

DRAMA:THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

ACT 1 ,Sc 1

Extract 1

In sooth.....much ado to know myself.

- 1) Where are Antonio and his friends? What does Antonio say about his sadness?
- 2) Give the meaning of :
 - a) Whereof it is born:
 - b) A want-wit sadness:
 - c) That I have much ado to know myself:
- 3) What reason does Salarino give as the probable cause of Antonio's melancholy?
- 4) State in your own words the scene on the ocean as described by Salarino, when Antonio's ships were sailing.
- 5) The play begins in an atmosphere of melancholy. Why do you think that Antonio is presented as a melancholic and passive character?

Extract 2

My wind cooling my broth.....is sad to think upon his merchandise.

- 1) Where does this scene take place? Name the people who are present there. In what mood is Salarino in this scene?
- 2) What would the wind cooling the broth remind Salarino of?
- 3) Give the meaning of :

And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,

Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs

To kiss her burial

- 4) What was the 'sandy hour-glass'? What would it remind Salarino of?
- 5) What is referred to as 'wealthy Andrew'? Why is it so referred?
- 6) When Salarino would go to church what would he see? What would the scene make him imagine?

Extract 3

Why, then you are in love. Fie, fie!

- 1) Who has just said that Antonio was in love? What was the reaction of Antonio to that remark?
- 2) Antonio says that he is not sad because of love. What explanation does Salarino give in the extract for Antonio's sadness?
- 3) What is meant by the two-headed Janus? Why is he referred to in the extract?
- 4) Describe in your own words the two types of strange fellows who have been framed by nature.
- 5) Who is Nestor? Why is he referred to in the extract?
- 6) Give the meaning of:
 - a) And other of such vinegar aspect
 - b) Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable
- 7) Why are a class of people compared to parrots?
- 8) Who comes at the end of Salarino's speech? Why does Salarino leave then?

Extract 4

In my school-days, when.....thankfully rest debtor for the first.

- 1) Where are Bassanio and Antonio? What has Antonio said earlier in reply to which Bassanio speaks these words?
- 2) Explain the following:

Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first
- 3) What confession has Bassanio made to Antonio earlier about his financial position? How can you conclude that Bassanio is a spendthrift?
- 4) What experience of his school days does Bassanio relate to justify his plan for repaying the loan?

Act I Scene 2

Extract I

Nerissa: Your father was ever virtuous.....are already come?

1. What has Portia just said in response to which Nerissa speaks these words?
2. Describe the lottery referred to in the extract.

3. Give the reaction of Portia as well as of Nerissa to the lottery.
4. Give the meaning of "never be chosen by any rightly, but one who you shall rightly love."
5. Portia is melancholic in the beginning of the scene as it was the case with Antonio in the previous scene. What is the difference between Antonio's melancholy and that Portia?
6. How does this scene show a mood of melancholy, anxiety and suspense?

Extract 2

Portia: He doth nothing.....God defend me from these two!

1. Where are Portia and Nerissa? What are they generally discussing about? In what mood is Portia in the scene?
2. Who is County Palatine? Why has he come to Belmont?
3. Who is the first prince described by Portia? What does she say about him?
4. Who is the weeping philosopher? In which context is he referred to in the extract?
5. Give a character-sketch of the County Palatine.

Extract 3

Portia: You know I say nothing.....and his behaviour everywhere.

1. How is the young baron's external appearance described in the passage? What light does it throw on the national pattern of clothes of Englishmen?
2. What shows that the English Lord has poor knowledge of the European languages? Why does Portia find it difficult to interact with him?
3. Give the meaning of:
4. What is referred to as a 'dumb show'? why is the baron said to be a dumb show?
5. Give a brief description of the Scottish Lord

Extract IV *Portia: Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober.....ere I will be married to a sponge.*

1. How does the young German behave when he is sober and when he is drunk? If the worse happens to Portia which would compel her to marry him, what would she do?
2. Give the meaning of:
 - a) When he is worst, he is little better than a beast
 - b) Set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket
3. What plan does Portia make to prevent the young German from choosing the right casket?
4. Why is the young German referred to as a 'sponge'?
5. After Portia's speech, what does Nerissa say to console her about the suitors?

