

**SHAKES  
PEARE  
FESTIVAL**

# Twelfth Night 2024-25 Study Guide

## ABOUT THIS STUDY GUIDE

The Colorado Shakespeare Festival will soon send actors to your school as part of a Shakespeare & Violence Prevention project. This study guide is a resource for you, whether you are an administrator, counselor, teacher, or student. Our program is most successful when schools have prepared in advance, so we encourage you to use this study guide to connect the material to your curriculum. Shakespeare offers a wonderful opportunity to explore meaningful questions, and we encourage you and your students to engage deeply with those questions.

This study guide was written and edited by Dr. Amanda Giguere and Dr. Heidi Schmidt, with input from Lulu Buck (Educational Equity & Community Engagement, St. Vrain Valley School District), Georgina Owen (Colorado Office of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education), Judi Hofmeister (Colorado Department of Education), Laurie Keith (Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence), Brett Cogswell (Safe2Tell), and Josue Miranda (Spanish translator). [add Sarah?]



## ABOUT SHAKESPEARE & VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Colorado Shakespeare Festival partners with CU Boulder's Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) and the Department of Theatre & Dance to create a touring program that increases awareness of Shakespeare and violence prevention.

Our actors will visit your school to perform an abridged three-actor version of *Twelfth Night* that explores the cycle of violence, using research from CSPV. In a 30-minute performance and 50-minute classroom workshops, we draw parallels between Shakespeare's world and our own. We recommend the performance for grades 3-5.



Theatre is about teamwork, empathy, and change. When your students watch the play, they will observe misunderstandings, mistreatment, cruelty, and reconciliation. They'll see examples of unhealthy and destructive relationships, as well as characters who become "upstanders"—people who make the choice to help. This play is intended to open up the dialogue about the cycle of violence and mistreatment—and to remind us all that change is always possible.

**CU★PRESENTS**

The post-show classroom workshops use theatre activities to increase your students' ability to work as a team and be upstanders. We employ empathy-building and team-building activities, key elements in creating a positive school environment.

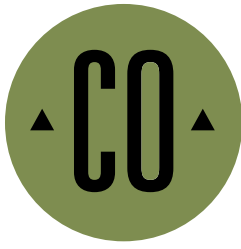


Our short visit to your school aims to inspire your students with live, professional theatre, but the work does not end when our actors depart. We encourage you to continue this conversation after our visit in order to create positive change in your own school setting.

## COLORADO CURRICULUM STANDARDS

This program was developed with a standards-based focus in multiple content areas. Content areas addressed by the performances, classroom workshops, and the contents of this study guide include:

- Reading, Writing, and Communicating
- Drama and Theatre Arts
- Comprehensive Health
- Social and Emotional Learning
- Colorado Essential Skills



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## ABOUT TWELFTH NIGHT

### Why this play?

*Twelfth Night* is set in Illyria, a topsy turvy world, where shipwrecks, lost twins, songs, celebrations, and griefs collide. In this raucous world of revelry, one character becomes the target of a prank, and things quickly get out of hand. This play provides opportunities for questions about the cycle of violence, bullying, and moments of choice.

### Three-Person Cast

Shakespeare's version of this play has seventeen characters. We combined some roles and eliminated others but we still have eight characters (including a set of twins) all played by only three actors. The challenge becomes how we differentiate these characters—look out for different costume pieces to help you keep track!

### Gender and Casting

In Shakespeare's time, only men were allowed to perform publicly, so Shakespeare's plays feature a LOT of male characters. These restrictions don't make sense in today's world, so in our production, we have changed the gender identity of some of these characters. We hope to carve out new possibilities within these 400-year-old plays, so that the plays reflect our own time.

### Bilingual Shakespeare

In this production, some characters speak occasionally in Spanish. Shakespeare belongs to all of us, and we hope that when you see a Spanish-speaking character, this helps you see Shakespeare's ability to cross boundaries and connect people from different backgrounds. Whether or not you speak Spanish, how does this choice impact the way you listen to the play?

