

## *As You Like It* | Study Guide

**Directions:** Answer questions in complete sentences, using textual support whenever possible. Since you will not write an essay on this play, your study guide answers should be detailed!

### Acts 1-2:

1. All comic plots are propelled by the overcoming of tension and tragedy. From Act I, Scene I, what is the tension in the relationship between Orlando and Oliver? What is the tension between Duke Frederic and Duke Senior?
2. Why does Rosalind fall in love with Orlando? Why does Orlando fall in love with Rosalind?
3. Throughout his plays, Shakespeare often uses disguises and mistaken identities as plot devices—but, more than this, they also allow him to comment on humans' identity and perception of reality, neither of which ends up being as stable and clear as we like to assume. What disguise do Rosalind and Celia take on at the end of Act 1?
4. Rosalind and Celia decide to flee to the Forest of Arden. Based on what you know about Arden so far, what other places in literature or in your experience does it remind you of?
5. In Act 2, the characters in and spectators of the play move from the world of the court to the world of the forest. How does Duke Senior's opening speech in 2.1.1-7 (that's Act 2, Scene 1, lines 1-17) function as a transition between the two worlds? What characteristics and overall mood does he portray each world as representing? In which world would you rather live?
6. What sort of person is Jacques? Does he seem to fit with the other exiles in the forest? Why or why not?
7. As Adam complains to Orlando in 2.3.2-15, Oliver and Duke Frederick (the story's villains) dislike Orlando simply because he is handsome, virtuous, and courteous. What insight into human nature is Shakespeare characterizing here? What examples of this attitude have you seen in your own world?
8. What is your favorite line or passage from Acts 1-2? Copy it out and explain why it made you laugh, wonder, cry, vent, or contemplate.

### Acts 3-4:

1. One of the most brilliant facets of Shakespeare's writing is his ability to capture universal human emotions. What girlish emotions and tendencies does he portray in Rosalind (despite her manly disguise) when she finds out that Orlando loves her in 3.2.166-255?
2. *As You Like It*, like many Shakespeare plays, is full of both fools (court jesters—Touchstone) and foolish people (Audrey and others). What do you think is the role of folly in comedy? Support your answer with a quote from the text.
3. In 4.3.79, Oliver suddenly appears in the Forest of Arden, pursuing Orlando. What happens to change his attitude towards his brother? And what word does he use to describe this change in 4.3.144? Why is this word significant? What is Phoebe's problem?
4. What is Phoebe's problem? What underlying, misguided attitudes could cause this problem? (Refer back to 3.5.62-68, 77-85 if needed.)
5. Look back to the introduction PPT on Shakespearean comedy vs tragedy. What elements of a typical Shakespearean comedy have we seen so far in *As You Like It*? Use textual support in your answer.

## Act 5:

1. Hymen is the classical god of marriage. Why do you think Shakespeare decided to have him show up to officiate all the marriages in Act 5, rather than just having them work out on their own?
2. In the middle of the wedding ceremony, what news arrives concerning Duke Frederick? What word is again used to describe his transformation in 5.4.166?
3. At the end of Act 5, which characters intend to remain in the forest? Which intend to leave it? What interpretations or conclusions do you draw from this?
4. Having finished the whole play, why do you think it is titled *As You Like It*?