William Shakespeare’s
All’s Well That Ends Well
“Easy Reading Old World Literature”

All’s Well That Ends Well

LEVEL 5

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About the Author

William Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-on-Avon, a city in England. His mother’s name was Mary Arden. His father, John, was a wealthy businessman. There is very little known about William Shakespeare’s early life. It is believed that he attended a local grammar school where the students learned Latin, public speaking, and religion. Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway in 1582. They had three children. Susanna was first, followed by twins Hamnet, and Judith. In 1584, Shakespeare left Stratford and went to London.

By 1592, Shakespeare was a well-known actor and playwright. In 1599, Shakespeare, along with others, opened the Globe Theatre. In the early 1600’s Shakespeare’s company worked under King James I and became known as the King’s Men. In 1608, the King’s Men acquired the Blackfriars Theatre, which became their winter home. In 1613, the Globe was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt a year later. However, by that time, Shakespeare had retired from writing. Shakespeare died in his hometown of Stratford on April 23, 1616.

Interdisciplinary Teaching Suggestions

Language Arts:
Be a Critic: Create a classroom critic’s corner. Break students up into ten groups. Allow each group to read a chapter before the class and prepare a critique just like the movies!
Create a Diary based on Shakespeare’s Characters: Have students choose a character from the story. After reading each chapter, students should write a diary entry on their character’s feelings based on the events in the story.

Math:
Create a Bar Graph: What professions were available in Shakespeare’s time? What were the average salaries paid? Create a bar graph.
Compare Prices: What was the average cost of food, shelter and clothing during Shakespeare’s day?

Science:
Scientific Discoveries During Shakespeare’s Life: Galileo Galilei was born in the same year as William Shakespeare. Research and report on Galileo’s discoveries throughout Shakespeare’s life.

Geography:
Create a Map: Research and compare Europe in Shakespeare’s time and Europe as we know it today. Create a map of each.

General:
Create a Classroom Bulletin Board: Break up students into small groups. Make each group responsible for an area of the bulletin board that pertains to the story. Create a story cluster describing literary elements from the story, for example: setting, characters, and plot.
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### KEY WORDS

- abandon
- ability
- intent
- sole
- style
- youth
- descendant
- entirely
- goddess
- growth
- recently
- rely
- brag
- fame
- heal
- peril
- scar
- shuffle
- blush
- compare
- grant
- grave
- select
- sincere
- appetite
- burglar
- confidence
- due
- vicious

### NECESSARY WORDS

- courtier
- ailing
- condemn
- authority
- apology
- mourn
- confess
- contract
- insult
- duke
- noble
- humble
- devil
- miracle
- ignorance
- rank
- inherit
- forfeit
- quality
- liar
- remedy
- reform
- regret
- reject
- restore
- reputation
- steward
- virtue
- vow
- ward

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### KEY WORDS

- admiration
- cloak
- holy
- suggestion
- troop
- undertake
- desperate
- generation
- obtain
- rehearse
- snare
- yarn
- bluff
- clue
- crush
- defeat
- release
- shrill
- alter
- appreciate
- clung
- exhaust
- hasty
- transportation
- craft
- inspect
- lent
- perplex
- proper
- valuable

### NECESSARY WORDS

- conceal
- ambush
- betray
- anguish
- guilty
- mingle
- blindfold
- deceive
- repay
- misfortune
- modest
- fabric
- resemble
- suspicious
- pursue
- interpreter
- passion
- reveal
Helena's Hope

PREPARATION

Key Words

abandon (ə banˈdən) 1. to leave behind
   The pioneers had to abandon the wagon after the wheel broke.
   2. to give up completely
   Marc refused to abandon his dream of becoming a sports announcer.

ability (ə bilˈə tē) special skill; talent
   Elizabeth had the ability to talk enemies into becoming friends.

intent (inˈ tent) plan or purpose that one has set one’s mind to
   The cat’s intent was to reach the singing bird in its cage.

sole (sōl) one and only
   Chris was the sole child in his family to complete his education.

style (stīl) the popular design of clothing; fashion
   Bella couldn’t decide which shoe style looked best with with her dress.

youth (yüth) the time between childhood and adulthood
   During his youth, the hairs on Seth’s chin grew into a beard.
Helena's Hope

