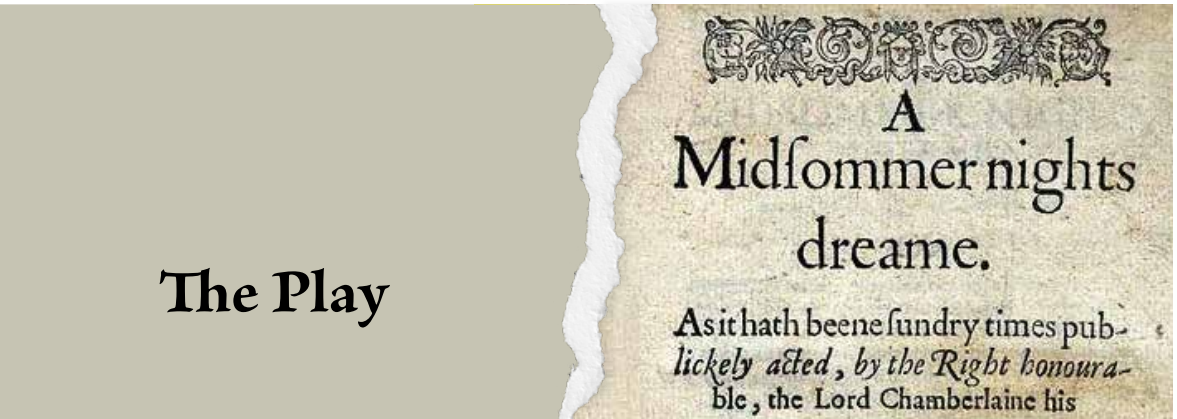


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## The Play



# A Midsummer nights dreame.

As it hath beene sundry times pub-  
lickely acted, by the Right honoura-  
ble, the Lord Chamberlaine his

### The Play

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* is one of Shakespeare's most famous comedies, and it is universally recognised as his first comic masterpiece. Unlike many of his other plays which take inspiration from one main, often historical, source, adding themes and details from others, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* he brings together elements from a range of different areas, from classical literature to romance stories and English folk tales, adding elements of day-to-day Elizabethan life to create a new dramatic style.

### When

The play was written in the mid-1590s, probably between 1594 and 1596, and is mentioned in a list of Shakespeare's works drawn up by the critic and scholar Francis Meres, in 1598. It takes its name after the summer solstice festival, when it was believed that a young woman may see the man she would marry, and it is thought to have been commissioned for an important wedding, though researchers have never discovered which one.

### Fairies

The play brings together four different worlds: the courtly world of Athens, the world of the four young lovers, the fairy world, and the world of the 'rude mechanicals', who are local tradesmen and would-be actors. The idea of a lavish show featuring fairies could have been inspired by a four-day event organised by Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, in 1591, in honour of Elizabeth I's visit to one of his estates, Elvetham Hall. It is thought that Shakespeare may have been present as a guest, or even as an actor, since there are a number of similarities between the celebrations and the play.

### Sources

Shakespeare takes the characters of the court of Athens, Theseus, the duke, and Hippolyta, the Amazonian warrior queen, from Greek mythology. The play has a 'play within the play', *Pyramus and Thisbe*, which comes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, as does the character Titania, the queen of the fairies. Shakespeare references the medieval poet Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* by borrowing the 'frame' of the play, the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta, from *The Knight's Tale*. This tale also features two noblemen who fall in love with the same girl and who run away to a forest to fight over her, which is similar to the lovers' story in

the play. *Huon de Bordeaux*, a 13th-century French poem, which became very popular in Renaissance England thanks to its translation into prose by John Bouchier, introduced the character Auberon, the king of the fairies, whom Shakespeare borrows and names Oberon.

### Folklore and daily life

The influence of folk culture is also present in the play with the fairy world being a mix of both courtly and popular traditions. The fairy king, queen and their attendants recall classical representations, whereas the character of Puck or Robin Goodfellow comes from rural folklore. Bottom and the other tradesmen draw heavily on Elizabethan daily life and doings.

#### 1 Write questions to which the following are correct answers.

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| a In the mid-1590s.   | f Greek mythology.              |
| b The summer solstice festival.                               | g Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> . |
| c An important wedding.                                       | h <i>The Knights Tale</i> .     |
| d Four.   | i Puck/Robin Goodfellow         |
| e Because of the similarities between the play and the event. | j Bottom and the tradesmen.     |

#### 2 Read the text once more. Highlight the things that we know about the play and the things that are suppositions (beliefs that have no proof). Share with a partner.

