

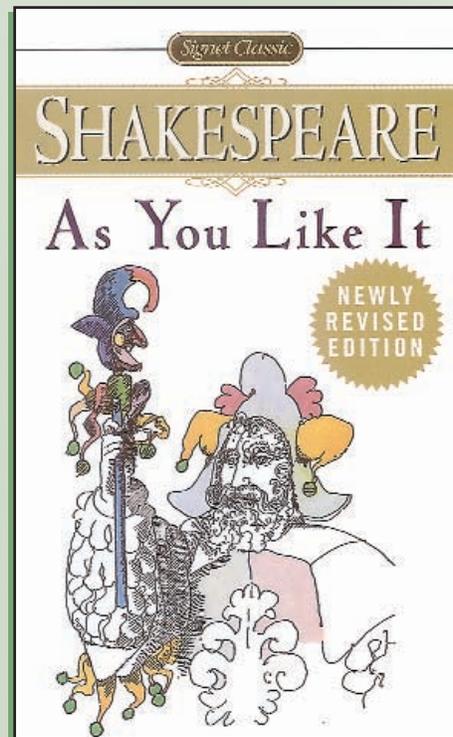
Signet Classic

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO THE SIGNET CLASSIC EDITION OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S

AS YOU LIKE IT

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INTRODUCTION

Shakespeare seems to be everywhere these days. *Romeo and Juliet* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, starring contemporary movie stars, have been box office hits. The film *Shakespeare in Love*, depicting how the playwright's experiences inspired him to write *Romeo and Juliet*, won multiple Oscars at the 1999 Academy Awards. These popular films have made the plays more accessible to students by exposing them to Elizabethan language and the action that brings the words to life. So teachers can expect a certain amount of positive interest among students when they begin to read a Shakespearean play. *As You Like It*, although not well known by students, will certainly delight and build on students' positive expectations.

As You Like It, like *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, is one of Shakespeare's "marriage" comedies in which love's complications end in recognition of the true identity of the lovers and celebration in marriage. This is a pattern still followed in today's romantic comedies. This play can lead to discussions of the nature of true love versus romantic love.

Other themes, which spin off from the duality between the real and unreal, include appearance versus reality, nature versus fortune, and court life of sophisticated manners contrasted with the natural life. All of these ideas are within students' experiences allowing for immediate responses and interesting discussions.

This guide includes a variety of activities and discussion questions to stimulate students' reactions and responses to the play before they begin to read, while they are reading, and after they have read the play. Teachers should choose the activities which best meet students' needs and interests.

LIST OF CHARACTERS BY RELATIONSHIP

THE COURT:

Duke Frederick	Usurped the throne from Duke Senior
Celia	Daughter of Duke Frederick
Rosalind	Cousin to Celia, niece to Duke Frederick, daughter to Duke Senior
Touchstone	Clown of the court

SONS OF SIR ROWLAND DE BOYS:

Oliver	Eldest son
Jaques	Middle Son who appears in the final scene
Orlando	Youngest son who loves Rosalind
Adam	Servant to Oliver who follows Orlando to Arden

FOREST OF ARDEN:

Duke Senior	Eldest brother of Duke Frederick
Amiens and Jaques	Two Lords attending Duke Senior
Aliena	Celia's name in Arden
Ganymede	Rosalind's name in Arden
Corin and Silvius	Two shepherds
Phebe	Shepherdess Silvius loves
Audrey	Country girl Touchstone loves

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY

ACT I, SCENE I

As the play begins Orlando complains about his brother's failure to give him the education that befits his station in life as a gentleman. In this opening, Shakespeare introduces themes of nature versus fortune and appearance versus reality. When Oliver, the older brother, comes out to speak with Orlando, they quarrel and fight. Oliver strikes Orlando, and

Orlando grabs him by the throat. Adam, an old servant of the family, steps between the two brothers, and is called an "old dog" by Oliver for his pains. Orlando demands either to be allowed to live as a gentleman or to receive his inheritance so he can seek his fortune in the world.

Oliver hopes to get rid of Orlando and keep the inheritance by inciting Orlando to fight the Duke's expert wrestler, Charles, at court. When Charles warns Oliver to keep his brother at home, Oliver slanders Orlando, saying he's stubborn and foolhardy and will be a menace to Charles unless he is severely beaten in the match.

ACT I, SCENE II

At the Duke's palace, Celia urges her cousin Rosalind not to be sad while Rosalind laments that it is difficult to forget about her father who has been banished. To take their minds off their problems, Rosalind suggests they make a game of love, but Celia suggests that they should rail at Fortune instead.

Touchstone, the Court Fool, calls Celia to her father, but soon they are engaged in word play about the common and meaningless use of oaths since so many swear by an honor they do not possess. LeBeau, a courtier, arrives with news of the wrestling match at the court and how Charles, the Duke's wrestler, has cracked the ribs of three brothers. Now another bout is about to begin just at the place where the two girls are standing.

Duke Frederick, Celia's father and Rosalind's uncle, asks the girls to dissuade the young and inexperienced Orlando from fighting, but he is determined to wrestle the champion. The women are impressed with his words and wish him success.

In the match Orlando throws Charles who is so winded he cannot speak when Orlando says he wants to have another round. Duke Frederick is impressed with Orlando until he learns that he is the youngest son of Rowland de Boys, his enemy and friend of Rosalind's father. Celia and Rosalind congratulate Orlando, and Rosalind gives him a chain to wear as a token of her esteem. Orlando is so charmed with Rosalind that he cannot speak when she addresses him.

LeBeau returns to urge Orlando to leave the court as the Duke has become angry and may do him some harm. Orlando asks who the two women were and learns that one is Rosalind, daughter of the usurped Duke. Le Beau also tells Orlando that lately the Duke has begun to be displeased with his niece, mainly because he is jealous that the people praise her goodness. Orlando plans to return home but his mind is on "heavenly Rosalind!"

ACT I, SCENE III

Celia sees that Rosalind is distracted and thinking about Orlando. They joke about her sudden affection, and Celia wonders how it is possible that Rosalind could fall in love so quickly.

Just then Duke Frederick walks in and orders Rosalind to leave the court. She is banished or will face death. When Rosalind asks for reasons, the Duke answers that he no longer trusts her and fears she will prove a traitor like her father. His answers to Celia, however, make it clear he is jealous of Rosalind. She is also a reminder of how he treated his own brother, the true Duke.

