

**William Shakespeare's**  
***1 Henry IV:***  
**A Discussion Guide**

**By David Bruce**

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Josephine Saturday Bruce**

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# William Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV*: A Discussion Guide

by **David Bruce**

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## Preface

The purpose of this book is educational. I have read, studied and taught William Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV*, and I wish to pass on what I have learned to other people who are interested in studying William Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV*. In particular, I think that the readers of this short introduction to William Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV* will be bright high school seniors and college first-year students, as well as intelligent adults who simply wish to study *1 Henry IV* despite not being literature majors.

This book uses a question-and-answer format. This book goes through the play scene by scene. I recommend that you read the relevant section of *1 Henry IV*, then read my comments, then go back and re-read the relevant section of *1 Henry IV*.

Teachers may find this book useful as a discussion guide for the play. Teachers can have students read a section of the play, then teachers can ask students selected questions from this study guide.

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Very Important Note: The page numbers refer to the Signet Classic edition of *1 Henry IV*. However, the text is that of an online edition of *1 Henry IV* available at <<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/1henryiv/full.html>>. This means that mostly minor variations in the text will occur. The short quotations (quotations not in block format) are from the Signet Classic edition. The long quotations (quotations in block format) are from the online edition.

## Introduction to *1 Henry IV*

### The Title of the Play

- You may write the title of the play in either of two ways:

*1 Henry IV*

*Henry IV, Part One*

Both are correct.

### King Henry IV

- King Henry IV ruled England from 1399 to 1413.
- King Henry IV usurped the kingship from the weak King Richard II, whom he ordered to be murdered. King Henry IV then had to defend himself from people who wished to dethrone him and take the crown. (In the play, King Henry IV leaves it ambiguous whether he had King Richard II murdered.)
- The Percys supported Henry Bolingbroke (as King Henry IV was then known) in his usurpation of the crown, but then they decided that King Henry IV was not rewarding them enough for their part in making him King. In *Henry IV, Part 1*, the Percys, led by Hotspur, rebel against King Henry IV.
- These four history plays by Shakespeare are related:

*Richard II*

Henry Bolingbroke usurps the crown from King Richard II and becomes King Henry IV.

*Henry IV, Part 1*

King Henry IV must deal with two major problems: 1) the rebellion of the Percys and others, and 2) his son Hal, who hangs out with lowlifes such as Falstaff and who appears to be a prodigal son.

*Henry IV, Part 2*

King Henry IV has succeeded in putting down the rebellion by the Percys, but conflict and unrest continue. Late in the play, King Henry IV dies, and Prince Hal becomes Henry V.

*Henry V*

Prince Hal, as King Henry V, becomes a great leader and a great King.

- The comic character Falstaff was so popular that Shakespeare wrote a comic play featuring him as the main character. The play is titled *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. In it, Falstaff tries to get a girlfriend—a married girlfriend—and he sends the same love letter to several wives.

### Sources

- Shakespeare used the 1587 edition of Raphael Holinshed's massive work *The Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (first published in 1577), as he did for many of his plays concerning English history.
- Another source was an anonymous play called *The Famous Victories of King Henry V*, which contained stories of Prince Hal's wild youth.

**Changes from the Sources**

- In real life, Hotspur was two years older than King Henry IV; however, Shakespeare makes him the same age as Prince Hal. He does this to make the audience focus on comparing the two characters.
- Read Shakespeare's plays as drama, not as history, because he changes many historical facts to serve dramatic purposes.
- In real life, no one knows who killed Hotspur in the battle.

**Titles**

- *Henry IV, Part 1* is often referred to as *1 Henry IV*.
- *Henry IV, Part 2* is often referred to as *2 Henry IV*.

**Setting (Time)**

- The play is set in the years 1402–1403, two centuries before Shakespeare's time. As a comparison, it's as if a playwright of today were writing about the events of 1804—the great philosopher Immanuel Kant died, and Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, was founded.

**Two Plots**

- The main plot involves the rebellion against King Henry IV.
- The subplot is comic: Prince Hal's adventures with the fat rogue, Sir John Falstaff, and with other drinking buddies.

## *Henry IV, Part I*

### Act 1

#### Act 1, Scene 1

#### Why is King Henry IV under so much stress?

The first words King Henry IV speaks are these (p. 3):

So shaken as we are, so wan with care,

Why is he shaken and wan with care?

To answer that, the audience needs to know past history.

1) This scene introduces us to King Henry IV, who is weary and worn out because of the stresses of defending his crown and his kingdom. King Henry IV is weary in part because he is a usurper. He took the crown from King Richard II and made himself King with the help of the Percys. He feels guilty because he unjustly took the crown. He would love to go on a Crusade to assuage his guilt over his usurpation of the crown.

2) To be an usurper, Henry Bolingbroke (King Henry IV) had to fight a civil war. Civil war is probably the worst of all wars because brother is fighting brother. (Think of the American Civil War.)

3) Currently, England is under attack on two borders. The Welsh and the Scots are both attacking England.

Being a King can be a full-time job. It can also be a very stressful job.

On pp. 3-4, we read:

#### **KING HENRY IV**

So shaken as we are, so wan with care,  
 Find we a time for frightened peace to pant,  
 And breathe short-winded accents of new broils  
 To be commenced in strands afar remote.  
 No more the thirsty entrance of this soil  
 Shall daub her lips with her own children's blood;  
 Nor more shall trenching war channel her fields,  
 Nor bruise her flowerets with the armed hoofs  
 Of hostile paces: those opposed eyes,  
 Which, like the meteors of a troubled heaven,  
 All of one nature, of one substance bred,  
 Did lately meet in the intestine shock  
 And furious close of civil butchery  
 Shall now, in mutual well-beseeming ranks,

March all one way and be no more opposed  
 Against acquaintance, kindred and allies:  
 The edge of war, like an ill-sheathed knife,  
 No more shall cut his master. Therefore, friends,  
 As far as to the sepulchre of Christ,  
 Whose soldier now, under whose blessed cross  
 We are impressed and engaged to fight,  
 Forthwith a power of English shall we levy;  
 Whose arms were moulded in their mothers' womb  
 To chase these pagans in those holy fields  
 Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet  
 Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd  
 For our advantage on the bitter cross.  
 But this our purpose now is twelve month old,  
 And bootless 'tis to tell you we will go:  
 Therefore we meet not now. Then let me hear  
 Of you, my gentle cousin Westmoreland,  
 What yesternight our council did decree  
 In forwarding this dear expedience.

### **Act 1, Scene 1**

#### **Why would King Henry IV want to go on a Crusade to Jerusalem?**

Here are a few possible reasons:

1. It can be a way to assuage a guilty conscience. If King Henry IV feels guilty about taking the throne from King Richard II and about King Richard II's murder, going on a holy Crusade for God can be way to assuage a guilty conscience.
2. It can be a way to stop fighting at home in England. Recently, a civil war has been fought in England. If everyone joins together in a holy Crusade, all the warriors will "march all one way" (1.1.15), instead of marching against each other. King Henry IV wants to unite his people (especially the nobles) in a single cause.
3. It can be a way to divert the attention of citizens from problems at home. Sometimes, American Presidents are accused of started military actions to divert attention away from an ailing economy.

### **Act 1, Scene 1**

#### **Currently, England is under attack on two borders. The Welsh and the Scots are both attacking England. How fares England in responding to these attacks?**

The news on one front is good; the news on the other front is bad.

*The Welsh*

- The Welsh have defeated the English.

- Mortimer led an English army against the Welsh general Glendower, but Glendower defeated them.
- The Welsh army captured Mortimer.
- The Welsh army killed 1,000 English soldiers.
- The Welsh women mutilated the bodies of the fallen English soldiers. Shakespeare's source, Holinshed's *Chronicles*, suggests that they were castrated.
- Because of this bad news, King Henry IV says that he cannot now go on a Crusade to the Holy Land.

### *The Scots*

- On this front the news is better for King Henry IV.
- Westmoreland brings news that a messenger gave him, but the news is that the outcome of the battle was still uncertain.
- King Henry IV has heard more recent news. Sir Walter Blunt has received this news: Hotspur, aka Harry Percy, has defeated the Scots and taken many prisoners.
- Hotspur has defeated Archibald, Earl of Douglas, a Scottish general.
- Among Hotspur's prisoners are Mordake, Earl of Fife and eldest son to Douglas, and several other important prisoners.

### *Summary*

- King Henry IV discusses the political situation with Westmoreland and others. Mortimer had led an army against the Welsh rebel Owen Glendower and has lost 1,000 soldiers. The wild Welsh women have mutilated their bodies—which may mean castration after the soldiers had died. Obviously, the news is bad on this front. Because of this bad news, King Henry IV must cancel his planned Crusade.
- Westmoreland tells King Henry IV that Henry Percy, known as Hotspur, has been fighting the Scots. He says that the outcome of the battle is uncertain. However, Sir Walter Blunt has more recent news: Hotspur has triumphed over the Scots.

### **Act 1, Scene 1**

#### **What does King Henry IV think about his son, Prince Hal, and about Hotspur?**

King Henry IV talks about Hotspur and his own son, Prince Hal. Hotspur is a brave soldier who has just won an important battle. Prince Hal, on the other hand, seems to be a wastrel who spends all his time hanging out in taverns with lowlifes.

Hotspur at this time appears to be a better candidate for a national leader (Prince now, then King later) than Prince Hal. Of course, he was born into the wrong family, and King Henry IV wishes that Hotspur were his son.

Henry IV even wishes that fairies had exchanged Hotspur and Prince Hal when they were infants. He strongly prefers to have Hotspur for a son instead of Prince Hal. To King Henry IV, his son Prince Hal is a disappointment.

As you may be able to tell, Hotspur and Prince Hal will become rivals in this play.

Shakespeare definitely wants his audience to compare and contrast Prince Hal and Hotspur. In real life, Hotspur was two years older than King Henry IV; however, Shakespeare makes him the same age as Prince Hal. He does this to make the audience focus on comparing the two characters.

On p. 6, we read:

**KING HENRY IV**

Yea, there thou makest me sad and makest me sin  
 In envy that my Lord Northumberland  
 Should be the father to so blest a son,  
 A son who is the theme of honour's tongue;  
 Amongst a grove, the very straightest plant;  
 Who is sweet Fortune's minion and her pride:  
 Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,  
 See riot and dishonour stain the brow  
 Of my young Harry. O that it could be proved  
 That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged  
 In cradle-clothes our children where they lay,  
 And call'd mine Percy, his Plantagenet!  
 Then would I have his Harry, and he mine.

**Act 1, Scene 1**

**Why is King Henry IV angry at Hotspur, whom he admires in many ways?**

King Henry IV is angry at Hotspur because Hotspur will not deliver to him his prisoners. Henry IV thinks that Hotspur should deliver the prisoners without any arguments. According to Westmoreland, who is loyal to King Henry IV, this is the evil influence of Hotspur's uncle, Worcester.

King Henry IV orders that the Percys meet with him. He wishes to discuss Hotspur's refusal to hand over his Scottish prisoners.

King Henry IV is tough, although he faces a lot of trouble. He is having trouble with rebellious Scottish and Welsh lords, the rebellious Percys, and his rebellious son.

On p. 6, we read:

**KING HENRY IV**

But let him from my thoughts. What think you, coz,  
 Of this young Percy's pride? the prisoners,  
 Which he in this adventure hath surprised,  
 To his own use he keeps; and sends me word,  
 I shall have none but Mordake Earl of Fife.

**WESTMORELAND**

This is his uncle's teaching; this is Worcester,  
 Malevolent to you in all aspects;  
 Which makes him prune himself, and bristle up  
 The crest of youth against your dignity.

**KING HENRY IV**

But I have sent for him to answer this;  
 And for this cause awhile we must neglect  
 Our holy purpose to Jerusalem.  
 Cousin, on Wednesday next our council we  
 Will hold at Windsor; so inform the lords:  
 But come yourself with speed to us again;  
 For more is to be said and to be done  
 Than out of anger can be uttered.

**WESTMORELAND**

I will, my liege.

Hotspur is the victor in the battle, so he is able to keep the common prisoners; however, he is supposed to give the King all prisoners of royal descent.

We have seen that King Henry IV has personal problems: He feels guilt over how he became King, and he is disappointed by the behavior of his son Prince Hal. In addition, he has public problems. He is being rebuffed by Hotspur, who ought to obey him.

**Act 1, Scene 2**

**Write a brief character analysis of Sir John Falstaff, based on this scene. How does he make his living?**

- After hearing about Prince Hal in the previous scene, we meet him in this scene. We also meet his companion, Sir John Falstaff. Many directors of the play show Sir John asleep and snoring as this scene opens.
- Falstaff is old, enormously fat, and very alcoholic.
- Falstaff daydreams about life in England when Prince Hal becomes King. For example, will thieves be respectable men? (Falstaff means, Will thieves be able to rob and steal without fear of being hanged?) In his answer, Prince Hal never says anything about not enforcing the law.
- Both King Henry IV and Falstaff may be underestimating Prince Hal.

- Falstaff claims that he would like to repent, but when Prince Hal asks where they should steal somebody's purse that night, Falstaff is eager to take part in the robbery (and to share in the profits). When Prince Hal criticizes his repentance as being brief, Falstaff jokes that purse-taking is his vocation, and it is "no sin for a man to labour in his vocation" (1.2.108-109).
- Falstaff is witty.
- Falstaff has no morals, except bad morals.
- Falstaff wastes time.
- Falstaff lets Prince Hal pay the bills.
- Falstaff is out for Falstaff.
- Falstaff makes his living by robbing other people. He is a highwayman.
- Falstaff wants Prince Hal to become a thief. He is a misleader of youth.
- Falstaff would love Prince Hal to become King. He thinks that he will be able to run wild if his friend is King.

### Act 1, Scene 2

**Falstaff is perhaps the wittiest of all Shakespeare's characters, and Prince Hal is nearly as witty as Falstaff. Falstaff is always making jokes and puns, but because language changes over time, some of Falstaff's jokes and puns are not immediately apparent to a modern reader who is new to Shakespeare. Explain some of the jokes and puns that Falstaff and Prince Hal make in this scene.**

- Both Prince Hal and Falstaff are witty characters. They also insult each other, although this is usually done in a friendly way. For example, when Sir John wakes up and asks what time it is, Prince Hal asks why such a drunkard as Falstaff needs to know the time. Note that in this scene, Falstaff is wasting time, something that King Henry IV would never do.
- Falstaff sometimes speaks as if he were a Puritan, someone who is very concerned with morality. Of course, Falstaff rejects morality. When Falstaff pretends to be a Puritan and pretends to reform, Prince Hal asks him where they will go to rob someone tomorrow. Hearing that, Falstaff stops pretending to reform. He is very eager to get money—someone else's money. When Prince Hal comments that he has given up his reformation very quickly, Falstaff justifies himself (p. 11):

**FALSTAFF**

Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation, Hal; 'tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation.

- To answer this question, read the notes in the Signet Classic edition.

• By the way, British professional comedian Ricky Gervais says that he is not a fan of Shakespeare for one reason. Of course, as a professional comedian, he may be joking when he says that he is not a fan of Shakespeare; however, he does have a point when he says why he is not a fan of Shakespeare:

Not anything to do with the structure, his themes—fantastic. The pun. I can't stand the pun. It just reminds me of a bloke in a beard and a pipe at a party doing puns, you know. It's things in Shakespeare like, you know, "Oh take their maidenheads", and you have to look at your Brodie's Notes to go, OK, cut off their heads and take their virginity, oh brilliant. You can't explain a joke in retrospect—you don't laugh if you then have it explained to you.

Source: 'Art is just something for your eyes to look at.' *The Guardian*. 18 February 2009  
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2009/feb/18/ricky-gervais-guardian-podcast>>.

Some of the Shakespeare's jokes aren't funny today because the language has changed. Some of Shakespeare's jokes are puns, and when the language changes, what was a pun in Shakespeare's time is not a pun today.

We can puzzle out the meaning of a "dead" pun, but that is unlikely to make it funny to us. However, if you go to the theater, often you will hear people laughing at unfunny puns and unfunny jokes. Often the audience knows that there is a joke there and by God they are going to laugh to show other people that they know that there is a joke there. (And sometimes they laugh to support the actors on stage.)

Let me say in Shakespeare's defense that many of his comic situations and jokes are funny. I think that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is hilarious. Falstaff is frequently hilarious.

An advantage of live productions and movies is that the directors can cut Shakespeare. One thing to cut is jokes that don't work anymore.

Of course, one reason for the cutting is that many of Shakespeare's plays are long by modern standards.

## **Act 1, Scene 2**

### **What practical joke does Poins wish to play on Falstaff?**

- Note the disorder in society. On a large scale, we see rebellions such as the Scots and the Welsh (and later, the Percys). On a small scale, we see Falstaff and his people robbing travelers on the highway.
- Poins comes in with a plan for a robbery on Gads Hill. Falstaff is eager to take part, but Prince Hal wants no part of it—he is not a thief. Poins asks Falstaff to let him be alone with Prince Hal so that he can persuade the Prince to be an accomplice in their robbery. Falstaff leaves, and Poins tells Prince Hal about a joke that they can play on Falstaff and the other robbers. They will let Falstaff and the others rob the travelers, then they will rob the robbers. The great sport of this practical joke will be to listen to Falstaff tell enormous lies about being waylaid by numerous men.

- Prince Hal is cautious and thinks things through. He asks whether they will be recognized. Poins replies that he has had disguises made—they will wear masks and clothing made of buckram (a rough cloth). Prince Hal asks whether the robbers will not overcome them. Poins replies that they are cowards.
- Prince Hal then agrees to the plan. His main reason, in my opinion, is that he wants to play a joke on Falstaff. Other people think that like father, like son. Henry IV stole a crown; Prince Hal should surprise no one if he steals crowns. (In other words, King Henry IV and Prince Hal are both thieves.) In addition, some people argue that really there is no theft, since Prince Hal eventually returns the money with interest.
- Note, however, that Prince Hal is putting the lives of the travelers at risk in order to have some fun. Falstaff and the other robbers will be carrying swords, and someone could get hurt during the robbery.

### **Act 1, Scene 2**

**Write a brief character analysis of Prince Hal, based on this scene. Why is he hanging out with lowlifes?**

- Prince Hal is the oldest son of King Henry IV. As such, he should be preparing himself to become King, but instead he is hanging out with lowlifes.
- We know that King Henry IV is disappointed in his son—so far.
- We know that Prince Hal is contrasted to Hotspur—and not in a good way.
- Prince Hal is witty.
- Prince Hal hangs out with Falstaff and other lowlifes because hanging out with Falstaff and other lowlifes is fun.
- Prince Hal is picking up an education that will most likely be useful when he becomes King. He will know something about the lowest dregs of society.
- Prince Hal allows the lowlifes to be very familiar with him. Poins, a thief, calls him “Sirrah” (1.2.182), which shows a great deal of familiarity.
- Prince Hal knows that these lowlifes are lowlifes. He is using them. He plans to reform later, and by reforming, to become a hero in his father’s and the people’s eyes.

### **Act 1, Scene 2**

**At the end of this scene, Prince Hal makes an important speech beginning, “I know you all ...” (1.2.199). Analyze that speech.**

- At the end of the scene, Prince Hal speaks an important soliloquy. He makes clear that he knows that his friends are lowlifes. He also says that he has a clever psychological plan. He is deliberately seeking to create low expectations of himself so that when he reforms and acts like royalty, people will be astonished and will hold him in higher regard than they would have otherwise. (Prince Hal

pulls this off, but don't try it in real life. Don't say, I'm going to party for the first two years of college, then buckle down and study. You might flunk out of college and never get another chance to buckle down and study.)

- Prince Hal compares himself to a sun that is covered up by clouds. When the sun comes out from the clouds, the sun will shine all the more brightly. (The sun is a symbol of a King.)
- As we see from this soliloquy, Prince Hal's character is more than it might otherwise seem from his behavior in the tavern. Some people are bothered by this clever psychological plan. They think that he is using his friends, only to cast them off when he becomes King. Other people think that Prince Hal is gaining a useful education in human behavior and that he acts correctly when he finally does reject Falstaff (in *2 Henry IV*). Very definitely, no one should want Falstaff running loose in the country, committing all kinds of thefts because his friend is King Henry V and no one dares to arrest him.

On pp. 14-15, we read:

**PRINCE HENRY**

I know you all, and will awhile uphold  
 The unyoked humour of your idleness:  
 Yet herein will I imitate the sun,  
 Who doth permit the base contagious clouds  
 To smother up his beauty from the world,  
 That, when he please again to be himself,  
 Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at,  
 By breaking through the foul and ugly mists  
 Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.  
 If all the year were playing holidays,  
 To sport would be as tedious as to work;  
 But when they seldom come, they wish'd for come,  
 And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.  
 So, when this loose behavior I throw off  
 And pay the debt I never promised,  
 By how much better than my word I am,  
 By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;  
 And like bright metal on a sullen ground,  
 My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,  
 Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes  
 Than that which hath no foil to set it off.  
 I'll so offend, to make offence a skill;  
 Redeeming time when men think least I will.

**Act 1, Scene 3**

**What do we learn about King Henry IV in this scene?**

- In this scene, we see King Henry IV's meeting with the Percys. The three Percys are Hotspur, his father (Northumberland), and his uncle (Worcester).

1. King Henry IV is angry and displeased at Hotspur. He says that he has been too kind recently, but now he will act more like himself—that is, he will act more like a King should—with authority and not with kindness.

On p. 16, he says:

**KING HENRY IV**

My blood hath been too cold and temperate,  
 Unapt to stir at these indignities,  
 And you have found me; for accordingly  
 You tread upon my patience: but be sure  
 I will from henceforth rather be myself,  
 Mighty and to be fear'd, than my condition;  
 Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down,  
 And therefore lost that title of respect  
 Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.

2. King Henry IV is shrewd. Immediately, he banishes Worcester from the meeting. This is an example of divide and conquer.

3. King Henry IV exerts his authority and orders Hotspur to turn over his Scottish prisoners. The King is angry and promises to act like a lion, not like a mild-mannered man. Worcester objects, saying that the Percys put Henry on the throne. King Henry IV orders him from the room. Worcester obeys and leaves. King Henry IV is definitely in control and is a force to be reckoned with.

On p. 16, he says:

**KING HENRY IV**

Worcester, get thee gone; for I do see  
 Danger and disobedience in thine eye:  
 O, sir, your presence is too bold and peremptory,  
 And majesty might never yet endure  
 The moody frontier of a servant brow.  
 You have good leave to leave us: when we need  
 Your use and counsel, we shall send for you.

4. King Henry IV stays on message. Hotspur tells a tale about an effeminate messenger. This makes people laugh, but King Henry IV again demands Hotspur's prisoners.

On pp. 18-19, we read:

**KING HENRY IV**

Why, yet he doth deny his prisoners,  
 But with proviso and exception,  
 That we at our own charge shall ransom straight  
 His brother-in-law, the foolish Mortimer;  
 Who, on my soul, hath wilfully betray'd

The lives of those that he did lead to fight  
 Against that great magician, damn'd Glendower,  
 Whose daughter, as we hear, the Earl of March  
 Hath lately married. Shall our coffers, then,  
 Be emptied to redeem a traitor home?  
 Shall we but treason? and indent with fears,  
 When they have lost and forfeited themselves?  
 No, on the barren mountains let him starve;  
 For I shall never hold that man my friend  
 Whose tongue shall ask me for one penny cost  
 To ransom home revolted Mortimer.

5. King Henry IV gets the last word when he exits.

On pp. 19-20, we read:

**KING HENRY IV**

Thou dost belie him, Percy, thou dost belie him;  
 He never did encounter with Glendower:  
 I tell thee,  
 He durst as well have met the devil alone  
 As Owen Glendower for an enemy.  
 Art thou not ashamed? But, sirrah, henceforth  
 Let me not hear you speak of Mortimer:  
 Send me your prisoners with the speediest means,  
 Or you shall hear in such a kind from me  
 As will displease you. My Lord Northumberland,  
 We licence your departure with your son.  
 Send us your prisoners, or you will hear of it.

**Summary:** King Henry IV exhibits a great deal of power and authority in his brief appearance in this scene.

**Act 1, Scene 3**

**How does Hotspur explain in this scene why he refused to give King Henry IV his prisoners?**

Actually, he never does explain why he refused the prisoners.

What Hotspur does is to tell a story about an effeminate messenger who made him mad, so mad that he told the messenger something—he doesn't know what.

It is a good speech:

- Northumberland claims that there has been a misunderstanding, and Hotspur backs that up by saying that he denies no prisoners. He then explains his version of what happened. He was hot and tired after the battle when a prissy, effeminate messenger arrived to ask for the prisoners in the King's name. The courtier (messenger) was perfumed and daintily dressed

and was upset whenever a corpse was carried between himself and the wind—he didn't want to smell the corpse. Therefore, the courtier often smelled the scent from a perfume box. The courtier also chattered like a parrot and said silly things such as that he would like to be a soldier if it weren't for the vile guns. This so upset Hotspur that he said something to the courtier—but he doesn't know what he said.

- This is a telling speech. Hotspur may have said something very insulting to the messenger, and he probably did. However, the way he tells the story one can understand why he would say sharp words in that situation. In fact, Sir Walter Blunt suggests that begones be bygones, that King Henry IV should forget the incident.

- However, King Henry IV is still angry because Hotspur still has the prisoners and will not give them up except with the provision that King Henry IV ransom Mortimer, his brother-in-law. (Hotspur is married to Mortimer's sister.)

### Act 1, Scene 3

**Write a character analysis of the “certain lord” whom Hotspur describes in 1.3.28-68.**

1. The lord is a man of fashion. He is neat, well dressed, and has a closely cropped chin.
2. The lord is perfumed—he wears scent to make himself smell nice.
3. The lord dislikes bad smells. He smells a perfume box whenever someone carries a decaying corpse between himself and the wind.
4. The lord criticizes brave soldiers—the soldiers who carry corpses near him.
5. The lord, of course, is of the nobility.
6. The lord demands the prisoners for King Henry IV.
7. The lord is very annoying to Hotspur.
8. The lord is definitely not cut out to be a soldier, but he says that he would be a soldier if it weren't for the guns and salt-peter.
9. At the end of the speech, Hotspur says that King Henry IV should accept this effeminate lord's account of himself.

