



# Year 8

## Much Ado About Nothing

### Revision Booklet



## The exam

**You will be asked to answer a question on a theme or a character.**

*Eg. Explore how Shakespeare presents Don John in Much Ado About Nothing.*

**OR**

*Explore how Shakespeare presents the theme of marriage in Much Ado About Nothing.*

## Mark Scheme

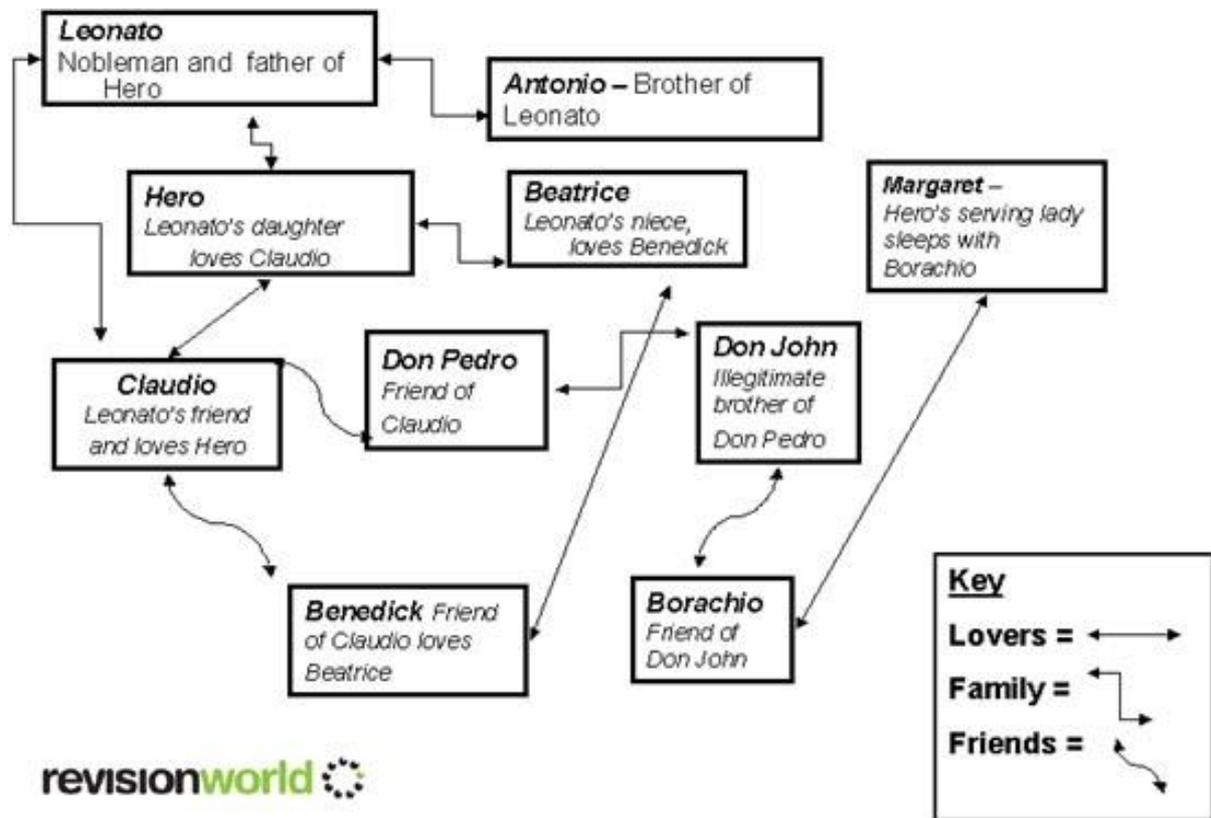
KS3 Criteria	KS3 Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The response is simple with little explanation of theme.</li><li>• There is little reference to the text.</li><li>• There is little comment made on context or its relationship to the text.</li></ul>	1-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The response may be largely narrative, with some consideration of the theme.</li><li>• Ideas are supported with reference to the text, although this may not be consistent.</li><li>• There is some comment on relevant context.</li></ul>	7-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are some clear points related to the theme.</li><li>• Ideas are supported with quotations or close reference to the text.</li><li>• There is an understanding of relevant contexts.</li><li>• There is some awareness of the relationship between text and context.</li></ul>	13-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The theme is clearly considered, with relevant points.</li><li>• Ideas are consistently supported with quotations or close reference to the text.</li><li>• There is sound understanding of relevant context and its relationship with the text.</li></ul>	20-26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The response shows a relevant personal response, soundly related to the text.</li><li>• There is an appropriate critical style, with comments showing a sound interpretation.</li><li>• The response is relevant and focused points are made with support from the text.</li><li>• There is sound comment on relevant context and sound relevant comment on the relationship between text and context.</li></ul>	27-30

