



THE HAMBURG PLAYERS e.V.

Oberaltenallee 20A

22081 Hamburg

www.hamburgplayers.de

Liebes Schulbüro,
bitte reichen Sie diese Unterlagen an das Fachkollegium ENGLISCH weiter.
Mit herzlichem Dank,
Hamburg Players e.V.

Angebot zum Zentralabiturthema „Love and Power - Women in Shakespeare's Plays“

Liebes Englischkollegium,

die Hamburg Players, Hamburgs älteste englischsprachige Theatergruppe, versucht Sie in diesem Jahr bei Ihrer Arbeit zu unterstützen. Wir haben uns mit einer unserer drei jährlichen Produktionen am zentralen Abiturthema „**Love and Power - Women in Shakespeare's Plays**“ orientiert, und bieten Ihnen nicht nur eine erstklassige Produktion des **Klassikers *Much Ado About Nothing* von William Shakespeare**, sondern auch 30% vergünstigte Studentenkarten für 7 Euro UND je eine Lehrerfreikarte auf 15 Schülertickets!

Da sich unter unseren Mitgliedern auch Englischlehrer befinden, wissen wir, dass das Arbeitspensum durch das neue LAZM kaum noch Zeitreserven für außerschulische Veranstaltungen lässt. Deshalb haben wir versucht, Ihnen mit diesen Unterlagen zumindest einen Teil der Unterrichtsvorbereitung abzunehmen, und schicken Ihnen hiermit einige Kopiervorlagen mit Arbeitsaufträgen und Übungen zum Stück. Sie beschränken sich nicht auf die herkömmliche literarische Auseinandersetzung mit dem Text, sondern nehmen ihn als das ernst, was er ist: Ein Theaterstück, das dafür geschrieben wurde um aufgeführt zu werden.

Sie können die Übungen vollständig übernehmen, auszugsweise ausprobieren, oder sich lediglich vom theaterpraktischen Ansatz inspirieren lassen. Wir haben außerdem versucht, sowohl Aufgaben für Kurse zu entwickeln, die das Stück bereits gelesen haben, als auch für Kurse, die sich noch nicht damit auseinander gesetzt haben.

Auch wenn Sie keine Zeit zur Vorbereitung auf das Stück finden, lohnt sich ein Besuch bei uns als Einstieg in das Thema, Anregung, Auflockerung, Belohnung für harte Arbeit oder als ‚krönender Abschluss‘ der Kursarbeit. Auf jeden Fall hoffen wir, Ihnen mit unseren Unterlagen etwas Arbeitserleichterung zu schaffen, den Schülern einen neuen Blickwinkel auf das Theater und speziell das Abiturthema zu eröffnen, und Sie alle zu einer unserer Vorführungen begrüßen zu dürfen.

ACHTUNG: Bitte nehmen Sie sich jedoch auf jeden Fall die Zeit, mit den Schülern auf den Punkt *Theatre Etiquette* (Kopiervorlage A) einzugehen. Nicht selten ist dies in unserer multi-medialen Welt der erste „richtige“ Theaterbesuch für viele Schüler, und damit sowohl sie als auch unsere anderen Zuschauer einen schönen und unterhaltsamen Abend verbringen, sollten Ihre Schüler auf bestimmte Förmlichkeiten und Abläufe vorbereitet sein. Vielen Dank!

Bei Fragen zur Vorbereitung, den Aufführungen, oder um einen Termin mit der Regisseurin zu vereinbaren, oder für weitere Informationen stehen wir Ihnen gerne zur Verfügung: PR@hamburgplayers.de.

Termine: 17.-20. und 24.-27. Februar 2010 jeweils um 19.30 Uhr
Am 20. Februar außerdem eine Matinee um 15.30.

Spielort: Theater Marschnerstraße 46 (U-Bahnhof Hamburger Straße)

Kartenreservierung: Tickets@hamburgplayers.de Stichwort „Abi“, oder unter der Hotline 040 713 1399

Besuchen Sie auch unsere Website unter www.hamburgplayers.de
Dort finden Sie unter Anderem auch die Kopiervorlagen zum Herunterladen.

