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**sea** PRESENTS

THE CRAZY  
ADVENTURES  
OF  
QUIXOTE  
DON  
LAS LOCAVENTURAS DE  
DON QUIJOTE

**A TEACHER'S RESOURCE GUIDE**

BOOK, MUSIC AND LYRICS BY Radamés Gavé AND Manuel A. Morán

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## ABOUT THE NOVEL

Cervantes, who is widely regarded as one of the greatest writers in history, is often compared to Shakespeare and both are considered “national literary treasures” of their respective “golden ages” of literature. During his time, Cervantes wrote alongside other literary luminaries such as Lope de Vega, Quevedo, and Calderon, many of whom were more highly esteemed than they are today.

According to the preface of Book I, it seems that Cervantes began thinking about the novel while he was in prison. Despite completing Book I, it took some time for Cervantes to find a publisher. Eventually, Francisco Robles of Madrid agreed to publish the book, though he was hesitant and did not bother securing copyrights for Aragon or Portugal, believing that Castile would be sufficient.



Despite the initial reluctance of its publisher, *Don Quixote* was an immediate success, with pirated editions appearing in Valencia and Portugal until Cervantes secured the appropriate copyrights the following year. However, the aristocracy was not pleased with the novel's critique of chivalric literature, and even Lope de Vega, Cervantes' most renowned contemporary, dismissed it. Nevertheless, the book was widely read and enjoyed, with a Brussels edition published in 1607 and the seventh edition released in Madrid in 1608.

The first English translation of *Don Quixote* was done by Shelton in 1608 and published in 1612, while John Philips, a nephew of John Milton, re-translated the book in 1687, claiming that it was “made English according to the humour of our modern language.”



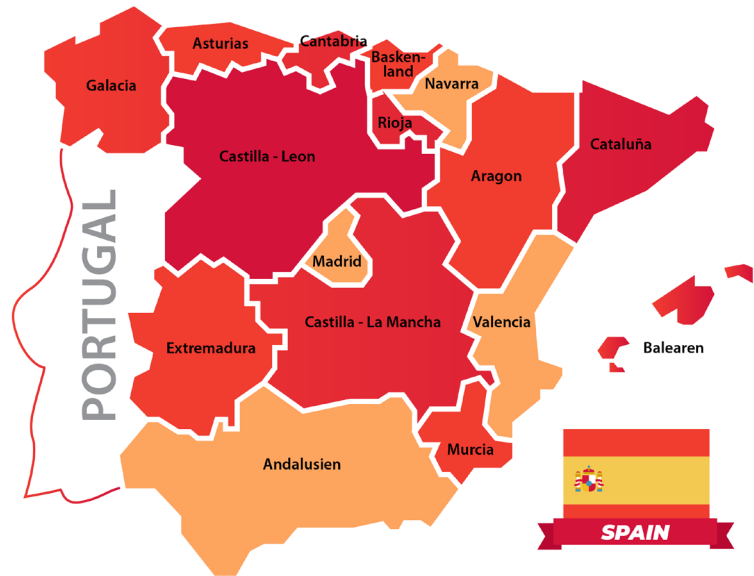
In 1610, Milan published their edition of *Don Quixote*, and Brussels followed suit with their second edition in 1611. During this time, Cervantes worked on other projects and postponed progress on Book II. In 1613, his *Novelas Ejemplares* was published and dedicated to the Conde de Lemos. In the preface, Cervantes hinted at the continuation of *Don Quixote's* adventures in Book II, though he was only halfway through writing it. Ironically, Cervantes had hoped to become Spain's great dramatist, but his dramatic works were largely unsuccessful.

In the fall of 1614, Cervantes had reached Chapter LIX of Book II when he discovered a small book being printed in Tarragona entitled “Second Volume of the Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha: by the Licentiate Alonso Fernandez de Avellaneda of Tordesillas.” Cervantes was horrified by this unauthorized sequel and responded by dedicating the last half of Chapter LIX and most of the following chapters to refuting Avellaneda's work. Despite this setback, critics agree that Avellaneda's imposter sequel ultimately helped prompt Cervantes to produce a superior effort in Book II. The volume was published in late 1615, and Cervantes died just a few months later in April 1616. To this day, the identity of “Avellaneda” remains

uncertain, and his work pales in comparison to the brilliance of Cervantes. Nonetheless, *Don Quixote* remains one of the most widely translated and diffused books in the world, second only to The Bible.

## SYNOPSIS

Don Quixote, a middle-aged gentleman hailing from La Mancha in central Spain, is consumed by his infatuation with the chivalrous ideals espoused in the books he has read. Driven by his obsession, he takes up his lance and sword to champion the defenseless and vanquish the wicked. However, his first adventure ends in failure. Undaunted, he sets out on a second expedition with Sancho Panza, a befuddled laborer whom he has convinced to serve as his loyal squire. In exchange for Sancho's assistance, Don Quixote promises to make him the wealthy governor of an isle.



Mounted on his aging horse, Rocinante, Don Quixote roams the roads of Spain in search of glory and adventure. He eschews basic necessities such as food, shelter, and comfort, all for the sake of his imagined princess, Dulcinea del Toboso, whom he envisions as a noblewoman. However, on this second journey, Don Quixote veers away from his original mission and becomes more of a bandit than a savior. He inflicts harm upon bewildered and rightfully enraged citizens while acting out against what he perceives as threats to his knighthood or to the world.

He also steals a barber's basin, believing it to be the legendary Mambrino's helmet, and becomes convinced of the healing powers of the Balsam of Fierbras, an elixir that ultimately makes him gravely ill. Despite the consequences of his actions, Sancho remains loyal to Don Quixote, often bearing the brunt of the punishments that result from Don Quixote's reckless behavior.

