

# THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

## – THE BIG QUESTION

A Key Stage 3 and 4 PSHE and Citizenship  
Resource



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## Curriculum Links

This KS3/KS4 Citizenship, English and Personal Wellbeing teaching sequence provides a scheme of work to help pupils learn about forming and talking through their opinions. It uses Shakespeare's plays to explore a range of topics including:

- *Personal growth and maturity*
- *Responsibility at different stages of life*
- *The importance of the rule of law*
- *Young people and mental health*
- *The power of political rhetoric*
- *Forgiveness and retribution*
- *Religious and other forms of extremism*
- *Cyberbullying and the pressures of social media*
- *The importance of diversity and of respecting difference*

### From the National Curriculum – Citizenship

#### Purpose of study

A high-quality citizenship education helps to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. In particular, citizenship education should foster pupils' keen awareness and understanding of democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld. Teaching should equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments. It should also prepare pupils to take their place in society as responsible citizens, manage their money well and make sound financial decisions.

#### Aims

The national curriculum for citizenship aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of how the United Kingdom is governed, its political system and how citizens participate actively in its democratic systems of government.

- Develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the role of law and the justice system in our society and how laws are shaped and enforced.
- Develop an interest in, and commitment to, participation in volunteering as well as other forms of responsible activity, that they will take with them into adulthood.
- Are equipped with the skills to think critically and debate political questions, to enable them to manage their money on a day-to-day basis, and plan for future financial needs.

## Subject content

### Key stage 3

Teaching should develop pupils' understanding of democracy, government and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Pupils should use and apply their knowledge and understanding while developing skills to research and interrogate evidence, debate and evaluate viewpoints, present reasoned arguments and take informed action.

Pupils should be taught about:

- The development of the political system of democratic government in the United Kingdom, including the roles of citizens, Parliament and the monarch.
- The operation of Parliament, including voting and elections, and the role of political parties.
- The functions and uses of money, the importance and practice of budgeting, and managing risk.

### Key stage 4

Pupils should be taught about:

- Parliamentary democracy and the key elements of the constitution of the United Kingdom, including the power of government, the role of citizens and Parliament in holding those in power to account, and the different roles of the executive, legislature and judiciary and a free press.
- The different electoral systems used in and beyond the United Kingdom and actions citizens can take in democratic and electoral processes to influence decisions locally, nationally and beyond.
- Other systems and forms of government, both democratic and non-democratic, beyond the United Kingdom.
- Local, regional and international governance and the United Kingdom's relations with the rest of Europe, the Commonwealth, the United Nations and the wider world.

- Human rights and international law.
- The legal system in the UK, different sources of law and how the law helps society deal with complex problems.
- Diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding.
- The different ways in which a citizen can contribute to the improvement of their community, to include the opportunity to participate actively in community volunteering, as well as other forms of responsible activity.
- Income and expenditure, credit and debt, insurance, savings and pensions, financial products and services, and how public money is raised and spent.

## **The Personal Wellbeing Programme of Study – non statutory**

### **The range and content includes:**

#### **Key Stage 3**

- Examples of diverse values encountered in society and the clarification of personal values.
- The knowledge and skills needed for setting realistic targets and personal goals.
- Physical and emotional change and puberty.
- Sexual activity, human reproduction, contraception, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections and HIV and how high-risk behaviours affect the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.
- Facts and laws about drug, alcohol and tobacco use and misuse, and the personal and social consequences of misuse for themselves and others.
- How a balanced diet and making choices for being healthy contribute to personal wellbeing, and the importance of balance between work, leisure and exercise.
- Ways of recognising and reducing risk, minimising harm and getting help in emergency and risky situations.
- A knowledge of basic first aid.
- The features of positive and stable relationships, how to deal with a breakdown in a relationship and the effects of loss and bereavement.
- Different types of relationships, including those within families and between older and young people, boys and girls, and people of the same sex, including civil partnerships.
- The nature and importance of marriage and of stable relationships for family life and bringing up children.
- The roles and responsibilities of parents, carers and children in families.

- m. The similarities, differences and diversity among people of different race, culture, ability, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation and the impact of prejudice, bullying, discrimination and racism on individuals and communities.

