English test

Shakespeare paper: *Much Ado About Nothing*

Please read this page, but do not open the booklet until your teacher tells you to start.

Write your name, the name of your school and the title of the play you have studied on the cover of your answer booklet.

This booklet contains one task which assesses your reading and understanding of *Much Ado About Nothing* and has 18 marks.

You have **45 minutes** to complete this task.
Much Ado About Nothing

Act 1 Scene 1, lines 25 to 78
Act 2 Scene 1, lines 243 to 300

In the first extract, Beatrice talks about Benedick; in the second, she talks to Don Pedro, Leonato and Claudio.

What does Beatrice’s use of language show about her attitudes towards the different men in these extracts?

Support your ideas by referring to both of the extracts which are printed on the following pages.

18 marks
Much Ado About Nothing

Act 1 Scene 1, lines 25 to 78

In this extract, Beatrice makes mocking comments about Benedick, after she has heard the news that Don Pedro and his companions are on their way.

BEATRICE

I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returned from the wars, or no? 25

MESSENGER

I know none of that name, lady; there was none such in the army of any sort.

LEONATO

What is he that you ask for, niece?

HERO

My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua. 30

MESSENGER

O, he’s returned, and as pleasant as ever he was.

BEATRICE

He set up his bills here in Messina, and challenged Cupid at the flight; and my uncle’s fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the bird-bolt. I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he killed? For indeed I promised to eat all of his killing. 35

LEONATO

Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he’ll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

MESSENGER

He hath done good service, lady, in these wars. 40

BEATRICE

You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it. He is a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

MESSENGER

And a good soldier too, lady.

BEATRICE

And a good soldier to a lady. But what is he to a lord? 45

MESSENGER

A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stuffed with all honourable virtues.

BEATRICE

It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man. But for the stuffing – well, we are all mortal.
LEONATO You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her. They never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

BEATRICE Alas, he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

MESSENGER Is't possible?

BEATRICE Very easily possible. He wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat: it ever changes with the next block.

MESSENGER I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

BEATRICE No: an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

MESSENGER He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

BEATRICE O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease. He is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! If he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere 'a be cured.

MESSENGER I will hold friends with you, lady.

BEATRICE Do, good friend.

LEONATO You will never run mad, niece.

BEATRICE No, not till a hot January.

MESSENGER Don Pedro is approached.
Act 2 Scene 1, lines 243 to 300

In this extract, Beatrice talks light-heartedly with Don Pedro, Leonato and Claudio.

**DON PEDRO** Come, lady, come. You have lost the heart of Signior Benedick.

**BEATRICE** Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile, and I gave him use for it, a double heart for his single one. Marry, once before he won it of me with false dice: therefore your Grace may well say I have lost it.

**DON PEDRO** You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

**BEATRICE** So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

**DON PEDRO** Why, how now, Count! Wherefore are you sad?

**CLAUDIO** Not sad, my lord.

**DON PEDRO** How then? Sick?

**CLAUDIO** Neither, my lord.

**BEATRICE** The Count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

**DON PEDRO** I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won. I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained. Name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

**LEONATO** Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes. His Grace hath made the match and all grace say Amen to it!

**BEATRICE** Speak, Count, 'tis your cue.

**CLAUDIO** Silence is the perfectest herald of joy. I were but little happy, if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you and dote upon the exchange.

Turn over
BEATRICE       Speak, cousin – or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

DON PEDRO      In faith, lady, you have a merry heart. 275

BEATRICE       Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

CLAUDIO        And so she doth, cousin.

BEATRICE       Good Lord, for alliance! Thus goes everyone to the world but I, and I am sunburnt. I may sit in a corner and cry ‘Heigh-ho for a husband!’

DON PEDRO      Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEATRICE       I would rather have one of your father’s getting. Hath your Grace ne’er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

DON PEDRO      Will you have me, lady?

BEATRICE       No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days. Your Grace is too costly to wear every day. But I beseech your Grace, pardon me: I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

DON PEDRO      Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

BEATRICE       No, sure, my lord, my mother cried. But then there was a star danced, and under that was I born. Cousins, God give you joy!

LEONATO        Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

BEATRICE       I cry you mercy, uncle. (To DON PEDRO) By your Grace’s pardon. 300

Exit BEATRICE.

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