

Shylock speaks menacingly of Antonio and the bond between them. He stresses the common humanity of both Jews and Christians, and says he will learn from Christian example and seek revenge.

**1 'I'm the same as you, so I'll do the same as you!'**  
(in small groups)

Lines 42–57 are among the most famous in all Shakespeare. To explore Shylock's feelings, choose one or more of the following:

- a Stand in a circle and read around the group, changing over at the end of each sentence. Make your first reading angry and revengeful. Then read it again quietly and with dignity, as a plea for understanding and common humanity.
- b Two of you are Solanio and Salarino and stand at the opposite end of the room from the rest of the group. The others begin reading the speech in unison, moving towards the two Christians as they speak. Increase the volume the nearer you get to them. Experiment with gesture and tones of voice. Try your best to share and feel Shylock's angry demand for understanding. You'll end up face to face with your opponents, but keep your concentration! Repeat the exercise to give the first Solanio and Salarino a chance to read.
- c Repeat Activity b, but this time Solanio and Salarino can reply. They should intercut the speech with insults to Shylock taken from this scene or other parts of the script (see the list on p. 188).
- d 'The villainy you teach me I will execute' (line 56). Many critics believe this is the moment when Shylock decides on his revenge. What do you think?
- e The speech contains ten rhetorical questions (exclamations phrased as questions to create dramatic effect rather than to seek an answer). Identify them and talk together about the effect created. Which do you think are the three most powerful and emotive ones?

**jet** semi-precious black stone  
**Rhenish** fine white wine  
**prodigal** waster  
**upon the mart** into the marketplace  
**He was wont** he liked  
**usurer** money-lender

**forfeit** breaks the contract  
**hindered me** stopped me making  
**what is his humility?** how does he take it?  
**execute** commit

SALARINO There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

SHYLOCK There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto, a beggar that was used to come so smug upon the mart. Let him look to his bond. He was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond. He was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond. 35

SALARINO Why, I am sure if he forfeit thou wilt not take his flesh. What's that good for? 40

SHYLOCK To bait fish withal; if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million, laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies – and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge! The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction. 45 50 55

*Enter a [SERVING]MAN from Antonio*

SERVINGMAN Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house, and desires to speak with you both.

SALARINO We have been up and down to seek him. 60

*Enter TUBAL*

SOLANIO Here comes another of the tribe; a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

*Exeunt [Salarino and Solanio with the Servingman]*

SHYLOCK How now, Tubal, what news from Genoa? Hast thou found my daughter?

Act 3 Scene 1 - Shylock's Feelings