

Much Ado About Nothing

An analysis of the main theme of Deception

The theme of Deception in Much Ado About Nothing

-  Based on the idiocy of characters
-  A major theme throughout the play
-  Brought together Beatrice and Benedick
-  Ensured Hero's innocence even after her "death"

Deception

'Play the devil's advocate'



Idiocy of Characters - Claudio

 Claudio is very quick in believing Don John and falling straight into Don John's weak plan. If he had confronted Hero before shaming her at the altar and hadn't been so impetuous, the following wouldn't have occurred.

The shaming of Hero and her "dying"

Reputation of the Governor's name, Count's Claudio's name and the Prince's name being shamed in the whole of Messina

Claudio and Don Pedro's loss of the friendship with Benedick

Loss of his (Claudio's) own love

Loss of the trust from the governor's family; Leonato, Antonio and Beatrice

Him having to marry a masked woman whom he has "never met" to appease Leonato

Idiocy of Characters – Don Pedro



Don Pedro was with Count Claudio that night they witnessed Hero's supposed slander. Though blood ran thicker than water, Don Pedro should've still held some scepticism and as the prince, should've investigated more. These factors attributed to him publicly denouncing her as a "common prostitute".

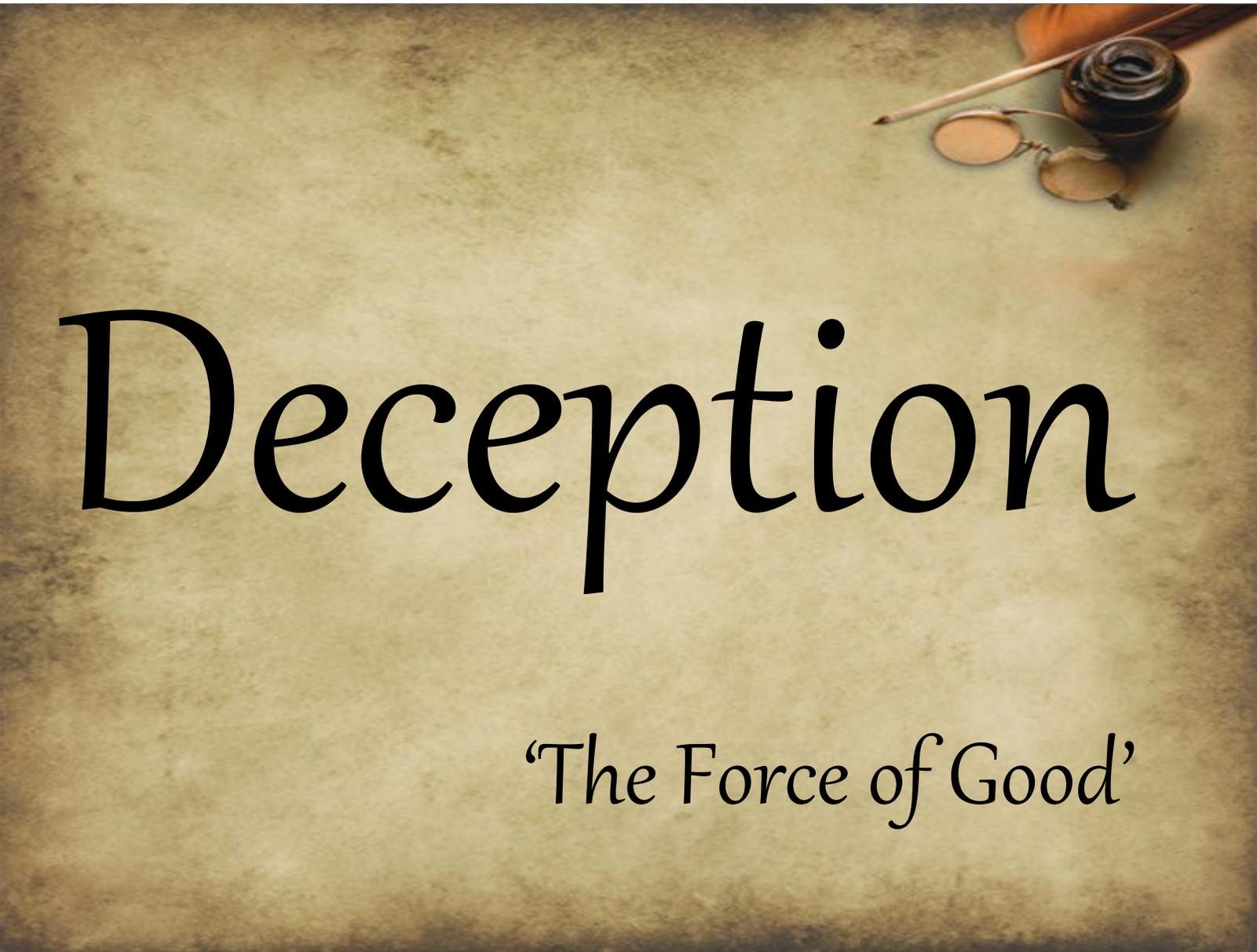
Trust in Don John

Disregarding the reputation of Hero as being innocent

Not asking Hero's chaperone

Margaret not professing that it was her at Hero's bedside window

"Her blush suggested guiltiness" – Claudio



Deception

‘The Force of Good’

Benedick and Beatrice

- 🐞 Benedick and Beatrice are so willingly tricked into falling in love with each other. They open themselves up to the weaknesses of love and ultimately disregard their previous thoughts on marriage.
- 🐞 A case of mishearing could change so much.