Necessary Words

courtier (kor′ tē ār) one who gives company and help to a king or queen
The king told the courtier to bring him his robe.
mourn (môrn) to feel great sadness over something lost
Those who came to mourn the mayor’s death were dressed in black.
noble (nō′ bəl) of a family believed to be more deserving than a lower class; high and great by birth, rank, or title
Katherine comes from a noble family.
A duke is a noble.
rank (rangk) the position or class a person was born into
In some countries, a person can’t move beyond one’s rank no matter what great things one does.
remedy (rem′ ā dē) a way of fixing what is wrong; a cure
Shawn learned that the best remedy to loneliness was to join a club.
reputation (rep′ yə tā′ shən) the good things people believe about a person
Jenny earned a reputation for being kind to others.
virtue (vər′ chü) moral goodness; a good quality found in someone
Kindness is a virtue.
Kindness is Kathy’s greatest virtue.
ward (wôrd) a young person under the care and protection of a grown-up
If her parents ever died, Elise knew she would become the ward of her favorite uncle.

People, Places, Things

Count of Rousillon is young Bertram
Mars a planet named after the Roman god of war. Some people in Shakespeare’s time believed the position of stars at one’s birth decided their character.
Paris a city in France
Parolles is a name Shakespeare made up from a French word meaning “words.” Some people’s words can be as empty of meaning as what Parolles says!
Bertram’s father has died. Now a ward of the King, Bertram must go to Paris.

Now read the story.
Read to find out who loves young Bertram.
Helena’s Hope

“We have only just begun to mourn for your father,” the Countess of Rousillon said to her son. The handkerchief she twirled in her hands was bright white against her black dress. “You having to go hurts as much as watching your father being buried.”

“I don’t want to abandon you,” Bertram said, “but, nobody has the freedom to refuse the King.”

Upon his father’s death, Bertram had become a ward of the King. The old lord Lafew, friend of the Countess, had come to take him to the King’s court in Paris.

“Is the King still ill?” the Countess asked Lafew.

“None of his doctors have shown the ability necessary to cure him,” said Lafew. “They’ve disappointed him so many times that he’s abandoned hope.”

The Countess turned to the pretty young girl waiting a few steps behind her. “I wish your father were still alive, Helena. No doctor had greater abilities than he. He would have found a remedy for the King’s illness.”

“I’ve heard your father was the most skilled doctor in France,” agreed Lafew.

“Helena was his sole child,” said the Countess. “She became my ward after he died a few months ago. Her family gave her good character. Her own heart makes her even worthier.”

“Your praise has made her weep,” said Lafew to the Countess.

“I shouldn’t have mentioned your father,” said the Countess. “Don’t cry so, Helena. You act as if your father died just moments ago, not months ago.”

“All ages mourn over death,” said Lafew. “But, youth must learn to control such shows of sadness.”

Bertram grew impatient with the fuss over Helena. Although she was beautiful and kind, Helena was below his rank. He wasn’t interested in her feelings. Bertram cleared his throat. “I should be leaving.”

Lafew frowned at this interruption, but the Countess smiled. “You’re as handsome as your father was in his youth. Now, make your character as good as his, as well. Your actions should mirror his reputation. Be kind to all, trust only a few, and do no wrong to anyone.”

Bertram looked at Helena. “Be good to your mistress,” he ordered.

“Good-by, Helena,” Lafew said. “I know you’ll always keep up the fine reputation of your father, as well.”

Alone in the hall, Helena let tears roll down her cheeks. She hadn’t admitted the true cause of her sadness. She was in love with Bertram! But, he was from a noble family, and she was a doctor’s daughter. Unless she found a remedy to the differences in their rank, she must abandon her love for him. “I might as well hope to marry a star in the sky!” she muttered.

Helena saw Parolles hurrying toward her. The colorful scarves that fluttered around his neck made him look like a swooping bird. A man of virtue must seem bare and ugly next to Parolles, Helena thought. Parolles pretended to be of noble birth. His clothes were always the latest style. Helena knew Parolles was a fool and a coward. But, youth blinded Bertram to his friend Parolles’ many faults.

“Fair queen,” Parolles said with a little bow, “why have you refused the love of so many men?”

“Men are the enemy of a woman’s virtue,” said Helena. “Since you call yourself a soldier, tell me how a woman can defend herself.”

“She can’t defend herself against a man’s intent.” Parolles stepped closer to Helena. “She becomes his sole reason for breathing. He’ll camp outside her gates until she surrenders herself into his hands.”

“A woman doesn’t have to surrender,” said Helena.

“It’s natural for a man and woman to join together.” Parolles inched closer until his bright scarves brushed against her black dress.

Helena stepped back. “A woman should be able to choose which man she wants.”

