Twelfth Night is one of several of Shakespeare’s plays to feature a heroine who dresses as a man. At the beginning of his career, Shakespeare included a cross-dressing heroine in The Two Gentlemen of Verona: Julia dresses as a pageboy to follow her boyfriend to another city. She reveals herself at the end to stop him from marrying another woman. Julia’s disguise is a plot convenience, allowing her to travel and to observe Proteus without suspicion. Later plays push that plot device further, creating the cross-dressed woman as an object of desire. In As You Like It, written two or three years before Twelfth Night, Rosalind dresses as a boy named Ganymede to travel into the forest; when she runs into her crush, Orlando, she offers, as Ganymede, to pretend to be Rosalind so that Orlando can practice wooing. She also finds herself the object of desire of a shepherdess named Phebe. In Twelfth Night, Shakespeare presses the mismatched desire even further, having a primary character, Olivia, and making that desire a central point of conflict in the play, rather than a side joke. This creates a double-play of suggested homoeroticism; Olivia is in love with Cesario, who is actually another woman, while Orsino thinks he’s falling for a boy, who is actually a woman, who is still played by a male actor.

Gender issues could prompt quite a bit of social anxiety in early modern England. Many of the anti-theatrical polemics leveled at the playing companies lamented the presentation of boys as women, particularly in romantic roles. Conversely, the idea of women usurping men's roles suggested an upending of convention. Though a female monarch had ruled England for over forty years – and for all of Shakespeare’s lifetime – women were still considered subordinate to men, legally, socially, and religiously; even Queen Elizabeth spent much of her life pressured by her councilors to find a man to share her throne. Many pamphlets published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries sought to instruct women on their "proper" place – suggesting that a great many of them had stepped outside the proscribed bounds and entered spheres typically dominated by males. Only two or three years before Twelfth Night, in As You Like It, Shakespeare has Rosalind reappear in women’s garb at the end of the play, which some scholars have suggested was a deliberate method of allaying social anxiety about her ability to resume her feminine role. Viola in Twelfth Night, like Julia in the earlier Two Gentlemen of Verona, never reappears in her “women’s weeds,” remaining in a state of gender ambiguity through the end of the play.

Today, the definition of gender roles remains a hot-button issue. Political debates continue to challenge ideas about balance between the sexes, both socially and financially. In many ways, however, the conversation has changed from determining what one gender or the other can or can’t do to debating the very meaning of gender itself. As the 21st-century begins, advocates for gay, lesbian, and transgender rights continue to push at the boundaries of the binary gender system. In 2010, a British expatriate living in Australia became the world’s officially and legally neuter person, though some cultures of the Indian subcontinent and of Southeast Asia have long recognized the existence of a “third gender.” More recently, transgender advocates such as Laverne Cox, of Orange is the New Black fame, have raised the profile of the transgender population – which has, in turn, led to political debates over bathroom use and legally protected classes. The ongoing gender debate suggests the existence of gray areas between male and female and in the spectrum of sexual attraction – the very sort of grey area that Viola-as-Cesario inhabits.
Twelfth Night, along with the other gender-bending comedies featuring cross-dressing heroines, suggests that, in the view of society, at least, a person’s role in life is more defined by what they wear and how they behave than it is by anatomy. How does Viola challenge or affirm the idea of strictly defined roles for genders? How convincing is her disguise? Several characters tell her during the course of the play that she behaves in a way unbefitting a man, particularly when she does such stereotypically feminine things as fainting at the sight of blood. How does Viola give herself away? How much double-speak does she engage in, allowing the audience to appreciate her duality without explicitly telling other characters about it?

In the following activity, your students will explore some of the gender dynamics at play in Twelfth Night.