Your response must include:

- An introduction
- 3-4 PQEC paragraphs
- A conclusion

## Overview of plot and characters





## Key Quotations

### Characters:

#### Don John:

- 'I am a plain-dealing villain'
- 'How tartly that gentleman looks'
- 'He is of a very melancholy disposition.'
- 'I cannot hide what I am'
- 'Only to despise them, I will endeavour anything'

#### Beatrice:

- She will not fall in love 'till God make men of some other metal than earth.'
- 'I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.'
- 'Benedick, love on; I will requite thee, Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand.'
- 'Kill Claudio!'
- "O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place."
- 'O that I were a man for his sake!'
- "I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest."

#### Benedick:

- 'I would my horse had the speed of your tongue and so good a continuer.'
- "The savage bull may, but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns and set them in my forehead, and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write 'Here is good horse to hire' let them signify under my sign 'Here you may see Benedick, the married man.'"
- 'One woman is far, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another, virtuous, yet I am well'
- "I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me because I have railed so long against marriage, but doth not the appetite alters? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age."
- 'Here comes Beatrice...she's a fair lady...If I do not love her, I am a villain'.
- 'By this hand I love thee'
- 'I cannot endure my Lady Tongue'
- "No! The world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married."
- "They say the lady is fair. 'Tis a truth, I can bear them witness. And virtuous—'tis so, I cannot reprove it. And wise, but for loving me. By my troth, it is no addition to her wit—nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her."
- "Prince, thou art sad. Get thee a wife, get thee a wife."
- "I do love nothing in the world so well as you- is not that strange?"

### Hero:

- 'Can the world buy such a jewel?' (Claudio about Hero)
- 'Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour. There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice'
- 'A rotten orange'
- 'Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it'
- 'Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps'
- "One Hero died defiled, but I do live, and surely as I live, I am a maid."

### Claudio:

- 'Not to be married, not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.'
- 'Tonight I'll mourn with Hero.'
- "Would you not swear, All you that see her, that she were a maid, these exterior shows? But she is none. She knows the heat of a luxurious bed."
- 'Give me your hand...I am your husband if you like of me.'
- 'Silence is the perfectest herald of joy'
- 'Bait the hook well; this fish will bite'

### Themes:

#### Love

- Leonato: 'You will never run mad, niece.' Beatrice: 'No, not till a hot January.' (Act 1 Scene 1)
- 'I had rather hear a dog bark at a crow than hear a man say he loves me.' Beatrice (Act 1 Scene 1)
- 'Friendship is constant in all other things save in the office and affairs of love.' Claudio (Act 2 Scene 1)
- 'She cannot love, nor take no shape nor project of affection, she is so self-endear'd.' Hero (Act 3 Scene 1)
- 'If it prove so, then loving goes by haps; Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.' Hero (Act 3 Scene 1)
- 'I do love nothing in the world so well as you. Is not that strange?' Benedick (Act 4 Scene 1)
- 'I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest.' Beatrice (Act 4 Scene 1)
- 'Sweet Hero, now thy image doth appear in the rare semblance that I loved it first.' Claudio (Act 5 Scene 1)
- 'Suffer love! ... I do suffer love indeed for I love thee against my will.' Benedick (Act 4 Scene 2)

#### Marriage

- 'I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.' Claudio (Act 1 Scene 1)
- 'Daughter, remember what I told you. If the Prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.' Leonato (Act 2 Scene 1)
- 'I would not marry her though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed.' Benedick (Act 2 Scene 1)
- 'No! The world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.' Benedick (Act 2 Scene 3)
- 'God give me joy to wear it, for my heart is exceeding heavy.' Hero (Act 3 Scene 4)
- 'Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage?' Margaret (Act 3 Scene 4)
- 'My brother hath a daughter ... Give her the right you should have giv'n her cousin, and so dies my revenge.' Leonato (Act 5 Scene 1)
- 'Friar, I must entreat thee for thy pains ... to bind me, or undo me, one of them.' Benedick (Act 5 Scene 4)
- 'Let's have a dance ere we are married, that may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels.' Benedick (Act 5 Scene 4)

