

## Disguise and Misdirection in Comedic Literature

Norina S. Terry  
Bellaire High School

### INTRODUCTION

This unit on disguise and misdirection in comedy explores the courage characters in literature attain and make use of to pursue and achieve their purpose. High school life presents a similar scenario where students are emboldened when they are behind a created or developed persona. Maintaining given expectations and a hardened mask-like exterior or image among peers and classmates is a pressure to my ninth grade students at Bellaire High School. Every day they are confronted by the same dilemma and confusion without ever finding a solution lest they make several mistakes from which they draw new knowledge to deal with their forced quandary. Their attempts at disguise and misdirection are for the sole purpose of being accepted into a society only teenagers understand. Tales of disguises and mistaken identities, such as *The Twelfth Night or What You Will* by William Shakespeare and *The Prince and the Pauper* by Mark Twain, may help students look at life in a capsule and realize that there are options to live a truthful life rather than seek to hide behind an imaginary avatar, for instance. The avatar is one of the latest crazes among teenagers and adults alike on the Web, where a player may disguise himself as another character normally acting as an alter ego. The assumed character not only disguises his true identity, but also oftentimes misdirects those who come in contact with the character, leading the “blind” to the assumed personality.

### Disguise and Misdirection

Disguise causes misdirection, and misdirection is often done within a disguise. These two elements take part in comedy where it “sets up the audience in the general exhilaration, because it presents the very image of ‘livingness’ ” (Langer 348). Disguise is a strategy to camouflage what is real in either appearance or intent. This comedic strategy is used to get the reader or the audience to look at the wrong issue, person, or place simultaneously with the deception. According to Ben Robinson in his online article entitled “Misdirection,” the appropriate time to misdirect the mind is when it is “engaged [with a] magic [that is] plausible.” For misdirection to work, the illusion has to “grab the intellect...and capture the imagination” (Robinson). In *Twelfth Night or What You Will*, Viola used her disguise as the illusion she creates to misdirect Orsino from seeing that she is in fact a woman and not a man.

Misdirection is such an interesting concept in the political arena and in magic. In political misdirection, key players disguise their real interests and misdirect societal notions as an end to their means. Likewise, magicians prove that having that advantage to trick with the speed of hand motion against their audience’s keen observation skills can seal both an audience’s attention and its economic contribution. Disguise and misdirection are oftentimes used to escape death, slavery, and opposition as in the movie *The Illusionist*. As applicable as they are in the trappings of politics and the world of magical entertainment, this strategic tandem find their roots in literature.

### OBJECTIVES

#### TEKS 110.42.b

(1) Writing/purposes. The student writes in a variety of forms, including business, personal, literary, and persuasive texts, for various audiences and purposes. The student is expected to do the following:

(A) Write in a variety of forms using effective word choice, structure, and sentence forms with emphasis on organizing logical arguments with clearly related definitions, theses, and evidence; write persuasively; write to report and describe; and write poems, plays, and stories;

(C) Organize ideas in writing to ensure coherence, logical progression, and support for ideas.

(6) Reading/word identification/vocabulary development. The student uses a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words and to build vocabulary. The student is expected to:

(A) Expand vocabulary through wide reading, listening, and discussing;

(B) Rely on context to determine meanings of words and phrases such as figurative language, idioms, multiple meaning words, and technical vocabulary;

(E) Use reference material such as glossary, dictionary, thesaurus, and available technology to determine precise meanings and usage; and

(F) Identify the relation of word meanings in analogies, homonyms, synonyms/antonyms, and connotation/denotation.

(7) Reading/comprehension. The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies.

The student is expected to:

(B) Draw upon his/her own background to provide connection to texts;

(C) Monitor reading strategies and modify them when understanding breaks down such as rereading, using resources, and questioning;

(E) Analyze text structures such as compare and contrast, cause and effect, and chronological ordering;

(F) Identify main ideas and their supporting details;

(G) Summarize texts;

(H) Draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text;

(I) Use study strategies such as skimming and scanning, note taking, outlining, and using study-guide questions to better understand texts; and

(J) Read silently with comprehension for a sustained period.

(8) Reading/variety of texts. The student reads extensively and intensively for different purposes in varied sources, including world literature. The student is expected to:

(C) Read world literature, including classic and contemporary works.

(19) Viewing/representing/interpretation. The student understands and interprets visual representations. The student is expected to:

(B) Analyze relationships, ideas, and cultures as represented in various media; and

(C) Distinguish the purposes of various media forms such as informative texts, entertaining texts, and advertisements.

(20) Viewing/representing/analysis. The student analyzes and critiques the significance of visual representations. The student is expected to:

(D) Recognize how visual and sound techniques or design convey messages in media such as special effects, editing, camera angles, reaction shots, sequencing, and music.

## **RATIONALE**

Comedy is an outlet for anxiety, culled inner thoughts, and pain for most people of varying ages. Even in the most mundane event or situation, people always find something humorous to talk about to ease tension within a crowd or small groups of people. Students, most especially in high school, have found comedy a relief from a hectic day at school, at home, or at work. They identify with comedy or comic instances because they are able to express themselves without prior thinking or inhibition. They do not expect to get in trouble for a joke. Moreover, they find freedom in speech or comic deliveries when they have an assumed identity or if they are able to

cleverly disguise their true intentions behind humorous antics or comments. Some students become more confident and daring in their relationships and dealings when they know they can hide behind an armor of made-up individuality. This unit, with the help of the readings, will trace the roots that tie them to disguises and misdirection. Why do students have to hide who they are? Why do they need to create an identity and misdirect others into believing what they are not? Why do people in general try to run away from who they really are? Hopefully, looking at the motives that drove the characters in *Twelfth Night or What You Will* and *The Prince and Pauper*, we should be able to arrive at conclusive observations that deal with this very human condition of disguise and misdirection and explain the reasons behind man-made masks.

