

## **Comedy Unit Essay Test: So, tell me what you do know...**

Answer one of these questions in a multi-paragraph essay on your own paper. That means that you should have a thesis sentence that you will expand into paragraphs that support your statement. This is a good time to use that good, old five paragraph essay formula that you learned as a freshman. Use specific supporting details from *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*. You may refer to your notes, your old tests, and your study guides, but not to each other.

1. Shakespeare used the comic device of disguises in all of his comedies, to one extent or another. This is not surprising when you realize that Shakespeare considered that we all are actors, playing many parts in our lives. Discuss how the use of disguise played a major role in plot and character development in the plays we experienced.

2. Many of Shakespeare's romantic comedies employ the device of the comic threat...a threat to order, the happiness of an individual (or several individuals), or even life. How Shakespeare resolves this comic threat is what distinguishes a comedy from a tragedy. Discuss this idea in light of the plays we experienced.

3. Shakespeare was no dummy. He knew that the financial success of his plays depended upon his giving the audience...all of them...what they liked. Discuss in this essay how Shakespeare appealed in his comedies to all economic and class levels of people, through his use of farce to the most elegant verbal puns and other language fireworks.

4. It has been stated that all of Shakespeare's comedies can be boiled down into one title: *Four Weddings and a Transvestite*. Discuss in this essay how Shakespeare used the concept of a wedding to establish an ideal of harmony and nature's order.

Extra Credit: In a paragraph, tell what was your favorite comedy of the four we experienced in class and why.