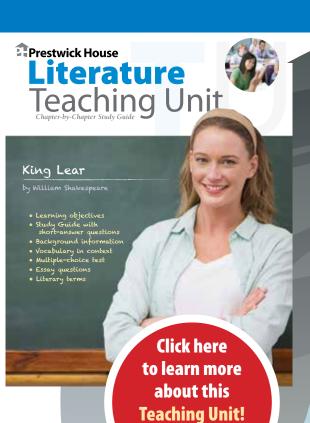


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# Literature Teaching Unit Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



# **Prestwick House**

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Item No: 300598

King Lear TEACHING UNIT

# **King Lear**

### **Objectives**

Note: All references come from the Prestwick House Literary Touchstone Classics edition of *King Lear*, copyright 2006.

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

- 1. trace the development of the main plot in the story and indicate how and where the subplot parallels the main plot.
- 2. identify and write a brief character sketch for each of the following characters:
  - Albany
  - Cornwall
  - Cordelia
  - Edgar
  - Edmund
  - Gloucester
  - Goneril
  - Kent
  - Lear
  - Oswald
  - Regan
- 3. write a short essay on the function of the fool in this play.
- 4. trace the development of the following themes in this play:
  - the foolishness of the aged and the ingratitude of the young
  - the roles of parent and child
  - the importance of nature and the natural order, and the consequences that occur when the natural order is subverted
  - man's fate viewed as a wheel of fortune
  - the consequences of unregulated passion
  - the corruption of power and redemption through suffering

2 OBJECTIVES

King Lear TEACHING UNIT

# **King Lear**

#### **Questions for Essay and Discussion**

- 1. Point out how and to what extent Lear is an example of a "tragic hero."
- 2. In three short paragraphs, identify and discuss three ways in which the Gloucester subplot mirrors the main plot.
- 3. Identify at least three comments made by the fool that reveal his opinion of Lear. In what way does the fool function as the Chorus does in a Greek play?
- 4. Write a short character analysis for each of the more important characters in the play. Identify their behavior and comment on their motivation.
- 5. Demonstrate how the following themes pertain to this play:
  - The foolishness of the aged and the ingratitude of the young.
  - The importance of nature and the natural order, and the consequences that occur when the natural order is subverted.
  - Fate, like a wheel, can spin spin out of control.
  - Punishment by the gods for evil acts.
  - Corruption of the individual by power.
  - Redemption through suffering.
  - The consequences of unregulated passion.
- 6. Describe the relationship between Lear and the Fool. How is it similar and dissimilar to the relationship of Lear and his daughters?
- 7. Identify the procedures of chivalry that are followed during the confrontational scene between Edgar and Edmund.

King Lear STUDENT COPY

Find	a pun in this scene.
What	announcement does Lear make?
How a	and why is Lear dividing his kingdom? On what will he base this division?
What	is the meaning of Cordelia's asides regarding her sisters' comments?
How	does Lear respond to Cordelia's comment?

King Lear STUDENT COPY

# Act II, Scene II

## Vocabulary

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7	What makes this scene humorous? What literary term would apply?
-	
]	Describe Kent's character, and explain how it contrasts with Oswald's.?
-	
7	Why does Gloucester say that Kent should not be put in stocks?
-	

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King Lear STUDENT COPY

## Act IV, Scene I

## Vocabulary

bending – overhanging
brim – edge
contemned – despised
entreat – ask
lamentable – sorrowful
superfluous – over prosperous
wanton – reckless

Explain the wors	what Edgar means when he says, "The worst is not/So long as we can say 'This ist.' "
How do	es Gloucester return to the theme of blindness and lack of vision?
What se	entiment about fate and the gods does Gloucester express?
At this p	point, why does Edgar not reveal himself to his father?
	an you infer from Gloucester's last comments? How do his comments amplify the fate and mankind?

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