Celia loves Rosalind so much that she will not continue to live in the court without her and proposes that they should go to find her uncle, Rosalind's father, in the Forest of Arden. Fearful of the danger they would face as unprotected women, Rosalind suggests that she should disguise herself as a soldier. They choose new names to reflect their changed natures. Rosalind will now be Ganymede, the name of Jove's page, and Celia will be Aliena, which means "the estranged one." As they leave to make preparations, Rosalind decides to take along the Clown as a traveling companion and Celia readily agrees.

ACT II, SCENE I

In the Forest of Arden, Duke Senior celebrates the simplicity of their new way of life, free of the customs and intrigues of the court. He is only sorry that they must kill the deer, "native burghers" of the woods in order to eat. Jaques, one of Senior's lords, is so saddened by the death of a deer that he weeps and sermonizes about how badly they are treating the animals of the woods.

ACT II, SCENE II

Meanwhile at the palace Celia and Rosalind are missing. Duke Frederick sends for Orlando's brother to make him help in the search.

ACT II, SCENE III

Orlando is returning to his home when he is warned by Adam, a faithful servant, not to trust his brother who is so jealous that he means to burn Orlando's house in the night. Adam gives Orlando his savings and asks to be his servant in his exile. He boasts that even though he is old (almost eighty) he will serve as well as a much younger man. Orlando is touched by his loyalty, so unlike the ambitions and expediencies of most people.

ACT II, SCENE IV

Rosalind disguised as Ganymede, Celia as Aliena, and Touchstone are wandering in the Forest of Arden, exhausted and weak. Two shepherds, Corin and Silvius, come near the travelers. Silvius is telling the older man how much he loves his mistress, more than Corin could have ever loved a woman. Rosalind is reminded of her own wounded heart.

When Rosalind asks Corin if there is any shelter or food to be had in the area, he reports that he is poor but knows of a cottage and some land that is for sale. The travelers decide to purchase the place so they can stay in this place for awhile.

ACT II, SCENE V

In another part of the forest, Amiens sings a sad song while Jaques begs him to sing again even though it makes him melancholy. He has avoided the Duke all day, preferring his solitary contemplations of nature.

ACT II, SCENE VI

Adam and Orlando enter the woods at another place. Adam is so hungry and tired that he fears he will die. Orlando begs him to hold on a little longer while he seeks for food and shelter.

ACT II, SCENE VII

Duke Senior is still looking for Jaques who suddenly appears before the company, excited that he has met a fool in the forest who spoke with great wisdom about fortune and man's life. Jaques wants to be like this fool, to freely speak whatever he pleases and to point out the folly of men.

Orlando comes upon the company with his sword drawn, demanding food, but Duke Senior invites him to eat what he needs. Orlando is ashamed that he acted so violently. He takes some food to feed Adam while Duke Senior and Jaques comment on the misfortunes of life.

Later Duke Senior reveals his identity. He realizes that Orlando is the son of his faithful retainer Sir Rowland, and he desires to hear how Orlando came into such misfortune.

ACT III, SCENE I

Back at the palace, Duke Frederick banishes Oliver and seizes his fortune and lands until he delivers up his brother.

ACT III, SCENE II

Orlando hangs verses written in praise of Rosalind on the trees while Corin and Touchstone try to outdo each other to show their wit. Rosalind (disguised) and Celia (Aliena) enter reading some of the verses written by Orlando. Celia wonders if Rosalind can guess the identity of the poet. When she reveals that she has seen Orlando in the woods, Rosalind is upset. She wants to see Orlando but how can she let him see her when she is dressed as a man?

Orlando and Jaques pass by the women. Jaques complains that Orlando is marring the trees with his verses, and Orlando complains that Jaques recites them in a poor manner. Both men want to be left alone.

Rosalind decides to use her disguise to speak with Orlando and tease him. When Orlando admits he is the poet who has covered the trees with his verses, Rosalind counters that he does not have the signs of a person who is lovesick. She says she can cure him of love if he will call her Rosalind and woo her every day. At first Orlando is reluctant, but then he thinks that he will have an opportunity to prove his love.

ACT III, SCENE III

Touchstone has met a simple country girl, Audrey, and woos her while Jaques, unobserved, comments on Touchstone's foolishness. Touchstone has engaged a vicar, Sir Oliver Mar-text, to wed him and Audrey in the forest. However, when Jaques questions him, Touchstone decides he's not in the mood to be married after all.

ACT III, SCENE IV

Rosalind and Celia wait on Orlando who has failed to meet them at the appointed time. Rosalind thinks he is a true lover while Celia criticizes him as false and changeable. Corin arrives to invite them to view the spectacle of his friend wooing his disdainful mistress. Rosalind goes willingly so she can see what other lovers are going through.

ACT III, SCENE V

Silvius pleads with Phebe not to be harsh with him even if she cannot find it in her heart to love him. Phebe contends that love cannot really hurt a person. Because she has never experienced what Silvius is going through, she has no pity for him.

When Rosalind upbraids Phebe for her hardheartedness, Phebe falls in love with Rosalind. Now Phebe, like Silvius, knows the hopelessness of unrequited love, so she finds his company more acceptable since he understands how she feels. Also Phebe wants him to deliver a letter to Rosalind since he knows her. Phebe pretends she doesn't love Rosalind, but she recalls details about her appearance, showing she has been deeply smitten.

ACT IV, SCENE I

Rosalind meets Jaques in the forest, and they talk about why he is so melancholy. When Orlando arrives late, Rosalind chides him but then asks him to woo her as if she were truly his Rosalind. He agrees so he can pretend to talk to his love.

Orlando says he would die if Rosalind did not love him, while Rosalind says there are no cases where anyone has died for love. Then in another mood, Rosalind calls on Celia to marry the two of them in a mock wedding. Then she wonders if Orlando will love her forever as wives are so changeable and difficult.

When Celia complains that Rosalind has abused women in her "play," Rosalind says she can't help herself. She is so deeply in love.

ACT IV, SCENE II

Jaques and the other lords sing about the deer they have killed. They place the deer's horns on the head of the hunter.

ACT IV, SCENE III

Silvius brings the note to Rosalind from his love, Phebe. He thinks it must be a nasty note, judging from Phebe's manner when writing it, but it turns out to be a complaint of love. Rosalind orders Silvius to tell Phebe that Rosalind will never love her unless Phebe loves Silvius.

