

# Conference on Best Teaching Practices using ICET

**Paper Title:** Learning English without Burden

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to make teaching of English interesting by using 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills - critical thinking, information technology application, communication, creativity, cross cultural understanding, self direction and team work. It also focuses on the development of HOTs (Higher-Order Thinking Skills) like problem solving, evaluating and analyzing. The chapters of English are to be taught in relation to the real life situation. Emails, (online/ in class) – debates, discussions or swapping opinion can also be used to develop language skills. E-projects which give an opportunity to collaborate and showcase the work to the global community motivate the students because they know that they have an international stage to share and get appreciation. Interviews, peer group discussion, multimedia presentations, posters, use of internet and other soft wares develop three Cs- Creativity, Communication, Critical thinking and technology.

Shakespeare's 'The Merchant of Venice' has been taken as base to explain Learning Foreign Language and Literature without Burden.' A multi-dimensional approach can cater too the need of students of various capabilities and will promote effective learning.

**Keywords:** E-project, Multimedia, Interview, Research, Survey, brotherhood, Mercy, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, Social Issues, Rubrics

## Main Paper

**Lesson:** The Merchant of Venice, Class VIII, NCERT Book

### Purpose:

Students will research and find out about the life and time of Shakespeare to better understand the play. Students will apply the themes and issues within the play to the modern life and will try to find out for the solutions such as intolerance, usury, cruelty, violence, absence of kindness and brotherhood. They will work in teams to make plans to find out the ways to ensure positive attitude to eradicate the problem. Each team will research the current needs and resources of the community, and determines a course of action.

**Objectives:**

- To familiarize student with the great playwright Shakespeare, his life and works
- To introduce students with the characters and their personality traits.
- To invite students to enter the vast world of ideas, images, and language found in literature.
- To engage students in responding to literature through reading, speaking, writing, and thinking processes that combine many higher-order reading skills and strategies.
- To provide opportunities for students to celebrate and share their reading experience in cooperative learning environments
- To provide an environment in which students are encouraged to return to the text to explore relationships, find links with their past experiences, build on previous learning, and explore how literature holds mirror to us? And what it aims at?
- To create an environment of choices that enhance students' needs to become proficient and avid readers and develop a lifetime interest in reading.

**Teaching Strategy:****Instructional Procedures**

Teacher will start the lesson with a discussion on the topic “**How is literature a mirror to us? Or how the literature makes us to have an insight into our own society and life?**”

This discussion will be followed by the ‘Wh’ question activity given below: The ‘Wh’ Yardstick will help students access their prior knowledge and provide useful information about student attitudes and possible misconceptions.

**‘Wh’ Yardstick**

**(Note: Teacher will make the chart on the board and will ask ‘Wh’ questions from students and will write in the specific column the possible responses of students)**

<b>Where is Venice?</b>	<b>What do you know about the play ‘The Merchant of Venice’?</b>	<b>What do you want to know about the play “The Merchant of Venice”?</b>	<b>What are the ways to find out the answers to your queries?</b>

Teacher will ask students to use Internet to find information about Shakespeare, his time, and Elizabethan theater and share what they have learned with the class by preparing a PowerPoint presentation or a website. Teacher has to specify the sources in advance to save time and confusion among the students. For example in the given project they can take help from

Shakespeare’s Globe (<http://www.bardweb.net/globe.html>),

Shakespeare’s Theatre (<http://shakespeare.palomar.edu/theatre.htm>).

