

Proposed Core Literature Titles

The following summary is provided by the California Department of Education's "Recommended Literature List", and the top three Google searches of the book title and author name that produced a description of the title.

Twelfth Night, or, What You Will

Proposed Grade Level: 8

SHAKESPEARE AND PLAIN ENGLISH



Title: Twelfth Night, or, What You Will

Author: William Shakespeare

First Published: 2002

Lexile Level: 1140

Proposed Grade Level: 8

California Department of Education, Recommended Literature List:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/rl/>

This title is on the CDE Recommended Literature List.

Annotation: On the island of Illyria, Duke Orsino pines away for the love of the beautiful, but unapproachable Olivia. A tempest occurs that brings Viola and Sebastian to the shores, and a renewed pursuing of affection begins among the island's inhabitants. (Circa 1600.)

Copyright: 1992:

Original Copyright: 1600

Grade Level Span: 9-12

Genre: Drama

Classification: Classic

Topic: English-Language Arts/General

Discipline: English Language Arts/Vocabulary; Visual and Performing Arts

Descriptions From Top 3 Google Searches:

Search: "Twelfth Night or What You Will" by William Shakespeare

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelfth_Night

Viola is shipwrecked on the coast of Illyria and she comes ashore with the help of a Captain. She has lost contact with her twin brother, Sebastian, whom she believes to be drowned, and with the aid of the Captain, she disguises herself as a young man under the name Cesario and enters the service of Duke Orsino. Duke Orsino has convinced himself that he is in love with Olivia, who is mourning the recent deaths of her father and brother. She refuses to see entertainments, be in the company of men, or accept love or marriage proposals from anyone, the Duke included, until seven years have passed. Duke Orsino then uses 'Cesario' as an intermediary to profess his passionate love before Olivia. Olivia, however, falls in love with 'Cesario', setting her at odds with her professed duty. In the meantime, Viola has fallen in love with Duke Orsino, creating a love triangle: Viola loves Duke Orsino, Duke Orsino loves Olivia, and Olivia loves Viola disguised as Cesario.

In the comic subplot, several characters conspire to make Olivia's pompous steward, Malvolio, believe that Olivia has

fallen for him. This involves Olivia's riotous uncle, Sir Toby Belch; another would-be suitor, a silly squire named Sir Andrew Aguecheek; her servants Maria and Fabian; and her witty fool, Feste. Sir Toby and Sir Andrew engage themselves in drinking and revelry, thus disturbing the peace of Olivia's household until late into the night, prompting Malvolio to chastise them. Sir Toby famously retorts, "Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" (Act II, Scene III).

Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and Maria plan revenge on Malvolio. They convince Malvolio that Olivia is secretly in love with him by planting a love letter, written by Maria in Olivia's handwriting. It asks Malvolio to wear yellow stockings cross-gartered—a colour and fashion that Olivia actually hates—to be rude to the rest of the servants, and to smile constantly in the presence of Olivia. Malvolio finds the letter and reacts in surprised delight. He starts acting out the contents of the letter to show Olivia his positive response. Olivia is shocked by the changes in Malvolio and agreeing that he seems mad, leaves him to be cared for by his tormentors. Pretending that Malvolio is insane, they lock him up in a dark chamber. Feste visits him to mock his insanity, both disguised as a priest and as himself.

Meanwhile, Viola's twin, Sebastian, has been rescued by Antonio, a sea captain who previously fought against Orsino, yet who accompanies Sebastian to Illyria, despite the danger, because of his admiration for Sebastian. Sebastian's appearance adds the confusion of mistaken identities to the comedy. Taking Sebastian for 'Cesario', Olivia asks him to marry her, and they are secretly married in a church. Finally, when 'Cesario' and Sebastian appear in the presence of both Olivia and Orsino, there is more wonder and confusion at their physical similarity. At this point, Viola reveals her identity and is reunited with her twin brother.

The play ends in a declaration of marriage between Duke Orsino and Viola, and it is learned that Sir Toby has married Maria. Malvolio swears revenge on his tormentors and stalks off, but Orsino sends Fabian to placate him.