Oliver comes in with a bloody handkerchief searching for Celia and Rosalind. He tells how Orlando found him sleeping beneath a tree, threatened by a snake and then a lion. Orlando recognized his brother Oliver, who had treated him so shamefully, but he couldn't leave him to be eaten alive. He fought the lion and saved Oliver. The brothers reconciled and went to the Duke where Orlando fainted from a flesh wound he had received in the fight. He sent Oliver to Celia and Rosalind to make his excuses for not keeping the meeting with them. On hearing this news, Rosalind faints.

ACT V, SCENE I

Touchstone and Audrey encounter William, Audrey's old beau. Touchstone demands that he relinquish all claims to her. Hearing Touchstone's wild speech, William is eager to get away.

ACT V, SCENE II

Oliver and Celia have fallen in love and are to be married the next day. Rosalind describes to Orlando the quick progression of stages that led them to marriage. While happy for his brother, Orlando is also heartsick that he cannot enjoy his own love. Rosalind, claiming to have magical powers, promises that Orlando also will wed his love tomorrow.

Phebe describes the state of being in love and Silvius and Orlando agree with her on every count. Rosalind promises all their needs will be fulfilled the next day and bids them to all meet together.

ACT V, SCENE III

Touchstone promises to marry Audrey tomorrow. Two pages sing a song of love.

ACT V, SCENE IV

Everyone meets together in the forest, and all promise Rosalind to fulfill their oaths to marry. While she goes out, Touchstone enters with Audrey to join the other couples.

Rosalind and Celia enter with Hymen, the god of marriage, and all the confusions are revealed and four couples agree to marry.

Jaques de Boys, the second son of Sir Rowland, arrives to announce that Duke Frederick has had a religious conversion and returned the throne to Duke Senior. This welcome news now provides a backdrop for the merriment of the wedding festivities. But Jaques decides to learn more about the Duke's conversion and so bids all well-deserved happiness. The play ends with dancing and a speech by Rosalind that the audience applaud the play according to how much they love the ladies or the men.

TEACHING PREREADING ACTIVITIES

These activities draw upon and build students' background knowledge about the themes, events, and dramatic conventions used in the play. (Note: Consult other *Teacher's Guides to Signet Classic Editions* of Shakespeare's plays; they contain ideas that can be adapted to prepare students to read this play.)

A. BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE THROUGH A PROBLEM SITUATION

By getting students to think about the story they might tell if they were writing a romantic comedy, this activity prepares students for the conventions of comedy and dramatic action that they will find in Shakespeare's play. Give students the following problem to discuss and write about in small groups:

Where do writers get ideas for romantic comedies and how do they tell a story that makes us laugh and also, at times, learn a lesson about human behavior?

Brainstorm with students the titles of popular situation comedies on TV that have a strong romantic interest and have them choose their favorite from the list. Then ask students to imagine that they have been asked to write the next episode for this series. They will be paid a hundred thousand dollars if they write a funny and interesting script.

In small groups brainstorm possibilities for a script. After discussing the various choices, select one idea or story line and outline the plot. Each group should make a list including: who are the characters; what will happen; what is the conflict; what complications must be resolved; how will the conflict be resolved; what will be the overall feeling at the end of the story; what will the characters learn; how will they change or be changed by the events; what will the audience learn from observing the characters in action?

Make a story board, a series of sketches, with four to six scenes from the plot showing key episodes in the action. Each group will use the story board to outline the action for the class. The class can vote on their favorite story, telling what they liked about the plot, characters, or themes.

B. BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE THROUGH INTERNET SEARCHES

The Internet offers a variety of resources for building background knowledge as preparation for reading Shakespeare's plays. One of the best sites to start with is Terry Gray's Mr. William Shakespeare and the Internet (<http://daphne.palomar.edu/shakespeare/>). The site offers "a complete annotated guide to the scholarly Shakespeare resources available on Internet." It includes links to Shakespeare's works, his life and times, theater, criticism, Renaissance studies, and teaching sites with activities and lesson plans. One category named "Other" also includes a variety of links which have resources that might be appealing to high school students, such as sites to send personalized Shakespearian greeting cards. The activities suggested here mainly draw upon links referenced in Mr. Gray's site.

PREREADING ACTIVITIES:

1. An enjoyable way to get students in the mood to study Shakespeare is to have them send sonnets to each other. At Blue Mountain Arts (<http://www1.bluemountain.com/eng/shakespeare/index.html>), students can read about Shakespeare's sonnets and send a sonnet electronically with music in a personalized greeting card.
2. To introduce students to Shakespeare's life and times, have them consult the Summary Diagram of his timeline, A Shakespeare Timeline (<http://daphne.palomar.edu/shakespeare/timeline/timeline.htm>), which relates events in Shakespeare's life with other historical and literary events. Students can choose one of the events in his life, place it in its historical context, and then gather details by following the relevant link on the timeline. Again, students can present these results either as written or verbal reports.
3. Develop background knowledge somewhat painlessly by having students take the quiz on Shakespeare and read the answers and related material at Are You Shakespearied? (<http://www.smsu.edu/English/eirc/shpag.html>). Students could then be asked to orally report on a question and answer to the class. Quiz questions and background material include topics such as Shakespeare's language, his popularity, and the use of terms in some of his plays.
4. Many resources are available to explore Shakespeare's language:
 - a. Assign students to practice pronunciation of Shakespearian English using the audio drills located at Proper Elizabethan Accents (<http://www.renfaire.com/Language/index.html>). This site also indicates common vocabulary words and forms of address.
 - b. Have students compare Old English, Middle English, and Shakespearian English at Are You Shakespearied? (<http://www.smsu.edu/English/eirc/shpag.html>). Then have them listen to how Shakespearian English was pronounced at Shakespeare Audio's (<http://home.wxs.nl/~hoeve955/shakespeare.html>) as they follow along in the text with Jacques' All the World's a Stage speech (2.7.140-166).
 - c. Once students are aware of some of the unique features of Shakespearian English, assign them to look for differences between Shakespearian usage and modern English as they read the first act of the play.
5. To get students to think about how Shakespeare's plays were produced, have them study the design of the Old Globe Theater at Shakespeare and the Globe (<http://www.rdg.ac.uk/globe/>). Discuss with students how this design would affect the sets and how speeches were delivered. Have the artistically inclined construct drawings or actual models of the Globe based on the pictures and plans at this web site.

