



ACTIVITIES: KEY STAGE 3

THE PRODUCTION - CHARACTERS

Katherina and Petruchio

1) Think about the way the characters of Katherina and Petruchio were presented by the actors when you saw the Playing Shakespeare performance of *The Taming of the Shrew* at The Globe. Was there anything that surprised or even shocked you about the way they both behaved and spoke when you saw the play?

2) Share your thoughts with a fellow student. Discuss the way Katherina and Petruchio behaved towards the other characters and towards each other. For instance you could focus on the way that the rope is used by Petruchio when he and Katherina are travelling to Padua or the way in which Katherina treats Bianca earlier in the play. Make a list of some of the key moments that you discussed and explain what they showed the audience about their two characters and their relationship with each other.

3) *The Taming of the Shrew* is a comedy but, as you know, there are many serious themes in the play. Discuss any points in the performance that you saw where you felt that the comedy in the relationship between Katherina and Petruchio stopped being funny and became much more serious.

4) Finally, discuss the way the actor presented Katherina's long final speech at the end of the play. How did the way she spoke and moved during the speech make you feel about her reasons for saying these words? Next think about the way Petruchio behaved and his facial expressions while Katherina was speaking. Decide how you think he was feeling about Katherina by the end of the speech.



Other Characters

- 1) When you see a play in performance the characters come to life in a way that rarely happens when you read the script. Think about the Playing Shakespeare performance of *The Taming of the Shrew* that you saw at The Globe. Make a list of some of the characters (other than Katherina and Petruchio) and decide how the actors' performances helped you to understand the character more fully.
- 2) Work with another student. For each character you have listed decide how the way each actor performed the part helped you to understand the character more fully. For instance, you could think of Lucentio and the way he was played as a really young and enthusiastic student or the way Grumio reacted to his treatment as Petruchio's servant.
- 3) Next think in particular about the way the actor playing Bianca made her behave and appear to the audience. How do you think the way she behaved and spoke added to your understanding of Bianca's character? Is she really as perfect in her behaviour as other characters seem to believe?
- 4) The older make characters like Baptista and Gremio are presented by the actors in a particular way. How do these performances help to add to the theme of the treatment of women? Share your ideas with other students.