Activity 1: Comparing the Cross-dressers
- Brainstorm (and record on the board) the factors in presentation and behavior that, at least stereotypically, separate men from women.
  - Suggestions for discussion:
    - Clothing.
      - Examine the costume sketches on page 178. How different was male from female dress in Shakespeare’s time? What similarities are there? Do your students think that, given this style of clothing, it would be easy for a girl to pass as a boy, or a boy as a girl?
      - Consider how this is different for us than it is for the Elizabethans. Women wear pants now, but what differences in clothing still exist to differentiate the genders? How could a modern-dress production of Twelfth Night present Viola convincingly? Do modern clothing standards make it easier or more difficult to pass as another gender?
      - Consider how these clothing conditions may have influenced how Shakespeare wrote his plays. In As You Like It, Rosalind does reappear as a woman – and Shakespeare gives her 75 prose lines (about five minutes of stage time) to change. In Twelfth Night, Viola remains dressed as a boy. What practical considerations might have gone into this choice?
    - Position of hips and shoulders while standing at rest.
    - Stride while walking.
    - Length of hair ( Productions will often have a long-haired heroine stuff her hair up under a cap to "hide" it, allowing for an easy reveal at the end of the play).
    - Vocal pitch.
    - Eye contact.
- Have your students stand at their desks and “try on,” as a group, some of the things you listed together.
- Give your students Handouts #5A-D: Suit Me Like a Man. This handout provides the text of the scenes from four other Shakespeare plays where the heroine makes the decision to dress as a man.
- Either in read-arounds (page 20) or by acting the scenes out with volunteers (page 20), explore these variant depictions of female-to-male cross-dressing.
- Compare these four scenes to Viola’s decision in the First 100 Lines (page 24).
Discuss:

- What do Shakespeare's cross-dressing heroines point to as the markers of masculinity versus femininity?
- What information does Shakespeare convey about how his (male) actors playing female characters will present masculinity?
- All of these heroines have help in assuming their disguises. Julia and Portia ask their waiting-women; Rosalind has Celia for a comrade; Viola asks the sea captain; Imogen takes the suggestion from Pisanio.
  - How do these relationships pertain to the social anxiety surrounding cross-dressing?
  - Is it different for Viola, who asks a man for help?
  - For Imogen, the only one among the five who does not have the idea herself, and cross-dresses at a man’s suggestion?
- Further Exploration: Look at Shakespeare's sonnets for more commentary on the comparison and confusion of gender (particularly Sonnet #20). What continuing relevance do these poems and the gender-bending heroines in the plays have in the modern world, as we begin to consider more frequently ideas of gender identity, gender fluidity, and the sliding scale of human sexuality? How is the social anxiety expressed in the plays and poems like or unlike modern social anxiety around the same topics?

Activity 2: Orsino's Awareness

Much of the emotional conflict in *Twelfth Night* centers around Viola’s charade as Cesario and the perception Orsino has of her. In performance, this can play as humorous or as deeply affecting, depending on the choices that the actors make.

- Set up your classroom according to the Elizabethan Classroom guidelines, found on page 32 of this study guide. This will allow your students who are not participating as actors to serve as the audience. Remind your non-acting students that the audience members are still a part of the play – at any moment, an actor may pick them out to play with them.
- Give your students Handout #6: Orsino's Awareness.
- Choose actors from your class:
  - One boy for Orsino
  - One girl for Viola
- Stage the scene the first time as though Viola’s guise never slips and Orsino never supposes that she is anything other than what she presents herself to be:
  - What story does it tell if Viola remains in control of herself, despite the revealing nature of the conversation?
  - Can your Orsino still be interested in Cesario, even with no suspicion that he is, in fact, a she? How could this demonstration of attraction affect the gender relations in the play?
- Have your actors do the scene again, this time with a Viola barely keeping up the pretense of masculinity, and Orsino starting to suspect something.
  - Have your Viola choose a reason – or try out more than one – for Viola’s disguise slipping. Is she frustrated with Orsino and forgetting to pretend? Is she trying to call attention to herself in a sideways manner?
• Try the scene a third time, with an overtly feminine Viola (similar to version 2) and an utterly oblivious Orsino (similar to version 1).
  ▪ How does this change the dynamic between them?
  ▪ How does this change the audience’s perception of Orsino? Of Viola?
• Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each interpretation. How does each version tell a slightly different story?
  ▪ Further Exploration: Consider that Orsino’s object of desire at the beginning of the play is adamantly unattainable. Look at the language he uses to describe Olivia early on. Is it sexual, sensual, or chaste? How would your students characterize his reaction to Viola when she reveals herself as a woman? Could a production choose to portray Orsino as someone not actually interested in women, choosing unavailable targets to avoid the issue?
• When Shakespeare wrote this play, he was writing Viola for a young male actor.
  ▪ Try at least one of the above interpretations again, this time with a male student playing Viola.
  ▪ What changes when a boy, in boy’s clothing, plays a female character (in boy's clothing)?