Portia: If I live to be as old as Sibylla.....a fair departure.

1. What was Portia's father's will as far as Portia's marriage is concerned?
2. Who is Sibylla and who is Diana? Why are they referred to in the extract?
3. What does Nerissa say to introduce Bassanio? What were the feelings of Portia for Bassanio in this scene?
4. In what scene can we say that the opening of the first two scenes of Act I give the plots of the play?
5. Name the six suitors given in this scene. Give two characteristics of each suitor described by Portia.

ACT 1 ,Sc 3

Extract 1

Shylock: How like a fawning publican.....most do congregate

1. What is meant by 'a fawning publican'? Give three reasons why Shylock hates Antonio.
2. Give the meaning of the following:
 - a) Low simplicity: Childish foolishness
 - b) Gratis: Free of interest
 - c) Rate of usance: rate of interest
3. Write the meaning of the following in your own words:
I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him
4. What old grudge does Shylock have against Antonio?
5. What does the 'sacred nation' refer to? What insults has Antonio heaped upon Shylock?
6. How does Shylock plan to get the money immediately? What light does this extract throw on Shylock's character?

Extract 2

Shylock:

When Jacob grazed.....Should fall as Jacob's hire.

1. What topic is referred to in the extract? Who were Jacob and Abhraham?

2. Give the story of Jacob who got his share as his payment from Laban.

3. What is the difference between taking interest and receiving payment for one's labour?

4. What role did Jacob's wise mother play to make him the third possessor?

5. How does Antonio interpret Jacob's success after this extract?

Extract 3

Antonio:

Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

....for all use of that which is mine own.

1. What is meant by 'shall we be beholding to you'? What is Rialto?

2. Give some examples to show that Shylock was ill-treated by Antonio. How did Shylock react to Antonio's insults?

3. Why did Shylock bear Antonio's insults patiently?

4. Give the causes, financial and racial, for Shylock's hatred for Antonio.

5. What is the need for Antonio to borrow money from his enemy?

6. Which trait of Shylock's character emerges in this scene?

Act II, SC 1

Extract 1

Morocco; Mislike me not for my complexion...

1. Where does this scene take place? Who are present in the scene? What explanation does Morocco give for his dark complexion?

2. What qualities does a creature born in north have? Why?

3. Who is Phoebus and what is meant by Phoebus' fire? What test does the speaker propose, to prove 'whose blood is reddest'?

4. What effect does the physical appearance of Morocco have on the brave men and the prettiest women of his country?

5. On what condition is the speaker prepared to change his dark complexion?

6. What idea do you get about the character of the Prince of Morocco from the extract?

7. What is the lottery of Portia's destiny? How does it prevent her from the right of voluntary choosing?

8. Give the meaning of:

9. But if my father had not scanted me, And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself

10. How prudent was Portia's father to have arranged her marriage through a lottery? Give a reason for your answer.

11. Give the brief character sketch of the Prince of Morocco in this scene.
12. Do you agree with Portia's statement that the Prince of Morocco stands as fair a chance as the other suitors? Give a reason to justify your opinion.
13. What is meant by a 'scimitar'? What conquests did Morocco make by using his scimitar?
14. State two of the brave deeds Morocco is prepared to carry out in order to win Portia.
15. To challenge the most brave warrior on earth
16. Snatch away the young sucking cubs from the mother bear and dare her wrath
17. Who are Hercules and Lichas? What could happen if they were to play a game of dice? In what way is this example applicable to Morocco?
18. Why is the fortune said to be blind? What does Morocco fear since the blind fortune is leading him to choose the casket?
19. What final instruction does Portia give to Morocco before he is led to make the choice?
20. Why does Portia ask Morocco to go to the temple before he makes the choice of the casket?

Extract 2

Launcelot: Well, my conscience says, "Launcelot, budge not....is the devil himself.