On pp. 17-18, we read:

#### **HOTSPUR**

My liege, I did deny no prisoners.  
 But I remember, when the fight was done,  
 When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,  
 Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,  
 Came there a certain lord, neat, and trimly dress'd,  
 Fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin new reap'd

Show'd like a stubble-land at harvest-home;  
 He was perfumed like a milliner;  
 And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held  
 A pouncet-box, which ever and anon  
 He gave his nose and took't away again;  
 Who therewith angry, when it next came there,  
 Took it in snuff; and still he smiled and talk'd,  
 And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,  
 He call'd them untaught knaves, unmannerly,  
 To bring a slovenly unhandsome corse  
 Betwixt the wind and his nobility.  
 With many holiday and lady terms  
 He question'd me; amongst the rest, demanded  
 My prisoners in your majesty's behalf.  
 I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,  
 To be so pester'd with a popinjay,  
 Out of my grief and my impatience,  
 Answer'd neglectingly I know not what,  
 He should or he should not; for he made me mad  
 To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet  
 And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman  
 Of guns and drums and wounds,--God save the mark!--  
 And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth  
 Was parmaceti for an inward bruise;  
 And that it was great pity, so it was,  
 This villanous salt-petre should be digg'd  
 Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,  
 Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd  
 So cowardly; and but for these vile guns,  
 He would himself have been a soldier.  
 This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,  
 I answer'd indirectly, as I said;  
 And I beseech you, let not his report  
 Come current for an accusation  
 Betwixt my love and your high majesty.

### Act 1, Scene 3

**Who is Mortimer and how do King Henry IV and Hotspur each characterize him?**

#### *Mortimer*

- Mortimer led an army against Glendower. Mortimer was captured, and 1,000 soldiers in his army were slaughtered and mutilated.
- Mortimer had recently married Glendower's daughter. This is significant in that it could be a political alliance, lending credence to King Henry IV's belief that Mortimer is a traitor.
- Mortimer is Hotspur's brother-in-law. Hotspur's wife, Kate, is Mortimer's sister.

- Mortimer was named as successor to the throne by the late King Richard II, whose throne King Henry IV usurped.

*King Henry IV*

King Henry IV thinks that Mortimer is a traitor and did not even fight Glendower but instead gave his army to Glendower to be slaughtered.

One reason to think this is that Mortimer has recently married Glendower's daughter.

*Hotspur*

Hotspur, however, insists that Mortimer fought bravely.

One reason for him to believe this is that Mortimer is his brother-in-law. We will see that Hotspur's wife is Kate. Kate and Mortimer are siblings.

On p. 19, we read:

**HOTSPUR**

Revolted Mortimer!

He never did fall off, my sovereign liege,  
 But by the chance of war; to prove that true  
 Needs no more but one tongue for all those wounds,  
 Those mouthed wounds, which valiantly he took  
 When on the gentle Severn's sedgy bank,  
 In single opposition, hand to hand,  
 He did confound the best part of an hour  
 In changing hardiment with great Glendower:  
 Three times they breathed and three times did  
 they drink,  
 Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood;  
 Who then, affrighted with their bloody looks,  
 Ran fearfully among the trembling reeds,  
 And hid his crisp head in the hollow bank,  
 Bloodstained with these valiant combatants.  
 Never did base and rotten policy  
 Colour her working with such deadly wounds;  
 Nor could the noble Mortimer  
 Receive so many, and all willingly:  
 Then let not him be slander'd with revolt.

Note: At the end of the conversation, King Henry IV angrily demands that Hotspur release the prisoners to him, then he leaves.

### Act 1, Scene 3

**What do we learn about Hotspur's character in this scene? How do you suppose Harry Percy got the nickname "Hotspur"? (Speaking of names, why do you suppose Shakespeare gave Falstaff the name "Falstaff"?)**

- When we think of the nickname "Hotspur," we think of two words: "Hot" and "Spur." Put the words together, and we think of a man of action, riding his horse furiously. This is a very good description of Hotspur. He is a man of action, and he is concerned about the kind of honor that can be won on the battlefield.
- Hotspur is not a man of ideas and of diplomacy.
- Hotspur is courageous in battle.
- Hotspur and Prince Hal are doubles. They are meant to be compared and contrasted.
- Hotspur is so angry that he will not be still for a long time. He is so angry that he will not listen to his father and his uncle, who have a plan for taking the kingdom for themselves. We learn from this that although Hotspur has the skills of a brave soldier, he lacks the skills that are necessary to be a King. Hotspur is entirely without diplomatic skills. Hotspur, as it happens, dislikes politicians. He even calls King Henry IV a "vile politician" (1.3.239) and a "king of smiles" (1.3.244).
- King Henry IV says that he doesn't want to hear the name of Mortimer; when he is gone, Hotspur says that he will train a starling (a bird) to say the word "Mortimer" and then give it as a present to the King.
- Hotspur readily agrees to join the conspiracy. This is in contrast to Prince Hal, who considered many contingencies before agreeing to join in the practical joke with Poins.
- Hotspur has many good characteristics such as bravery and a concern for honor, but he lacks political skills such as diplomacy. He is impatient.
- Falstaff is a "false staff" for Prince Hal. He is a bad influence on the Prince.

### Act 1, Scene 3

**In 1.3.199-206, Hotspur makes an important speech about honor. Analyze that speech.**

- Hotspur greatly desires the kind of honor that can be gained on the battlefield.
- Hotspur is energetic in his speech, just as he is in his actions. He talks of leaping to the moon to gain honor or of diving to the bottom of the sea to gain honor.

On p. 22, we read:

#### **HOTSPUR**

By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap,  
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon,  
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,

Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,  
 And pluck up drowned honour by the locks;  
 So he that doth redeem her thence might wear  
 Without corrival, all her dignities:  
 But out upon this half-faced fellowship!

### **Act 1, Scene 3**

#### **Why are Hotspur and the other Percys angry at King Henry IV?**

Hotspur and the other Percys are angry for two reasons:

- 1) Mortimer (Hotspur's brother-in-law) may hold a better title to the throne than Henry, and that may be the reason why Henry does not want to ransom him.
- 2) The Percys helped Henry depose King Richard II, and the Percys have lost honor because of that deposition. They are blamed for the deposition of Richard II; King Henry IV is not blamed for it.

In addition, Worcester is worried about what King Henry IV may do to the Percys. The King is powerful and can kill them if he wishes. On p. 25, we read:

#### **EARL OF WORCESTER**

And 'tis no little reason bids us speed,  
 To save our heads by raising of a head;  
 For, bear ourselves as even as we can,  
 The king will always think him in our debt,  
 And think we think ourselves unsatisfied,  
 Till he hath found a time to pay us home:  
 And see already how he doth begin  
 To make us strangers to his looks of love.

### **Act 1, Scene 3**

#### **What are the rebels' plans against King Henry IV?**

Finally, Hotspur settles down long enough to listen to his father and his uncle. Worcester has a plan:

- 1) The Percys will seek an alliance with the Welsh and the Scots.
- 2) Hotspur will release all his Scottish prisoners and establish an alliance with the Scottish rebel Douglas.
- 3) Northumberland will seek support from the Archbishop of York, whose brother has been executed after conspiring to murder King Henry IV.
- 4) Worcester will go to Wales to consult with Mortimer and Glendower.

## Act 2

### Act 2, Scene 1

**Write a character analysis of Gadshill, based on this scene.**

- A robber named Gadshill tries to borrow a lantern from the carriers and pump them for information, but they are suspicious and will have none of it. The carriers refuse to lend him a lantern and they are guarded in their answers to his questions seeking information about their travels.
- Gadshill is named after Gad's Hill, the scene of many robberies.
- When Gadshill calls for a chamberlain (room attendant), one immediately comes. The chamberlain is his accomplice (informer), and in this society, robbers seem to be respected more than hard-working carriers. Previously, when the honest carriers called for an ostler, the ostler cried "Anon, anon" ("Right away! Right away!"), but he did not come.
- Gadshill gets information from the chamberlain, and when he promises as a "true man" (2.1.95) to pay him his share from the robbery, the chamberlain asks him to promise as a "false thief" (2.1.97). The chamberlain knows very well that Gadshill is not a true man.
- Gadshill and the chamberlain are working together. The chamberlain gives Gadshill information about who are good prospects to rob and when is a good time to rob them, and Gadshill gives the chamberlain a share of the spoils.
- This scene is another scene of open rebellion. Gadshill is not afraid to rob, as some important people will be riding with him. One is Sir John Falstaff. The other, he thinks, is Prince Hal.
- With Prince Hal helping in the robbery, Gadshill thinks, the robbers are sure to get off scot-free, even if they are captured.

### Act 2, Scene 1

**In what way does this scene mirror the previous scene?**

- Both scenes show disorder in England.

In the previous scene, we saw disorder on a big scale—the Percys are plotting against King Henry IV.

In this scene, we see disorder on a small scale. Gadshill and his friends are threatening to rob some honest people.

- In this scene, two carriers converse. Their language is Elizabethan slang, and modern readers need footnotes to understand it.
- Carriers are deliverymen.

- Shakespeare writes about many kinds and levels of society in *Henry IV*. We have seen nobles and royalty, and we have seen high-ranking foreign nobles such as Douglas and Glendower. Now we see the working class and the criminal class.
- In this scene, we learn about the condition of England. We have already seen trouble on a big scale, since the Percys turn traitor to King Henry IV. Now we see trouble on a smaller scale. Robbers break the law, and hotels are disordered.
- The hotel is disordered; so is the social and political sphere of England.
- The carriers complain about the hotel. It has fleas and it stinks. The owner, Robin Ostler, killed himself when the price of oats rose.
- The carriers call for help from a stableboy (hostler), but no one comes. This shows disorder in the hotel.

## **Act 2, Scene 2**

### **Is the practical joke successful?**

The practical joke is very successful. Everything comes off exactly as Poins and Prince Hal planned it:

- Poins and Prince Hal hide Falstaff's horse, and apparently the other horses as well.
- Poins and Prince Hal go ahead to, they say, rob the travelers if they should escape the trap set by Falstaff, Bardolph, Peto, and Gadshill.
- Falstaff, Bardolph, Peto, and Gadshill rob the travelers. Falstaff calls Prince Hal and Poins cowards.
- Prince Hal and Poins, disguised in buckram, rob the robbers "with much ease" (2.2.105). Falstaff fights briefly, then runs away with the others.

This practical joke is very successful. Of course, this is only the first part. The second part of the practical joke will be listening to the lies Falstaff tells about being robbed.

## **Act 2, Scene 2**

### **What do we learn about Prince Hal in this scene?**

- In this scene, we see a moral counterpart to the rebellions at court. In it, Falstaff and his friends rob some travelers, and Prince Hal and Poins rob Falstaff. The time is 4 a.m.

*Prince Hal is a leader.*

He has never participated in a robbery before, yet the other, much more experienced robbers take his orders, which seem sound.

- Although he has never been a robber before, Prince Hal takes charge. He forms the plan. Falstaff and the others will rob the travelers at a narrow place, while Hal and Poins will wait downhill in case the travelers try to flee. This plan shows that Prince Hal is a leader, and that the others obey him show that they hold Hal in high regard.

On p. 33, we read:

**PRINCE HENRY**

Sirs, you four shall front them in the narrow lane;  
Ned Poins and I will walk lower: if they 'scape  
from your encounter, then they light on us.

*Prince Hal can be cruel.*

- As part of the practical joke, Poins has hidden Falstaff's horse. This shows cleverness on Shakespeare's part, as he cannot bring a horse onto the Elizabethan stage (or at least it would be difficult). In addition, it means that Falstaff will have to walk, as fat as he is. Therefore, he searches for his horse, and he asks Hal to help him search for his horse.

After he and Poins have robbed the robbers, they let fat Falstaff walk back to London on foot.

On p. 35, we read:

**PRINCE HENRY**

Got with much ease. Now merrily to horse:  
The thieves are all scatter'd and possess'd with fear  
So strongly that they dare not meet each other;  
Each takes his fellow for an officer.  
Away, good Ned. Falstaff sweats to death,  
And lards the lean earth as he walks along:  
Were 't not for laughing, I should pity him.

**Act 2, Scene 2**

**What do we learn about Falstaff in this scene?**

- Of course, Falstaff is very fat, and he complains about having to walk because his horse has been removed somewhere. (However, later he seems to be able to run away quickly enough.)
- Falstaff is witty. When Bardolph talks of the King's money (that they are about to rob) going to the King's exchequer, Falstaff says that it is going to the King's tavern. Of course, whatever money Falstaff gets, he is going to drink away.

By the way, I remember once overhearing a student who had donated blood plasma that day. He had gotten the money for the blood plasma, then gone directly to a tavern and drank the money away. He justified it by saying that he needed to replenish his fluids after donating blood plasma.

On p. 33, we read:

**BARDOLPH**

Case ye, case ye; on with your vizards: there 's  
money of the king's coming down the hill; 'tis going  
to the king's exchequer.

**FALSTAFF**

You lie, ye rogue; 'tis going to the king's tavern.

- The two friends engage in some wordplay. Falstaff complains that he has been “colted” (2.2.37), meaning that a trick has been played on him, while Hal replies that he has been “uncoltd” (2.2.38-39), meaning he has been unhorsed.
- The two friends also engage in some insults. Hal calls Falstaff “fat guts” (3.2.31) and “Sir John Paunch” (2.2.65).
- When Gadshill shows up and tells the robbers that some 8 or 10 travelers are coming, Falstaff asks if the travelers will not rob them.
- Falstaff is devious. When they rob the travelers, Falstaff yells, “They hate us youth” (2.2.85). Of course, Falstaff is trying to divert suspicion away from himself. He is old, and he is hoping that the travelers say that young men robbed them.

This doesn't work, by the way. Falstaff is so obese that he is recognized as the fat Knight.

On p. 34, we read:

**FALSTAFF**

Strike; down with them; cut the villains' throats:  
ah! whoreson caterpillars! bacon-fed knaves! they  
hate us youth: down with them: fleece them.

- Falstaff criticizes Prince Hal and Poin.

On pp. 34-35, we read:

**FALSTAFF**

Come, my masters, let us share, and then to horse  
before day. An the Prince and Poin be not two  
arrant cowards, there's no equity stirring: there's  
no more valour in that Poin than in a wild-duck.

- Falstaff does strike a blow or two at Prince Hal and Poin, which is more than the other robbers do.

On p. 35, we read:

*As they are sharing, the Prince and Poins set upon them; they all run away; and Falstaff, after a blow or two, runs away too, leaving the booty behind them.*

- The plan works. Falstaff takes part in the robbery, and he cleverly tries to make the travelers think that young men are robbing them. He cries, “They hate us youth” (2.2.85).
- As the robbers divide the loot, Falstaff complains that Hal and Poins are cowards. Hal and Poins rob them, as agreed, and the practical joke is played. Falstaff fights for a very short time, but then he flees. Hal and Poins laugh at how he roared.
- So is Falstaff a coward? Very likely. However, he may have fought as long as he found reason to, then left. He doesn’t want to lose his life over money.
- Falstaff walks back to London, sweating heavily since he is traveling under his own legs, not the legs of his horse.

## **Act 2, Scene 2**

**What kind of a relationship do Prince Hal and Falstaff have? Are they friends? Do they mutually take advantage of each other?**

This is a tough question with different defensible answers.

### *1. They are friends.*

- One can say that they are friends. They exchange insults between them, but friends can sometimes engage in humorous bantering.

### *2. I personally think that they are mutually taking advantage of each other.*

- Prince Hal pays, and Falstaff entertains.
- Prince Hal hangs out with lowlifes now but reforms later, and Falstaff gets his bills paid and has the honor of association with the Prince—for a while.

### *3. They are not friends.*

- We can wonder whether Prince Hal and Falstaff are friends. One interpretation is that Hal has played a mean practical joke on a man who is supposed to be his friend. However, Falstaff has no trouble running away, so he may be in better physical shape than he thinks or lets on to be.
- However, Hal does insult Falstaff vigorously, and Hal does cause Falstaff physical discomfort. In addition, the point of the practical joke is to make fun of Falstaff later after he has told some lies about being robbed.

Note: One thing we can ask after reading this scene is whether Hal can gain the honor that should belong to a Prince. So far, he has been drinking and having fun and playing practical jokes. When, if ever, will he act like a Prince should act?

### Act 2, Scene 3

**What objections to the rebellion does the writer of the letter make? What is Hotspur's reaction to these objections? Why does Hotspur decide to set out on horse that night?**

- Hotspur is reading a letter from an unnamed nobleman. Hotspur has asked him to join the rebellion, and the nobleman is declining to do so.
- The nobleman has several reasons for declining to join the rebellion, which he thinks is dangerous:
  - 1) The allies are untrustworthy.
  - 2) It's a bad time for the march.
  - 3) The king's army is stronger and bigger than they think.
- Hotspur believes that the writer of the letter is a coward.
- Hotspur believes that the nobleman is going to tell King Henry IV about the rebellion, so he sets out on horse that night. He is going to meet Glendower and Mortimer, as we see later. We can certainly guess in this scene that Hotspur is going to meet some of the other conspirators.
- We see that serious plans are underway for the rebellion.
- Hotspur is hotheaded, and he thinks that the Percys' plot is good. Compare Hotspur to Prince Hal, who carefully thinks things (like the practical joke of robbing the robbers) through, instead of rushing into things.
- Hotspur thinks that the writer of the letter is a coward, but actually all that the nobleman writes comes true. Hotspur also worries that the nobleman will tell King Henry IV of their plans, so he decides to ride to Glendower.

On pp. 35-36, we read about the letter writer's objections against the rebellion:

*Enter HOTSPUR, solus, reading a letter*

#### **HOTSPUR**

'But for mine own part, my lord, I could be well contented to be there, in respect of the love I bear your house.' He could be contented: why is he not, then? In respect of the love he bears our house: he shows in this, he loves his own barn better than he loves our house. Let me see some more. 'The purpose you undertake is dangerous;!--why, that's certain: 'tis dangerous to take a cold, to sleep, to

drink; but I tell you, my lord fool, out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety. 'The purpose you undertake is dangerous; the friends you have named uncertain; the time itself unsorted; and your whole plot too light for the counterpoise of so great an opposition.'

On p. 36, we read Hotspur's reaction to the objections of the nobleman:

[...] Say you so, say you so? I say unto you again, you are a shallow cowardly hind, and you lie. What a lack-brain is this! By the Lord, our plot is a good plot as ever was laid; our friends true and constant: a good plot, good friends, and full of expectation; an excellent plot, very good friends. What a frosty-spirited rogue is this!

Hotspur is ready to set forth in rebellion against the King.

### **Act 2, Scene 3**

**For the first time, we see a female character—Hotspur's wife, Kate. What kind of a marriage do Hotspur and Kate have?**

*Kate Loves Hotspur*

Kate obviously loves Hotspur. We know this for two main reasons:

1. Kate complains that she has been banished from her husband's bed for two weeks. In other words, they have not had sex for two weeks.

Hotspur has not had sex with his wife because he has been thinking about the rebellion. Indeed, his wife stays up at night to listen to her husband talk about battles and war in his sleep.

On pp. 36-37, we read:

#### **LADY PERCY**

O, my good lord, why are you thus alone?  
 For what offence have I this fortnight been  
 A banish'd woman from my Harry's bed?  
 Tell me, sweet lord, what is't that takes from thee  
 Thy stomach, pleasure and thy golden sleep?  
 Why dost thou bend thine eyes upon the earth,  
 And start so often when thou sit'st alone?  
 Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks;  
 And given my treasures and my rights of thee  
 To thick-eyed musing and cursed melancholy?

2. When Hotspur tells her later—not seriously, I think—that he doesn’t love her, she is upset and asks if Hotspur is telling the truth.

Hotspur tells her that once he is on horseback he will swear that he loves her infinitely.

On pp. 38-39, we read:

**HOTSPUR**

Away,  
 Away, you trifler! Love! I love thee not,  
 I care not for thee, Kate: this is no world  
 To play with mammets and to tilt with lips:  
 We must have bloody noses and crack'd crowns,  
 And pass them current too. God's me, my horse!  
 What say'st thou, Kate? what would'st thou  
 have with me?

**LADY PERCY**

Do you not love me? do you not, indeed?  
 Well, do not then; for since you love me not,  
 I will not love myself. Do you not love me?  
 Nay, tell me if you speak in jest or no.

**HOTSPUR**

Come, wilt thou see me ride?  
 And when I am on horseback, I will swear  
 I love thee infinitely.

*A Charming Scene*

Obviously, Kate loves Hotspur. They have a charming scene in which Kate calls Hotspur a parrot, mad-headed, and full of spleen. She also threatens to break his little finger (which may be an euphemism for Hotspur’s penis) if he doesn’t tell her what she wants to know.

*Hotspur Wears the Pants in the Family*

Hotspur is in charge. He doesn’t trust women to hold their tongues, so he won’t even tell his own wife about the rebellion. Hotspur is sexist.

Hotspur declines to tell his wife what she wants to know. He knows that she is a woman, and he thinks that she may talk. Knowing that she can’t tell what she does not know, he tells her nothing.

Apparently, Hotspur loves his wife, but he lives in a sexist society, and he has power over her. He also will not trust her with knowledge of the rebellion. Kate must wait until he decides to tell her something.

This is a charming scene, but Shakespeare advances the plot in it: 1) we learn that the civil war is quickly becoming a reality, 2) and we see that Hotspur is thinking constantly about the rebellion.

On p. 39, we read:

**HOTSPUR**

Come, wilt thou see me ride?  
 And when I am on horseback, I will swear  
 I love thee infinitely. But hark you, Kate;  
 I must not have you henceforth question me  
 Whither I go, nor reason whereabouts:  
 Whither I must, I must; and, to conclude,  
 This evening must I leave you, gentle Kate.  
 I know you wise, but yet no farther wise  
 Than Harry Percy's wife: constant you are,  
 But yet a woman: and for secrecy,  
 No lady closer; for I well believe  
 Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know;  
 And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate.

**LADY PERCY**

How! so far?

**HOTSPUR**

Not an inch further. But hark you, Kate:  
 Whither I go, thither shall you go too;  
 To-day will I set forth, to-morrow you.  
 Will this content you, Kate?

**LADY PERCY**

It must of force.

**Act 2, Scene 4**

**Note:** This scene is divided into four parts: 1) Hal and Francis the Drawer, 2) Falstaff's "Incomprehensible Lies" (1.2.190), 3) the Tavern Play, and 4) the Sheriff.

*Hal and Francis the Drawer*

**Act 2, Scene 4**

**Write a character analysis of Francis the Drawer.**

1. Francis is a drawer, a bartender.
2. Francis is an apprentice. He has served as an apprentice for two years and has five more years left to serve. Therefore, Francis is a young person.
3. Francis does not do meaningful work. All day, he serves alcohol, running up and down stairs, and his conversation chiefly consists of reckoning accounts, totalling up what is owed by the customers.
4. Francis is kind. He has given the Prince a penny's worth of sugar to mix in his wine.

4. Francis is not intellectual. His job does not require that, except for the ability to add sums and to make change.
5. Francis is confused when two people call him at once. I think that anyone would be confused in this situation. It's not polite to leave a conversation with the Prince to go into another room and attend on Poin. Perhaps Francis is overworked. The innkeeper needs an additional apprentice.
6. Francis understands the jargon of his position. Many jobs develop a specialized language or jargon, and bartenders have their own jargon.

Example from modern times:

The phrase “86 that guy!” means, “Don’t serve him drinks any more. He’s too drunk already.”

That is how Agent 86, Maxwell Smart of *Get Smart!* fame got his name. Comedian Don Adams played him in the TV series.

7. Prince Hal is able to learn much of the drawers’ jargon in only 15 minutes. This shows that learning Francis’ job is not that difficult. One hardly needs to be an apprentice for seven years to learn Francis’ job.
8. Unfortunately, higher-class people sometimes make fun of lower-class people. This seems to be the case with Prince Hal and Francis.

## Act 2, Scene 4

### What does Prince Hal learn from hanging out with the workers in the tavern and with Poin?

1. We can say that Prince Hal learns about the lower classes: the working class and the criminal class. This can be useful to a ruler. A ruler—whether King or President—needs to understand the citizens of the state he or she is ruling. That way, they can rule more fairly. Unfortunately, in the United States, many of our Presidents—with some exceptions—know little about the lower classes. One exception is Lyndon B. Johnson. And another is Harry Truman. Another is Abraham Lincoln. Of course, some rich people treat the lower classes (at least the working class) well. Examples are John F. Kennedy and FDR—especially FDR.

In particular, Hal learns that the tavern employees know hardly anything but their work. Someone like Francis knows little else and hardly speaks any words but those associated with serving alcohol.

2. Prince Hal learns the jargon of drawers.

- Hal’s program of self-education takes him to the tavern, where he mingles with the tavern employees and learns their jargon. He enjoys drinking with the working class (and with the criminal class). The employees like him and call him the “king of courtesy” (2.4.10), which means the most gallant knight.

- Among the slang terms that Hal learns is “dyeing scarlet” (2.4.15), which means chugging a mug of wine. Chugging wine can lead to a scarlet face.

3. By hanging out with Poins, Prince Hal knows that there is disorder among the lower classes. He learns that people such as Falstaff exist. Falstaff is either immoral or amoral. Prince Hal learns that robbers exist in his society.

#### **Act 2, Scene 4**

#### **How does the scene with Francis and Poins reflect more important issues in the kingdom?**

- Hal and Poins play a practical joke on Francis. Poins is in another room, calling for service, while Hal is with Francis, keeping him in the room by asking him silly questions and making silly comments. This can be seen as a cruel practical joke, but it also illustrates the position that Prince Hal finds himself in. He is being pulled in two different directions at once. He enjoys the tavern scene, but he also knows that he should soon start acting like a Prince. One way of life is represented by Sir John Falstaff; the other is represented by King Henry IV, Hal’s father.
- Hal says that Francis knows fewer words than a parrot. The mention of a parrot reminds us of Hotspur, who referred to Henry IV’s messenger as a parrot, and whom his wife Kate has just called a parrot. Hal makes fun of Hotspur, who he says kills several Scots at breakfast then complains of a dull life.

*Falstaff’s “Incomprehensible Lies” (1.2.190)*

#### **Act 2, Scene 4**

#### **What are the “incomprehensible lies” (1.2.190) that Falstaff tells in connection with the robbery?**

This is comic scene, and Falstaff tells lie after lie.

1. Falstaff says that his sword is hacked up because he has been in a battle with men who robbed the robbers. The same holds true of the other three robbers who robbed with him: Bardolph, Peto, and Gadshill. Of course, we discover that they hacked up their own swords and thrust speargrass up their noses to make them bleed so they could smear the blood on their clothes to make it look like they have been fighting.