## UNIT BACKGROUND

### **Disguise and Misdirection in *Twelfth Night or What You Will* and *The Prince and the Pauper***

Disguise and misdirection play an important role in novels, poems, essays, or plays that deal with espionage, warfare, love and romance, fantasy, and even suspense thrillers. No genre is safe. William Shakespeare is one of the chief proponents of the idea of concealment and misrepresentation, although some may argue that his portrayals are not his original ideas. Many of his plays, both comedy and tragedy, have plot lines that have the main characters deceive each other whether deliberately or not towards their desired goals. As mentioned, *Twelfth Night or What You Will* and *Comedy of Errors* are two Shakespearean plays that portray camouflaged identities. Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* focuses on mistaken identity that is the direct consequence of a disguise and misdirection. Under the guise of a man named Cesario, Viola misdirects the affection of Olivia towards the assumed identity and makes another, Orsino, trust in him who is her pretending to be him. Within this situation that becomes totally confusing to the audience, who, ironically, at that time of Shakespearean theater, is aware that the actor playing the girl, Viola, is in reality a man playing a woman playing a man, the conflict takes place "between the appearance and the reality [that is] not totally realized" (Kiryakakis). Such an ironic event is an example of dramatic irony in Shakespearean theater in those days when all roles used to be played by men, and the mistaken identity is enjoyed by the audience alone, perplexed or not, who has the knowledge about something the actors or characters in the play do not. Thus, the disguise that starts with the assumption of a role by a male actor "heighten[s] irony, develop[s] theme, and enhance[s] subtle comic innuendos" (Kiryakakis).

In Mark Twain's *Prince and the Pauper*, the disguise introduced at the beginning of the novel when the prince and the pauper exchange identities turns into a classic misdirection when everyone just assumes that the "bogus" prince is indeed the real prince and the real prince is the "real" pauper playing to be the prince. Advancing into the novel, Twain directs the readers' attention to the vagabonds of the streets of England where the real prince, Edward Tudor, now roams as he learns about the injustices of the English laws. John Canty, the father of the real Tom Canty, the pauper, disguises himself as a crippled beggar to get close to people with money, and after robbing them escapes using the deceptive appearance. John Canty's tricks are examples of misdirections that never failed his and his cronies' criminal activities. Funnily enough, the prince who the common people believe to be their boy pauper dresses up in a mock disguise of "Foo-foo the First, King of the Moonclaves" (Twain 99), making it even more ironic because he is indeed the prince who is next in line to the throne made to become a make-believe king. Other characters assume false appearances like wearing an eye-patch or leaning on false leg pegs to trick people into believing they need more due to their unfortunate physical impediment when in fact they are as healthy as anyone else can be. Later, the reader finds out, when these characters shed their disguises, i.e., the eye patch or the peg legs, that these devices are tools to disguise and misdirect.

## **Identity, Class, and Deception as found in Other Literatures**

Similarly, Jane Austen also has characters with perverted motives, such as Mr. Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice*, who misleads a family into believing he has honorable intentions and background. In the end everyone finds out that he is a dashing rogue who has a penchant for younger moneyed girls who are easy to prey on. As he squanders money left and right as a commissioned soldier in the English army, his deliberate disguise and misdirection lead to his permanent confinement in a marriage with one of the younger and less financially endowed Bennet girls. He suffers this marital arrangement without a choice in order to pay off his creditors with the Bennet's allowance. Mrs. Bennet provides the comic though camp appeal in the novel. She has a self-inflated perception of her importance, deceiving herself in the process. She is ill mannered, flamboyant, and boisterous in her bearing. She opens her mouth, whether consciously or subconsciously, to comment offensively or insultingly on an occasion or a person. In *Sense and Sensibility*, Mr. Willoughby shrouds his dire need for financial security to seal his already important standing in society, cloaks his scoundrel nature with his charm, and presents himself as the epitome of the good-natured person when in fact his not-so-distant-past reveals a scandal involving another gentleman's daughter.

Even children's literature has disguise and mistaken identity. *Cinderella* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* are two all time favorite fairy tales. Cinderella is a mistreated girl who, shrouded with her fairy godmother's magic, goes to the prince's ball as a princess without her stepmother and stepsisters ever recognizing her. In *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, an evil queen stepmother in witch's garments tricks Snow White into taking a bite from an apple laced with poison. In both fairy tales, the masks are dropped and the real identities are revealed. Cinderella's stepfamily finds out that she was the beautiful and enchanting "princess" who left her glass slipper at the prince's ball; and Snow White finds out after a deep sleep awakened by a prince that the old hag who offered her the poisoned apple was indeed her wicked queen stepmother.

### **Hollywood, Disguise and Misdirection**

In entertainment, disguise and misdirection are favorite plot elements, such as in the television show *Zorro* where the protagonist wears a mask to disguise his identity as he helps citizens in their daily fight against a corrupt government. In this drama, no one knows who the real Zorro is except for the audience. In actuality, he is a wealthy landowner who has compassion for those who work for him and who are weak, and while in his mask, prevents injustice from prevailing. *The Lone Ranger* is also a masked hero who battles the lawlessness of the Old West. In episode of *I Love Lucy*, Lucille Ball frequently disguises herself as someone else to interfere in her showbiz husband Ricky's business. Other television shows that have disguise and misdirection are *Columbo* and *Hogan's Heroes*.

