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Twelfth Night: The 30-Minute Shakespeare

By William Shakespeare



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Twelfth Night: The 30-Minute Shakespeare By William Shakespeare

Planning a school or amateur Shakespeare production? The best way to experience the plays is to perform them, but getting started can be a challenge: The complete plays are too long and complex, while scene selections or simplified language are too limited.

"The 30-Minute Shakespeare" is a new series of abridgements that tell the "story" of each play from start to finish while keeping the beauty of Shakespeare's language intact. Specific stage directions and character suggestions give even inexperienced actors the tools to perform Shakespeare with confidence, understanding, and fun!

This cutting of TWELFTH NIGHT, Shakespeare's bittersweet comic masterpiece, consists of three classic scenes. After an extended introductory narration, the action begins with Feste the Fool consoling a mourning Lady Olivia with wit and wordplay. Viola (disguised as a male Cesario) woos Olivia on behalf of Duke Orsino, but Olivia falls for the messenger Viola/Cesario instead. The final scene in Olivia's kitchen gives young actors an easy and specific way to play late-night revelry, as Sir Toby Belch and his friends amuse themselves with the censorious but ultimately hapless Malvolio. One highlight of the production is a group "rap" version of the song "Come Away Death."

The edition also includes an essay by editor Nick Newlin on how to produce a Shakespeare play with novice actors, and notes about the original production of this abridgement at the Folger Shakespeare Library's annual Student Shakespeare Festival.



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Editorial Review

About the Author

Nick Newlin has performed a juggling and variety act for international audiences for 23 years. Since 1996, he has conducted an annual Play Directing residency affiliated with the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC. Nick has a BA from Harvard University with Honors 1982 and an MA in Theater from The University of Maryland with an emphasis on Play Directing.

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