**KINDNESS IS NEVER A SIGN OF WEAKNESS**

## Land Acknowledgment

We honor and acknowledge that the Colorado Shakespeare Festival resides on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Ute Nations. We recognize the sophisticated and intricate knowledge systems Indigenous people have developed in relationship to their lands and respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land. You can learn more about the original inhabitants where you live by searching your (or your school's) address at [native-land.ca](http://native-land.ca)



**SAFE2TELL** provides students, parents, and community members a safe and anonymous way to report information about any issues that concern their safety or the safety of others. You can use your voice to make the life of someone else better. Sometimes if YOU don't speak up for someone, no one else will. You can make a difference. Safe2Tell will not ask for your name or contact information when you make a report.

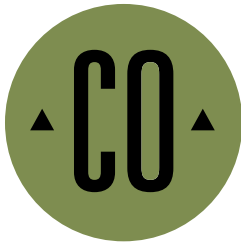
**HOW TO REPORT: (877) 542-7233 | [safe2tell.org](http://safe2tell.org) | Download the mobile app**

**Colorado Shakespeare Festival  
Education Programs**

[coloradoshakes.org/education](http://coloradoshakes.org/education)  
[csfedout@colorado.edu](mailto:csfedout@colorado.edu)  
(303) 735-1181

**Center for the Study and Prevention  
of Violence**

[colorado.edu/cspv](http://colorado.edu/cspv)  
(303) 492-1032



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# How Do I Prepare?

## TEACHER CHECKLIST

This might be your students' first exposure to theatre and/or Shakespeare, so we recommend establishing some norms with your students to prepare for this program:

- In theatre, actors are vulnerable onstage; they step into the shoes of another character (metaphorically) and help us see the world from another person's perspective. For actors to do their jobs, they need to know that their audience will respect their work, their bravery, and their honesty.
- We will respect the actors, we will respect one another, and we will respect ourselves. How do we cultivate a classroom of mutual respect?
- Trying new things is hard! When the actors visit our classroom, we might be asked to step out of our comfort zone and participate in some activities with the actors. Let's support one another for being brave, being honest, and for trying new things.
- The Shakespeare & Violence Prevention post-performance workshops emphasize three key ideas: Teamwork, Empathy, and Change. What do these things have in common? How can we prepare ourselves to work as a team, practice empathy, and rehearse the change we'd like to see in our community?

### How do I prepare my students for the play?

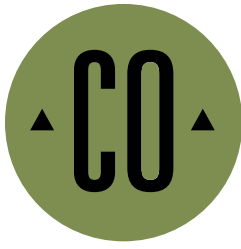
- Review Meet the Characters (pg. 4) and Things to Look For (pg. 8) with your students. You can print these pages as handouts to familiarize your students with the characters, plot, and some themes of the play.
- Use the Mini-Lesson Plan (pg. 6) and the activity (pg. 7) to help your students think through some of the big questions presented in *Twelfth Night* in advance of the performance.
- Discuss appropriate theatre etiquette with your students. Our performance is frequently interactive (like Shakespeare's original performances). Students are encouraged to laugh and applaud when they enjoy the show, though we ask them not to have private conversations, use cell phones, eat during the performance, or otherwise distract the performers or their fellow students. Remind them that just as they can see and hear the actors, the actors can also see and hear the audience.

### How do I prepare for post-show workshops?

- Be ready to participate and co-facilitate with our teaching artist. The more involved you are, the more your students learn!
- Talk with your class about the upcoming actor-led theatre workshop. Set expectations about trying new things and respecting one another.
- Push desks/chairs to the side of your classroom to create an open, movement-friendly space.
- At the end of the workshop, our teaching artist will step out of the room while you conduct an anonymous, 3-question survey with your students. Don't worry about preparing - they'll give you a card with the questions pre-printed.

### What should I do after the visit?

- Take the 5-minute survey in your thank you email to let us know what you thought.
- Use the Discussion Questions (pg. 9) to have a follow-up discussion with your students about the performance and the workshops.
- Look for ways to integrate the performance and workshop in your units throughout the year by tying your lesson plans back to the ideas and questions posed by the visit from the CSF actors.



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# Meet the Characters

(and the actors who play them)



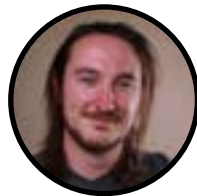
**VIOLA**

A young female shipwreck survivor who believes her twin brother has drowned. Viola dresses up as a boy, adopts the name Cesario, and gets a job with Orsino.



