

The merchant of venice dialectical journals



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Humanities English II -4 21 February 2011 Dialectical Journals: The Merchant of Venice Source | Quotation | Analysis | Act 1. Sc. 1 Pg. 17Ln. 147-151, 153-159 | " In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft, I shot his fellow of the self-same flight. The self-same way with more advised watch, to find the other forth, and by adventuring both, I oft found both. " " I owe you much, and, like a willful youth, that which I owe is lost; but if you please to shoot another arrow that self-way which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt, as I will watch the aim, or to find both or bring your latter hazard back again and thankfully rest debtor for the first. " | 1. When I was younger, if I had lost an arrow, I would shoot another one in the same direction and follow it to find the first. In the same way, give me more money and it will lead me to get you back all the money I owe. 2. Pleading; vying for second chances.

Shakespeare introduces Bassanio's character as one who feels strongly for the influence of second chances. He uses persuasive and self-denouncing diction to influence Antonio's decision on how to deal with his debt, comparing himself to " a willful youth" in order to display that his character was out of the norm when he lost the first batch of money. By degrading himself, that will prove that he does not usually act that way and deserves a second chance to prove his true character. The author's use of desperation on Bassanio's part enhances the reader's eagerness to read on and discover whether he will make do on his promises, seeing that he did not the first time. 2. Metaphor: a direct comparison between two things. Shakespeare's direct relation of the situation of finding the first arrow through the shooting of the second to the lending of more money in order to " rest debtor for the first" serves to intensify Bassanio's pride that the plan will ensue successfully. The point of the story is to calm Antonio's worries of Bassanio's

plan, and to give Antonio no reason to refuse him the second chance because he has extreme confidence in himself to return both monies. Shakespeare relates this situation to the story of the arrows in order to further enhance Antonio's and the reader's understanding of Bassanio's desperation for another chance with Antonio's money. | Act 1. Sc. 2Pg. 25Ln. 83-89 | NERISSA " How do you like the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew? "PORTIA " Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast. " | 1. He is horrible when sober, and even worse when drunk. His best is not up to the standards of a normal man, and in his worst, he is like an animal. 2. Patronizing; judgmental. Portia's attitudes towards other men that are of her standards in social ranking portray that they are not always of her standards in their character and attitudes, especially this young German she is speaking of, who is the nephew of a Duke, when she says he is " little better than a beast" at times. Although she has justification for her feelings towards this man, she meets him with a contemptuous attitude, feeling that though they are practically equal in social status, she is superior in character. This attitude she feels towards these other men impact the play in that it sets the standards for what she will accept and who she will marry. 3. Antithesis: a statement in which two opposing ideas are balanced. The structural use of negating the statements of this man's " best" being " worse than a man" as his " worst" being " better than a beast" goes to provide enough evidence as to just how awful this man really is. This use of corresponding syntax with differing descriptions serves to provide the reader with a full understanding of this man's personality with regards to how he acts on a regular basis, and

<https://assignbuster.com/the-merchant-of-venice-dialectical-journals/>

thus goes to emphasize the lack of good men that are suitable enough for Portia. | Act 3. Sc. 1Pg. 99Ln. 58-70 | " Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge! " | 1. Doesn't a Jew have eyes? Doesn't a Jew have hands, bodily organs, a human shape, five senses, feelings, and passions? Doesn't a Jew eat the same food, get hurt with the same weapons, get sick with the same diseases, get healed by the same medicine, and warm up in summer and cool off in winter just like a Christian? If you prick us with a pin, don't we bleed? If you tickle us, don't we laugh? If you poison us, don't we die? And if you treat us badly, won't we try to get revenge? If we're like you in everything else, we'll resemble you in that respect. If a Jew offends a Christian, what's the Christian's kind and gentle reaction? Revenge. If a Christian offends a Jew, what punishment will he come up with if he follows the Christian example? Of course, the same thing—revenge! 2. Indignant- marked by anger and aroused by injustice. In this passage, Shylock is seen as a very haughty man with a bitter attitude towards all Christians who doubt his ability and capabilities because of his religious nature, as seen in the last few sentences where he ultimately gets fed up and declares that just as a Christian would do, in a situation where someone wrongs him, their punishment would be "