#### **Key Stage 4**

- a. The effect of diverse and conflicting values on individuals, families and communities and ways of responding to them.
- b. How the media portrays young people, body image and health issues.
- c. The characteristics of emotional and mental health, and the causes, symptoms and treatments of some mental and emotional health disorders.
- d. The benefits and risks of health and lifestyle choices, including choices relating to sexual activity and substance use and misuse, and the short and long-term consequences for the health and mental and emotional wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.
- e. Where and how to obtain health information, how to recognise and follow health and safety procedures, ways of reducing risk and minimising harm in risky situations, how to find sources of emergency help and how to use basic and emergency first aid.
- f. Characteristics of positive relationships, and awareness of exploitation in relationships and of statutory and voluntary organisations that support relationships in crisis.
- g. The roles and responsibilities of parents, carers, children and other family members.
- h. Parenting skills and qualities and their central importance to family life.
- i. The impact of separation, divorce and bereavement on families and the need to adapt to changing circumstances.
- j. The diversity of ethnic and cultural groups, the power of prejudice, bullying, discrimination and racism, and the need to take the initiative in challenging this and other offensive behaviours and in giving support to victims of abuse.

## The Big Question – The Taming of the Shrew

<p><b>Learning Objective</b></p> <p>Pupils use a range of balanced and persuasive argument techniques across a range of activities to formulate a viewpoint and argument related to the Big Question for this lesson.</p> <p>Pupils analyse the relationships depicted in the play and consider modern-day help and support available.</p> <p><b>Success Criteria (including differentiation)</b></p> <p><b>All</b> can express an initial opinion on the ‘Big Question’ and justify their viewpoint.</p> <p><b>Most</b> can develop their opinion over the course of the lesson sequence by listening and responding to others.</p> <p><b>Some</b> can articulate a clear balanced argument on the ‘Big Question’, using sophisticated argument techniques.</p>	<p><b>Big Question: How can we foster positive relationships?</b></p> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b> exploitation, perception, statutory, manifest</p>	
	<p><i>To begin: Discover the events of <a href="#">The Taming of the Shrew</a> using the <a href="#">SSF 10 Events</a> and the instructions for exploring the story in the <a href="#">Appendix</a>.</i></p> <p><b>Lesson Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils make a living family tree for the play, depicting characters’ relationships spatially and discussing their choices.</li> <li>• Class discussion about the qualities of a positive relationship and how these qualities might manifest.</li> <li>• Discussion of the opposite qualities, how they manifest and what the potential consequences are.</li> <li>• Groups research organisations that support people in relationships. Pupils think about how they could help someone they know who is struggling in a relationship.</li> <li>• <b>Written task:</b> Writing as Bianca, pupils compose advice for Kate in her marriage to Petruchio.</li> <li>• Plenary: Pupils revisit the family tree and discuss advice they would give to different characters on their relationships.</li> </ul> <p><b>See Teaching and Learning Activities for full details</b></p>	<p><b>Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Taming of the Shrew – 10 events</b></li> <li>• <b>Instructions for exploring the story in the Appendix</b></li> </ul>
		<p><b>National Curriculum Links</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The features of positive and stable relationships, how to deal with a breakdown in a relationship.</li> <li>• Different types of relationships, including those within families and between older and young people, boys and girls.</li> <li>• The nature and importance of stable relationships.</li> <li>• Characteristics of positive relationships, and awareness of exploitation in relationships and of statutory and voluntary organisations that support relationships in crisis.</li> <li>• Examples of diverse values encountered in society and the clarification of personal values.</li> </ul>

# The Taming of the Shrew – The Big Question

## Teaching and Learning Activities

### Starter Activity - Living Family Tree

- Explain that as a group you're going to make a visual representation of the relationships in *The Taming of the Shrew*, with pupils as the characters.
- Ask for a volunteer to represent Kate. Ask them to stand in the centre of the room.
- Invite other characters one by one to build on the image by positioning themselves in relation to the people already in the space. E.g. Bianca, coming in second, might choose to stand close to Kate or to sit far away with her back to her. Encourage the use of levels, bringing chairs into the space if possible. Follow this structure to begin with but add more as appropriate.
  - Kate
  - Bianca
  - Baptista
  - Lucentio
  - Gremio
  - Hortensio
  - Petruchio
- Once every character has positioned themselves, use **thought tapping** to question students about their choices – why are you positioned here? What is your relationship with this character? Would you say you had a good relationship with them? Why is that? Students can make adjustments anytime if they change their mind or a new character in the space alters things.
- It is worth considering holding a discussion here about the following things, to ensure that Shakespeare isn't written off as someone who didn't understand relationships.