1. Who is Launcelot Gobbo? What inner struggle is going on in his conscience? What does his struggle show about the contemporary Christian practice?
2. Why does Launcelot want to run away from the Jew? What does his conscience advise him to do?
3. Launcelot's speech provides some comic relief in the play? Why was such a relief need in the context of the play?
4. Enumerate the reasons given by Launcelot's conscience to stay on with the master.
5. Finally, whom does Launcelot obey-the devil or his conscience? How is the theme of racial discrimination brought out in Launcelot's decision to run away?
6. How is the theme of conflict between the good and the evil shown in this scene?

Act II, Scene III

Extract I

Jessica :I am sorry thou wilt leave my see me in talk with thee.

1. Give reasons for Launcelot's leaving Jessica's house.
2. Give the meaning of:
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
3. How does Jessica show in words and action that she liked Launcelot's presence in her house?

4. What errand does Jessica give to Launcelot? What precautions does she ask him to take while doing the errand?
5. How does Jessica show herself as a scheming but prudent young lady? In what way is her character different from that of Portia?

Extract II

Launcelot: But, adieu: these foolish.....become a Christian, and they loving wife!

1. How does Launcelot bid farewell to Jessica? In this context, what are your feelings for Launcelot, Jessica and Shylock?
2. Why does Jessica regret being the daughter of Shylock? What is the 'heinous sin' referred to in the extract? Is it really a sin? Give reasons to justify your answer.
3. Give the meaning of :
4. Which promise has Lorenzo to keep? Describe the strife that Jessica is going to end.
5. Explain Jessica's relationship with her father which is shown in the scene.

Act II: Scene 5

Extract I

Shylock: I am bid forth to supper, Jessica.....dream of money-bags tonight.

1. Why does Shylock accept the invitation to dinner? On what grounds did Shylock refuse to accept an invitation to dinner earlier in the play?
2. Why is Shylock unhappy to accept the invitation this time too? Who is the prodigal Christian? Give the significance of the word: prodigal.
3. Give the meaning of:a) I am not bid for love: I am not invited our of love.
b) I am right loath to go: I hate to accept the invitation to dinner.
4. How do Jessica and Lorenzo take advantage of Shylock's absence from home during dinner?
5. What sort of a bad omen did Shylock have which made him think that there is some evil being plotted against him?

Extract I

Lock my doors; and when you.....feasting forth to-night.

1. Who is the speaker of the above lines? To whom is he giving his advice? Why should the doors be locked?

2. Where is the speaker going? What reason does he give for his going out? Who was Jacob? Why does the speaker swear by Jacob's staff?
3. Give the meaning of: a) Clamber not you up to the casements
b) Sound of shallow foppery
4. Who are the 'Christian fools with varnished faces'? What were they planning against the speaker? What warning did the speaker have of it earlier?
5. Summarize the advice of the speaker in your own words.

Extract I Gratiano: And it is marvel he out-dwells.....are with more spirit chased than enjoyed.

1. Where does this scene take place? Who has out-dwelt his hour? Normally what do the lovers do as far as the appointed time is concerned?
2. Who is Venus? How do the Venus pigeons behave as far as love is concerned?
3. How does Gratiano explain in the extract the state of people in love?
4. Give the meaning of:
 - a) He out dwells his hour
 - b) To seal love's bonds new-made
5. Explain the meaning of:

Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unabated fire

6. All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoyed
- How far is this statement brought out by giving the example of a ship?

Extract II

Lorenzo: Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode.....who's within?

1. Where is Lorenzo and who are his sweet friends?
2. What did his friends say about the anxiety of those in love?
3. What were the affairs that kept the speaker away so long?
4. What is meant by 'to play the thieves for wives'? How apt are these remarks in the context?
5. What does Lorenzo ask Jessica to do later in the scene? What is Jessica's reaction to his request?

Act II, Scene 7

Extract I

Portia: Go draw aside the curtains.....make your choice

1. Who is asked to draw aside the curtains? Who is asked to make his choice?
2. What does Portia say later to the prince regarding the right casket?
3. Which casket does the Prince of Morocco finally choose? What are the reasons for his choice?
4. For what reasons does the prince reject the other two caskets?
5. What does the prince find when he opens the casket?
6. How does the prince bid farewell to Portia? What does Portia say when the prince leaves the place?