Dieses Materialpaket beinhaltet folgende Kopiervorlagen:

- A. Theatre Etiquette (!)
 - B. Summary of Much Ado About Nothing
 - C. Biographical Notes on William Shakespeare
 - D. Arbeitsaufträge für Schüler mit und ohne Kenntnisse über das Stück
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The Hamburg Players' Production of
Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare

A. Theatre Etiquette (You will find an exercise that will help raise students' awareness of courtesy to the performers and other people around them in section D. Arbeitsaufträge. If you choose to do the exercise, read this page afterwards. If you have no time for the exercise, **please make sure that you discuss this page with your students**)

Overview of the theatre experience

When you go to the theatre, you are part of the AUDIENCE. Each live theatre performance is a unique experience shared between the performers and the audience on a particular occasion. Without you, the performance would not exist.

Before the performance

The bells are rung to tell the audience to enter the auditorium and take their seats. The third bell is the last warning that the play is about to begin. When the lights dim and go out, the performance is about to begin. At this time the audience becomes very quiet so they can pay attention to what is happening on stage.

During the performance

Unlike a film performance, a theatre performance has not been pre-recorded with the mistakes edited out. There are lights, costumes, actors and dancers right there in front of you – LIVE. They are not on a television or movie screen. This makes it fun and exciting to see a performance. The actors' job is to perform for you. Your job is to listen quietly and watch them carefully. If you pay attention and respond, this has a direct effect on the performance and contributes to its overall quality. You interact in a special way with the performers, giving them energy to breathe life into the play. If you laugh when something is funny or cry when something is sad, the actors respond to you. But noise or movement disturbs the performers and other members of the audience and can spoil the overall effect. So remember to "play your part" and watch and listen - the performers depend on YOU.

At the end of the performance

Thank the performers for your experience by clapping (applauding) when they bow, which is their way of saying thank you to you. After the bows (called the 'curtain call'), the audience stays seated until the theatre lights come on.



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B. Short Summary of *Much Ado About Nothing*

In Messina, the governor Leonato, his daughter Hero, and her cousin Beatrice (Antonio's daughter) learn from a messenger that Don Pedro has won victory in a battle and is returning home. He arrives with Claudio, Benedick, and Pedro's bastard brother, Don John. Claudio falls in love with Hero at first sight. Benedick and Beatrice chide one another and trade witticisms. In private, Claudio tells Benedick of his love, but Benedick only teases him. Don Pedro, however, vows to help Claudio by disguising himself as Claudio and making advances to Hero. Leonato's brother Antonio overhears Don Pedro and Claudio's conversation, but believes Don Pedro is in love with Hero, rather than Claudio. Informing Leonato of this, both rejoice at prince Don Pedro's supposed intentions and plan to tell Hero. Don John's servant Conrade informs Don John of Claudio and Pedro's plans to woo Hero for Claudio, but John, who enjoys being grouchy and spreading gloom, plans to attempt to foil the plans.

At dinner, while discussing husbands, Beatrice vows to never marry, echoing Benedick's earlier vow. The men arrive in masks: Don Pedro and Hero dance; Benedick and Beatrice dance, and she makes fun of Benedick in general, possibly not knowing she is in fact dancing with him. Don John appears to Claudio, who identifies himself as Benedick, even though Don John knows he's Claudio. Don John tells him Don Pedro is actually in love with Hero, causing Claudio to become depressed. Benedick carries the ruse further, depressing him more. To his relief, though, Don Pedro unites Hero and Claudio in future marriage. Further, Don Pedro plans to convince Beatrice and Benedick to marry one another, even though both have vowed to never marry. Soon, Don John learns of Claudio's engagement to Hero. Still hoping to foil their marriage, he and his servant Borachio plan to brand Hero as a wanton woman and thus compromise the marriage. In the orchard/garden, Don Pedro, Leonato, and Claudio discuss Beatrice's "love" for Benedick. Although Benedick is hiding, they know he is there and lead him to believe she loves him; Benedick takes the bait.

