

"The Misanthrope by Moliere

Discussion Questions

July 30, 2016

1. Do you think the characters are caricatures or do any of them seem like more fully-fleshed out? Does Moliere want us to find any of the characters worth of admiration?
2. Does the play carry a moral behind the social satire? Do you think Moliere wanted us to learn anything from "The Misanthrope" and, if so, what?
3. Do you consider "The Misanthrope" humorous? If so, which parts particularly tickled you?
4. Many of Moliere's play exposed hypocrisy of various social groups. What examples do you find in this play?
5. What is the author's attitude towards religion and how is that attitude displayed by Arsinoe?
6. Do you think Célimène can truly love?
7. Can you think of a literary precedent for Alceste?
8. Many characters mention active court cases, one which even takes Alceste out of the action in the middle of the play. What is the purpose of references to court cases?
9. What really happens in "The Misanthrope?" Does the abruptness of the dénouement really settle anything?
10. Much like Shakespeare, there isn't much known about Moliere's life. In fact, there is some speculation, again like Shakespeare, about the true author of the works attributed to him. Is this the work of a son of a wealthy upholstery merchant turned prolific author of farces, or, was Moliere a stage manager and actor who lent his name to these works?