

Compiled *Merchant of Venice* Character Study Guide

Character: Morocco

Personality Trait: Arrogant
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross” (2.7.20) “I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes, / In graces, and in qualities of breeding” (2.7.32-33)
Personality Trait: Smooth-tongued, effusive
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I would not change this hue, / Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.” (2.1.11-12) “. . . all the world desires her. / From the four corners of the earth they come / To kiss this shrine, this mortal breathing saint.” (2.7.38-40) “O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem / Was set in worse than gold.” (2.7.54-55)
Personality Trait: Hypocritical
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Mislike me not for my complexion” (2.1.1) “Is’t like that lead contains her? ‘Twere damnation / To think so base a thought; it were too gross / To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.” (2.7.48-50)
Personality Trait: Shallow
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Is’t like that lead contains her? ‘Twere damnation / To think so base a thought; it were too gross / To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.” (2.7.48-50) “Or shall I think in silver she’s immured, / Being ten times undervalued to tried gold? / O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem / Was set in worse than gold.” (2.7.51-54) “But here an angel in a golden bed / Lies all within.” (2.7.57-58)

Character: Arragon

Personality Trait: Conceited
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “What many men desire: that ‘many’ may be meant / By the fool multitude that choose by show. . . .” (2.9.24-25) “I will not choose what many men desire / Because I will not jump with common spirits / And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.” (2.9.29-31)
Personality Trait: Arrogant
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “‘Who chooseth me, shall get as much as he deserves.’ / I will assume desert.” (2.9.50)
Personality Trait: Honourable
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “O, that estates, degrees, and offices / Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour / Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!” (2.9.40-42) “Sweet, adieu; I’ll keep my oath / Patiently to bear my wroth.” (2.9.76-77)
Personality Trait: Shallow
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “You shall look fairer ere I give or hazard.” (2.9.21)

Character: Jessica

Personality Trait: Unfilial, disloyal
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Alack, what heinous sin is it in me / To be ashamed to be my father’s child! / But though I am a daughter to his blood / I am not to his manners.” (2.3.15-18)• “Farewell, and if my fortune be not crossed, / I have a father, you a daughter, lost.” (2.5.54-55)
Personality Trait: Spendthrift
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I will make fast the doors, and gild myself / With some moe ducats, and be with you straight.” (2.6.51-52)• “Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night four score ducats.” (3.1.85-86)• “One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.” (3.1.93-94)
Personality Trait: Passionate
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “O Lorenzo, / If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife, / Become a Christian and thy loving wife.” (2.3.18-20)• “Lorenzo certain, and my love indeed, / For who love I so much?” (2.6.30-31)• “But love is blind, and lovers cannot see / The pretty follies that themselves commit” (2.6.37-38)• “I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.” (3.5.15)
Personality Trait: Playful
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Our house is hell, and thou a merry devil / Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.” (2.3.2-3)• “Even such a husband / Hast thou of me, as she is for a wife.” / “Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.” (3.5.71-73)• “In such a night / Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well, / Stealing her soul with many vows of faith, / And ne’er a true one.” (5.1.17-20)

Character: Gratiano

Personality Trait: Wild, rude
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Let me play the Fool.” (1.1.79)• “Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice.” (1.1.114-115)• “But hear thee, Gratiano: / Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice” (2.2.151-152)• “About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring / That she did give me, whose poesy was / For all the world like cutler’s poetry / Upon a knife” (5.1.147-150)
Personality Trait: Loyal, caring
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I tell thee what, Antonio - / I love thee, and it is my love that speaks” (1.1.86-87)• “O be thou damned, execrable dog, / And for thy life let justice be accused!” (4.1.127-128)
Personality Trait: Reckless, Rash
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come, / And let my liver rather heat with wine / Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.” (1.1.80-82)• “My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours: / You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid. /

You loved, I loved; for intermission / No more pertains to me, my lord, than you." (3.2.197-200)
Personality Trait: Merciless, vengeful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "...thy desires / Are wolfish, bloody, starved, and ravenous." (4.1.137-138) • "A halter gratis – nothing else, for God's sake." (4.1.375) • "In christening shalt thou have two godfathers: / Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more, / To bring thee to the gallows, not to the font." (4.1.394-396)