2. Falstaff asks for a cup of sack, drinks it, then swears that he has had nothing to drink all day. Prince Hal points out that Falstaff has scarcely wiped his lips since his most recent drink.

3. As Falstaff tells his story, the number of the enemy grows and grows.

- Falstaff tells lie after lie about how 100 men attacked them, and how he himself fought 2 men in buckram. These 2 men quickly multiply to 4, then 7, then 9, then 11 men.
- Then Falstaff says that he was set on by men in Kendal green. In the same sentence, he says that the night was so dark he could not see his hand in front of his face. Prince Hal asks how he knows the men were wearing Kendal green if the night was so dark he could not see his hand in front of his face.

- This brings up the question of whether Falstaff expects his outrageous lies to be believed. Is he telling the lies to entertain Prince Hal and his friends, or does he expect to be believed? Perhaps as he tells the lies, he grows excited and begins to exaggerate, expecting to be believed. Either interpretation can be correct.

4. When Falstaff is asked to explain how he knows the men were wearing Kendal green if the night was so dark he could not see his hand in front of his face, he declines to answer, saying that he will not answer upon compulsion.

5. When Prince Hal tells the true story of how he and Poins robbed Falstaff and his fellow robbers, Falstaff lies his way—or tries to lie his way out of an embarrassing situation by saying, I knew it was you the whole time! And that he was not a coward because he would not fight the true Prince, just as a brave lion will not harm the true Prince.

6. In my opinion, Falstaff expected his lies to be believed. I say this because he asks the Prince not to tease him about being a coward.

On p. 50, we read that Falstaff proposes a “play extempore” (2.4.281):

**PRINCE HENRY**

Content; and the argument shall be thy running away.

**FALSTAFF**

Ah, no more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me!

By the way, Falstaff is glad that Hal has the money because now they can all spend it.

**Act 2, Scene 4**

**Write a short character analysis of Bardolph.**

1. Bardolph is an alcoholic.
2. Bardolph is a lowlife.
3. Bardolph is a servant/friend of Falstaff.
4. Bardolph’s face is red from alcoholism and from pimples and other blemishes.
5. Bardolph is easily led astray by Falstaff—he hacks at his sword because Falstaff urges him to do so.

On p. 51, we read:

**BARDOLPH**

Yea, and to tickle our noses with spear-grass to make them bleed, and then to beslobber our garments with it and swear it was the blood of true men. I

did that I did not this seven year before, I blushed to hear his monstrous devices.

**PRINCE HENRY**

O villain, thou stolest a cup of sack eighteen years ago, and wert taken with the manner, and ever since thou hast blushed extempore. Thou hadst fire and sword on thy side, and yet thou rannest away: what instinct hadst thou for it?

**BARDOLPH**

My lord, do you see these meteors? do you behold these exhalations?

**PRINCE HENRY**

I do.

**BARDOLPH**

What think you they portend?

**PRINCE HENRY**

Hot livers and cold purses.

**BARDOLPH**

Choler, my lord, if rightly taken.

**PRINCE HENRY**

No, if rightly taken, halter.

*The Tavern Play*

**Act 2, Scene 4**

**What news comes from the court?**

A nobleman comes from the court. Prince Hal doesn't want to speak to him, so Falstaff does—to get rid of him, he thinks. However, the nobleman bears important news. Rebellion is in the land, and Prince Hal must return to court and take part in the war.

We do see a little humor when Falstaff returns from seeing the nobleman Sir John Bracy. Falstaff is fat, and Prince Hal asks when was the last time he has seen his own knee.

On pp. 51-52, we read (Prince Pal speaks first):

*Re-enter FALSTAFF*

Here comes lean Jack, here comes bare-bone.  
How now, my sweet creature of bombast!  
How long is't ago, Jack, since thou sawest thine own knee?

**FALSTAFF**

My own knee! when I was about thy years, Hal, I was not an eagle's talon in the waist; I could have crept into any alderman's thumb-ring; a plague of sighing and grief! it blows a man up like a bladder. There's villanous news abroad: here was Sir John Bracy from your father; you must to the court in the morning. That same mad fellow of the north, Percy, and he of Wales, that gave Amamon the bastinado and made Lucifer cuckold and swore the devil his true liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook--what a plague call you him?

**Act 2, Scene 4**

**Analyze this speech by Prince Hal: “Why, then, it is like, if there come a hot June, and this civil buffeting hold, we shall buy maidenheads as they buy hobnails, by the hundreds” (2.4.362-364).**

This passage refers to the effects of war on women and soldiers in regards to sex.

Three things are important to say here:

1. As all the men go off to war, virgins may be more willing to sleep with them: “I’m going off to war, honey. You may never see me again. Give me something to remember you by.”
2. As all the men are gone to war, any remaining men will have their pick of the women. Soldiers on furlough can walk down the street during wartime, and women come from all over to meet them. (This used to be true, but may have changed recently.)
3. War devastates a country, making food hard to come by. In such a case, women sell their bodies in order to get food. This happened in Germany after World War II.

In my opinion, the third possibility is the most accurate, since it involved buying and selling. I reject the first possibility in Falstaff’s case because I don’t think women will sleep with Falstaff without getting paid for it.

For Falstaff, this is good news. He can now get sex.

Prince Hal knows the effect of war on women.

**Act 2, Scene 4**

**What is the Hostess’s opinion of Falstaff play-acting abilities?**

The Hostess has a keen appreciation of Falstaff’s play-acting abilities, as seen in her comments.

On pp. 53-54, we read:

**Hostess**

O Jesu, this is excellent sport, i' faith!

**FALSTAFF**

Weep not, sweet queen; for trickling tears are vain.

**Hostess**

O, the father, how he holds his countenance!

**FALSTAFF**

For God's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen;  
For tears do stop the flood-gates of her eyes.

**Hostess**

O Jesu, he doth it as like one of these harlotry  
players as ever I see!

**Act 2, Scene 4**

**What defense does Falstaff make of himself? What response does Prince Hal make to that defense?**

- Note on Name: Falstaff = False Staff
- Falstaff knows that Prince Hal and King Henry IV will be having a serious talk the next day. The King has heard of Hal's activities and is not pleased about them. Therefore, Falstaff decides to put on a play extempore. He will play King Henry IV during the conversation with Hal. Hal, of course, will play himself.
- In the character of King Henry IV, Falstaff criticizes Hal: "Shall the son of England prove a thief and take purses?" (2.4.409-410). He also praises greatly the portly man with whom Hal has been seen with. That portly person, of course, is Falstaff.
- However, Hal then insists that he and Falstaff trade places, Hal will play his father, and Falstaff will play Hal. Hal calls Falstaff many detestable names, and Falstaff defends himself: "Banish plump Jack, and banish the world" (2.4.479-480).
- Prince Hal truly does criticize Falstaff, as paraphrased below ("he" refers to Falstaff):
  - Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it?
  - Wherein is he neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it?
  - Wherein is he cunning, but in craft?
  - Wherein is he crafty, but in villany?
  - Wherein is he villanous, but in all things?

- Wherein is he worthy, but in nothing?

On p. 55, Falstaff, playing Prince Hal, praises himself:

**FALSTAFF**

A goodly portly man, i' faith, and a corpulent; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye and a most noble carriage; and, as I think, his age some fifty, or, by'r lady, inclining to three score; and now I remember me, his name is Falstaff: if that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff: him keep with, the rest banish. And tell me now, thou naughty varlet, tell me, where hast thou been this month?

On pp. 55-56, Prince Hal, playing Henry IV, criticizes Falstaff:

**PRINCE HENRY**

Swearst thou, ungracious boy? henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace: there is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of an old fat man; a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years? Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it? wherein cunning, but in craft? wherein crafty, but in villany? wherein villanous, but in all things? wherein worthy, but in nothing?

On pp. 56-47, Falstaff, playing Prince Hal, defends himself:

**FALSTAFF**

But to say I know more harm in him than in myself, were to say more than I know. That he is old, the more the pity, his white hairs do witness it; but that he is, saving your reverence, a whoremaster, that I utterly deny. If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked! if to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know is damned: if to be fat be to be hated, then Pharaoh's lean kine

are to be loved. No, my good lord; banish Peto,  
banish Bardolph, banish Poins: but for sweet Jack  
Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff,  
valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore more valiant,  
being, as he is, old Jack Falstaff, banish not him  
thy Harry's company, banish not him thy Harry's  
company: banish plump Jack, and banish all the world.

#### Act 2, Scene 4

**In the play at the tavern, Falstaff, playing the character of King Henry IV, asks Hal not to banish Falstaff when the Prince of Wales becomes King. Hal replies, “I do, I will” (4.2.481). Would Prince Hal be acting in cold blood if he were to banish his friend Falstaff from his company, or should a good King banish thieves and robbers from his company?**

- Definitely, Prince Hal should banish Falstaff from his company when he becomes King—if not before.
- When Hal insists that he and Falstaff trade places, Hal plays his father, and Falstaff plays Hal. Hal calls Falstaff many detestable names, and Falstaff defends himself: “Banish plump Jack, and banish all the world” (2.4.479-480).
- Hal replies coldly: “I do, I will” (4.2.481). These words are astonishing, and people argue about them. They can be interpreted to mean that Hal is using Falstaff, and all the time he is enjoying Falstaff's company he is also planning to banish him. Others recognize that Falstaff should be banished when Hal becomes King.
- At the end of *Henry IV, Part 2*, Hal does banish Falstaff—and a good thing, too. Falstaff is very willing to loot the kingdom if Prince Hal, now King Henry V, would not restrain him. However, Prince Hal does arrange a pension for Falstaff.
- Prince Hal does use the present tense: “I do, I will” (4.2.481). Yet he still hangs around with Falstaff. What can it mean that Prince Hal is presently banishing Falstaff? Possibly, it means that even though Prince Hal is hanging around with Falstaff now, Falstaff has no claim on his heart. Prince Hal knows exactly what Falstaff is, and when it comes time to literally banish Falstaff from his presence, Prince Hal will have no problem at all doing so.

#### *The Sheriff*

#### Act 2, Scene 4

**Why does Prince Hal protect Falstaff? What does Prince Hal do with the money taken in the robbery?**

- The sheriff arrives in the company of a carrier. They are looking for a fat knight who recently took part in a robbery. Hal lies to protect Falstaff, telling the Sheriff that the fat knight is not there at present. However, he does offer to send the fat knight to him tomorrow.
- When the Sheriff arrives, there is a tense moment: Should Prince Hal protect Falstaff or not?

- Prince Hal decides to protect Falstaff, even though he has severely criticized him a moment ago.
- One reason may be that the penalty for what Falstaff had done is death. Prince Hal recognizes how evil Falstaff is, but he does not want him killed.
- Indeed, even when, at end of the play 2 *Henry IV*, Prince Hal banishes Falstaff from his presence on pain of death, he gives Falstaff a pension to live on. Falstaff is not left entirely in the cold.

On pp. 57-58, we read:

**Hostess**

The sheriff and all the watch are at the door: they are come to search the house. Shall I let them in?

**FALSTAFF**

Dost thou hear, Hal? never call a true piece of gold a counterfeit: thou art essentially mad, without seeming so.

**PRINCE HENRY**

And thou a natural coward, without instinct.

**FALSTAFF**

I deny your major: if you will deny the sheriff, so; if not, let him enter: if I become not a cart as well as another man, a plague on my bringing up! I hope I shall as soon be strangled with a halter as another.

**PRINCE HENRY**

Go, hide thee behind the arras: the rest walk up above. Now, my masters, for a true face and good conscience.

**FALSTAFF**

Both which I have had: but their date is out, and therefore I'll hide me.

**Act 2, Scene 4**

**What is in Falstaff's pockets when they are picked? What can we learn about Falstaff from what is in his pockets?**

- After the Sheriff leaves, Hal and Peto find Falstaff asleep behind a tapestry or wall hanging—and snoring. Hal has Peto pick Falstaff's pocket. Nothing of value is found there, but they do find a paper that lists his food and drink for a day. Falstaff has consumed a capon (a chicken), sauce, over two gallons of sack (sweet wine), some anchovies, and a little bread. Hal finds it monstrous that Falstaff has consumed so much sack and so little bread. Falstaff apparently seldom eats fruits and vegetables.

- Falstaff is an impoverished alcoholic. Nothing is in his pockets except for papers—not including paper money. He has no money. He does have a bill that shows that he has ordered (and probably consumed—I doubt that Falstaff pays for his friends to drink, although Bardolph may be an exception)—over two gallons of sack and just a little bread.
- Prince Hal finds this monstrous.
- Hal says that the stolen money shall be returned with interest. There is no reason to doubt him.

On p. 59, we read:

**PRINCE HENRY**

O monstrous! but one half-penny-worth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack! What there is else, keep close; we'll read it at more advantage: there let him sleep till day. I'll to the court in the morning. We must all to the wars, and thy place shall be honourable. I'll procure this fat rogue a charge of foot; and I know his death will be a march of twelve-score. The money shall be paid back again with advantage. Be with me betimes in the morning; and so, good morrow, Peto.

**Act 2, Scene 4**

**How does Prince Hal treat his friends as they go off to war?**

- Very well.
- Prince Hal tells Peto that he will have an honorable position.
- As for Falstaff, he will have a company of foot soldiers, although no doubt he would prefer to be mounted on horseback since he is too fat to find walking very far comfortable.
- Prince Hal is treating his friends better than they deserve. After all, Peto and Falstaff are robbers.

On p. 59, we read:

**PRINCE HENRY**

O monstrous! but one half-penny-worth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack! What there is else, keep close; we'll read it at more advantage: there let him sleep till day. I'll to the court in the morning. We must all to the wars, and thy place shall be honourable. I'll procure this fat rogue a charge of foot; and I know his death will be a march of twelve-score. The money shall be paid back again with advantage. Be with me betimes in the morning; and so, good morrow, Peto.



## Act 3

### Act 3, Scene 1

**According to this scene, is Hotspur capable of being diplomatic—a skill required of a good King?**

- This scene is set in Glendower's castle in Wales. The rebels meet to divide up England. After deciding how to divide up the territory, they sign a contract saying that they agree to the division.
- King Henry IV wishes to have all his people “march all one way” (1.1.15) and be united, but the rebels are determined to split up England into three parts.
- We see dissension and trouble within the rebels' ranks immediately.
- Hotspur, as usual, is headstrong and hot-headed. He tries to take control immediately—he tells the others, Mortimer and Glendower, to sit down. Actually, of the three rebel leaders, he has the least authority to tell the others to sit. Mortimer has the best claim of the three rebels to the throne, so he has authority to ask the others to sit. On the other hand, Glendower owns the castle where the three rebels are meeting, so he also has authority to ask the others to sit. Hotspur has no such claim to authority as the others have.
- We find out that Hotspur does not pay attention to details. He finds out that he has forgot the map of England—the map that the rebels wanted to use to divide up England. A good politician pays attention to detail. (Glendower quickly finds the map.)
- A political leader should have the skills of a diplomat, but Hotspur does not have those skills. Almost immediately, he and Glendower begin to quarrel. Glendower believes that he is a great magician, but Hotspur scoffs at magic.
- Hotspur is a skeptic, as we see in this passage:

**GLENDOWER**

[...] At my nativity  
 The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,  
 Of burning cressets; and at my birth  
 The frame and huge foundation of the earth  
 Shaked like a coward.

**HOTSPUR**

Why, so it would have done at the same season, if  
 your mother's cat had but kittened, though yourself  
 had never been born.

- Glendower believes that he is marked for great things because when he was born, meteors appeared in the sky and an earthquake occurred. Hotspur, however, believes that these things were just a coincidence. If Glendower's mother's cat had given birth to kittens and Glendower had not been born, the same things would have occurred on that day.

- Glendower is making the logical fallacy of *Post Hoc, Ergo Propter Hoc*—*After This, Therefore Because of This*. When he was born, there were meteors and an earthquake; therefore, he must be destined for great things. Hotspur, however, denies this; instead, he regards the timing of the meteors and the earthquake as coincidentally occurring at Glendower's birth.
- Who is right in this matter: Glendower or Hotspur? Since few of my students have ever heard of Glendower before taking my course, apparently Hotspur is correct.
- When Glendower insists that the heavens were on fire and the earth did shake when he was born, Hotspur mocks him by saying that the earth had gas and burped.
- Glendower next insists that he can call up spirits. Again, Hotspur is skeptical.

**GLENDOWER**

I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

**HOTSPUR**

Why, so can I, or so can any man;  
But will they come when you do call for them?

- Hotspur's scientific skepticism is correct; however, he should be a diplomat here, and he is not. It's not a good idea to make one of your allies mad at you, and that is exactly what Hotspur is doing when he makes fun of Glendower's boasts of magical ability to his face.
- Glendower is more of a diplomat than Hotspur. Although angry at Hotspur, he does not fight him.
- Glendower does make one point that is a fact and that Hotspur cannot deny: Glendower has defeated King Henry IV's armies three times in battle. Nevertheless, Hotspur keeps on arguing with and mocking Glendower. When Glendower boasts that he has sent King Henry IV's armies home three times "bootless" (3.1.66)—without profit—Hotspur puns on "bootless" and asks how Henry IV escaped catching colds.

**GLENDOWER**

Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made head  
Against my power; thrice from the banks of Wye  
And sandy-bottom'd Severn have I sent him  
Bootless home and weather-beaten back.

**HOTSPUR**

Home without boots, and in foul weather too!  
How 'scapes he agues, in the devil's name?

- Hotspur and Glendower even quarrel over music. Glendower points out that he was raised in the English courts, and so he is fluent in English and has even sung English songs. Hotspur says that he would prefer being a meowing kitten to an English ballad-singer.

- The three rebel leaders divide England into three sections, using the map as a visual aid. Hotspur will get land up North, where his family, the Percys, live. Glendower will get land close to Wales. Mortimer will get London and the Southeast.
- Again, a quarrel breaks out. Hotspur complains that a river that is to be a boundary curves up into his portion and carves out a huge chunk of territory that he wishes to own, giving it instead to Glendower. Therefore, Hotspur says, he will change the course of the river so that the territory will belong to him.
- Hotspur and Glendower quarrel over the course of the river, and Glendower gives in, but Hotspur then says that he does not care about the land. He says that he would give three times as much land to a well-deserving friend, but he would quarrel over a trifling amount of land.

### **HOTSPUR**

I do not care: I'll give thrice so much land  
 To any well-deserving friend;  
 But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,  
 I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair.  
 Are the indentures drawn? shall we be gone?

- At this point, Glendower and Hotspur are reconciled.
- When Glendower leaves to fetch the wives of Mortimer and of Hotspur, Mortimer (Hotspur's brother-in-law) and Worcester (Hotspur's uncle) take turns rebuking him for the way he has behaved. They point out that Glendower has behaved very well under Hotspur's tormenting of him.
- Hotspur has some reason not to like Glendower. He says (p. 65):

He held me last night at least nine hours  
 In reckoning up the several devils' names  
 That were his lackeys: I cried 'hum,' and 'well, go to,'  
 But mark'd him not a word.

- Glendower does seem vain and boastful. Hotspur is probably exaggerating the nine hours, but not the fact that Glendower told him the names of the devils who were his lackeys.
- Worcester does know Hotspur's good and bad points. Hotspur has the good points that make a person a good general, but he lacks the good points that are additionally needed to make a person a good King.
- Worcester points out that Hotspur lacks diplomacy (p. 66):

In faith, my lord, you are too wilful-blame;  
 And since your coming hither have done enough  
 To put him quite beside his patience.  
 You must needs learn, lord, to amend this fault:  
 Though sometimes it show greatness, courage, blood,--  
 And that's the dearest grace it renders you,--

Yet oftentimes it doth present harsh rage,  
 Defect of manners, want of government,  
 Pride, haughtiness, opinion and disdain:  
 The least of which haunting a nobleman  
 Loseth men's hearts and leaves behind a stain  
 Upon the beauty of all parts besides,  
 Beguiling them of commendation.

### **Act 3, Scene 1**

**Write a short character analysis of Glendower.**

- Glendower has a high opinion of himself—he is conceited.
- Glendower believes that he was born to do great things.
- Glendower believes in magic, and he believes that he can do magic.
- Glendower believes that he can call up spirits and that they will obey his commands.
- Glendower is Welsh.
- Glendower is a general who has had great success against the English armies of King Henry IV, having defeated his armies three times.

### **Act 3, Scene 1**

**Compare and contrast the married couples of Hotspur and Kate and of Mortimer and his Welsh wife.**

- Mortimer is deeply in love with his Welsh wife, although he can speak no Welsh and she can speak no English. Apparently, their marriage was a marriage arranged to create a political alliance between Mortimer and Glendower. Mortimer is now Glendower's son-in-law and Hotspur's brother-in-law.
- When his wife speaks Welsh, Mortimer says (p. 67):

O, I am ignorance itself in this!

Fortunately, Glendower is able to translate for Mortimer and his daughter.

- Hotspur also says goodbye to Kate, his wife. These two are in love, but they take a light, teasing tone in dealing with each other. Hotspur is not above making a joke that his wife does not like (pp. 68-69):

**LADY PERCY**

Now God help thee!

**HOTSPUR**

To the Welsh lady's bed.

Lady Percy either doesn't hear her husband or does hear him and doesn't like what she hears:

**LADY PERCY**

What's that?

**HOTSPUR**

Peace! she sings.

- Hotspur and Kate are in love, but apparently, she has to put up with a lot.
- The three rebels sign their contract, then they set forth to meet with Northumberland and Douglas (the Scottish leader of the rebel forces).
- In this scene, we definitely see Hotspur's hot-headedness. Being bold and of a quick temper can be an asset in battle, but it is not an asset in diplomacy. Hotspur can be careless (he loses the map of England). He also fights with his ally, Glendower. Hotspur does have many positive traits, but he would not make a good King of England. He is a practical man, but he is too hot-headed to be King.

**Act 3, Scene 2**

**How does King Henry IV rebuke his son, Prince Hal? What points does King Henry IV make in his speech?**

- In this scene, we have the meeting between King Henry IV and Prince Hal. In this scene, Henry IV is both the King of England and a father.
- One way to play this scene is to have the two actors playing Henry IV and Prince Hal not able to look at each other in the eyes because they are too angry.
- This scene has been played out in many families. A father is disappointed in his son and is worried that he will not grow up the right way. The son, however, is independent and wishes to live his life without interference from his father.
- In this case, King Henry IV has an additional worry. Prince Hal is his oldest son and therefore is destined to be the next King of England—provided, that is, he is strong enough to fight off any rivals. In addition, if Prince Hal proves to be a bad King, the people of England will suffer. Richard II was a bad King, and Henry IV is worried that Prince Hal will be like Richard II.
- King Henry IV has tried hard to maintain law and order in his kingdom. He has fought off rebels, but the fighting is wearing him out, as we found in the first scene of Act 1.
- In this scene, Prince Hal comes to the palace in response to his father's request, and the two speak together alone.
- King Henry IV starts by saying that God may be punishing him by sending him such a son as Prince Hal. The Elizabethans believed that the sins of fathers could be punished through their sons, and Henry IV thinks that this may be happening to him. He tells Prince Hal that he is keeping poor company—"rude society" (3.2.14)—and that the rod of Heaven will punish him.

- Prince Hal makes a brief reply, saying that he has committed some faults but that other faults are attributed to him by gossips.
- Henry IV replies that Prince Hal has been absent from court, not doing his duty, and that Hal's younger brother, John, has been doing the work that properly should be done by Hal.
- Henry IV also says that by hanging around with commoners, Prince Hal will not command the respect that he should command. In contrast, Henry IV has kept himself aloof from commoners, so that it is a big deal whenever he appears in public. In contrast, King Richard II was a “skipping king” (3.2.60) with “shallow jesters” (3.2.61) who ended up being scorned by his subjects, thus allowing Henry Bolingbroke (now Henry IV) to take the crown from him. Henry IV also says that Prince Hal is acting like Richard II.
- Henry IV also says that anyone who wants to see Prince Hal can—with the sole exception of himself.
- On p. 73, Prince Hal replies, briefly:

**PRINCE HENRY**

I shall hereafter, my thrice gracious lord,  
Be more myself.

- King Henry IV goes on to say that Prince Hal is to Richard II as Hotspur is to Henry Bolingbroke. That is, Prince Hal is in danger of losing his future crown, and Hotspur is likely to take it away from him.
- Furthermore, King Henry IV says that Hotspur has a better claim to the crown than Prince Hal. That is, Hotspur is more worthy to be King than Prince Hal. Hotspur looks like a King and acts like a King, and Prince Hal hangs out in taverns with lowlifes.
- Furthermore, King Henry IV tells Prince Hal that he, his son, is likely to fight against him, his father and King, in the service of Hotspur.
- King Henry IV makes a number of points in his speech to his son:
  - 1) God must have cursed him by giving him such a son.
  - 2) Hal hangs out with commoners and does not keep himself aloof. Richard II did the same thing, and look what happened to him—he was deposed.
  - 3) Hotspur would make a better King than Hal.
  - 4) Hal is such a bad son that he is likely to become a traitor and fight in Hotspur's service against his father and King.

## Act 3, Scene 2

**How does Prince Hal respond to his father? What points does Prince Hal make in his speech?**

- Prince Hal replies that he will mend his ways. He also says that he will meet Hotspur, defeat him, and take all of Hotspur's honor as his own. He also says that he will die rather than break his vow.
- Sir Walter Blunt enters with news that the rebels are meeting at Shrewsbury. King Henry IV has been aware of this for five days (a sign of a good King), and already Westmoreland and Prince John are leading armies there (another sign of a good King). Henry IV gives his son, Prince Hal, an army to lead into battle.
- King Henry IV and Prince Hal have reconciled.

On pp. 74-75, we read:

### **PRINCE HENRY**

Do not think so; you shall not find it so:  
 And God forgive them that so much have sway'd  
 Your majesty's good thoughts away from me!  
 I will redeem all this on Percy's head  
 And in the closing of some glorious day  
 Be bold to tell you that I am your son;  
 When I will wear a garment all of blood  
 And stain my favours in a bloody mask,  
 Which, wash'd away, shall scour my shame with it:  
 And that shall be the day, whene'er it lights,  
 That this same child of honour and renown,  
 This gallant Hotspur, this all-praised knight,  
 And your unthought-of Harry chance to meet.  
 For every honour sitting on his helm,  
 Would they were multitudes, and on my head  
 My shames redoubled! for the time will come,  
 That I shall make this northern youth exchange  
 His glorious deeds for my indignities.  
 Percy is but my factor, good my lord,  
 To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf;  
 And I will call him to so strict account,  
 That he shall render every glory up,  
 Yea, even the slightest worship of his time,  
 Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart.  
 This, in the name of God, I promise here:  
 The which if He be pleased I shall perform,  
 I do beseech your majesty may salve  
 The long-grown wounds of my intemperance:  
 If not, the end of life cancels all bands;  
 And I will die a hundred thousand deaths  
 Ere break the smallest parcel of this vow.

