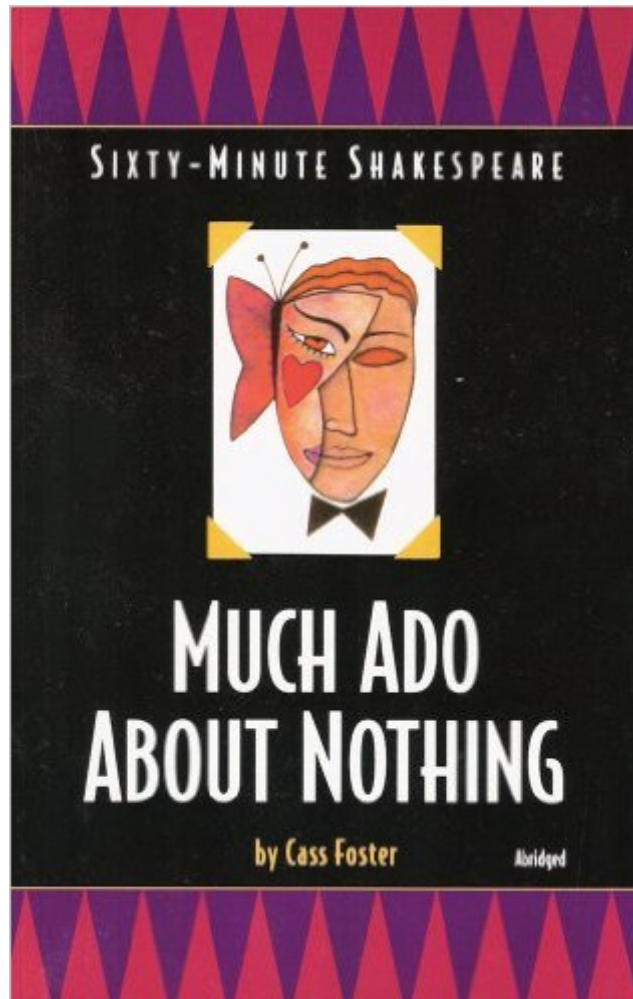


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# Much Ado About Nothing: Sixty-Minute Shakespeare Series



## Synopsis

Not enough time to tackle the unabridged version of the world's most widely read playwright? Pick up a copy of *The Sixty-Minute Shakespeare Series: Much Ado About Nothing* and discover how much more accessible Shakespeare can be to you and your students.

## Book Information

Series: Sixty-Minute Shakespeare

Paperback: 69 pages

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Shipping Weight: 4.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (9 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #853,046 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #55 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Renaissance](#) #127 in [Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Performing Arts > Drama & Theater](#) #368 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Movements & Periods > Renaissance](#)

Age Range: 11 and up

Grade Level: 8 and up

## Customer Reviews

I got this book so that my family could do a living room performance in one night. Although I am fairly pleased with how it was shortened, I found many typos that needed to be corrected before we could even read it. I had to sit down with the full text to check it all the way through. An obvious example is when Beatrice says to Benedick "You always end with a jade's trick. O know you of old." (It should be "I know you of old.") If you are only buying one copy, this isn't too hard to do and is easier than buying the full text and cutting the lines yourself. If you are buying several copies for a classroom, however, correcting the typos would be a lot of work. If you are buying this book to read the play, buy the full text, this in one of Shakespeare's shorter plays and one of our favorites.

I was pleasantly surprised by how easy these are to read and follow. The language of the texts has been condensed, yet not changed or modernized. Just as in some of my college texts, notes are

given at the bottom of each page to help the reader follow the language. But the best thing about these, to me, is that they are formatted both for reading and acting out the plays. I went ahead and read mine and now have my son and daughter acting out several of the exciting individual scenes. I really felt unable to do this before on my own, but this book allows this non-thespian to make Shakespeare fun for my kids!

Cass Foster's version of Shakespeare's popular comedy has all the right ingredients for staging "Much Ado" with high school students. He edits the text to eliminate much of the parallel speech while retaining the brightest of the lines. Shakespeare's many metaphors and images, though brilliant, can tend to confuse the average audience. Foster's script loses none of the important lines or images, and none of the audience members either, as he culls the text to focus on important action and interaction in the play. Also offering definitions of archaic Elizabethan words and ample space for director's notes, this script gets two thumbs up.

Reviewed By: Aaron Garrett, Eclectic Homeschool Online This is an abridged version of Shakespeare's play, *Much Ado About Nothing*, designed so that you can read through it fairly quickly and so that it can be performed in a shorter period of time than Shakespeare's original version. This is indicated by the series name, *Sixty-Minute Shakespeare*. The play begins with several men coming back from a war, and Count Claudio and Lord Benedick find that they are in love with the daughter (Hero) and niece (Beatrice) of governor Leonato. The play unfolds as evil Don John tries to destroy their love. Cass Foster has done a wonderful job editing the play to be short enough to read it casually, but long enough to keep all the important details. Foster has also made it easy to use the book as a script to guide a director and cast in producing the play. Features that assist in this include a complete detail of the cast before the play starts, a spot at the end of each act for the actors/director to take notes, definitions of Old English terms, and ideas on how to perfect the play with tips on scenery and pacing. If you want an overview of a particular Shakespeare play, but don't have the time to read it, or if you are looking for a good script for a class play, I would definitely pick this and the other abridged versions in this series.

I facilitate a mother/daughter book group, fifth and sixth graders and their moms. We decided to do a play read this year and, after looking at the offerings under children's theater (boring, trite, tired), we decided to tackle Shakespeare. At first I tried cutting the play down myself, but this is much harder than you'd think! I was delighted when I ran across Cass Foster's series. It's not dumbed

down, it uses the original language and has excellent vocabulary helps. Of course the girls didn't get everything that was going on in the play when they read it at home, but when we got together for the reading, it went fantastically well and now they've had a positive introduction to Shakespeare. We will be buying another set of 60 minute Shakespeare books for next year

I received a copy of "Much Ado About Nothing" in exchange for my review of the book. I was very happy with the abridgement and am enjoying sharing Shakespeare with my boys. Here is my blog review of the book:[...]

**What I Liked:**When I was in high school, we "sampled" Shakespeare. I remember reading a snippet of Macbeth and maybe a summary of it, but that was it. To be honest, I wasn't terribly fond of the bard, although I do appreciate some of his better-known quotes - I still have the first 5 lines of "To be, or not to be" memorized. With this series, I'm able to get a complete, albeit fast, meal - so I got a nice taste of the comedy side of Shakespeare's writing in Much Ado About Nothing. The scenes flow together well; it doesn't feel like chunks are missing. And it is most definitely still in beautiful Shakespearean English. Footnotes help the reader understand certain words and phrases. I think this series would be interesting to work through as a high school co-op group, with multiple people participating to read the different parts.

**What I Didn't Like:**I've got nothing negative to say about the abridgment of the book - that is very well done. However, I'm not a big fan of some of Shakespeare's darker themes and the "double, double toil and trouble" stuff. I'm still undecided on whether his literary genius outweighs the death speak and irreverent humor of some of his characters, which you find even in comedies such as this one.

This was too long for our planned use. Waws looking for something Like "Shakespeare in a Box".

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