#### 3 Listen to this critic talking about the similarities between the pageant at Elvetham Hall and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Write them below.

- a .....
- b .....
- c .....
- d .....

#### 4 Look at this expression:

A **four-day** event was organised in honour of Queen Elizabeth I.

- a Why do we say 'four-day' and not 'four days'?
- b Use the same rule to rephrase these expressions:
- a holiday which lasts for two weeks
  - a girl who is ten years old

### THINK

#### 5 Shakespeare learned about the poem *Huon de Bordeaux* thanks to its translation. In groups discuss the importance of translation. What have you read in translation?

# The Main Characters

- 1
- Look at the characters below and read the texts. Highlight all the words which describe **relationships** and **positions**. Then find words to describe the characters' personalities. Make lists in your notebook, as in the example.

Character	Relationships, Position	Personality
<i>Theseus</i>	<i>Duke of Athens, Hippolyta's fiancé</i>	

## The Athenians



**Theseus**  
is the duke of Athens and a force of order and justice. He has claimed Hippolyta as his future wife.



**Hippolyta**  
is the queen of the Amazons and is about to become Theseus's bride.



**Philostrate**  
is organising the entertainment at Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding.



**Egeus**  
is an Athenian citizen and the father of one of the young lovers, Hermia. Even though he loves his daughter, he is also strict and thinks his daughter should obey him.

## The Young Lovers



**Demetrius**  
is a young Athenian gentleman who is in love with Hermia. He can be rude and even violent at times.



**Hermia**  
is an independent young Athenian woman, who stands up to her father, Egeus. She loves Lysander, and although she is beautiful, she is self-conscious about her height.



**Lysander**  
is a young Athenian gentleman who is in love with Hermia.



**Helena**  
is a young Athenian woman and Hermia's best friend. She is in love with Demetrius. She is intelligent, and seems strong and determined, but is unsure about her looks.

2 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a play based on contrasts. Some of these contrasts can already be seen here, in the character descriptions.

- a Find examples and underline the words used to express contrast.
- b Do you know any other expressions of contrast? Make a list.

### The Mechanicals



#### Nick Bottom

is a weaver and would like to be the leader of the group, despite his incompetence. He takes himself very seriously whereas nobody else does, and he is unaware of his own stupidity.



#### The Players

are a group of artisans who are also (very) amateur actors. They include **Peter Quince** (the leader of the group and director of the play), **Francis Flute**, **Robin Starveling**, **Tom Snout** and **Snug**. They are so foolish that their performance of the tragic play, *Pyramus and Thisbe*, is comic.

### The Fairies



#### Oberon

is the king of the fairies. He is jealous of Titania, but can also be kind and loving.



#### Titania

is the queen of the fairies. She is stubborn and becomes a victim of Oberon's jealousy and revenge. However, she also compromises and gives in to Oberon's wishes.



#### Puck

also known as **Robin Goodfellow**, is Oberon's servant. In spite of his loyalty, he is very mischievous and enjoys playing tricks when he can.





- 1 Read the text. Use the notes on the right.

# AS SHE IS MINE, I MAY DISPOSE OF HER

## ACT I SCENE I

### EGEUS

- 1 Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke!

### THESEUS

Thanks, good Egeus: what's the news with thee?

### EGEUS

- Full of vexation come I, with complaint  
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.  
5 Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,  
This man hath my consent to marry her.  
Stand forth, Lysander: and my gracious duke,  
This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my  
child;  
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her  
rhymes,  
10 And interchanged love-tokens with my child:  
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,  
With feigning voice verses of feigning love,  
And stolen the impression of her fantasy  
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds,  
conceits,  
15 Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats,  
messengers  
Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth:  
With cunning hast thou filch'd my  
daughter's heart,  
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,  
To stubborn harshness: and, my gracious  
duke,  
20 Be it so she; will not here before your grace  
Consent to marry with Demetrius,  
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens,  
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:  
Which shall be either to this gentleman  
25 Or to her death, according to our law  
Immediately provided in that case.

Egeus greets the duke, and Theseus asks him what news he has.

