



SYMPOSIUM DAY 2019

A LETTER FROM HEADMASTER DEAN

Dear Veritas Families:

The teachers and I eagerly look forward to **Symposium Day, Monday, January 14**. This day will be full of exploration, as the entire school delves into Shakespeare's play [*A Midsummer Night's Dream*](#).

First, some quick practical notes for parents:

1. **Monday, January 14, is a 12:30-release**. Please make arrangements with rides.
2. **Attendance is mandatory**. Students should go to their regular 1st-period classrooms that morning. Details of the day's schedule will be provided during 1st period. Students will spend time with groups of students outside their usual class section, discussing, workshopping, and enjoying the play.
3. **Please print the [attached student guide](#)** for your child(ren), which include **reading and annotation guidance**.

Hopefully our students already have their copies and are ready to read it for the first, or maybe even the second or third time over break. Wherever you are at, though, this packet should help you focus your efforts and prepare for our time together in Symposium.

Shakespeare speaks our language, but sometimes it's hard to tell. Some students, especially in middle school, may have less experience with his manner of speaking. For those who need extra guidance with Shakespeare's language, there is a short essay at the beginning of the [Folger edition](#) of the play. Useful notes on vocabulary are also always on the left facing page as you read.

As you read, try to track **plot** and **character** development (see worksheets in the [handout attached](#)). It is best if you can do this on your own, but a basic summary (included in the [attached handout](#)) may be useful in this

case. (*In our literature classes, students read the text first, before reading summaries – and practice how to summarize effectively on their own.*)

A play is a living thing, meant to be performed. **Read it aloud** when you can, **share it with family and friends**, picture and practice what scenes might **look like**, how characters might **sound like**. During or after your reading, please consider watching a good production of the play. As an example, linked here is a decent high-school rendition on [YouTube](#). Local libraries also have a wide range of DVD and online versions you can enjoy.

Please print and share [the handout linked here](#) with your students, as they prepare.

Looking forward to seeing you all again soon!

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Dean', with a stylized, cursive script.

David Dean

Headmaster

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

PLOT SUMMARY

The primary plot of *Much Ado About Nothing* turns on the courtship and scandal involving young Hero and her suitor, Claudio, but the witty war of words between Claudio's friend Benedick and Hero's cousin Beatrice often takes center stage.

Set in Messina, the play begins as Don Pedro's army returns after a victory. Benedick, a gentleman soldier, resumes a verbal duel with Beatrice, the niece of Messina's governor, Leonato. Count Claudio is smitten with Leonato's daughter, Hero. After Don Pedro woos her in disguise for Claudio, the two young lovers plan to marry in a week. To fill in the time until the wedding, Don Pedro and the others set about tricking Benedick and Beatrice into falling in love with each other. Meanwhile, Don Pedro's disgruntled brother, Don John, plots to ruin Hero and halt her wedding. Claudio believes Don John's deception, is convinced Hero has a lover, and, at the wedding, brutally rejects her.

With Hero in hiding and falsely reported dead, Beatrice persuades Benedick to fight Claudio. Tragedy is averted when the bumbling city watch, having discovered Don John's treachery, arrives and clears Hero's name. With Claudio forgiven, both couples are ready to get married.

Source: <https://www.folger.edu/much-ado-about-nothing>

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Be sure to bring this with you to the Symposium and, in class, turn in to your literature teacher. It will not be graded, but will demonstrate your participation in the activity.

Student Name: _____

Directions: Give a brief description, at least 2 sentences each, of the following character and actions.

Leonato	
Hero	
Beatrice	
Don Pedro	
Claudio	
Benedick	
Don John	
Dogberry	

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

DISCUSSION NOTES

Be sure to bring this with you to the Symposium and, in class, turn in to your literature teacher. It will not be graded, but will demonstrate your participation in the activity.

Student Name: _____

Directions: Make notes about your thoughts on the following questions. These will not be graded as right or wrong answers, but will help you in discussing the play. Whenever possible, give specific examples, using Act, Scene, and Line numbers. This will help you quote the play in discussion. You may use this sheet, or continue your thoughts on additional paper.

A. Think about the play's title: what is the "much ado" in this play? What is all the fuss about?

B. Who do you think are the most virtuous characters? Why?

C. Note some examples of trickery and deception in this play. Which characters deceive or trick others? Do they all have the same motives?

D. How does it end? Why does it end that way? Is it a happy ending?

E. Use this space and any more that you need to continue your notes.



SPECIAL BELL SCHEDULE

SYMPOSIUM DAY 2018

All-School Assembly		
7:40-7:45	Attendance Group Assignments	<u>Regular 1st-Period Classrooms</u>
7:50-8:00	Plenary Comments	Gym
High School		
8:05-10:05	Seminar	Assigned Classrooms
10:10-10:25	Snack	Lunchroom
10:30-11:15	Scenes	Lund
11:20-12:15	Workshop	Assigned Classrooms
Middle School		
8:05-9:05	Pre-Seminar Tasks	Assigned Classrooms
9:05-9:20	Snack	Lunchroom
9:25-10:25	Seminar	Assigned Classrooms
10:30-11:25	Workshop	Assigned Classrooms
11:30-12:15	Scenes	Lund
All-School Assembly		
12:20-12:30	Closing	Gym