- 🐞 This comic effect is necessary as it is the only way they could be convinced to allow love into their lives.
- 🐞 The bold lines in the following slides refer to how they had been sceptic, but they had been easily deceived. It is almost as if they wanted to be deceived into thinking both parties had feelings.

Benedick

- 📖 “I should think this a gull, but that the white bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot sure hide himself in such reverence” — *Lines 106-107 Act 2 Scene 3*
- 📖 “**This can be no trick**, the conference was sadly borne, they have the truth of this from Hero, they seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent: love me? Why, it must be requited: I hear how I am censured, they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her” — *Lines 181-184 Act 2 Scene 3*
- 📖 “When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married —” *Lines 197-199 Act 2 Scene 3*

Beatrice

 What fire is in mine ears? **Can this be true?**
Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adieu,
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And Benedick, love on, I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand:
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band,
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly. --- *Lines 107-116 Act 3 Scene 1*

Other Aspects of Deception

-  Friar Francis successfully deceives everyone, except for those in on the plan and the reader of the play that Hero is dead. This ultimately restored her honour after it was revealed she had been slandered by Don John.
-  Leonato deceiving Claudio into thinking that he is marrying an unknown woman who looks akin to Hero. Claudio did this to appease Leonato even though at the end, it ends happily with Leonato being able to trust Claudio in accepting his consequences and truly loving Hero.