Throughout his journey, Sancho serves as the voice of reason to Don Quixote, attempting to correct his master's delusional fantasies. Don Quixote's friends, the priest and the barber, come to bring him back home, and believing himself to be under an enchantment, he follows them, ending his second expedition.

As the two resume their journey, Sancho lies to Don Quixote, claiming that an evil enchanter transformed Dulcinea into a peasant girl. Don Quixote's primary goal is to undo this enchantment, which even Sancho comes to believe. A young maid at the Duchess's home falls in love with Don Quixote, but he remains a devout worshipper of Dulcinea. Their unconsummated affair amuses the court. Finally, Don Quixote sets out on his journey again, but his end comes swiftly. The Knight of the White Moon, an old friend in disguise, defeats him shortly after he arrives in Barcelona.

Cervantes presents Don Quixote's story as a history, which he claims he translated from a manuscript written by a Moor named Cide Hamete Benengeli. Cervantes becomes a character in his own fiction, allowing Sancho and Don Quixote to modify their own histories and criticize the false history published under their names.

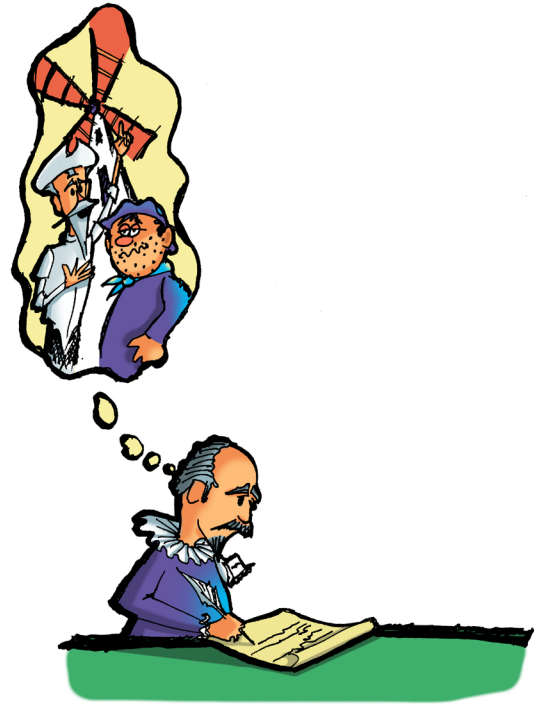
In the end, Don Quixote, beaten and battered, renounces all the chivalric principles he once passionately followed and dies of a fever. Knights-errant become extinct with his passing. Benengeli returns to reveal that his primary objective in recounting Don Quixote's history was to illustrate the demise of chivalry.

## NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Don Quixote is an intricate examination of the potentialities of narrative perspective. The novel is divided into three distinct parts, each employing a unique narrative style. The initial section, which covers Don Quixote's first journey, satirizes the prevalent romance tales of the time. The second section, constituting the remainder of the First Part, is presented as a historical account, with a meticulous record of each day's events. The third section, chronicling the Second Part of the story, is written in a more conventional narrative style, characterized by character development and emotional content.

In the first section, Cervantes uses a straightforward narrative style to tell the story, reporting it alone. In the second section, Cervantes informs us that he is translating the manuscript of Cide Hamete Benengeli and frequently interrupts the narration to discuss the internal inconsistencies of Benengeli's manuscript. Cervantes uses Benengeli primarily to support his claim that the story is a true history.

In the third section, Cervantes enters the novel as a character, a composite of Benengeli and Cervantes the author. The characters in the story are conscious of the books that have been written about them and attempt to revise the content of future editions. This complex and self-referential narrative structure leaves us feeling somewhat disoriented, uncertain of which plotlines are part of the story and which are factual. This sense of disorientation pulls us directly into the story and emphasizes the question of sanity that runs throughout the novel.



Cervantes gives us many reasons to distrust him in the second section. However, in the third section, when we become aware of another allegedly false version of the novel and a second Don Quixote, we lose our bearings entirely and have no choice but to immerse ourselves in the story and trust Cervantes. Yet, having already given us reasons to doubt him, Cervantes forces us to question fundamental principles of narration, just as Quixote forces his contemporaries to question their lifestyles and principles. Thus, the structure of the novel mirrors its function, creating a universe in which Cervantes engages and instructs us, manipulating our preconceptions to compel us to scrutinize them more closely.

Don Quixote attempts to embody the ideals of a chivalric knight, hoping to inspire others to embrace the old system of morality. However, his contemporaries cannot understand his motivations, and he cannot comprehend their lack of adherence to the chivalric code. Only Sancho, a simple-minded but morally astute character, can serve as a mediator between Don Quixote and the rest of the world. Interestingly, Sancho's beliefs are a mix of contemporary and anachronistic morals.

Throughout the First Part of the novel, Don Quixote's clash with reality is evident as he cannot relate to the priest's rational perspective, and his belief in enchantment is dismissed as ridiculous. However, in the Second Part, Cervantes brings the two conflicting moral systems together by allowing Don Quixote's imaginary world to mix with the commonplace world of the Duke and the Duchess. As the two worlds converge, the advantages and disadvantages of each become apparent. Ultimately, Sancho's timeless aphorisms and ascetic discipline prevail, but he also uses his rational abilities to adapt to the present.



This conflict between incompatible systems of morality highlights the struggle of reconciling the old with the new, and the need to find a balance between tradition and progress. The novel shows that there can be value in preserving the ideals of the past, but also that it is necessary to adapt to changing times and circumstances.