### **Misdirection and the Eiron**

*Eiron* or irony traces its roots back to Greek comedy where an astute underdog character *Eiron* uses his cunning to prevail over the confident, much too conceited *Alazon*. Thus, the Greek literary character *Eiron* presents a humble and unassuming character that is deliberately misleading or misdirecting. The *eiron* character exudes a self-deprecating, self-effacing persona. In an irony, there is a difference between what readers or viewers perceive and what a character means or how an event is supposed to happen. In *Columbo*, the main character or *eiron* is Lt. Columbo who appears to be a shuffling, shabby police lieutenant. Because of this appearance, he falsely gives the impression that he is inept, blundering, and forgetful. These perceptible characteristics lull the criminals into a false sense of security, believing that the officer will not solve the case. The misdirection becomes really comical because it causes the "snowball effect," which according to Henri Bergson in his essay "The Comic Element in Situations and The Comic

Element in Words” is “the rolling snowball, which increases in size as it moves along” (112). Furthermore, Bergson says that the events leading to the conclusion are “instances that are different, but they suggest the same abstract vision, that of an effect which grows by arithmetical progression, so that the cause, insignificant at the outset, culminates by a necessary evolution in a result as important as it is unexpected” (113). This theory is characteristically illustrated in this now classic detective TV series when the criminal who is hounded by Columbo tries to manipulate Columbo’s theories. The criminal’s maneuver is actually compounding clues against himself or herself, incriminating him or her even more until a slip in the overall scheme to cover up for the criminal act is detected, thus proving Columbo’s original theory. In the end, the criminal in the story as well as the audience are just mystified by the sudden turn of events. Repetition is also a comic element in this show and is seen every time Columbo comes back to talk to his suspect and says, “One more question.” Here the audience knows that something is really amiss and Columbo’s persistent questioning becomes a comic relief or a comical moment and a parody of the tragic interrogation in works like *Oedipus Rex*. Repetition is not just “with a word or a sentence repeated by an individual, but rather with a situation, that is, a combination of circumstances, which recurs several times in its original form” as the lieutenant comes and goes on screen with the suspect (Bergson 119).

*Hogan’s Heroes* is a parody on the life of officers in a prisoner of war (POW) camp in World War II Germany. The misdirection in this comedy series comes from Col. Hogan and his gang of imprisoned officers in Stalag 13, the *ieron*, as they always mask their everyday activities with purposes or reasons to allay Col. Klink’s, the stalag’s commandant, suspicion of prison escape. In one episode called “Flight of the Valkerie,” Hogan and his friends persuade Col. Klink to allow them to practice with their musical instruments and to form an orchestra inside a tent to cover up for a plan to smuggle a baroness out of the German camp to England. Col. Klink’s gullibility as well as his pride in the German ingenuity in everything, including performing arts, plays well to the heroes’ advantage. While the heroes play in their make-believe orchestra using a record playing classical music, their sleight-of-hand, Klink listens and enjoys the music all along thinking that the prisoners’ abilities has become so close to the German’s skill in creating and performing music. Just about this time, the heroes are ready to sneak the baroness through a light airplane they have fixed inside the tent. The loud and beautiful music as well as the heroes’ “need to practice their music abilities” is the magic, disguise, and misdirection.

### **Plot Strategy of Disguise and Misdirection in Modernized Versions of *Twelfth Night* and *Prince and the Pauper* and other films**

Disguise and misdirection has not escaped film. *Coming to America* is a film of disguise where the main character, Prince Akeem, masquerades as a student along with his trusted friend and servant, Semmi, and points others in the wrong direction, making sure that no one finds out their background so that he may find a wife he can trust and love in America. The plot line is similar to the *Prince and the Pauper* because of the masking of their true selves to attain an objective and true intention. One part of the film is similar in plot to Shakespeare’s *Comedy of Errors* where the servant and friend, Semmi, was mistaken for the prince. Of course, Semmi, in this part of the movie, deliberately misleads other characters in order to gain more for him, thus, making it a momentary act of selfishness, which when found out becomes a humorous bit in the film. *She’s the Man* is the modern film adaptation of *Twelfth Night* where a high school girl, Viola, disguises herself as her brother, Sebastian, at his boarding school. She leaves her own school and conceals her identity to try her hand at soccer at her brother’s school’s soccer team and proves herself worthy to be a team player against her old school’s all male team. In the middle of this hilarious masquerading and misdirection, she falls for Duke, the school’s soccer team captain who is in turn enamored with Olivia, a girl-next-door type student. Olivia befriends and falls for Viola now disguised as Sebastian.

Movie productions feature disguise in updates or remakes of literary classic stories, and one such version is available in a modernized *Odyssey*. *O Brother Where Art Thou* is a film based on Homer's *The Odyssey*. Disguise and misdirection are truly tools in this film as Everett Ulysses escapes from a prison farm along with two other miscreants, with a promise to find loot Everett claims he hid at his house. In reality, he tells his two friends this story to get them to escape with him due to them being chained together, but never tells them the true purpose of the escape, which is to get home in time to stop his divorced wife from marrying another man. Released in 2000, the story is set in the Deep South in the 1930s, complete with dust and chain gangs for effect. The disguise is in the form of misrepresentation, which resolves itself in the end with Everett's cunning machinations and smooth flexibility in adjusting to new situations.

Disguise and misdirection, indeed, are used for a variety of reasons: to fight injustice, to achieve a goal deemed attainable only through deception and misdirection, and to find happiness or true love. All these stories are written to entertain and teach a lesson about the dangers of being ourselves and face consequences that sometimes arise out of ordinary situations. Students of any age and not only those in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade or high school may very well benefit from the experiences brought by reading literature or viewing plays and films that confront identity issues.

### **Comedy as a Stage for Disguise and Mistaken Identity**

Comedy has an excellent source of humor in human nature. According to Susanne K. Langer, regardless of what the plot of a story may be, comedy "takes the form of a temporary triumph over the surrounding world" (331). We are often able to see from the outside as spectators or readers what the characters are not able to see from within the drama where their story unfolds. With our vantage point, we are able to see a character's flaws and virtues, though done in a comedic or tragic way, and use the knowledge to look at ourselves humorously and treat life a little less stressfully. It is "anchored in ordinary, daily experience – what is usually lumped together under the concerns of realism – but the comic effects depend upon the forays into the unexplored territory of wish fulfillment and fantasy gratification" (Charney 4). It enables the comic to make fun of and draw influences from daily life, and freely express one's anxiety or thoughts with wild abandon. The effect of comedy is referred to as the *comic experience* (5).