FURTHER EXPLORATION
• Divide the class into small teams and assign each a section of the text (an act, a scene, or their own Line Assignments) for exploration.
• Give each a large sheet of paper and a marker.
• Teams are to find instances, throughout the text, when a character comments on Viola’s/Cesario’s presentation of gender. (This may include Viola commenting on herself).
  o Suggestions:
    ▪ 1.4.28-41
    ▪ 1.5.123-145
    ▪ 1.5.226-268
    ▪ 2.2.15-39
    ▪ 2.4.14-40
    ▪ 3.1.114-155
    ▪ 3.4.243-276
    ▪ 3.4.330-349
    ▪ 5.1.101-167
    ▪ 5.1.208-270
    ▪ 5.1.309-315
    ▪ 5.1.369-375
• Answer the following:
  o What aspect of Viola-Cesario is the character commenting on?
  o Is it described as a typically masculine or typically feminine trait?
  o Does the character speaking seem aware of any contradiction or gender ambiguity?
• Have each team stage one of their moments in at least two different ways, underscoring the characters’ awareness of or oblivion to Viola’s dual nature.
JULIA
Not like a woman; for I would prevent
The loose encounters of lascivious men.
Gentle Lucetta, fit me with such weeds
As may besee some well-reputed page.

LUCETTA
Why, then, your ladyship must cut your hair.

JULIA
No, girl, I'll knit it up in silken strings
With twenty odd-conceived true-love knots.
To be fantastic may become a youth
Of greater time than I shall show to be.

LUCETTA
What fashion, madam, shall I make your breeches?

JULIA
That fits as well as 'Tell me, good my lord,
What compass will you wear your farthingale?'
Why even what fashion thou best likest, Lucetta.

LUCETTA
You must needs have them with a codpiece,
madam.

JULIA
Out, out, Lucetta, that would be ill-favour'd.

LUCETTA
A round hose, madam, now's not worth a pin,
Unless you have a codpiece to stick pins on.

JULIA
Lucetta, as thou lovest me, let me have
What thou thinkest meet, and is most mannerly.
But tell me, wench, how will the world repute me
For undertaking so unstaid a journey?
I fear me, it will make me scandalized.

LUCETTA
If you think so, then stay at home and go not.
As You Like It, 1.3, 1599

ROSALIND
Alas, what danger will it be to us,
Maids as we are, to travel forth so far?
Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold.

CELIA
I'll put myself in poor and mean attire
And with a kind of umber smirch my face;
The like do you: so shall we pass along
And never stir assailants.

ROSALIND
Were it not better,
Because that I am more than common tall,
That I did suit me all points like a man?
A gallant curtle-axe upon my thigh,
A boar-spear in my hand; and--in my heart
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will--
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,
As many other mannish cowards have
That do outface it with their semblances.

CELIA
What shall I call thee when thou art a man?

ROSALIND
I'll have no worse a name than Jove's own page;
And therefore look you call me Ganymede.
But what will you be call'd?

CELIA
Something that hath a reference to my state
No longer Celia, but Aliena.

ROSALIND
But, cousin, what if we assay'd to steal
The clownish fool out of your father's court?
Would he not be a comfort to our travel?
PORTIA
Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of: we'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

NERISSA
Shall they see us?

