At this point in the play, after Hero is revealed to Claudio, Beatrice and Benedick are pretending that they don’t love each other.

**Benedick**
They swore that you were almost sick for me.

**Beatrice**
They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

**Benedick**
'Tis no such matter. Then you do not love me?

**Beatrice**
No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

**Leonato**
Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

**Claudio**
And I'll be sworn upon’t that he loves her;
For here's a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

**Hero**
And here's another
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

**Benedick**
A miracle! Here's our own hands against our hearts. Come, I will have thee. But by this light, I take thee for pity.

**Beatrice**
I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption.

**Benedick**
Peace! I will stop your mouth.

*Kissing her*

Starting with this conversation, explain how Shakespeare presents attitudes towards love in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Write about

- how Shakespeare presents attitudes towards love in this passage
- how Shakespeare presents attitudes towards love in the play as a whole.
<table>
<thead>
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**How does love cause suffering?**

**How might their language suggest a relationship of equals?**

**Does the audience believe this?**

**How does this link to match-making? Why is love seen to be important for Beatrice?**

**How does this relate to courtly love conventions? What does ‘halting’ tell us about Benedick?**

**Why is it important and unusual that Beatrice also follows courtly love conventions?**

**How does an audience respond to him feigning surprise?**

**How do the motifs of hands and hearts relate to inward and outward signs of love?**

**What do the possessive verbs ‘have’ and ‘take’ imply?**

**How is humour used by Shakespeare in his presentation of Beatrice?**

**How do Benedick’s words and the stage direction suggest his more dominant role at this point in the play?**
Attitudes to love in Act 5 Scene 4

_Much ado About Nothing_ by William Shakespeare

How does Shakespeare present _attitudes to love_ in the play as a whole?

Look at the examples below. Which of these could you use in your essay? What comments can you make about _context_ and _language_?

Once you have finished going through these, find your own useful quotations from the rest of the play, and when you are ready, have a go at answering the exam-style question.

Romantic/courtly love

**Claudio for Hero:** ‘Can the world buy such a jewel?’ ‘That I love her, I feel.’
**Benedick:** ‘Love me? Why it must be requited.’ ‘I will be horribly in love with her.’ ‘If I do not love her I am a Jew.’
**Beatrice:** ‘I will requite thee, taming my wild heart to my loving hand.’
**Claudio:** ‘the sweet youth’s in love.’ ‘The old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis balls.’
**Benedick:** ‘I cannot show it in rhyme. I have tried ... I cannot woo in festival terms.’

Match-making/interference in love

**Don Pedro:** ‘Thou wilt be like a lover and tire the hearer with a book of words.’
**Don Pedro:** ‘Thou lovest and I will fit thee with the remedy.’
**Don Pedro:** ‘to bring Signor Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection.’
**Don Pedro:** ‘we are the only love-gods.’

Suffering in love

**Leonato:** ‘she loves him with an enraged affection.’
**Claudio:** ‘she says she will die if he love her not.’
**Ursula:** ‘It were not good she knew his love, lest she’ll make sport at it.’
**Hero:** ‘let Benedick consume away in sighs, waste inwardly.’
**Benedick:** ‘I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.’

Sacrifice for love

**Beatrice:** ‘Kill Claudio.’

Cynical and anti-romantic attitude towards love

**Benedick:** ‘With anger, with sickness or with hunger, my lord; not with love.’
**Beatrice:** ‘wooing, wedding and repenting.’

Fickle/changeable attitude towards love

**Claudio:** ‘Farewell, therefore Hero.’
**Claudio:** ‘She’s but the sign and semblance of her honour.’
**Don Pedro:** ‘a common stale’
**Claudio:** ‘Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.’

Destruction of love

**Borachio:** ‘Tell them that you know that Hero loves me.’
**Don John:** ‘it would better fit your honour to change your mind.’

Endorsement of love/marriage as the ultimate goal

**Benedick:** ‘Prince, thou art sad. Get thee a wife, get thee a wife!’