#### 1. Shakespeare's stock female character of the 'witty but unmarriageable woman'.

Ask them to draw comparisons here with other women in Shakespeare, E.g. Beatrice, who once she is paired off at the end of 'Much Ado About Nothing' her love, Benedick, tells her before he kisses her: 'Peace, I will stop thy mouth'. Both her and Kate are presented as strong and independent women (unusual for the time) but both are conquered and silenced at the end of the plays. What does this tell us about women and their role in society at the time?

#### 2. The reasons why women needed to marry during this time.

Women had no financial independence or freedom and they were very much considered their father's property, who were then handed over to a husband. The responsibility for the women was passed from one man to another and women often had no say or control over this.

## Teaching and Learning Activity One - What does a positive relationship look like?

- Invite a class discussion of the qualities of a positive relationship, and write these up on the board. Encourage your pupils to consider romantic relationships, but also friendships and familial relationships.
- For each quality (e.g. generosity) ask how this might manifest in a relationship (e.g. cooking for them, giving them gifts, prioritising time to help them) and write this up too.
- For each quality, ask what the opposite of this is, (e.g. selfishness) so that you build a list of things that undermine positive relationships.
- Again ask how each of these qualities might manifest (e.g. prioritising own concerns) and ask students what the result of these actions might be, so that you build a chain of possible consequences (e.g. prioritising own concerns leads to never making time for the other person, might lead to partner feeling unsupported and isolated, might lead to depression or other mental health conditions).
- It's likely that pupils will have differing ideas of what constitutes a 'good' or 'bad' relationship. Encourage them to be sensitive to each others' different values and steer where necessary.

## Teaching and Learning Activity Two - Who can help?

- Split the class into groups and ask them to research different organisations that support people in relationships. Some ideas are:
  - **Relate:** Charity that offers advice on every type of relationship, including dedicated services for young people. [www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)
  - **Family Lives:** National charity providing help and support on all aspects of family life. [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
  - **Women's Aid:** Grassroots federation that aims to end domestic violence against women and children. [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)
  - **ManKind:** Provides information and support for men in abusive relationships. [www.mankind.org.uk](http://www.mankind.org.uk)
  - **Karma Nirvana:** Charity supporting victims of honour-based abuse and forced marriage. [www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)
- Groups present back to the rest of the class.
- Ask pupils to consider in groups how we can help someone who is unhappy or struggling in a relationship. Signposting professional organisations such as the ones above is a valid and often the most important answer but what else can they do to personally support someone?



### **Written task: Advice for Kate**

- If necessary, remind pupils of the nature of Petruchio and Kate's marriage. Good scenes to look at are three, five, nine and the final moments of the play SSF script.
- Kate, married to Petruchio, has contacted Bianca (assuming Bianca feels more friendly towards her sister now). Kate describes her marriage, says she is unhappy and asks her sister for advice. Write to Kate as Bianca – what advice would you give her? What could you do to help her?

### **Plenary**

- Return to the family tree. Pupils are free to shift their positions if their minds have changed.
- Ask pupils what advice they would give characters about their relationships, especially:
  - Kate and Petruchio
  - Kate and Bianca
  - Baptista and his daughters
- Talk through different options and opinions. E.g. do Kate and Bianca need to just sit down and talk things through or should they seek relationship counselling?