Character: Antonio

Personality Trait: Prejudiced
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I am as like to call thee so again, / To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too." (1.3.122-123)
Personality Trait: Naïve, trusting
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Content, in faith! I'll seal to such a bond, / And say there is much kindness in the Jew." (1.3.145-146) • "The Hebrew will turn Christian, he grows kind." (1.3.171) • "I dare be bound again, / My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord / Will nevermore break faith advisedly." (5.1.251-253)
Personality Trait: Melancholy
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "In sooth I know not why I am so sad." (1.1.1) • "A stage where every man must play a part, / And mine a sad one." (1.1.78-79) • "...his eye being big with tears. . ." (2.8.47)
Personality Trait: Self-deprecating
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I am a tainted wether of the flock, / Meetest for death; the weakest kind of fruit / Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me." (4.1.114-116) • "For herein Fortune shows herself more kind / Than is her custom: it is still her use / To let the wretched man outlive his wealth, / To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow / An age of poverty; from which ling'ring penance / Of such misery doth she cut me off." (4.1.264-268)
Personality Trait: Generous
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "My purse, my person, my extremest means / Lie all unlocked to your occasions." (1.1.137-138) • "And out of doubt you do me now more wrong / In making question of my uttermost / Than if you had made waste of all I have." (1.1.154-156)
Personality Trait: Honourable
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Duke cannot deny the course of law; / For the commodity that strangers have / With us in Venice, if it be denied, / Will much impeach the justice of the state, / Since that the trade and profit of the city / Consisteth of all nations." (3.4.26-31) • "Make no more offers, use no farther means, / But with all brief and plain conveniency / Let me have judgement, and the Jew his will." (4.1.82-84)
Personality Trait: Loving
Quotations:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I think he only loves the world for him." (2.8.51) • ". . .all debts are cleared between you and I if I might but see you at my death." (3.2.316-317) • "Tell her the process of Antonio's end, / Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death, / And when the tale is told, bid her be judge / Whether Bassanio had not once a love." (4.1.270-273)
Personality Trait: Altruistic, selfless
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me, / Let it not enter in your mind of love. / Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts / To courtship, and such fair ostents of love / As shall conveniently become you there." (2.8.42-46) • "Turning his face" (2.8.48) • "Notwithstanding, use your pleasure; if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter." (3.2.318-319) • "Grieve not that I am fall'n to this for you." (4.1.262)

Character: Bassanio

Personality Trait: Dependent
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ". . .if you please / To shoot another arrow that self way / Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt, / As I will watch the aim, or to find both / Or bring your latter hazard back again / And thankfully rest debtor for the first." (1.1.146-151) • "When I told you / My state was nothing, I should then have told you / That I was worse than nothing; for indeed / I have engaged myself to a dear friend, / Engaged my friend to his mere enemy, / To feed my means." (3.2.257-262)
Personality Trait: Caring, compassionate
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You shall not seal to such a bond for me; / I'll rather dwell in my necessity." (1.3.147-148) • "The dearest friend to me, the kindest man, / The best conditioned and unwearied spirit / In doing courtesies; and one in whom / The ancient Roman honour more appears / Than any that draws breath in Italy." (3.2.291-295) • "The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all, / Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood." (4.1.112-113)
Personality Trait: Thoughtful, insightful
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "So may the outward shows be least themselves; / The world is still deceived with ornament." (3.2.73-74) • "But thou, thou meagre lead / Which rather threaten'st than dost promise aught, / Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence." (3.2.104-106)
Personality Trait: Spendthrift
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio, / How much I have disabled mine estate / By something showing a more swelling port / Than my faint means would grant continuance." (1.1.121-124) • "I owe you much, and like a wilful youth / That which I owe is lost" (1.1.144-145)
Personality Trait: Untrustworthy
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "O my Antonio, had I but the means / To hold a rival place with one of them, / I have a mind

<p>presages me such thrift / That I should questionless be fortunate.” (1.1.172-175)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Pray thee take pain / To allay with some cold drops of modesty / Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behaviour / I be misconstrued in the place I go to, / And lose my hopes.” (2.2.156-160) • “Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him; / Give him the ring, and bring him if thou canst / Unto Antonio’s house.” (4.1.447-450) • “Why, I were best to cut my left hand off / And swear I lost the ring defending it.” (5.1.177-178)
Personality Trait: Passionate
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Madam, you have bereft me of all words. / Only my blood speak to you in my veins, / And there is such confusion in my powers / As after some oration fairly spoke / By a beloved prince there doth appear / Among the buzzing, pleased multitude, / Where every something being blent together / Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy / Expressed, and not expressed.” (3.2.175-183) • “There’s more depends on this than on the value. / The dearest ring in Venice will I give you, / And find it out by proclamation. / Only for this I pray you pardon me.” (4.1.430-433)
Personality Trait: Cautious, cynical
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I like not fair terms and a villain’s mind.” (1.3.172)
Personality Trait: Short-sighted
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I beseech you / Wrest once the law to your authority; / To do a great right, do a little wrong, / And curb this cruel devil of his will.” (4.1.210-213)