There are six areas of the comic experience mentioned in Charney's book: the Discontinuous, the Accidental, the Autonomous, the Self-Conscious, the Histrionic, and the Ironic. The **Discontinuous comedy** puts together portions of comic performances that do not all together belong to the same idea or thought. The effect is one of a medley of events that creates its own meaning and comic effect. The **Accidental comedy** presents a comic experience based more on chance happenings. A simple visit to the library or going up the stairs may have a comic value more than what is on the surface, for example. The **Autonomous** depicts non-living things as comical and can be a basis for replication by a comic actor. Anything can be copied and become humorous. The **Self-Conscious comedy** is the use of what is inherently the comic's: his own body. The comic makes fun of bodily parts and simply releases angst about any specific body quality. For example, a comic may make fun of his height or of the size of his nose. In the case of *Twelfth Night*, Viola is a completely unconvincing male, and we laugh at her attempts to relate to maleness to fight and swagger. The **Histrionic** happens when an actor becomes affected with emotions to the point of becoming overly dramatic. The comic plays a buffoon trying to imitate daily life with exaggerated gestures and facial expressions. Such was in the case of the Charlie Chaplin style in cinema in the early part of the 1900s. Edward Tudor in *The Prince and the Pauper* also portrays the overdramatic character when he cannot persuade anyone to listen to his claims of being the true prince. The **Ironic** ventures that for everything, the opposite is equally appealing or humorous. Like Socrates, the comic who uses irony consistently repeats "the only thing I know is that I know nothing" (Charney 7). Similarly, the prince and the pauper both

experience the life of the other and neither expects the realities that hit them as they go through each day living each other's life.

### ***On Twelfth Night or What You Will***

William Shakespeare, known for his tragedies and comedies, is a weaver of tales portraying the inner workings of the world of noblemen and noblewomen. His comedies are influenced by Roman Comedy, which in turn was influenced by Greek New Comedy. *Twelfth Night*, for instance, traces its influence to Plautus, a Roman dramatist.

### ***Who is Plautus?***

Titus Macchius Plautus was a Roman playwright whose works were copied by Shakespeare "quite unblushingly" (Watt). Plautus adapted Greek plays into Roman plays to attract his Roman audiences' interest. His influence and works are referred to as Plautine. His greatest influence is Menander of Greek New Comedy whose plot lines and characters he finds more plausible for his own audience. Shakespeare borrowed a lot of Plautus' technique of communicating theme to the audience and developing his comic characters and situations in his own plays.

### ***The Play***

*Twelfth Night or What You Will* is a comic portrayal of mistaken identity named after a Christian holiday after Christmas called the Twelfth Night holiday. The setting of the play is Illyria, a place believed to be imaginary in Shakespeare, but had actually been a Roman province on the western shores of the Adriatic Sea. In the play, siblings Viola and Sebastian are shipwrecked and lose contact with each other. Viola, believing her brother to be dead, disguises herself as a young man and a page named Cesario and serves a duke, Orsino. Viola learns that Orsino is besotted with Lady Olivia who is, at that time, mourning the death of her brother. Cesario, who is actually Viola, and who becomes the bridge between Orsino and Olivia. This intermediary act leads to Olivia becoming enamored with Cesario whom she believes to be a man. In all this fiasco, Viola falls in love with Orsino who believes her to be a man as well and sees "him" as a good friend. Sebastian finally arrives and fools Olivia, who upon seeing him thinks him to be Cesario. Olivia brazenly asks him to marry her, and they secretly marry before a priest. When both Sebastian and Cesario (Viola) appear in a scene together before Orsino and Olivia, they cannot believe their eyes at the striking resemblance between the two. Finally, Viola reveals her identity and Orsino, now smitten, thinks that the only way to repay Viola's (Cesario's) services to him is to marry her in the end. In Act V scene 1 lines 336-343, Orsino accepts Olivia's request "to think [of her] as a sister [more than] as a wife" and asks Viola for her hand in marriage.

*Orsino*

Madam, I am most apt to embrace your offer.

*To Viola*

Your master quits you; and for your service done him,  
So much against the mettle of your sex,  
So far beneath your soft and tender breeding,  
And since you call'd me master for so long,  
Here is my hand: you shall from this time be  
Your master's mistress. (183)

It will be observed that the disguise used by Viola in the play adjusts her identity as an individual according to her appearance. Her disguised character "creates an elevated irony, a developed theme, and an enhanced comic element to the story" ("Jealousy and Mistaken Identity").

Other characters in the play provide much entertainment and add to the confusion already present. Malvolio is Olivia's head servant. He thinks highly of himself, very much like Mrs.

Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*, and has the tendency to frown at anyone who does not act according to his pre-conceived standards. His situation becomes a humorous part in the play when a group of revelers, Sir Toby and his friends, decide to leave a love note for Malvolio as retaliation for Malvolio's rather pompous regard for them as they were drinking and merrymaking at Olivia's home, with hints that Lady Olivia is in love with him. In the note, Malvolio is advised of Olivia's feelings for him and how she likes very much to see him dressed in yellow stockings with cross garters. Malvolio, despite his usual surly self, starts to give Olivia an attentiveness that soon enough becomes obvious to her. She does not only notice that Malvolio is wearing a pair of stockings that she dislikes so much, but that his over flattering attention becomes annoying. In Act V scene 1 lines 316-325, Fabian, another manservant in Olivia's household, reads Malvolio's written letter to Olivia expressing his discontent at being ridiculed and placed under the "rule" of her "drunken cousin" and resentfully admits that he was used by Sir Toby and his cronies for their own entertainment (180).