Appendix 1

# THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

**THE BIG QUESTION**

Resources Pack



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# The Taming of the Shrew

## 10 Events

1. A rich father, Baptista, will not allow his youngest daughter, Bianca, to marry either of her suitors, Gremio and Hortensio, until his eldest strong-willed daughter Katherine has found a husband.
2. One of the suitors – Hortensio – finds an old friend, Petruchio, who needs to marry for money.
3. Petruchio meets Katherine and tries to woo her.
4. Petruchio and Baptista agree a generous dowry and the wedding day.
5. Petruchio, late for the wedding, marries Katherine and takes her, unwilling, to his home in the country.
6. Petruchio treats Katherine cruelly in order, he hopes, to 'tame' her.
7. Katherine's younger sister, Bianca, falls for a young student Lucentio instead of one of her older suitors.
8. Hortensio, jilted, goes to Petruchio's home to see if can learn from Petruchio how to teach a wife to behave.
9. At a great wedding feast Hortensio marries a widow and Bianca marries Lucentio.
10. At the wedding dinner Petruchio, Hortensio and Lucentio lay bets on which of their wives will obey them the most. Petruchio appears to have tamed Katherine, winning the bet.

## Exploring the story

**Before you start this lesson and delve into the Big Question in the play, you might want to familiarise yourself with the story first.**

- There are lots of different approaches you could take, including using the 10 point summary.
- If you and/or your students don't know the play, then the following process is a great way to introduce them to the story and some of the main characters.
- As with any lesson, do adapt this to suit the needs of your students.
- This is a great way to get the story on its feet quickly and help your students to understand the story arc.

**Firstly, divide your students into groups and give them copies of the 10 point summary to explore the story order.**

- Cut up and remove the numbers from the 10 point summary.
- Give each group a few minutes to rearrange them into the correct order.
  - You could print a large copy of the 10 point summary so that each one is on an A3 page and when you go through the order with the whole class you can stick them up in the correct order around the room.
  - Ensure that you correct misconceptions as you go through the points and ask your students to justify and clarify the decisions they made.
  - This will support with comprehension work across English as there are some key indicators of the story structure (E.g. Romeo and Juliet can only get married once they have met, Macbeth can only become King once he has killed the King).

**Once the correct order has been established, give each group two consecutive story points and ask them to create freeze frames to show this moment. Provide them with two rules**

1. Everyone must be involved.
  2. Someone/some people must read out the story point.
- Give them a strict time limit to create the freeze frame, before moving onto their second one.
    - Ask them to consider what else they could be if there are only a small amount of named characters in the scene - could they create the architecture or double up on characters?
  - After the time limit is up, give them a further two minutes to consider how they would adjust their positions so that the rest of the class can see the whole image – ask them to consider their audience.
  - With the rest of the class watching, move from one group to another, seeing each freeze frame in order and hearing the story point. Then jump into the image to ‘Thought tap’ some (or all ideally) of the characters.
    - It is really encouraging for students if they get to share their ideas, whether they are Juliet or Juliet’s wardrobe, Macbeth or one of his soldiers.
  - Ask them open questions about who they are, what they are doing and how they feel about it. Facilitate this in a light-hearted way to avoid the students feeling under pressure.
  - If they struggle with an answer, throw the question out to the rest of the group and the audience.
    - This is a great opportunity to get some interpretations of characters’ thoughts and actions but do use it to clarify facts about the story and the characters too.
    - It is also a great time to show that you don’t have all of the answers either and that you will all find out more as you delve further into the play and rehearsals.
    - You could do this ‘Thought Tapping’ as a ‘Roving Reporter’, using a prop as a microphone to interview the characters as if live in that moment.

**Once you have done this for each of the 10 images, bring the class back together for a plenary.**

This is a good time to recap on what they have learnt about the characters and/or the story and you could do this in a number of ways. E.g.

1. **Tell the story in a circle.** Everyone sits in a circle and adds a bit more information on the previous person's ideas. This means that those that have a good grasp will be able to share their knowledge and those who are still working towards it, will be able to add whatever they can – such as a character name or a setting for the play.
2. **Provide them with Plenary cards.** Use the following examples and ask them to share their response with someone else.
  - Something they have learnt today; a new word or phrase that they have used today; something that they would like to know more about; something that they are looking forward to in the play; a question that they now have about the play.
3. **Learnt and enjoyed.** Simply ask for them to tell a partner something that they have learnt and something that they have enjoyed in this lesson.