## **SOCIAL CLASSES AND PERSONAL WORTH**

During Cervantes's era, the idea of distinguishing between a person's social class and their worth was considered a radical concept. In *Don Quixote*, Cervantes challenges the conventional belief that aristocrats are inherently respectable and noble. He highlights this issue of social class by contrasting the Duke and Duchess's heartless cruelty with Sancho's compassionate anxiety. Despite his humble origins, Sancho, a peasant, exhibits wisdom and thoughtfulness. Similarly, the lowly goatherds and shepherds often display profound philosophical insights. In contrast, the aristocratic and cosmopolitan characters like the Duke and Duchess tend to be superficial and unkind. Cervantes's emphasis on these disparities between social class and personal worth is a key reason why *Don Quixote* was such an innovative work during its time.

## **THEMES**

Themes sometimes known as Motifs, are recurrent literary elements, such as contrasts, structures, and devices, that aid in the development and communication of a text's primary themes.

## **INTEGRITY, RESPECT, REPUTATION AND HONOR**

*Don Quixote* features characters who vary in their concern for personal honor, with some showing deep regard for it and others not. Cervantes suggests that either stance can yield favorable or calamitous outcomes. Anselmo, for instance, is excessively protective of his wife's honor, which leads to his suspicion of her fidelity, her infidelity, and ultimately his demise. Similarly, Don Quixote's fixation on his honor compels him to engage in battles with non-threatening opponents. In contrast, Dorothea's concern for her personal honor drives her to pursue Ferdinand, resulting in a happy ending for both.

Certain characters, like the Duke and Duchess, exploit Don Quixote's madness for their amusement and demonstrate little regard for their personal honor. They illustrate that genuine personal honor has no connection to social status or position. Preoccupation with public notions of honor can become all-consuming, leading to ruin. Sancho, initially preoccupied with such a perspective, conflating honor with social status, eventually realizes the perils of excessive ambition. In this way, Cervantes suggests that personal honor can be a potent and constructive motivator, while adherence to hollow and false socially prescribed honor can be detrimental if taken to an extreme.



## LOVE, PASSION, RELATIONSHIP AND ROMANCE



In the world of Don Quixote, many characters seem to have abandoned the notion of romantic love, but a select few, including Don Quixote himself, still cherish this ideal. Several instances in the text illustrate how romantic love can eclipse all other considerations. For example, Don Louis's affection for Clara, the events surrounding Camacho's wedding, and the story of the captive and Zoraida all feature romantic love as the central theme. Even in the case of Sancho and Teresa, love plays a vital role in their marital commitment, as evidenced by Teresa's desire to honor her spouse at court. Ironically, Don Quixote's own devotion to Dulcinea parodies romantic love, taking it to extremes as he idolizes a woman he has never laid eyes on.

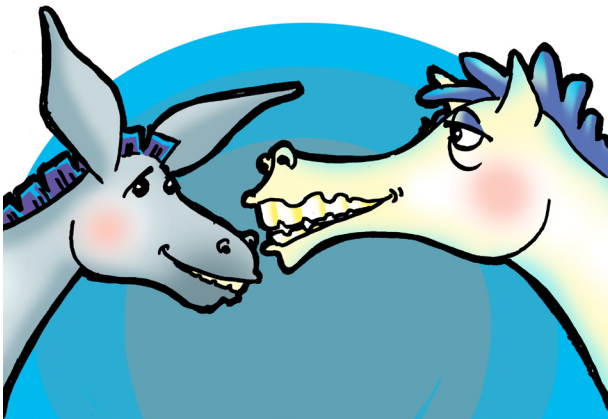


## WRITTEN WORKS, POETRY, PROSE AND LITERATURE

Don Quixote features numerous discussions about the value of different literary genres, such as fiction and historical accounts. The majority of characters, including the priest and the canon of Toledo, believe that literature should be truthful, and some even suggest that the government should censor books containing false information to protect vulnerable minds like Don Quixote's. However, the novel reveals that even true histories can be misleading. Cervantes claims that Don Quixote is a historical account rather than a work of fiction, but this assertion is untrue, highlighting the fact that no writer can ever tell the whole truth. Despite these limitations, literature remains a potent force in the novel, influencing many characters, especially Don Quixote. Throughout the book, characters grapple with notions of authorship and storytelling, with many of them considering writing their own narratives.

## SIGNS, CODES AND SYMBOLS

Symbols are tangible elements such as objects, characters, figures, and colors that are employed to embody and convey abstract ideas or concepts.



Rocinante and Dapple, in particular, are significant in the travels of Don Quixote and Sancho, serving not only as modes of transportation and symbols of status, but also as companions.

## Stallions, Steeds and Donkeys

In the novel, horses serve as symbols of movement and status and are often used to indicate a character's worth or class. For example, the pilgrims outside Barcelona walk to the city, while noblemen ride in carriages and robbers and Don Quixote ride on horseback. For Don Quixote, the sight of horses on the horizon signifies the arrival of a new adventure.





### Guesthouses, Lodgings and Inns

Throughout the novel, inns serve as a place of gathering for people of different social classes, representing the meeting point of diverse individuals who would not normally cross paths. Inns also represent the need for rest and sustenance, but they are also symbolic of deceit and greed as many innkeepers in the novel are dishonest. Sancho's desire to stay at an inn rather than sleep under the stars reflects his connection to reality and society, and his desire for comfort, in contrast to Don Quixote's detachment from society and its norms. Despite staying at inns, Don Quixote remains detached from the major events that occur there, such as the reunion of the four lovers in the First Part.

