

- Now try to do the scene as a pantomime with no words at all. Illustrate the emotions with your body language. When you have it down, add the language and the verse. This time, try to bring out the artificial quality of the language. Emphasis the rhythm of the verse and use the rhyme at the end of each couplet like punch lines.

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The
 Dramatic Classics
 Series

Molière Retold

A Modern Adaptation of the Classical Moliere plays

Tartuffe and The Misanthrope

Student & Teachers Guide

L4801DVD & L4802DVD

This program is designed for a general
 High School audience, grades 8 – 12.

Moliere (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin) was born in Paris on January 15, 1622. His father was one of eight valets de chambre tapissiers who tended the King's furniture and upholstery, so the young Poquelin received every advantage a boy could wish for. In 1643, at the age of twenty-one, he decided to dedicate his life to the theatre. Moliere worked feverishly to make his company the most respected dramatic troupe in Paris. He directed his own plays and often played the leading role himself. Moliere left behind a body of work which not only changed the face of French classical comedy, but has gone on to influence the work of other dramatists the world over. The greatest of his plays include *The School for Husbands* (1661), *The School for Wives* (1662), *The Misanthrope* (1666), *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* (1666), *Tartuffe* (1664, 1667, 1669), *The Miser* (1668) and *The Imaginary Invalid* (1673).

QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT, REVIEW & FURTHER STUDY:

Do you think that the characters and situations of these two plays *Tartuffe* and *The Misanthrope* translate into our times?

Is it a good idea to set them in a contemporary environment like the Los Angeles society or should they be performed in historic costumes and settings?

Is a realistic acting style appropriate to make the characters "real" or would it be better to develop artificial, allegorical characters who represent general human behavior like greed or jealousy.

RESEARCH: COMMEDIA DEL ARTE

If you could cast film or TV stars in the lead roles of plays who would you cast.

Misanthrope:	Celimene, 18 – 30, a big flirt. Arsinoe, 18-30, her jealous rival. Alceste, <i>The Misanthrope</i> , any age.
Tartuffe:	Orgon, 50 + , a wealthy business man. Tartuffe, any age, a religious impostor. Damis, Orgon's son, 20's. Elmire, Orgon's wife, 40 + Dorine, any age, the cheeky housekeeper.

EXERCISES FOR YOUNG ACTORS:

Take the scene between Alceste and Arsinoe (Act 3, Scene 5). Amanda Pajer, the actress in the film chooses to play the scene seductively even though the character is described as a prude.

- Play the scene one time seductively and then a second time as a shy prude.
- Rehearse the same scene with the emphasis only on the intensions of the characters.
To do this, ignore the verse and make up your own words for each moment of the scene.
Try to use only your own emotions and be as true as possible.
Try to have a normal, natural sounding conversation like with a friend.
- When you have the scene down try to play the same emotions and moments with the poetic text, using the verse dialogue instead of your own words.
Try to find a natural flow of the sentences without verse breaks.

(Continued on other side)