revenge! " Shylock's reactions towards the inflammatory remarks of doubt of his capabilities due to him being a Jew seem to send him over the edge, and cause him to angrily justify his rights in regards to the rights of others. The indignant attitude and hostile ways of Shylock present him as a force to be reckoned with later in the play, and alert the reader that he will provide a great obstacle for anyone who crosses his path the wrong way. 3. Anaphora: The repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of consecutive lines or phrases. The pure disgust Shylock feels towards the Christians he is addressing in this passage is put forth through Shakespeare's haughty diction and repetition of the initial phrases of " If you...us, do we not...? " These repetitive and " fill-in-the-blank" style sentences provide a deeper insight as to how Shylock has had to deal with this religious injustice and prejudice, and show how he has come to rationalize his importance. The reader can instantly tell that he has felt these feelings for a long while and has kept them bottled up inside, but now feels the need to rationalize his status in regards to other Christians. | Act 3. Sc. 2Pg. 107Ln. 55-64 | " Now he goes with no less presence but with much more love than young Alcides, when he did redeem the virgin tribute paid by howling Troy to the sea monster. I stand for sacrifice; The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives, with blear'd visages come forth to view the issue of th' exploit. Go, Hercules! Live thou, I live. With much, much more dismay I view the fight than thou that makest the fray. " | 1. Bassanio's walking to the boxes now. He looks as dignified as Hercules did when he saved the princess Hesione from the sea monster. I'll play the damsel in distress, and everyone else will be the bystanders watching with tear-streaked faces. We've all come out to see what will happen. Go, Hercules! If you survive, I'll live. I'm more anxious

<https://assignbuster.com/the-merchant-of-venice-dialectical-journals/>

watching you fight than you are in the fight itself. 2. Sanguineous; optimistic. Through Portia, Shakespeare expresses jovial and optimistic feelings toward Bassanio, hoping for the best when she says "Go, Hercules!" This exclamation gives a hopeful energy through the connection of Bassanio to the great mythological hero, Hercules, thus providing proof that Portia seems to have positive feelings towards Bassanio, and admires his character. This gives the reader a hint as to who Portia will end up with, seeing as though Bassanio is the only one thus far who has stirred up any sort of likeness from Portia. 3. Allusion: a reference to something literary, mythological, or historical. Through the relation of Bassanio to the great mythological hero Hercules, Shakespeare puts it into the reader's mind that Bassanio has it inside him to choose the correct casket and win Portia's love, deeming him with "no less presence" and "much more love" than Hercules himself. The ultimate point of this passage is to put into terms the greatness of Bassanio himself so that the reader/audience can easily understand his capabilities and get a relative sense of what he is like. The relation to Hercules serves as ironic for later on in the play because he is the one in distress whom Portia comes to rescue. | Act 1. Sc. 3Pg. 29Ln. 42-50 | "I hate him for he is a Christian, but more for that in low simplicity he lends out money gratis and brings down the rate of usance here with us in Venice. If I can catch him once upon the hip, I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him. He hates our sacred nation, and he rails, even there where merchants most do congregate, on me, my bargains and my well-won thrift." | 1. I hate him because he's a Christian. But more than that, I hate him because he stupidly lends money without interest, which lowers the interest rates here in Venice. If I can just get the upper hand of him once, I'll satisfy my old grudge against

<https://assignbuster.com/the-merchant-of-venice-dialectical-journals/>

him. He hates Jews. Even at the Rialto he's always complaining about me and my negotiating and my hard-earned profits. 2. Inflammatory; angry; bitter. Shylock's choleric attitude keeps influencing the tone of the play, adding hostile attitudes among the people surrounding him, including in this situation, in which he uses bitter and angry diction such as "hate" and phrases such as "if I can catch him... I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him". This threat serves to ignite fear in Shylock's opponents, which are his intentions. The choleric remarks coming from Shylock influence the tone of the play in the sense that Antonio now takes to heart the threats put in place through his bond, and everyone involved is fearful. 3. Ad hominem argument: an argument attacking an individual's character rather than his position on an issue. In this passage, Shylock goes off about how he hates Antonio because of the way he feels so lightly about usury, but more than that, he also attacks him personally, claiming that "he hates our sacred nation", and attacking his religion, stating "I hate him for he is a Christian". This enhances the sense of hostility that is present between Jews and Christians in the time period that this play was written. Shakespeare's use of literary devices elucidates social patterns that persisted in his lifetime. The focus on the personal level in an argument present the idea that people exhibit bias all the time, even in business situations such as this one shown in the passage. | Act 5. Sc. 1Pg. 197Ln. 249-253 | PORTIA "I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow. "NERISSA " And I his clerk. Therefore be well advised how you do leave me to mine own protection. "GRATIANO " Well, do you so. Let not me take him, then, for if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen. "

| 1. Portia: I'll sleep with that lawyer. Nerissa: And I'll sleep with the clerk. So be careful when you leave me alone. Gratiano: Well, go ahead. But don't let

