

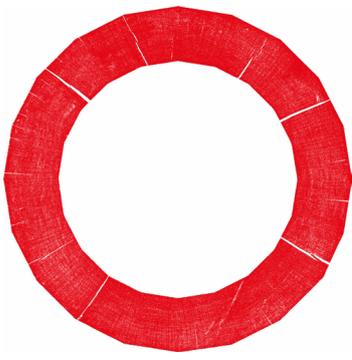
# Activities: Key Stage 3

## Verse and Prose

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To compare how verse and prose affect characterisation.

- 1) Find the article 'Verse and Prose' on the web-site. The article discusses the different ways verse and prose are used by Shakespeare in his plays. It explains that, often, prose is used for witty and amusing conversation while verse is used for more formal or ceremonial occasions.
- 2) Work in pairs or small groups. Find the section about half way through the article where it describes the differences between the way Benedick talks after the trick convincing him that Beatrice loves him with the way Beatrice talks after the trick played on her. It shows the differences in feeling between Benedick's rational words in prose with the more emotional reaction of Beatrice when she speaks in verse.
- 3) Take it in turns to speak Benedick's lines aloud. When you read it, which words do you emphasise? Why do you think this is? When you listen to your partner read it, which words stand out? Why do you think this is?
- 4) Now take it in turns to speak Beatrice's lines aloud. When you read it, which words do you emphasise? Why do you think this is? When you listen to your partner read it, which words stand out? Why do you think this is?
- 5) Now discuss the two speeches in your groups. What differences do you notice? Which words stood out in each? What effect does this have on what the audience thinks and feels about each character? Think about how the speeches highlight what each of them is feeling about the tricks played on them.



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6) Share the ways you have spoken the lines with others in the class (select how to share based on what your group would prefer; for example, you could have one person read the speech, with the other group members joining in for the words that stood out to them).

- o As you listen to other groups, consider: what similarities do you notice for each character's lines? What differences do you notice?
- o Are there more similarities in what stood out for Beatrice's lines, or Benedick's? Why might this be so?