***Much Ado About Nothing* Study Guide**

**ACT 1**

**1.1**

1. What is Leonato’s position is Messina?

2. What does the messenger tell Leonato at the beginning of the scene?

3. What is Beatrice's relation to Leonato? What is Hero's relation to Leonato?

4. Who does Beatrice mean when she asks about Signor Mountanto? How does Beatrice describe him?

5. What is the “merry war” between Beatrice and Benedick?

6. What happens when Beatrice encounters Benedick? What does Benedick mean when he calls Beatrice,

"Lady Disdain"?

7. What does Beatrice mean when she says to Benedick, “You always end with a jade’s trick. I know you

of old” (1.1. 144-145)?

8. Where will Don Pedro (the Prince), Claudio, Benedick, and Don John stay while they are in Messina?

9. Hero enters at the beginning of the play and remains onstage until 1.1.110. How much does she have to

say? How would you describe her at this point?

10. Claudio first mentions Hero in lines 162-163: "Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior

Leonato?" What is it about her that catches his interest? Do you think he truly falls in love with her at

that moment? Why or why not?

11. What is Benedick’s response to Claudio's declaration that Hero is “…the sweetest lady that ever I

looked on" (1.1.187-188)?

12. What is Benedick's attitude toward women and marriage?

13. What does Claudio tell Don Pedro about Hero?

14. What does Don Pedro offer to do for Claudio? Why does Claudio want him to do this favor?

15. Why is it important to the play that Don Pedro (the Prince) and his men are returning from war?

**1.2**

1. Leonato's brother reports a misunderstood overheard conversation to Leonato. What does he think he

overheard? What does Leonato say he will do?

**1.3**

1. What is Don John's relation to Don Pedro (the Prince)?

2. According to Conrade, why should Don John not show his gloom for the time being?

3. How does Don John describe himself as a person? Why does Don John want to cause trouble?

4. What has Borachio overheard that he tells Don John?

5. Why does Don John want to cross Claudio?

**ACT 2**

**2.1**

1. What is Beatrice's opinion of Don John? How does she contrast him to Benedick?

2. What is Beatrice's attitude toward marriage? Quote two of Beatrice's comments that express her

opinion of marriage.

3. What do Leonato and his brother tell Hero to do at the party, and what do these instructions show about

the traditional attitudes of the time?

4. What kind of party does Leonato throw? Why is this important to the scene?

5. What is your impression of Hero from her brief conversation with Don Pedro (2.1.86-100) at the

beginning of the party?

6. Pay attention to the staging of the dance. Everyone is dancing on stage, but we hear one couple at a

time. What do Margaret and Borachio discuss?

7. What happens between Beatrice and Benedick when they dance? Does Beatrice know she is speaking

with Benedick (who is wearing a mask)? Does Benedick think she knows to whom she is speaking?

8. What sometimes happens to people when they wear masks or costumes to a party?

9. Why does Don John pretend that he does not recognize Claudio? What does Don John tell Claudio?

10. What is Claudio's reaction?

11. What is Benedick's reaction to his conversation with Beatrice?

12. When the Prince and Benedick talk, of what does Benedick accuse him? What is Don Pedro’s reply?

13. How does Benedick describe Beatrice to Don Pedro?

14. What does Beatrice tell Don Pedro about her relationship with Benedick? What does Beatrice mean

when she says, "once before he [Benedick] won it [my heart] of me with false dice" (2.1.278-282)?

15. What news does Don Pedro have for Claudio? How do Claudio, Leonato, and Hero respond?

16. How serious do you think is Don Pedro's offer of marriage (2.1.326)? What does Beatrice say to

excuse herself in case she has offended him by refusing his offer?

17. Who does Don Pedro say Beatrice would make a good wife? Do you think he is right? Why or

why not?

18. What does Don Pedro get Leonato, Claudio, and Hero to agree to do to pass the time until the

wedding?

**2.2**

1. Why did Don John's plan against Claudio fail? Why does he continue plotting?

2. What is Borachio's plan to stop the wedding of Hero and Claudio?

**2.3**

1. At the beginning of Scene 3, what is Benedick’s reaction to Claudio's engagement to Hero? What does

Benedick say has to happen before he will fall in love?

2. What is the message of Balthasar's song and how is it significant to the action of Scene 3?

3. Summarize what Don Pedro, Leonato, and Claudio say to make Benedick think that Beatrice is in love

with him.

4. How does Benedick respond to what he has overheard? How does Benedick rationalize loving

Beatrice?

5. How does Benedick react to the arrival of Beatrice? Why do you think Don Pedro's plan is working?

**ACT 3**

**3.1**

1. How does Hero seem to change when she is with the other women in this scene? Does this change your

opinion of Hero? Why or why not?

2. What does Hero tell Margaret to tell Beatrice? Summarize what Hero and Ursula say to make Beatrice

think that Benedick is in love with her.

3. How do the women describe Beatrice's behavior? Do you think she too hard on men? Why or why not? 4. Why does Hero say that she will not tell Beatrice about Benedick's love?

5. How does Beatrice respond to what she has overheard?

**3.2**

1. What change is there in Benedick when he encounters Don Pedro, Leonato, and Claudio? What excuse

does he give?

