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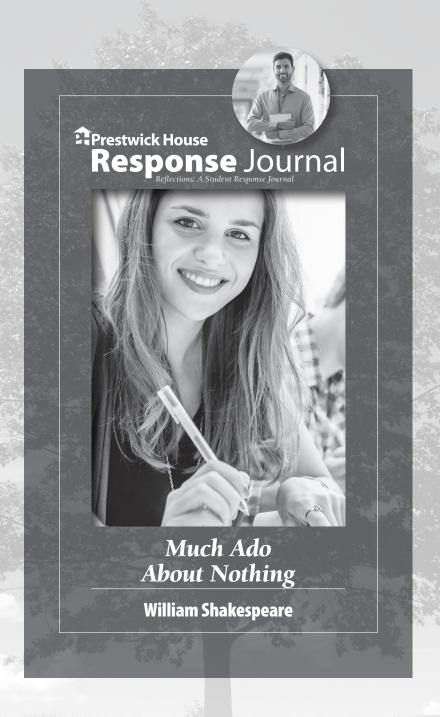
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Response Journal

To The Student

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

Act I, Scene I

1. Leonato finds out that the prince is coming by receiving a letter and the latest information he has is three days old. As you know, this play was written by Shakespeare in England in 1598. Communications, as you can well imagine, was primitive at best. Think about the almost instantaneous communications systems we enjoy today such as cell phones, email, text messaging, satellite phones, etc. Complete the following conversation about this that you might have by cell phone with a friend whose family has moved to Mexico:

You: Yo, it's me. Como esta usted? Ha, bet you thought I didn't know

any Spanish. Hey, have you ever read Much Ado About Nothing?

Friend: What's that about?

You:

- 2. Don Pedro has "[done] in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion". Write a newspaper article about a young person who has accomplished much in his or her life, and whom you personally admire. Remember to tell the who, why, where, when, and how. You could title your article "Not Too Young for Fame and Fortune."
- 3. Leonato says, "How much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping!" Imagine you keep a journal where you write about your most secret thoughts. Write an entry about a time when you or someone you know seemed to enjoy the troubles of someone else. In your entry, be sure to write about why no one really should be pleased about feeling this way.
- 4. Beatrice and Benedick are always "fighting" when they meet. Leonato says it "is a kind of merry war". As you know from your own experience, we all relate to different people in different ways. We can, depending on the people, be formal with them, ignore them, be very friendly, or even act mean toward them. We know how Beatrice and Benedick related to each other. Write your interpretation of what is going on in the relationship between these two young people. Be sure to explain how each really feels about the other and why you think they are behaving the way they are.

Act I, Scene II

8. Leonato, Hero's father, learns from his brother Antonio that a servant has told him that Don Pedro, Prince of Arragon, loves Hero. It seems that a servant overheard the prince telling that to Claudio while they were walking in the woods. Big misunderstanding! It is actually Claudio who is in love with Hero. Misunderstandings happen to us all at one time or another. Relate a time when you experienced misunderstanding something or someone or they misunderstood you and how the situation eventually worked out. Do not use real names unless you are comfortable with doing that.

Act I, Scene III

9. The wicked Don John learns of Claudio's love for Hero and devises a plan to use it to his advantage. This scene, though brief, is important to the plot of the play. Don John, Don Pedro's illegitimate brother, reveals his wicked streak. Reread the scene with careful attention to Don John's dialogue. Write a brief character study of Don John from what you have read, using any lines from the scene that back up your conclusions. Be sure to include what actions he wants to take and how this reflects his character.

Act II, Scene III

- 13. Benedick tells of his unrealistic expectations for a wife. All of Shakespeare's plays show the role of a wife in the times in which he wrote as being an important one. His women characters are fully thought out and varied, from a sweet protagonist like Hero to a murderer like Lady Macbeth. Imagine you are asked by *People Magazine* or some other magazine that deals with celebrities to submit your list of the top ten characteristics you would like ALL wives to have. Whether you are a male or female student, you should have an opinion about the best characteristics of wives. Please write each item on your list in a complete sentence.
- 14. Balthasar lacks the self-confidence to sing even though people tell him he is good. Think about the whole idea of what self-confidence means, and why some people seem to have more of it than others. Think about two people you know who have widely differing levels of self-confidence. Without using real names, write two brief paragraphs about them telling how each demonstrates their high or low level of self-confidence, giving at least one example of something they did that convinced you of their self-confidence.
- 15. Benedick overhears Claudio and Leonato talking about Beatrice's love for him. He immediately believes it because he says that Leonato wouldn't lie. Benedick has an interesting reaction to hearing that Beatrice really loves him. Reread his dialogue. Complete the following conversation you might have with a classmate who is also reading this play, about whether or not Benedick really loves Beatrice.

Classmate: I can't figure this guy out. He can't seem to believe what he's hearing about Beatrice, and yet...

Act III, Scene IV

28. When Margaret and Hero are talking to Beatrice, they make comments about Carduus Benedictus, which is a holy-thistle. Though Margaret is Hero's servant, they are on a friendly basis. Hero also has another serving woman, Ursula, who is quite different than Margaret. Comparing and contrasting fictional characters in an author's work leads to greater understanding of the work. Complete the paragraphs below in which you list the ways in which Margaret and Ursula are the same and how they are different. Remember, all you need to do is make a list.

The ways in which Margaret and Ursula are alike are:

The ways in which Margaret and Ursula are unalike are:

Act III, Scene V

29. Dogberry and Verges are very nice to Leonato so they can soften him up before telling him the news about the fraud. You may never have used flattery in this way because you might find it rather deceitful to do so. But it might be interesting for you to try doing this in an imaginative, fun way. Below you will find a list of some of the characters in this play. Beside each name write one or two sentences of the most flowery flattery of that person that you can think of for some imagined "softening up" purpose.

Don John Beatrice Borachio Ursula Benedick