

Activities: Key Stage 3

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1) Find the Week 4 blog by the assistant director of the play Tom Davey. In the blog Tom discusses the way the actors expect the audience of young people to take sides so that they are for or against different characters.

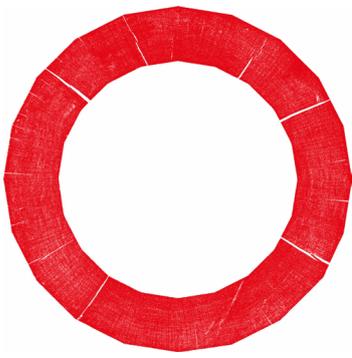
2) Work with a group of fellow students. Discuss the characters in the play and decide which ones you would expect an audience to support and which they are likely to be against.

3) For some of the characters it is likely to be obvious which side the audience will be on. For instance they are likely to feel support for Hero and against Donna Joan. However, the audience could feel some sympathy with Donna Joan because of the way she is an outsider in the world of men, overlooked for promotion and therefore understand her desire to upset Claudio's plans. Similarly, some may feel surprised and disappointed that Hero still decided to marry Claudio despite the terrible things he said to her in the abandoned wedding.

4) Draw up a chart titled 'For or Against' showing your reasons for an audience to support or be against each character. Use quotations to illustrate the reasons you identify.

5) In the case of Benedick the audience might change sides as the play goes on. In the early scenes the audience learn that he has let Beatrice down in the past so are likely to be against him but when he challenges his former best friend Claudio to a duel the audience will probably be on his side.

6) Two other characters where an audience are likely to change how they feel as the play goes on are Leonato and Borachio. Leonato accepts the Hero's guilt so easily in the wedding scene but later stands up for her and is prepared to challenge Claudio. Borachio enthusiastically leads the plan to shame Hero but later accepts all responsibility and any punishment.



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7) Share other aspects of the performance which you found to be effective or surprising. For instance, you might think about the way Claudio spoke so viciously to Hero in the wedding scene, Benedick and Beatrice's reactions to hearing that they are loved or the scenes with Dogberry and Verges.

8) Share your work with others students in the class.