C. STUDYING GENRE: CHARACTERISTICS OF SHAKESPEARIAN COMEDIES

1. Since *As You Like It* is unlikely to be the first Shakespearian play students will read, spend some time reviewing the other plays students know. In small groups have students list titles of Shakespearean plays they remember. Ask them to organize them according to categories: tragedy, comedy, history, other. Have students develop a definition for each type of play based on what they remember about the plays they have listed. List the key characteristics of each type of play. If students have listed a play that doesn't fit one of these categories, what elements of each does it contain? What might they call one of these hybrid plays? Refer students to p. xvii of the Signet Classic edition for a complete listing of Shakespeare's plays.
2. Show clips from at least two movie versions of Shakespeare's plays, one a comedy and one a tragedy; for example, *Taming of the Shrew* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Ask students to identify the characteristics of comedy and tragedy based on the action and language in these films. Ask students to free write and then discuss how comedy and tragedy are different, especially in the overall mood and impact of the play.

3. To prepare to read the play and imagine the actions which could accompany the script, ask students to read the description and examine the picture of an Elizabethan theater on pp. xxvi--xxxiii. As a project, students could prepare a model or a poster-sized drawing of the theater. Groups of students could be assigned the first two scenes of the play. Keeping in mind the design of the stage and the limitations of lighting and space, students should work out the placement of the actors for the scene. How will they avoid having an empty stage or having actors bump into each other? Where will exits and entrances occur? What characters will be on stage? Would they have more characters than the ones who have speaking roles? What visual elements would they use to catch and keep the audience's attention?
4. Show clips from several popular TV situation comedies. Ask students to identify the plot, character, and theme in each of these shows. Discuss what common conventions writers tend to use when writing comedy, such as mistaken identity, disguise, complications arising when characters do not know important information. Students could be assigned to watch a complete TV show of 30 minutes for homework and to bring a list to class of what they observed the next day. In class organize their observations according to conventions used by writers for plot, characters, themes.
5. Some students might want to read "The Source of *As You Like It*" to discover how Shakespeare used and changed his sources to create a comedy. Students should read the essay on pp. 107-110 and make two lists: The Source and Shakespeare's adaptation. Discuss why Shakespeare changed the original. What were his motives? What effect was he striving to create? Make and display a chart of students' responses. As students read the play, return to their speculations about the impact Shakespeare is seeking. They can revise their ideas according to the new information they learn as they read the play.

D. INITIAL EXPLORATION OF THEMES

Nature of Love

1. Have students think about their ideal love relationship.

Have them write the word "love" in the center of a circle and then brainstorm all the qualities of love on lines going out from the circle. This is called a cluster web or a visual web. Next have students create a class web about love; remind them to think about all kinds of experiences of love--such as love between parents/children, friends, husband/wife, boyfriend/girlfriend.

Ask students to write a two or three sentence description of true love on large index cards. Post these on a "True Love" bulletin board.

Bring in two weeks' worth of newspapers. Have pairs of students go through the papers to find examples of "true love" in the stories and columns. Have small groups of four share their stories and choose one story to share with the class. These clippings can be pasted on construction paper and added to the bulletin board. Student's definitions of love and the newspaper stories can be used as a touchstone by which to judge the character's actions in the play.

2. Who are famous lovers in history? Give students a list of famous historical lovers: Antony and Cleopatra, Napoleon and Josephine, Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh, Heloise and Peter Abelard, Elizabeth and Robert Browning. Send students on a Web search to get the main facts about the biographies of each pair of lovers and what happened in their relationship. Ask students to draw a picture of the couple with captions that best explain their relationship.
3. Who are famous literary lovers? Give students a list of famous lovers from literature: Dido and Aeneas, Penelope and Odysseus, Tristan and Isolt, Romeo and Juliet, Troilus and Cressida, Jane Eyre and Rochester, Heathcliff and Catherine (teachers should add other pairs of lovers that students may have encountered in the literature curriculum). Send students on a web search to identify the lovers and their story. Ask students to draw a picture of the lovers with a caption that explains their relationship.

After completing numbers 2 and 3, ask students to list the characteristics of each love relationship. Compare notes as a group and describe two or three different types of love that are presented by the stories of the love relationships of both historical and literary persons.

4. Read one of the courtly love romances: a story from King Arthur's court by Chretien de Troyes or the *Lais* of Marie de France which explore the relationship between a lady and her lover. "Guigemar" is a good example from Marie de France in which the lover moves from a disdain for love through a recognition of its power, eventually forming a loving relationship with the woman. (*The Lais of Marie de France*. Trans. by Glyn S. Burgess and Keith Busby, Penguin Classics.) Students can analyze the nature of love presented in the story, distinguishing between romantic and real love. They can identify conventions of love stories that continue to be used in popular media to tell love stories today.
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5. Explore Shakespeare's ideas about love by reading several of his love sonnets, such as 22, 25, and 116. Sonnet 147 presents a darker view of love. Students can contrast the view of love in sonnets 116 and 147 as a prereading activity and then look for these various views of love as they read the play.

Nature versus Fortune

1. Give students a copy of these lines spoken by Orlando from the opening scene of the play:

...he [Oliver, his older brother] keeps me rustically at home or, to speak more properly, stays me here at home unkept; for call you that keeping for a gentleman of my birth that differs not from the stalling of an ox? His horses are bred better, for, besides that they are fair with their feeding, they are taught their manage, and to that end riders dearly hired; but I, his brother, gain nothing under him but growth.... (Act I, i, 6-14).

Ask students to write freely about Orlando's complaint. What is he saying? Why is he upset? After students write, discuss the lines as a class. What expectations does Orlando have about the type of education which he deserves? What does he imply about his nature as a gentleman? What does he think is the difference between himself and men who are not born as gentlemen? This discussion may lead to a study of the social history of Elizabethan England. *The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare: An Introduction with Documents* (1996), by Russ McDonald, offers primary documents describing family life and social structure of the time. Choose several excerpts that describe the social class system. Compare these writings to what Orlando has to say about his station in life.

2. Is the idea popular today that people are born with a certain fixed nature and no amount of education will change the person? Brainstorm in groups of three common assumptions about the relative importance of nature (birth and social class) versus education. This exercise may lead to a discussion of the purpose of education. In what ways do schools prepare students for life in society? How do schools work to instill common behaviors and values? Do public schools eliminate social class distinctions? This discussion may go in several directions depending on the background and interest of students. Tie this discussion into the play, by asking students why Orlando is upset that Oliver has not sent him to school and is not preparing him for his role in society?

