

PLOT		CHARACTERS		KEY QUOTATIONS		MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
Act 1	Don Pedro, returns triumphant from battle and seeks refuge in Messina. Leonato, welcomes Pedro and his soldiers with open arms, and the sudden influx of men into the town soon stirs up some romance. Claudio instantly falls in love with Hero, and Beatrice is reunited with her old flame, Benedick – the man she loves to hate.	Don Pedro	The Prince of Aragon. He is always involved in the affairs of the other characters. Don Pedro woos Hero for Claudio.	Beatrice	A1 "...he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block."	
		Leonato	Governor of Messina and father to Hero.			
		Claudio	A young Florentine soldier who fights for Don Pedro, and a friend of Benedick.	Beatrice	A1 "I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me."	
		Hero	Leonato's daughter, Beatrice's cousin, and the beloved of Claudio.			
Act 2	Leonato gives permission for his daughter to marry Claudio in seven days time. Hearing that they only have one week to ruin the wedding, Don John and his henchmen soon devise a plan – they intend to trick Claudio with false evidence into thinking that Hero has been unfaithful to him the night before their wedding. Meanwhile, Don Pedro tricks Benedick into thinking that Beatrice is head-over-heals in love with him.	Beatrice	Leonato's niece, an extremely witty and strong-willed young woman. Beatrice has a "merry war," of wits and insults with Benedick, whom she hates.	Beatrice	A4 "O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the marketplace."	
		Benedick	A witty young Lord of Padua and a soldier. He is extraordinarily successful with women, but is fanatically committed to a bachelor's life.			
		Antonio	Leonato's brother.	Beatrice	A4 "O that I were a man for his sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie and swears it..."	
Don John	When the play begins, Don John has just been defeated by his brother in battle. Out of desire for revenge and a general bad attitude, Don John schemes to destroy the marriage of Hero and Claudio.					
Act 3	Don John prepares to execute his plan. He finds Claudio and tells him of Hero's impurity. At first disbelieving, Claudio eventually agrees to go with Don John and see for himself. Dogberry, a bumbling constable, instructs his watchmen to be extra vigilant because of the important wedding in the morning. The watchmen later overhear Don John's henchmen drunkenly bragging about how they successfully tricked Claudio – they are promptly arrested.	WOMEN IN THE RENAISSANCE		Beatrice	A4 "...I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving."	
		Women were subservient to men. They were dependent on their male relatives to support them. They were used to forge alliances with other powerful families through arranged marriages.				
Act 4	Claudio publicly reveals Hero's infidelity halfway through the marriage ceremony. Hero is stunned by the accusation and soon faints in the chaos that follows. Once the wedding party disbands, the Friar becomes suspicious and convinces Leonato, Beatrice and Benedick to pretend that Hero died from shock until they discover who has slandered her – Benedick immediately suspects Don John. Left alone, Beatrice and Benedick finally declare their love for each other.	Women were tutored at home - there were no schools for girls. Women were not allowed to enter University. Women could not be heirs to their father's titles (except female royals). Women could not become doctors or lawyers. Women did not have the vote and were not allowed to enter politics. Women were not allowed to act in the theatres.		KEY VOCABULARY		
		Disobedience was seen as a crime against their religion. The Church firmly believed this and quoted the Bible in order to ensure the continued adherence to this principle. The Scottish protestant leader John Knox wrote: <i>"Women in her greatest perfection was made to serve and obey man."</i>		Renaissance	The revival the influence of classical models in or rebirth of European art and literature under the 14th–16th centuries. The culture and style of art and architecture developed during the Renaissance.	
Act 5	People turn against Claudio; both Leonato and Benedick accuse him of wronging Hero, and then Dogberry reveals Don John's henchmen. Claudio realizes that he was tricked by Don John and tries to apologize to Leonato. Leonato is surprisingly forgiving (because he knows that his daughter didn't actually die). He says that he will forgive Claudio if he marries his cousin the following day. At the wedding, Claudio is amazed when Hero is revealed to be alive and as virtuous as ever. Benedick and Beatrice finally admit their love for each other in public.			Patriarchy	A system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.	
				Emancipation	The fact or process of being set free from legal, social, or political restrictions - liberation. For example, the political and social emancipation of women.	