**SEBASTIAN**

Viola's twin brother. He survives the shipwreck, and eventually finds himself in Illyria, where he is mistaken for Viola's fictional persona, "Cesario."



**ORSINO**

A duke in Illyria. He thinks he is desperately in love with Olivia, but he is possibly more in love with love. He learns that true love is right under his nose.



**OLIVIA**

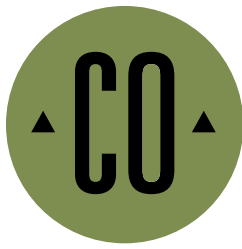
A countess in Illyria. She is in mourning for her brother (like Viola), and has no interest in Orsino. However, she falls head over heels for Cesario - who is actually Viola in disguise.

## SHIPWRECKED IN ILLYRIA

Viola is shipwrecked on the unfamiliar shores of Illyria. She assumes that her twin brother, Sebastian, drowned in the wreck.

## THE ILLYRIANS

Illyria has drama of its own. Orsino is in love with Olivia, but she doesn't love him back. Viola/Cesario gets a job with the Duke.



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# Meet the Characters

(and the actors who play them)



## **MALVOLIO**

Olivia's steward, or butler. Malvolio likes rules, disapproves of Toby and Andrew, and has a secret crush on Olivia.

**TRICKS**  
At Olivia's house, her cousin Toby doesn't get along with her butler Malvolio, and it's becoming a problem.  
Toby and Andrew plan a prank. They send a message to Malvolio, pretending to be Olivia, telling him to smile a lot and to wear yellow stockings – Olivia's least favorite color!



## **TOBY**

Olivia's cousin, who loves to dance, party, and listen to music.

**GETTING OUT OF HAND**  
Malvolio falls for the prank, starts acting strangely in front of Olivia, and ends up locked in a dark room.  
The prank has gone too far. How can Toby and Andrew fix it?



## **ANDREW**

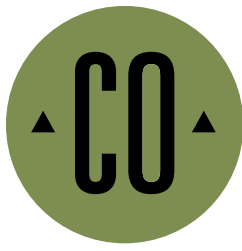
Toby's foolish friend. He also has a crush on Olivia, though it quickly becomes clear that she's more interested in Cesario.

**RESOLUTION?**  
Remember Viola's lost twin brother Sebastian? He shows up and Olivia mistakes him for Cesario (who is really Viola).  
The characters sort out who is who.  
Malvolio promises revenge on everyone.



## **SWING / STAGE MANAGER**

Our stage manager, Sarah, does a log of work backstage to make sure this performance goes well. She is also a "swing," or understudy. She has learned ALL the roles in this production so if someone gets sick, Sarah can perform in their place!



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# Mini-Lesson Plan

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS | BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

**Rationale:** This mini-lesson will introduce students to the plot of *Twelfth Night* and prepare them to take part in a Shakespeare & Violence Prevention workshop with a CSF actor.

**Objective:** Students will be able to articulate thoughts and feelings of two very different characters in *Twelfth Night* by practicing empathy and imagining character responses to multiple scenarios from the play.

**Instructions:** Use any relevant information from the Study Guide to introduce some of the characters, plot points and themes of *Twelfth Night* to your students.

Share the graphic organizer with your students (pg. 7). After the students have completed their work, invite them to share their answers in pairs or create a class brainstorming session on empathy.

### **COLORADO CURRICULUM STANDARDS**

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/standards>

#### **Reading, Writing and Communicating: Standard 1: Oral Expression and Listening**

- Prepared Graduates: collaborate effectively as group members or leaders who listen actively and respectfully; pose thoughtful questions, acknowledge the ideas of others; and contribute ideas to further the group's attainment of an objective

#### **Reading, Writing and Communicating: Standard 2: Reading for All Purposes**

- Prepared Graduates: read a wide range of literary texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience

#### **Drama and Theatre Arts: Standard 3: Critically Respond**

- Perceive and analyze artistic work
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work
- Connect artistic experiences to our our world; past, present and future