## **KING HENRY IV**

A hundred thousand rebels die in this:

Thou shalt have charge and sovereign trust herein.

### **Act 3, Scene 3**

#### **What kind of a mood is Falstaff in at the beginning of this scene?**

- This is another humorous scene. The plot is not much developed here, but Falstaff does provide enjoyment.
- As the scene opens, Falstaff is complaining and says that he is wasting away. Of course, he is a hugely obese man, and he is not wasting away.
- Bardolph gets in a good joke here. Falstaff is thinking about repenting, and he says that he has been living “out of all order, out of all compass” (3.3.20). Bardolph replies (p. 76):

Why, you are so fat, Sir John, that you must needs  
be out of all compass, out of all reasonable  
compass, Sir John.

- Falstaff responds by insulting Bardolph’s nose, which is fiery red through alcoholism. Bardolph says that his nose does Falstaff no harm, and Falstaff tells him that he has supporting Bardolph for 32 years. (This is hard to believe; after all, Prince Hal is supporting Falstaff.)

### **Act 3, Scene 3**

#### **Earlier, Prince Hal had ordered Falstaff’s pocket to be picked. What did the pocket hold? What do the pocket’s contents tell you about Falstaff? What does Falstaff accuse Mistress Quickly of, and what does he claim was in his pockets?**

- Falstaff is an impoverished alcoholic. Nothing is in his pockets except for papers—not including paper money. He has no money. He does have a bill that shows that he has ordered (and probably consumed—I doubt that Falstaff pays for his friends to drink, although Bardolph may be an exception)—over two gallons of sack and just a little bread.
- Mistress Quickly (the Hostess) comes in, and Falstaff asks her who picked his pocket. Mistress Quickly replies that her house (hotel/inn) is honest, but Falstaff insists that his pocket was picked.
- Falstaff claims that a valuable ring was stolen from him, one worth 40 marks, but the hostess replies that the prince has told her that Falstaff’s ring was a cheap one made of copper.

### **Act 3, Scene 3**

#### **What kind of a character is Mistress Quickly?**

- In this scene, Mistress Quickly is a very comic character. Apparently, she is an honest woman, but not a very intelligent one. Witness this exchange in which Falstaff calls her a woman, but Mistress Quickly thinks she has been insulted and denies that she is a woman (p. 78):

**FALSTAFF**

[...] Go  
to, you are a woman, go.

**Hostess**

Who, I? no; I defy thee: God's light, I was never  
called so in mine own house before.

- It turns out that Falstaff owes Mistress Quickly money. (Why am I not surprised?) She has lent him 24 pounds, plus he owes her for food and lodging, plus she has bought him 12 shirts. (Falstaff claims that the shirts were made of coarse material, but she claims that they were made of fine material.)

**Act 3, Scene 3**

**How does Falstaff insult Prince Hal (when Prince Hal is not present)? How does Prince Hal react to the insult, and how does Falstaff wiggle out of his predicament?**

- At this point, Falstaff insults the prince. He calls the prince a Jack (a rascal) and says that he would beat the prince like a dog if he were present. Just then, of course, Prince Hal enters (but without hearing Falstaff). Falstaff jokingly pretends he is playing a fife (a military musical instrument) because Prince Hal and Poins are going to war.
- Prince Hal hears Falstaff tell his story about having his pocket picked. Of course, Falstaff lies, saying that he lost a valuable ring and “three or four bonds of forty pound apiece” (3.3.104-105).
- Mistress Quickly tells Prince Hal that Falstaff said that he would beat him. This shocks Prince Hal, and it leads Falstaff and Mistress Quickly into an argument. Once again, Mistress Quickly is funny, this time in an unknowing sexual way (p. 80):

**FALSTAFF**

Why, she's neither fish nor flesh; a man knows not  
where to have her.

**Hostess**

Thou art an unjust man in saying so: thou or any  
man knows where to have me, thou knave, thou!

Here, “to have” has a sexual sense.

- This leads to a confrontation between Falstaff and Prince Hal. Falstaff is in a tight spot and must find a way to get himself out of trouble.
- When Mistress Quickly says that Falstaff said that Prince Hal owed him 1,000 pounds, Falstaff says that Prince Hal owes him a million pounds. After all, Prince Hal owes him his love, and his love is worth a million pounds.
- When Mistress Quickly says that Falstaff said that he would beat Prince Hal, Falstaff explains that he said that he would beat Prince Hal **IF** he said that Falstaff's ring was made of copper.

- Immediately, Prince Hal says that it is made of copper and asks if Falstaff wants to beat him. Falstaff says that he would as Hal is a man, but that he will not as Hal is the son of a King.
- Prince Hal then reveals that Falstaff's pockets held nothing but the bills of restaurants and bawdy houses and a little candy. Because Hal has correctly identified the contents of his pocket, Falstaff knows that Hal picked his pocket.
- Falstaff, as always, comes out on top (until the end of *2 Henry IV*). He “forgives” Mistress Quickly, although she has done nothing that needs to be forgiven, and he bids her cook his breakfast, which she does.
- Prince Hal then gives Falstaff some news. He has paid the stolen money back. Of course, this news disappoints Falstaff (p. 82):

**PRINCE HENRY**

O, my sweet beef, I must still be good angel to thee: the money is paid back again.

**FALSTAFF**

O, I do not like that paying back; 'tis a double labour.

- Prince Hal tells Falstaff that he will be in charge of some foot soldiers. Falstaff, of course, wishes that he were in charge of some horse-mounted soldiers.
- Prince Hal orders Bardolph to deliver a letter to his brother, Lord John of Lancaster. (Bardolph, alcoholic though he is, is still able to perform a useful service.)
- Prince Hal orders Falstaff to meet him the next day to pick up money to be used in the war effort. We can be sure that Falstaff will pick up the money. We cannot be sure that he will use it in the war effort. Rather, he is more likely to use in the drinking of sack.
- Prince Hal ends by saying (p. 83):

The land is burning; Percy stands on high;  
And either we or they must lower lie.

- Falstaff also makes a rhyming couplet, but his is about matters closer to his heart—or stomach (p. 83):

Rare words! brave world! Hostess, my breakfast, come!  
O, I could wish this tavern were my drum!

## Act 4

### Act 4, Scene 1

#### What bad news pours in for the rebels?

- This scene is set in the rebels' camp the day before the Battle of Shrewsbury.

The information below comes from

<http://www.battleofshrewsbury.org/battle/index.html?sid=IEGTkNkI6DIc4OF176TS7iy2CUXp4vxe>, which I accessed on March 9, 2003.

The Battle of Shrewsbury, fought on July 21st, 1403 between an army led by the Lancastrian King, Henry IV and a rebel army led by members of the Percy family from Northumberland, is principally remembered today by many as the climax of Shakespeare's play, *Henry IV, part 1*. The Percy forces, mostly raised from their estates in Cheshire, were believed to be aiming to join forces with a Welsh rebel force led by Owain Glyn Dwr. Shrewsbury was a principal town on the route taken by the Percy forces and was the major crossing point over the river Severn as well as a potential supply base. The royal army had to take and defend the site urgently before the Percys and Glyn Dwr could join up. Our knowledge of the battle, the battlefield and the armies is less than complete and even contemporary estimates of the numbers involved or of those slain are very much open to debate.

- In this scene, we see the rebel leaders Worcester, Hotspur, and the Scottish rebel Douglas. Absent are Northumberland (Hotspur's father), Glendower, and Mortimer.
- The rebel leaders are confident at the beginning of the scene, but their confidence soon fades with the arrival of bad news.
- As Hotspur and Douglas speak, a messenger arrives with the news that Hotspur's father, Northumberland, is ill and cannot fight. In addition, the illness has forced him to stay in bed, so that he was not able to raise troops and send them to fight for the rebels.
- Worcester's first reaction is that the news is very bad—and it is (p. 85). Hotspur agrees (p. 86):

#### **EARL OF WORCESTER**

Your father's sickness is a maim to us.

#### **HOTSPUR**

A perilous gash, a very limb lopp'd off:

- However, Hotspur bounces back quickly, with two reasons why his father's absence need not be a blow:

1) Northumberland's forces can be saved for use on another day.

2) The rebels will win more glory if they can beat the King's army without the use of Northumberland's army.

- Worcester, however, continues to be worried by the absence of Northumberland and his army for two reasons:

- 1) Of course, the absence of Northumberland's army will seriously weaken the forces of the rebels.

- 2) Others will think that the rebels are divided, that they cannot put up a united front. Others will think that Northumberland stayed away from the battle because he sided with King Henry IV.

- Sir Richard Vernon, who sympathizes with the rebels, arrives with more bad news. The King's forces are very strong indeed, and Prince Hal is acting like the son of a King, not like a tavern drunkard.

- 1) He announces that Westmoreland and Prince John are leading an army of 7,000 men toward them.

- 2) The King himself is setting out towards them.

- 3) Prince Hal is "gallantly armed" (4.1.104) and "As full of spirit as the month of May" (4.1.100).

- Prince Hal is acting like a gallant, valiant warrior-prince, and we know that Hal and Hotspur will meet in battle. In fact, Hotspur insists on it (p. 88):

[...] Come, let me taste my horse,  
 Who is to bear me like a thunderbolt  
 Against the bosom of the Prince of Wales:  
 Harry to Harry shall, hot horse to horse,  
 Meet and ne'er part till one drop down a corse.  
 O that Glendower were come!

- Hotspur's (p. 88)

Harry to Harry shall, hot horse to horse,  
 Meet and ne'er part till one drop down a corse.

sounds very much like Prince Hal's (p. 83):

The land is burning; Percy stands on high;  
 And either we or they must lower lie.

Both Hotspur and Prince Hal know that they will meet in battle.

- At this point, Hotspur gets more bad news. Glendower is not coming. He has not been able to get his army together in time.

- Hotspur discovers that the King's army numbers 30,000 soldiers, and that therefore the rebels' forces, which lack the armies of Northumberland and of Glendower, are vastly outnumbered. He has a foreboding that the rebels will die fighting (pp. 88-89):

**HOTSPUR**

Forty let it be:  
 My father and Glendower being both away,  
 The powers of us may serve so great a day  
 Come, let us take a muster speedily:  
 Doomsday is near; die all, die merrily.

However, Hotspur is brave, and he intends to go down fighting.

- Worcester, on the other hand, is more worried. After all, Worcester has always been more practical than Hotspur.
- Obviously, the rebels are in a very bad situation.
- Remember the letter that Hotspur received from the nobleman in Act 2, Scene 3? The nobleman had several reasons for declining to join the rebellion: 1) the allies are untrustworthy, 2) it's a bad time for the march, and 3) the King's army is stronger and bigger than they think. All of these things have come to pass.

**Act 4, Scene 1**

**Compare and contrast Hotspur's and Worcester's reactions to the bad news.**

*Hotspur*

Disheartened at first, but rallies quickly. Ready to go down fighting.

*Worcester*

More cautious, and very aware that this is bad news.

**Act 4, Scene 2**

**Why are Falstaff's foot soldiers so poor and bedraggled? What do the Earl of Westmoreland and Prince Hal think about Falstaff's troops?**

- Falstaff enters and provides some comic relief and some black comedy. Falstaff is in charge of some foot soldiers, and he chooses to rest his bulky body. He sends Bardolph to buy some sack, while he rests and addresses the audience in a soliloquy.
- We find out that Falstaff is ashamed of the "soldiers" that he has pressed into service. For one thing, Falstaff has not taken the best men, the ones who are able-bodied and strong. No, he has chosen to draft "toasts-and-butter," men who have money and are willing to pay a bribe to get of military service. For example, some of them are on the verge of being married and therefore do not want to go to war. Some of them are simply cowards. (Falstaff is the King's representative, and if he

says you have to serve in the King's army, you have to serve.) In this way, Falstaff has acquired a small fortune of over 300 pounds.

- Falstaff knows that he is abusing the King's draft, but he doesn't care.
- The 150 men he has drafted are all losers and are unfit to be soldiers. They have not more than one and one-half shirt between them, the one-half shirt consisting of two napkins sewn together to form a kind of a shirt without arms. Falstaff does say that the men will be able to steal linen that is drying on the hedges.
- The men that Falstaff is taking to war resemble Lazarus just before he died, when dogs were licking his wounds. They are:

- 1) Dishonest serving men.
- 2) Younger brothers to younger sons (and therefore poor, since the oldest son would inherit the property).
- 3) Runaway tapsters.
- 4) Unemployed servants.
- 5) Parasites.

- Falstaff says that he is ashamed to be seen with the men he has drafted. A man even saw the men he had drafted and told him that he had drafted corpses hanging from a gibbet.
- Previously, we read about Hal's golden warriors. Falstaff's men form quite a contrast.
- Prince Hal and the Earl of Westmoreland overtake Falstaff, and Prince Hal inquires about the "pitiful rascals" (4.2.65) following Falstaff. He is surprised to hear that they are Falstaff's men.
- Here, Falstaff engages in some very black humor (p. 91):

**FALSTAFF**

Tut, tut; good enough to toss; food for powder, food  
for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better:  
tush, man, mortal men, mortal men.

- Falstaff's point here that these men can die as well as better men. Men die in wartime, so why not let the worst men die? Perhaps he has a point here, but this is a point that few are willing to make. These men are cannon fodder—almost all of them will die in battle. Those who do not die in battle will live as beggars for the rest of their lives.
- Falstaff jokes when he talks about the men he has recruited, but the humor is so black that few people laugh. He says that the men he has recruited will fill a mass grave as well as anybody else.
- One thing that Falstaff does is to criticize society. In this scene, he criticizes war. He knows that people die in war, and he would rather live.

### Act 4, Scene 3

**In his speech to Sir Walter Blunt, Hotspur lays out the case for the rebels. What points does Hotspur make to justify their rebellion against King Henry IV?**

- Hotspur and Douglas and Worcester and Vernon argue about whether to attack right away or to wait to attack. Hotspur and Douglas are ready to attack right away, but Worcester and Vernon are in favor of waiting.
  - The reasons not to attack now are two:
    - 1) Vernon's cousin's forces have not all arrived yet, and
    - 2) Worcester's mounted knights have just arrived that day, so the horses are all worn out.
  - Hotspur gives two reasons why the rebels should attack that evening:
    - 1) The King's reinforcements are certain, while the rebels' reinforcements are not
    - 2) Most of the rebels' horses are rested, while those of the King are not.
  - Hotspur does give good reasons here to attack now, while Vernon gives good reasons here not to attack until morning.
  - While the rebels are arguing, Sir Walter Blunt arrives with a message from King Henry IV. The King wishes to give the rebels a chance to plead their case and to give reasons why they are rebelling against him. He also promises to satisfy their desires and to give them amnesty. King Henry IV is possibly doing two things here: 1) He is trying to avoid bloodshed. 2) He is making sure that his reinforcements will arrive in time to fight in the battle.
  - Sir Walter Blunt, of course, is loyal to King Henry IV and believes that it is wrong to rebel against a King. The Percys, however, could argue that Henry Bolingbroke stole the crown from King Richard II and that stealing a crown from a thief who stole it is not really stealing. (We saw something similar when Prince Hal stole money from the thief Falstaff.)
  - Hotspur replies to Sir Walter Blunt. He says (p. 94):
 

The king is kind; and well we know the king  
Knows at what time to promise, when to pay.
- This implies that the King is well able to make promises without intending to keep them. In addition, of course, even if the King did give them pardons, would the King trust them in the future? Once a rebel, always the possibility of being a rebel again.
- Hotspur also makes the point that the Percys helped Henry Bolingbroke when he returned to England to take back his lands that had been unjustly seized from Richard II. At that time, Bolingbroke said that he merely wanted to regain his title of Duke of Lancaster, but he became popular and became King of England.
  - After that, Hotspur says, Bolingbroke had Richard II killed. He then allowed Mortimer to stay in Wales unransomed, and he treated the Percys badly.

### Act 4, Scene 3

#### At the end of the scene, does Hotspur appear diplomatic and ready to compromise?

- Hotspur does a good job of stating the Percys' case against King Henry IV, but when Sir Walter asks if that is the answer he is to take back to the King, Hotspur says (p. 96):

#### **HOTSPUR**

Not so, Sir Walter. We'll withdraw awhile.  
Go to the King; and let there be impawned  
Some surety for a safe return again,  
And in the morning early shall mine uncle  
Bring him our purposes; and so farewell.

Hotspur appears ready to agree to a compromise. Worcester shall talk to King Henry IV the next morning. Hotspur and the Percys will want, at the very least, a surety for their safe return home.

- Of course, by waiting until the next morning, these things happen:

- 1) The King's reinforcements have a chance to arrive.
- 2) The horses of the King have a chance to rest.

- Hotspur is keeping the door open so that the Percys and the King can negotiate.

### Act 4, Scene 4

#### Why do you think Shakespeare included this brief scene?

- In this short scene, we see the Archbishop of York asking Sir Michael to deliver urgent letters to the other rebels.
- The Archbishop of York has good reason to be worried. We learn here that Mortimer is also not present at the battle.
- Sir Michael names several valiant rebel leaders—Hotspur, Worcester, Mordake (the oldest son of Douglas and also the Earl of Fife—Macduff was the thane of Fife in *Macbeth*; remember that at the end of *Macbeth* Malcolm made the thanes the first earls of Scotland), Douglas, and Vernon.
- However, the archbishop counters by naming several valiant leaders on the other side: King Henry IV, Prince Hal, Lord John (Hal's younger brother), Westmoreland, and Sir Walter Blunt.
- Again, the Archbishop of York has good reason to be worried.
- We may ask why this scene appears in *Henry IV, Part 1*. The answer is that Shakespeare is setting up *Henry IV, Part 2*. At the end of *Henry IV, Part 1*, Henry IV divides his armies in two. One army goes west to Wales to fight Glendower. The other goes north to fight the Archbishop of York and Northumberland.

## Act 5

### Act 5, Scene 1

**Obviously, King Henry IV and the rebels view the rebellion in different ways. How do King Henry IV and Worcester view the rebellion?**

- At the beginning of the scene, the weather seems bad. The sun is very red like blood, and King Henry IV points out that the “day looks pale” (5.1.2). In Shakespeare, disturbances in politics are reflected in disturbances in Nature. (Cf. *Macbeth*. Also cf. the disturbances in Nature following the quarrel between Oberon and Titania in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.)
- The dreary weather does not dismay King Henry IV. He merely remarks that “nothing can seem foul to those that win” (5.1.8). The King is very much in control. He knows that his army outnumbered that of the rebels.
- King Henry IV maintains his control when he meets with Worcester, who arrives with Sir Richard Vernon. The King makes clear that he holds the rebels responsible for breaking the peace—although he is willing to make peace with them. King Henry IV says (p. 99):

[...] You have deceived our trust,  
And made us doff our easy robes of peace,  
To crush our old limbs in ungentle steel:

- Here we find that King Henry IV is old—in terms of the play. Prince Hal, however, is a young man and full of strength—in terms of the play. In real life, he was born in 1387, so he would have been 16 years old at the time of this battle. Henry IV was born in 1367, so he would have been 36 years old at the time of this battle. Hotspur was born in 1366, so he would have been 37 years old at the time of this battle. (Remember: We read Shakespeare for drama, not for history.)
- Worcester sets forth the Percys’ grievances against Henry IV. He tells the story of the deposition of King Richard II. Richard II fought in Ireland but lost, and contrary winds kept him from returning to England for so long that people thought that he was dead. This made it easy for Henry Bolingbroke to become King Henry V. Although the Percys helped him to become King, Henry IV has not recently looked kindly at the Percys, forcing them to gather an army and mount a rebellion.
- King Henry IV is not impressed with Worcester’s speech and says so, replying (p. 101):

And never yet did insurrection want  
Such water-colours to impaint his cause;

- King Henry IV replies simply that rebels have no problems coming up with excuses for rebellion—excuses that make it seem as if they are in the right and the person whom they are rebelling against is in the wrong.

### Act 5, Scene 1

#### What do you think about Prince Hal's offer to meet Hotspur in single combat? Why won't King Henry IV let Prince Hal meet in single combat?

- At this point, Prince Hal speaks up, very courteously. He praises Hotspur, mentions that “I have a truant been to chivalry” (5.1.94), and says that he wants to meet Hotspur in single combat.
- Prince Hal wants to avoid the battle by having a single combat between himself and Hotspur. Whoever wins the single combat also wins the battle. This will “save the blood on either side” (5.1.99).
- King Henry IV says that he would “dare” to let Prince Hal fight a single combat with Hotspur—except that “considerations infinite” lead him not to (5.1.102).
- Prince Hal, we know, considers consequences carefully. We saw that in his questioning of Poins before he decided to take part in the robbing of the robbers previously. Apparently, he thinks that he can defeat Hotspur in single combat.
- King Henry IV, however, decides not to let Prince Hal fight Hotspur in single combat. Henry IV is also a careful man, thinking ahead to what needs to be done next. Henry IV may have his doubts that Hal can take Hotspur. After all, Hal has been drinking in taverns, while Hotspur has been fighting in battles. Hotspur seems to have the edge in a single combat between the two men.
- In addition, King Henry IV knows that his army is greater than the Percys' army, so he may decide to go with the battle instead of the single combat, although more blood will be spilled on both sides. The odds are better with the battle than with the single combat.
- Still, the offer of single combat shows something good about Prince Hal. He is brave to offer to meet Hotspur in single combat, and he does not want to spill innocent blood needlessly.
- King Henry IV does offer terms of peace to the Percys and the soldiers in their army, but after Worcester and Vernon leave, King Henry IV and Prince Hal agree that Hotspur and Douglas will not accept the offer of peace. Quite simply, Hotspur and Douglas have great confidence in their battle prowess. Therefore, they think that Henry IV's offer to be friends again with the rebels will not be accepted.

### Act 5, Scene 1

#### What do Falstaff and Prince Hal talk about when they are alone?

- When Falstaff and Prince Hal are alone, Falstaff tells him that he would appreciate it if Prince Hal would protect him in battle. That is, if Prince Hal sees Falstaff on the ground, Prince Hal will bestride him and protect him from attackers.
- Prince Hal simply advises Falstaff to say his prayers, and Prince Hal tells Falstaff that he owes God a death.
- Earlier, Prince Hal protected Falstaff from the Sheriff; however, here he does not agree to protect him from soldiers. Other, more important things are at stake in this battle.

**Act 5, Scene 1****Analyze Falstaff's speech about honor. According to Falstaff, what is honor? How do Hotspur and Prince Hal regard honor?**

• In a soliloquy on p. 102, Falstaff talks about honor. He first says that he may owe God a death, but he doesn't owe God a death yet. Falstaff says:

[...] honour pricks  
me on.

This means that honor spurs him on, the way it does such characters as Hotspur in this play. Hotspur is fighting for honor. Falstaff then goes on to say:

[...] Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I  
come on? how then?

This means: But what happens if honor leads me to be killed or wounded in battle?

[...] Can honour set to a leg? no: or  
an arm? no: or take away the grief of a wound? no.  
Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? no.

Honor is not able to heal a wound such as an injury to an arm or a leg.

[...] What is  
honour? a word. What is in that word honour? what  
is that honour? air. A trim reckoning!

What is honor? It is nothing but a word, the air that we breathe out when we pronounce a word.

[...] Who hath it?  
he that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? no.  
Doth he hear it? no. 'Tis insensible, then. Yea,  
to the dead.

Who has honor? Dead people, to whom it is worthless.

[...] But will it not live with the living?  
no. Why? detraction will not suffer it.

Can the living have honor? According to Falstaff, no. Why? Because when people are living, they have detractors—people slander them. (Cf. Lincoln.)

[...] Therefore  
I'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon: and so  
ends my catechism.

Therefore, Falstaff says, he will have nothing to do with honor. He would rather be a live coward than a dead hero. Thus ends his soliloquy.

- A catechism is a series of questions designed to elicit a person's view—for example, about religious matters. Falstaff's religion is to look out for himself. Falstaff regards himself as the most important thing that exists. He is the center of the universe. Other people often regard something or someone or Someone as being more important than themselves.
- To Hotspur, of course, honor is very valuable, and he is willing to risk death in order to achieve it. On p. 22, Hotspur said:

By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap,  
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon,  
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,  
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,  
And pluck up drowned honour by the locks;  
So he that doth redeem her thence might wear  
Without corrival, all her dignities:

- To Prince Hal, honor is a commodity to be won from Hotspur (p. 74):

Percy is but my factor, good my lord,  
To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf;  
And I will call him to so strict account,  
That he shall render every glory up,  
Yea, even the slightest worship of his time,  
Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart.

Commodity: "Something useful that can be turned to commercial or other advantage"—*The American Heritage Dictionary*.

- Falstaff can easily dismiss honor because he has so little honor himself. This may be a realistic, if cynical, way of looking at honor, or it may be a way for Falstaff to justify being a coward.

## Act 5, Scene 2

**Why doesn't Worcester tell Hotspur about Henry's offer of amnesty? What does he tell Hotspur instead?**

- Worcester tells Vernon not to let Hotspur know about King Henry IV's "liberal and kind offer" (5.2.2) of peace and friendship. He reasons that the Percys will remain under suspicion of the King because of the rebellion. This may not apply to Hotspur, who is likely to be forgiven because:
  - 1) He is young.
  - 2) He is known to be rash because of "heat of blood" (5.2.17).
  - 3) His nickname gives him the privilege of being impulsive.
  - 4) Worcester and Northumberland will be blamed for leading Hotspur astray.

- Worcester describes Hotspur as being “hare-brained” (5.2.19). This is not a kind description, but it may be accurate. Certainly, Hotspur is rash.
- Vernon agrees to Worcester’s wishes.
- As soon as Hotspur hears from Worcester that King Henry IV wants to fight a battle, he immediately sends Westmoreland to tell the King defiantly that they will fight. Westmoreland is in the enemy camp as a surety that Worcester and Vernon will be allowed to return safely from the King’s camp. If anything had happened to Worcester and Vernon, then Westmoreland would have been executed by the rebels.

### **Act 5, Scene 2**

#### **Write a character analysis of Worcester.**

- Worcester is the bad guy in this play. He lies to his nephew (Hotspur), and his nephew is killed as a result.

