“Much Ado About Nothing” Review Guide

The title is actually “Much Ado About Noting” because Shakespeare is commenting on how people “note” or notice things, and then make assumptions based on that.

Characters

Don P edro is the P rince

Don Jon is the bastard, or illegitimate brother—think J ohn / ille G itimate

B eatrice and B enedick are the reluctant, older lovers

Her O and Claudi O are the young lovers

M argaret is Hero’s chamber M aid who is in her bedroom window when the men think Hero is cheating

Leonat O is the father of Her O –he is the Governor of Messina where the story takes place

D ogberry is the constable or lawman—he is D umb but pieces together the truth before anyone else. Shakepeare may be commenting on the notion of a *wise fool* through this character.

Dogberry also uses malapropisms—words used incorrectly, i.e. lawful wedded wife, not awful wedded wife. Dogberry says auspicious when he means suspicious.

The Friar—the priest who marries the lovers. It is his idea to fake Hero’s death.

Vocabulary Terms from the play

Valiant

Skirmish

Disdain

Subdued

Transgression

Significant Quotes

“I had rather hear a dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me” (1.1.125).

Who said it?

Who or what is it about?

“If it prove so, then loving goes by haps; Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps” (3.1.106).

Who said it?

Who or what is it about?

“I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace…it must not be denied that I am a plain dealing villain” (1.3.25). Who said it?

Who or what is it about?

“She knows the heat of a luxurious bed” (4.1.40).

Who said it?

Who or what is it about?

“The world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married” (2.3.237).

Who said it?

Who or what is it about?

“Come, lady, die to live. This wedding day is but prolonged. Have patience, and endure” (4.1.253)

Who said it?

Who or what is it about?

“Oh, God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the marketplace” (4.1.131).

Who said it?

Who or what is it about?

Whose Who?

A rotten orange

Lady Disdain

Lord Lackbeard

Signor Mountanto

The Prince’s Jester