

AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION  
*The Merchant of Venice*  
Study Questions

ACT I:

1. What causes do Salerio and Solanio suggest for Antonio's melancholy?

**-They suggest that he is sad because he is in love and that his ships might be in danger.**

2. What humorous advice does Gratiano offer Antonio?

**-He told Antonio to talk because he would forget his own voice.**

3. Why does Bassanio want Antonio to loan him more money?

**-Bassanio wants Antonio to loan him money because he wants to go on a journey to Belmont to marry Portia.**

4. Why is Portia angry with her deceased father?

**-Portia is angry with her father because he left a system so the man who chooses the right casket gets to marry her. Portia disagrees with this because she can't choose who she wishes to marry.**

5. Why does Nerissa tell Portia she "need not fear" her unwelcome suitors?

**-Nerissa tells Portia this because if she ignores or doesn't acknowledge the unwelcome suitors they will leave her alone.**

6. What do Portia and Nerissa think of Bassanio?

**-Portia and Nerissa think that he is the most suitable person for Portia to marry out of all the others that tried.**

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7. According to Shylock, why does he hate Antonio?

**-Shylock hates Antonio because he spat on him in a previously and ridicules him and the Jews.**

8. Why is Shylock indignant over Antonio's request?

**-Shylock was indignant because he felt as if he shouldn't give them what they want because they treated him poorly.**

9. What is Antonio's response to Shylock's accusation?

**-Antonio's response to Shylock's accusation was shocking because he should do it as his job not from personal grudges.**

10. In exchange for what does Shylock agree to lend Antonio and Bassanio the money?

**-Shylock agrees to lend him money, but he must give Shylock a pound of flesh in return if the due isn't paid.**

**ACT II:**

1. Why does Morocco fear Portia will reject him at the outset?

**-Morocco thinks he will be rejected by Portia because of his skin color.**

2. What is Bassanio's reservation about Gratiano accompanying him to Belmont?

**-Bassanio's reservation was that Gratiano had to act more mature in this voyage.**

3. What is Jessica's dilemma concerning her father, Shylock?

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**-Jessica's dilemma is that she can't love a Christian and she is ashamed of him.**

4. How does Lorenzo plan to disguise Jessica in order to escape from her father?

**-Lorenzo plans to disguise Jessica as a boy to escape from her father's house.**

5. Before going to dine with Antonio and Bassanio, what advice does Shylock give his daughter?

**-The advice that Shylock gave Jessica was to lock all the doors and not to leave the house.**

6. Why does Jessica not want Lorenzo to see her when he arrives at Shylock's house?

**-Jessica didn't want Lorenzo to see her because she was disguised as a boy and she was embarrassed.**

7. What is Morocco's rationale for choosing the gold casket?

**-Morocco choose the gold casket because he thought that she is worth nothing less and every suitor wants her.**

8. What news has Salerio heard, making him anxious?

**-Salerio heard that some ships have sank on a voyage and he fears that they may be Antonio's .**

9. How does Solanio interpret Antonio's sadness at Bassanio's departure?

**-Solanio says that Antonio is upset because Bassanio is leaving and that he's losing his best friend.**

10. Which casket does Aragon choose, and why?

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**-Aragon choose the silver casket because he thinks he deserves her more than any other suitor.**

**ACT III:**

1. Why, since it won't result in any financial gain, does Shylock insist on the terms of his bond with Antonio?

**-Antonio and Shylock made a deal and if Antonio doesn't give his bond he must give a pound of flesh and a deal is a deal.**

2. What news does Tubal bring Shylock?

**-Tubal told Shylock that Antonio's ships sank and he wouldn't be able to pay back the bond.**

3. Why does Portia want Bassanio to wait before facing the challenge of the three caskets?

**-Because Portia wants Bassanio to wait and be with her for a little while so that if he get's it wrong they still spent time together.**

4. Why does Bassanio select the lead casket?

**-Bassanio select the lead casket because he thought it was the right one and indeed it was.**

5. What does the lead casket contain?

**-The lead casket contain Portia picture and a scroll.**

6. What doe Portia claim will occur if Bassanio gives up the ring she gave him?

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**-Portia claim that it will show that Bassanio doesn't love her as much as she thought.**

7. What does Gratiano reveal after Bassanio solves the riddle of the three caskets?

**-Gratiano revealed that Portia would now be Bassanio's.**

8. Why does Portia allow Bassanio to leave before they get married?

**-Portia allow him to leave because she knows that Antonio is in trouble and that they are best friends.**

9. According to Antonio, why won't the Duke be able to intercede on his behalf?

**-Because a bond is a bond and it was a written agreement and it was signed so Antonio must hold up his end of the bargain.**

10. What does Portia decide to do at the end of Act III?

**-Portia decides to dress up like a man and go to the court for Antonio to help him so that Shylock doesn't receive the pound of flesh.**

**ACT IV:**

1. What does the Duke request of Shylock?

**-The Duke requests that Shylock is to forgive him and come up with a different agreement.**

2. What reason does Shylock give for his wanting the pound of Antonio's flesh?

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**-That the Jews and Christians should have the same rights. Shylock also mentioned that Antonio always spat on him.**

3. Why does Antonio advise his friends to give up attempting to dissuade Shylock?

**-Because Antonio knows that Shylock wont back down and that the deal was what it was.**

4. Why does Shylock believe the Duke must enforce the terms of the bond?

**-Because the bond was made and it should be followed up with no matter what.**

5. Why does Portia, disguised as the lawyer, initially conclude that Shylock's bond must be adhered to?

**-Portia disguises herself so she can help Antonio, so that he doesn't have to give one pound of flesh to Shylock.**

6. Although she acknowledges Shylock's right to a pound of Antonio's flesh, how does Portia prevent the usurer from acting on it?

**-She says that if any drip of christian blood is dripped he Shylock has the right to die.**

7. Why is Shylock stripped of his possessions?

**-Because he tried to murder or harm a christian.**

8. Apart from the financial conditions, what does Antonio's new arrangement demand of Shylock?

**-He doubles his money and Antonio does not lose one pound of flesh, and half of the money goes to Jessica.**

9. What does the disguised Portia demand from Bassanio for her services?

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**-She demands the ring that she gave to him.**

10. Why is Bassanio reluctant to give up the ring?

**-Because it was the ring his wife gave him showing her love, and she made him promise that he wouldn't give it away or lose it no matter what.**

**ACT V:**

1. What message does Stephano deliver to Lorenzo and Jessica?

**-The message was that Portia and Nerissa have arrived.**

2. What opinion does Lorenzo hold of men who don't like music?

**-Lorenzo thinks that they feel no emotion of love.**

3. What does Portia order her household not to do?

**-Portia orders that they take no being of the absence.**

4. To whom does Nerissa claim to believe Gratiano gave his ring?

**-Nerissa believes that Gratiano gave it to another woman.**

5. What does Portia threaten when Bassanio admits he gave the ring away?

**-She threatens him that she will not see or talk to him until the ring is returned.**

6. What does Portia claim she will do if she encounters the doctor to whom Bassanio gave the ring?

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**-She says if she sees the doctor with her ring the doctor must lay with her.**

7.How does Antonio attempt to placate Portia?

**-By telling her he witnessed give the ring to the clerk.**

8.What does Portia offer Bassanio to seal the new promise?

**-Another ring.**

9.What secret does Portia reveal to the company?

**-That she was infact the doctor and Nerissa was the clerk.**

10.What good news does Portia tell Antonio?

**-That shylock's gift is that after he dies all his possessions go to him.**