### **Act 5, Scene 2**

#### **How does Hotspur react to the news that Prince Hal challenged him to single combat?**

- After the defiant response of the rebels has been delivered to the King and battle is assured, Worcester tells Hotspur about Prince Hal’s challenge to single combat.
- Hotspur wants to know how Prince Hal made the challenge: Was he insulting?
- Vernon replies (p. 105):

No, by my soul; I never in my life  
Did hear a challenge urged more modestly,  
Unless a brother should a brother dare  
To gentle exercise and proof of arms.

- Prince Hal was a model of courtesy in making the challenge.
- Hotspur teases Vernon a little by saying (p. 105):

Cousin, I think thou art enamoured  
On his follies [...]

- Of course, Hotspur is eager to meet Prince Hal in the battle.
- Letters arrive, probably from the Archbishop of York, but Hotspur has no time to read them because the battle is beginning.
- Hotspur is eager to fight (p. 106):

Let each man do his best: and here draw I  
A sword, whose temper I intend to stain

With the best blood that I can meet withal  
In the adventure of this perilous day.

Hotspur hopes to stain his sword with the best blood possible—royal blood.

### **Act 5, Scene 3**

#### **Why are so many men disguised as King Henry IV?**

- Scenes 3, 4, and 5 are brief scenes that show the battle.
- We find out that the King has dressed many lords in royal clothes, Sir Walter Blunt among them. The purpose is to not let the enemy soldiers know who the King is. If they can easily identify the King, they can concentrate on killing or capturing him. In the Middle Ages, if the King were killed or captured, the battle would be over. That is why in chess the game is over when a King is checkmated.
- Douglas has been fighting well and has already killed one person wearing King's clothing when he meets Sir Walter Blunt, who is also wearing King's clothing and who says that he is the King. Douglas kills him and thinks that the battle is over, but Hotspur identifies the body as belonging to Sir Walter Blunt.
- Douglas vows to kill everybody who is wearing the King's coats.
- Douglas and Hotspur leave, and Falstaff enters, alone. He sees the lifeless Sir Walter Blunt and says (p. 108):

[...] Sir Walter Blunt: there's honour  
for you!

- Falstaff sees what can happen when you pursue honor, and as we know, he wants none of it. He strongly prefers to be a live coward than a dead hero.

### **Act 5, Scene 3**

#### **What has happened to Falstaff's men?**

- Falstaff also lets us know what has happened to the men he led into battle (p. 108):

[...] I have  
led my ragamuffins where they are peppered: there's  
not three of my hundred and fifty left alive; and  
they are for the town's end, to beg during life.

- Of the 150 men Falstaff led into battle, nearly all are dead. As Falstaff had said earlier, they would serve well enough to fill a pit—that is, to fill a mass grave. Of the perhaps three who are left alive, they are horribly wounded—so badly wounded that they will never work again. They will try to survive by begging.

- Falstaff has done an evil deed by leading his men into battle at a place where he knew they would be peppered (slaughtered). Evil officers sometimes got their men killed so that they could keep the soldiers' pay.

### **Act 5, Scene 3**

**What has Prince Hal been doing in the battle? What joke does Falstaff play on Prince Hal? How does Prince Hal respond?**

- Prince Hal enters, and it is obvious that he has been fighting hard. He sees that Falstaff is idle and criticizes him for it (p. 108):

What, stand'st thou idle here? lend me thy sword:  
 Many a nobleman lies stark and stiff  
 Under the hoofs of vaunting enemies,  
 Whose deaths are yet unrevenged: I prithee,  
 lend me thy sword.

- Falstaff won't lend Hal his sword, but he does offer to give him his pistol, saying, "'Tis hot" (5.3.53), implying that it is hot because he has been firing it so much. He also says that in his case "there's that will sack a city" (5.3.53-54). However, when Hal opens the case, he finds a bottle of sack, which he throws at Falstaff. Even in battle, Falstaff can pun and joke. Needless to say, a battle is not the time to do that.

- Prince Hal is fighting hard. He is redeeming himself, as he promised to do.

### **Act 5, Scene 4**

**How are Prince Hal and King Henry IV reconciled?**

- In this scene, Prince Hal has been wounded, and his father wants him to withdraw from battle. Prince Hal declines, saying (pp. 109-110):

And God forbid a shallow scratch should drive  
 The Prince of Wales from such a field as this,  
 Where stain'd nobility lies trodden on,  
 and rebels' arms triumph in massacres!

- Prince Hal's brother, Prince John, has been fighting valiantly, and he has earned Prince Hal's respect. He says of his brother, John of Lancaster (p. 110):

By God, thou hast deceived me, Lancaster;  
 I did not think thee lord of such a spirit:  
 Before, I loved thee as a brother, John;  
 But now, I do respect thee as my soul.

- This speech by Prince Hal is odd. Prince Hal has spent much time partying, but now he is doing what he should be doing. Prince John has for a long time been doing what he should be doing, and he is still doing his duty. If anyone should be surprised by the good behavior of a brother, Prince John should be surprised by the good behavior of Prince Hal.

- Prince Hal leaves King Henry IV, and Douglas enters, ready to kill the King. Douglas nearly kills Henry IV, but Prince Hal enters in time to fight Douglas and to drive him away, saving his father's life.
- At this time, father and son are truly reconciled. King Henry IV says (p. 111):

Stay, and breathe awhile:  
 Thou hast redeem'd thy lost opinion,  
 And show'd thou makest some tender of my life,  
 In this fair rescue thou hast brought to me.

#### **Act 5, Scene 4**

#### **How does Hotspur die? How does Prince Hal react to the death of Hotspur?**

- After King Henry IV leaves, Hotspur enters, and he and Prince Hal fight to the death. As the two fight, Falstaff enters and cheers Hal. Douglas enters, and Falstaff falls to the ground, feigning death.
- When Prince Hal inflicts a mortal wound on Hotspur, Hotspur mourns the loss of his honor and glory more than the loss of his life (p. 112):

O, Harry, thou hast robb'd me of my youth!  
 I better brook the loss of brittle life  
 Than those proud titles thou hast won of me;  
 They wound my thoughts worse than sword my flesh:

- Hotspur dies before he can finish his final sentence, which Prince Hal finishes for him (p. 112):

#### **HOTSPUR**

[...] no, Percy, thou art dust  
 And food for—

*Dies*

#### **PRINCE HENRY**

For worms, brave Percy: fare thee well, great heart!  
 Ill-weaved ambition, how much art thou shrunk!  
 When that this body did contain a spirit,  
 A kingdom for it was too small a bound;  
 But now two paces of the vilest earth  
 Is room enough: this earth that bears thee dead  
 Bears not alive so stout a gentleman.

- Now, two paces of land (a grave) is enough for Hotspur when before a Kingdom was not enough for him.
- When Hotspur dies, a man who could have been good dies. If Hotspur would have served as a general under King Henry IV, he would have been a great general, provided he followed orders.

- Note that good men die in battle. Who should we prefer to die in battle? People such as Hotspur, King Henry IV, and Prince Hal? Or the poor wretches led into battle by Falstaff. Be honest. Falstaff's black comedy may contain a telling criticism of society.

#### **Act 5, Scene 4**

##### **How does Prince Hal react to the supposed death of Falstaff?**

- Prince Hal sees Falstaff lying on the ground. He thinks Falstaff is dead, and he mourns his death, saying (p. 113):

What, old acquaintance! could not all this flesh  
Keep in a little life? Poor Jack, farewell!  
I could have better spared a better man:  
O, I should have a heavy miss of thee,  
If I were much in love with vanity!

- Apparently, Prince Hal did care for Falstaff even though he recognizes how evil Falstaff can be.
- Prince Hal also says that he will have Falstaff's body disemboweled so that it can be embalmed. In other words, he is going to give Falstaff a decent burial.
- On stage, Prince Hal is often shown standing between Hotspur and Falstaff. Hotspur overvalued honor, while Falstaff undervalued honor. Prince Hal has achieved the real thing with his actions.

#### **Act 5, Scene 4**

##### **How does Falstaff react to the death of Hotspur?**

- As soon as Prince Hal leaves, Falstaff jumps up. He may want to lose weight, but being disemboweled is not the way he wants to lose it.
- Falstaff intends to take credit for killing Hotspur, although Prince Hal actually killed him. He wounds Hotspur's thigh with a sword, then begins to carry away the body.
- Prince Hal and Prince John arrive. Both are astonished to see Falstaff alive. Falstaff cleverly—and immorally—takes credit for killing Hotspur, saying that he made the wound on Hotspur's thigh.
- Falstaff is able to get away with the lie that he and Hotspur were both winded, but after Prince Hal left the two jumped up and fought, and he defeated Hotspur. Since Prince Hal has already said that he saw Falstaff dead, but was mistaken (obviously), why then may he not have been mistaken about Hotspur?
- Prince Hal is willing to let Falstaff have the credit for killing Hotspur, saying (p. 115):

For my part, if a lie may do thee grace,  
I'll gild it with the happiest terms I have.

- In *Henry IV, Part 2*, Falstaff has an undeserved reputation as a military hero.

### Act 5, Scene 5

#### Now that the battle is over, what happens to Worcester and Vernon?

- The Battle of Shrewsbury is over, and King Henry IV has won. His army has captured both Worcester and Vernon. King Henry IV knows that they lied to Hotspur about his offer of peace and friendship, so he condemns them to be executed. Worcester is not surprised at the order, and he goes to his death patiently.

### Act 5, Scene 5

#### Why does Prince Hal free Douglas?

- Prince Hal asks his father for the boon of disposing of Douglas, who fought valiantly but who has been captured while fleeing after the battle was lost. Prince Hal gives his brother John the happy task of allowing Douglas to go free without harm and without ransom. This is a shrewd move on Prince Hal's part. This move should help lead to peace with the Scots. (Of course, this means that Sir Walter Blunt's death is not avenged.)

- Clearly, Prince Hal is emerging as a great leader.

### Act 5, Scene 5

#### How does *1 Henry IV* end?

- At the end of *Henry IV, Part 1*, Henry IV divides his armies in two. One army goes west to Wales to fight Glendower. The other goes north to fight the Archbishop of York and Northumberland. Shakespeare thus sets up *Henry IV, Part 2*.

### **Bibliography**

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### Paper Topics

- Write a character analysis of Falstaff.
- Write a character analysis of Prince Hal.
- Describe the education of Prince Hal. What does he learn from Falstaff? What does he learn from his father, King Henry IV?
- Explain how Shakespeare uses doubling in this play.
- In the *Henry IV* plays, Shakespeare is writing about leadership at the highest level. What does it take to be a good—even great—King? Assess these characters as to whether they would make good or bad Kings: Falstaff, Hotspur, Prince Hal.
- Compare and contrast Prince Hal and Hotspur.
- Compare and contrast Falstaff and King Henry IV.

### Paper Hints

- **Write a character analysis of Falstaff.**

Falstaff is fat.

Falstaff is witty.

Falstaff wishes to mislead Prince Hal.

Falstaff may be a coward.

Falstaff is an alcoholic.

Falstaff takes credit for killing Hotspur.

Falstaff wants Hal to become a thief.

Falstaff abuses the Hostess.

Falstaff is a good *ex tempore* actor.

Falstaff's pockets reveal a lot about him.

Falstaff is a knight.

Falstaff does not value honor—if he has to earn it honestly.

Falstaff = false staff.

Falstaff takes bribes.

Falstaff deliberately gets his soldiers killed.

Falstaff is old and has a white beard.

Falstaff pretends to be young while robbing the travelers.

Falstaff lies about the robbery,

- **Write a character analysis of Prince Hal.**

Hal uses his friends.

Hal reforms, showing that he will make a good King in military matters.

Hal has a plan for lowering expectations, then reforming.

Hal is witty.

Hal kills Hotspur and saves his father's life.

Hal knows exactly what kind of man Falstaff is.

Hal orders that Douglas be released, thus helping to ensure good relations with Scotland.

Hal continues to fight, even though wounded.

Hal's brother John has taken his place at court.

Hal shows leadership during the robbery.

Hal knows exactly what kind of man Falstaff is.

**• Describe the education of Prince Hal. What does he learn from Falstaff? What does he learn from his father, King Henry IV?**

Both King Henry IV and Falstaff are father figures to Prince Hal. Basically, King Henry IV tries to teach Prince Hal the right things and Falstaff tries to teach Prince Hal the wrong things.

King Henry IV tries to teach his son to be a strong leader, a strong general, and to lead his people all one way.

Falstaff tries to teach Hal to be an alcoholic and a robber.

We know that Hal did become a good King. He learned from his father, and he rejected the teaching of Falstaff. However, Hal did learn from Falstaff things to avoid doing, and he learned about the criminal element in his society.

You can write about more than just Henry IV and Falstaff. For example, what does Hal learn from Francis the drawer?

You can write about whether this is a good program of self-education for Hal. He deliberately sets out to learn about lowlifes. Should he be learning about all segments of society if he is to be King of England?

You can certainly write a character analysis of Hal and include his education in it.

From Falstaff, Hal learns what not to do when he is King.

From Falstaff, Hal learns that he must reject people like Falstaff when he is King. It is worthwhile learning to avoid people who want to mislead you.

### Anecdotes: *1 Henry IV* and the Henry Plays

- Julia Marlowe believed in thoroughly preparing for her roles in plays by Shakespeare. Before appearing in *King Henry IV, Part I*, as Prince Hal, she actually wore the character's armor at home until she felt comfortable in it.
- Gustav Holst (1874-1934) wrote *At the Boar's Head* (1925) while recuperating from a head injury. He was reading Shakespeare's *Henry IV* and studying English folk music, when he noticed that the melody of one of the folk songs fit a passage from *Henry IV*. Because of that happy accident, he wrote an opera using folk songs and passages from *Henry IV*.
- In November of 1778, John Henderson (1747-1785) was playing Falstaff in Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 1*. The previous Wednesday, a nobleman had died in a duel over a quarrel about gambling, shocking the society of Bath. Mr. Henderson spoke Falstaff's lines, "What is honour? A word. What is that word honour? A trim reckoning. Who hath it?" Here Mr. Henderson paused, then said, "He that died on Wednesday!" (5.1.134-136). These words created a sensation. Many in the audience felt that he had added the words to Shakespeare's text, but he had delivered them exactly as Shakespeare wrote them.
- In 1894, people were shocked by vice portrayed on the stage. When Constance Benson portrayed the prostitute Doll Tearsheet in Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 2*, shocked ministers preached against the immorality of the stage. In addition, all the schoolchildren in the audience were escorted from the theater by their shocked parents or teachers.
- John Chapman, drama critic for the New York *Daily News*, loved Shakespeare. He once started to attend a new production of *Henry V* at the Shakespeare theater at Stratford, Connecticut, but was surprised to see gymnasts performing on stage. Figuring that he was early for the play, he asked an usher what was being performed on stage, and he was surprised when the usher told him that the performance was *Henry V* and that it opened with gymnasts. Mr. Chapman replied, "The hell it does," then left the theater.
- British boarding schools frequently provide a superior education. When actor Patrick Macnee was eight years old, he played the title role in a production of Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth*. The play was performed in its entirety—completely uncut. (Playing the Dauphin—because he could speak both French and English—was eight-year-old Christopher Lee, who later became an actor like Mr. Macnee.)
- To celebrate the reopening of the arena at Alexandra Palace, Sir Ralph Richardson was asked to perform a speech from Shakespeare on television. Sir Ralph thought for a moment, then he said, "I think I shall do my speech from *Richard IV* or *Henry X*—I know it by heart." Then he spoke several minutes of a speech that was complete rubbish but which sounded authentic. Sir Ralph then asked, "Shall I stop, or continue? That's the speech I used to do whenever I dield [forgot the words] in Shakespeare, no critic ever noticed it, no audience has ever made any comment on it whatsoever."

## Interpretation of Characters and Other Notes

### Form Your Own Interpretation

You must form an interpretation of the characters based on your reading of the play.

#### King Henry IV

- You may form a positive opinion of King Henry IV by saying that he is an able man who took advantage of opportunity and became a much better King than King Richard II could have ever made.
- You can form a negative opinion of King Henry IV by saying that he is a “vile politician” (1.3.239) who usurped the crown from the rightful King of England.

#### Prince Hal

- You may form a positive opinion of Prince Hal by saying that his program of self-education (which involves getting to know people from all levels of society, not just the upper class) helps to make him an effective—even a great—King. His rejection of Falstaff at the end of *Henry IV, Part 2* is exactly what he ought to do. A Falstaff with great power (because he is a friend of the King) would do great damage.
- You may form a negative opinion of Prince Hal by saying that he uses his friends. For example, he is friends with Sir John Falstaff, but rejects him at the end of *Henry IV, Part 2*, when he is crowned King.

#### Sir John Falstaff

- You may form a positive opinion of Sir John Falstaff by saying that he plays an important role in criticizing society.
- You may form a negative opinion of Falstaff by saying that he is evil, he is a liar, he is a thief, he has no honor and wants none, etc. Basically, you can say that Falstaff is an old, fat rogue who is living by what’s left of his wits after a lifetime of alcoholism and debauchery.
- You may hold both of the above opinions at the same time.
- Falstaff’s major characteristics are that he is fat—the man is HUGE—and that he is witty.
- A student of mine—Karrie Dowling—once wrote that all Falstaff cares for is wine, women, and wit.

#### Contrasts Between Characters: Honor

- Hotspur is wild to gain honor; he overvalues honor.
- Falstaff does not value and does not want honor—if he has to earn it honestly.
- Prince Hal achieves honor without overvaluing it.

#### Hotspur

- Among Hotspur’s good qualities are that he is brave and determined.
- Among Hotspur’s bad qualities are that he is rash and quick to judgment.
- Hotspur would not be a good King. He is too easily manipulated by other people. Look for examples as you read the play. A good King must not be easy to manipulate.
- Hotspur is unable to be diplomatic. Look for examples as you read the play. A good King must be diplomatic.

### **Conflict**

- There is a conflict between King Henry IV and his son, Prince Hal; the two often do not get along. King Henry IV worries because his son hangs out with lowlifes and may end up being a weak and bad King.
- One of the problems with rule by Kings and Queens is that of succession. What happens when the leader of the country dies without having had any children? Sometimes, civil war occurs as ambitious men fight to become King. Queen Elizabeth I died without having had any children, and the people of Shakespeare's time worried about what would happen after she died. (Fortunately, the transfer of power to King James I was peaceful.) Another problem is that a good King will have a son who will become a bad King. King Henry IV worried about the succession of power to his son. If Prince Hal becomes a bad King, the people of England will suffer.

### **Theme of Leadership**

- In the *Henry IV* plays, Shakespeare is writing about leadership at the highest level. What does it take to be a good—even great—King?
- In *Henry IV, Part 1*, Shakespeare examines the question of what it takes to be a good King in military matters.
- In *Henry IV, Part 2*, Shakespeare examines the question of what it takes to be a good King in civil matters.

### **Doubles**

- King Henry IV and Falstaff are both father figures to Prince Hal.
- Hotspur and Prince Hal are both possible successors to King Henry IV.
- Falstaff's robbery at Gad's Hill is similar to the Percys' rebellion against King Henry IV. Both show disorder in the realm. One is a rebellion against the King. Another is a rebellion against the King's laws.

## List of Major Characters

### **Prince Hal**

The son of King Henry IV, Prince Hal spends much time hanging out with lowlifes in preference to serving his father. At this time, it seems that if Prince Hal becomes King, he will be a bad King.

### **Sir John Falstaff**

Sir John is fat, old, and witty. In some ways, he is like a father to Prince Hal, but he is a bad influence.

### **King Henry IV**

This King feels guilty because he stole the crown from King Richard II. He also worries about what kind of King his son, Prince Hal, will make.

### *Supporters of the King*

#### **Prince John**

Prince John is a dutiful son, serving his father instead of hanging out with lowlifes. Prince Hal is his older brother.

#### **Sir Walter Blunt**

Sir Walter is loyal to King Henry IV.

#### **Earl of Westmoreland**

Westmoreland is a trusted advisor to the King.

### *The Rebels*

#### **Hotspur**

Hotspur, a Percy, rebels against King Henry IV. He is impulsive and lacks diplomacy.

#### **Earl of Worcester**

Worcester is Hotspur's uncle. He is devious and misleads Hotspur into revolting against King Henry IV.

#### **Earl of Northumberland**

Hotspur's father and a conspirator against King Henry IV.

#### **Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March**

A conspirator against King Henry IV, Mortimer has married Owen Glendower's daughter. She speaks Welsh but not English; he speaks English but not Welsh.

#### **Owen Glendower**

A Welshman who rebels against King Henry IV. He claims to have magical powers, and he has defeated King Henry IV's armies three times.

#### **Archibald, Earl of Douglas**

Douglas is a Scottish conspirator against King Henry IV.

**Richard Scroop, Archbishop of York**

The Archbishop of York is a conspirator against King Henry IV.

**Sir Michael**

He is a friend of the Archbishop of York.

**Richard Vernon**

A co-conspirator.

**Lady Mortimer**

Mortimer's wife and the daughter of Glendower.

**Kate, Hotspur's Wife**

Kate has as much spirit as Hotspur. She is a devoted wife.

*Prince Hal's Lower-Class Friends***Poins**

A robber. He, like Falstaff and Bardolph, robs people to support his drinking and partying.

**Gadshill**

This robber gets his nickname from Gads Hill, the site of many robberies.

**Bardolph**

Bardolph, Falstaff's friend, has a fiery red face due to his alcoholism.

**Peto**

Yet another lowlife who robs people to support his drinking and partying.

**Mistress Quickly**

The manager of an inn, she allows Falstaff to run up a large tab.

**Francis**

A drawer (he pours drinks and serves them to customers), Francis' whole life is work. He knows little beyond being a drawer.

## Miscellaneous Information

### Vocabulary

- “Usurp” means “to seize and hold (the power or rights of another, for example) by force and without legal authority.”—*The American Heritage College Dictionary*
- “Sack” is wine.

### Elizabethan English

The use of a double negative is regarded as correct by the Elizabethans. For emphasis, Shakespeare will use two negatives. For example, in Act 3, scene 1, Glendower says,

“No, nor you shall not.” (3.1.116)

King Henry IV uses the royal “we.” At the end of the play, he says,

“Then this remains, that we divide our power.” (5.5.34)

“Sack” means “wine.” Falstaff drinks a great deal of sack.

“You” is a pronoun of respect. “Thou” is a pronoun of familiarity. When addressing an equal or inferior, you would use “thou.” When addressing a superior, you would use “you.” We see the sexism in Shakespeare’s society in this exchange between husband and wife in Act 2, Scene 3, when Lady Percy speaks to Hotspur:

Lady Percy: But hear you, my lord.  
Hotspur: What say’st thou, my lady? (2.3.75-76)

## Scene Summaries

### Act 1

#### Scene 1

King Henry IV is under a great deal of stress. He plans a Crusade to the Holy Land out of guilt over usurping the crown from King Richard II, but he puts his plans on hold because of rebellions. Hotspur Percy, whom King Henry IV admires, has won a battle for the King, but Lord Mortimer has lost a battle against the Welsh rebels. King Henry IV compares Hotspur to his own son, Prince Hal—and he prefers Hotspur. However, Hotspur is refusing to turn over his prisoners to the King, so King Henry IV orders a meeting between himself and the Percys.

#### Scene 2

In this scene, we are introduced to Prince Hal and Sir John Falstaff. Falstaff is Shakespeare's wittiest character, and Prince Hal is nearly as witty as Falstaff. Prince Hal is hanging around with lowlifes, who want Prince Hal to join them in a robbery. He declines, but then agrees to help Poins play a practical joke on Falstaff. At the end of the scene, when he is alone, Prince Hal explains why he is hanging around with lowlifes.

#### Scene 3

The Percys arrive for their meeting with King Henry IV, who demands Hotspur's prisoners. Hotspur makes an excuse for not returning them, and then King Henry IV again demands the prisoners. After King Henry IV leaves, the Percys make a plan to rebel against him.

Note on language: A popinjay is a parrot.

### Act 2

#### Scene 1

This scene mirrors the previous scene, in which the Percys plan to rebel against King Henry IV. In this scene, Gadshill plans to rebel against the King's laws by breaking them. There is disorder in the inn just as there is disorder in the realm.

Note on language: "Carriers" are "deliverymen." A "chamberlain" is a room attendant.

#### Scene 2

Prince Hal and Poins play a practical joke on Falstaff. Prince Hal and Poins allow Falstaff and the other robbers to rob the travelers, then they rob Falstaff and the other robbers.

#### Scene 3

Hotspur reads a letter in which the writer declines to take part in the rebellion against King Henry IV. Hotspur's wife, Kate, unsuccessfully tries to find out what is bothering Hotspur.

#### Scene 4

This scene has four parts: 1) Hal plays a joke on the bartender Francis, 2) Falstaff tells "incomprehensible lies" (1.2.190) about how he was robbed, 3) Hal and Falstaff takes turns playing the role of Hal's father, King Henry IV, in the tavern play; and 4) the Sheriff arrives, looking for Falstaff.

### Act 3

#### Scene 1

At Glendower's castle in Wales, the rebels meet to divide up England, then Hotspur and Mortimer say farewell to their wives.

#### Scene 2

In Act 2, Scene 4, we saw Prince Hal and Falstaff rehearse the meeting that Prince Hal would have with his father the King. In this scene, we have the actual meeting of Prince Hal and King Henry IV. The King rebukes his son, and Prince Hal responds that he will behave more like his true self in the future. King Henry IV then gives Prince Hal the command of some soldiers.

#### Scene 3

Falstaff accuses Mistress Quickly of picking his pocket, but when Prince Hal arrives, Falstaff discovers that Prince Hal had ordered his pocket picked. Prince Hal is serious and preparing for war, but Falstaff is much more concerned about his breakfast.

### Act 4

#### Scene 1

Bad news pours in for the rebels. Northumberland is ill and will not send his soldiers. Prince Hal is acting like a Prince, not like a madcap. Glendower cannot raise his troops in a timely manner. Worcester is worried, but Hotspur is determined to push on.

#### Scene 2

Falstaff marches with his troops to the battle. They are poor, sickly soldiers because Falstaff has taken bribes from rich, healthy men not to make them fight and risk their lives. The Earl of Westmoreland and Prince Hal are shocked at the appearance of Falstaff's soldiers, but he assures them that his soldiers will serve very well as cannon fodder—that is, they can die just as well as good, healthy soldiers.