### BACKGROUND

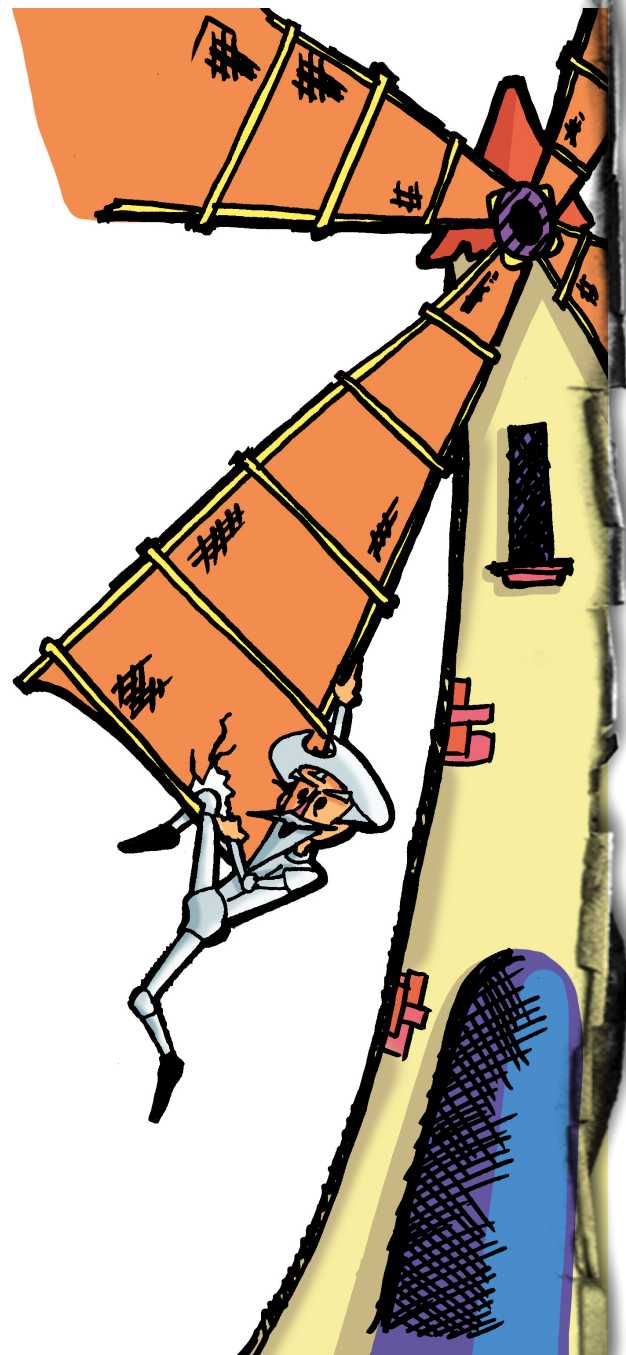
Born in 1547 to a modest Spanish doctor, Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra embarked on a military career at the age of twenty-one, serving in conflicts against Turkey and Italy on land and sea. However, in 1575, Cervantes and his brother were taken captive by pirates and sold into slavery to the Moors, Spain's Muslim enemies. After several failed attempts to escape, Cervantes was finally released in 1580 and returned to Spain.

Despite struggling financially for many years, Cervantes achieved great success and widespread acclaim with the publication of the first volume of *Don Quixote* in 1605. The novel became an instant hit, even inspiring an unauthorized sequel by a writer known as Avellaneda. Cervantes published his own second volume in 1615, but he passed away later that same year.

*Don Quixote* draws heavily on Cervantes's own experiences, including the presence of Algerian pirates on the Spanish coast, the exile of the Moors, failed escape attempts, battles showcasing Spanish bravery in the face of defeat, and the ruthless ruler of Algiers. Cervantes's own biases are also evident in the novel, particularly his distrust of foreigners.

During Cervantes's lifetime, Spain was at the height of its European power, buoyed by riches from its American colonies. However, Spain also suffered major defeats, such as the English's crushing victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588. *Don Quixote* reflects these historical events, with Chapter XXXIX of the first part recounting many of the battles in which Cervantes himself participated. Thus, the novel can be seen as a work of historical fiction.

Despite the tumultuous state of Spain during Cervantes's time, *Don Quixote* serves as a platform for discussing themes of human identity, morality, and art. While the Renaissance ushered in a new humanism in literature, popular writing continued to be dominated by romances about chivalrous knights. These stories often featured melodramatic encounters with giants, rescues of distressed princesses, and battles with evil enchanters.



The first volume of Don Quixote parodies these romances, with Don Quixote himself embodying the ideals of chivalry in ridiculous ways. However, the novel's First Part also attempts to describe a code of honor that could serve as an example for a Spain confused by war and technological advances. The Second Part provides further insight into questions of identity and codes of conduct through the nuanced characters of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

Cervantes also includes social and religious commentary in Don Quixote, criticizing the class structure in Spain and the arrogance of the aristocracy. The victory of old-fashioned goodness and wisdom represented by Sancho and Teresa Panza at the end of the novel stands in contrast to a world that values practicality over morality. Cervantes even touches on the church, with Sancho's self-identification as an "old Christian" reflecting a new morality. Throughout the novel, Cervantes grapples with the changes in the intellectual environment, as evidenced by the numerous discussions of playwriting, poetry, and literature.

The year 1997 marks the 450th anniversary of the birth of one of the most illustrious Spanish writers in history. His magnum opus, The Quixote (known as El Quijote in Spanish), sets him apart, making the birth of Don Miguel de Cervantes y Saavedra a truly global celebration.

