

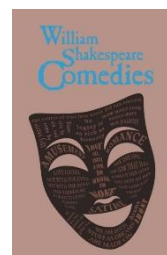


Key Stage Three English - Unit Overview

Year 7 – Summer – ‘Shakespearean comedies’

Main – Shakespearean comedies

- Resourcing – available in J: Drive – created by WA and AX (updated July 25)



Unit rationale	1. Introducing Comedy Across Time - To help students understand what makes something funny, exploring comedy from slapstick to satire to farce. - To introduce the core conventions of Shakespearean comedy—chaos, love, disguise, mistaken identity, and happy endings—so students can recognise how these tropes shape plot and character. - To build cultural capital by showing how comedic devices used today in film, TV, and theatre have deep roots in Shakespeare's work. - To develop students' ability to identify and discuss tropes and archetypes, strengthening their understanding of genre. 2. Exploring Shakespeare's Comic Worlds Through Three Plays - To expose students to a range of Shakespearean comedies—<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>, <i>Twelfth Night</i>, and <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>—so they can see how recurring ideas appear across different texts. - To explore key comedic tropes such as disguise and mistaken identity, dramatic irony, irrational love, and deception. - To study character archetypes including the fool, the lover, the tyrant/authority figure, and the outsider, building foundational knowledge for later Shakespeare study. 3. Developing Understanding of Identity, Love, and Performance - To help students explore how Shakespeare presents identity as unstable and performative, especially through disguise and role-play. - To introduce the idea of love as irrational, laying conceptual groundwork for <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> in Year 9. - To examine how conflict, pride, and misunderstanding drive comic plots and create opportunities for humour. 4. Building Drama and Performance Literacy
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	- To develop students' confidence with drama conventions, including stage directions, comedic timing, and character interaction. - To encourage students to visualise scenes, interpret character motivations, and understand how comedy works in performance. - To prepare students for future Shakespeare units by building early familiarity with dramatic structure and comedic devices.	
Assessment Teacher assessed Peer assessed	Unit outcome: Cold task: <i>Students will complete an end of year knowledge quiz showcasing their ability to revise and how the skills across the year have been strengthened.</i>	Informal assessment and low-stakes testing: - Students are to be encouraged to self and peer assess their writing throughout the unit on a regular basis. Success criteria to be made available by teachers. - Students are to use their knowledge organisers for the unit to develop core knowledge retention and learn the unit's key vocabulary in order for it to be applied independently.
Core knowledge	1. Comedy Across Time Students learn: - definitions and features of slapstick, farce, satire, and romantic comedy - how humour works through exaggeration, misunderstanding, and conflict - how Shakespeare's comedy connects to modern comedic forms 2. Shakespearean Comedy Tropes Students gain knowledge of: - disguise and mistaken identity - dramatic irony - love as irrational - deception and trickery - chaos leading to resolution - happy endings as a structural convention 3. Character Archetypes Students explore: - the fool (Bottom, Feste, Dogberry) - the lover (Hermia, Helena, Viola, Benedick, Beatrice) - the tyrant/authority figure (Egeus, Malvolio, Leonato)	

	- the outsider (Malvolio, Bottom, Don John) 4. Key Scenes and Concepts from Each Play Students learn: <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>: lovers' chaos, authority vs love, the Mechanicals, Titania and Bottom <i>Twelfth Night</i>: Viola's disguise, the love triangle, Malvolio's letter scene, comic resolution <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>: Beatrice and Benedick's "merry war", masked ball, Hero and Claudio's wedding, restored order 5. Drama Conventions Students understand: - stage directions - comedic timing - entrances/exits - asides and dramatic irony - how performance shapes meaning
Core skills	1. Language and Comedy Analysis Students develop the ability to: - analyse how Shakespeare uses language to create humour - identify puns, wordplay, and comic misunderstandings - explain how dramatic irony shapes audience response 2. Inference and Interpretation Students learn to: - infer character motives and emotions from dialogue and stage directions - interpret how disguise and deception shape identity - understand how characters perform roles for comedic effect 3. Drama and Performance Skills Students practise: - reading aloud with expression - interpreting stage directions - visualising scenes and comedic timing - understanding how performance changes meaning 4. Comparative Thinking Students develop the ability to: - compare tropes across three comedies - identify recurring character types - evaluate how different plays explore love, identity, and conflict
Key Questions for the Unit	- What defines a Shakespearean comedy? - What do Shakespeare's fools reveal about society and human behaviour? - How do authority figures create conflict in Shakespeare's comedies? - How do authority figures create conflict in Shakespeare's comedies?

Key vocabulary	Unit vocabulary - tier 2 words: 1. Reconciliation 2. Separation 3. Chaotic 4. Resolution 5. Deception 6. Noble 7. Relief 8. Enchanted 9. Besotted 10. Unrequited	2. Unit terminology: 1. Monologue 2. Genre 3. Protagonist 4. Antagonist 5. Stage directions 6. Allusion 7. Allegory 8. Connotations 9. Prologue 10. Epilogue
Homework opportunities	• Knowledge organisers to prepare for in class quizzes. • Homework booklets are set alongside the main lessons to consolidate skills across the units.	
Wider English curriculum links	• Reading – consolidating and encouraging independence with these strategies will establish the core skills needed across the curriculum, developing 'good readers.' Links to language GCSE and Romeo and Juliet. • Writing – consolidating core writing skills and writing from perspective. • Spoken language – students will engage in oracy and debates to consider links across the texts.	