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 **Prestwick House**
Activity Pack
Literature Made Fun!



Much Ado About Nothing
BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE


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All references come from the Dover Thrift Edition of *Much Ado About Nothing*, copyright 1994.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Setting and History**

Objective: Researching the historical setting of the play

Activity

Much Ado About Nothing is set in Messina, a city on the northeast tip of Sicily.

Using the library, the Internet, or both, research the history of the setting. Your research should include information about Messina, the island of Sicily, and Italy. Focus on the time period in which the play occurs, and include any significant facts about the world at that time.

Use this research to complete the **Setting Chart** on the next page.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act I

Personification

Objective: Identifying personification

Activity

Shakespeare plays contain frequent uses of personification. As you read Act I, watch for instances in which human qualities are given to animals, objects, or ideas. Find at least six examples of personification, and include the location of each example. Two examples are provided for you.

When you finish, write three of your own personified phrases.

Personification	Location
“every word stabs”	Act II, Scene 1
“time goes on crutches till love have all his rites”	Act II, Scene 1
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____

Your Personification:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Acts I – III**Metaphor**

Objective: Recognizing and interpreting metaphors

Activity

Like most Shakespeare plays, *Much Ado About Nothing* contains several instances of metaphor.

The **Metaphor Chart** lists seven examples of metaphor in the first three acts of *Much Ado About Nothing*. For each example, identify the character that uses the metaphor, and then explain the metaphor.

The first metaphor is completed for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act V

Interpreting Shakespeare

Objective: Interpreting Shakespeare's language

Activity

Some readers enjoy *Much Ado About Nothing* more than other Shakespeare plays because it is written as prose rather than poetry. This straightforward writing makes the play easier to understand for the modern audience; however, the play still has parts that are somewhat cryptic.

Rewrite Leonato's monologue in modern English. When you finish the translation, explain the significance of the passage in one paragraph.

Leonato: I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve: give not me counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father that so loved his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience;
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain,
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form.
If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard,
Bid sorrow wag, cry 'hem!' when he should groan,
Patch grief with proverbs, make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man: for, brother, men
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptual medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,
Charm ache with air, and agony with words:
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency,
To be so moral when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel:
My griefs cry louder than advertisement. (Act V, Scene 1)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Acts I – V**Characterization I****Objective:** Analyzing characters in the play**Activity**

Psychiatrists examine patients, determine the source of problems, and implement possible solutions. The proper examination of a patient may require detailed information regarding the patient's family life and social environment. Using personal observations and facts gathered from the patient, the doctor might then make a diagnosis.

You are now a modern psychiatrist, and below is a list of your patients for today. Write down your initial analysis for each patient and the possible source of the problem. In the **treatment** column, suggest a treatment. To diagnose the characters, assume that they are at their worst point in the play. Remember, one character may have multiple disorders, each of which may require a different treatment.