### QUICK QUIZ (Answers are in Bold)

1- What year was Cervantes born?

1. 1447
2. **1547**
3. 1647
4. 1747

2- During Cervantes's lifetime, what was the source of Spain's wealth?

1. Indian spices
2. Chinese textiles
3. African slaves
4. **American gold**

3- The first volume of Don Quixote serves as a parody of \_\_\_\_.

1. **Romance novels**
2. Adventures
3. Religious parables
4. Histories

4- Much of the second volume of Don Quixote involves characters in \_\_\_\_ with one another.

1. Ideological conflict
2. Pointless, circular arguments
3. Confusing misunderstandings
4. **Sincere, meaningful engagement**

5- Don Quixote offers a bitter criticism of \_\_\_\_ in contemporary Spain.

1. Youth culture
2. Gender roles
3. **Class structure**
4. Colonialism



6- What initially causes Don Quixote's obsession with chivalry?

1. Friends who are knights
2. Sancho's stories
3. **The books he reads**
4. Falling in love

7- Which character bears the brunt of the punishments that Don Quixote incurs?

1. **Sancho Panza**
2. Rocinante
3. Dulcinea del Toboso
4. Don Quixote

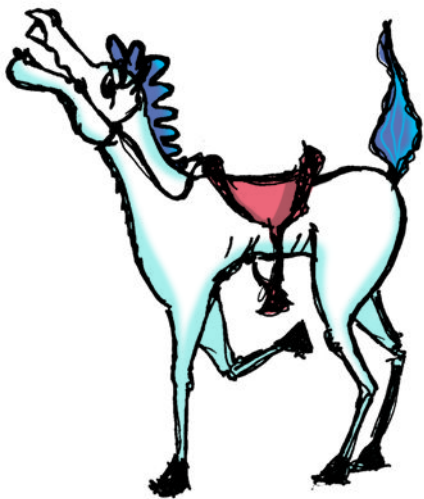


8- What becomes extinct with the death of Don Quixote?

1. Misguided heroes
2. Spanish Iguanas
3. Philosopher-kings
4. **Knights-errant**

9- What is Don Quixote's goal in life?

1. **To revive knight-errantry**
2. To travel the world
3. The Holy Grail
4. The fountain of youth



10- What are the names of Don Quixote's horse and Sancho Panza's donkey, respectively?

1. Esteban and Philippe
2. **Rocinante and Dapple**
3. Rocky and Bullwinkle
4. Dulcinea and Toboso

11- Where is Don Quixote from?

1. Perpignan
2. Madrid
3. Barcelona
4. **La Mancha**

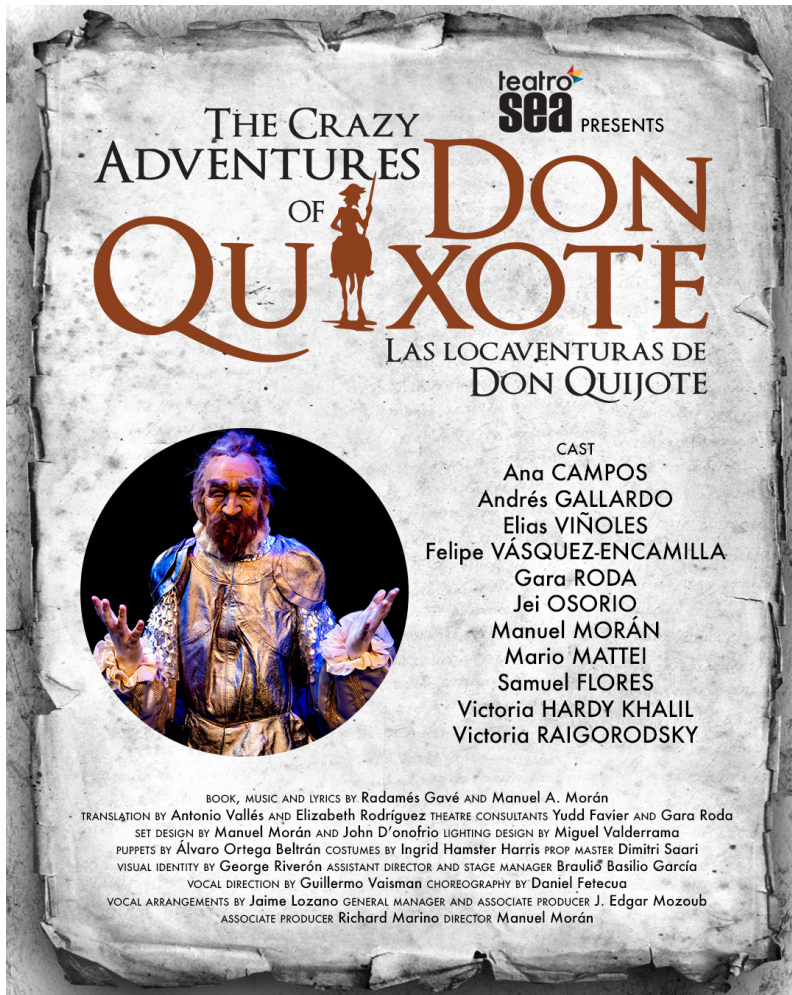
12- Which friends does Don Quixote find at his house upon his return home?