Similarly, Hero and her servant Ursula discuss how Benedick is "in love" with Beatrice, while Beatrice herself hides in the trees and listens; she too takes the bait. Separately, Don Pedro and Claudio tease Benedick for being quiet. Don John appears and tells Pedro and Claudio that Hero is a whore and will give proof of it the evening before the wedding. At nightfall, Dogberry and Verges instruct the night watch to watch over the city. In hiding, they hear Borachio (drunk) tell Conrade how he let Margaret woo him from Hero's bedroom, and thus deceive Don Pedro and Claudio into believing Hero is a whore. The next day, at the wedding, Claudio plans to denounce Hero and will not marry her. The watch arrests Borachio and Conrade, then Dogberry and Verges come to Leonato to tell him of the arrest, though he impatiently shrugs them off.

At the wedding, Claudio and Don Pedro accuse Hero of being a whore. Leonato vows to determine if the accusations are true. Further, the Friar suggests they pretend that Hero has died from the accusation, so that if a lie is being propagated, the source may admit the lie out of remorse. Privately, Benedick and Beatrice profess their love for one another. She asks him to prove his love by killing Claudio for wronging Hero. In prison, Dogberry interrogates Borachio and Conrade; the Sexton (recorder) plans to tell Leonato of their crimes.

In a courtyard, Benedick charges Claudio to a duel. Before this can occur, Dogberry brings Borachio, who admits of his wrongdoings to slander Hero. Leonato, still dissembling that Hero is dead, instructs Claudio to come to his house in the morning, so that he can marry a "cousin" of Hero, who is nearly identical to her (and actually is her). Beatrice and Benedick continue falling in love. At the tomb, Claudio delivers an epitaph to Hero. Then, in the morning, Benedick asks Leonato for Beatrice's hand in marriage. Hero and Claudio are again engaged to be married. Lastly, it is reported that Don John has been arrested for his deceit and will be punished.

Note: The Hamburg Players feature a slightly shortened version of the play.

(source: www.about-shakespeare.com)



The Hamburg Players' Production of
Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare

C. Biographical Notes on William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in April 1564. Shakespeare probably attended the grammar school in central Stratford but never studied at a university. At the age of eighteen (1582), he married Anne Hathaway, who was already 26 years old. There seems to have been some haste in arranging the ceremony, since Anne was presumably 3 months pregnant. The two had three children together, two daughters and a son.

After his marriage, Shakespeare left very few traces in the historical record until he appeared in London's theatrical scene. The late 1580s are known as Shakespeare's "lost years". There are legends surrounding this time of his life but no evidence has survived to show exactly where he was or when and why he left Stratford for London.

Shakespeare reappears in London in the early 1590's, by then a member of the "Lord Strange's Men", later the "Lord Chamberlain's Men" (after the accession of James I to the throne they renamed themselves "The King's Men"). Most likely Shakespeare lived in London during his time as an active playwright, separated from his family.

Shakespeare was a very successful playwright, actor and part-owner of his playing company. Enterprising as he was, he gained a small fortune that allowed him to buy one of the grandest houses in Stratford in 1597. He only seems to have retired to Stratford after his last two plays were written in 1613. He died on April 23, 1616, at the age of 52. He was married to Anne Hathaway until his death and was survived by his two daughters, Susanna and Judith.

Some of Shakespeare's plays first appeared in print as a series of quartos. However most of his works remained unpublished until 1623 when the posthumous *First Folio* was published by two actors who had been in Shakespeare's company: John Heminges and Henry Condell.

The name Shakespeare is extremely widespread, and is spelt in an astonishing variety of ways. That of his father, John Shakespeare, occurs 166 times in the Council Book of the Stratford Corporation, and appears to take 16 different forms. The verdict, not altogether unanimous, of competent graphologists is to the effect that Shakespeare himself, in the extant examples of his signature, always wrote "Shakspere." In the printed signatures to the dedications of his poems, on the title-pages of nearly all the contemporary editions of his plays that bear his name, and in many formal documents it appears as Shakespeare.