Egeus tells the duke that he is angry with his daughter, Hermia. He says he has given his permission for Demetrius to marry her but that Lysander has won her heart in all sorts of devious ways, for example by writing her poems, singing to her and giving her lots of worthless jewellery and gifts.

He says that Lysander has not only won her heart, but also made her disobedient towards him, her father.

Egeus asks the duke's permission to enforce an old law that states that a father can choose his daughter's husband or, if she refuses, punish her with death..

**THESEUS**

What say you, Hermia? be advised  
fair maid:

To you your father should be as a god;  
One that composed your beauties, yea,  
and one

- 30 To whom you are but as a form in wax  
By him imprinted and within his power  
To leave the figure or disfigure it.  
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

**HERMIA**

So is Lysander.

**THESEUS**

- 35 In himself he is;  
But in this kind, wanting your father's  
voice,  
The other must be held the worthier.

**HERMIA**

I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

**THESEUS**

Rather your eyes must with his judgment  
look.

**HERMIA**

- 40 I do entreat your grace to pardon me.  
I know not by what power I am made  
bold,  
Nor how it may concern my modesty,  
In such a presence here to plead my  
thoughts;  
But I beseech your grace that I may know  
45 The worst that may befall me in this case,  
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

Theseus talks to Hermia, telling her that it was her father who made her, in all her beauty, and it is her father who can decide to destroy that same beauty. He tells her that Demetrius is a gentleman of value.

Hermia says that Lysander is a gentleman, too.

Theseus agrees but points out that, in this case, he is not the one chosen by her father, and so Demetrius is of greater value.

Hermia wishes that her father could see things from her point of view.

Theseus says it must be the other way round: she must see things from her father's viewpoint.

Hermia begs the duke's forgiveness for speaking like this to someone in his position. She asks him to tell her the worst that could happen to her if she refuses to marry Demetrius.



**THESEUS**

Either to die the death or to abjure  
For ever the society of men.

Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires;

50 Know of your youth, examine well your  
blood,

Whether, if you yield not to your father's  
choice,

You can endure the livery of a nun,  
For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,

To live a barren sister all your life,

55 Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless  
moon.

Thrice-blessed they that master so their  
blood,

To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;

But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,

Than that which withering on the virgin  
thorn

60 Grows, lives and dies in single blessedness.

**HERMIA**

So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,

Ere I will yield my virgin patent up

Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke

My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

**THESEUS**

65 Take time to pause; and, by the next new  
moon--

The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,

For everlasting bond of fellowship--

Upon that day either prepare to die

For disobedience to your father's will,

70 Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would;

Or on Diana's altar to protest

For aye austerity and single life.

Theseus says that she would either  
be killed or forced to become a nun.