Character: Portia

Personality Trait: Cunning
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within, and that temptation without, I know he will choose it.” (1.2.78-80) • “I have within my mind / A thousand raw tricks of these bragging jacks, / Which I will practice” (3.4.76-78) • “Tarry a little; there is something else. / This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood. / The words expressly are ‘a pound of flesh’. / Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh, / But in the cutting it, if thou dost shed / One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods / Are by the laws of Venice confiscate / Unto the state of Venice.” (4.1.301-308)
Personality Trait: Virtuous
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In Belmont is a lady richly left / And she is fair, and – fairer than that word - / Of wondrous virtues.” (1.1.160-162) • “First go with me to church, and call me wife, / And then away to Venice to your friend! For never shall you lie by Portia’s side / With an unquiet soul.” (3.2.302-305) • “I never did repent for doing good, / Nor shall not now” (3.4.10-11)
Personality Trait: Modest
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Though for myself alone / I would not be ambitious in my wish / To wish myself much better, yet for you / I would be trebled twenty times myself” (3.2.150-153) • “But the full sum of me / Is sum of something: which to term in gross / Is an unlessoned girl,

<p>unschooled, unpracticed" (3.2.157-159)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "This comes too near the praising of myself, / Therefore no more of it" (3.4.22-23)
Personality Trait: Jealous, cynical
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Your wife would give you little thanks for that / If she were by to hear you make the offer." (4.1.284-285) "And if your wife be not a mad woman, / And know how well I have deserved this ring, / She would not hold out enemy for ever/ For giving it to me." (4.1.441-444) "Even so void is your false heart of truth. / By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed/ Until I see the ring." (5.1.189-191)
Personality Trait: Playful, humorous, teasing
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself. I am much afeared my lady his mother played false with a smith." (1.2.34-37) "Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair / As any comer I have looked on yet / for my affection." (2.1.20-22) "O, these deliberate fools! When they do choose / They have the wisdom by their wit to lose." (2.9.79-80)
Personality Trait: Rule-following, just
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I may neither choose who I would, nor refuse who I dislike, so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father." (1.2.19-21) "It must not be; there is no power in Venice / Can alter a decree established. / 'Twill be recorded for a precedent, / And many an error by the same example / Will rush into the state: it cannot be." (4.1.214-218)
Personality Trait: Passionate
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise." (1.2.98-99) "I would not lose you" (3.2.5) ". . .if he lose he makes a swan-like end, / Fading in music. That the comparison / May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream / And watery deathbed for him." (3.2.44-47) "O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy, / In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess!" (3.2.11-112)
Personality Trait: Generous
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "What, no more? / Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond. / Double six thousand, and then treble that" (3.2.298-299) "You shall have gold / To pay the petty debt twenty times over." (3.2.305-306)

Character: Shylock

Personality Trait: Merciless, cold-hearted
<p>Quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Jailor, look to him. Tell me not of mercy." (3.3.1) "How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?" (4.1.88) "My deeds upon my head! I crave the law, / The penalty and forfeit of my bond." (4.1.202-203)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I cannot find it, 'tis not in the bond." (4.1.258)
Personality Trait: Cunning
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "If I can catch him once upon the hip, / I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him." (1.3.38-39) • "I would be friends with you, and have your love, / Forget the shames that you have stained me with" (1.3.131-132)
Personality Trait: Determined
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I'll have my bond, speak not against my bond; / I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond." (3.3.3-4) • "I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak; / I'll have my bond, and therefore speak no more. / I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool, / To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield / To Christian intercessors" (3.3.11-16) • "Proceed to judgement. By my soul I swear / There is no power in the tongue of man / To alter me. I stay here on my bond." (4.1.236-238)
Personality Trait: Money-minded, stingy
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest, / For I did dream of money bags tonight." (2.5.17-18) • "I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear; would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin." (3.1.69-71)
Personality Trait: Vengeful
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog, / And spit upon my Jewish gabardine" (1.3.103-104) • "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." (3.2.42-46) • "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." (3.2.54-57) • "So can I give no reason, nor will I not, / More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing / I bear Antonio, that I follow thus / A losing suit against him." (4.1.59-62)
Personality Trait: Prejudiced
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I hate him for he is a Christian" (1.3.34) • "Clamber not you up to the casements then / Nor thrust your head into the public street / To gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces" (2.5.29-31)
Personality Trait: Controlling
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ". . .there be land rats, and water rats, water thieves and land thieves – I mean pirates" (1.3.19-20) • ""Hear you me, Jessica, / Lock up my doors, and when you hear the drum / And the vile squealing of the wry-necked fife, / Clamber not you up to the casements then / Nor thrust your head into the public street / To gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces" (2.5.25-31) • "But stop my house's ears – I mean my casements" (2.5.32) • "So says the bond, doth it not, noble judge? / 'Nearest his heart': those are the very words." (4.1.249-250)

Personality Trait: Sentimental
Quotations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise, I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor. I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.” (3.1.95-97)• “These be the Christian husbands! I have a daughter: / Would any of the stock of Barabbas / Had been her husband, rather than a Christian!” (4.1.291-293)