#### **Comprehensive Health: Standard 4: Prevention and Risk Management**

- Prepared Graduates: apply knowledge and skills that promote healthy, violence-free relationships

### **ADDITIONAL CONNECTIONS**

#### **SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) Core Competencies** <https://casel.org>

- Self Awareness
- Self Management
- Social Awareness
- Responsible Decision-Making
- Relationship Skills

#### **Colorado Essential Skills**

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/essentialskills-pdf>

- Self-awareness
- Personal responsibility
- Adaptability / flexibility
- Perseverance / resilience
- Critical thinking / problem-solving
- Creativity / innovation
- Inquiry / analysis
- Informed risk taking
- Collaboration / teamwork

### **WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT BULLYING AND YOUTH VIOLENCE**

- 5% of students in this country miss school each day because of bullying. That translates to 160,000 students missing school daily.
- 57% of the time, bullying stops in 10 seconds or less when a bystander becomes an upstander.

### **PROTECTIVE FACTORS THAT LOWER RISK OF VIOLENCE**

- Supportive relationships
- Connections with peers, school, family, and community
- Involvement in prosocial activities

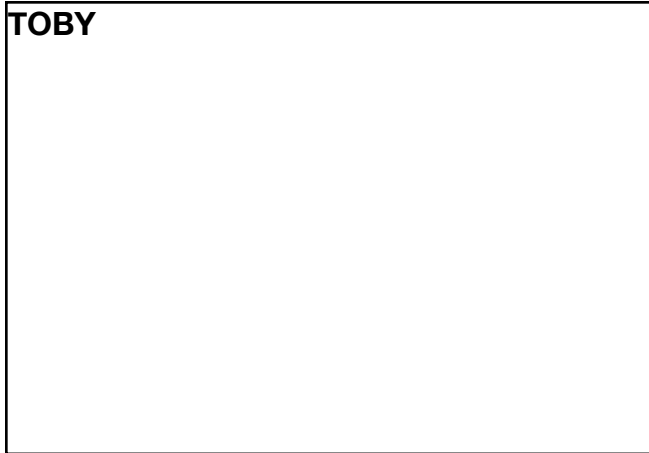
**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Before you see *Twelfth Night*

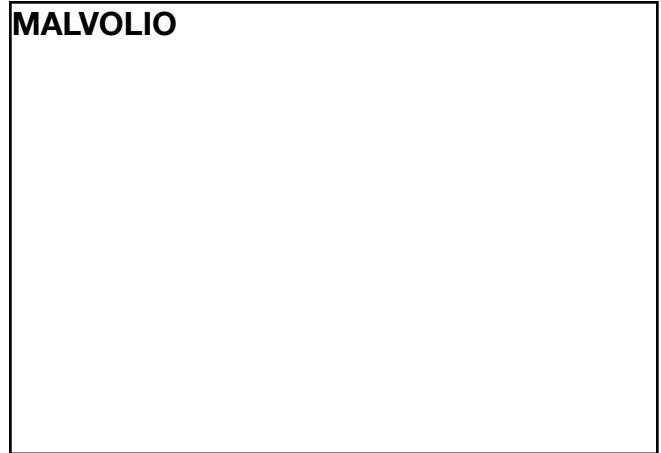
Soon you will watch actors from the Colorado Shakespeare Festival perform a play for you called *Twelfth Night*. In the play, two characters named Malvolio and Toby don't get along. Malvolio likes rules, order, and quiet, while Toby likes loud music, dancing, and partying late at night.

1. Draw a picture of what you think each character might look like based on these descriptions.

**TOBY**



**MALVOLIO**



*Toby, with the help of some friends, sends a fake message to Malvolio, pretending to be Malvolio's crush, Olivia. The message tells Malvolio that Olivia likes him, and he should wear yellow stockings if he likes her back. Toby knows that yellow is Olivia's least favorite color - but Malvolio doesn't.*

2a. How do you think **Toby** feels watching Malvolio find, read, and believe the fake message?

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2b. How do you think **Malvolio** feels when he finds and reads the message he believes is from Olivia?

