How does William Shakespeare use dialogue involving Hero and Claudio to develop plot in *Much Ado About Nothing*?

In this lesson you will learn how the author develops complex characters and advances the plot by analyzing what characters say.

Let's Review

Much Ado About Nothing

Shakespeare, 1623

Act I, Scene I

SCENE I. Before LEONATO'S house.

Enter LEONATO, HERO, and BEATRICE, with a Messenger

LEONATO

I learn in this letter that Don Peter of Arragon
comes this night to Messina.

Messenger

He is very near by this: he was not three leagues off
when I left him.

LEONATO

How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?   5

Messenger

But few of any sort, and none of name.

LEONATO

A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings
home full numbers. I find here that Don Peter hath
bestowed much honour on a young Florentine called Claudio.

Messenger

Much deserved on his part and equally remembered by   10
Don Pedro: he hath borne himself beyond the
promise of his age, doing, in the figure of a lamb,
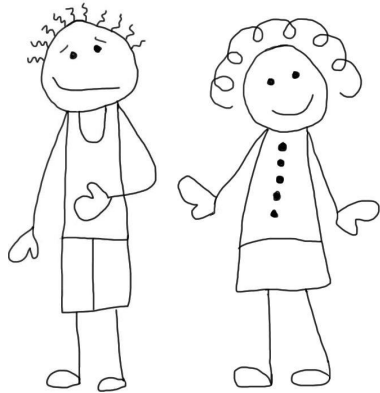the feats of a lion: he hath indeed better

- Author: William Shakespeare

- Play

- Written in 1623

- Comedy

- Act I, Scene 1
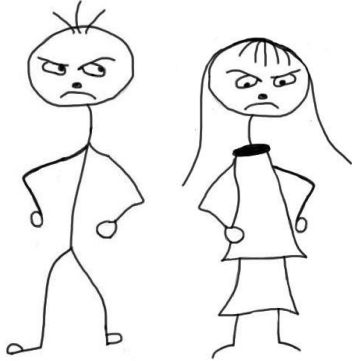
Benedick and Beatrice

- We learn mainly from what they say <u>to</u> one another

Claudio and Hero

- We learn mainly from what they say <u>about</u> each other

LEARNZILLION

1 Annotate examples of characters speaking to or about one another.

2 Ask, "How does the author use dialogue to develop character?"

3 Ask, "How does characterization advance the plot?"

LEARN ZILLION

Core Lesson

1 Annotate examples of characters speaking to or about one another.

BEATRICE
I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returned from the wars, or no?

MESSENGER
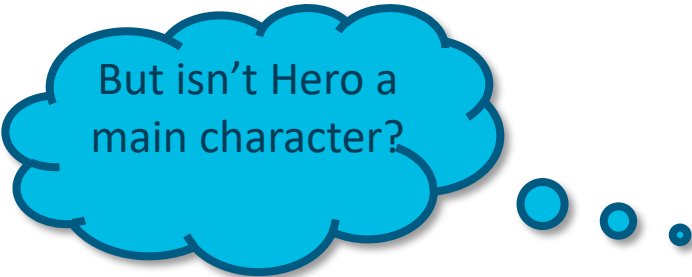I know none of that name, lady: there was none such in the army of any sort.

LEONATO
What is he that you ask for, niece?

HERO
My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

(I.i.27-32)

But isn't Hero a main character?

Hero
• quiet, perhaps shy
• knows Beatrice well

LEARNZILLION

Core Lesson

1 Annotate examples of characters speaking to or about one another.

CLAUDIO
   Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of
   Signior Leonato?
BENEDICK
   I noted her not; but I looked on her.
CLAUDIO
   Is she not a modest young lady?
BENEDICK
   Do you question me, as an honest man
   should do, for my simple true judgment;
   or would you have me speak after my custom,
   as being a professed tyrant to their sex?
CLAUDIO
   No; I pray thee speak in sober judgment.

   (I.i.141-146)

Claudio finds her well-mannered.

Is this a compliment?

Why does he need another opinion?

He presses Benedick for an opinion.

LEARNZILLION

Core Lesson

1 Annotate examples of characters speaking to or about one another.

CLAUDIO

In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

BENEDICK

I can see yet without spectacles and I see no such matter: there's her cousin, an she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I have hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you?

CLAUDIO

I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

(I.i.163-171)

Has he fallen in love?

Claudio finds her "sweet": beautiful? wonderful?

Wow! That was fast!

He wants to marry her?

LEARNZILLION

2 Ask, "How does the author use dialogue to develop character?"

Hero		Claudio	
What do we know?	**How?**	**What do we know?**	**How?**
• Quiet • A sharp contrast from Beatrice	• Doesn't speak	• Easily influenced • Unsure of himself • A sharp contrast from Benedick	• Speaks about Hero to Benedick
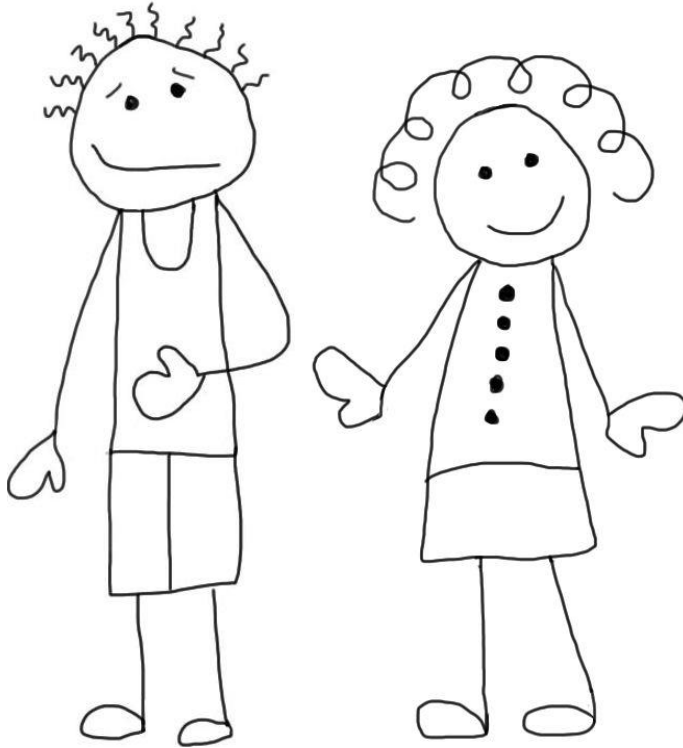
LEARNZILLION

How does William Shakespeare use dialogue involving Hero and Claudio to develop plot in *Much Ado About Nothing*?

One way that William Shakespeare develops plot tension in Act I, Scene 1 is by introducing Hero and Claudio. Despite the fact that Claudio doesn't speak to Hero – but only about her – he decides he is in love with her. By the end of the first scene, the audience wants to know whether or not Claudio will succeed in getting Hero to notice him.

In this lesson you have learned how the author develops character and advances the plot by analyzing what characters say.