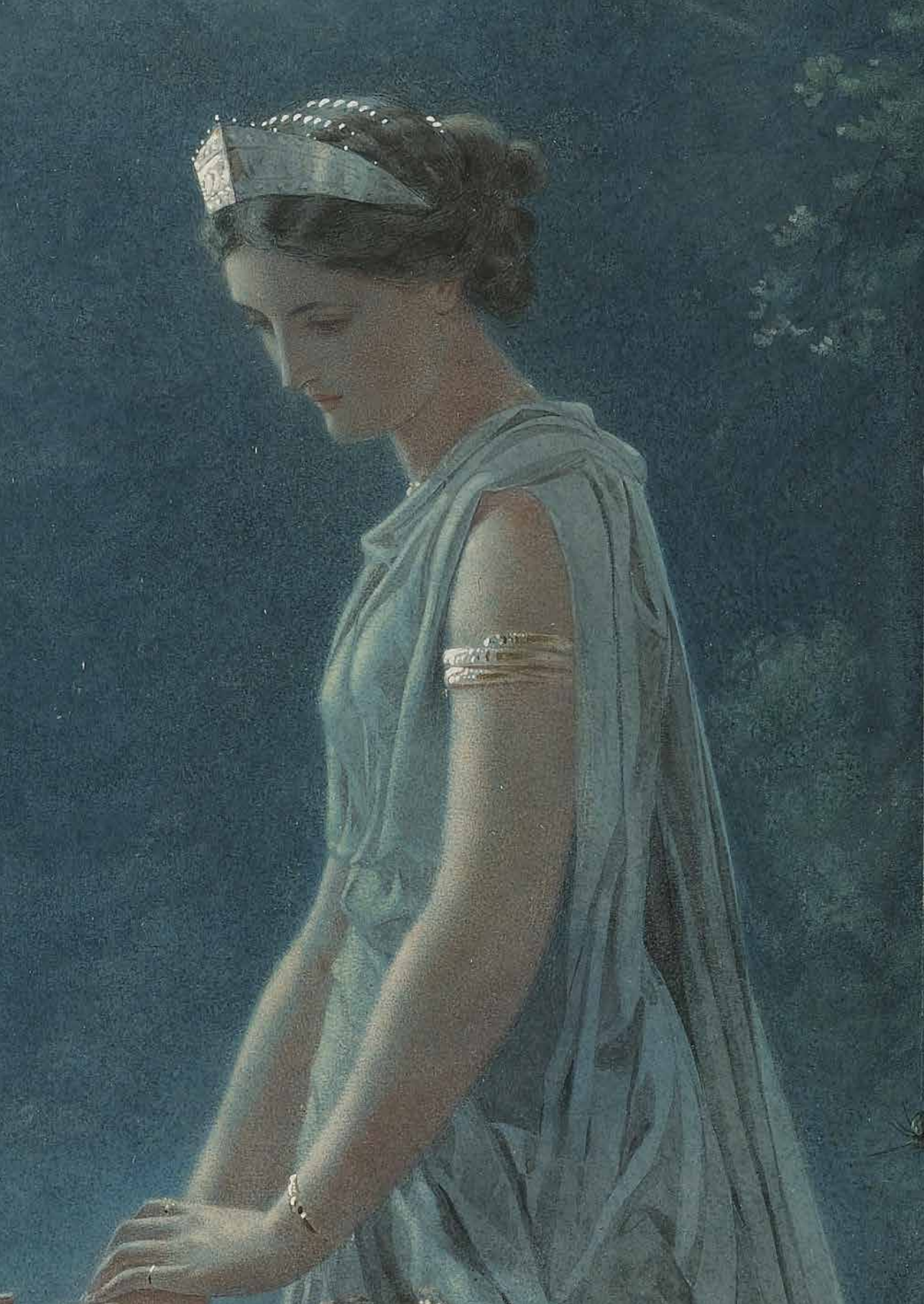
He tells her to think carefully about  
whether she could bear the life of  
a nun, living in seclusion, a virgin,  
unmarried and without children for  
the rest of her life.

He says that women who enjoy  
physical rather than spiritual pleasures  
are happier.

Hermia says she would rather  
live the life of a nun than marry  
Demetrius.

Theseus tells her to think about it.  
He says that she has four days, until  
the date set for his own marriage,  
to decide whether she wants to die,  
to marry Demetrius, or to become  
a nun.






# Understand and Analyse

## UNDERSTAND

- 1 Answer the following questions.
  - a Who wants to marry Hermia? Who does Hermia want to marry?
  - b Why does Egeus come to speak to Theseus?
  - c Theseus gives Hermia three alternatives to choose from. What are they?
- 2 Does Hermia seem to give in to her father's wishes? Where in the text can you understand this?

## ANALYSE


- 3 What can you deduce about Hermia's character from this scene? Choose the best adjectives and explain your choices.
 

a <input type="checkbox"/> compliant	e <input type="checkbox"/> easily persuaded
b <input type="checkbox"/> courageous	f <input type="checkbox"/> obedient
c <input type="checkbox"/> decided	g <input type="checkbox"/> strong-willed
d <input type="checkbox"/> defiant	h <input type="checkbox"/> submissive
- 4  In pairs, compare Theseus and Egeus.
  - a Do they agree on the choice that Hermia must make?
  - b Do they address the issue with the same self-control?

## THINK

- 5 The play begins with a show of power – who or what is in a position of power and who must obey? Describe the power hierarchies evident in this opening scene. Refer to Theseus, Egeus, Hermia and the law of the land.

## OVER TO YOU

- 6  Do you think that children should always obey their parents? When do you think a son or daughter is old enough to make their own decisions? Should we always consult our parents or guardians when we make important decisions? Share ideas in groups.

## PRODUCE

- 7 Write a letter to either Hermia or to Egeus. Explain your point of view on their difference of opinion and tell them what you think they should do.