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*Malvolio believes the fake message and starts acting strangely around Olivia. Olivia is confused and worried about Malvolio and asks Toby to keep an eye on him. Instead, Toby tells everyone Malvolio is crazy and locks him alone in a dark room.*

3a. How do you think **Toby** feels when Malvolio is locked up?

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3b. How do you think **Malvolio** feels when he is locked up for following the message's instructions?

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*At the end of the play, Toby's trick is revealed and Malvolio is released.*

4a. How do you think **Toby** feels once Malvolio is free and everyone knows what Toby has done?

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4b. How do you think **Malvolio** feels once he is free and learns the whole thing was a trick?

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5. If you saw this happening at your school, what could **you** do to help the situation?

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

# Things to look for as you watch:

## A POWER IMBALANCE

Example(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## A PRANK (OR A TRICK) THAT GOES TOO FAR

Example(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## SOMEONE ASKING FOR HELP

Example(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ONE CHARACTER TREATING ANOTHER AS INFERIOR (OR LESS IMPORTANT)

Example(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## SOMEONE HURTING ANOTHER PERSON TO GET WHAT THEY WANT

Example(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## A BYSTANDER WHO CHOOSES NOT TO HELP

Example(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## AN ACT OF KINDNESS

Example(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

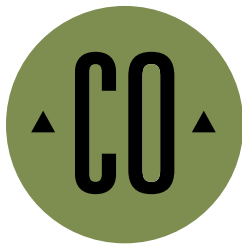
### What is Bullying Behavior?

Before you see the play, review the definition of bullying:

1. There is an intention to harm (they do it on purpose)
2. It is repeated over time (and often escalates)
3. There is a power imbalance (when one person has more power than another)

As a class, discuss what this means. How is bullying different from other kinds of conflicts? Could some bullying be prevented if we put ourselves in the shoes of others? What do you do when you see bullying behavior?





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## After the Performance: Discussion Questions

- What is empathy? Why is it important? Was there ever a time when you “stepped into someone else’s shoes”? What did it teach you?
- Actors use teamwork to trust one another when they are onstage. How is teamwork useful in school?
- How do the characters change from the beginning of the play to the end? What causes these changes? Have you ever noticed a change in your own behavior?
- Why do you think the other characters choose to mistreat Malvolio? If you were Malvolio, how would you feel when you discovered the other characters had tricked you? If you were one of the other characters, would you have behaved differently?
- Malvolio’s final line in the play is, “I’ll be revenged on the whole pack of you.” When the other characters say they will “pursue him and entreat him to a peace,” what do you think that conversation looks like? What would **you** say to Malvolio?
- When Shakespeare’s company first performed this play, all of the actors were men and boys and spoke mostly in English. How do you think changing a character’s gender or language impacts the story?
- Why do you think actors are still performing the plays of Shakespeare? What do the stories have to teach us today?
- How could you apply what you learned from this play here in your school? How about outside of school?

## Tips from the Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence

### HOW TO BE AN UPSTANDER

- Refuse to join in if someone tries to get you to taunt and torment another person.
- Get a teacher, parent, or other responsible adult to come help. This isn’t snitching. It’s helping. You are saying that you don’t think bullying is acceptable and don’t want anyone to get hurt.
- Try to get the person being bullied to tell a trusted adult. Offer to go with them.
- Tell a trusted adult yourself if the person being bullied is unwilling to report it. Do not let the person behaving as a bully know so that they do not become aggressive toward you.

### SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEYS

One of the most important components of a safe school is a climate where youth feel secure and supported in their learning environment. As part of the Safe Communities Safe Schools (SCSS) project, the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence offers school climate surveys, at a low cost, with options for students, staff, and parents. For more information about our surveys or to administer any of the SCSS Surveys at your school, please contact us via email at [cspv@colorado.edu](mailto:cspv@colorado.edu) or by phone at 303-492-1032.

<https://cspv.colorado.edu/what-we-do/surveys/>

## Program Sponsors

“I can no other answer make but thanks, and thanks, and ever thanks.” - *Twelfth Night*  
The Colorado Shakespeare Festival is deeply grateful for the support of these generous sponsors, who make the Shakespeare & Violence Prevention program possible.



**Dorothy & Anthony  
Riddle Foundation**