1. The bricklayer, the magistrate
2. The butcher, the doctor
3. **The barber, the priest**
4. The merchant, the apothecary

# THE CRAZY ADVENTURES OF DON QUIXOTE

## VOCABULARY

*\*Study these words to gain an improved understanding before viewing the play\**



- Bewitched- To place under one's power by or as if by magic; cast a spell over
- Bravery- the quality of not being afraid, being able to face danger
- Chivalry- the noble qualities of a knight, such as courage, honor, and readiness to help and protect the weak
- Destiny- an inevitable outcome that the future will bring
- Excalibur- the magic sword of King Arthur
- Feeble- physically weak, as from age or sickness; frail
- Honor- high regard or great respect given, a keen sense of right and wrong
- Illusion- something that deceives by producing a false or misleading impression of reality
- Joust- a combat with lances between knights
- Knight errant- a knight traveling in search of adventures in which to exhibit military skill, bravery, and generosity

- La Mancha- a plateau region in central Spain: famous as the birthplace of Don Quixote
- Peasant- any person of the class of farmer or farm laborer
- Quest- a journey in pursuit of adventure
- Siesta- a midday or afternoon rest or nap, esp. as taken in Spain and Latin America
- Spain- A country of southwest Europe comprising most of the Iberian Peninsula & the Balearic and Canary Islands.
- Squire- a young man who served a medieval knight as an attendant
- Steed- a spirited riding horse
- Tournaments- large events at which jousts and free-for-alls were held
- Virtue- general excellence, right action and thinking, goodness



## SPAIN IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Don Quixote, despite living in the 1600s, believed he was living in the Middle Ages, a period spanning from approximately 400 to 1500 AD. During this time, the land of Iberia, where present-day Spain, Portugal, Andorra, and Gibraltar are located, was contested by two groups: The Moors, who were North African Islamic followers that resided in the region of al-Andalus, and Christian Spain, who lived in the northern areas of Iberia, including Asturias-Leon, Navarre, Castile, Aragon, and Catalonia. In 1212, Christian Spain waged a crusade to take control of all of Iberia from the Moors, which lasted for 800 years and was known as the Reconquista.



Feudalism was the system of government followed in Christian Spain, where wealthy landowners possessed farmland and peasants, who lacked land ownership, worked on the farms in exchange for protection. Conversely, the Moors did not have a feudal system, and farmers grew their own crops to sell at markets. Towns in the Middle Ages celebrated fairs and other events where troubadours entertained and shared news, merchants sold goods, and knights held tournaments.

The food consumed during the Middle Ages varied depending on social status. The wealthy ate meat, but flour was costly, so bread was a luxury item. Peasants, on the other hand, primarily consumed peas, beans, rye and barley breads, and thick soups known as pottage.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION (QUESTIONS & POSSIBLE RETORTS)

Students should first read the biography of Miguel de Cervantes and discuss how his life is mirrored in the character of Don Quixote.

**How does Don Quixote's perception of reality affect other characters' perceptions of the world? Does his disregard for social convention change the rules of conduct for the other characters?**

In Don Quixote, the protagonist's unique perception of the world is a major theme, as is the effect this perception has on those around him. Don Quixote transforms ordinary people and objects into grandiose and fantastic versions of themselves, creating a divide between those who adapt to his imaginary world and those who oppose it. At first, characters like the barber and the priest try to coax Don Quixote back into reality, but to communicate with him, they must participate in his fantasies. Eventually, they learn to appreciate Don Quixote's world, despite not believing in it.

On the other hand, characters who resist Don Quixote's perceptions, like Sampson Carrasco and the Duke and Duchess, experience disruption in their lives. Sampson becomes a knight to seek revenge on Don Quixote, sacrificing his own beliefs to alter Don Quixote's world. Meanwhile, the Duke and Duchess find that their world is not so different from Don Quixote's, as events like Sancho's governorship align more closely with Don Quixote's vision than their own.

### **Discuss how Don Quixote's madness helped him? How did it hurt him?**

Don Quixote's madness both helped and hurt him throughout the novel. On one hand, it allowed him to live out his dream of becoming a knight-errant, which gave him a sense of purpose and adventure. His delusions allowed him to see the world in a more romantic and idealized way, which provided him with a sense of beauty and nobility in a world that he otherwise found disappointing. On the other hand, his madness caused him to behave in dangerous and foolish ways, which put himself and others in harm's way. His inability to distinguish reality from fiction led to his many misadventures, including his battles against windmills and other harmless objects.

### **Discuss Don Quixote's perception of the windmills as an enemy.**

**Questions to lead the discussion: Why do you think he saw the windmills this way?**

Don Quixote's perception of the windmills as an enemy was a result of his delusional thinking. He saw the windmills as giants, which was a common trope in the chivalric romances that he had read. In his mind, he believed that he was fulfilling his duty as a knight-errant by attacking these giants and protecting the innocent.



### **How could the windmills look threatening to someone?**

Windmills could look threatening to someone if they are unfamiliar with them or if they are seen in a particular context, such as during a storm when they are turning quickly. They may also appear large and imposing, especially if seen from a distance.

### **Why is that they especially look threatening to Don Quixote?**

The windmills look especially threatening to Don Quixote because of his delusional thinking. He sees them as giants, which he believes are his sworn enemies. In his mind, he is fulfilling his duty as a knight by attacking them.

### **What in his mind makes him think this way? What modern-day mediums have the power to influence people the way Don Quixote was influenced by his books?**

Don Quixote's delusional thinking is influenced by the books he has read about chivalry and knighthood. Similarly, modern-day mediums such as social media, television, and movies have the power to influence people's thinking and behavior, often in ways that may be harmful or irrational.