#### Scene 3

Sir Walter Blunt meets with the rebels to see if he can secure peace, but Hotspur replies with a speech in which he lists the rebels' grievances against King Henry IV.

#### Scene 4

In this brief scene, the Archbishop of York asks Sir Michael to deliver some letters. The Archbishop is on the side of the rebels, and he is worried that the rebellion will be unsuccessful.

### Act 5

#### Scene 1

Worcester meets with King Henry IV and sets forth his grievances. Prince Hal offers to fight Hotspur in single combat. Falstaff makes an important speech about honor.

**Scene 2**

Worcester lies to Hotspur and doesn't mention King Henry IV's offer of peace. Hotspur wishes to meet Prince Hal on the battlefield.

**Scene 3**

Douglas kills Sir Walter Blunt, who is disguised as King Henry IV. Falstaff arrives, then Prince Hal. Falstaff jokes with Prince Hal, who is in no mood to joke.

**Scene 4**

Prince Hal and King Henry IV are reconciled after Prince Hal saves King Henry IV from Douglas. Prince Hal kills Hotspur in single combat, but Falstaff, who has been pretending to be dead, claims that he killed Hotspur.

**Scene 5**

The King's forces decisively win. Worcester and Vernon are executed, but Prince Hal orders Douglas to be set free. King Henry IV now turns toward stopping other rebels.

## Notes on Acts and Scenes

Very Important Note: The page numbers refer to the Signet Classic edition of *I Henry IV*; so do the notations in parentheses. However, the text of long quotations is that of an online edition of *I Henry IV* available at <<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/1henryiv/full.html>>. This means that mostly minor variations in the text will occur. The short quotations (quotations not in block format) are from the Signet Classic edition. The long quotations (quotations in block format) are from the online edition. This means that the lines and line numbers may not match exactly.

### Act 1, Scene 1

- This scene introduces us to King Henry IV, who is weary and worn out because of the stresses of defending his crown and his kingdom. Currently, England is under attack on two borders. The Welsh and the Scots are both attacking England.
- King Henry IV is weary in part because he is a usurper. He took the crown from King Richard II and made himself King with the help of the Percys. He feels guilty because he unjustly took the crown. He would love to go on a Crusade to assuage his guilt over his usurpation of the crown.
- King Henry IV discusses the political situation with Westmoreland and others. Mortimer had led an army against the Welsh rebel Owen Glendower and has lost 1,000 soldiers. The wild Welsh women have mutilated their bodies—which may mean castration after the soldiers had died. Obviously, the news is bad on this front. Because of this bad news, King Henry IV must cancel his planned Crusade.
- Westmoreland tells King Henry IV that Henry Percy, known as Hotspur, has been fighting the Scots. He says that the outcome of the battle is uncertain. However, Sir Walter Blunt has more recent news. Hotspur has triumphed over the Scots.
- King Henry IV talks about Hotspur and his own son, Prince Hal. Hotspur is a brave soldier who has just won an important battle. Prince Hal, on the other hand, seems to be a wastrel who spends all his time hanging out in taverns with lowlifes. King Henry IV even wishes that fairies had exchanged Hotspur and Prince Hal when they were infants. He strongly prefers to have Hotspur for a son instead of Hotspur. As you may be able to tell, Hotspur and Prince Hal will become rivals in this play.
- Hotspur, however, is withholding some prisoners from King Henry IV, so King Henry IV questions Hotspur's pride. King Henry IV thinks that Hotspur should deliver the prisoners without any arguments. Westmoreland believes that Worcester must have persuaded Hotspur not to hand over the prisoners.
- King Henry IV orders that the Percys meet with him. He wishes to discuss Hotspur's refusal to hand over his Scottish prisoners.
- King Henry IV is tough, although he faces a lot of trouble. He is having trouble with rebellious Scottish and Welsh lords, the rebellious Percys, and his rebellious son.

### Act 1, Scene 2

- After hearing about Prince Hal in the previous scene, we meet him in this scene. We also meet his companion, Sir John Falstaff. Many directors of the play show Sir John asleep and snoring as this scene opens.
- Both Prince Hal and Falstaff are witty characters. They also insult each other, although this is usually done in a friendly way. For example, when Sir John wakes up and asks what time it is, Prince

Hal asks why such a drunkard as Falstaff needs to know the time. Note that in this scene, Falstaff is wasting time, something that King Henry IV would never do.

- Falstaff daydreams about life in England when Prince Hal becomes King. For example, will thieves be respectable men? (Falstaff means, Will thieves be able to rob and steal without fear of being hanged?) In his answer, Prince Hal never says anything about not enforcing the law.
- Both King Henry IV and Falstaff may be underestimating Prince Hal.
- Falstaff claims that he would like to repent, but when Prince Hal asks where they should steal somebody's purse that night, Falstaff is eager to take part in the robbery (and to share in the profits). When Prince Hal criticizes his repentance as being brief, Falstaff jokes that purse-taking is his vocation, and it is "no sin for a man to labour in his vocation" (1.2.108-109).
- Falstaff is old, enormously fat, and very alcoholic. He is also very witty and a good entertainer.
- Note the disorder in society. On a large scale, we see rebellions such as the Scots and the Welsh (and later, the Percys). On a small scale, we see Falstaff and his people robbing travelers on the highway.
- Poins comes in with a plan for a robbery on Gads Hill. Falstaff is eager to take part, but Prince Hal wants no part of it—he is not a thief. Poins asks Falstaff to let him be alone with Prince Hal so that he can persuade the Prince to be an accomplice in their robbery. Falstaff leaves, and Poins elaborates to Prince Hal about a joke that they can play on Falstaff and the other robbers. They will let Falstaff and the others rob the travelers, then they will rob the robbers. The great sport of this practical joke will be to listen to Falstaff tell enormous lies about being waylaid by numerous men.
- Prince Hal is cautious and thinks things through. He asks whether they will be recognized. Poins replies that he has had disguises made—they will wear masks and clothing made of buckram (a rough cloth). Prince Hal asks whether the robbers will not overcome them. Poins replies that they are cowards.
- Prince Hal then agrees to the plan. His main reason, in my opinion, is that he wants to play a joke on Falstaff. Other people think that like father, like son. Henry IV stole a crown; Prince Hal should surprise no one if he steals crowns. (In other words, King Henry IV and Prince Hal are both thieves.) In addition, some people argue that really there is no theft, since Prince Hal eventually returns the money with interest.
- Note, however, that Prince Hal is putting the lives of the travelers at risk in order to have some fun. Falstaff and the other robbers will be carrying swords, and someone could get hurt during the robbery.
- At the end of the scene, Prince Hal speaks an important soliloquy. He makes clear that he knows that his friends are lowlifes. He also says that he has a clever psychological plan. He is deliberately seeking to create low expectations of himself so that when he reforms and acts like royalty, people will be astonished and will hold him in higher regard than they would have otherwise. (Prince Hal pulls this off, but don't try it in real life. Don't say, I'm going to party for the first two years of college, then buckle down and study. You might flunk out of college and never get another chance to buckle down and study.)
- Prince Hal compares himself to a sun that is covered up by clouds. When the sun comes out from the clouds, the sun will shine all the more brightly. (The sun is a symbol of a King.)
- As we see from this soliloquy, Prince Hal's character is more than it might otherwise seem from his behavior in the tavern. Some people are bothered by this clever psychological plan. They think that he is using his friends, only to cast them off when he becomes King. Other people think that Prince Hal is gaining a useful education in human behavior and that he acts correctly when he finally does reject Falstaff (in *2 Henry IV*). Very definitely, no one should want Falstaff running loose in the country, committing all kinds of thefts because his friend is King Henry V and no one dares to arrest him.

### Act 1, Scene 3

- In this scene, we see King Henry IV's meeting with the Percys. The three Percys are Hotspur, his father (Northumberland), and his uncle (Worcester).
- King Henry IV exerts his authority and orders Hotspur to turn over his Scottish prisoners. The King is angry and promises to act like a lion, not like a mild-mannered man. Worcester objects, saying that the Percys put Henry on the throne. King Henry IV orders him from the room. Worcester obeys and leaves. King Henry IV is definitely in control and is a force to be reckoned with.
- Northumberland claims that there has been a misunderstanding, and Hotspur backs that up by saying that he denies no prisoners. He then explains his version of what happened. He was hot and tired after the battle when a prissy, effeminate messenger arrived to ask for the prisoners in the King's name. The courtier (messenger) was perfumed and daintily dressed and was upset whenever a corpse was carried between himself and the wind—he didn't want to smell the corpse. Therefore, the courtier often smelled the scent from a perfume box. The courtier also chattered like a parrot and said silly things such as that he would like to be a soldier if it weren't for the vile guns (1.3.62). This so upset Hotspur that he said something to the courtier—but he doesn't know what he said.
- This is a telling speech. Hotspur may have said something very insulting to the messenger, and he probably did. However, the way he tells the story one can understand why he would say sharp words in that situation. In fact, Sir Walter Blunt suggests that begones be bygones, that King Henry IV should forget the incident.
- However, King Henry IV is still angry because Hotspur still has the prisoners and will not give them up except with the provision that King Henry IV ransom Mortimer, his brother-in-law. (Hotspur is married to Mortimer's sister.)
- King Henry IV is unwilling to ransom Mortimer. For one thing, Mortimer appears to be a traitor. King Henry IV suspects that he deliberately lost the battle. Why? King Henry IV has heard that Mortimer has married the Welsh rebel Glendower's daughter, and marriages are a wonderful way to arrange alliances. In addition, we will learn that Mortimer was chosen by King Richard II to succeed him. King Henry IV does not want another man with a claim to the throne around.
- King Henry IV angrily demands that Hotspur release the prisoners to him, then he leaves.
- Hotspur is angry, and after King Henry IV leaves, says that he would not release the prisoners even if the Devil wanted him to.
- Hotspur and the other Percys are angry for two reasons: 1) Hotspur wants Mortimer (Hotspur's brother-in-law) ransomed, but Mortimer may hold a better title to the throne than Henry, and that may be the reason why Henry does not want to ransom him. 2) The Percys helped Henry depose King Richard II, and the Percys have lost honor because of that deposition. They are blamed for the deposition of Richard II; King Henry IV is not blamed for it.
- Hotspur is so angry that he will not be still for a long time. He is so angry that he will not listen to his father and his uncle, who have a plan for taking the kingdom for themselves. We learn from this that although Hotspur has the skills of a brave soldier, he lacks the skills that are necessary to be a King. Hotspur is entirely without diplomatic skills. Hotspur, as it happens, dislikes politicians. He even calls King Henry IV a "vile politician" (1.3.239) and a "king of smiles" (1.3.244).
- King Henry IV says that he doesn't want to hear the name of Mortimer; when he is gone, Hotspur says that he will train a starling (a bird) to say the word "Mortimer" and then give it as a present to the King.
- Finally, Hotspur settles down long enough to listen to his father and his uncle. Worcester has a plan: 1) The Percys will seek an alliance with the Welsh and the Scots, 2) Hotspur will release all his

Scottish prisoners and establish an alliance with the Scottish rebel Douglas, 3) Northumberland will seek support from the Archbishop of York, whose brother has been executed after conspiring to murder King Henry IV, and 4) Worcester will go to Wales to consult with Mortimer and Glendower.

- Hotspur readily agrees to join the conspiracy. This is in contrast to Prince Hal, who considered many contingencies before agreeing to join in the practical joke with Poins.
- We see a powerful, although troubled, King Henry IV in this scene.
- Northumberland, Hotspur's father, is practical and tries to get his son, Hotspur, to listen to the plot of the Percys.
- Worcester is the most evil of the three Percys. He is the bad guy. Later, we will see that he deceives Hotspur.
- Hotspur has many good characteristics such as bravery and a concern for honor, but he lacks political skills such as diplomacy. He is impatient.

### Act 2, Scene 1

- In this scene, two carriers converse. Their language is Elizabethan slang, and modern readers need footnotes to understand it.
- Carriers are deliverymen.
- Shakespeare writes about many kinds and levels of society in *Henry IV*. We have seen nobles and royalty, and we have seen high-ranking foreign nobles such as Douglas and Glendower. Now we see the working class and the criminal class.
- In this scene, we learn about the condition of England. We have already seen trouble on a big scale, since the Percys turn traitor to King Henry IV. Now we see trouble on a smaller scale. Robbers break the law, and hotels are disordered.
- The hotel is disordered; so is the social and political sphere of England.
- The carriers complain about the hotel. It has fleas and it stinks. The owner, Robin Ostler, killed himself when the price of oats rose.
- The carriers call for help from a stableboy, but no one comes. This shows disorder in the hotel.
- A robber named Gadshill tries to borrow a lantern from the carriers and pump them for information, but they are suspicious and will have none of it. Gadshill is named after Gad's Hill, the scene of many robberies.
- When Gadshill calls for a chamberlain (room attendant), one immediately comes. The chamberlain is his accomplice (informer), and in this society, robbers seem to be respected more than hard-working carriers.
- Gadshill gets information from the chamberlain, and when he promises as a "true man" (2.1.95) to pay him his share from the robbery, the chamberlain asks him to promise as a "false thief" (2.1.97). The chamberlain knows very well that Gadshill is not a true man.
- This scene is another scene of open rebellion. Gadshill is not afraid to rob, as some important people will be riding with him. One is Sir John Falstaff. The other, he thinks, will be Prince Hal.

### Act 2, Scene 2

- In this scene, we see a moral counterpart to the rebellions at court. In it, Falstaff and his friends rob some travelers, and Prince Hal and Poins rob Falstaff. The time is 4 a.m.
- As part of the practical joke, Poins has hidden Falstaff's horse. This shows cleverness on Shakespeare's part, as it is difficult to bring a horse onto the Elizabethan stage. In addition, it means

that Falstaff will have to walk, as fat as he is. Therefore, he searches for his horse, and he asks Hal to help him search for his horse.

- The two friends engage in some wordplay. Falstaff complains that he has been colted, meaning that a trick has been played on him, while Hal replies that he has been “uncolted” (2.2.38-39), meaning he has been unhorsed.
- The two friends also engage in some insults. Hal calls Falstaff “fat guts” (2.2.31) and “Sir John Paunch” (2.2.65).
- When Gadshill shows up and tells the robbers that approximately 8 or 10 travelers are coming, Falstaff asks if the travelers will not rob them.
- Although he has never been a robber before, Prince Hal takes charge. He forms the plan. Falstaff and the others will rob the travelers at a narrow place, while Hal and Poins will wait downhill in case the travelers try to flee. This plan shows that Prince Hal is a leader, and that the others obey him show that they hold Hal in high regard.
- The plan works. Falstaff takes part in the robbery, and he cleverly tries to make the travelers think that young men are robbing them. He cries, “They hate us youth” (2.2.85).
- As the robbers divide the loot, Falstaff complains that Hal is a coward. Hal and Poins rob them, as agreed, and the practical joke is played. Falstaff fights for a very short time, but then he flees. Hal and Poins laugh at how he roared.
- So is Falstaff a coward? Very likely. However, he may have fought as long as he found reason to, then left. He doesn’t want to lose his life over money.
- Falstaff walks back to London, sweating heavily since he is traveling under his own legs, not the legs of his horse.
- We can wonder over whether Prince Hal and Falstaff are friends. One interpretation is that Hal has played a mean practical joke on a man who is supposed to be his friend. However, Falstaff has no trouble running away, so he may be in better physical shape than he thinks he is or lets on to be.
- However, Hal does insult Falstaff vigorously, and Hal does cause Falstaff physical discomfort. In addition, the point of the practical joke is to make fun of Falstaff later after he has told some lies about being robbed.
- One thing we can ask after reading this scene is whether Hal can gain the honor that should belong to a Prince. So far, he has been drinking and having fun and playing practical jokes. When, if ever, will he act like a Prince should act?

### **Act 2, Scene 3**

- In this scene, we see Hotspur at home. This is a domestic scene.
- Hotspur is reading a letter from an unnamed nobleman. Hotspur has asked him to join the rebellion, and the nobleman is declining to do so.
- We see that serious plans are underway for the rebellion.
- The nobleman has several reasons for declining to join the rebellion, which he thinks is dangerous: 1) the allies are untrustworthy, 2) it’s a bad time for the march, and 3) the King’s army is stronger and bigger than they think.
- Hotspur is hotheaded, and he thinks that the Percys’ plot is good. Compare Hotspur to Prince Hal, who carefully thinks things (like the practical joke of robbing the robbers) through, instead of rushing into things.
- Hotspur thinks that the writer of the letter is a coward, but actually all that the nobleman writes comes true. Hotspur also worries that the nobleman will tell King Henry IV of their plans, so he decides to ride to Glendower.

- Finally, we see a woman in the play. Kate (Lady Percy, Hotspur's wife) speaks to him. Hotspur has not been himself of late, and she wants to know why. His sleep has been disturbed, they have not had sex, and he has not been eating properly.
- Obviously, Kate loves Hotspur. They have a charming scene in which Kate calls Hotspur a parrot, mad-headed, and full of spleen. She also threatens to break his little finger (which may be an euphemism for "penis") if he doesn't tell her what she wants to know.
- Hotspur declines to tell his wife what she wants to know. He knows that she is a woman, and he thinks that she may talk. Knowing that she can't tell anyone what she does not know, he tells her nothing.
- Apparently, Hotspur loves his wife, but he lives in a sexist society, and he has power over her. He also will not trust her with knowledge of the rebellion. Kate must wait until he decides to tell her something.
- This is a charming scene, but Shakespeare advances the plot in it: 1) we learn that the civil war is quickly becoming a reality, 2) and we see that Hotspur is thinking constantly about the rebellion.

#### Act 2, Scene 4

- This scene is divided into four parts: 1) Hal and Francis the Drawer, 2) Falstaff's "incomprehensible lies" (1.2.190), 3) the Tavern Play, and 4) the Sheriff.

##### *Hal and Francis the Drawer*

- Hal's program of self-education takes him to the tavern, where he mingles with the tavern employees and learns their jargon. He enjoys drinking with the working class (and with the criminal class). The employees like him and call him the "king of courtesy" (2.4.1.10), which means the most gallant knight.
- Among the slang terms that Hal learns is "dyeing scarlet" (2.4.15), which means chugging a mug of wine.
- Hal learns that the tavern employees know hardly anything but their work. Someone like Francis knows little else and hardly speaks any words but those associated with serving alcohol.
- Hal and Poins play a practical joke on Francis. Poins is in another room, calling for service, while Hal is with Francis, keeping him in the room by asking him silly questions and making silly comments.
- This can be seen as a cruel practical joke, but it also illustrates the position that Prince Hal finds himself in. He is being pulled in two different directions at once. He enjoys the tavern scene, but he also knows that he should soon start acting like a Prince. One way of life is represented by Sir John Falstaff; the other is represented by King Henry IV, Hal's father.
- Hal says that Francis knows fewer words than a parrot. The mention of a parrot reminds us of Hotspur, who referred to King Henry IV's messenger as a parrot, and whom Kate, his wife, has just called a parrot. Hal makes fun of Hotspur, who he says kills several Scots at breakfast then complains of a dull life.

##### *Falstaff's "incomprehensible lies" (1.2.190)*

- Falstaff, Peto, and Bardolph arrive, and the practical joke plays out as Prince Hal and Poins had hoped. In a very funny scene, Falstaff tells about being robbed. As proof of their valor, he and the others have hacked their swords to make it look like they had been in a major battle.
- Falstaff accuses Prince Hal of cowardice.
- Falstaff tells lie after lie about how 100 men attacked them, and how he himself fought 2 men. These 2 men quickly multiply to 4, then 7, then 9, then 11 men.

- When Prince Hal informs Falstaff that Hal and Poins robbed him, Falstaff bluffs his way out of an embarrassing situation. He says that he had recognized Hal, and he had run because he would not be responsible for harming the heir apparent.
- Perhaps the lies Falstaff has been telling are for entertainment. Did he expect to be believed? Possibly, possibly not.
- Falstaff is glad that Hal has the money because now they can all spend it.

### *The Tavern Play*

- A knocking is heard, and Falstaff goes to send the messenger away. However, the messenger bears important news. He is there to tell Prince Hal that the Percys are rebelling, and that Hal must report to the King the next day.
- Falstaff knows that Prince Hal and King Henry IV will be having a serious talk the next day. The King has heard of Hal's activities and is not pleased about them. Therefore, Falstaff decides to put on a play extempore. He will play King Henry IV during the conversation with Hal. Hal, of course, will play himself.
- In the character of King Henry IV, Falstaff criticizes Hal: "Shall the son of England prove a thief and take purses?" (2.4.409-410). He also praises greatly the portly man with whom Hal has been seen. That portly person, of course, is Falstaff.
- However, Hal then insists that he and Falstaff trade places, Hal will play his father, and Falstaff will play Hal. Hal calls Falstaff many detestable names, and Falstaff defends himself: "Banish plump Jack, and banish all the world!" (2.4.479-480).
- Hal replies coldly: "I do, I will" (2.4.481). These words are astonishing, and people argue about them. They can be interpreted to mean that Hal is using Falstaff, and all the time he is enjoying Falstaff's company he is also planning to banish him. Others recognize that Falstaff should be banished when Hal becomes King.
- At the end of *Henry IV, Part 2*, Hal does banish Falstaff—and a good thing, too.

### *The Sheriff*

- The Sheriff arrives in the company of a carrier. They are looking for a fat knight who recently took part in a robbery. Hal lies to protect Falstaff, telling the Sheriff that the fat knight is not there at present. However, he does offer to send the fat knight to him tomorrow.
- After the Sheriff leaves, Hal and Peto find Falstaff asleep behind a tapestry or wall hanging—and snoring. Hal has Peto pick Falstaff's pocket. Nothing of value is found there, but they do find a paper that lists his food and drink for a day. Falstaff has consumed a capon (a chicken), sauce, over two gallons of sack (sweet wine), some anchovies, and a little bread. Hal finds it monstrous that Falstaff has consumed so much sack and so little bread.
- Hal says that the stolen money shall be returned with interest. There is no reason to doubt him.

## **Act 3, Scene 1**

- This scene is set in Glendower's castle in Wales. The rebels meet to divide up England. After deciding how to divide up the territory, they sign a contract saying that they agree to the division.
- King Henry IV wishes to have all his people "march all one way" (1.1.15) and be united, but the rebels are determined to split up England into three parts.
- We see dissension and trouble within the rebels' ranks immediately.
- Hotspur, as usual, is headstrong and hot-headed. He tries to take control immediately—he tells the others, Mortimer and Glendower, to sit down. Actually, of the three rebel leaders, he has the least authority to tell the others to sit. Mortimer has the best claim of the three rebels to the throne, so he

has authority to ask the others to sit. On the other hand, Glendower owns the castle where the three rebels are meeting, so he also has authority to ask the others to sit. Hotspur has no such claim to authority as the others have.

- We find out that Hotspur does not pay attention to details. He finds out that he has forgot the map of England—the map that the rebels wanted to use to divide up England. A good politician pays attention to detail. (Glendower quickly finds the map.)
- A political leader should have the skills of a diplomat, but Hotspur does not have those skills. Almost immediately, he and Glendower begin to quarrel. Glendower believes that he is a great magician, but Hotspur scoffs at magic.
- Hotspur is a skeptic, as we see in this passage:

### GLENDOWER

[...] at my nativity  
 The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,  
 Of burning cressets; and at my birth  
 The frame and huge foundation of the earth  
 Shaked like a coward.

### HOTSPUR

Why, so it would have done at the same season, if  
 your mother's cat had but kittened, though yourself  
 had never been born.

(3.1.12-19)

Glendower believes that he is marked for great things because when he was born, meteors appeared in the sky and an earthquake occurred. Hotspur, however, believes that these things were just a coincidence. If Glendower's mother's cat had given birth to kittens and Glendower had not been born, the same things would have occurred on that day.

- Glendower is making the logical fallacy of *Post Hoc, Ergo Propter Hoc*—*After This, Therefore Because of This*. When he was born, there were meteors and an earthquake; therefore, he must be destined for great things. Hotspur, however, denies this; instead, he regards the timing of the meteors and the earthquake as coincidentally occurring at Glendower's birth.
- Who is right in this matter: Glendower or Hotspur? Since few of my students have ever heard of Glendower before taking my course, apparently Hotspur is correct.
- When Glendower insists that the heavens were on fire and the earth did shake when he was born, Hotspur mocks him by saying that the earth had gas and burped.
- Glendower next insists that he can call up spirits. Again, Hotspur is skeptical.

### GLENDOWER

I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

### HOTSPUR

Why, so can I, or so can any man;  
 But will they come when you do call for them?

(3.1.52-54)

Hotspur's skepticism is correct; however, he should be a diplomat here, and he is not. It's not a good idea to make one of your allies mad at you, and that is exactly what Hotspur is doing when he makes fun of Glendower's boasts of magical ability to his face.

- Glendower is more of a diplomat than Hotspur. Although angry at Hotspur, he does not fight him.

- Glendower does make one point that is a fact and that Hotspur cannot deny: Glendower has defeated King Henry IV's armies three times in battle. Nevertheless, Hotspur keeps on arguing with and mocking Glendower. When Glendower boasts that he has sent King Henry IV's armies home three times "bootless" (3.1.66)—which means "without profit"—Hotspur puns on "bootless" and asks how Henry IV escaped catching colds.

### GLENDOWER

Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made head  
Against my power; thrice from the banks of Wye  
And sandy-bottom'd Severn have I sent him  
Bootless home and weather-beaten back.

### HOTSPUR

Home without boots, and in foul weather too!  
How 'scapes he agues, in the devil's name? (3.1.63-68)

- Hotspur and Glendower even quarrel over music. Glendower points out that he was raised in the English courts, and so he is fluent in English and has even sung English songs. Hotspur says that he would prefer to be a meowing kitten to an English ballad-singer (3.1.127-129).
- The three rebel leaders divide England into three sections, using the map as a visual aid. Hotspur will get land up North, where his family, the Percys, live. Glendower will get land close to Wales. Mortimer will get London and the Southeast.
- Again, a quarrel breaks out. Hotspur complains that a river that is to be a boundary curves up into his portion and carves out a huge chunk of territory that he wishes to own, giving it instead to Glendower. Therefore, Hotspur says, he will change the course of the river so that the territory will belong to him.
- Hotspur and Glendower quarrel over the course of the river, and Glendower gives in, but Hotspur then says that he does not care about the land. He says that he would give three times as much land to a well-deserving friend, but he would quarrel over a trifling amount of land when bargaining.

