

✕ Refers to links on [www.crossref-it.info](http://www.crossref-it.info)

- ❖ **Lesson focus:** To explore the impact of the final scene of the play.
  - ❖ **Opening exercise:** Read the *Book of Common Prayer* marriage vows:
    - ✕ The solemnisation of matrimony > The declarations; The exchange of rings; The vows.
      - Why are they considered controversial today?
        - What do some couples change them to and why?
      - How have ideas changed about how marriage should work, from Shakespeare's day to today?
        - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Social/political context > Marriage in Shakespeare's day](#)
        - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Themes > Marriage](#)
  - ❖ **Textual examination:** Revisit Act 1, Scene 1 and identify the criteria for/motive for/attitude to marriage for each of these characters:
    - Baptista
    - Bianca
    - Katherina
    - Lucentio
    - Gremio
    - HortensioRecord ideas on **The Taming of the Shrew: e) Attitudes to marriage handout.**
    - What are some of the underlying ideas/assumptions about marriage revealed in this scene?
      - Colour code those ideas which are different from today
        - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Synopses and commentaries > Act 1 Scene 1](#)
        - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Themes > Marriage](#)
  - Next, revisit Act 5, Scene 2 and identify the same characters' ideas/assumptions about marriage.
    - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Synopses and commentaries > Act 5 > Scene 2](#)
    - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Themes > Marriage](#)
  - What do both these scenes show us about views towards marriage in Shakespeare's day, in a patriarchal society?
  - Are there any differences in the characters' ideas about marriage, from the start to the end of the play?
    - To what do we attribute these?
  - The marriages which have taken place over the course of the play have all been in some way unconventional. Why might Shakespeare have done this, and how might this affect the views the characters express about marriage?
- ❖ **Discussion ideas:** Re-read Katherina's speech in Act 5, Scene 2 (ideally photocopied onto paper with large margins around it for note-taking). Discuss reactions to it, perhaps using some of the following prompt questions:
  - Compare the language of Katherina's speech to biblical teaching on marriage
    - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Social/political context > Marriage in Shakespeare's day](#)
      - What point could Shakespeare be making in using this language?
  - Shakespeare is often acclaimed for his strong female characters and his challenging of/sympathy for the restraints of a patriarchal society. Is this the impression we get in this speech?

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- How might the original audience respond to this speech?
  - What about a modern day audience?
- How could the actor's delivery/director's directing of this speech affect its meaning and reception? (Experiment with it – pride, sarcasm, parroting, etc.)
  - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Synopses and commentaries > Act 5 > Scene 2](#)
  - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Themes > Marriage](#)

- ❖ **Recreative task:** Experiment with alternative 'purpose of marriage' speeches, spoken by a typical modern woman.
  - On what might the language and ideas be based today?
  - How does such a speech compare with Katherina's speech?
- ❖ **Critical task:** 'The entire meaning of the play rests on the delivery and reception of Katherina's speech.' Discuss the importance of the final speech in interpreting the play's messages about marriage.
  - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Themes > Marriage](#)
- ❖ **Extension task:** Research Elizabethan literature about marriage. For some starting points see:
  - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Social/political context > Marriage in Shakespeare's day](#)
  - ✕ [The Taming of the Shrew > Themes > Marriage.](#)