### **Discuss the idea of metaphor and how Cervantes uses it in the story to describe the things that Don Quixote sees. Who else uses metaphor? Where have you seen metaphor used especially?**

Cervantes uses metaphor throughout the novel to describe the things that Don Quixote sees. For example, the windmills are described as "four great giants," and the inn is described as a "castle." Other characters in the novel also use metaphor to describe their experiences, such as Sancho Panza, who compares himself to a "sack of potatoes." Metaphor is a common literary device used to create imagery and convey abstract concepts in a more concrete way. It can be seen in literature, poetry, and even everyday speech.



**What attitude does the novel take toward social class? How is social class a factor in relationships between characters?**

Don Quixote explores social class differences on various levels. The novel highlights Sancho's peasant status, the Duke and Duchess's aristocratic status, and Don Quixote's own genteel upbringing. However, the book does not ridicule any particular class more than others. Sancho's common sense exposes the foolishness of noblemen, but his lack of education and ignorance also make him appear foolish at times.

Moreover, Don Quixote looks beyond the boundaries of social class and sees the inner worth of the people he meets. His optimistic nature often leads him to imagine that people are of higher social classes than they actually are. For instance, prostitutes become ladies, innkeepers become lords, and country girls become princesses in his eyes.

Social class is frequently portrayed as a hurdle for characters to overcome in achieving their true desires. The pairs of lovers in the novel, for example, must navigate the difficulties of class differences to be together. Characters often resort to disguises, tricks, and imagination to overcome their social limitations and act on their genuine values.

**Like Hamlet's madness, Don Quixote's insanity is the subject of much controversy among literary critics. Is Don Quixote really insane, or is his behavior a conscious choice? What might account for the change in his behavior over the course of the novel?**

At the start of *Don Quixote*, the protagonist appears entirely insane, unable to distinguish people and objects, attacking strangers without provocation, and experiencing hallucinations. However, as the novel progresses, his madness takes on a different character. Don Quixote occasionally suggests that he is more aware than others believe him to be. He also begins to conform his behavior to the codes of chivalry prescribed in books, such as when he plans out his penance in the Sierra Morena. In the Second Part, his behavior becomes more stable and controlled when he feels melancholic or dissatisfied with his life as a knight-errant. Don Quixote even spends an entire chapter outlining his future life as a shepherd, seemingly fully in control of his faculties. Finally, he dies as his true self, Alonso Quixano.

There are several possible explanations for this apparent evolution in Don Quixote's sanity. One possibility is that he is genuinely insane at the beginning of the novel and gradually recovers. Alternatively, it could be that he acts more rashly than necessary in his initial burst of enthusiasm for knight-errantry and eventually learns to regulate his eccentric behavior. Another possibility is that Don Quixote is always sane, and Cervantes reveals this fact to the reader gradually, mirroring the experience of the protagonist's friends. It is also possible that Cervantes intended Don Quixote to be a simple, laughable madman but decided to add depth to the character by gradually bringing him out of his madness in the Second Part. Ultimately, Cervantes leaves the question of Don Quixote's mental health open to interpretation.

## **(QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED WITH AND/OR ANSWERED BY STUDENTS)**

Teachers, ask your students if they have a dream, a mission, or a vision for their lives? Encourage them to pursue what they truly desire, regardless of what others may think.

Ask them about their role models and whether they know of anyone who has followed their dreams despite opposition.

What are their thoughts on Don Quixote?

Do they hold him in high regard, or do they view him as a madman?

Can they think of anyone in their lives who embodies the spirit of Don Quixote?

Throughout Don Quixote, Cervantes claims that his novel is a true history about real people and based on documented evidence. Why does he make this claim? How do his games with history and authorship advance the themes of the play?

Many characters in Don Quixote serve as foils, or opposites, of other characters. What role do these opposed pairs play in developing the novel's themes?

What is the role of parody in Don Quixote? How does the story mock books of chivalry, and how does it defend them? Do the characters who mock and try to humiliate Don Quixote come across in a positive or a negative light?

Don Quixote highly values genuine romantic love, yet many of the love stories embedded in Don Quixote are resolved only through trickery. What is Cervantes implying if true love in the novel can be realized only by deceit?

## **ADAPTATION OF A NOVEL TO A PLAY (helpful if students have read the novel)**

In groups, students can discuss how the story was adapted for the stage. What was left out? What was added? Did the story change? If so, in what way? Why do you think the writer of the play chose to present the story in this way? What is it that the playwright wanted us to take from his story?

In groups, students can adapt another story of their choosing into a play script, taking into consideration what they would leave in and what they would take out. Would they add anything? How would their story change?

Have students' act out their own theatrical adaptations of a story.

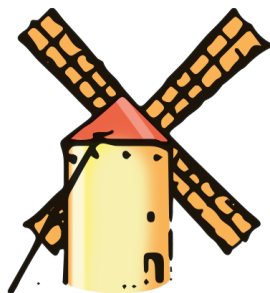
## **STUDYING THE TIME PERIOD**

Students can research customs, dress, courting, vocabulary, etc. from the medieval period and create a museum featuring all of their findings.

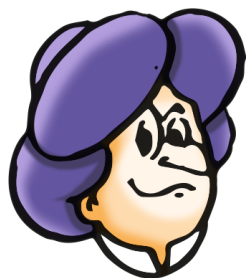
Students can compare and contrast modern-day customs, dress, courting and vocabulary to that of the medieval time period.