# Vocabulary Building

“With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds,  
conceits / Knacks, trifles...”

## Jewellery and accessories

- 1 Explain the difference between the following to a partner.

- a a wedding ring and an engagement ring
- b a bangle and a bracelet
- c cuff links and a tie pin
- d a locket and a pendant
- e a brooch and a badge
- f a ruby and a sapphire
- g hoop earrings and studs
- h beads and a chain

- 2 The following materials can be used to make jewellery.  
In pairs, find translations for each one.

amber	ceramic	coral	diamonds	emeralds	enamel
glass	platinum	resin	shells	silver	stones
				wood	

- 3 Write the materials from Exercise 2 in the table below. Some can be in more than one category. Add more of your own.

Metals	Stones	Manufactured materials	Natural materials

- 4 Match the hats with their names.

- a baseball cap
- b beanie
- c beret
- d boater
- e bucket hat
- f cloche
- g flat cap
- h sun hat



- 5 In pairs, talk about the hats. Would/Do you wear them? On what occasions?  
Which hat would you never wear? Why?

- 6 Go to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* online and do the vocabulary worksheet.



## CULTURE Greek Influences



**1 Read the text quickly, then choose a title from below for each paragraph. There is one extra title.**

- Greek influence in Ancient Rome
- Rituals in Greek society
- Shakespeare's sources
- The aims of comedy
- The structure of Greek comedy
- Why Theseus?

**a** .....

When Shakespeare wrote *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, he used a number of sources from the cultural world of Ancient Greece. The frame of the play is set in Athens, Theseus and Hippolyta are both characters from Greek mythology (see pages 120-121), references to Greek gods and goddesses appear throughout the story, and *Pyramus and Thisbe*, the play which Nick Bottom and the mechanicals will perform at the wedding, comes from Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which is a reworking of Greek and Roman myths (see pages 52-53). In this way, Shakespeare pays tribute to Ancient Greek culture and, in particular, Ancient Greek comedy.

**b** .....

Comedy was one of the three main genres in Ancient Greek theatre, along with tragedy and satyr, and together they form the foundation of modern theatre. Comedy was popular across Ancient Greece from the 5th century BCE, and popular authors included Aristophanes and Menander. It followed a six-part structure: the introduction, the *parados*, the *agon*, the *parabasis*, the *episode* and the *exodus*. The introduction outlined the basic story and the *parados* contained the opening songs and dances which were performed by the chorus. The *agon* or contest was a ritualised debate between two stock characters offering different positions on a current topic or issue. The *parabasis* was the moment in which the chorus talked directly to the audience about current topics and issues. The *episode* presented farical scenes based on the *agon*, and the *exodus* typically showed a celebration or a wedding with songs and dances.

**c** .....




Ancient Greek comedy was rich in satire, and the actors often made fun of prominent figures such as politicians, philosophers and other playwrights. Political satire was disguised in farcical performances, and the choral songs and dance routines could be vulgar and rich in sexual innuendo. The chorus often wore spectacular costumes and were often dressed as animals or mythological creatures, while the main characters wore everyday clothes with grotesque masks on their faces.

**d** .....

Theseus was a mythical king and, according to some legends, the founder of Athens. He is famous for killing the terrible Minotaur, (a terrible monster with a bull's head and a man's body) to whom fourteen of the most virtuous young men and women of Athens were sacrificed each year. Likewise in Shakespeare's play, Theseus is a symbol of justice, order and stability.

**e** .....


Ovid's *Metamorphoses* also deals with myth and legend, and is a collection of stories written in the form of a poem in 15 parts. Ovid, a Roman poet (43 BCE – 17 CE), took inspiration from Greek sources and gathered his stories under the common theme of metamorphosis or transformation. He used his imagination and fine writing style to elevate the stories he borrowed into a great work of art, which speaks about love and passion just as much as it does about transformation. One of the stories is that of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, which is featured in Shakespeare's play, too.

- 2  Look at the underlined words. Discuss their meaning in pairs.
- 3   Listen to this description of some of the recurring features in Shakespeare's comedies. In pairs, find at least 5 similarities with Greek comedy.

## INDEPENDENT LEARNING

- 4 Aristophanes is considered to be 'the father of comedy'. Find out more about this writer and the influence he had on modern literature.