Disguise

1. When Rosalind and Celia run away to the Forest of Arden, they decide they must go in disguise in order to protect themselves. Brainstorm with students all the possible uses of disguise. Then make a second list of the positive and negative effects of using disguise. Ask students: what can you do in disguise that you cannot do in your real appearance? When is disguise useful; when is it devious?
2. Think about some famous examples of the use of disguise. Students may be familiar with several examples from literature, such as when Odysseus disguised himself as a beggar when he returns to his home to confront the suitors who have been abusing the hospitality of his home or when Huck Finn dresses as a girl to hide his identity. Students can also think about popular action characters such as Batman, Wonder Woman, Superman, or Zorro. Why does a person use disguise? What does he/she gain? What are the dangers of disguise?

Woman's Nature

1. There are descriptions of the nature of women throughout the play spoken by both the female and male characters suggesting there is an essential difference between the two genders. To explore students' ideas ask them to free write on this topic: is there an essential difference between men and women? What is the nature of this difference? If there isn't a difference, why is it commonly assumed that there is a difference? After writing, have a general discussion about gender expectations. Ask students to speculate where and why some expectations emerged. For instance, when do students think the idea emerged that women couldn't work as hard as men? How much work did a woman do in the middle ages, during the industrial revolution, in modern America? Is there an idea that upper class women are less strong than lower class women? What do these notions tell us about how social class and concepts of human nature are intertwined?
2. Read the section from *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1929) in which she imagines that Shakespeare has a talented sister, named Judith, who also wants to see the world and use her talents. Then discuss what were the expectations and possibilities for women in the Elizabethan age? Consider if you were a daughter of a noble family in the sixteenth century. Would you receive a university education? What were your life expectations? What if you didn't want to do what was expected? What choices did you have?

Court Life Versus Natural Life

1. Engage students in creative imaging. Ask them to close their eyes or simply to focus and relax. Here is a possible script to use: You are going back in time to 1590. You are living in a manor house in the English countryside, about twenty miles from London where the Queen is in court. Your father is a nobleman, and he plans to take you to the court to meet the queen and other nobles. You have heard your father talk about the court, and you are excited to see it for yourself. You wake to hear the morning birds and are greeted by your personal maid who helps you dress in your finest clothing. You begin to think about the day ahead. What will you do or say when you get to the court? Who do you think you will meet? Suddenly your father calls you to join him for breakfast so you can start on the journey. Describe what you saw in your daydream.

Ask students to share their impressions of court life. What ideas do they have about court life in the sixteenth century? Write their ideas on chart paper.

Then show a clip from *Shakespeare in Love* where the young woman goes to the court to be introduced to Queen Elizabeth and meet her future husband. After viewing the film, ask students to add to their chart. Discuss how the lives of common people would differ from the lives of the aristocrats. Discuss why Shakespeare focuses on the lives of the well-to-do in his plays? Do playwrights today focus on the same social class?

2. Think about the political arena today. What do you think it is like to be in politics? If you were in the Senate or House of Representatives, what would be some of your activities? How would your life be different from that of other citizens? What might happen to your thinking as a result of living in the capital? Would it be important to return to your home district from time to time? Why?
3. Consider the advantages of living in a city versus the advantages of living in the country. With a partner label two columns and make a list of the benefits of each type of life. Then as a group discuss what type of life you would prefer if you could make a choice and why.
4. Read the selection from Henry Thoreau's *Walden* where he describes leaving the town for the country. What were his reasons for choosing to live in the country? Why did he think the benefits of country living would outweigh the benefits of city life?

E. STUDYING SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE

1. Blank Verse

Although Shakespeare often used couplets, he more frequently employed unrhymed blank verse, a regular pattern of unstressed and stressed syllables. Say aloud the ten syllables that follow, stressing each "dah": da DAH da DAH da DAH da DAH da DAH. (In order to create this pattern, Shakespeare had to carefully consider the placement of each stress in the line. He would have to rearrange words in order to achieve the regular pattern of unstressed and stressed syllables that he desired.)

Read the section on poetry in "Shakespeare: An Overview" by Sylvan Barnet (pp. xl-xliii). In this section Barnet shows how Shakespeare uses blank verse with variations. After reading and discussing this section, find examples of blank verse that use the five different techniques Barnet describes.

2. Syntax

Some difficulties with Shakespearean language stem from the complex syntax used to create poetic effects. Choose some lines from the play. Rearrange the words to more usual word order and take the embedded phrases and clauses and turn them into simple sentences. Add, change, or omit some of the words. For example:

Act I, i, 4-6

Orlando: My brother Jaques he keeps at school, and report speaks goldenly of his profit.

Act I, i, 124-126

Charles: Your brother is but young and tender, and for your love I would be loath to foil him, as I must for my own honor if he come in.

3. Lyric songs

Since lovers often express their feelings in lyrics, this play has many examples of songs and verses written in honor of love.

Look at these examples. Notice the refrains, use of repetition, and contrived rhymes. Examples are: Act II, v, 1-7; Act II, v, 34-40; Act II, vii, 174-190; Act III, ii, 88-95. Then look at counter-examples, the poetry of the melancholy Jaques and the fool Touchstone: Act II, 5, 45-51 and Act III, ii, 100-112. Compare two of these poems to see how the parody uses the same poetic elements. Explain what causes the different effects in the two types of poems.

4. Repartee

Jaques and Touchstone engage in clever wordplay which entertains their listeners as they teach them to examine their foolish notions. Examine several of these speeches to identify the use of repetition, puns, and connotation vs. denotation.

For example, what is Touchstone's meaning in his conversation with the shepherd Corin? Does he like the rural life or not? What is Shakespeare's message to his audience?

Touchstone: "Truly, shepherd, in respect of itself, it is a good life; but in respect that it is a shepherd's life, it is naught. In respect that it is solitary, I like it very well; but in respect that it is private, it is a very vile life. Now in respect it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in respect it is not in the court, it is tedious. As it is a spare life, look you, it fits my humor well; but as there is no more plenty in it, it goes much against my stomach." (III, ii, 13-21)

Examine the encounter between Rosalind and Jaques in Act 4, scene i. Does Jaques successfully defend his decision to live as a melancholy person or does Rosalind outwit him? What is your reaction to Jaques' speech:

"I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation, nor the musician's, which is fantastical; nor the courtier's, which is proud; nor the soldier's, which is ambitious; nor the lawyer's, which is politic; nor the lady's, which is nice; nor the lover's, which is all these: but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness." (IV, i, 10-19)

DURING READING ACTIVITIES

These activities and reader response prompts will elicit students' initial responses to reading the play and lead to more in-depth analysis of the themes and ideas explored in the prereading activities.

