

'Twelfth Night: A Shakespeare Story' by Andrew Matthews and Tony Ross

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Ages 7-11

Reasons for selection and synopsis

Also known as 'What You Will', 'Twelfth Night' is a hilariously funny and bitter sweet comedy about mistaken identity and unrequited love. Viola and her twin brother have been shipwrecked and Viola finds herself washed up on the coast on Illyria. Disguising herself as a man named Cesario, Viola soon gets work as a servant for Duke Orsino. Orsino is madly in love with the beautiful Olivia, but Olivia soon falls in love with Cesario, who is also in love with the Duke! What follows is a delightful comedy of confusion, full of trickery, love-sick suitors and Shakespeare's unique humour.

Before reading...

Ask the children to look at the front cover. What do you think the book will be about? What things can you see on the front cover? What sort of story will it be? Who might enjoy it?

Now read the blurb – where any of your predictions correct? How do the reviews on the back persuade you to read the book?

Ask the children to create semantic maps for the following words:

- **Identity**
- **Gender**
- **Love**

Can they create a web of words noting down all the phrases and words linked to these concepts?

The following questions are designed as prompts only – allow the children to come up with their own questions and ideas. They will be much more engaged this way!

Before reading...

This play is set in Illyria in the fifteenth century. Can you locate Illyria on a map?

Look carefully at the cast list. Draw lines to match the name of the character to their role in the story.

Sebastian and Viola	Duke of Illyria
Olivia	A rich Countess
Orsino	Twin brother and sister
Malvolio	Friend to Sir Toby
Sir Toby Belch	Uncle to Olivia
Sir Andrew Aguecheek	Steward to Olivia

*If music be the food of love, play on,
Give me excess of it that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken and so die...
(Orsino; I,i)*

In the opening scene to the play, Orsino is in love. But is he happy? To 'surfeit' is to overdose. What might Orsino be saying? Tell the class that Orsino is lovesick and fed up. He is hoping his 'appetite' for love will soon stop. Who might he be in love with? Do you think his love is being returned? What is 'unrequited love'?

Pages 7 - 15

Vocabulary	<p>Which word on page 8 means 'filled with water and sunk'?</p> <p>Find and copy a word on page 8 that is similar in meaning to 'dangerous'.</p> <p>Look at page 13 when Viola (disguised as Cesario) is talking to the Duke. Why does the author use a dash?</p>
Infer	<p>What might Sebastian be thinking and feeling on pages 8 and 9?</p> <p>Why does Viola decide she would be safer disguised as a man? What does this tell you about the time in which she lives?</p> <p>Read to the bottom on page 11. How is the Duke feeling? How do you know?</p> <p>How do you think Viola feels when she is asked to go and speak to Olivia?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of page 7. Viola often borrows Sebastian's clothes and dresses up as him – how might this play out later on in the story? Why do you think we have been told this on the very first page?</p> <p>Read to the end of page 9. What do you think has happened to Sebastian?</p> <p>Do you think the Duke will fall in love with Viola?</p> <p>Read to the end of page 15. How do you think Viola's life will become even more complicated?</p>
Explain	<p>The Duke thinks love is a sickness. What does he mean by this?</p> <p>Explain why the Duke asks Cesario to talk to Olivia. Why doesn't he go himself?</p>
Retrieve	<p>List three ways in which Viola and Sebastian are similar.</p> <p>How did Viola save herself after the shipwreck?</p> <p>Viola was washed up on the coast of Italy. True or false?</p> <p>Complete this: Viola disguises herself as a man and calls herself _____.</p>
Summarise	<p>Re-tell this part of the story from Viola's perspective. What happened during the shipwreck? Why did you decide to disguise yourself as a man?</p> <p>When Viola is asked to talk to Olivia, she says:</p> <p><i>I'll do my best</i></p> <p><i>To woo your lady. – Yet, a barful strife!</i></p> <p><i>Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife.</i></p> <p>Can you summarise what she means by this?</p>

Pages 16 - 27

Vocabulary	<p>What is a 'bachelor' (pg 17)?</p> <p>Find and copy a word on page 19 that means the same as 'cheek' or 'cheeky'.</p> <p>Which word on page 21 means the same as 'rude' and 'disrespectful'?</p>
Infer	<p>How does Sir Toby feel about Malvolio?</p> <p>What are your first impressions of Sir Toby?</p> <p>What might Olivia be feeling on page 21 when she hears there is a man waiting for her with a message from the Duke?</p> <p>What might Olivia be thinking and feeling when she looks up and sees Cesario/Viola?</p> <p>What are your first impressions of Malvolio?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of page 17. Do you think Olivia will fall in love with Sir Andrew?</p> <p>Read to the end of page 18. How might Sir Andrew get the chance to see Olivia?</p>
Explain	<p>Explain why Malvolio looks like 'a bony shadow' (pg 20).</p> <p>How does Viola try to flatter Olivia on page 23?</p> <p>The Duke is 'just in love with the idea of being in love' (pg 24). What does Olivia mean by this?</p> <p>Can you explain why Olivia gives Malvolio a ring from one of her fingers?</p>
Retrieve	<p>Use the information on page 16 to draw and label a picture of Sir Toby Belch.</p> <p>Olivia has dark blue eyes and blonde hair. True or false?</p> <p>Why is Olivia confused on page 25?</p>
Summarise	<p>Viola says to Olivia that she would try to win her heart and that she would...</p> <p><i>Make me a willow cabin at your gate</i></p> <p><i>And call upon my soul within the house.</i></p> <p>Can you summarise what she is saying? Can you re-write this in modern day language? Perhaps you could try acting this speech out? A willow tree is traditionally linked to sadness and weeping. What is a cabin? Viola goes on to say that from inside her 'willow cabin' she would write love songs and shout Olivia's name so that Olivia would feel pity for 'Cesario'.</p>

