## Characters in *The Merchant of Venice*

**Use your electronic devices to look up the meaning of the following names. Record the meaning in the space provided.**

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| **Character** | **Meaning of Name** | **Brief Description** |
| **Duke of Venice** |  | Ruler who sits as the judge in the trial of Antonio, the merchant of Venice |
| **Antonio** |  | A merchant of Venice who borrows money from Shylock on behalf of his friend Bassanio. Antonio agrees to pay a pound of flesh if he defaults on the loan. |
| **Shylock** |  | A wealthy Jewish moneylender who seeks revenge for ill treatment by Christians. Because he is a tragic figure–and the most compelling character in the play–the drama takes on overtones of tragedy. |
| **Portia** |  | Wealthy heiress wooed by many suitors. Although often described by Shakespeare interpreters as noble, upright, and benevolent, a close reading of the play reveals her as a racist and a snob. |
| **Bassanio** |  | Friend of Antonio who loves Portia |
| **Prince of Morocco, Prince of Arragon** |  | Suitors of Portia |
| **Salanio, Salarino, Gratiano, Salerio** |  | Friends of Antonio and Bassanio |
| **Jessica** |  | Shylock's daughter |
| **Lorenzo** |  | Jessica's suitor |
| **Tubal** |  | Lorenzo's Jewish friend |
| **Launcelot Gobbo** |  | Clown and Shylock's servant |
| **Old Gobbo** |  | Launcelot's father |
| **Leonardo** |  | Bassanio's servant |
| **Balthasar, Stephano** |  | Portia's servants |
| **Nerissa** |  | Portia's maid |
| **Minor characters** |  | Magnificoes of Venice, officers of the Court of Justice, gaoler (jailer), servants of Portia, attendants |