A. GETTING DOWN INITIAL REACTIONS

1. As students read each scene, have them make a list of what they learn about each main character and also what they would like to learn. Write these lists on large chart paper which can be displayed in the room. Use these lists daily to review what has happened, to add information, and to make connections to what they learn about the characters.
2. Using the prereading activity about the nature of love, create a chart to describe the behaviors of love displayed by each lover in the play. As a gathering strategy each day, ask the class to add to the list, based on their reading of the latest scenes. What generalizations can they begin to make about Shakespeare's idea of true love?

B. READER RESPONSE

Students need to have the opportunity to express their initial reactions to the reading, based on their personal experiences and understanding of what they have read. Reader response writing prompts encourage this type of personal, subjective response to the reading. Use open-ended questions, such as, describe your response to the scene or what do you know about Rosalind? Ask students to choose the most important line in the section and explain why they consider it important. Or choose a quotation and explain what it means to them. Tell students to write freely for three to five minutes about ideas the quotation brings to mind. Have students share their responses in pairs and then invite reactions as a way to start a whole-class discussion.

The following quotations may lead to rich responses:

Act I

1. "The courtesy of nations allows you my better in that you are first born, but the same tradition takes not away my blood were

there twenty brothers betwixt us. I have as much of my father
in me as you...." (I, i, 44-48)

2. "They say many young gentlemen flock to him [Duke Senior] every day, and fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world." (I, i, 113-115)
3. "Let us sit and mock the good housewife Fortune from her wheel, that her gifts may henceforth be bestowed equally." (I, ii, 30-32)
4. "What passion hangs these weights upon my tongue?
I cannot speak to her [Rosalind], yet she urged conference.
(I, ii, 247-248)

Act II

1. "Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?" (II, i, 4-5)
2. "Thou art not for the fashion of these times,
When none will sweat but for promotion,
And having that, do choke their service up
Even with the having..." (II, iii, 59-62)
3. "We that are true lovers run into strange capers; but as all is mortal in nature, so is all nature in love mortal in folly."
(II, iv, 51-54)
4. "When I did hear
The motley fool thus moral on the time,
My lungs began to crow like chanticleer
That fools should be so deep contemplative...." (II, vii, 28-31)
5. "All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages." (II, vii, 139-143)

Act III

1. "O Rosalind! These trees shall be my books,
And in their barks my thoughts I'll character,
That every eye which in this forest looks
Shall see thy virtue witnessed everywhere." (III, ii, 5-8)
2. "Time travels in divers paces with divers persons. I'll tell you
who Time ambles withal, who Time trots withal, who Time
gallops withal, and who he stands still withal." (III, ii, 304-307)
3. "Love is merely a madness, and...deserves as well a dark
house and a whip as madmen do; and the reason why they are
not so punished and cured is that the lunacy is so ordinary
that the whippers are in love too." (III, ii, 391-395)
4. "Thou tell'st me there is murder in mine eye:
'Tis pretty, sure, and very probable
That eyes, that are the frail'st and softest things,
Who shut their coward gates on atomies,
Should be called tyrants, butchers, murderers." (III, v, 10-14)

Act IV

1. "The poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this
-

time there was not any man died in his own person...in a love cause." (IV, i, 89-92)

2. "Men are April when they woo, December when they wed. Maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives." (IV, i, 140-142)
3. "Twice did he turn his back and purposed so;
But kindness, nobler ever than revenge,
And nature, stronger than his just occasion,
Made him give battle to the lioness,
Who quickly fell before him." (IV, iii, 128-132)

Act V

1. "...for your brother and my sister no sooner met but they looked; no sooner looked but they loved; no sooner loved but they sighed; no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason; no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy: and in these degrees have they made a pair of stairs to marriage...." (V, ii, 31-37)
2. What is love? "It is to be all made of fantasy,
All made of passion, and all made of wishes,
All adoration, duty, and observance,
All humbleness, all patience, and impatience,
All purity, all trial, all observance" (V, ii, 93-97)
3. "Here's eight that must take hands
To join in Hymen's bands,
If truth holds true contents." (V, iv, 128-130)

C. STRATEGIES TO BUILD STUDENTS' DRAMATIC PRESENTATION SKILLS

Drama is useful in teaching oral development because it encourages the combination of spoken language and kinesthetic body movement which affects small group interactions and public speaking. Drama also promotes imagination and the ability to make connections between the ideas in the play and the students' everyday experiences. However, be prepared for disappointing results if you simply ask students to "act out" a scene without any preparation. Students are often uncomfortable or too embarrassed to vary their voices, make gestures, or move about the classroom. Dramatic presentation skills must be taught, just like other reading, writing, and listening skills. Students need to be eased into dramatic presentations. It is better to start with small scenes and more limited actions. Students will gain confidence and a comfort level which will enable them to risk more detailed dramatic presentations. Following are a list of teaching strategies which can be used to build speaking and acting skills:

1. Reading for meaning

One student reads several lines of a character; another says what the character "really" means.

Ex. Rosalind's speech, Act V, scene ii, 62-68

"If you do love Rosalind so near the heart as your gesture cries it out, when your brother marries Aliena shall you marry her. I know into what straits of fortune she is driven; and it is not impossible to me, if it appear not inconvenient to you, to set her before your eyes tomorrow, human as she is, and without any danger."

Rosalind is really speaking for herself. She is in a difficult situation, pretending to be a man and the mock lover of Orlando. It's time for the truth to come out. Since Orlando shows that he loves her, she will reveal herself at the wedding tomorrow.

2. Reading for dramatic action

One student reads the lines of a particular scene or part of a scene while members of the group pose as specific characters and perform the actions that give more meaning to the words. Students need time to plan this activity by reading the lines together and deciding on the best actions to convey the meanings of the lines. Try any of the scenes involving Rosalind and Orlando.

3. Slide show

Students choose four key moments in a scene or part of a scene. They plan a fixed tableau to present each moment and then present the scenes in succession to the class. Each time they switch positions, they call out "switch." Students close their eyes until the actors call out "open." This happens four times in succession creating a visual "slide show."