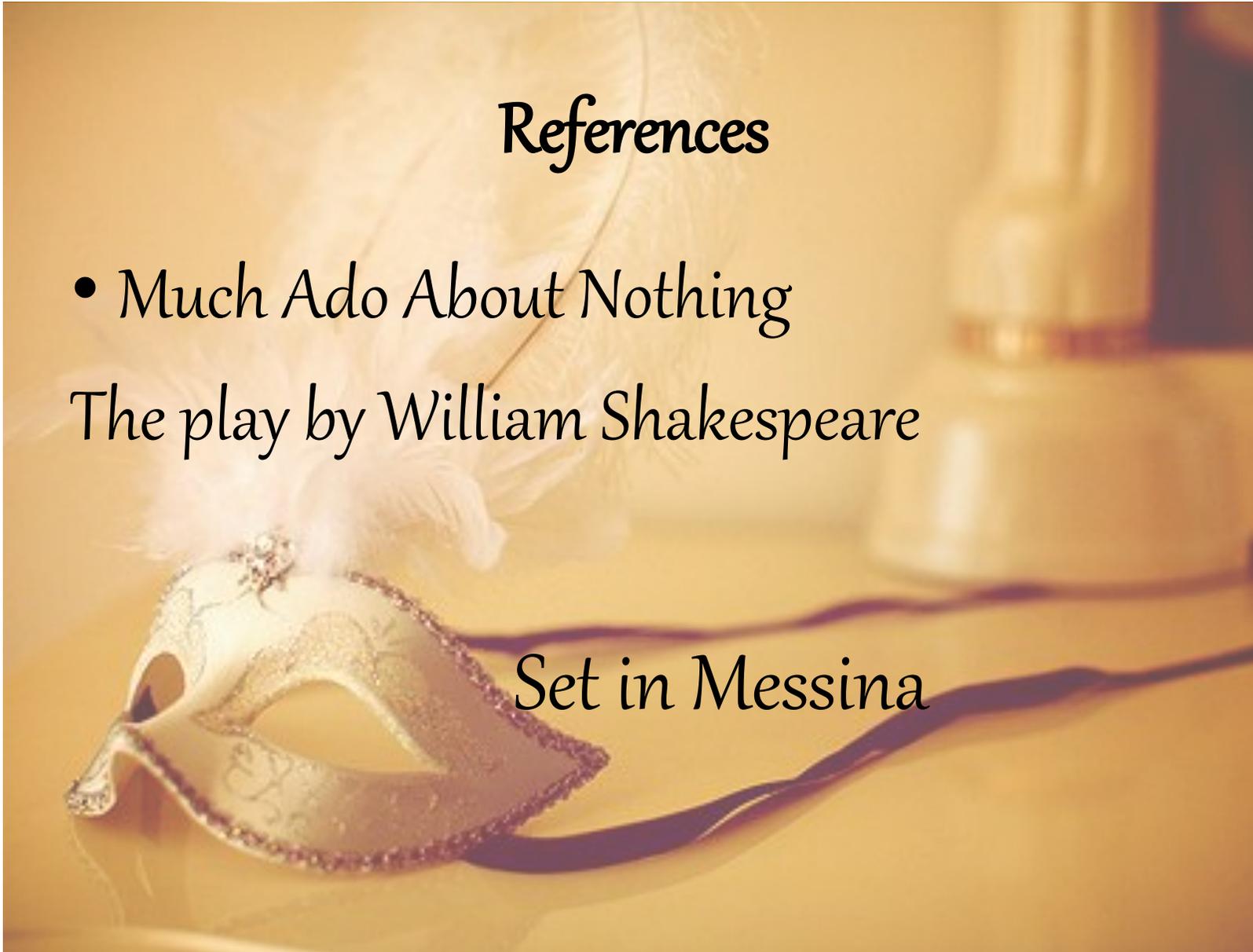


References

- *Much Ado About Nothing*

The play by William Shakespeare

Set in Messina

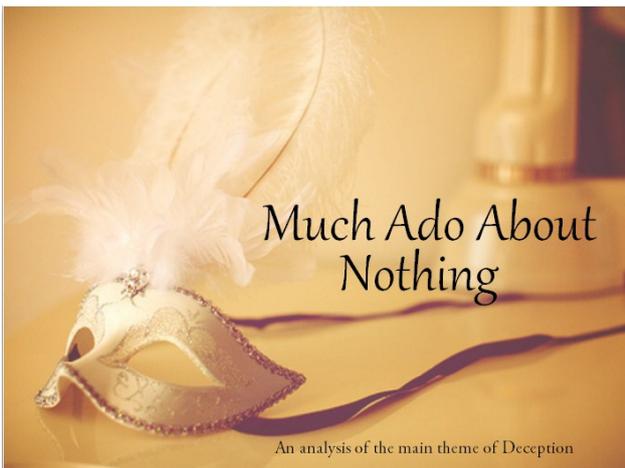


Reflection Statement

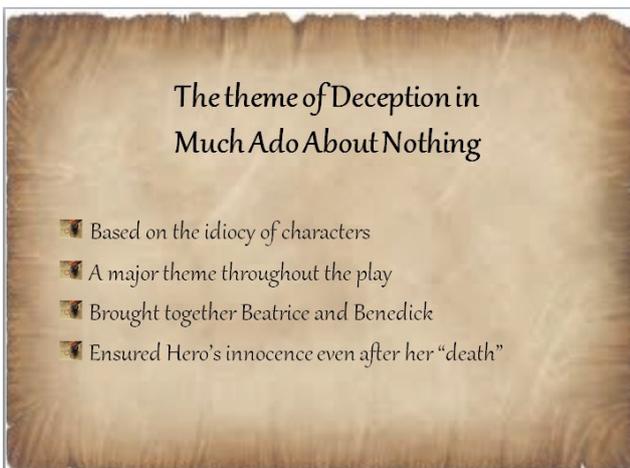
As my medium, I chose media and made a power point regarding the theme of deception in *Much Ado about Nothing*. My aim of creating this power point was to give an in depth analysis of the theme deception through simple slides. Though it was in simple slides of 10 slides, the audience is the average high school student who may be studying *Much Ado about Nothing*.

Through these slides, I aimed to analyse deception in a more in-depth way throughout the play. I outlined that deception could have two facets, one being the “force of good” and one being the “devil’s advocate”. It was also ironic that the characters allowed themselves to be deceived with how Benedick and Beatrice were so easily swayed to change their views on marriage. I believe I showcased this pretty well and to link that deception was due to many factors; that deception was caused by an idiocy of characters, the acceptance of being deceived and it being one of the main themes that intertwine within the play.