“Yet I have heard that you often retreat,” said Helena. Parolles scowled. “When I return from Paris, you’ll be begging for my attention.”

Helena suddenly remembered Bertram’s journey. “All the women courtiers will be after Bertram,” she said. “Why can’t those who we love sense how we feel? Because you and I are lower born, we can’t tell them.”

Parolles didn’t like being reminded that he wasn’t a noble. “The Count of Rousillon is waiting for me. I’ll think of you sometimes...unless life at court makes me forget you completely.”

Helena didn’t let Parolles hurt her feelings. “Your kind words prove that your rank is well deserved. Maybe the stars forgot to watch over you when you were born.”

“I was born under the planet, Mars,” boasted Parolles.

“I can see how Mars has had an effect on your character,” said Helena. “Losing so many battles has trapped you into such a low rank.”

“You don’t understand,” said Parolles. “Mars was rising in the sky as I was born. Therefore, the planet gave my character strength in battle.”

“Yet I have heard that you often retreat,” said Helena.

Parolles scowled. “When I return from Paris, you’ll be begging for my attention.”

Helena suddenly knew what she needed to do. “Often the remedy to a problem lies in ourselves, not in any help from heaven. Heaven only abandons us when our intent is not strong enough.”

Helena decided to find a way to go to Paris. Once there, the King’s disease would help her win Bertram.
Helena’s Hope

COMPREHENSION CHECK

Choose the best answer.

1. Why was Bertram going to Paris?
   ___a. The Countess abandoned him.
   ___b. To help the King get over his illness.
   ___c. To become a ward of the King.
   ___d. To get away from Helena.

2. Bertram would not be going to Paris if
   ___a. his mother was a strong woman.
   ___b. his father were still alive.
   ___c. Helena's father were still alive.
   ___d. the King was in good health.

3. According to the Countess,
   ___a. Helena is a girl of good character.
   ___b. Helena has a heavy heart.
   ___c. Helena's life is out of control.
   ___d. Helena should go to Paris with Bertram.

4. Bertram
   ___a. is sad to be leaving Helena.
   ___b. has no interest in Helena.
   ___c. does not trust Helena.
   ___d. is angry that Helena lives with his mother.

5. Helena is full of sadness because
   ___a. she's only a doctor's daughter.
   ___b. she's in love with a noble.
   ___c. she feels abandoned.
   ___d. she doesn't believe she has a chance with Bertram.

6. Helena thinks Parolles’ clothing makes him look like
   ___a. a nobleman.
   ___b. a coward.
   ___c. a man of virtue.
   ___d. a swooping bird.

7. Parolles
   ___a. was admired for his good character.
   ___b. always looked out for the feelings of others.
   ___c. was not happy with his station (social position) in life.
   ___d. felt threatened by Helena’s good reputation.

8. Parolles wants to take Helena to himself because
   ___a. it makes him happy to feel he has power over others.
   ___b. he wants to make Bertram jealous.
   ___c. he senses that she loves him.
   ___d. he loves her.

9. Another name for this story could be
   ___a. “Off to Paris.”
   ___b. “Love Out of Bounds.”
   ___c. “Bertram's Youth.”

10. This story is mainly about
    ___a. making friends.
    ___b. the heartache Helena experienced for loving Bertram.
    ___c. the Countess’ sadness over the death of her husband.
    ___d. why Bertram went to Paris.

Check your answers with the Key on page 67.
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Helena’s Hope

VOCABULARY CHECK

| abandon | ability | intent | sole | style | youth |

I. Sentences to Finish
Fill in the blank in each sentence with the correct key word from the box above.

1. The hunter aimed his bow at the deer with the ________ of killing it.

2. Sheila’s dress is out of ____________.

3. In his ________, my brother dreamed of being President.

4. “You must ________ ship!” screamed the captain to his men. “We’re going to sink!”

5. Jack was the ________ person in the class who scored 100% on the test.

6. Yolanda has the ________ to become a great musician.

II. Matching
Write the letter of the correct meaning from Column B next to the key word in Column A.

<table>
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<td>___1. ability</td>
<td>a. plan or purpose that one has set one’s mind to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___2. intent</td>
<td>b. the time between childhood and adulthood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___3. sole</td>
<td>c. one and only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___4. abandon</td>
<td>d. special skill; talent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___5. style</td>
<td>e. to leave behind, or give up completely</td>
</tr>
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<td>___6. youth</td>
<td>f. the popular design of clothing; fashion</td>
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Check your answers with the Key on page 69.
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