Another character is Feste the Fool, whose sole job is to make people laugh in Olivia's court. Through his mask as a fool, he succeeds in making sense of things and the audience sees that Feste, though acting as a fool, sees through others and their situation. All throughout the play, Feste is referred to as the Fool and "his acerbic, eccentric manner seems closer to genuine madness," thus creating this fool with "sophistication of such professionals" (Charney 173). Sir Toby Belch is Olivia's uncle and a drunk who loves to play tricks on people, very much like what he and his friends did to Malvolio. His name alone, Belch, draws laughter due to its imitation of the sound of the release of gas from the stomach out through the mouth. Logically, the belching is due to his obnoxious drinking that causes a disgusted reaction not only from his niece but also from everyone else.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek is already funny due to his conceit, but in reality is a coward and an unwise man. He is gullible for much of the play, especially in matters of the heart and money. Sir Toby tricks Andrew by disguising his real purpose, which is to live off his money, by telling him that Olivia's interest in Cesario is only her way to make him jealous. Andrew believes Sir Toby, for he is Olivia's uncle.

Another disguised man in the play is Antonio, a sailor on the same ship that sinks at the beginning of the play, causing Sebastian and Viola to separate. He later comes to Sebastian's rescue and accompanies him inland. He hides from the general public while in Illyria because he is a wanted man for stealing freight from a ship called the *Phoenix* and for illegally boarding another where Orsino's nephew loses his leg. His potential death represents the tragic possibility of one's disguise not working.

### ***On The Prince and the Pauper***

Mark Twain is more popular for his humorous stories and sketches and homespun Midwestern style. His *The Prince and the Pauper* is a satirical historical attack on class divisions very prevalent in Tudor England. This story is an obvious break away from his more renowned pattern in storytelling. *The Prince and the Pauper* is a tale of two identical boys, one who is familiar with poverty and the other who is accustomed to wealth and privilege. They trade places to avoid the responsibilities of who they are and take the persona of the other. The prince, Edward, the son of King Henry VIII, wants to escape the pressures of being next in line to the throne, and so he takes to the streets and lives the life of Tom Canty, the pauper. Likewise, Tom, who clamors to escape the oppressive hand of his stepfather and the drudgery of street life, agrees to exchange places with the prince to do so. The humor in the story focuses on the struggles of the two boys as they undertake unfamiliar responsibilities in life. While Prince Edward is away and on the streets of England, he learns of the poverty and the injustices of the English laws that further oppress the people. As he walks the streets, he promises the people that when he gets

back to the palace, he will make sure that the laws be amended. The people, of course, laugh at him. Here, the readers know that the prince has not yet learned what it is to be poor and is merely an observer. He eventually learns the ins and outs of street life and becomes more resolved to return to his palace and discuss those changes with his father, the king. The prince's predicament in the streets of England is an example of a disguise and accidental misdirection. What started out as a lark in order to experience what another person has ends up as a serious dilemma. Because of the pauper disguise, the prince has a hard time convincing the people around him that he is the real prince, and the people in turn are subconsciously misdirected by the disguise thinking that the boy likes to pretend to be the royal prince. The mockery the prince experiences in the hands of the street people provides a rather ironic humor.

In the palace, Tom Canty longs for his mother and sisters, although not so much for his abusive father and grandmother. He ironically endures the privileged life of the real prince and painstakingly plays the part of the prince attending to his princely duties. Fortunately Tom, having had previous instruction from Father Andrew, a priest "whom the king turned out of house and home," learns quickly (Twain 11). He takes advantage of the little Latin he learned from the good, old priest. He also "proceed[s] to instruct himself with honest zeal" upon finding a book of etiquette in the English court while in the privacy of the real prince's room (39). Whenever Tom undertakes his "princely duties," the king and his attendants tend to ignore Tom's "mistakes," attributing them to a mental malady. It is comical to observe the royal court as they look the other way with his mistakes. In this situation, misdirection occurs because of the unwanted disguise Tom unfortunately dons. Again, the misdirection plays like a magic trick, unplanned by the key character.

The story of the prince and the pauper displays the modern mindset or typical attitude of today's teenagers. Tired of being who they are, they want badly to be someone else, and weary of what they have, they look for a way to compensate for this feeling of inadequacy. Like the proverbial grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence, these teenagers turn to disguise and misdirection. They find avenues of escape in various ways that include technology and innovations in modern fashion and lifestyle.

## **LESSON PLANS AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Lesson 1: Vocabulary and Grammar Concept**

#### ***Objectives:***

TEKS 110.42.b TEKS 110.42.b (1) Writing/purposes. The student writes in a variety of forms, including business, personal, literary, and persuasive texts, for various audiences and purposes. The student is expected to:

- 6 (A) Expand vocabulary through wide reading, listening, and discussing;
- 6 (B) Rely on context to determine meanings of words and phrases such as figurative language, idioms, multiple meaning words, and technical vocabulary;
- 6 (E) Use reference material such as glossary, dictionary, thesaurus, and available technology to determine precise meanings and usage; and
- 6 (F) Identify the relation of word meanings in analogies, homonyms, synonyms/antonyms, and connotation/denotation.
- 7 (I) Use study strategies such as skimming and scanning, note taking, outlining, and using study-guide questions to better understand texts; and

***Materials:*** a chart with 5 columns (word, location of word in context – page number or act #, scene #, line #, part of speech, synonym in context, antonym in context), pen, and copy of *Twelfth Night or What You Will* and *The Prince and the Pauper*

**Procedures:**

Students should have received a copy of the list of words for the week. They will then receive a copy of the chart with five columns for note taking purposes. While reading, students should take note of the location of a specific word in context the first time they see the word. Using context clues, they will provide the **use of the word, synonym, and antonym according to context**. Prior to this activity, the students should have already taken notes on the **definition** of each word in their vocabulary notebook with the help of a dictionary or thesaurus, so they can use their notes to help them determine the answers for each word in context in their chart. After the students are finished with their chart notes, the class will be divided into two groups and will have a contest using the information in their charts. An arbiter is positioned in the middle of the board while student competitors write the location of the word, part of speech, synonym, and antonym on the board with an appropriate sentence patterned after the sentence in the novel or play. The student who finishes first earns a point for his/her group. The additional point will be added to individual points earned in their respective activity. An additional point will be given to the group who can apply the words and use them to **describe** or **discuss** a concept of disguise or misdirection in the texts being studied.

