Twelfth Night

Act 2

Year 3 and 4 letter codes

Context

Viola’s brother Sebastian reaches Illyria alive. Believing his sister Viola dead, Sebastian decides to go travelling and heads to Duke Orsino’s home first. His friend Antonio, who saved him from the shipwreck, asks to accompany him. Sebastian refuses and leaves alone, but Antonio follows despite the fact he is an old enemy of the Duke.

Meanwhile, we are introduced to the members of Olivia’s household including her uncle Sir Toby and his friend, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, who is hopelessly trying to court Olivia. We also meet Olivia’s friend Maria, her clown Feste and main servant, Malvolio. As Malvolio’s stiff and proper nature annoys the other member’s of the household, they decide to mock him by tricking him into thinking Olivia is in love with him.

Maria forges a letter from Olivia to M.O.A.I (who Malvolio assumes is himself) telling him that if he wants her affection, he should wear yellow stockings and crossed garters and behave in a proud manner whilst smiling all the time. Unfortunately for the fooled servant, Olivia hates to see people smiling whilst she mourns her brother and detests the colour yellow! Whilst Malvolio is convinced Olivia is in love with him and he cannot wait to become master of the household, the others are excited to see him make a fool of himself.

Maths

**This letter code investigation is inspired by the trick played on Malvolio by the members of Olivia’s household.**

LI: To solve problems.

Rules

Here is the alphabet:

**a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z**

Suppose Maria’s letter used a code that meant you move 4 places to the left to discover what the code stands for.

**a b c** will become **e f g**

Using Maria’s code, can you decipher this letter to Malvolio?

H i e v q c p s z i ,

Q i i x q i m r x l i

k e v h i r e x s r i e r h

f v m r k g l s g s p e x i w!

Questions

Can you work out what Maria’s code says?

Can you write your own code?

Teacher Tips

Write the alphabet in a circle so to support children count through z-a.

Extension

Can you work out the rule for this code? Clue: the first word is a name associated with this playt…

**U j c m g u r g c t g k u e q q n!**

Answers

Meet me in the garden and bring chocolates!

Shakespeare is cool