### **Lies and Deceit:**

- 'I will assume thy part in some disguise and tell fair Hero I am Claudio.' Don Pedro (Act 1 Scene 1)
- 'I cannot hide what I am.' Don John (Act 1 Scene 3)
- 'This can be no trick ... Love me? Why, it must be requited!' Benedick (Act 2 Scene 3)
- 'I know not that, when he knows what I know.' Don John (Act 3 Scene 2)
- 'Of this matter is little Cupid's crafty arrow made, that only wounds by heresay.' Hero (Act 3 Scene 1)
- 'If you love her then, tomorrow wed her. But it would better fit your honour to change your mind.' Don John (Act 3 Scene 2)
- 'Call me a fool ... if this sweet lady lie not guiltless here under some biting error.' Friar Francis (Act 4 Scene 1)
- 'When I send for you, come hither masked.' Leonato (Act 5 Scene 4)
- 'The sight whereof I think you had from me, from Claudio and the prince.' Leonato (Act 5 Scene 4)

## Context

It is important that you revise and memorise key information about the time during which the play was written and set – the Elizabethan era. *Much Ado About Nothing* is a comedy by William Shakespeare about misunderstandings, love and deception.

**Features of Shakespearean comedies:** Comedy is not necessarily what a modern audience would expect comedy to be. Whilst there may be some funny moments, a Shakespearean comedy may involve some very dramatic storylines. Usually what defines a Shakespearean play as a comedy is that it has a happy ending, often involving a marriage. The main characteristics in Shakespeare's Comedies are:

1. Mistaken Identity and deception
2. Disputes between characters
3. Comic language (puns, metaphors, insults)
4. Main theme: love
5. Separation and Reconciliation.
6. Happy Endings (usually involving a marriage)

**The Elizabethan Era:** 1558-1603 this period is named after Queen Elizabeth I who reigned during this period. This is the period during which Shakespeare wrote and set the play. Also known as the Golden Age. Marriage would also be viewed as a business transaction. Elizabeth I ruled England alone. She did not marry. So although she was queen, England had no king. This was unusual at the time, and she was nick-named 'The Virgin Queen'.

**The court and the upper classes:** the upper classes were educated and could read and write. They would dress very smartly and speak in a more formal manner. Those who were associated with the royal court were known as nobleman and aristocrats.

**The watch and lower classes:** the lower classes were not educated and many would not have been able to read and write. The watch was a sort of early police force made up of the lower classes. It is debatable as to how effective they were at preventing crime.

**Women:** in the Elizabethan era were submissive and maintained a domesticated role in life. It was thought that they should speak when spoken to by men. Usually a woman would not be witty – wit would be seen as being clever and women were not educated during this era. In many ways, Beatrice is unconventional of our expectations of an Elizabethan woman. Society was patriarchal which meant that men were in charge/ dominant and women were inferior to them.

**Marriage:** Women were basically property. When they were young, they belonged to their father. When they were married they belonged to their husband. Their main job was to have children so that houses/ titles/ money could pass down the generations. Very few women could own their own property, get a job (unless they are poor and a servant) or have an education. They were expected to obey their husbands and their fathers. They

could not choose their own husbands (although many fathers wanted their daughters to be happy) as they needed to marry a rich man. A woman had to be chaste (a virgin) when she was married. If she was not, the marriage was invalid and she could be sent out on the streets. The ideal wife should be beautiful, gentle, subservient, intelligent but not domineering. When a man got married he could have children and continue his family line. A rich man could choose his wife (for love, politics, money). A poor man would marry someone he liked since it made no difference! An ambitious poor man would try to marry a wife with a dowry (the father gives the man money to marry his daughter). If a woman was the only child, the husband would inherit her father's wealth.

**Illegitimate children:** Illegitimate children, known as 'bastards', were the unlawful offspring of unmarried parents; born out of wedlock. They were looked down upon in society and would have been seen as inferior.

## Model Paragraphs

Paragraph structure:

**Point**

**Quotation** (at least 2 per paragraph)

**Explanation**

**Context**

**Explore how Shakespeare presents Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing.**

Within the opening scene of Much Ado About Nothing Shakespeare presents Beatrice as a witty character, particularly when she speaks of her war of words with Benedick. Through Beatrice's dialogue Shakespeare describes how Benedick "will hang on him like a disease: he is sooner caught than a pestilence." Shakespeare establishes for the audience Beatrice's feelings for Benedick, as she sees him as an illness or infection or a blight on her company. The back and forth insults between Beatrice and Benedick establish their relationship and establish the play as a comedy from the opening. Beatrice states, "I wonder that you will still be talking, Signor Benedick; nobody marks you." Shakespeare uses this insult to create humour for the audience within the opening of the play and establish Beatrice as an unconventional female character. During the Elizabethan era it was conventional for women to only speak when spoken to and in mocking Benedick publicly, humour is created around the character of Beatrice as she does not conform to social norms. Shakespeare establishes this relationship at the beginning of the play so that he can continue to build on this war of words throughout the rest of the play.