4. Interview

One student interviews another student who poses as a character in the play. The actor must assume the role fully, so that he/she responds as the character would, given the character's actions and speeches in the play.

5. Tug of War as Characters

Two characters argue about a decision or conflict in the play. Each character is represented by a student who reads the character's lines with appropriate emotion and emphasis while pulling an imaginative rope toward him/her in pantomime. This encourages kinesthetic exercise and movement. The opposite student in the argument then does the same, pulling the rope toward him/her.

6. Monologue

In character, a student describes a particular locale in the play. The character should talk about the best/worst thing about living in this particular place. The character talks about his/her daily life and describes relationships to other characters.

D. GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING DRAMA

1. Read speeches out loud to model to students how pauses, actions, and gestures add meaning to the words.
2. Encourage students to see action with the dialogue. Ask students to go through a scene, describing what they think the characters are doing while they speak. Consider how actions add meaning to the words and how words add meaning to the actions.
3. Explain and model inflections and subtle voice changes to show how they affect how the lines of the play are interpreted by the audience.
4. Encourage students to read plays aloud by giving them time to read short sections of scenes in pairs and small groups. This shows how important it is to hear the speech of characters in order to begin to understand their behavior and thinking.

E. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Students' personal responses to the play can be deepened through small group and whole-class discussion. The goal of discussion is not to summarize the plot, but to try to understand connections between what characters say and do and their motivation and how all these actions taken together suggest Shakespeare's overall ideas about love and human relationships. You may want to use students' reader response reactions as the starting point of discussion or you may use some of the following questions to explore character, action, and theme more fully.

ACT I

1. Is Orlando justified in his quarrel with his older brother Oliver? Does Oliver owe him access to an education fitting for a gentleman?
 2. Why does Oliver plot to harm Orlando?
 3. Why is Rosalind sad? Why hasn't she left the court since her father was banished by the present Duke? Should she have left the court?
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4. Why does Orlando want to challenge Charles the wrestler?
5. How is Orlando affected when Rosalind gives him a chain to wear as a reward and token of esteem?
6. Why does Duke Frederick banish Rosalind from the court? Why does he think Celia should be glad that she is leaving?
7. What does Celia's response to her father's treatment of Rosalind show about her character? Is her love stronger than Rosalind's as she claims?

ACT II

1. How is life different in the Forest of Arden from the Court? Do you think the life in the woods is better and why? Or would you prefer to live in the court and why?
2. How do the woods change with the arrival of the Duke and his lords? How do they disturb nature? Is this right or wrong?
3. How does Adam characterize the plan of Oliver to harm his brother? How is Adam's behavior towards Orlando used as a contrast to Oliver's? What is Shakespeare telling us about the right order of relationships?
4. What are the characteristics of romantic love? How does Silvius identify himself as a romantic lover? When is love foolish? When is love true?
5. Is Rosalind truly in love with Orlando? What is her love based on? Is Orlando truly in love with Rosalind?
6. What are the seven ages of man described by Jacques in his speech? Is this description still relevant or how else should the stages of life be described? What stages has the average high school student gone through?
7. Why does the Duke offer food to Orlando? If he is not impressed with Orlando's show of force, what does move him to be generous to Orlando?

ACT III

1. How does Amiens' song at the end of the last act apply to the motivation of Duke Frederick and Oliver in the first scene of Act III?
 2. What are the truisms that the shepherd Corin tells Touchstone? What are some truisms that a modern day student might speak?
 3. If you were the director of this play, how would you direct the scene between Corin and Touchstone? Would Corin be an innocent who is all seriousness in his "wisdom," or would you have him act the role of a "smart alec" who is speaking in mockery trying to outdo Touchstone? Explain your reasons for your choice.
 4. Contrast the rhyme that Touchstone wrote about Rosalind with the one written by Orlando and read by Celia. How do the two characterizations differ?
 5. How is Orlando's view of the world different from that of Jaques (Monsieur Melancholy)?
 6. Why does Rosalind decide to "play the knave" to Orlando?
 7. When Rosalind tells Orlando that he does not look like a lover, he says that he wants to make her believe it is true. Is this why he agrees to pretend she is Rosalind and woo her even though he thinks she is a man? Are there any other possible reasons?
 8. Rosalind in the guise of a man reveals some of the ways that women differ from men. List these differences and judge whether a modern audience would consider them as true.
 9. In Touchstone's speech to Audrey, he refers to the inevitability of horns for a married man, suggesting that all wives are unfaithful. Even so, he says that it is better to be married than not. Why might he think so?
 10. How would you describe Touchstone's attraction to Audrey? Does he express romantic love or some other kind of feeling?
 11. Contrast Phebe's feeling for Silvius compared to her feeling for Rosalind disguised as Ganymede.
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ACT IV

1. Celia accuses Rosalind of misusing "our sex in your love-prate." How has Rosalind defamed women in her speeches to Orlando?
2. How does Rosalind respond to the sight of Orlando's blood? What does this say about her nature?

ACT V

1. What role does Rosalind play in her disguise as Ganymede in the uniting of Phebe and Silvius and herself with Orlando?
2. In the resolution of the play, the lovers are united in marriage, and they are restored to their rightful places in society. What does this resolution imply about nature and fortune?

AFTER READING ACTIVITIES

After reading the play and discussing various themes, students are ready to engage in activities that will deepen their interpretation, help them see connections between the play and other literary works, and provide a creative outlet.

A. DEEPENING INTERPRETATION

Having read the entire play, students are now ready to discuss the full implications of the story. This activity follows several steps that will get students to ask literal, inferential, and evaluative questions about the play.

As a focus activity, give small groups large, poster-sized copies of paintings by masters of the 17th or 18th centuries. These paintings can have any subject as long as there are two or more figures in the scene. Students, individually, answer the following questions about the painting: who are the figures and what are some facts about them you recognize by looking at the painting? What is happening in the painting? What does the painting mean?

After five minutes of free writing, students share their responses in small groups and prepare to present their ideas to the whole class. They show the painting, describe the facts about the scene in the painting, and then explain their various interpretations of the action. After each group has presented their paintings, the teacher can ask a higher level of questions, evaluative, which ask students to make judgments about the quality of the painting and the way in which the painter has presented the subject.