PORTIA
They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;
I could not do withal; then I'll repent,
And wish for all that, that I had not killed them;
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
That men shall swear I have discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
Which I will practise.

NERISSA
Why, shall we turn to men?

PORTIA
Fie, what a question's that,
If thou wert near a lewd interpreter?
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day.

Exeunt
PISANIO
First, make yourself but like one.
Fore-thinking this, I have already fit--
'Tis in my cloak-bag--doublet, hat, hose, all
That answer to them: would you in their serving,
And with what imitation you can borrow
From youth of such a season, 'fore noble Lucius
Present yourself, desire his service, tell him
Wherein you're happy,--which you'll make him know,
If that his head have ear in music,--doubtless
With joy he will embrace you, for he's honourable
And doubling that, most holy. Your means abroad,
You have me, rich; and I will never fail
Beginning nor supplyment.

IMOGEN
Thou art all the comfort
The gods will diet me with. Prithee, away:
There's more to be consider'd; but we'll even
All that good time will give us: this attempt
I am soldier to, and will abide it with
A prince's courage. Away, I prithee.

PISANIO
I am most glad
You think of other place. The ambassador,
Lucius the Roman, comes to Milford-Haven
To-morrow: now, if you could wear a mind
Dark as your fortune is, and but disguise
That which, to appear itself, must not yet be
But by self-danger, you should tread a course
Pretty and full of view; yea, haply, near
The residence of Posthumus; so nigh at least
That though his actions were not visible, yet
Report should render him hourly to your ear
As truly as he moves.

IMOGEN
O, for such means;
Though peril to my modesty, not death on't,
I would adventure.

PISANIO
Well, then, here's the point:
You must forget to be a woman; change
Command into obedience: fear and niceness--
The handmaids of all women, or, more truly,
Woman its pretty self--into a waggish courage:
Ready in gibes, quick-answer'd, saucy and
As quarrelous as the weasel; nay, you must
Forget that rarest treasure of your cheek,
Exposing it--but, O, the harder heart,
Alack, no remedy--to the greedy touch
Of common-kissing Titan, and forget
Your laboursome and dainty trims, wherein
You made great Juno angry.

IMOGEN
Nay, be brief
I see into thy end, and am almost
A man already.
**The Two Gentlemen of Verona, 2.7, 1591**

**JULIA**
Counsel, Lucetta; gentle girl, assist me;  
And even in kind love I do conjure thee,  
Who art the table wherein all my thoughts  
Are visibly character'd and engraved,  
To lesson me and tell me some good mean  
How, with my honour, I may undertake  
A journey to my loving Proteus. [...]

**LUCETTA**
Better forbear till Proteus make return. [...]

**JULIA**
Didst thou but know the inly touch of love,  
Thou wouldst as soon go kindle fire with snow  
As seek to quench the fire of love with words.

**LUCETTA**
I do not seek to quench your love's hot fire,  
But qualify the fire's extreme rage,  
Lest it should burn above the bounds of reason.

**JULIA**
The more thou damm'st it up, the more it burns.  
The current that with gentle murmur glides,  
Thou know'st, being stopp'd, impatiently doth rage;  
But when his fair course is not hindered,  
He makes sweet music with the enamell'ed stones,  
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge  
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage,  
And so by many winding nooks he strays  
With willing sport to the wild ocean.  
Then let me go and hinder not my course  
I'll be as patient as a gentle stream  
And make a pastime of each weary step,  
Till the last step have brought me to my love;  
And there I'll rest, as after much turmoil  
A blessed soul doth in Elysium.

**LUCETTA**
But in what habit will you go along?
JULIA
Not like a woman; for I would prevent
The loose encounters of lascivious men.
Gentle Lucetta, fit me with such weeds
As may beseem some well-reputed page.

LUCETTA
Why, then, your ladyship must cut your hair. 35

JULIA
No, girl, I'll knit it up in silken strings
With twenty odd-conceited true-love knots.
To be fantastic may become a youth
Of greater time than I shall show to be.