**Explore how Shakespeare presents the theme of marriage in Much Ado About Nothing.**

Shakespeare explores the theme of marriage through the changing attitudes to marriage of Benedick. Throughout Act one and two, Benedick repeatedly says that he will never love a woman or get married, describing how "for truly, I love none". This is evident in his exchanges with Beatrice at the beginning of the play as well as his disdain for Claudio when he reveals his love for Hero. Benedick equates Claudio's love for Hero with an absence of masculinity, commenting that Claudio is "a fool when he dedicates his behaviors to love". This challenges Elizabethan attitudes to marriage, as men were keen to view marriage as a way of continuing their family line and as a symbol of status. As the play progresses, Shakespeare shows how Benedick's attitudes to marriage change as Beatrice's love for him is revealed, "I do spy some marks of love in her." Arguably, Shakespeare is showing how Benedick's earlier refusal to marry is linked to Elizabethan ideas about masculinity and a fear of being rejected.

## Example questions:

### Character:

*Explore how Shakespeare presents **Don John's** character in Much Ado About Nothing.*

*Explore how Shakespeare presents **Beatrice's** character in Much Ado About Nothing.*

*Explore how Shakespeare presents **Benedick's** character in Much Ado About Nothing.*

*Explore how Shakespeare presents **Claudio's** character in Much Ado About Nothing.*

*Explore how Shakespeare presents **Hero's** character in Much Ado About Nothing.*

### Theme:

*Explore how Shakespeare presents **the theme of marriage** in Much Ado About Nothing.*

*Explore how Shakespeare presents **the theme of love** in Much Ado About Nothing.*

*Explore how Shakespeare presents **the theme of lies and deceit** in Much Ado About Nothing.*

## Example plan:

**Character:** Choose 3-4 ways that Shakespeare presents the character throughout the play.

**Introduction:** Introduce the play and the genre. Why has Shakespeare included a character like Don John? What is his role? How is it integral to the plot of the play?

*Don John is an integral character in Much Ado About Nothing. As a \_\_\_\_\_ [insert genre], Shakespeare includes Don John's character as a \_\_\_\_\_ [what is his role?] and uses him throughout the play to...*

**Point: How does Shakespeare present Don John's character?**

*Shakespeare presents Don John as...*

*Shakespeare uses Don John's character to explore...*

- Spiteful
- Vengeful
- Jealous
- Villainous
- Deceitful
- Dishonest

**Quotations (at least 2 in each paragraph):**

*This is shown when Don John's character says, "\_\_\_\_\_"*

*Shakespeare exemplifies this when...For example "\_\_\_\_\_"*

- Shakespeare uses the title "Don John the bastard" in the stage directions.
- "I cannot hide what I am"
- "I am a plain dealing villain"
- "let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me"
- "I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests"
- "He is enamoured on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her: she is no equal for his birth: you may / do the part of an honest man in it." (convinces Claudio that Don Pedro is in love with Hero\_
- "I am sick in displeasure to him." (about Claudio)

**Explanation and context: What do these quotations show about Don John? What is the effect on the audience? How does it link to Elizabethan society?**

*This shows that Don John's character is...*

*This exemplifies Don John's \_\_\_\_\_ nature as...*

*Don John is used to reflect Elizabethan society/attitudes towards...*

*Shakespeare uses Don John's character as...*

- Villains were a common feature of Shakespearean comedies and acted as the antagonist.
- Dramatic irony is used throughout the play so that the audience are aware of Don John's villainous plans, heightening the entertainment and the audience's disdain for his character.
- Illegitimate children, or bastards, were often seen as inferior in Elizabethan society.

**Conclusion:** Re-iterate how Shakespeare uses Don John's character throughout the play. Make a judgement – is Don John an active villain or is his evil nature a reaction to his inferior status in society.

*In conclusion, Shakespeare develops Don John's character throughout the play to act as... Arguably, Don John's character is...*

**Theme:** Choose 3-4 characters that Shakespeare uses to explore the theme.

## Planning

<b>Short introduction</b> explaining views to Elizabethan marriage.	
<b>PQE 1-</b> Claudio's view on marriage	
<b>PQE 2-</b> Benedick's view on marriage	
<b>PQE 3-</b> Beatrice's view on marriage.	
<b>Conclusion-</b> Why do you think Shakespeare presents so many different views on marriage. How does it set up the story?	