

CORSO DI LINGUA

a partire dal 27 febbraio 2023

NO FEAR OF SHAKESPEARE

SPARKNOTES EDITION OF
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
con Paul Van Gastel



In this course you'll be listening to, discussing and repeating Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, the complete play, scene by scene. We use a MODERN ENGLISH version of the original and complete play script, and we'll be dividing the parts between us. I encourage a theatrical reading with some handy tips of how to give meaning and personality to the characters. Anybody with at least a B2 intermediate level can participate. The accent in this course lies on listening, reading and speaking, and on getting a deep understanding of the play. Reading Shakespeare is fun. But also there will be ample opportunity for all to freely talk about the play and the themes we touch upon and what these mean in today's society.

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This is the second of three Shakespeare plays we're presenting, all three set in the Veneto. The third will be *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Of the three *The Merchant of Venice* is the most dramatic and most famous. The play has been rarely performed after the 2nd WW as it caricatures and stereotypes Jews and their behaviour, until its revival in the 1970s. In recent times clashes worldwide between groups of people who identify with a certain religion, ethnicity, race or country have resurged and it is remarkable how universal and timeless Shakespeare's description of the phenomenon is.

The play is neither a tragedy nor a comedy, though imbedded in the characters of Antonio and Shylock is great tragedy. It offers a wide-angle view of a 16th century society, set in Venice and the imaginary city of Belmont, where suitors come to woo the beautiful Portia. It showcases Shakespeare's in-depth depiction of the human condition, and it has a happy ending. The love stories – in particular between Bassanio and Portia, but also the other two couples – are tangible and grow throughout the play. Love, friendship and trust, but also prejudice, intolerance and hatred are the principle themes, and the usual Shakespeare tool of disguise is the springboard for the more comical scenes. The dialogues are really quite easily understood in this Sparknotes edition. You'll find yourself acting the various parts and bringing the scenes to life!

In a regular classroom interaction, I'll guide you through a first reading of the text and we'll pay careful attention that all words and meanings are clear. Then I'll split up the group in couples and threesomes who work simultaneously, and everybody can read and practice. There are five acts in total and we should manage to finish the play by the 8th meeting. During the remaining 2 meetings, students do individual presentations on a topic their own choice, followed by group discussions. For those who miss a class, don't worry; at the beginning of every lesson, we'll do a quick recap of the previous scenes in order to refresh our memory. Finally, we will also watch some scenes of famous productions of the play with subtitles.

DETTAGLI DEL CORSO:

numero di lezioni: 10

durata della lezione: 2 ore

giorno e ora: martedì ore 18:00

costo: 210 euro con tessera "visite e corsi" / 220 euro senza tessera

MODALITÀ DI ISCRIZIONE

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