### HOTSPUR

I do not care: I'll give thrice so much land  
To any well-deserving friend;  
But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,  
I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair.  
Are the indentures drawn? shall we be gone? (3.1.136-140)

At this point, Glendower and Hotspur are reconciled.

- When Glendower leaves to fetch the wives of Mortimer and of Hotspur, Mortimer (Hotspur's brother-in-law) and Worcester (Hotspur's uncle) take turns rebuking him for the way he has behaved. They point out that Glendower has behaved very well under Hotspur's tormenting of him.
- Hotspur has some reason not to like Glendower. He says:

[...] I tell you what;  
He held me last night at least nine hours  
In reckoning up the several devils' names  
'That were his lackeys: I cried 'hum,' and 'well, go to,'  
But mark'd him not a word. (3.1.154-158)

Glendower does seem vain and boastful. Hotspur is probably exaggerating the nine hours, but not the fact that Glendower told him the names of the devils who were his lackeys.

- Worcester does know Hotspur's good and bad points. Hotspur has the good points that make a person a good general, but he lacks the good points that are additionally needed to make a person a good King.
- Worcester points out that Hotspur lacks diplomacy; what he has an abundance of are

[...] harsh rage,  
Defect of manners, want of government,  
Pride, haughtiness, opinion and disdain: (3.1.182-184)

- Glendower does cause a miracle for Hotspur. When he brings the wives of Mortimer and of Hotspur, he orders magical musicians to play to them. Hotspur does not know how the trick is played, so he merely remarks:

Now I perceive the devil understands Welsh; (3.1.231)

- Mortimer is deeply in love with his Welsh wife, although he can speak no Welsh and she can speak no English. Apparently, their marriage was a marriage arranged to create a political alliance between Mortimer and Glendower. Mortimer is now Glendower's son-in-law and Hotspur's brother-in-law.
- When his wife speaks Welsh, Mortimer says,

O, I am ignorance itself in this! (3.1.212)

Fortunately, Glendower is able to translate for Mortimer and his daughter.

- Hotspur also says goodbye to Kate, his wife. These two are in love, but they take a light, teasing tone in dealing with each other. Hotspur is not above making a joke that his wife does or would not like:

**LADY PERCY**  
Now God help thee!

**HOTSPUR**  
To the Welsh lady's bed. (3.1.243-244)

Lady Percy either doesn't hear her husband or does hear him and doesn't like what she hears:

**LADY PERCY**  
What's that?

**HOTSPUR**  
Peace! she sings. (3.1.245-246)

- Hotspur and Kate are in love, but apparently, she has to put up with a lot.
- The three rebels sign their contract, then they set forth to meet with Northumberland and Douglas (the Scottish leader of the rebel forces).

- In this scene, we definitely see Hotspur’s hot-headedness. Being bold and of a quick temper can be an asset in battle, but it is not an asset in diplomacy. Hotspur can be careless (he loses the map of England). He also fights with his ally Glendower. Hotspur does have many positive traits, but he would not make a good King of England. He is a practical man, but he is too hot-headed to be King. If Hotspur were loyal, he would be an excellent general for a good King.

### Act 3, Scene 2

- In this scene, we have a meeting between King Henry IV and Prince Hal. In this scene, Henry IV is both the King of England and a father.
- One way to play this scene is to have the two actors playing Henry IV and Prince Hal not able to look at each other in the eyes because they are too angry at and uncomfortable with each other.
- This scene has been played out in many families. A father is disappointed in his son and is worried that he will not grow up the right way. The son, however, is independent and wishes to live his life without interference from his father.
- In this case, King Henry IV has an additional worry. Prince Hal is his oldest son and therefore is destined to be the next King of England—provided, that is, he is strong enough to fight off any rivals. In addition, if Prince Hal proves to be a bad King, the people of England will suffer. Richard II was a bad King, and Henry IV is worried that Prince Hal will be like Richard II.
- King Henry IV has tried hard to maintain law and order in his kingdom. He has fought off rebels, and he continues to fight off rebels, but the fighting is wearing him out, as we see in the first scene of Act 1.
- In this scene, Prince Hal comes to the palace in response to his father’s request, and the two speak together alone.
- King Henry IV starts by saying that God may be punishing him by sending him such a son as Prince Hal. The Elizabethans believed that the sins of fathers could be punished through their sons, and Henry IV thinks that this may be happening to him. He tells Prince Hal that he is keeping poor company—“rude society” (3.2.14)—and that the rod of Heaven will punish him.
- Prince Hal makes a brief reply, saying that he has committed some faults but that others are attributed to him by gossips.
- King Henry IV replies that Prince Hal has been absent from court, not doing his duty, and that Hal’s younger brother, John, has been doing the work that properly should be done by Hal.
- King Henry IV also says that by hanging around with commoners, Prince Hal will not command the respect that he should command. In contrast, King Henry IV has kept himself aloof from commoners, so that it is a big deal whenever he appears in public. In contrast, King Richard II was a “skipping King” (3.2.60) with “shallow jesters” (3.2.61) who ended up being scorned by his subjects, thus allowing Henry Bolingbroke (now King Henry IV) to take the crown from him. Henry IV also says that Prince Hal is acting like Richard II.
- King Henry IV also says that anyone who wants to see Prince Hal can—with the sole exception of himself.
- Prince Hal replies, briefly:

**PRINCE HENRY**

I shall hereafter, my thrice gracious lord,  
Be more myself.

(3.2.92-93)

- King Henry IV goes on to say that Prince Hal is to Richard II as Hotspur is to Henry Bolingbroke. That is, Prince Hal is in danger of losing his future crown, and Hotspur is likely to take it away from him.
- Furthermore, King Henry IV says that Hotspur has a better claim to the crown than Prince Hal. That is, Hotspur is more worthy to be King than Prince Hal. Hotspur looks like a King and acts like a King, while Prince Hal hangs out in taverns with lowlifes.
- Furthermore, King Henry IV tells Prince Hal that he, his son, is likely to fight against him, his father and King, in the service of Hotspur.
- King Henry IV makes a number of points in his speech to his son:
  - 1) God must have cursed him by giving him such a son.
  - 2) Hal hangs out with commoners and does not keep himself aloof. Richard II did the same thing, and look what happened to him—he was deposed.
  - 3) Hotspur would make a better King than Hal.
  - 4) Hal is such a bad son that he is likely to become a traitor and fight in Hotspur's service against his father and King.
- Prince Hal replies that he will mend his ways. He also says that he will meet Hotspur, defeat him, and take all of Hotspur's honor as his own. He also says that he will die rather than break his vow.
- Sir Walter Blunt enters with news that the rebels are meeting at Shrewsbury. King Henry IV has been aware of this for five days, and already Westmoreland and Prince John are leading armies there. Henry IV gives his son Prince Hal an army to lead into battle.
- King Henry IV and Prince Hal have reconciled.

### Act 3, Scene 3

- This is another humorous scene. The plot is not much developed here, but Falstaff does provide enjoyment.
- As the scene opens, Falstaff is complaining and says that he is wasting away. Of course, he is a hugely obese man, and he is not wasting away.
- Bardolph gets in a good joke here. Falstaff is thinking about repenting, and he says that he has been living “out of all order, out of all compass” (3.3.20-21). Bardolph replies,

Why, you are so fat, Sir John, that you must needs  
be out of all compass, out of all reasonable  
compass, Sir John. (3.3.22-24)

- Falstaff responds by insulting Bardolph's nose, which is fiery red through alcoholism. Bardolph says that his nose does Falstaff no harm, and Falstaff tells him that he has been supporting Bardolph for 32 years. (This is hard to believe; after all, Prince Hal is supporting Falstaff.)
- Mistress Quickly (the Hostess) comes in, and Falstaff asks her who picked his pocket. Mistress Quickly replies that her house (hotel/inn) is honest, but Falstaff insists that his pocket was picked.
- In this scene, Mistress Quickly is a very comic character. Apparently, she is an honest woman, but not a very intelligent one. Witness this exchange (p. 78):

**FALSTAFF**  
Ye lie, hostess: Bardolph was shaved and lost many  
a hair; and I'll be sworn my pocket was picked. Go  
to, you are a woman, go.

**Hostess**

Who, I? no; I defy thee: God's light, I was never called so in mine own house before.

(3.3.61-65)

Falstaff has called her a woman, but Mistress Quickly thinks she has been insulted and denies that she is a woman.

- It turns out that Falstaff owes Mistress Quickly money. (Why am I not surprised?) She has lent him 24 pounds, plus he owes her for food and lodging, plus she has bought him 12 shirts. (Falstaff claims that the shirts were made of coarse material, but she claims that they were made of fine material.)
- Falstaff claims that a valuable ring was stolen from him, one worth 40 marks, but the hostess replies that the prince has told her that Falstaff's ring was a cheap one made of copper.
- At this point, Falstaff insults the prince. He calls the prince a "Jack" (3.3.88) —a rascal—and says that he would beat the prince like a dog if he were present. Just then, of course, Prince Hal enters (but without hearing Falstaff). Falstaff jokingly pretends he is playing a fife (a military musical instrument) because Prince Hal and Poin are soon going to war.
- Prince Hal hears Falstaff tell his story about having his pocket picked. Of course, Falstaff lies, saying that he lost a valuable ring and "three or four bonds of forty pound apiece" (3.3.104-105).
- Mistress Quickly tells Prince Hal that Falstaff said that he would beat him. This shocks Prince Hal, and it leads Falstaff and Mistress Quickly into an argument. Once again, Mistress Quickly is funny, this time in an unknowing sexual way (p. 80):

**FALSTAFF**

Why, she's neither fish nor flesh; a man knows not where to have her.

**Hostess**

Thou art an unjust man in saying so: thou or any man knows where to have me, thou knave, thou!

(3.3.130-134)

Here, "to have" has a sexual sense.

- This leads to a confrontation between Falstaff and Prince Hal. Falstaff is in a tight spot and must find a way to get himself out of trouble.
- When Mistress Quickly says that Falstaff said that Prince Hal owed him 1,000 pounds, Falstaff says that Prince Hal owes him a million pounds. After all, Prince Hal owes him his love, and his love is worth a million pounds.
- When Mistress Quickly says that Falstaff said that he would beat Prince Hal, Falstaff explains that he said that he would beat Prince Hal **IF** he said that Falstaff's ring was made of copper.
- Immediately, Prince Hal says that it is made of copper and asks if Falstaff wants to beat him. Falstaff says that he would as Hal is a man, but that he will not as Hal is the son of a King.
- Prince Hal then reveals that Falstaff's pockets held nothing but the bills of restaurants and bawdy houses and a little candy. Because Hal has correctly identified the contents of his pocket, Falstaff knows that Hal picked his pocket.
- Falstaff, as always, comes out on top (until the end of *2 Henry IV*). He "forgives" Mistress Quickly, although she has nothing that needs to be forgiven, and he bids her cook his breakfast, which she does.
- Prince Hal then gives Falstaff some news. He has paid the stolen money back. Of course, this news disappoints Falstaff:

**PRINCE HENRY**

O, my sweet beef, I must still be good angel to thee: the money is paid back again.

**FALSTAFF**

O, I do not like that paying back; 'tis a double labour. (3.3.183-186)

- Prince Hal also tells Falstaff that he will be in charge of some foot soldiers. Falstaff, of course, wishes that he were in charge of some horse-mounted soldiers.
- Prince Hal also orders Bardolph to deliver a letter to his brother, Lord John of Lancaster. (Bardolph, alcoholic though he is, is still able to perform a useful service.)
- Prince Hal also orders Falstaff to meet him the next day to pick up money to be used in the war effort. We can be sure that Falstaff will pick up the money. We cannot be sure that he will use it in the war effort. Rather, he is more likely to use in the drinking of sack.
- Prince Hal ends by saying:

The land is burning; Percy stands on high;  
And either we or they must lower lie. (3.3.209-210)

- Falstaff also makes a rhyming couplet, but his is about matters closer to his heart—or stomach (p. 83):

Rare words! brave world! Hostess, my breakfast, come!  
O, I could wish this tavern were my drum! (3.3.211-213)

**Act 4, Scene 1**

- This scene is set in the rebels' camp the day before the Battle of Shrewsbury.

The information below comes from

<http://www.battleofshrewsbury.org/battle/index.html?sid=IEGTkNkI6DIc4OF176TS7iy2CUXp4vxe>, which I accessed on March 9, 2003.

The Battle of Shrewsbury, fought on July 21st, 1403 between an army led by the Lancastrian King, Henry IV and a rebel army led by members of the Percy family from Northumberland, is principally remembered today by many as the climax of Shakespeare's play, *Henry IV, Part 1*. The Percy forces, mostly raised from their estates in Cheshire, were believed to be aiming to join forces with a Welsh rebel force led by Owain Glyn Dwr. Shrewsbury was a principal town on the route taken by the Percy forces and was the major crossing point over the river Severn as well as a potential supply base. The royal army had to take and defend the site urgently before the Percys and Glyn Dwr could join up. Our knowledge of the battle, the battlefield and the armies is less than complete and even contemporary estimates of the numbers involved or of those slain are very much open to debate.

- In this scene, we see the rebel leaders Worcester, Hotspur, and the Scottish rebel Douglas. Absent are Northumberland (Hotspur's father), Glendower, and Mortimer.

- The rebel leaders are confident at the beginning of the scene, but their confidence soon fades with the arrival of bad news.
- As Hotspur and Douglas speak, a messenger arrives with the news that Hotspur's father, Northumberland, is ill and cannot fight. In addition, the illness has forced him to stay in bed, so that he was not able to raise troops and send them to fight for the rebels.
- Worcester's first reaction is that the news is very bad—and it is. Hotspur agrees:

**EARL OF WORCESTER**

Your father's sickness is a maim to us.

**HOTSPUR**

A perilous gash, a very limb lopp'd off: (4.1.42-43)

- However, Hotspur bounces back quickly, with two reasons why his father's absence need not be a blow:

- 1) Northumberland's forces can be saved for use on another day.
- 2) More glory will be won by the rebels if they can beat the King's army without the use of Northumberland's army.

- Worcester, however, continues to be worried by the absence of Northumberland and his army for two reasons:

- 1) Of course, the absence of Northumberland's army will seriously weaken the forces of the rebels.
- 2) Others will think that the rebels are divided, that they cannot put up a united front. Others will think that Northumberland stayed away from the battle because he sided with King Henry IV.

- Sir Richard Vernon, who sympathizes with the rebels, arrives with more bad news. The King's forces are very strong indeed, and Prince Hal is acting like the son of a King, not like a tavern drunkard.

- 1) He announces that Westmoreland and Prince John are leading an army of 7,000 men toward them.
- 2) The King himself is setting out towards them.
- 3) Prince Hal is "As full of spirit as the month of May" (4.1.100) and "gallantly arm'd" (4.1.104).

- Prince Hal is acting like a gallant, valiant warrior-prince, and we know that Hal and Hotspur will meet in battle. In fact, Hotspur insists on it (p. 88):

[...] Come, let me taste my horse,  
Who is to bear me like a thunderbolt

Against the bosom of the Prince of Wales:  
 Harry to Harry shall, hot horse to horse,  
 Meet and ne'er part till one drop down a corse.  
 O that Glendower were come! (4.1.118-123)

• Hotspur's

Harry to Harry shall, hot horse to horse,  
 Meet and ne'er part till one drop down a corse. (4.1.121-122)

sounds very much like Prince Hal's

The land is burning; Percy stands on high;  
 And either we or they must lower lie. (3.3.209-210)

Both Hotspur and Prince Hal know that they will meet in battle.

- At this point, Hotspur gets more bad news. Glendower is not coming. He has not been able to get his army together in time.
- Hotspur discovers that the King's army numbers 30,000 soldiers, and that therefore the rebels' forces, which lack the armies of Northumberland and of Glendower, are vastly outnumbered. He has a foreboding that the rebels will die fighting (pp. 88-89):

**HOTSPUR**

Forty let it be:  
 My father and Glendower being both away,  
 The powers of us may serve so great a day  
 Come, let us take a muster speedily:  
 Doomsday is near; die all, die merrily. (4.1.129-133)

However, Hotspur is brave, and he intends to go down fighting.

- Worcester, on the other hand, is more worried. After all, Worcester has always been more practical than Hotspur.
- Obviously, the rebels are in a very bad situation.
- Remember the letter that Hotspur received from the nobleman in Act 2, Scene 3? The nobleman had several reasons for declining to join the rebellion: 1) the allies are untrustworthy, 2) it's a bad time for the march, and 3) the King's army is stronger and bigger than they think. All of these things have come to pass.

**Act 4, Scene 2**

- Falstaff enters and provides some comic relief and some black comedy. Falstaff is in charge of some foot soldiers, and he chooses to rest his bulky body. He sends Bardolph to buy some sack, while he rests and addresses the audience in a soliloquy.
- We find out that Falstaff is ashamed of the "soldiers" that he has pressed into service. (Falstaff is the King's representative, and if he says you have to serve in the King's army, you have to serve.) For one thing, Falstaff has not taken the best men, the ones who are able-bodied and strong. No, he has chosen to draft "toasts-and-butter" (4.2.21), men who have money and are willing to pay a bribe to get out of military service. For example, some of them are on the verge of being married and

therefore do not want to go to war. Some of them are simply cowards. In this way, Falstaff has acquired a small fortune of over 300 pounds. Because of his taking the bribes, the men he ends with are poor (in two meanings of the word) men and are unsuited to be soldiers.

- Falstaff knows that he is abusing the King's draft, but he doesn't care.
- The 150 men he ends up with are all losers and are unfit to be soldiers. They have not more than one and one-half shirts between them, the one-half shirt consisting of two napkins sewn together to form a kind of a shirt without arms. Falstaff does say that the men will be able to steal linen that is drying on the hedges.
- The men that Falstaff is taking to war resemble Lazarus just before he died, when dogs were licking his wounds. They are:
  - 1) Dishonest serving men.
  - 2) Younger brothers to younger sons (and therefore poor, since the oldest son would inherit the property).
  - 3) Runaway tapsters.
  - 4) Unemployed servants.
  - 5) Parasites.
- Falstaff says that he is ashamed to be seen with the men he has drafted. A man even saw the men he had drafted and told him that he had drafted corpses hanging from a gibbet.
- Previously, we read about Hal's golden warriors. Falstaff's men form quite a contrast.
- Prince Hal and the Earl of Westmoreland overtake Falstaff, and Prince Hal inquires about the "pitiful rascals" (4.2.65) following Falstaff. He is surprised to hear that they are Falstaff's men.
- Here, Falstaff engages in some very black humor:

### FALSTAFF

Tut, tut; good enough to toss; food for powder, food  
for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better:  
tush, man, mortal men, mortal men.

(4.2.66-68)

- Falstaff's point here that these men can die as well as better men. Men die in wartime, so why not let the worst men die? These men are cannon fodder—almost all of them will die in battle. Those who do not die will live as beggars for the rest of their lives.
- Falstaff jokes when he talks about the men he has recruited, but the humor is so black that few people laugh. He says that the men he has recruited will fill a mass grave as well as anybody else.
- One thing that Falstaff does is to criticize society. In this scene, he criticizes war. He knows that people die in war, and he would rather live.

### Act 4, Scene 3

- Hotspur and Douglas and Worcester and Vernon argue about whether to attack right away or to wait to attack. Hotspur and Douglas are ready to attack right away, but Worcester and Vernon are in favor of waiting.
- The reasons not to attack now are two:
  - 1) Vernon's cousin's forces have not all arrived yet, and
  - 2) Worcester's mounted knights have just arrived that day, so the horses are all worn out.
- Hotspur gives two reasons why the rebels should attack that evening:
  - 1) The King's reinforcements are certain, while the rebels' reinforcements are not, and
  - 2) Most of the rebels' horses are rested, while those of the King are not.

- Hotspur does give good reasons here to attack now, while Vernon gives good reasons here not to attack until morning.
- While the rebels are arguing, Sir Walter Blunt arrives with a message from King Henry IV. The King wishes to give the rebels a chance to plead their case and to give reasons why they are rebelling against him. He also promises to satisfy their desires and to give them amnesty.
- Sir Walter Blunt, of course, is loyal to King Henry IV and believes that it is wrong to rebel against a King. The Percys, however, could argue that Henry Bolingbroke stole the crown from King Richard II and that stealing a crown from a thief who stole it is not really stealing. (We saw something similar when Prince Hal stole money from the thief Falstaff.)
- Hotspur replies to Sir Walter Blunt. He says (p. 94),

The king is kind; and well we know the king  
Knows at what time to promise, when to pay. (4.3.52-53)

This implies that the King is well able to make promises without intending to keep them.

- Hotspur also makes the point that the Percys helped Henry Bolingbroke when he returned to England to take back his lands that had been unjustly seized from Richard II. At that time, Bolingbroke said that he merely wanted to regain his title of Duke of Lancaster, but he became popular and became King of England.
- After that, Hotspur says, Bolingbroke had Richard II killed. He then allowed Mortimer to stay in Wales unransomed, and he treated the Percys badly.
- Hotspur does a good job of stating the Percys' case against King Henry IV, but when Sir Walter asks if that is the answer he is to take back to the King, Hotspur says,

#### **HOTSPUR**

Not so, Sir Walter: we'll withdraw awhile.  
Go to the king; and let there be impawn'd  
Some surety for a safe return again,  
And in the morning early shall my uncle  
Bring him our purposes: and so farewell. (4.3.107-111)

Hotspur appears ready to agree to a compromise. Worcester shall talk to King Henry IV the next morning. Hotspur and the Percys will want, at the very least, a surety for their safe return home.

- Hotspur is keeping the door open so that the Percys and the King can negotiate.

#### **Act 4, Scene 4**

- In this short scene, we see the Archbishop of York asking Sir Michael to deliver urgent letters to the other rebels.
- The Archbishop of York has good reason to be worried. We learn here that Mortimer is also not present at the battle.
- Sir Michael names several valiant rebel leaders—Hotspur, Worcester, Mordake (the oldest son of Douglas and also the Earl of Fife—Macduff was the thane of Fife in *Macbeth*; remember that at the end of *Macbeth* Malcolm made the thanes the first earls of Scotland), Douglas, and Vernon.
- However, the archbishop counters by naming several valiant leaders on the other side: Henry IV, Prince Hal, Lord John (Hal's younger brother), Westmoreland, and Sir Walter Blunt.
- Again, the Archbishop of York has good reason to be worried.

- We may ask why this scene appears in *Henry IV, Part 1*. The answer is that Shakespeare is setting up *Henry IV, Part 2*. At the end of *Henry IV, Part 1*, Henry IV divides his armies in two. One army goes west to Wales to fight Glendower. The other goes north to fight the Archbishop of York and Northumberland.

### Act 5, Scene 1

- At the beginning of the scene, the weather seems bad. The sun is very red like blood, and King Henry IV points out that the “day looks pale ...” (5.1.2). In Shakespeare, disturbances in politics are reflected in disturbances in Nature. (Cf. *Macbeth*. Also cf. the disturbances in Nature following the quarrel between Oberon and Titania in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.)
- The dreary weather does not dismay King Henry IV. He merely remarks that “nothing can seem foul to those that win” (5.1.8). The King is very much in control. He knows that his army outnumbered that of the rebels.
- King Henry IV maintains his control when he meets with Worcester, who arrives with Sir Richard Vernon. The King makes clear that he holds the rebels responsible for breaking the peace—although he is willing to make peace with them. King Henry IV says,

[...] You have deceived our trust,  
And made us doff our easy robes of peace,  
To crush our old limbs in ungentle steel: (5.1.11-13)

Here we find that King Henry IV is old—in terms of the play. Prince Hal, however, is a young man and full of strength—in terms of the play. In real life, he was born in 1387, so he would have been 16 years old at the time of this battle. King Henry IV was born in 1367, so he would have been 36 years old at the time of this battle. Hotspur was born in 1366, so he would have been 37 years old at the time of this battle. (Remember: We read Shakespeare for drama, not for history.)

- Worcester sets forth the Percys’ grievances against Henry IV. He tells the story of the deposition of King Richard II. Richard II fought in Ireland but lost, and contrary winds kept him from returning to England for so long that people thought that he was dead. This made it easy for Henry Bolingbroke to become King Henry IV. Although the Percys helped him to become King, Henry IV has not recently looked kindly at the Percys, forcing them to gather an army and mount a rebellion.
- King Henry IV is not impressed with Worcester’s speech and says so, replying:

And never yet did insurrection want  
Such water-colours to impaint his cause; (5.1.79-80)

King Henry IV means simply that rebels have no problems coming up with excuses for rebellion—excuses that make it seem as if they are in the right and the person whom they are rebelling against is in the wrong.

- At this point, Prince Hal speaks up, very courteously. He praises Hotspur, mentions that he himself has been “a truant to chivalry” (5.1.94), and says that he wants to meet Hotspur in single combat.
- Prince Hal wants to avoid the battle by having a single combat between himself and Hotspur. Whoever wins the single combat also wins the battle. This will “save the blood on either side” (5.1.99).
- King Henry IV says that he would “dare” (5.1.101) to let Prince Hal fight a single combat with Hotspur—except that “considerations infinite” (5.1.101) lead him not to.

- Prince Hal, we know, considers consequences carefully. We saw that in his questioning of Poins before he decided to take part in the robbing of the robbers previously. Apparently, he thinks that he can defeat Hotspur in single combat.
- King Henry IV, however, decides not to let Prince Hal fight Hotspur in single combat. Henry IV is also a careful man, thinking ahead to what needs to be done next. Henry IV may have his doubts that Hal can take Hotspur. After all, Hal has been drinking in taverns, while Hotspur has been fighting in battles. Hotspur seems to have the edge in a single combat between the two men.
- In addition, King Henry IV knows that his army is greater and mightier than the Percys' army, so he may decide to go with the battle instead of the single combat, although more blood will be spilled on both sides. The odds are better with the battle than with the single combat.
- Still, the offer of single combat shows something good about Prince Hal. He is brave to offer to meet Hotspur in single combat, and he does not want to spill innocent blood needlessly.
- King Henry IV does offer terms of peace to the Percys and the soldiers in their army, but after Worcester and Vernon leave, King Henry IV and Prince Hal agree that Hotspur and Douglas will not accept the offer of peace. Quite simply, Hotspur and Douglas have great confidence in their battle prowess. Therefore, King Henry IV and Prince Hal think that Henry IV's offer to be friends again with the rebels will not be accepted.
- When Falstaff and Prince Hal are alone, Falstaff tells him that he would appreciate it if Prince Hal would protect him in battle. That is, if Prince Hal sees Falstaff on the ground, Prince Hal will bestride him and protect him from attackers.
- Prince Hal simply advises Falstaff to say his prayers, and Prince Hal tells Falstaff that he owes God a death.
- Earlier, Prince Hal protected Falstaff from the Sheriff; however, here he does not agree to protect him from soldiers. Other, more important things are at stake in this battle.
- In a soliloquy, Falstaff talks about honor. He first says that he may owe God a death, but he doesn't owe God a death yet. Falstaff says:

[...] honour pricks  
me on (5.1.130)

This means that honor spurs him on, the way it does such characters as Hotspur in this play. Hotspur is fighting for honor. Falstaff then goes on to say:

[...] Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I  
come on? how then? (5.1.130-131)

This means: But what happens if honor leads me to be killed or wounded in battle?

