

Worksheet 3 – Grief

Review: Lecture 1 – Performance

In the previous lecture of the unit, Dr. Duncan discussed a character's costume as an important part of performance.

Read Valentine's description of Oliva from Act 1 Scene 1. Write a summary of an audience's first impression of her character and the specific item of clothing the character would wear to show she is in mourning.

But from her handmaid do return this answer:

The element itself, till seven years' heat,

Shall not behold her face at ample view;

But like a cloistress she will veiled walk,

cloistress: a nun secluded from the world

And water once a day her chamber round

With eye-offending brine; all this to season

eye-offending brine: bitter tears

A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh

And lasting, in her sad remembrance.

Recall: Lecture 3 – Grief

Answer these questions after watching the video lecture to check how much you remember.

1. Dr. Duncan explains that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, grief was seen as a medical condition that was treated with three remedies. Which of the following **is not** one of the three remedies?
 - a) laxatives
 - b) painkillers
 - c) bleeding
 - d) emetics
2. What is the name of Thomas Wright's book, the writer who identified 'sadness hath killed many'?
 - a) The Passion of Thought in General (1601)
 - b) The Passions of the Humours in General (1601)
 - c) The Passions of the Body in General (1601)
 - d) The Passions of the Minde in General (1601)
3. Dr. Duncan refers to the four humors which people believed regulated health. These temperament categories (or personality types) needed to be in balance, but which one was considered to be the most dangerous?
 - a) sanguine
 - c) choleric

b) melancholic

d) phlegmatic

Analysis

During the lecture, Dr. Duncan discusses how Feste considers Olivia's grief is illogical as she abandons it when she meets Cesario. [4:01]

Olivia is a character who has suffered the permanent loss of her brother and her father, yet many argue she turns mourning into an overly dramatic, despairing and public demonstration of her own private suffering, yet Viola's perceived grief for her brother, Sebastian is only temporary and less dramatic.

Compare the different ways Shakespeare presents Olivia's grief before and after she meets Cesario in Act One.

	Before meeting Cesario	When she meets Cesario Act 1 Scene 5
Olivia	Act 1 Scene 1 Act 1 Scene 2 Act 1 Scene 4	

Evaluation

Read Act 2 Scene 1, where Sebastian has been rescued by Antonio and reveals his grief for his twin sister, Viola, whom he believes has drowned.

Imagine you are directing this play. The actor playing Sebastian asks for your advice before he performs this scene.

Consider the following:

- Which words describe the character's thoughts and feelings: miserable, irritable, distraught, reflective or inconsolable?
- Which words describe the way he should speak: slowly, quickly, confidently or hesitantly?
- Which actions should be included?

Glossary

- **Illogical** (adj) lacks logic as ideas are driven by emotions rather than thought
- **Grief** (noun)– a feeling of deep sorrow or sadness, often caused by someone's death
- **Mourning** (noun) expressing sorrow for someone who has died
- **Emetic** (noun) a medicine or substance that is swallowed causing vomiting

- **Androgynous** (adj) used when describing someone as having both a masculine and feminine appearance