

AP English Literature and Composition
***The Taming of the Shrew* assessment options**

Persuasive Essay (80 points)

Respond to the following topic in a well-organized and meticulously-proofread essay. Reveal your understanding of the play's final scene and its connection to the play's theme.

Portia Minola, an independent land-owning woman from Venice, recently received the news from her gossipy cousin Bianca that Katherina, the defiant and tempestuous shrew, has not only married but declared at her sister's wedding feast,

"I am ashamed that women are so simple
To offer war where they should kneel for peace;
Or seek for rule, supremacy and sway,
When they are bound to serve, love and obey."

Portia cannot believe that her favorite cousin is so changed and immediately writes to Katherina at her new home with Petruchio in Verona to express her concern.

As Katherina, your task is to write a letter to your cousin Portia, clearly defining your identity and defending your marriage to Petruchio as well as your wedding speech. Because you are attempting to persuade your cousin to accept your transformation, you must be cognizant of audience and offer counterargument in your letter. Make reference to specific details from the play in your letter as support for your argument.

AND

Motif Tracking Assignment (100 points)

A motif is a recurrent image, word, object, phrase, or action that unifies the work and highlights significant ideas and themes. Your task is to create a final product that reveals how you have tracked the motif through the course of the play.

Your product must include the following:

- thesis statement: What central meaning or theme does the motif develop?
- the four most significant quotations, at least one from each act preferably, that support your thesis (with citations)
- detailed paragraph-length explanations for each of the quotations you have chosen (beginning with an effective topic sentence; showing how the quotation supports your thesis and theme statements; and making apt reference to function of literary devices such as *allusion, characterization, comedy, contrast, detail, diction, double entendre, figurative language, foil, imagery, irony, motif, setting, symbol, syntax, theme, tone*)
- visual element(s) that reveal your insight into the topic

You may choose from among the following motifs or another topic of your creation:

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. abuse of power | 7. social expectations (of women, men, servants, masters, children, parents) |
| 2. subversion of power | 8. taming of wildness |
| 3. honesty and deception in courtship | 9. transformation of identity |
| 4. sibling rivalry | 10. consistency of identity |
| 5. disguise as a form of deceit | 11. word play a battle |
| 6. façade | |

OR

Epilogue Assignment (100 points)

We have repeatedly discussed why *The Taming of the Shrew* is a problematic play. Critics believe the text is unfinished because the frame of the play is never completed: the induction involving the deception of Sly as planned and executed by the Lord is not resolved at the end of the play. This lack of resolution is the reason most theater companies, like the one we watched together, choose not to stage the Induction at all and to begin with play-within-a-play of Act 1. Your task is to finish this unfinished play by completing the following:

- Compose a precise statement of theme in which you reveal one of the play's assertions about human nature that is introduced in the Induction and is reinforced in the wedding feast in Act 5.
- Cite and discuss three specific scenes (with supporting quotations) that illustrate this theme. One must come from the Induction.
- Describe in detail the epilogue that you would compose for *The Taming of the Shrew*. How would you return to the plot of the Induction? How will Sly, Bartholomew, and the Lord respond to the play that they have seen? How will their words and actions reinforce the play's theme?
- For bonus points, write a brief section of your epilogue (at least eight lines) of text in blank verse.

BONUS Assignments

You may choose to complete one or two of the following tasks in order to earn bonus points that will be added to your total points and thus improve your grade. Be prepared to present your assignment(s) to the class.

1. Perform a recitation of a speech by Kate or Petruchio for the class. You will be evaluated according to the following criteria:
 - Fluency and pace (speaking without pausing or being prompted), 10 points
 - Accuracy (reciting Shakespeare's exact words with correct pronunciation and in proper order), 10 points
 - Delivery (using appropriate voice and body language while maintaining eye contact), 10 points
 - Interpretation (conveying emotion of the character and apt meaning of the passage), 10 points
2. Choose two central and opposing characters, and begin this activity by making a list of objects and images associated with each character that you will use in the creation of your poems. Using Sandra Cisneros's "Abuelito Who" as your model, write two poems that convey each character's most essential traits. (40 points)
3. Create a visual product that expresses the essence of this play, choosing all elements of the creation with careful intent—form, size, colors, textures, objects, and details. Compose a detailed paragraph, explaining how your product encapsulates the work's theme and providing at least three quotations as support for your theme statement. (40 points)

Kate (Act 5, Scene 2)

Such duty as the subject owes the prince
Even such a woman oweth to her husband;
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,
And not obedient to his honest will,
What is she but a foul contending rebel
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?
I am ashamed that women are so simple
To offer war where they should kneel for peace;
Or seek for rule, supremacy and sway,
When they are bound to serve, love and obey.
Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,
But that our soft conditions and our hearts
Should well agree with our external parts?
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,
My heart as great, my reason haply more,
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;
But now I see our lances are but straws,
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands below your husband's foot:
In token of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready; may it do him ease.

Petruchio (Act 4, Scene 1)

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,
And 'tis my hope to end successfully.
My falcon now is sharp and passing empty;
And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged,
For then she never looks upon her lure.
Another way I have to man my haggard,
To make her come and know her keeper's call,
That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites
That bate and beat and will not be obedient.
She eat no meat to-day, nor none shall eat;
Last night she slept not, nor to-night she shall not;
As with the meat, some undeserved fault
I'll find about the making of the bed;
And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,
This way the coverlet, another way the sheets:
Ay, and amid this hurly I intend
That all is done in reverend care of her;
And in conclusion she shall watch all night:
And if she chance to nod I'll rail and brawl
And with the clamour keep her still awake.
This is a way to kill a wife with kindness;
And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humour.
He that knows better how to tame a shrew,
Now let him speak: 'tis charity to show.

Abuelito Who

Sandra Cisneros

Abuelito who throws coins like rain
and asks who loves him
who is dough and feathers
who is a watch and glass of water
whose hair is made of fur
is too sad to come downstairs today
who tells me in Spanish you are my diamond
who tells me in English you are my sky
whose little eyes are string
can't come out to play
sleeps in his little room all night and day
who used to laugh and like the letter k
is sick
is a doorknob tied to a sour stick
is tired shut the door
doesn't live here anymore
is hiding underneath the bed
who talks to me inside my head
is blankets and spoons and big brown shoes
who snores up and down up and down up and down again
is the rain on the room that falls like coins
asking who loves him
who loves him who?