

### Handout 3

## Shakespeare was a pretty punny guy!

### *Finding the Fun in the Pun*

Below are some lines from some of William Shakespeare's plays and sonnets. You will find a pun in each set of lines in bold print. On the lines below each quote, briefly explain the pun as you think Shakespeare might have intended for his audience. Remember, a pun can be a humorous play on words that look or sound alike, but have different meanings. Look at the hints provided and just take a minute to "think about it!"

1. "No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door, but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man." *Romeo and Juliet* (Act iii, S.1) Hint: Grave=serious, dead, sad.

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2. "I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!" *Hamlet* (Act i, S.4) Hint: In Shakespeare's day, "let" meant "hinder," and today means the opposite, "allow."

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3. "If reasons were as plentiful as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I." *Henry IV, Part One* (Act ii, S.4) Hint: "Reason" was pronounced "raisin" in Shakespeare's day.

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4. "Give me a torch: I am not for this ambling; Being but heavy, I will bear the light." *Romeo and Juliet* (Act i, S.4) Hint: Heavy = in a bad mood; Light = not weighing much; a torch.

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