

The Taming of the Shrew

Thematic Concepts

Power Relationships

Ponder how power is used, abused, or subverted in each of the following relationships:

1. Master-servant
2. Father-child
3. Husband-wife
4. Nobility-lower class

Courtship/Dating

Contemplate how these issues affect events in the play:

1. Male ideas on courtship/dating
2. Female ideas on courtship/dating
3. Love interest as a status symbol or possession
4. Parental interference in courtship/dating
5. Romantic love/love at first sight
6. Male/female expectations in relationships
7. Honesty and deception in relationships

Sisters

Consider how Shakespeare draws on realistic conflicts between sisters in these situations:

1. Rivalry and jealousy
2. Resentments of comparison

Deception

Mull over the roles deception and disguise play in each of the following characters' relationships and examine if each is more deceptive or deceived:

1. Lucentio
2. Tranio
3. Petruchio
4. Bianca
5. Kate

Social Roles and Society's Expectations

Analyze how pressure to conform affects the characters.