2. What changes has Benedick made to his physical appearance? Why do the men make fun of Benedick?

3. What does Don John tell Don Pedro and Claudio? What does he arrange for them to do?

4. What does Claudio say he will do if Don John's accusation is true? What will Don Pedro do?

**3.3.**

1. What does Dogberry tell his watchmen to do:

a. if a vagrant will not stop in the name of the Prince?

b. if a drunk man will not go home to bed?

c. if they encounter a thief?

2. If you were a citizen of Messina, how safe would Dogberry and his volunteer police force make you

feel? Why?

3. Give three examples of Dogberry and Verges’ malapropisms. What words do they really mean?

a.

b.

c.

4. How does this part of the scene affect the tone of the play?

5. Who does the 2nd Watchman think Deformed is? Will he able to capture Deformed? Why or why not? 6. What does Borachio say happened at Hero's window? What did Don Pedro and Claudio think they

witnessed?

7. Why do the watchman arrest Borachio and Conrade?

**3.4**

1. What is happening in this scene? How does Hero act? How does Hero feel?

2. What does Hero notice about Beatrice’s voice? What does Beatrice say is the reason? What do you

think is the real reason?

**3.5**

l. What is Dogberry trying to tell Leonato? How effective are Dogberry and Verges in getting Leonato to

understand what they have learned? Why?

2. What does Leonato tell them to do?

**ACT 4**

**4.1**

1. What happens at the wedding? What is Hero accused of doing? What do you think of the actions of

Claudio and Don Pedro? Why?

2. What is Hero's reaction to the accusation? What happens to Hero?

3. What does the importance men place on Hero's virtue tell us about women’s place in this society?

4. How supportive of Hero is Leonato at first? Summarize what Leonato says about Hero.

5. Who, perhaps surprisingly, has not left with Don Pedro, Claudio, and Don John? What is his first

reaction?

6. What does the Friar say about the accusation?

7. Who does Benedick blame?

8. What plan does the Friar offer? What is his reason?

9. Why do you think Benedick is willing to support Hero, her family, and the plan?

10. What does Benedick admit to Beatrice when they are left alone? What is her reply?

11. What does Beatrice ask Benedick to do for her to prove his love? How does Benedick respond at first?

12. What would Beatrice do if she were a man? Why is she so angry?

13. What does Benedick agree to do for Beatrice? Why does he finally agree? What does this tell about

Benedick's opinion of Beatrice? How does this contrast with the trust Claudio has in Hero?

**4.2**

1. Who are the prisoners and with what offenses are they accused of by the Watchmen? Does Dogberry

seem to understand the charges? Does the Sexton understand?

2. According to the Sexton, what has happened to Don John?

3. How does his last speech affect your understanding of Dogberry? What kind of man does he think he

is?

**ACT 5**

**5.1**

1. What are Leonato and his brother discussing at the beginning of the scene? How has Leonato's

understanding of the situation changed?

2. What does Leonato do when Don Pedro and Claudio enter? What do Leonato and his brother want to

do to Claudio? How do Claudio and Don Pedro respond to them?

3. How successful is Benedick in challenging Claudio, and how do Claudio and Don Pedro respond to

him? Do you think they should take him seriously? Why or why not?

4. What do Don Pedro and Claudio learn from Borachio? What is Claudio's reaction? What does his

reaction indicate about his love for Hero?

5. What does Claudio mean when he tells Leonato, "Yet sinned I not but in mistaking" (5.1.273-274).

6. What penance does Leonato set for Claudio? Why do you think marriage to Leonato's “niece” is part of

the bargain?

7. Whose honor, besides Hero's, has been wronged? Why do you think Leonato still wants Claudio to

believe he killed Hero?

8. What does Borachio say about Margaret's fault in the crime?

9. What is the nature of Dogberry's humor? Does he think he is funny?

**5.2**

1. What does Benedick say about his skill in writing poetry?

2. What does Beatrice ask Benedick? What is his answer?

3. What does Benedick mean when he tells Beatrice, “Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably (5.2.72).

4. What news does Ursula bring?

**5.3**

1.Describe the memorial service for Hero.

2.Where do Claudio and Don Pedro go at the end of the scene?

**5.4**

1. What instructions does Leonato give to his brother?

2. What does Benedick ask of Leonato and the friar?

3. Why is the "niece" veiled? Why must Claudio promise to marry her before he sees her face? What

happens when Claudio does make that promise?

4. How willing to Beatrice and Benedick seem to be about marrying each other? How do the others force

them to admit their love?

5. How serious do you think Beatrice and Benedick are, and how much of this is playing with the others?

6. What does Benedick now say about marriage? What does he mean by "man is a giddy thing" (5.4.108)? 7. What is Benedick's advice to Don Pedro?

8. What news does the messenger bring? What does Don Pedro say will happen to Don John?

9. What is the effect of mentioning Don John at the end of the play? What would be different about the

ending if Don John were not mentioned there?

10. What is patriarchy, and does it play a role in this play?

11. What different kinds of love are there in the play and how are they compared and contrasted in this

play?

12. Contrast Hero and Claudio's relationship with Beatrice and Benedick's relationship. Which

relationship would you rather be in? Why?