In overall, I am quite pleased as to how the power point turned out. Though I had aimed to present the presentation with music, the last product, I believe satisfies my original aim to provide an educational tool for students studying *Much Ado About Nothing*. Though it may be narrow, as it only presented “deception” as a theme, I believe that through this power point, you can see that deception is central to this play, and without it, many of the plots wouldn’t have occurred.

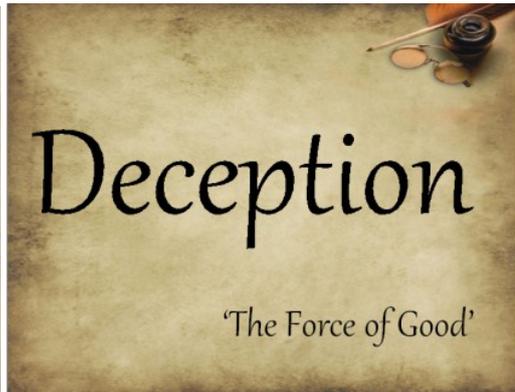
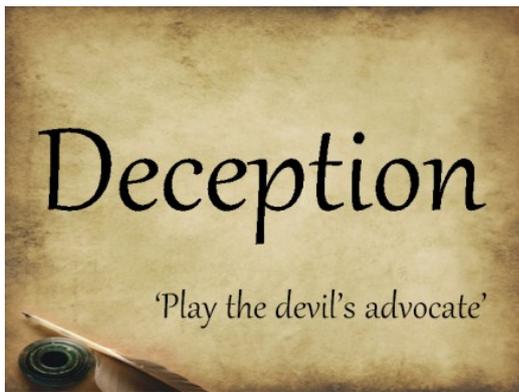


This first slide has a transition which shows the word “nothing” slowly rising. This suggests that nothing in the title holds significance. As for the background, the masquerade mask was to represent the theme of a play and that masks are commonly used as tools of deception. The words used on this power point are of the same font: “Gabriola” which not only showcases elegance but suggests royalty.



This second slide is just a basic overview. Once again the font used is Gabriola, and this is consistent throughout the powerpoint. The choice of background for this particular slide was to imitate books/parchments during the 17th century.

- Based on the idiocy of characters
- A major theme throughout the play
- Brought together Beatrice and Benedick
- Ensured Hero’s innocence even after her “death”



Deception is obviously the main theme of the power point. This “subtitle” is to separate the different aspects of deception, where it could be the devil’s advocate or for good. The background chosen once again imitates parchment, and the bottom left hand side is a quill, which would have been the instrument people then used.

Idiocy of Characters - Claudio

☛ Claudio is very quick in believing Don John and falling straight into Don John's weak plan. If he had confronted Hero before shaming her at the altar and hadn't been so impetuous, the following wouldn't have occurred.

- The shaming of Hero and her “dying”
- Reputation of the Governor's name, Count's Claudio's name and the Prince's name being shamed in the whole of Messina
- Claudio and Don Pedro's loss of the friendship with Benedick
- Loss of his (Claudio's) own love
- Loss of the trust from the governor's family; Leonato, Antonio and Beatrice
- Him having to marry a masked woman whom he has “never met” to appease Leonato

Idiocy of Characters – Don Pedro

☛ Don Pedro was with Count Claudio that night they witnessed Hero's supposed slander. Though blood ran thicker than water, Don Pedro should've still held some scepticism and as the prince, should've investigated more. These factors attributed to him; publicly denouncing her as a “common prostitute”.

- Trust in Don John
- Margaret not professing that it was her at Hero's bedside window
- Disregarding the reputation of Hero as being innocent
- “Her blush suggested guiltiness” – Claudio
- Not asking Hero's chaperone

The above slides are with the same background as slide 2. The choice of having coloured textboxes is to engage students as seeing the same boring black can really deter the thinking. The words in the textboxes are straightforward and this is succinct so there will be no confusion as to what had been said.

Other Aspects of Deception

☛ Friar Francis successfully deceives everyone, except for those in on the plan and the reader of the play that Hero is dead. This ultimately restored her honour after it was revealed she had been slandered by Don John.

☛ Leonato deceiving Claudio into thinking that he is marrying an unknown woman who looks akin to Hero. Claudio did this to appease Leonato even though at the end, it ends happily with Leonato being able to trust Claudio in accepting his consequences and truly loving Hero.

The choice of background was to only differentiate the forms of deception presented. The books in the background suggest literature and the play as a form of literature showcases that. Once again, the font Gabriola has been used and this is so that, it is clear but at the same time elegant just as how deception is being played throughout the play.

At the end of making this power point, I realised that I could have expanded on more themes, but within limited slides, I believe I have been able to show deception in a more deeper understanding.

Grade Commentary