

# TWELFTH NIGHT

## TWELFTH NIGHT

By **William Shakespeare**  
Directed by **Seana McKenna**

## GRADE RECOMMENDATION

Grade 6+

## CONTENT ADVISORY

This play includes some intoxication and sexual innuendo.  
[Please see the show page for a detailed audience advisory.](#)

## SYNOPSIS

In Shakespeare's celebrated romantic comedy, Viola finds herself shipwrecked on the island of Illyria. For protection, she disguises herself as a young man, Cesario, and enters the service of Duke Orsino to deliver love letters to Countess Olivia. Drama arises in a tangle of mistaken identities and passions, with Olivia falling for Cesario, whose heart belongs to Orsino, who is still smitten with Olivia. When Viola's twin brother appears, complications peak!

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

### GLOBAL COMPETENCIES

- Citizenship, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity, Metacognition, Self-Awareness

### GRADE 6-8

- The Arts
- Health and Physical Education
- Language Arts
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies, History and Geography

### GRADE 9-12

- The Arts
- English
- Health and Physical Education
- Technological Education

### GRADE 11-12

- Social Sciences and Humanities

### POST-SECONDARY

- Suitable for courses in disciplines such as Arts, Cultural Studies, Creative Writing, Drama, English, Fine Arts, Gender Studies, History, Human Rights, Social Development Studies, Teacher Education and Theatre

## THEMES

- 1967 in Canada
- Bullying and Exclusion
- Chaos and Order
- Disguise, Mistaken Identity, Liberation and Surprise
- Division and Unity
- Excess and Moderation
- The Fool in Shakespeare's Works
- Freedom and Fun; Freedom vs. Oppression
- Gender Performance, Construction and Identity
- Hope and Survival
- Illusion and Reality
- LGBTQ+ Relationships
- Longing and Desire
- Lost and Found; Finding Your Way in a New Place
- Love in All its Shapes and Sizes
- Natural and Unnatural
- Outside and Inside
- Reason and Madness
- Revenge and Justice
- Searching for the Other
- Self-Discovery
- Social Hierarchies and Expectations
- Time in Shakespeare's Comedies
- Trust and Mistrust
- Trusting in Fate
- Twins

## DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever had to navigate somewhere new? Recall how you felt arriving and finding your way. What advice would you give to someone navigating without any ID, cell phone or internet?
- Part of this play is the exploration of the fluidity of gender and sexuality. Does it surprise you that this was included in a play written 400 years ago? Why or why not? How have Western understandings of gender and sexuality changed since Shakespeare's time? What hopes do you have for how they might continue to change?
- This is one of two plays in which Shakespeare features twins. In what ways might twins be helpful in a comedic story?
- "If music be the food of love, play on..." are the first words of the play, said by Orsino. What does this mean to you? The full line is: "If music be the food of love, play on; give me excess of it, that, surfeiting, the appetite may sicken, and so die." What does the full line mean to you and what does it tell us about Orsino?

## STUDY GUIDES

Study Guides for selected 2024 productions are available free of charge online:

<https://www.stratfordfestival.ca/Learn/Teachers/ResourcesPD>

Email [educate@stratfordfestival.ca](mailto:educate@stratfordfestival.ca) for access to past study guides.

## BOOKING INFORMATION: STUDENT MATINÉES, INTERACTIVE PRESHOWS, WORKSHOPS & CHATS

### STUDENT MATINÉES

You may book any available date, but selected student matinée performances for this show are at 2 p.m. on the following dates:

- Friday, April 26
- Wednesday, May 1
- Friday, May 10
- Tuesday, May 14
- Wednesday, May 22
- Friday, May 31
- Wednesday, June 5
- Tuesday, June 11
- Thursday, June 20
- Thursday, September 12
- Thursday, September 26
- Tuesday, October 1
- Friday, October 11
- Tuesday, October 15
- Thursday, October 24

### INTERACTIVE PRESHOWS

Led by artists appearing in the matinée, these high-energy sessions provide students the opportunity to explore key themes, questions and technical aspects of productions on the Festival's renowned stages.

\$4 per student (free for Teaching Stratford Program participants)  
11 a.m. – noon on the following dates:

- Wednesday, May 1
- Friday, May 10
- Tuesday, May 14
- Wednesday, May 22
- Wednesday, June 5
- Thursday, September 26
- Friday, October 11
- Thursday, October 24

[stratfordfestival.ca/InterACTives](https://stratfordfestival.ca/InterACTives)

### WORKSHOPS & CHATS

Workshops and Chats (virtual, onsite or at your school/centre) can be booked by calling the Box Office at 1.800.567.1600 or by emailing [educate@stratfordfestival.ca](mailto:educate@stratfordfestival.ca).

**Pre-Show Workshops** customized to your students' needs and interests are available from 10–11 a.m. or 11 a.m.–noon before selected matinées.

\$10 per student

[stratfordfestival.ca/Workshops](https://stratfordfestival.ca/Workshops)

**Half-Hour Post-Show Chats** with cast and creative team members are available after selected matinées.

\$3 per student

[stratfordfestival.ca/Chat](https://stratfordfestival.ca/Chat)

## SOCIAL MEDIA



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## TOOLS FOR TEACHERS SPONSORED BY



Tools for Teachers includes Prologues, Study Guides and Stratford Shorts.

## PROUD SEASON PARTNER



The 2024 season is generously supported by Ophelia Lazaridis.

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