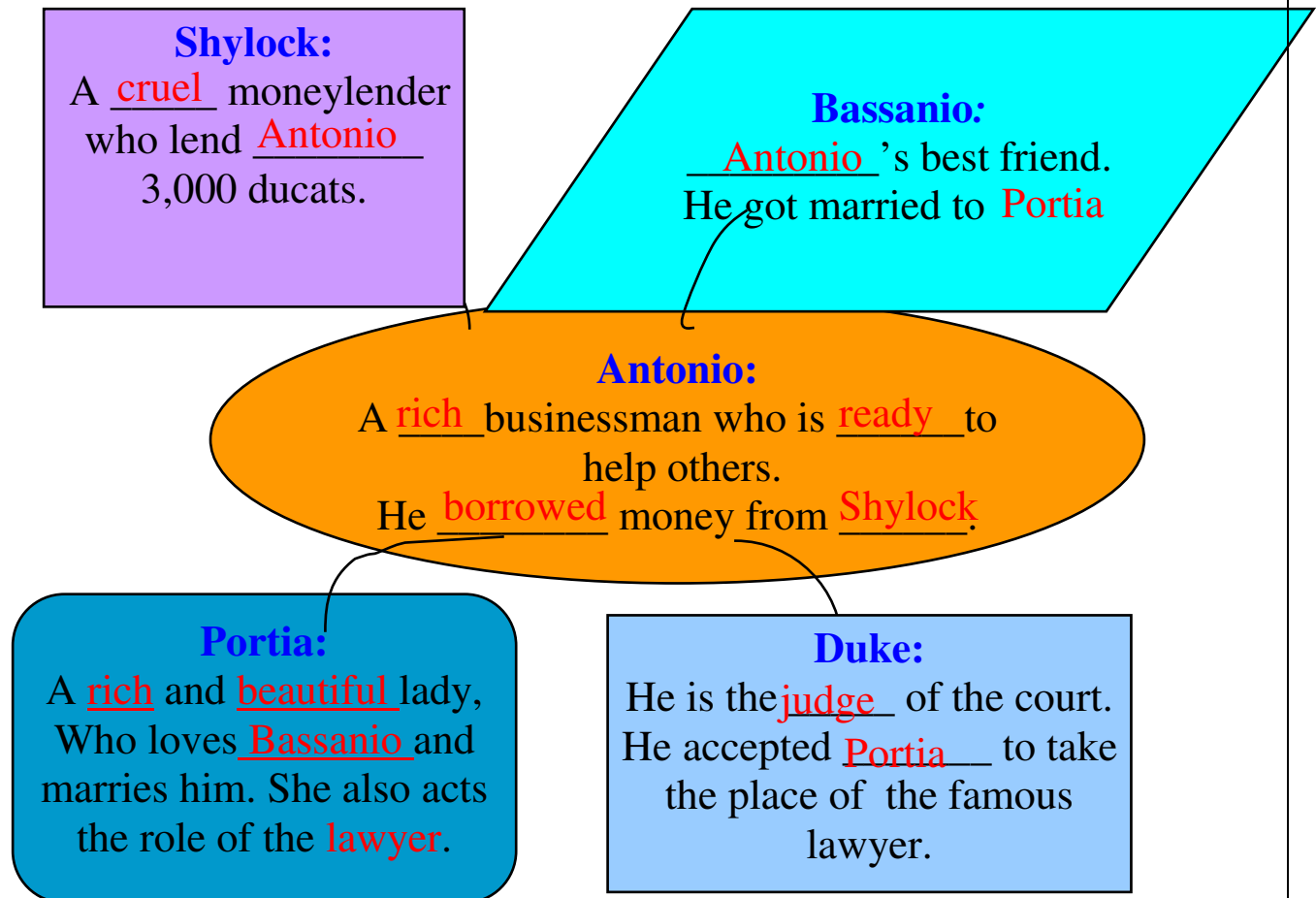
Teacher may also prepare a presentation on Shakespeare for the guidance of students. Students who are not techno-savvy will be put under the guidance of the student technology experts to do the work.

### Reading 'The Merchant of Venice'

Teacher will model different strategies for interpreting and understanding the play. A loud model reading will also help the students. Alternate methods like oral reading, silent reading and playing an **audio** (easily available on internet) may also help the students to comprehend the lesson better.

An easy script of the play can be a useful aid for the students of junior classes which can be enacted on the stage. Reading of the play with role play will also help the students to understand in a better way.

After reading of the play students will make a presentation on the important characters of the play, their personality traits and nature. Teacher can ask the students to fill the following chart to assess the understanding of characters of the play.



Teacher will discuss the various themes of the play e.g.

- A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed
- Revenge destroys.
- Role of women in family and nation building
- Don't count your ships until they're in port.
- Appearances are deceiving.