The activity forces students to go back to the novel or play and look at each word in context and reinforces their knowledge on certain words, their meanings, and uses. The activity also teaches students different **sentence composition skills** and **develops style in writing** sentences using the sentences in the selection as patterns. Each week, the student receives a set of 15-20 words in total depending on the level of the class.

**Lesson 2: Thematic Lesson – We deal with issues of disguise and misdirection everyday.**

**Objectives:**

TEKS 110.42.b The student will:

7 (B) Draw upon his/her own background to provide connection to texts;

7 (H) Draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text;

**Materials:** duct tape, list of issues related to the stories and life, copy of *Twelfth Night or What You Will* and *The Prince and the Pauper*

**Procedure:**

This lesson is patterned from a lesson developed by Steven Christiansen on the Folger Shakespeare Library website. The lesson on theme is appropriate to begin the readings and lessons on *Twelfth Night or What You Will* and *The Prince and the Pauper*. The original lesson was created as a game for *The Comedy of Errors*.

For this game, the teacher created a list of issues or **themes** related to *Twelfth Night or What You Will* and *The Prince and the Pauper*. After the list is created, the classroom will then be divided in two groups by marking the division with duct tape in the middle of the room. The room now has two sides: agree and disagree. The middle part will be the neutral part. Students will be instructed to move to the back of the room and as the teacher reads from the list of issues, students choose whether they agree or disagree with each statement. If a student can neither agree nor disagree, he or she will stand in the middle. After each statement is read and the students have chosen sides, the teacher then asks a question asking for a reason or clarification why students have chosen the side where they are. Themes crafted within the research process will be utilized such as disguises do not always work; misdirection is sometimes necessary to attain a goal; disguises are used in misdirection; beware of disguises and misdirection for they

can become permanent; sometimes it is best to be just yourself; we wear a façade to hide our identity everyday; and love and happiness can be found in unexpected places and circumstances.

The following statements adapted from Christiansen’s lesson may also be used in the game.

- Coincidences happen all the time.
- It is not okay to mistreat those who work for you.
- Promises and deals should always be kept.
- Honor and reputation are everything.
- Love and family heal all wounds.
- Without trust, relationships are doomed.
- Miracles do happen.

After the discussion of **opinions** about each statement, students will regroup as a class and the teacher will explain that the issues are themes found in *Twelfth Night or What You Will* and *The Prince and the Pauper*. The issues will be revisited at the end of the readings.

### Lesson 3: Character Sketch

#### **Objectives:**

TEKS 110.42.b The student will

- 1 (A) Write in a variety of forms using effective word choice, structure, and sentence forms with emphasis on organizing logical arguments with clearly related definitions, theses, and evidence; write persuasively; write to report and describe; and write poems, plays, and stories;
- 1 (C) Organize ideas in writing to ensure coherence, logical progression, and support for ideas.
- 7 (F) Identify main ideas and their supporting details;
- (I) Use study strategies such as skimming and scanning, note taking, outlining, and using study-guide questions to better understand texts; and
- (J) Read silently with comprehension for a sustained period.

**Materials:** construction paper, colored markers or pencils, pen, and scrap paper, copy of *Twelfth Night or What You Will* and *The Prince and the Pauper*

#### **Procedure:**

For this activity, students will be divided into groups of three. Each group will be assigned a character. They will also be given a list of characters and their descriptions according to the story. They will brainstorm what the character is like physically, emotionally, and mentally. Each member will be tasked to find quotes in the text that are examples of **direct** or **indirect characterization**. Examples of **figurative language** such as simile, metaphor, and others may be included. According to how they picture the character, they will draw the person on the construction paper and color the illustration. They will write the descriptive quotes beside the picture. On a scrap paper, using the quotes they found, they will write a creative short sketch of the character. The quotes have to be blended in with their own report of the character and not airdropped. Two to three paragraphs may be enough to provide a sketch of the character. After they have proofread and edited their paragraphs, they will write the paragraph at the back of the illustration with quotes. If their group is picked on reporting day, they will present their character sketch and provide a class set copy of their character sketch essay for the benefit of the whole class; otherwise, their project will just be displayed in the classroom for other students’ perusal. On reporting day, each group picked to discuss their project will briefly identify **main ideas** from an act or chapter where the character sketched is dominantly featured.

This activity will help students imagine the character they are studying and develop their sense of distinction when choosing the right quote to describe the character physically, internally, or mentally. This activity will help reinforce their writing and peer review skills.

#### **Lesson 4: Film Tie-in/Graphic Novel – *She’s the Man* and Common Sense Media’s “The Prince and the Pauper” or other traditional films on the selections in the unit or other stories**

##### **Objectives:**

TEKS 110.42.b (19) Viewing/representing/interpretation. The student understands and interprets visual representations. The student is expected to:

(B) Analyze relationships, ideas, and cultures as represented in various media; and

(C) Distinguish the purposes of various media forms such as informative texts, entertaining texts, and advertisements.

(20) Viewing/representing/analysis. The student analyzes and critiques the significance of visual representations. The student is expected to:

(D) Recognize how visual and sound techniques or design convey messages in media such as special effects, editing, camera angles, reaction shots, sequencing, and music.