LUCETTA
What fashion, madam, shall I make your breeches?

JULIA
That fits as well as 'Tell me, good my lord,
What compass will you wear your farthingale?'
Why even what fashion thou best likest, Lucetta.

LUCETTA
You must needs have them with a codpiece, madam.

JULIA
Out, out, Lucetta, that would be ill-favour'd. 45

LUCETTA
A round hose, madam, now's not worth a pin,
Unless you have a codpiece to stick pins on.

JULIA
Lucetta, as thou lovest me, let me have
What thou thinkest meet, and is most mannerly.
But tell me, wench, how will the world repute me
For undertaking so unstaid a journey?
I fear me, it will make me scandalized.

LUCETTA
If you think so, then stay at home and go not.
As You Like It, 1.3, 1599

ROSALIND
Alas, what danger will it be to us,
Maids as we are, to travel forth so far?
Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold.

CELIA
I'll put myself in poor and mean attire
And with a kind of umber smirch my face;
The like do you: so shall we pass along
And never stir assailants.

ROSALIND
Were it not better,
Because that I am more than common tall,
That I did suit me all points like a man?
A gallant curtle-axe upon my thigh,
A boar-spear in my hand; and--in my heart
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will--
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,
As many other mannish cowards have
That do outface it with their semblances.

CELIA
What shall I call thee when thou art a man?

ROSALIND
I'll have no worse a name than Jove's own page;
And therefore look you call me Ganymede.
But what will you be call'd?

CELIA
Something that hath a reference to my state
No longer Celia, but Aliena.

ROSALIND
But, cousin, what if we assay'd to steal
The clownish fool out of your father's court?
Would he not be a comfort to our travel?

CELIA
He'll go along o'er the wide world with me;
Leave me alone to woo him. Let's away,
And get our jewels and our wealth together,
Devise the fittest time and safest way
To hide us from pursuit that will be made
After my flight. Now go we in content
To liberty and not to banishment.

The Merchant of Venice, 3.4, 1597

PORTIA
Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of: we'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

NERISSA
Shall they see us?

PORTIA
They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;
I could not do withal; then I'll repent,
And wish for all that, that I had not killed them;
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
That men shall swear I have discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
Which I will practise.

NERISSA
Why, shall we turn to men?

PORTIA
Fie, what a question's that,
If thou wert near a lewd interpreter?
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day.

Exeunt

_Cymbeline, 3.4, 1609_

PISANIO
I am most glad
You think of other place. The ambassador,
Lucius the Roman, comes to Milford-Haven
To-morrow: now, if you could wear a mind
Dark as your fortune is, and but disguise
That which, to appear itself, must not yet be
But by self-danger, you should tread a course
Pretty and full of view; yea, haply, near
The residence of Posthumus; so nigh at least
That though his actions were not visible, yet
Report should render him hourly to your ear
As truly as he moves.

IMOGEN
O, for such means;
Though peril to my modesty, not death on't,
I would adventure.

PISANIO
Well, then, here's the point:
You must forget to be a woman; change
Command into obedience: fear and niceness—
The handmaids of all women, or, more truly,
Woman its pretty self—into a waggish courage:
Ready in gibes, quick-answer'd, saucy and
As quarrelous as the weasel; nay, you must
Forget that rarest treasure of your cheek,
Exposing it— but, O, the harder heart,
Alack, no remedy— to the greedy touch
Of common-kissing Titan, and forget
Your laboursome and dainty trims, wherein
You made great Juno angry.
IMOGEN
Nay, be brief
I see into thy end, and am almost
A man already.

PISANIO
First, make yourself but like one.
Fore-thinking this, I have already fit--
'Tis in my cloak-bag--doublet, hat, hose, all
That answer to them: would you in their serving,
And with what imitation you can borrow
From youth of such a season, 'fore noble Lucius
Present yourself, desire his service, tell him
Wherein you're happy,--which you'll make him know,
If that his head have ear in music,--doubtless
With joy he will embrace you, for he's honourable
And doubling that, most holy. Your means abroad,
You have me, rich; and I will never fail
Beginning nor supplyment.