Next students apply these three levels of questions to a well-known fairy or folk tale, such as "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" or "Little Red Riding Hood." Review the literal details of the story and then ask inferential questions about the action: Why did Goldilocks go inside the home of the three bears? How did Goldilocks feel when she woke up and found the three bears looking at her? Also ask evaluative questions: If you were Goldilocks, would you have gone inside the empty house? Do you think Goldilocks was good or bad, and why do you think so?

Understanding the three level of questions, students are ready to apply this skill to the play. Ask students to write at least three questions at the literal, inferential, and evaluative levels. Then play the "Question Game." One student will ask a literal question. The person who answers gets to ask the next literal question, and so on through the various levels. Work through the inferential to the evaluative questions. After the discussion, students should choose one of the inferential or evaluative questions and write a response. This initial free writing could then become the basis of a longer interpretative essay about theme or character in the play.

Other Post-Reading Questions:

1. Compare Rosalind's actions when she is not disguised as a man with her actions when she is disguised as a man. In which case does she appear to be more powerful? How might you explain this?
2. List all instances of love-at-first-sight in the play. Which of these relationships have a greater chance of lasting for a long time? Explain your reasoning.
3. Jacques is a melancholy character. Identify his views about life and love that show his melancholy nature and analyze the cause of his ill humour. Is he really sad about human nature or merely putting on a pose? Identify passages that support your point of view.

B. GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

1. Create character collages by choosing a character in the play and then rereading all their speeches. Make a character map or cluster with the character's name in the middle and then a listing of physical and personality traits. Make a visual representation of the character by creating a collage from magazines and your own personal drawing. Choose a speech that your character says in the play that best represents your character's point of view or role in the action. Students can rewrite the speech in modern English or memorize it in Elizabethan English. Present the speech and your character collage to small groups or the whole class. It will be interesting for students to note different interpretations of the same character.
2. Compare one of the film versions to the text of the play. The classic 1936 British film stars Laurence Olivier as Orlando and Elisabeth Bergner as Rosalind. This film was directed by Paul Czinner. (It can be purchased from Films for the Humanities and Sciences, PO Box 2053, Princeton, NJ 08543-2053.) A more accessible film version of the play available from the same source was filmed at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival. Roberta Maxwell is Rosalind and Andrew Gillies is Orlando; John Hirsch is the director. (It can also be purchased from Magic Lamp, 1838 Washington Way, Venice, California, 90291-4704.)

There is a BBC TV Movie version from 1978 directed by Basil Coleman and a 1992 movie directed by Christine Edzard. Teachers should check local video stores and libraries to locate these and several other film versions of the play.

3. In pairs or individually, write valentines from one of the lovers in the play to their beloved. The valentines should show understanding of character motivation and can be illustrated and composed in blank verse or sonnet form.
4. Participate in a discussion group of *As You Like It* on the Internet. In small groups pose a question or two for response and also respond to other's comments or questions. Report to the class the results of the discussions. The site maintained at MIT's web page on Shakespeare is excellent as a place for students to discuss Shakespeare's plays. The URL for *As You Like It* is: <http://www-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/cgibin/commentary/get/Comedy/asyoulikeit/asyoulikeit.html>
5. A final project for student response to the play can offer students choices of media. Artistically inclined students can illustrate a scene from the play and caption it with a speech from one of the players. The musically inclined can take one of the songs and arrange it to music to present to the class. It might be fun, for example, to perform a rap on the page's song in 5.iii.15-40.

C. READING OTHER LITERATURE CONNECTED TO THE THEMES OF THE PLAY

1. Read another "marriage" comedy by Shakespeare, such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and compare the speeches of the lovers. Do they say the same things about love?
2. Read poems of Metaphysical poets, like John Donne and Andrew Marvell, on the subject of love. How do their ideas of love compare to Shakespeare's?
3. Explore the theme of romantic love in several YA novels (see the bibliography). Use a "book-pass-around" technique where students survey a book for three minutes before passing it to another student and reviewing another book. After everyone has had a chance to survey the books, students list the books they would like to read in order of preference. Reading circles should be set up according to student choices. In the circle, the group should set their reading schedule and decide how they want to read the novel: silently, orally, alternating silent and oral readings. Students respond to each section through a written response and share their reactions at the beginning or close of each reading circle. Students can also list significant quotes in a double entry journal. The quote should go on one side of the paper and an analysis of what it tells about the plot, characters, and theme should be written on the opposite side of the paper.

OTHER LITERATURE DEALING WITH ROMANTIC LOVE

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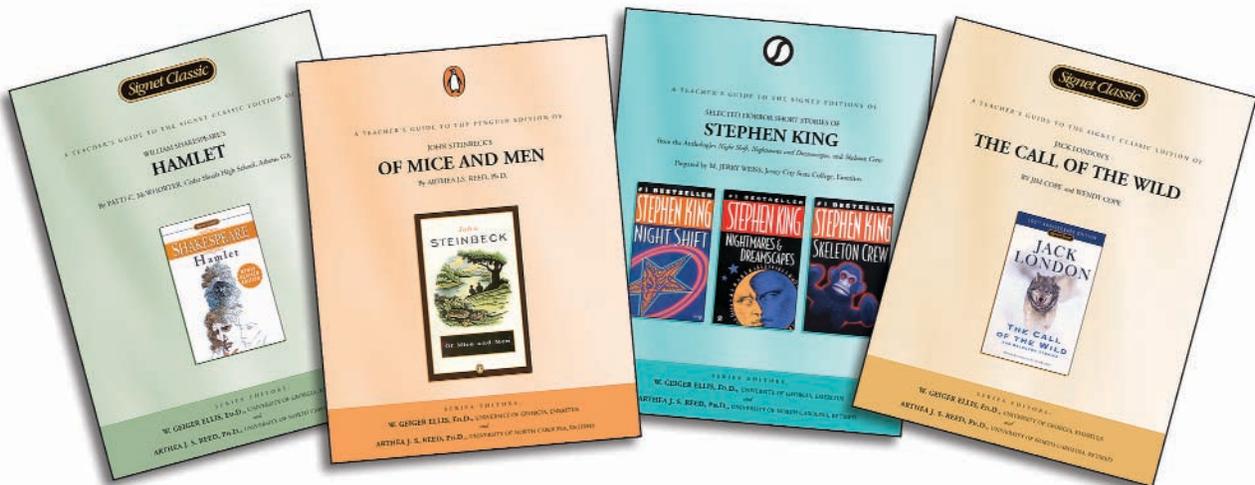
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