1 (A) Write in a variety of forms using effective word choice, structure, and sentence forms with emphasis on organizing logical arguments with clearly related definitions, theses, and evidence; write persuasively; write to report and describe; and write poems, plays, and stories;

1 (C) Organize ideas in writing to ensure coherence, logical progression, and support for ideas.

7 (F) Identify main ideas and their supporting details;

(G) Summarize texts;

**Materials:** video, TV/DVD/VHS, other media if available, copy of *Twelfth Night* or *What You Will* and *The Prince and the Pauper*, construction paper, pencils, colored markers

##### **Procedure:**

The students will view the film versions of the selections chosen or view specific parts only. They will view the modern *She’s the Man* for *Twelfth Night* or *What You Will* and Common Sense Media’s “The Prince and the Pauper” for *The Prince and the Pauper*. They will take notes on the costumes, visual effects, dialogues, and facial expressions. They will **compare** and **contrast** each scene selected for analysis and note the **similarities** and **differences** of film and text. After **viewing** and **analyzing**, they will decide which tool is more effective to and affective of their learning – which helped them to understand the stories more. The class will have a discussion board with a big Venn diagram where students can post their responses on post-it notes or strips of paper.

As an assessment activity, the students will write a **summary** of what they have read and seen on text and film. They have the option of choosing only one text or film: the play or the novel. They will represent the story chosen and create a graphic novel with twelve (12) squares based on their summary. **Dialogues** should be included inside the frames. There should be emphasis on period costume **details** or **setting**.

#### **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

##### **Works Cited**

Bergson, Henri. “Laughter.” In *Comedy*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1956. 61-146.

The essay talks about laughter and what makes it happen or what influences it. It talks about the comic in general.

Charney, Maurice. *Comedy High and Low: An Introduction to the Experience of Comedy*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1987.

This book talks about the comic experience, definition of comedy, as well as the six areas of comedy.

- Christiansen, Steven. "Cross That Line, Antipholus! (Either one of you) A Lesson in Theme." Folger Shakespeare Library. 2008. <<http://www.folger.edu>>. The article is a lesson plan on theme. It contains a detailed instruction and sample themes in William Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* to be read to the class.
- "Jealousy and Mistaken Identity in Shakespeare". *Online Essays.com*. February 11, 2008. <<http://onlineessays.com/essays/shakespeare/jealousy-and-mistaken-identity-in-shakespeare>>. This website talks about the role of jealousy and mistaken identity in William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, and *Comedy of Errors*.
- Kiryakakis, Faye. "Mistaken Identity in Shakespeare's Comedy." *Super Secretary Home Page*. 1991, 1998. 11 February 2008. <<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/5804/Comedy.htm?200811>>. This website explains the use of mistaken identity as a plot device in literature.
- Langer, Susanne K. *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935. This article is about the role of comedy in visual arts.
- Robinson, Ben. "Misdirection." *Illusion Genius*. March 2004. 14 April 2008. <<http://www.illusiongenius.com/3-04.html>>. This website contains an article written by award-winning writer and historian Ben Robinson. In the article, he talks about misdirection in magic as well as in real life.
- Shakespeare, William. *Twelfth Night or What You Will*. Ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. New York: Washington Square Press for Pocket Books, 1993. This paperback version of the Shakespearean play *Twelfth Night* is based on the First Folio version although the editors have modernized the punctuation and some spelling of the Folio. The full text has modern stage directions whenever the directions are implied.
- "Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)." *Texas Education Agency*. 7 March 2008. <<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/>>. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) website provides information on Texas education including required objectives for Texas curriculum in all content areas.
- Twain, Mark. *The Prince and the Pauper*. New York: Penguin Books, 1997. This edition of the classic *The Prince and the Pauper* was first published in Great Britain by Chatto and Windus in 1881. A copyrighted introduction by Jerry Griswold is included in the book about two identical boys, one a pauper and the other a prince, who traded places to experience each other's life.
- Watt, H.A. "Plautus and Shakespeare – Further Comments on *Menaechmi* and the *Comedy of Errors*." *Classical Journal* 20.7 (April 1925): 401-407. JSTOR. MD Anderson Library, University of Houston, Houston, Texas. 14 February 2008. <<http://www.jstor.org/>>. This article talks about the unoriginality of both William Shakespeare and Plautus whose plays were based on other influences. Shakespeare based his plays on Plautus and Roman Drama, whereas Plautus based his plays on Menander's Greek New Comedy.

### **Other Media**

- Columbo*. Perf. Peter Falk. NBC, 1968-2003. This TV show is a popular American criminal investigation series that is full of comedic moments and has a disheveled looking police lieutenant as its main protagonist.
- Coming to America*. Dir. John Landis. Perf. Eddie Murphy. Eddie Murphy Productions, 1988. This film is about an African prince who comes to the United States in a disguise to search for an intelligent and independent wife.
- "The Flight of the Valkerie." from *Hogan's Heroes*. Dir. Gene Reynolds. Perf. Bob Crane. Bing Crosby Productions, 1965. This humorous episode of *Hogan's Heroes* is about an effort of prisoners of war (POW) in a German camp to help a baroness escape to England through Stalag 13.
- I Love Lucy*. Perf. Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. CBS, 1951-1957. *I Love Lucy* is a popular American sitcom whose main character, Lucille Ball, was the first woman main star on television.

*Lone Ranger TV series*. Perf. Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels. DVD Street Release, 2002.

This DVD released the original 1949 to 1957 *Lone Ranger* television shows.

*O Brother, Where Art Thou?* Dir. Joel Coen. Perf. George Clooney. Touchstone Pictures, 2000.

This film is an adaptation of Homer's epic poem *The Odyssey*.

*She's the Man*. Dir. Andy Fickman. Perf. Amanda Bynes. DreamWorks SKG, 2006.

This film is a loosely modernized version of *Twelfth Night or What You Will*. It contains similar humorous parts of the original Shakespearean plays, but the setting and some of the characters have been modified.