me catch him, because if I do, I'll break that clerk's penis. 2. Disdainful; revengeful. Gratiano's attitude towards the clerk with whom Nerissa is threatening to take as her bedfellow is that of hate and revenge, wanting to "mar" his "pen" if he ever comes in contact with him. This hateful attitude gives the passage a tense tone, and seems to pull others into that same attitude. But Shakespeare has given Portia a sense of independence, and so does not succumb to these spiteful feelings, but instead rises above the others with a strong attitude. 3. Euphemism: an indirect, less offensive way of saying something that is considered unpleasant. Even though the tone of this passage and of Gratiano's speech is that of hostile attitudes, Shakespeare toys with the senses and inserts not-harsh words into a harsh-sounding speech to get a unique effect: instead of blatantly and quite harshly stating that Gratiano will "break the clerk's penis", he gently states that he will "mar the young clerk's pen". This creates a unique sensation of curiosity for the reader, and a new sense of contrast is found. | Act 5. Sc. 1Pg. 195Ln. 208-214 | BASSANIO " Sweet Portia, if you did know to whom I gave the ring, if you did know for whom I gave the ring and would conceive for what I gave the ring and how unwillingly I left the ring, when naught would be accepted but the ring, you would abate the strength of your displeasure. "PORTIA " If you had known the virtue of the ring, or half her worthiness that gave the ring, or your own honour to contain the ring, you would not then have parted with the ring. " | 1. Bassanio: My dear Portia, if you knew who I gave the ring to, for whose sake I gave the ring to him, why I gave it to him, and how unwilling I was to leave it when he wouldn't accept anything but the ring, you wouldn't be so angry. Portia: If you'd known how much that ring meant, how much the woman who gave it to you is worth, or

<https://assignbuster.com/the-merchant-of-venice-dialectical-journals/>

how much your honor depended on your keeping the ring, you wouldn't have let it go. 2. Justifying; remorseful. The tone of this passage is created through the repetitive stammering of Bassanio's justifications, making it seem as though he were pleading for Portia to understand his reasoning behind his giving of "the ring". This portrays just how much he desires her forgiveness for giving away her ring, and his desperation for her understanding. Shakespeare created this sense of male inferiority and susceptibility to the female demands through switching the traditional male and female roles, and having the male beg for the female's forgiveness, while it is usually the opposite. 3. Repetition In this passage, Bassanio's pleading for justification of his actions create a sense of pity towards him, and through his repetitive statements, one feels as though he was desperate to receive Portia's forgiveness, what with the alluring compliments of "Sweet Portia" and the repeating stammering of "the ring" at the end of his statements. These repetitive phrases add to the effect of the justifications, by enforcing the fact that the ring was at fault for being so irresistible to others. | Act 2. Sc. 4Pg. 61Ln. 11-15 | LANCELET " An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify. "LORENZO " I know the hand. In faith, 'tis a fair hand, and whiter than the paper it writ on is the fair hand that writ. " | 1. Lancelet: If you don't mind opening this letter, it will explain things. Lorenzo: I recognize the handwriting. It's beautiful handwriting. And the beautiful hand that wrote this letter is whiter than the paper it's written on. 2. Eager; admiring. Lorenzo seems to admire the woman who wrote him the letter, explaining she is "fair" in the sense that she is beautiful and pale. This proves that Lorenzo is in love, and so provides a basis of understanding for how the rest of the play will ensue. Shakespeare adds a sense of

eagerness to his opening the letter in order to further inform the reader of Lorenzo's feelings towards Jessica. 3. Syllepsis: a construction in which one word is used in two different senses. Shakespeare creates a sense of mystery when he uses literary devices such as this, in the sense that, in this case, the word "fair" represents a whirlwind of characteristics. In the case of the first usage of the word, "fair" could be describing characteristics such as beautiful, pure, equal, or just. In the second tense, "fair" is more obviously seen as meaning pale in skin tone. This passage is unique in that it is open for personal interpretation as to which tense "fair" is used in. | Act 2. Sc. 7Pg. 75Ln. 16-45, 65 | "Some god direct my judgment! Let me see; I will survey the inscriptions back again. What says this leaden casket? 'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.' Must give: for what? for lead? hazard for lead? This casket threatens. Men that hazard all do it in hope of fair advantages: A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross; I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead. What says the silver with her virgin hue? 'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.' As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco, and weigh thy value with an even hand: If thou be'st rated by thy estimation, thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough may not extend so far as to the lady: And yet to be afeard of my deserving were but a weak disabling of myself. As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady: I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes, in graces and in qualities of breeding; But more than these, in love I do deserve. What if I stray'd no further, but chose here? Let's see once more this saying graved in gold 'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.' Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her; From the four corners of the earth they come, to kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint..." | 1. I wish some god could