[...] Can honour set to a leg? no: or  
an arm? no: or take away the grief of a wound? no.  
Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? no. (3.1.131-134)

Honor is not able to heal a wound such as an injury to an arm or a leg.

[...] What is  
honour? a word. What is in that word honour? what  
is that honour? air. A trim reckoning! (3.1.134-136)

What is honor? It is nothing but a word, the air that we breathe out when we pronounce a word.

[...] Who hath it?  
 he that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? no.  
 Doth he hear it? no. 'Tis insensible, then. Yea,  
 to the dead. (3.1.136-138)

Who has honor? Dead people, to whom it is worthless.

[...] But will it not live with the living?  
 no. Why? detraction will not suffer it. (3.1.138-139)

Can the living have honor? According to Falstaff, no. Why? Because when people are living, they have detractors—people slander them. (Cf. Lincoln.)

[...] Therefore  
 I'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon: and so  
 ends my catechism. (5.1.140-141)

Therefore, Falstaff says, he will have nothing to do with honor. He would rather be a live coward than a dead hero. Thus ends his soliloquy.

- To Hotspur, of course, honor is very valuable, and he is willing to risk death in order to achieve it. Hotspur said:

By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap,  
 To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon,  
 Or dive into the bottom of the deep,  
 Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,  
 And pluck up drowned honour by the locks;  
 So he that doth redeem her thence might wear  
 Without corrival, all her dignities: (1.3.199-205)

- To Prince Hal, honor is a commodity to be won from Hotspur:

Percy is but my factor, good my lord,  
 To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf;  
 And I will call him to so strict account,  
 That he shall render every glory up,  
 Yea, even the slightest worship of his time,  
 Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart. (3.2.147-152)

Commodity: “Something useful that can be turned to commercial or other advantage”—*The American Heritage Dictionary*.

- Falstaff can easily dismiss honor because he has so little honor himself. This may be a realistic, if cynical, way of looking at honor, or it may be a way for Falstaff to justify his being a coward.

## Act 5, Scene 2

- Worcester tells Vernon not to let Hotspur know about King Henry IV's "liberal and kind offer" (5.2.2) of peace and friendship. He reasons that the Percys will remain under suspicion of the King because of the rebellion. This may not apply to Hotspur, who is likely to be forgiven because:
  - 1) He is young.
  - 2) He is known to be rash because of "heat of blood" (5.2.17).
  - 3) His nickname gives him the privilege of being impulsive.
  - 4) Worcester and Northumberland will be blamed for leading Hotspur astray.
- Worcester describes Hotspur as being "hare-brained" (5.2.19). This is not a kind description, but it may be accurate. Certainly, Hotspur is rash.
- Vernon agrees to Worcester's wishes.
- As soon as Hotspur hears from Worcester that King Henry IV wants to fight a battle, he immediately sends Westmoreland to tell the King defiantly that they will fight. Westmoreland is in the enemy camp as a surety that Worcester and Vernon would be allowed to return safely from the King's camp. If anything had happened to Worcester and Vernon, then Westmoreland would be executed by the rebels.
- Worcester is the bad guy in this play. He lies to his nephew (Hotspur), and his nephew is killed as a result.
- After the defiant response of the rebels has been delivered to the King and battle is assured, Worcester tells Hotspur about Prince Hal's challenge to single combat.
- Hotspur wants to know how Prince Hal made the challenge. Was he insulting?
- Vernon replies:

No, by my soul; I never in my life  
 Did hear a challenge urged more modestly,  
 Unless a brother should a brother dare  
 To gentle exercise and proof of arms. (5.2.51-54)

Prince Hal was a model of courtesy in making the challenge. He praised Hotspur highly.

- Hotspur teases Vernon a little by saying (p. 105):

Cousin, I think thou art enamoured  
 On his follies [...] (5.2.69-70)

Of course, Hotspur is eager to meet Prince Hal in the battle.

- Letters arrive, probably from the Archbishop of York, but Hotspur has no time to read them because the battle is beginning.
- Hotspur is eager to fight:

Let each man do his best: and here draw I  
 A sword, whose temper I intend to stain  
 With the best blood that I can meet withal  
 In the adventure of this perilous day. (5.2.92-95)

Hotspur hopes to stain his sword with the best blood possible—royal blood.

### Act 5, Scene 3

- Scenes 3, 4, and 5 are brief scenes that show the battle.
- We find out that the King has dressed many lords in royal clothes, Sir Walter Blunt among them. The purpose is to not let the enemy soldiers know who the King is. If they can easily identify the King, they can concentrate on killing or capturing him. In the Middle Ages, if the King were killed or captured, the battle would be over. That is why in chess the game is over when a King is checkmated.
- Douglas has been fighting well and has already killed one person wearing the King's clothing when he meets Sir Walter Blunt, who is also wearing the King's clothing and who says that he is the King. Douglas kills him and thinks that the battle is over, but Hotspur identifies the body as belonging to Sir Walter Blunt.
- Douglas vows to kill everybody who is wearing the King's coats.
- Douglas and Hotspur leave, and Falstaff enters, alone. He sees the lifeless Sir Walter Blunt and says:

[...] Sir Walter Blunt: there's honour  
for you! (5.3.32-33)

Falstaff sees what can happen when you pursue honor, and as we know, he wants none of it. He strongly prefers to be a live coward than a dead hero.

- Falstaff also lets us know what has happened to the men he led into battle:

[...] I have  
led my ragamuffins where they are peppered: there's  
not three of my hundred and fifty left alive; and  
they are for the town's end, to beg during life. (5.3.36-39)

Of the 150 men Falstaff led into battle, nearly all are dead. As Falstaff had said earlier, they would serve well enough to fill a pit—that is, to fill a mass grave. Of the perhaps three who are left alive, they are horribly wounded—so badly wounded that they will never work again. They will try to survive by begging.

- Falstaff has done an evil deed by leading his men into battle at a place where he knew they would be peppered (slaughtered). Evil officers sometimes got their men killed so that they could keep the soldiers' pay.
- Prince Hal enters, and it is obvious that he has been fighting hard. He sees that Falstaff is idle and criticizes him for it (p. 108):

What, stand'st thou idle here? lend me thy sword:  
Many a nobleman lies stark and stiff  
Under the hoofs of vaunting enemies,  
Whose deaths are yet unrevenge: I prithee,  
lend me thy sword (5.3.40-43)

- Falstaff won't lend Hal his sword, but he does offer to give him his pistol, saying, "Tis hot" (5.3.53), implying that it is hot because he has been firing it so much. He also says that in his case "there's that will sack a city" (5.3.53-54). However, when Hal opens the case, he finds a bottle of

sack, which he throws at Falstaff. Even in battle, Falstaff can pun and joke. Needless to say, a battle is not the time to do that.

- Prince Hal is fighting hard. He is redeeming himself, as he promised to do.

#### Act 5, Scene 4

- In this scene, Prince Hal has been wounded, and his father wants him to withdraw from battle. Prince Hal declines, saying:

And God forbid a shallow scratch should drive  
The Prince of Wales from such a field as this,  
Where stain'd nobility lies trodden on,  
and rebels' arms triumph in massacres! (5.4.10-14)

- Prince Hal's brother, Prince John, has been fighting valiantly, and he has earned Prince Hal's respect. He says of his brother, John of Lancaster:

By God, thou hast deceived me, Lancaster;  
I did not think thee lord of such a spirit:  
Before, I loved thee as a brother, John;  
But now, I do respect thee as my soul. (5.4.16-19)

- Prince Hal leaves King Henry IV, and Douglas enters, ready to kill the King. Douglas nearly kills Henry IV, but Prince Hal enters in time to fight Douglas and to drive him away, saving his father's life.
- At this time, father and son are truly reconciled. King Henry IV says (p. 111):

Thou hast redeem'd thy lost opinion, (5.4.47)

- After King Henry IV leaves, Hotspur enters, and he and Prince Hal fight to the death. As the two fight, Falstaff enters and cheers Hal. Douglas enters, and Falstaff falls to the ground, feigning death.
- When Prince Hal inflicts a mortal wound on Hotspur, Hotspur mourns the loss of his honor and glory more than the loss of his life:

O, Harry, thou hast robb'd me of my youth!  
I better brook the loss of brittle life  
Than those proud titles thou hast won of me;  
They wound my thoughts worse than sword my flesh: (5.4.76-79)

- Hotspur dies before he can finish his final sentence, which Prince Hal finishes for him:

**HOTSPUR**  
[...] no, Percy, thou art dust  
And food for—

*Dies*

**PRINCE HENRY**

For worms, brave Percy: fare thee well, great heart!

(5.4.84-86)

- Now, two paces of land (a grave) is enough for Hotspur; before, a Kingdom was not enough for him.
- Prince Hal sees Falstaff lying on the ground. He thinks Falstaff is dead, and he mourns his death, saying:

What, old acquaintance! could not all this flesh  
 Keep in a little life? Poor Jack, farewell!  
 I could have better spared a better man:  
 O, I should have a heavy miss of thee,  
 If I were much in love with vanity!

(5.4.101-105)

Apparently, Prince Hal did care for Falstaff even though he recognizes how evil Falstaff can be.

- Prince Hal also says that he will have Falstaff's body disemboweled so that it can be embalmed. In other words, he is going to give Falstaff a decent burial.
- On stage, Prince Hal is often shown standing between Hotspur and Falstaff. Hotspur overvalued honor, while Falstaff undervalued honor. Prince Hal has achieved the real thing with his actions.
- As soon as Prince Hal leaves, Falstaff jumps up. He may want to lose weight, but being disemboweled is not the way he wants to lose it.
- Falstaff intends to take credit for killing Hotspur, although Prince Hal actually killed him. He wounds Hotspur's thigh with a sword, then begins to carry away the body.
- Prince Hal and Prince John arrive. Both are astonished to see Falstaff alive. Falstaff cleverly—and immorally—takes credit for killing Hotspur, saying that he made the wound on Hotspur's thigh.
- Falstaff is able to get away with the lie that he and Hotspur were both wounded, but after Prince Hal left the two jumped up and fought, and he defeated Hotspur. Since Prince Hal has already said that he saw Falstaff dead, but was mistaken (obviously), why then may he not have been mistaken about Hotspur?
- Prince Hal is willing to let Falstaff have the credit for killing Hotspur, saying:

For my part, if a lie may do thee grace,  
 I'll gild it with the happiest terms I have.

(5.4.155-156)

- In *Henry IV, Part 2*, Falstaff has an undeserved reputation as a military hero.

**Act 5, Scene 5**

- The Battle of Shrewsbury is over, and King Henry IV has won. His army has captured both Worcester and Vernon. King Henry IV knows that they lied to Hotspur about his offer of peace and friendship, so he condemns them to be executed. Worcester is not surprised at the order, and he goes to his death patiently.
- Prince Hal asks for the boon of disposing of Douglas, who had fought valiantly but who has been captured while fleeing after the battle was lost. Prince Hal gives John, his brother, the happy task of allowing Douglas to go free without harm and without ransom. This is a shrewd move on Prince Hal's part. This move should help lead to peace with the Scots. (Of course, this means that Sir Walter Blunt's death is not avenged.)
- Clearly, Prince Hal is emerging as a great leader.

- At the end of *Henry IV, Part 1*, Henry IV divides his armies in two. One army goes west to Wales to fight Glendower. The other goes north to fight the Archbishop of York and Northumberland. Shakespeare thus sets up *Henry IV, Part 2*.

## Shakespeare Checklist

Check to make sure that you are not making these common errors.

- Make sure that the titles of plays are underlined or italicized.

*Macbeth*

*Hamlet*

*Romeo and Juliet*

- Make sure that you use numbers to refer to acts and lines that you cite in your paper.

(5.14-15) = Act 5, lines 14-15

- Make sure that you use MLA style when quoting Shakespeare.
- Make sure that you use a dash—not a hyphen—when a dash is needed.

Dashes are longer than hyphens.

— is longer than -

- Make sure that you use a hyphen when a hyphen is needed (as when you put two words together to form an adjective that appears before the noun it modifies).

Epic poems are thought-provoking literature.

- Make sure that you use a comma after an introductory element.

Although Macbeth begins the play as a morally good hero, he ends the play as a morally evil tyrant.

- Make sure that you put commas and periods inside quotation marks—this is the American style.

“Hi,” said Sally. George replied, “Hello.”

- Make sure you proofread well. Make sure you spell words correctly (double-check difficult-to-spell names) and use apostrophes, commas, etc. correctly.
- Make sure you do a spelling check one final time before printing your paper. Often, a writer will misspell a word during revision.
- Proofread three times.

## How Should I Quote Poetry in Shakespeare?

### Notes

- 1) For information about the MLA style of using quotations, see almost any English handbook.
- 2) Your major papers will be double-spaced.
- 3) Use a Works Cited list.

### Identify the Act, Scene, and Line Number(s)

For example, 2.2.2-3 means Act 2, scene, lines 2-3.

For example, 3.1.64-70 means Act 3, scene 1, lines 64-70.

### A Note on How to Tell Poetry from Prose in Shakespeare

Shakespeare uses both poetry and prose in his plays. A quick way to differentiate between the two is to look at capitalization. If each line of a passage begins with a capital letter, it is poetry; if it does not, it is prose. This is true of the Signet Classic edition.

### How to Quote Short Passages of Poetry (Three Lines or Fewer)

- When quoting three or fewer lines of poetry, run them in with your text.
- Use a slash mark to separate the lines of poetry.
- Use a blank space before and after the slash mark.
- Quote poetry correctly, both in content and in style. (Quote every word accurately, and use the punctuation that appears in the original quotation.)
- Tell the reader where the passage is located. Use numbers to indicate act, scene, and lines of the passage.
- Use quotation marks.

For example:

When Romeo first sees Juliet in the Capulets' garden, he says, "But, soft! What light through yonder window breaks? / It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!" (2.2.2-3).

### How to Quote Long Passages of Poetry (Four Lines or More)

- When quoting four or more lines of poetry, indent the lines a little more than you indent the paragraphs. (This is MLA style.)
- Do not center the lines of poetry.
- Do not use quotation marks unless they appear in the original lines of poetry.
- Be aware that some dialogue in plays by Shakespeare is poetry and must be quoted as poetry.
- Quote poetry correctly, both in content and in style. (Quote every word accurately, and use the punctuation that appears in the original quotation.)
- Tell the reader where the passage is located. Use numbers to indicate act, scene, and lines of the passage.

For example, the below quotation is correct. It is quoted as poetry—the lines break exactly where they break in the poem.

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Titania says,

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;  
 Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;  
 Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,  
 Some war with rere-mice for their leathern wings,  
 To make my small elves coats, and some keep back  
 The clamorous owl that nightly hoots and wonders  
 At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;  
 Then to your offices and let me rest.

(2.2.1-8)

Another correct quotation:

Macbeth says,

No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,  
 For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;  
 For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered;  
 Put rancors in the vessel of my peace  
 Only for them, and mine eternal jewel  
 Given to the common enemy of man,  
 To make them kings, the seeds of Banquo kings!

(3.1.64-70)

- Be sure capitalization remains the same as in the original source. If the original source capitalizes the beginning of each line, your quotation should do the same.
- Note that no quotation marks are needed unless they appear in the original source. The indentation shows that the passage is a quotation.
- Look up the quotation to see that it is quoted correctly, with no words left out. Make sure that the poetry is quoted as poetry, not as prose. (Each line of the poem should be indented, as above.) Tell the reader the page number of the quoted passage.

### How Can I Identify Very Long Lines of Poetry as Being One Line?

Occasionally, a line of poetry is too long to be set as a single line in a copy of one of William Shakespeare's plays, so the last word or two is printed below the first, long line. However, you may still quote it as a single line.

For example, the Signet Classic edition of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has this:

Call you me fair? That fair again unsay.  
 Demetrius loves your fair. O happy fair!  
 Your eyes are lodestars, and your tongue's sweet  
     air  
 More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,  
 When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear. (1.1.181-185)

The word "air" is printed on a line of its own because the width of the page it is printed on is not long enough for the whole line. How do we know this? We can count the lines. Immediately preceding this quotation, Hermia says, "God speed fair Helena! Whither away?" That line is marked 180. If we count out the lines of Helena's speech, we discover that "Your eyes are lodestars, and your tongue's sweet air" is line 183. If "Your eyes are lodestars, and your tongue's sweet" was line 183, and if "air" was line 184, we would have too many lines. After all, "More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear" would have to be line 185, but the book clearly identifies "When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear" as line 185.

In your papers, you may quote it as a single line.

When Hermia calls Helena fair, Helena replies:

Call you me fair? That fair again unsay.  
 Demetrius loves your fair. O happy fair!  
 Your eyes are lodestars, and your tongue's sweet air  
 More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,  
 When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear. (1.1.181-185)

### How Do I Quote Shakespeare's Prose?

Quote prose with line breaks the way you quote poetry in Shakespeare's plays. To make it easy for scholars to refer to passages in Shakespeare's plays, passages of prose have also been given lines. Therefore, use the line breaks that appear in the play and cite the passages of prose just like you do with poetry.

Here is an example of a short quoted passage of prose from the Signet Classic edition of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*:

When Mercutio has been fatally wounded by Tybalt, he makes a final joke: "Ask / for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave / man" (3.1.98-100).

Here is an example of a longer passage of quoted prose from the Signet Classic edition of *Romeo and Juliet*:

When Mercutio has been fatally wounded by Tybalt, he makes a final joke even as he calls down a plague on both the House of Capulet and the House of Montague:

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. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A  
plague a both your houses! Zounds, a dog, a rat, a  
mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! A braggart,  
a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arith-  
metic! Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt  
under your arm.

(3.1.97-105)

### Short Reaction Memos

The questions in this short guide to William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* can be used in discussions; however, they can also be used for short reaction memos. For example, I do this at Ohio University. See below for the assignment and sample short reaction memos.

#### *How Do I Complete the Reaction Memo Assignments?*

During the quarter, you will have to write a series of short memos in which you write about the readings you have been assigned.

Each memo should be at least 250 words, not counting long quotations from the work of literature. Include a word count for each memo, although that is not normally part of the memo format.

Following the memo heading (To, From, Re, Date, Words), write the question you are answering and the part of the book that the question applies to.

You may answer one question or more than one question. I will supply you with a list of questions that you may answer

Note that a Works Cited list is needed if you use quotations.

For examples from my Great Books courses at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, see the following pages.

**To:** David Bruce  
**From:** Jane Student  
**Re:** *Odyssey*, Book 12 Reaction Memo  
**Date:** Put Today's Date Here  
**Words:** 323

### ***Odyssey*, Book 12: Is Odysseus a bad leader?**

This is an important question in the *Odyssey*. After all, Odysseus leads 12 ships and many men to Troy, but the ships are all destroyed and all of his men die and he returns home to Ithaca alone. Who is responsible for the deaths of Odysseus' men? Is Odysseus responsible for their deaths, or do the men bear some responsibility for their own deaths? Many readers prefer Odysseus, the great individualist, to Aeneas, the man who founds the Roman people, but then they realize that all of Odysseus' men died, while Aeneas succeeded in bringing many Trojans to Italy. When readers think of that, they begin to have a greater respect for Aeneas.

From the beginning of the *Odyssey*, this has been an issue. The bard says that the men perished because of the "recklessness of their own ways" (1.8). However, we notice that Odysseus is asleep at odd times. In Book 10, Aeolus gives Odysseus a bag in which the contrary winds have been tied up. This allows Odysseus to sail to Ithaca safely. However, they reach the island and see smoke rising from the fires, Odysseus goes to sleep and his men open the bag, letting the contrary winds escape, and the ship is blown back to King Aeolus' island. Similarly, in Book 12, on the island of the Sun-god, Odysseus is asleep when his men sacrifice the Sun-god's cattle.

It does seem that Odysseus does not bear the blame for his men's death. In many cases, they do perish through their own stupidity. In other cases, of course, they die during war or during adventures, but in those times, Odysseus was with them, and he could have died, too.

One other thing to think about is that Odysseus is telling his own story. Could he be lying? After all, some of the adventures he relates are pretty incredible. (Probably not. The gods vouch for some of what he says.)

#### Works Cited

Homer. *The Odyssey*. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin Books, 1996. Print.

**To:** David Bruce  
**From:** Jane Student  
**Re:** *Inferno*, Canto 1 Reaction Memo  
**Date:** Put Today's Date Here  
**Words:** 263

### ***Inferno*, Canto 1**

#### • What do you need to be a member of the Afterlife in Dante's *Inferno*?

To be a member of the afterlife in Hell, you must meet a number of criteria:

- 1) You must be dead.
- 2) You must be an unrepentant sinner.
- 3) You must be a dead, unrepentant sinner by 1300.

Of course, only dead people—with a few exceptions such as Dante the Pilgrim—can be found in the *Inferno*.

Only unrepentant sinners can be found in the *Inferno*. Everyone has sinned, but sinners who repented their sins are found in Purgatory or Paradise, not in the *Inferno*.

Dante set his *Divine Comedy* in 1300, so the characters who appear in it are dead in 1300.

### ***Inferno*, Canto 1**

#### • What does it mean to repent?

A sinner who repents regrets having committed the sin. The repentant sinner vows not to commit the sin again, and he or she does his or her best not to commit the sin again.

### ***Inferno*, Canto 1**

#### • What is the geography of Hell? In *The Divine Comedy*, where is Hell located?

Hell is located straight down. We will find out later that when Lucifer was thrown out of Paradise, he fell to the Earth, ending up at the center of the Earth. The center of the Earth is the lowest part of Hell. On the other side of the earth away from the spot that Lucifer hit the Earth is the Mountain of Purgatory. Lucifer created the Mountain of Purgatory when he hit the Earth.

**To:** David Bruce  
**From:** Jane Student  
**Re:** *Candide*, Ch. 26-30  
**Date:** Today's Date  
**Words:** 368

**Ch. 30: Write a brief character analysis of the old man and his family.**

When Candide and his friends meet the old man, the old man is “sitting in front of his door beneath an arbor of orange trees, enjoying the fresh air” (119). The old man basically ignores politics that he cannot influence. Some people have recently been killed in Constantinople, and the old man does not even know their names. However, the old man does enjoy some material things, including good food, and he enjoys hospitality.

The old man invites Candide and his friends to enjoy some refreshments inside his house. They are served with “several kinds of fruit-favored drinks” and “boiled cream with pieces of candied citron in it, oranges, lemons, limes, pineapples, pistachio nuts, and mocha coffee” (119). The old man and his family have an abundance of food, but although Candide wonders if the old man has an enormous farm, the old man tells him, “I have only twenty acres of land, which my children and I cultivate. Our work keeps us free of three great evils: boredom, vice, and poverty” (119).

From this brief encounter, we learn several things:

- The old man and his family are content—even happy.
- The old man and his family ignore the wars and murders and crimes that happen elsewhere.
- The old man and his family have enough. They work hard on their little farm, and they have plenty of food and good things to eat.
- The old man and his family have only 20 acres, but 20 acres are enough.

Candide and his friends decide to emulate the old man and his family. Each of them begins to work hard on their little farm. Cunegonde learns to make pastry, Paquette begins to embroider, and the old woman does the laundry and repairs the linen. Brother Giroflée becomes a carpenter, and Candide and the others grow “abundant crops” (120). At the end of the short novel, the group of friends seem to have come the closest they can to happiness in a world filled with evil, but it does take an effort on their part. As Candide says in the short novel’s last words, “... we must cultivate our garden” (120).

Works Cited

Voltaire. *Candide*. Trans. Lowell Bair. New York: Bantam Books, 1981. Print.

**To:** David Bruce  
**From:** Jane Student  
**Re:** *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, Ch. 1-4 Reaction Memo  
**Date:** Put Today's Date Here  
**Words:** 286

### CHAPTER 3: "KNIGHTS OF THE TABLE ROUND"

• **What hints do we have of the relationship between Queen Guenever and Sir Launcelot?**

Some hanky-panky is going on between Sir Launcelot and King Arthur's wife, Queen Guenever. Some six or eight prisoners address her, and they tell her that they have been captured by Sir Kay the Seneschal. Immediately, surprise and astonishment are felt by everybody present. The queen looks disappointed because she had hoped that the prisoners were captured by Sir Launcelot.

As it turns out, they were. Sir Launcelot first rescued Sir Kay from some attackers, then he took Sir Kay's armor and horse and captured more knights. All of these prisoners were actually captured by Sir Launcelot, not by Sir Kay at all.

Two passages let us know that something is going on between Sir Launcelot and Queen Guenever:

1. The first is subtle; she looks disappointed when Sir Kay says that he captured the knights: "Surprise and astonishment flashed from face to face all over the house; the queen's gratified smile faded out at the name of Sir Kay, and she looked disappointed ..." (503).
2. The other is much more overt and occurs after Guenever learns that the knight who really captured the prisoners was Sir Launcelot: "Well, it was touching to see the queen blush and smile, and look embarrassed and happy, and fling furtive glances at Sir Launcelot that would have got him shot in Arkansas, to a dead certainty" (503).

#### Works Cited

Twain, Mark. *Four Complete Novels*. New York: Gramercy Books, 1982. Print.

### About the Author

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy—me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine’s brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka “The Joker,” decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name—David—ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn’t been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don’t often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for “sounds like” and “two words,” then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn’t let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor’s degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a master’s degree in English and a master’s degree in Philosophy. Currently, and for a long time to come, I publish a weekly humorous column titled “Wise Up!” for *The Athens News* and I am an English instructor at Ohio U.

#### *Shameless Commerce*

Visit David Bruce’s storefront at

<http://stores.lulu.com/bruceb>

By the way, this storefront offers free downloads of collections of my students’ autobiographical essays. For example, one such collection is titled *Love and Friendship: Stories About Growing Up*.

If all goes well, I will publish one or two books a year for the rest of my life. (On the other hand, a good way to make God laugh is to tell Her your plans.)