Confirmed facts about Shakespeare's life are meagre by today's standards. Consequently, there is a considerable number of scarcely provable theories and stories about Shakespeare. It has to be noted, however, that Shakespeare's vita is well documented for a man of his social standard and considering the times he lived in.

(source: www.shakespeare-gesellschaft.de, www.shakespeare-literature.com)



The Hamburg Players' Production of
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D. Arbeitsaufträge für Schüler mit und ohne Kenntnisse über das Stück

A: for students who have read the play

B: for students who have NOT read the play

Suggested time for each exercise: 1 to 2 double lessons.

1) Theatre etiquette [A and B]

Step 1: So you will soon watch a play, a live performance on stage. Warm up to this experience by doing a quick improvisation exercise: Get together in 5 groups and show us scenes of friends doing the following together:

- Watching a film by yourself at home on TV
- Watching a film with friends or family at home
- Watching a film in the cinema
- Going to listen to your favourite band at a big concert
- Watching a live performance on stage at a theatre

Afterwards discuss the following questions:

What are the differences between these scenes? Who is involved in the interaction? What can you do or not do in these situations and why? What might annoy you or others in these situations?

Step 2: Now get together in those same groups and draw up a list of dos and don'ts for a visit to the theatre. Your aim should be that everyone in the audience (that's YOU, too) gets the most out of the performance, and that they contribute to the quality of the actors' performance and the audience's enjoyment of the play

- Sample rules:
- No food, drink, sweets, potato chips, Döner (even without garlic) or gum into the theatre!
 - Keep your feet off the seats and no climbing over seat backs to get to your row
 - Feel free to laugh if you find something in the show funny
 - Turn off all cell phones before the performance begins
 - No photos, video or audio recordings ever in a theatre – so drop that cell phone! ...

goal: to raise awareness of courtesy to the performers and other audience members

2) The Shakespeare Quickie [A]

Your teacher tells you that today's exam will be on the play *Much Ado About Nothing*. Plays usually run an average of two to three hours. Reading it takes at least that long. Unfortunately your best friend didn't have time for it either and is now in deep trouble. However, you are going to fill him/her in the quick way.

In groups of approximately five (yes, multiple casting will be a necessity) reenact the play. Make sure you don't forget the most essential parts, but don't be shy to skip over the not so important stuff either. Don't worry; you've got the entire length of the break before the exam, which is a five full minutes!!! GO!

(Prep time: 10 Minutes)

goal: improvisation, summarizing and extracting the essentials, team work, speaking and presentation skills

3) The Overall Concept [A and B]

On the stage we only see the actors, but many more people are responsible for putting on a play.

Theatre is a collaborative art, which in this case means that several artists (besides the director and actors) come together to create a piece of art, namely the final production. Under the leadership of the director, these artists must work independently but together to produce a play that is well rounded.

Form five groups representing stage designers, lighting designers, sound designers, make-up designers and costume designers. Your director has decided that the most important message he wants to convey is that of *the Importance of Honour*, and on that the overall mood he wants to create is that of *fear and distrust*. The groups get 20 minutes to come up with a concept of their work. Take notes and make sketches to visually support your presentation. Then each group has 5 minutes to present their concept to the class. After the presentations, have an open discussion on how well the concepts fit together and can be realized. Think about problems you may face (e.g. a limited budget).

goal: gaining an understanding for the complexity of a production process, team work, speaking skills

4) The Shrunken Shakespeare [A]

Almost no money, only three weeks until the show opens, not enough good actors, and your audience's inability to sit still for several hours - those are the restrictions you have to deal with. This calls for major cuts in the play!

As a board of directors, get together in groups (3-6 people) and discuss which parts of the play you can leave out and still convey its message - by the way, what is it? Which characters would you eliminate if you had to get rid of half of them? What else could you do to save yourself money, time and stress? Get together and haggle!

goal: defining major themes/motives/symbols, concentrating on what is most important, argumentation skills