Question Bank- Acts III, IV, V

ACT III, Sc 1

‘To bait fish withal’ .If it will feed nothing else’. ‘It will feed nothing else. In what context does Shylock react thus? What does it reveal?

How has Antonio insulted Shylock? Mention four ways.

Present some of Shylock’s arguments which make him think that Antonio was more reasonable in the way he has treated him?

What does Shylock indicate by saying, “I will better the instruction?”

What prompts Salerino to ask Shylock about his intentions towards Antonio?

Why is Shylock so distressed at present? What does he reveal?

What is referred to as the Rialto? What type of news is likely to be discussed?

What news does Salerino give Solanio? What are the Goodwins? Why are they fatal?

What wish does Solanio express immediately after hearing the news given in the extract?

Who is referred to as ‘bird’ later on? Where has this bird flown?

What reason does Solanio give for the flight of the bird?

Who is the devil referred to in the extract? What judgment is the devil expected to give?

What contrast does Salerino make between Shylock and the bird immediately after this?

What efforts has Shylock made to recover the bird and what is the outcome of his efforts?

Who is referred to as ‘another of the tribe’? What reply does the person give to Shylock’s question ‘has thou found my daughter’?

What does this person say in order to console Shylock? What does Solanio think of him?

How has Shylock reacted on hearing of Antonio's misfortune?

Give the meaning of "fee me an officer; be speak him a fortnight before."

Why does Shylock plan to go to the synagogue?

Explain in what context the 'monkey' and the 'turquoise' have been mentioned.

ACT III, Sc 2

How does Portia indicate that she is in love with Bassanio?

What reason does Portia give for not teaching Bassanio how to choose?

How long would Portia have liked to detain Bassanio, to teach him how to choose?

Why was Bassanio in a hurry to make the choice of the caskets?

Why do you think Nerissa and the rest are asked to stand aloof?

Explain the term 'a swan like end'. What contemporary belief about swans is expressed in the extract?

'Who is Alcides? How is Bassanio compared to him?

Why does Portia say, "I stand for sacrifice"? What is the theme of the song that Bassanio is asked to choose?

The world is still deceived with ornament'. Who is the speaker of these lines? What is the occasion? What do these words indicate?

'But when this ring parts from this finger.....Complete the sentence. Which ring is referred to by Bassanio?
What promise does he make? Does he break it later?

Explain the comments that Bassanio has made about cowards.

Explain the lines 'Thus ornament is but the guiled shore. To a most dangerous sea the beauteous scarf, Veiling an Indian beauty.'

Bring out the concept of beauty during Shakespearean times. How does Bassanio describe Portia's beauty immediately after opening the casket?

What reasons does Bassanio give for rejecting the gold and the silver caskets?

Why does he choose the lead casket? Briefly state the message written on the scroll. What other object did Bassanio find in the casket?

Give three reasons to state why Portia is still happy in her present condition.

How does Portia seal her agreement with Bassanio? What instruction does he give regarding the token she gives him? What is Bassanio's assurance regarding the token?

'Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear'. What does Portia mean by these lines?

How does Portia describe herself? Highlight Portia's sterling qualities.

How did Gratiano meet his future wife? On what condition did she promise to marry him?

Explain briefly how Gratiano's fortune too "stood upon the casket."?

Referring to the letter, who has brought it? Why did Portia claim the right to know what was in the letter?

Why did Portia claim the right to know what was in the letter? What admission does Bassanio make, in reply to Portia mentioning her claim?

Why according to Bassanio was everything a 'gaping wound'?

What was Bassanio's reaction to the news? Explain the reason.

ACT III, Sc 3,4, 5

But since I am a dog beware my fangs.....Where are Antonio and Shylock at present? Who else is there with them? (Sc 3)

What does Shylock want the jailor to do early in the scene? How does he react to Antonio's request to listen to him?

What makes Antonio say that the duke cannot refuse to let the law take its course?

Contrast the characters of Shylock and Antonio as presented in this scene.