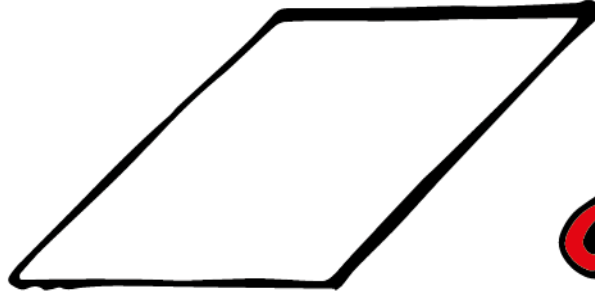
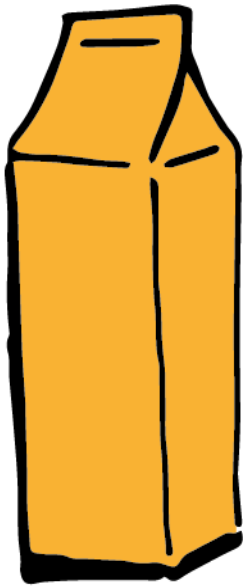


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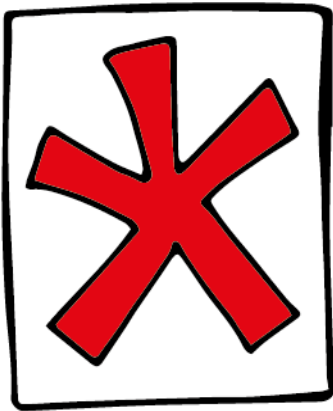




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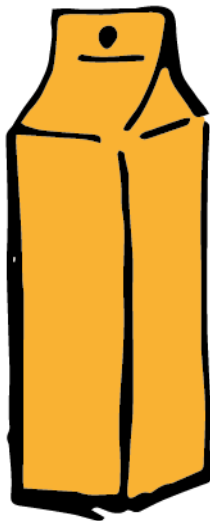
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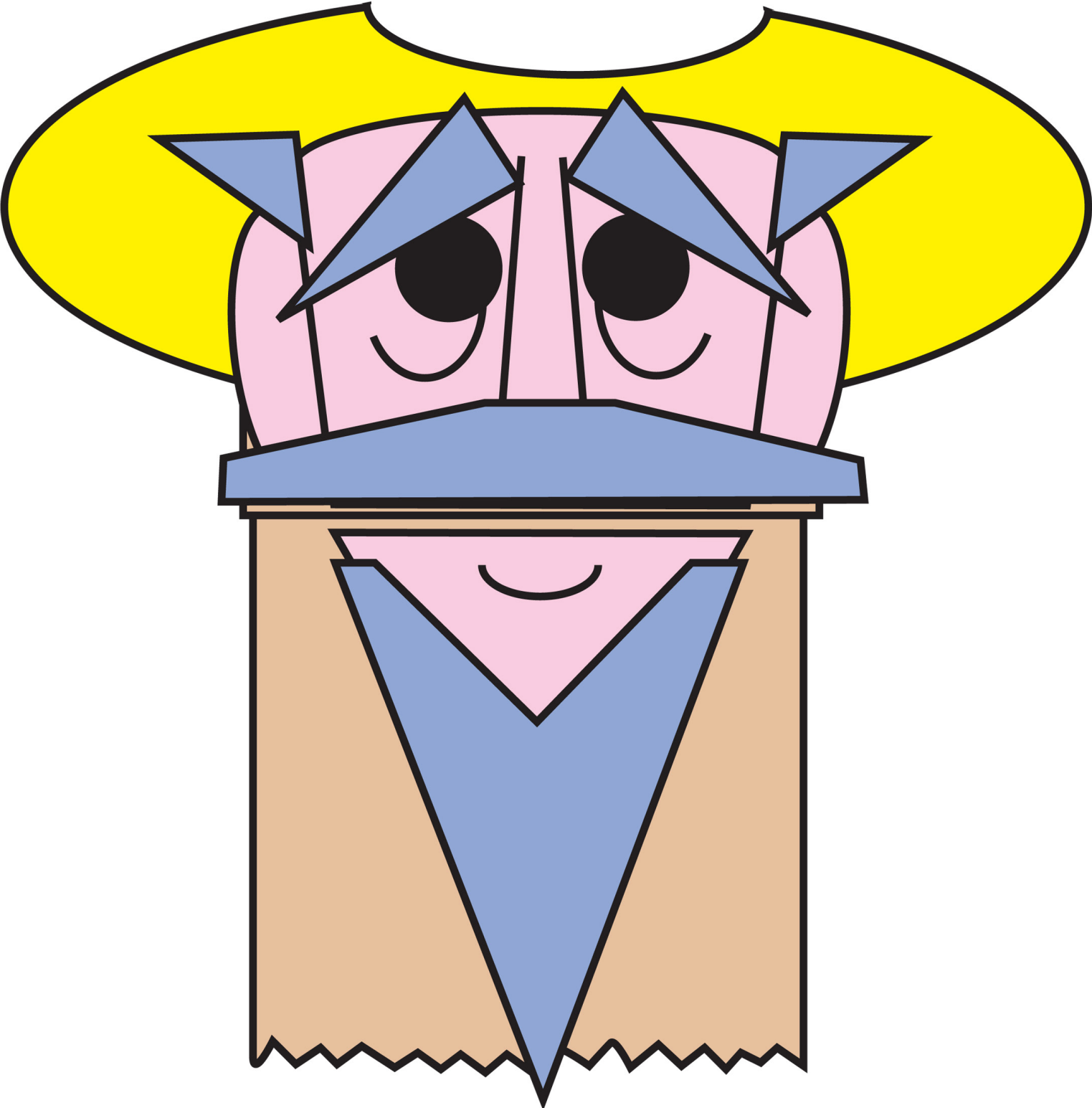


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6







TÍTERE DE DON QUIJOTE  
DON QUIXOTE PUPPET