## OVER TO YOU



- 5  Think about cinema and TV in your country. Which films or programmes do you associate with the words below? Share ideas in groups.
  - farce
  - satire
  - stock characters
  - witty dialogues
  - dressing up and disguise
  - happy endings

# From Reading to Performing



- 1 Before you listen, predict how each character will deliver their parts. Use these words and add some of your own.

angrily   bravely   calmly   defiantly   diplomatically  
fairly   impatiently   self-righteously   sensitively

- 2   Listen and see if you were right. Discuss the tone used by each character. Try for yourself. Read the script aloud with the recording and then without. Imitate reading speed, intonation and tone for all three voices.

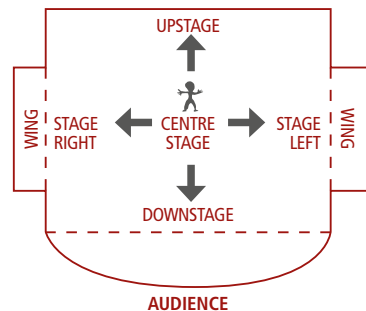
## POWER AND CONTROL

The opening scene of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* introduces the themes of power and control, which are central in the play.



### ON STAGE!

Position and height can be used to convey messages about hierarchies, power struggles, submission and rebellion. Downstage centre is more powerful than upstage right or left. These areas are called **power points**.

**Levels** can also affect the power balance between characters. For example, a dominant character can stand behind a weaker one. This is also called **status placement**.









- 3 Think about a time in your life when you felt confident, or a time when you felt powerless.**
- a**  In small groups, talk about your experiences.
  - b** Take turns in your groups to create 'tableaux' – still images made using your bodies – to represent the experiences. Think about power points and levels when you make your image. Show your tableaux to other groups.
  - c**  Now add a short dialogue and some minimal movements to create brief scenes. Perform your scenes for the other groups.
- 4 Look at these photos of two different performances.**
- a** For each picture, say if the relationship between the characters seems to be one of dominance/submission or equality.
  - b** Look at the pictures again. What is it about the characters that puts across the idea of dominance/submission or equality? Are there any other ways to communicate hierarchy?



## PERFORM

- 5**  Go to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* online and download the script for this extract.
- a**   Listen to the recording once more and make notes about the characters' delivery on the script.
  - b** Think of the characters' positions on stage, remembering that you want to show power, respect of power, and refusal to obey power.
  - c**  In groups of three, perform the scene.

# Test Yourself

## AS SHE IS MINE, I MAY DISPOSE OF HER

1 Find words or expressions in the extract that mean the following.

- a anger; distress .....
- b poem .....
- c disobedience .....
- d happen to .....
- e vow; promise .....

2 In this scene, there are several pairs of words that were synonyms at Shakespeare’s time, or which were meant as such in the play. Find two examples of this in the extract.

3 Who is who? Complete the text by filling each gap with ONE name.

The play begins in the palace of (1) ....., duke of Athens. With the help of (2) ....., who will be in charge of the ceremony, the duke is going to marry (3) ....., queen of the Amazons, and he wants the whole community to start preparing for the feast. Then (4) ..... arrives, looking troubled and annoyed. He has promised his daughter (5) ..... to a gentleman called (6) ....., but she is determined to disobey her father and marry (7) ..... instead.

4 Turn the following statements into the passive. Decide whether or not to mention the agent.

- a Egeus greets the duke.
- b Egeus has given Demetrius his permission to marry his daughter, Hermia.
- c Egeus claims that Lysander has won Hermia’s heart in devious ways.
- d Egeus hopes the duke will enforce an old law.
- e Theseus and Hippolyta have already set the date of their marriage.

► ..... / 26 marks

## VOCABULARY BUILDING

5 Complete the sentences with words from Exercise 1 on page 23.

- a We didn’t know he was a policeman until we noticed a ..... on his jacket.
- b It was not unusual for our grandmothers to have a miniature portrait of a beloved person inside a ..... that they wore around their neck.
- c She wore a beautiful silver ..... pinned to her lapel.
- d ‘No, it can’t be a ....., it’s not red!’