Pages 28 - 37

Vocabulary	<p>Find and copy a word on page 30 that is similar in meaning to 'irritably'.</p> <p>Draw a line to match the word to its meaning:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>deceive</td> <td>grasp tightly</td> </tr> <tr> <td>imitate</td> <td>trick</td> </tr> <tr> <td>clutched</td> <td>copy</td> </tr> </table>	deceive	grasp tightly	imitate	trick	clutched	copy
deceive	grasp tightly						
imitate	trick						
clutched	copy						
Infer	<p>Underline the words or phrases on pages 28 that tell us Viola is feeling upset and dejected.</p> <p>Read to the end of page 29. What might Viola be thinking and feeling when Malvolio gives her the ring?</p> <p>Read to the end of page 36. Who do you think has sent the letter to Malvolio?</p>						
Predict	<p>Read to the end of page 33. Do you think Viola will give the diamond brooch to Olivia?</p> <p>Read to the end of page 35. What might be written in the letter?</p> <p>What do you think Sir Toby and Sir Andrew will do when they see Malvolio reading the letter?</p>						
Explain	<p>Explain what the author means by 'the truth fell on her like an avalanche' (pg 31).</p> <p>Viola says on page 32 that she <u>does</u> understand the agony of love. Why does she say this?</p> <p>In the play, the letter to Malvolio begins:</p> <p>'In my stars I am above thee, but be not afraid of greatness. Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em...' Can you explain what this means? How might someone have 'greatness thrust upon 'em'?</p>						
Retrieve	<p>Look at page 33. The Duke gives Viola a necklace to give to Olivia. True or false?</p> <p>In the letter, Malvolio is asked to wear red tights to show he loves Olivia. True or false?</p>						
Summarise	<p>In the play, the Duke says his love is 'as hungry as the sea' and that there is no comparison 'between that love a woman can bear me/ And that I owe Olivia'. Can you summarise what he is saying here? What are his views on women? Does he believe they can love as much as men?</p>						

Pages 37 – 48

Vocabulary	<p>Replace the words in bold with synonyms:</p> <p>In the laurel bushes, Sir Andrew quivered with rage.</p> <p>“Draw your sword, vile scoundrel!” snarled Sir Andrew Aguecheeck.</p> <p>Find and copy a word that means ‘to frown in an angry way’ on page 48.</p>
Infer	<p>What might Viola be thinking and feeling when she tells Olivia to forget her on page 38?</p> <p>How is Sir Andrew feeling when Sir Toby suggests he should challenge Cesario to a duel? How do you know?</p> <p>What might Olivia be thinking and feeling when she sees Malvolio on page 41 wearing yellow tights?</p> <p>What might Viola be thinking and feeling on page 48 when she hears Sebastian is alive?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of page 41. What do you think Olivia will say to Malvolio?</p> <p>Do you think Viola and Sebastian will be reunited? What do you think will happen when they are? What will Viola say to Sebastian?</p>
Explain	<p>Read page 38. What are the answers Olivia would give to Cesario?</p> <p>Can you explain how Sebastian survived the shipwreck?</p>
Retrieve	<p>What does Olivia say and do when she sees Malvolio wearing the yellow tights?</p> <p>Read page 45. Who appears and stops the duel between Viola and Sir Andrew?</p> <p>Who does the sailor think Viola is?</p>
Summarise	<p>Draw a story map to show the events so far in the story.</p> <p>Re-write pages 45 – 48 from the sailor's point of view.</p>

Pages 49 - 58

Vocabulary	<p>Find and copy a word on page 49 that means the same as 'confused'.</p> <p>Replace the words in bold with synonyms:</p> <p>Duke Orsino called for his fastest horse, and galloped to Olivia's house.</p>
Infer	<p>What might Sebastian be thinking and feeling when Olivia flings her arms around him on page 49?</p> <p>Which words and phrases on page 51 tell us how Sebastian is feeling when he sees Viola?</p> <p>Why is there a priest holding a bible on page 54?</p> <p>What might the Duke be thinking and feeling when he sees Sebastian and Olivia holding hands?</p>
Predict	<p>Read to the end of page 55. What do you think the Duke will see when he turns around?</p> <p>Do you think Malvolio will escape?</p> <p>How might the story have changed if the Duke had visited Olivia himself earlier on in the play?</p>
Explain	<p>Why doesn't Sebastian tell Olivia she has made a mistake on page 50?</p> <p>The Duke instantly falls in love with Viola when he sees her on page 56. Do you think this is realistic? Is he the type of man that would behave like this?</p> <p>What role does music play in the story? How does the type of music the Duke listens to change over the course of the story?</p> <p>Malvolio is the main villain in the play. Do you agree? Use evidence from the story to support your ideas.</p>
Retrieve	<p>Who does Olivia mistake Sebastian for?</p> <p>Who does Olivia marry?</p> <p>The Duke and Viola get married. True or false?</p>
Summarise	<p>How many disguises and tricks are there in this story?</p> <p>Before they get married, Sebastian says,</p> <p><i>"I'll follow this good man, and go with you; And, having sworn truth, ever will be true."</i></p> <p>If the 'good man' is the priest, what is Sebastian saying?</p>