<https://www.amazon.com/Twelfth-Night-What-You-Will/dp/1076786669>

In the kingdom of Illyria, a nobleman named Orsino lies around listening to music, pining away for the love of Lady Olivia. He cannot have her because she is in mourning for her dead brother and refuses to entertain any proposals of marriage. Meanwhile, off the coast, a storm has caused a terrible shipwreck. A young, aristocratic-born woman named Viola is swept onto the Illyrian shore. Finding herself alone in a strange land, she assumes that her twin brother, Sebastian, has been drowned in the wreck, and tries to figure out what sort of work she can do. A friendly sea captain tells her about Orsino's courtship of Olivia, and Viola says that she wishes she could go to work in Olivia's home. But since Lady Olivia refuses to talk with any strangers, Viola decides that she cannot look for work with her. Instead, she decides to disguise herself as a man, taking on the name of Cesario, and goes to work in the household of Duke Orsino. Viola (disguised as Cesario) quickly becomes a favorite of Orsino, who makes Cesario his page. Viola finds herself falling in love with Orsino—a difficult love to pursue, as Orsino believes her to be a man. But when Orsino sends Cesario to deliver Orsino's love messages to the disdainful Olivia, Olivia herself falls for the beautiful young Cesario, believing her to be a man. The love triangle is complete: Viola loves Orsino, Orsino loves Olivia, and Olivia loves Cesario—and everyone is miserable. Meanwhile, we meet the other members of Olivia's household: her rowdy drunkard of an uncle, Sir Toby; his foolish friend, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, who is trying in his hopeless way to court Olivia; Olivia's witty and pretty waiting-gentlewoman, Maria; Feste, the clever clown of the house; and Malvolio, the dour, prudish steward of Olivia's household. When Sir Toby and the others take offense at Malvolio's constant efforts to spoil their fun, Maria engineers a practical joke to make Malvolio think that Olivia is in love with him. She forges a letter, supposedly from Olivia, addressed to her beloved (whose name is signified by the letters M.O.A.I.), telling him that if he wants to earn her favor, he should dress in yellow stockings and crossed garters, act haughtily, smile constantly, and refuse to explain himself to anyone. Malvolio finds the letter, assumes that it is addressed to him, and, filled with dreams of marrying Olivia and becoming noble himself, happily follows its commands. He behaves so strangely that Olivia comes to think that he is mad. Meanwhile, Sebastian, who is still alive after all but believes his sister Viola to be dead, arrives in Illyria along with his friend and protector, Antonio. Antonio has cared for Sebastian since the shipwreck and is passionately (and perhaps sexually) attached to the young man—so much so that he follows him to Orsino's domain, in spite of the fact that he and Orsino are old enemies. Sir Andrew, observing Olivia's attraction to Cesario (still Viola in disguise), challenges Cesario to a duel. Sir Toby, who sees the prospective duel as entertaining fun, eggs Sir Andrew on. However, when Sebastian—who looks just like the disguised Viola—appears on the scene, Sir Andrew and Sir Toby end up coming to blows with Sebastian, thinking that he is Cesario. Olivia enters amid the confusion. Encountering Sebastian and thinking that he is Cesario, she asks him to marry her. He is baffled, since he has never seen her before. He sees, however, that she is wealthy and beautiful, and he is therefore more than willing to go along with her. Meanwhile, Antonio has been arrested by Orsino's officers and now begs Cesario for help, mistaking him for Sebastian. Viola denies knowing Antonio, and Antonio is dragged off, crying out that Sebastian has betrayed him.

Suddenly, Viola has newfound hope that her brother may be alive.

<https://www.amazon.com/Twelfth-Night-What-William-Shakespeare/dp/1791359310>

William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*, was written in 1601 or 1602 at the end of Christmastide. It is a comedy intended as entertainment at the end of the holiday season. The play is set in Illyria, and follows the story of the twins Viola and Sebastian. The beginning of the play finds Viola shipwrecked on the Illyrian coast and helped to shore by the captain. Her twin brother Sebastian, also aboard the ship, is nowhere to be found and Viola believes him dead. She disguises herself as a man named Cesario and begins service under the Duke Orsino. Duke Orsino pines after Olivia. However Olivia is in mourning after losing her father and brother, and will not be brought out of her grief or accept marriage proposals for seven years. Duke Orsino decides to have Cesario help him, asking Cesario to explain how strong his love is for Olivia. However, Olivia mistakenly falls in love with Cesario, believing Viola's disguise too well. Viola herself has fallen helplessly in love with Duke Orsino. While this love triangle is occurring, multiple characters create a ruse to convince Olivia's conceited steward Malvolio that Olivia is in love with him. These conspirators include Sir Toby Belch, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Olivia's servants Maria and Fabian, and the fool, Feste. Amused by their deception, they create a ruckus at Olivia's house by drinking and partying late into the night and hiding a fake love letter allegedly written by Olivia to Malvolio. The servant Maria pens the letter to imitate Olivia's writing, and asks Malvolio to wear yellow stockings, smile affectionately at Olivia whenever she appears, and to be rude to the rest of the household. When Malvolio discovers the letter he is excited to learn of Olivia's affections and begins to follow the letter's instructions. Olivia is not pleased to see the change in his character and does not return any affection at all. His tormentors pretend Malvolio has gone insane and see that he is locked in a dungeon, where the fool Feste visits and mocks him, pretending to be a priest at times. The missing twin Sebastian has meanwhile been rescued from the shipwreck by his friend Antonio. Seeing the resemblance between Sebastian and Cesario confuses Olivia who believes them to be the same person. She asks Sebastian for his hand and they marry secretly. When Viola and Sebastian are reunited there is confusion amongst all. Viola reveals that she was Cesario in disguise and that she loves Duke Orsino. They decide to marry. Sir Toby Belch, who was also an admirer of Olivia's, decides instead to marry her servant Maria. Malvolio is angry at the deception and says he will take revenge, but is talked down by Fabian. The gender bending from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, is a comment on a day of revelry that was commonplace in Shakespeare's era. On this twelfth night after Christmas roles were changed as women dressed as men and vice versa. The celebration was based on a Roman festival called Saturnalia, which was an excuse for an evening of drunken festivities and inverted social order. In *Twelfth Night*, the grumpy Malvolio can represent the adversary of these imbibed festivities. The conspirators that aim to humiliate Malvolio, Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek, representing the comic revelers. The play was written to be performed at Christmastide and was performed right after its completion in 1602. Shakespeare borrowed some elements of the story from Barnabe Rich's short story entitled *Of Apollonius and Silla*, which was in turn based on Matteo Bandello's story.