What does Antonio speak about Venetian law? What are Antonio's last words in scene 3? What does he mean?

'I know you would be prouder of the work.. Than customary bounty can enforce you. Who speaks these lines? Name the 'true gentleman' referred to in the scene. (Sc 4)

Explain the lines: 'Than customary bounty can enforce you'.

Why does Portia say that Antonio must be like my lord'?

What cruelty is referred to in the scene? Why is it called 'hellish'?

What excuse does Portia give for leaving Belmont with Nerissa? Why do you think that she gives this excuse?

After Jessica and Lorenzo leave, whom does Portia plan to meet and what for? What does she tell Nerissa?

What does Launcelot mean by saying:....a)The sins of the father are to be laid upon the children. b) I speak my agitation of the matter. (Sc 5)

Explain the reference to Scylla and Charybdis. What does Launcelot wish to highlight here?

How does Jessica hope to escape damnation? How would Jessica, becoming a Christian, affect the food supply?

State and explain the accusations made by Lorenzo in this scene.

What does Jessica say to indicate that there is no danger of such an accusation?

Explain the lines..'O dear discretion, how his words are suited! The fool has planted in his memory. An army of good words and I do know A many fools that stand in better place.....

Who is the fool referred to? What is meant by 'how his words are suited/ Give an instance to show, how his words are suited?

How does Jessica describe and praise Portia? Why does she say that Bassanio must live an upright life?

State and explain two important qualities of a) Portia b) Jessica c) Lorenzo.... as seen in this scene.

ACT IV ,Sc 1,2

Why is Shylock referred to as the stony adversary? What does the Duke tell Antonio?

What reply does Antonio give?

What does the Duke tell Shylock? Explain the reference to Turks and Tartars.

'If you deny it let danger light upon your charter and your city's freedom!' Explain.

What circumstances made the Duke hope for a change in Shylock's heart. Give an example to show that the Duke favours Antonio?

What is referred to as 'the holy Sabbath'? Explain clearly what the conditions of 'the due and forfeit' of the bond are.

Explain the reason given by Shylock for his preference to have carrion flesh rather than to receive three thousand ducats. What is carrion flesh?

Bassanio says, 'Every offence is not hate at first.' What offence is he referring to?

To what does Antonio compare Shylock's attitude to?

What does Bassanio offer at this point? What is Shylock's reply?

Explain the reference to slaves as argued by Shylock.

Does the Duke dismiss the court? What is he waiting for?

Explain Antonio's words: I am a tainted wether of the flock.....epitaph.

Who enters now? What is Shylock doing? What does he say? How does Gratiano react? What does he call Shylock? Who is Pythagoras? Which theory of Pythagoras is referred to in the extract? Which spirit had been infused into Shylock and when?

Summarise Portia's speech on the quality of mercy.

'That in the course of justice, none of us should see salvation'. Explain this line.

We do pray for mercy.....the deeds of mercy. Explain. What does Shylock reply?

What does Bassanio offer? What does he mean 'To do a great right, do a little wrong'.

After reading the bond, what did Portia say? To whom does Shylock compare her as a judge? What were the terms of comparison?

In what way is Bassanio arm'd and well prepared? Why does Antonio consider that fortune is kind to him? What is meant by the 'lingering penance'?

Why does Antonio consider that Fortune is kind to him? What is meant by the 'lingering penance referred to in the extract? State, what according to Antonio, Bassanio must regret? To what extent was Bassanio prepared in order to save him?

What aspect of the bond trap Shylock? How does Gratiano react to the new interpretation of the bond? Why does Portia refuse Shylock even the principal he gave Antonio? Explain 'another hold' which the Venetian law has on Shylock.

Bring out the various details and the humor in the ring episode.

Why is Portia in a hurry to get back to Belmont? Why does she refuse to dine with Bassanio?

What secret plan does Nerissa propose to Portia?

ACT V, Sc 1,

Who are the two lovers present in the first part of the scene? Describe the romantic atmosphere.

Who are Troilus and Cressida? Why did he sigh his soul towards Grecian tents?

Who are the other mythical lovers mentioned in the scene? Bring out their story.