*The Illusionist*. Dir. Neil Burger. Perf. Edward Norton. Yari Film Releasing, 2006.

A period drama based on Steven Millhauser's short story *Eisenheim the Illusionist*. The film is about a man who becomes obsessed with magic who one day becomes a master illusionist.

*Zorro*. Perf. Guy Williams. Walt Disney, 1957.

This television show about a masked advocate of the weak is a half-hour program broadcast from 1957-1959.

### Supplemental Sources

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice and Related Readings*. Evanston, IL: McDougall Littell Inc, 1998.

This book contains a copy of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and related readings. A romantic social comedy about a class-conscious society in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, this novel tells of an English family with aspirations to infiltrate polite society through marriage.

---. *Sense and Sensibility*. New York: Quality Paper Back Book Club, 1996.

Another masterpiece by Jane Austen, this novel tells the story of two sisters with opposite personalities, whose hopes of marrying well shatters as their father dies and leaves everything to a stepbrother. This novel is another romantic social comedy that comments on 18<sup>th</sup> century English society.

Baxter, Nicola. *Stories from Shakespeare*. New York: Bookmart Limited Barnes and Nobles Publishing, Inc, 2001.

The story book is a picture book that contains shortened versions of eight of William Shakespeare's plays. Jenny Thorne drew the illustrations.

Bloom, Harold. *William Shakespeare: Comedies and Romances*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1986.

This book reviews Shakespearean comedies and romances.

Cope, Jim, and Wendy Cope. *A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classic Edition of Mark Twain's The Prince and the Pauper*. Ed. W. Geiger Ellis, Ed.d. and Arthea J.S. Reed, Ph.d. 4 March 2008.

<<http://www.penguin.com/>>.

This study guide free online is a wealth of guide questions, vocabulary, chapter summaries, dramatic and artistic activities. The guide also provides a list of resources.

Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957.

This book contains essays about literary criticism.

Grimm, Jacob. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. 1785-1863. Trans. Raymond Sibley. New York: Ladybird Books, 1996.

This famous fairy tale story by the Brothers Grimm tells of a story of a princess, Snow White, whose jealous stepmother orders her death. Snow White finds refuge among seven dwarfs where her stepmother, disguised as an old hag gives her poisoned apple. She is later rescued by a handsome prince.

Halliwell, Martin. *Images of Idiocy: The Idiot Figure in Modern Fiction and Film*. Burlington, VT: Aldershot, Hants, 2004.

This book talks about the concept of idiocy especially in visual media in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

- Hartwig, Joan. 'Feste's "'Whirligig' and the Comic Providence of Twelfth Night.'" *English Literary History (ELH)* 40.4 (Winter 1973): 501- 513. JSTOR. MD Anderson Library, University of Houston, Houston, Texas. 18 February 2008. <<http://www.jstor.org/>>.  
This article discusses the external influences in *Twelfth Night*. In the article, she talks about the motivations of the characters that create the conflict in the entire play.
- Homer. *The Odyssey*. In *The Language of Literature*. Trans. Robert Fitzgerald. Ed. Applebee, Arthur N. Evanston, IL: McDougall Littell, 2000.  
The Odyssey is a classic Greek epic poem about the adventures of Odysseus and his cunning disguises and misdirections.
- Ko, Yu Jin. "The Comic Close of *Twelfth Night* and Viola's Noli Me Tangere." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48.4 (Winter 1997): 391-405. JSTOR. MD Anderson Library, University of Houston, Houston, Texas. 18 February 2008. <<http://www.jstor.org/>>.  
This article is about the moving scene between Viola and Sebastian in Act V of the Shakespearean play *Twelfth Night*. The article also analyzes Viola's disguise and her hesitation to have herself acknowledged by Sebastian until their identities are absolute.
- Leech, Clifford. *Twelfth Night and Shakespearean Comedy*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1965.  
This book talks about lectures "delivered from the stage of the Neptune Theatre, Halifax, Nova Scotia, in August 1964." The lectures are about comedies of William Shakespeare.
- Meredith, George. "An Essay on Comedy." In *Comedy*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1956. 3-57.  
The essay talks about comedy and its elements.
- Rosenblum, Joseph. *A Reader's Guide to Shakespeare*. New York: Salem Press Inc., 1987.  
This book contains essays that explain each Shakespearean play, its characters, and its plot.
- Sanderson, Ruth. *Cinderella*. Little, Brown Young Readers, 2002.  
This book is an adapted picture book written and illustrated by Ruth Sanderson based on the famous fairy tale. There are a variety of versions on Cinderella in bookstores today.
- Segal, Erich. *The Death of Comedy*. London, England: Harvard University Press, 2001.  
The book traces the root of comedy and its "life cycle from its first breath to its death in the Theater of the Absurd."
- Shakespeare, William. *Comedy of Errors*. In *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. 1921. Minneapolis, MN: Amaranth Press, 1985. 106-123.  
This book contains the complete works of William Shakespeare.
- Siemon, James Edward. "Disguise in Marston and Shakespeare." *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 38.2 (Feb., 1975): 105-123. JSTOR. MD Anderson Library, University of Houston, Houston, Texas. 18 February 2008. <<http://www.jstor.org/>>.  
This article is about the presence of the elements of disguise and role-playing that are found in John Marston's and William Shakespeare's plays.
- Stace, C. "The Slaves of Plautus." *Greece and Rome* 15.1 (April 1968): 64-77. JSTOR. MD Anderson Library, University of Houston, Houston, Texas. 16 March 2008.  
This article talks about the slaves in Plautus' plays and the influence if Menander's Greek New Comedy on Plautus' plays.
- Van Spanckeren, Kathryn. "An Outline of American Literature." *From Revolution to Reconstruction...and What Happened Afterwards*. 7 April 2008.  
<<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/LIT/clemens.htm>>.  
This article is about Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) and his style in writing. He is the author of *The Prince and the Pauper*.