

AS YOU LIKE IT - Rosalind's Banishment: The Language of Status

Overview

1. The students will examine Shakespeare's choices in using formal or informal language for a character in a scene.

2. They will then investigate how Shakespeare's language helps to determine the actor's movement on stage.

Grade Level	Subject Area	Curriculum Expectations and Learning Outcome		Time Needed	Space	Materials	
7-12	English, Drama	Identify the important information and ideas in the text;	Evaluate the effectiveness of the text, using evidence from the text to support their opinion;	Communicate feelings, thoughts, and abstract ideas through drama.	1-2 class Periods	Desks in groups, then open spaces for exploring the text	Attached handouts of Activities

Rosalind's Banishment: the Language of Status

As You Like It - Act I, scene 3 (excerpt)

ACTIVITY

The tyrannical Duke Frederick has usurped the throne of Rosalind's father, Duke Senior. He has grown distrustful of his niece living at the palace with his daughter, Celia, and has come to banish her from court.

The exchange takes place in a public place, where respect and formality is customary. However, this is also about a family so there are moments of informality.

There are clues in the text on how to play and stage the scene by studying Rosalind's choices in using formal or informal language when she addresses her uncle.

1. Working in pairs underline those words or phrases that you think are informal and circle those words or phrases you think are formal.

2. With your partner act out the scene, using the language cues in the text to help you make the physical choices.

As You Like It - Act I, scene 3 (excerpt)

*Celia and her cousin Rosalind are in a room in Duke Frederick's palace.
Enter DUKE FREDERICK, with Lords.*

DUKE FREDERICK

Mistress, dispatch you with your safest haste
And get you from our Court.

go away quickly if you value your safety

ROSALIND

Me, Uncle?

DUKE FREDERICK

You, Cousin,
Within these ten days if that thou be'st found
So near our public Court as twenty miles,
Thou diest for it.

*plural pronoun denoting high status and formality
thee/thou/thy: singular pronoun for lower status, familiarity or disdain
general, common*

ROSALIND

I do beseech your Grace
Let me the knowledge of my fault bear with me:
If with myself I hold intelligence,
Or have acquaintance with mine own desires,
If that I do not dream or be not frantic
(As I do trust I am not) then, dear Uncle,
Never so much as in a thought unborn
Did I offend your highness.

*offence
if I understand myself with what you are telling me*

*mad
noble
subconsciously*

DUKE FREDERICK

Thus do all Traitors:
If their purgation did consist in words,
They are as innocent as grace itself.
Let it suffice thee that I trust thee not.

*purification/acquittal
virtue, goodness/salvation, divine grace*

ROSALIND

Yet your mistrust cannot make me a Traitor;
Tell me whereon¹ the likelihoods² depends?

1. on what; 2. indications

DUKE FREDERICK

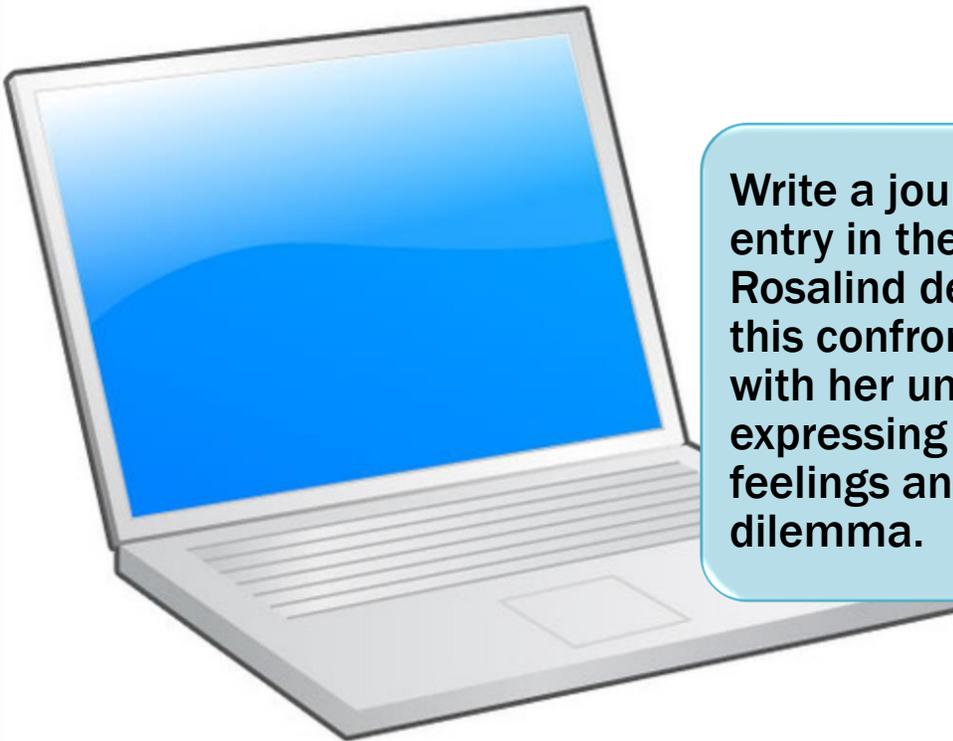
Thou art thy Father's daughter; there's enough.

ROSALIND

So was I when your Highness took his Dukedom;
So was I when your Highness banished him;
Treason is not inherited, my lord,
Or if we did derive it from our friends,
What's that to me? My father was no Traitor.
Then, good my liege, mistake me not so much
To think my poverty is treacherous.

relatives

Write On!



Write a journal entry in the voice of Rosalind describing this confrontation with her uncle, expressing her feelings and dilemma.