help me choose! Let me see. I'll look over the inscriptions again. What does the lead box say? " He who chooses me must give and risk all he has. " Must give everything—for what? For lead? Risk everything for lead? This box is too threatening. Men who risk everything hope to make profits. A golden mind doesn't bend down to choose something worthless. So I won't give or risk anything for lead. What does the silver one say? " He who chooses me will get as much as he deserves. " As much as he deserves—wait a minute there, Morocco, and consider your own value with a level head. If your reputation is trustworthy, you deserve a lot—though maybe not enough to include this lady. But fearing I don't deserve her is a way of underestimating myself. As much as I deserve—I deserve Portia! By birth I deserve her. In terms of wealth, talents, and upbringing, and especially love, I deserve her. What if I went no further and chose this one? But let's see once more what the gold one says: " He who chooses me will get what many men want. " That's Portia! The whole world wants her. They come from the four corners of the earth to kiss this shrine and see this living, breathing saint.

2. Reflective.

The tone of this passage can be expressed through the Moroccan's rhetoric questions towards himself, providing a thought to expand upon and reason toward, such as when he asks himself "' Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.' Must give: for what? For lead? Hazard for lead? " and reasons that " this casket threatens". Through all this questioning and reasoning, the tone of the passage shifts to a factual and logical explanation of his personal choices, which reflect his inner self.

3. Rhetorical questions: a question asked for rhetorical effect and not requiring an answer. The constant inner squabble of this Moroccan man in regards to which casket to choose is almost never-ending, seeing as though he constantly proposes

himself new questions to doubt himself, such as when he asks himself "What if I stray'd no further, but chose here?" This questioning almost causes him to choose one casket, but decided to go on to look at the last one. The constant inner interrogations prove to be destructive in certain ways, but also help in his decision in that they cause him to think logically about the situation. | Act 2. Sc. 9Pg. 85Ln. 18-43, 52-55 | " And so have I addressed me. Fortune now to my heart's hope! Gold, silver, and base lead. ' Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.' You shall look fairer ere I give or hazard. What says the golden chest? Ha, let me see. ' Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.' ' What many men desire'-that ' many' may be meant by the fool multitude that choose by show, not learning more than the fond eye doth teach; which pries not to th' interior, but like the martlet builds in the weather on the outward wall, even in the force and road of casualty. I will not choose what many men desire because I will not jump with common spirits and rank me with the barbarous multitudes. Why then, to thee, thou silver treasure house. Tell me once more what title thou dost bear. ' Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.' And well said too-for who shall go about to cozen fortune and be honorable without the stamp of merit? Let none presume to wear an undeserv'd dignity. " " Well, but to my choice. ' Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.' I will assume desert. Give me a key for this, and instantly unlock my fortunes here. " | 1. Okay, I'm ready. I hope luck will give me what my heart hopes for! Gold, silver, and common lead. " He who chooses me must give and risk all he has. " You'd have to be more attractive for me to give or risk anything for you. What does the golden box say? Hmm, let me see: " He who chooses me will get what many men want. " What many men want-that " many"

could mean that most people are fools and choose by whatever is flashy. They don't go beyond what their eyes see. They don't bother to find out what's on the inside. Just like those birds called martins who build their nests on the outside of walls, people pay too much attention to what's on the outside. So I won't choose what many men desire, because I won't jump on the bandwagon and include myself with the whole crude population. So I guess it's you, you silver treasure house. Tell me once more what you say. " He who chooses me will get what he deserves. " That's nicely put-because who's going to cheat luck and get more than he deserves? No one should have an honor he doesn't deserve. Well, let me get back to my choice. " He who chooses me will get what he deserves. " I'll assume I deserve the very best. Give me a key for this one. I'll unlock my fate here in a second. 2.

Turgid; condescension . This man relating his thoughts in this passage is blatantly self-assured and pretentious, and therefore portrays an arrogant personality and proposes an air that he is better than everyone else, saying " I will not jump with common spirits and rank me with the barbarous multitudes". This proposes the thought that he is not willing to stoop so low to the ways of " many men", and that he is way too much better than that. This instantly provides insight that he is definitely not the right man for Portia, but leaves the audience in suspense as to whether he will choose the right casket. 3. Soliloquy: speech to oneself. Throughout the length of this particular passage, Arragon's soliloquy helps him to logically think through details in order to choose a casket to win Portia, but also deters him in that his thoughts lift him up to be superior to all others, causing him to think " You shall look fairer ere I give or hazard, " which suggests that he wouldn't think of risking anything for Portia lest she stay looking that way. The

soliloquy is used in the play in order to be able to understand why the characters make the decisions that they do, and since this is a play, it is vital since there is no other way to understand personal intentions. |