Students will be asked to have debate and speech on the given topics. The class can also be divided in five groups. Each group will be given a topic to discuss. After discussion one member of the team will read the report on behalf of his group. This will help the students to develop their critical thinking, creativity, communication, team work,

### The Casket Scene

The casket scene thrills the student and they love to have an activity on it. Teacher will write the details of the caskets and then will have a discussion about the character traits of the people who have chosen the one of the three caskets. Teacher will make a note of the possible student responses. This will help them to develop their critical thinking and communication.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GOLD</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SILVER</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LEAD</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Who chooseth me must give and hazard all.</p>
<p>(Possible Student Response)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• greedy people</li> <li>• people fooled by flashy outward appearances</li> <li>• materialistic people</li> <li>• people who sell out for luxury</li> <li>• people who take without giving</li> </ul>	<p>(Possible Student Response)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cautious people</li> <li>• wannabees -- people who try to be what they're not</li> <li>• people who make compromises for comfort</li> <li>• people who sacrifice spiritual health for material wealth</li> </ul>	<p>(Possible Student Response)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• risk-takers</li> <li>• people not fooled by appearances</li> <li>• spiritual, intellectual people</li> <li>• people not deceived by false values</li> <li>• people who give more than they get</li> </ul>

Students can use it for inviting ideas worldwide on their web pages in e-project.

## **Role of Fate and Chance**

In Shakespearean plays fate and chance play an important role in the making of character or situation.

Students will do survey in class and school and if possible will post the question of debate on internet using different websites for free survey like Survey Monkey, Hot Potatoes, etc or post survey question in e-project on free educational portal like thinkquest.org to see what the people throughout the world think about – Do fate and chance guide our actions and life?

An open book essay can also be used in the class to find out the role of fate and chance on the different characters of the play ‘The Merchant of Venice’

## **Classical & Modern Literature**

The teacher will have a class discussion or group discussion the differences and similarities between the classical and modern literature and will fill the following table.

<b>The Classical Literature</b>	<b>Common Points</b>	<b>The Modern Literature</b>

## **Social Issues**

The play addresses to the different social issues like religious intolerance, usury, violence, absence of kindness and brotherhood. Students will find out the instances in the play which support the above issues and will find a solution to it with discussion, debate, voting, research and survey on internet and an special activity like interview with some suitable personality who can guide them through to find out the practical solution to these problems.

## **E- Project**

Teacher will briefly explain that students have to complete a project where they will apply the themes and issues within the play to address a current-day problem along with real solutions.

Students will make a list of social issues encompassed in the play which are true for the present society. And will try to find out its solution with the help of e-project.

Students may work on their lists at home or at school, and can even compare their ideas with students located in distant classrooms.

E-projects made on thinkquest.org helps students to invite responses and share their work globally. It is free and safe portal for the students and teacher.

Students can make chart based on the survey and write report of the research work, take interview with the person who is related to issue or can inform students in a better way.

Students work in a team to complete the project. They know that their project is viewed globally. Hence, they create products like multimedia presentations, newsletter, website or flyer.

After the completion of all the activities students will present he work done by them to the Principal, teachers, parents and other students. This will develop a sense of responsibility and achievement.

### **Culminating Products:**

- Presentation: Shakespeare – Age & Works
- Presentation: Summary of the Play
- Presentation: Main characters of the play and their personality traits.
- Interview Summary
- Survey Reports
- Website or wiki
- E- project
- Debate, Speech or article on the themes of the play
- Poster – Mercy on Animals

**Assessment:** Each of the activity will have rubrics for its assessment. While making rubrics or assessment plan the given points are to be kept in mind:

- It must evaluate students’ performance of tasks that are analogous to real-world challenges.
- It must be an instrument to provide constructive feedback and guidance to students throughout the session.
- It must be designed to evaluate the students’ final or culminating products of their learning assignment.

**Evaluation and Reflection:** After the completion of the lesson it is necessary to ask the students what else can be done to ensure better learning of the lesson. Teacher must also do the evaluation and reflect on the weak areas. This will help to make the next lesson more effective and child centered.