'Look how the floor of heaven Is thick inlaid with patents of bright gold'. Explain.

What does the speaker of the above line told about the effect of music on wild horses.

What effects, according to the speaker are the effects of lack of music on man?

What does the listener say about music?

Who is the poet referred to here? What did he imagine?

Who was Orpheus? What was the effect of music played by Orpheus?

What does Portia say later about music?

Give the meaning of: Since naught so stockish, hard and full of rage, But music for the time doth change his nature.

What observation does Portia make as she enters her home. Bring out the comparison with the king here. Explain.

State the orders to be given to Portia's servants through Lorenzo, before the arrival of Bassanio.

How did Lorenzo know of the arrival of Bassanio? What did Portia say about the night?

Give the meaning of the line: We should hold day with the Antipodes, If you would walk in absence of the sun.'

How does Bassanio introduce Antonio to Portia? What does Portia say welcoming Antonio to her house?

A quarrel, ho already! What's the matter? About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring.....cutler's poetry.....Who are the speakers? Explain a hoop of gold; cutler's poetry.

Who had given the ring to Gratiano? What promise was made by him at that time about the ring?

Explain the words: 'If I could add a lie unto a fault ,I would deny it'.

Give evidence to show that Bassanio unwillingly gave away the ring. How does he try to defend himself?

Who settles the dispute? What surprises Bassanio?

What good comforts does the 'clerk' have for Lorenzo?

How does Lorenzo react after coming to know of the good comforts?

What does Portia tell the others since it is morning already? Why dos she say she will satisfy their curiosity?

Who utters the last lines in the play? What does he say?

Tick the right answer

1. Why does Bassanio need to borrow money from Antonio?

- a. To get his ships out to sea b. To pay for his daughter's wedding c. To court Portia, a rich heiress d. To pay off his debts

2. When Antonio borrows the money on behalf of Bassanio from Shylock, what are the moneylender's terms?

- a. An exorbitant rate of interest b. No interest, but a pound of Antonio's flesh if the repayment is late c. No interest, but Antonio's daughter's hand in marriage if the repayment is late d. A pound of Bassanio's flesh for every day the repayment is late

3: Shylock dislikes Antonio intensely because Antonio a. never repays his loans b. publicly condemns Shylock for charging excessive interest c. pretends he is your friend, and then swindles you. d. refuses to haggle

4: Bassanio chooses the lead casket, which contains a. a portrait of Portia b. 3,000 ducats c. a deed to property d. a ring

5: What does Shylock bring with him to the courtroom? a. A monkey b. Leah's ring c. Jessica's picture d. A knife and scales

6: Which of the female characters disguise themselves as boys during the course of the play? a. None of them b. All of them c. Portia and Nerissa d. Portia and Jessica

7: Which of the following characters does not get married at the end of the play?

- a. Portia b. Gratiano c. Antonio d. Jessica

8. "It's a wise father who knows his own child" is said by A. Jessica B. Launcelot C. Lorenzo

9. The young Venetians like to compare themselves to A. merchant ships B. unrefined gold C. musical instruments
10. The episode of the rings might be said to show A. that Bassanio does not take his marriage seriously B. that loyalty in spirit is more important than vows and sworn oaths C. that Bassanio will eventually have to choose between his best friend and his wife
11. In joking about her German suitor, Portia suggests A. placing a bottle of wine on the wrong casket B. he's in love with his horse C. he's a vile coward
12. "The shadowed livery of the burnished sun" refers to A. the new uniform Bassanio gives Launcelot B. the Prince of Morocco's complexion C. Shylock's hoarded gold
13. The casket picked by Prince of Aragon is the wrong one as A. silver is less valuable than gold B. his choice was too obvious C. his choice was dictated by logic, not love
14. Shylock hates Antonio because I. he is a Christian II. he has insulted him III. he deals in merchandise IV. he lends money without charging interest A. II only B. I and III only C. all of these D. I, II and IV only
15. In The Merchant of Venice, love and money are A. enjoyed only by those who guard them carefully B. two forms of wealth C. in constant conflict.