► ..... / 4 marks

## CULTURE

### 6 Make questions about the underlined information.

- a In this play, Shakespeare pays tribute to Ancient Greek culture.
- b Comedy, tragedy, and satire form the foundation of modern theatre.
- c The actors often made fun of prominent figures, such as politicians, philosophers, and other playwrights.
- d The opening songs and dances were performed by the chorus.
- e Fourteen of the most virtuous young men and women of Athens were sacrificed each year to the terrible Minotaur.

### 7 Match the two halves of the following sentences. There are two extra options.

- a ☐ Instead of retelling a familiar story,
- b ☐ Ovid's *Metamorphoses*
- c ☐ Although Ovid's is the oldest version of the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe,
- d ☐ The *parados* was normally
- e ☐ It was not unusual for actors in ancient Greek comedy

- 
- 1 was not written by the well-known Latin writer.
  - 2 the very first part of a Greek comedy.
  - 3 not very different from the *exodus*.
  - 4 was one of the most important sources for the play.
  - 5 the story of the two lovers already existed as a legend.
  - 6 to satirize personalities in Athens.
  - 7 Shakespeare used a number of sources, mainly from Greek mythology.

► ..... / 10 marks

► TOTAL ..... / 40 marks



## Exam Practice

### **F** B2 FIRST ENGLISH TEST: READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 1

**TIP:** This section tests your knowledge and understanding of similar words.

- Read the title and think what the text may be about. This will help you to activate vocabulary and ideas.
- Read the text quickly ignoring the gaps and the options. This will help you get the main idea of the text.
- Read the text once more. This time stop at each option, looking carefully before and after the gap.
- Then look at the options. If you aren't sure of the answer, cross out any answers that you think are incorrect.
- With the remaining options, try to make similar sentences in order to help you make a decision.

**Read the text below and decide which option (A, B, C, or D) best fits each gap.**

#### AROUND THE WORLD

In Act II, Scene I, Puck **(1)** ..... that he can travel round the earth and be back in forty minutes, while Oberon, in Act IV, Scene I, says that he and his fairies can 'compass the globe swifter than the wandering moon'.

Both of these statements **(2)** ..... reference to something that every person in the audience **(3)** ..... have known about, something that had happened a decade earlier, and that had provided people with a new way of imagining the world.

Shakespeare was expressing his nation's pride in Sir Francis Drake's great accomplishment. Drake, in 1580, had successfully circumnavigated the globe, **(4)** ..... the first Englishman and **(5)** ..... the second man in history to sail a ship round the earth. Drake was **(6)** ..... as a hero on his return to England. Thanks to his voyage, it was now possible to have a visual representation of the globe's limits, and the fact that it could be crossed by a ship created unprecedented opportunities. This was just the most recent of a series of events that were changing people's **(7)** ..... forever. Exploration and scientific discoveries were altering the **(8)** ..... by which previous generations had lived until then.

- |                 |               |               |             |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1 A admits      | B speaks      | C rumours     | D boasts    |
| 2 A made        | B did         | C meant       | D owned     |
| 3 A would       | B could       | C shall       | D will      |
| 4 A being       | B finding     | C becoming    | D coming    |
| 5 A accordingly | B even        | C only        | D alone     |
| 6 A made        | B hailed      | C avowed      | D called    |
| 7 A conception  | B perception  | C reflection  | D inception |
| 8 A suspicions  | B persuasions | C assumptions | D theories  |

## **F** B2 FIRST ENGLISH TEST: SPEAKING PART 3

**TIP:** This part of the exam is called the Collaborative Task, this means you and your partner will score higher marks if you work as a team. Listen attentively while your partner speaks and treat her/him as an equal. If you disagree with what s/he says, do so in a respectful way.

### **Tasks for Candidates A and B:**

#### **1 Discuss the question below in pairs.**

differing interests
jealousy

family

**Does true love always have obstacles?**

similar background
time together

friends

#### **2 Decide which two of these can cause the most problems.**

## Exam Practice

### **F** B2 FIRST ENGLISH TEST: READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 2

Read the text below and think of the word which best fits each gap. Use only ONE word to fill each gap.

