

Merchant of Venice Acts 3-5 Answer these questions, print out your answers, and bring these sheets with you for the class discussion in our second class. Again, phrases and quotations are adequate. The sheet is to help you enter the graded discussion with meaningful information that you have at hand.

Act 3

1. How do Solanio and Salerio prove dramatically useful again in scene 1?
2. What is the effect of Shylock's long "I am a Jew" speech in scene 1?
3. How does Shakespeare keep from making Shylock into too sympathetic a character in scene 1?
4. What is the prevailing mood as the scene ends?
5. What is the dramatic importance of scene 2?
6. Compare the mood of scene 2 and scene 1.
7. What is the theme of Bassanio's long speech before he makes his choice of the caskets?
8. How does scene 2 help to develop Bassanio's character?

Act 4

1. What appeal does the Duke of Venice make to Shylock as the trial opens?
2. How does Shylock respond to the appeal?
3. How does Antonio behave in the face of the fate that seems about to befall him?
4. Is money the most important thing in the world to Shylock? Explain.

5. What is the effect of Shakespeare's delaying Portia's entrance into the trial scene?
6. Describe the unfolding of Portia's argument in the trial.
7. When Shylock relents and says he will take the money instead of the pound of flesh, why is he denied?
8. How does Shakespeare bring the trial scene full circle?
9. What kind of mercy does the court show Shylock?
10. Why doesn't Shakespeare end Act 4 with Shylock's exit from the court in defeat?

Act 5

1. What is the mood as Act 5 opens?
2. In what other scenes in the play does music play as important a role? What is its importance?
3. How is the ring plot in Act 5 enhanced by dramatic irony?
4. How is the intrigue of the rings finally resolved?