

JEFFREY R. WILSON  
LITERATURE AND THEORY

**Objective:** This activity is designed to help you put a theoretical text and a literary text into conversation.

**Readings:** William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing* (ca. 1598)  
Jeffrey Hall, *The Five Flirting Styles* (2013)

**Assignment:** In a small group, write a short essay putting Shakespeare and Hall into dialog.

**Instructions**

1. Read the Shakespearean passage you're working with:

PRINCE In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

BEATRICE Yea, my lord, I thank it. Poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

CLAUDIO And so she doth, cousin.

BEATRICE Good Lord, for alliance! Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sunburnt. I may sit in a corner and cry, 'Heigh-ho for a husband'.

PRINCE Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEATRICE I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands if a maid could come by them.

PRINCE Will you have me, lady?

BEATRICE No, my lord, unless I might have another for working days, your grace is too costly to wear every day. But I beseech your grace pardon me, I was born to speak all mirth, and no matter.

PRINCE Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for out o' question, you were born in a merry hour.

BEATRICE No, sure, my lord, my mother cried. But then there was a star danced, and under that was I born. [*To Hero and Claudio*] Cousins, God give you joy.

LEONATO Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

BEATRICE I cry you mercy, uncle. [*To Prince*] By your grace's pardon. *Exit Beatrice.* (2.1.276-301)

2. In your group, discuss how this passage might relate to Hall's *The Five Flirting Styles*.

3. Based on your discussion, select one of these options related to your *method*:

- If your group thinks Hall's text helps us understand the flirting in Shakespeare's text, *you're writing a lens essay*.
- If your group thinks Hall's text doesn't explain the flirting in Shakespeare's text, or the Shakespearean passage challenges Hall's theory, *you're writing a test-a-theory essay*.