Whether (1) ..... not Shakespeare drew inspiration from folklore and mythology in conceiving the world of the wood in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, it strongly reminds us (2) ..... the unconscious or subconscious part of our mind, the part most commonly associated with imagination and artistic creation. Most critics agree that it is this part of the mind that we have to engage in order to understand this amazingly meaningful play. When we think of the play as following the logic of a dream (3) ..... than that of the real world, we can accept the series of illusions and shifting identities, as well as all the other instances of irrationality that we encounter as the plot develops. Some characters wake up from their dreams dazed and (4) ..... a sense of alienation and little memory of what happened to them, and there are other specific references to dreaming throughout the play. In the closing speech, Puck (5) ..... the audience hoping that everybody enjoyed the play, and if they didn't, perhaps it was all a dream anyway.

Even (6) ..... Theseus openly condemns the illusion of the imagination as expressed by lovers and poets, comparing them to madmen, it was reason and rationality – in the form of the law in Athens – that caused all the problems in the (7) ..... place. And it was what happened in the wood that helped solve these (8) ..... . The world of the wood, the world of dreams and poetry, is where the complications of the plot are resolved allowing the comedy (9) ..... end happily. The magic of this fairy world removes the potential violence of the events, producing only positive effects. By highlighting the weakness of Theseus's rationality. Shakespeare is at his ironic best, suggesting that dreams and imagination can (10) ..... as valuable as reason and logic.

**F B2 FIRST ENGLISH TEST: READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 4**

**TIP:** Contracted forms (ex. don't, I'm, we'll) will count as two words.

**Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and four words, including the word given.**

**Example:**

0 *It is possible that the play was written for a performance at a wedding.*

**MAY**

The play MAY HAVE BEEN WRITTEN for a performance at a wedding.

1 Egeus has promised his daughter Hermia to Demetrius.

**BEEN**

Hermia ..... Demetrius by her father Egeus.

2 If she doesn't marry Demetrius, Hermia will be punished.

**UNLESS**

..... Demetrius, Hermia will be punished.

3 'I'm sorry I've made that mistake', said Puck.

**WISH**

'I ..... made that mistake,' said Puck.

4 Helena hates people making fun of her.

**LAUGH**

Hermia hates ..... her.

5 Helena felt that her best friend had let her down badly.

**DISAPPOINTED**

Helena felt ..... friend.

6 Queen Elizabeth I refused many proposals that were made to her.

**DOWN**

The queen ..... many proposals that were made to her.



# Shakespeare Wordbank

**Character** The characters are the people in a story, play or poem.

**Comedy** Comedy is a type of drama that is amusing in tone and that has a happy ending, usually after the characters overcome a set of difficulties.

**Context** The situation (social, historical, biographical and geographical) in which a text is written.

**Dialogue** The words that the characters say to each other. Other types of speech include *monologue* (when only one character speaks) or *soliloquy* (when a character speaks alone and reflects on his/her feelings).

**Drama** A literary genre which begins as a written text but which is meant for performance. A single piece of drama is known as a *play*.

**Figures of speech** Phrases and expressions that use words in a figurative way. The most common figures of speech include *metaphor* (when something with similar characteristics is used to describe the original), *simile* (when something with similar characteristics is compared to the original, using 'as' or 'like').

**Form** How a poem or piece of writing appears on the page.

**Genre** A type of literature. For example, drama is a literary genre.

**Performance** When a script is acted out on stage, on screen or on the radio.

**Play** A piece of drama. The author of a play is called a *playwright* or *dramatist*. Plays can be divided into acts, and acts can be subdivided into scenes. A scene usually covers a single event in a single setting.

**Poem** Piece of writing with the words arranged in separate lines, often using rhyme, and chosen for the ideas they suggest and sounds they create.

**Rhyme** Same sounds usually at the end of lines (rhyme-time). Rhymes can create patterns and these patterns are often indicated by using the letters of the alphabet (A, B, C, etc.) to mark rhyming words. The pattern generated is called the 'rhyme scheme'.

**Sonnet** A type of poem of which the earliest examples were Italian. Petrarch established the form with his *Canzoniere* (1366-1374) influencing poets worldwide.

**Stage directions** In a play, they are the instructions and information given by the playwright which accompany the dialogue. They are usually in italics to distinguish them from the dialogue. They can give information about the characters, their physical appearance and their feelings and behaviour as well as their actions, movements, facial expressions and gestures.

**Story(line)** In drama, the storyline is the main events given in chronological order.

**Theme** The central idea of a work, usually expressed in abstract terms, such as 'evil', 'love', etc.