IMOGEN
Thou art all the comfort
The gods will diet me with. Prithee, away:
There's more to be consider'd; but we'll even
All that good time will give us: this attempt
I am soldier to, and will abide it with
A prince's courage. Away, I prithee.
Student Handout #6 - Orsino’s Awareness

DUKE ORSINO
Let all the rest give place: Once more, Cesario,
Get thee to yond same sovereign cruelty:
Tell her my love, more noble than the world,
Prizes not quantity of dirty lands;
The parts that fortune hath bestow’d upon her,
Tell her, I hold as giddily as fortune;
But ’tis that miracle and queen of gems
That nature pranks her in attracts my soul.

VIOLA
But if she cannot love you, sir?

DUKE ORSINO
It cannot be so answer’d.

VIOLA
Sooth, but you must.
Say that some lady, as perhaps there is,
Hath for your love a great a pang of heart
As you have for Olivia: you cannot love her;
You tell her so; must she not then be answer’d?

DUKE ORSINO
There is no woman's sides
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
As love doth give my heart; no woman's heart
So big, to hold so much; they lack retention
Alas, their love may be call’d appetite,
No motion of the liver, but the palate,
That suffer surfeit, cloyment and revolt;
But mine is all as hungry as the sea,
And can digest as much: make no compare
Between that love a woman can bear me
And that I owe Olivia.

VIOLA
Ay, but I know--

DUKE ORSINO
What dost thou know?

VIOLA
Too well what love women to men may owe:
In faith, they are as true of heart as we.
My father had a daughter loved a man,
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,
I should your lordship.

DUKE ORSINO
And what's her history?

VIOLA
A blank, my lord. She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i’ the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek: she pined in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy
She sat like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed?
We men may say more, swear more: but indeed
Our shows are more than will; for still we prove
Much in our vows, but little in our love.

DUKE ORSINO
But died thy sister of her love, my boy?

VIOLA
I am all the daughters of my father’s house,
And all the brothers too: and yet I know not.
Sir, shall I to this lady?

DUKE ORSINO
Ay, that’s the theme.
To her in haste; give her this jewel; say,
My love can give no place, bide no denay.

Exeunt
Teacher’s Guide - Orsino’s Awareness

DUKE ORSINO
Let all the rest give place: Once more, Cesario, Get thee to yond same sovereign cruelty: Tell her my love, more noble than the world, Prizes not quantity of dirty lands; The parts that fortune hath bestow’d upon her, Tell her, I hold as giddily as fortune; But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems That nature pranks her in attracts my soul.

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It cannot be so answer'd.

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My love can give no place, bide no denay.

Exeunt

Consider how your different versions of Viola could play these lines. Does she reveal too much, then catch herself and backtrack? Is she making a solid intellectual argument? How does each choice affect the overall scene?

Viola is, in a way, speaking in both the past and future tenses, not only stating what she has (or has not) done, but with the implication that she never will reveal herself.

Notice the vivid description of suffering from melancholy. How does this relate to Orsino's woes elsewhere in the play? Is there any gendered difference between how men and women experience melancholy?

How accusatory might this be? How despairing? How strongly is Viola including her Cesario-self in on the "we", and how strongly is she aiming it at Orsino?

Notice that normal iambic pentameter will stress "am" in this line. How does that affect the emotional delivery of the line? The rest of the line does not scan normally; is this permission to move the stress off of "am" and to scan the line trochaically? What might that change about how much Viola reveals or conceals of herself?

What is it that prompts Viola to stop arguing with Orsino and change the topic back to Olivia? Does she run out of steam? Does she feel she's given too much away and needs to change the subject? Does something physical happen between them? Explore different possible reasons for this sudden shift.

How do different reasons for the shift affect Orsino's delivery of line 44?

Notice both the embedded need for a prop (the jewel), and the sudden brevity of Orsino's sentences. What clue does this departure from his usual florid speech give an actor?