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## A Midsummer Night's Dream for Middle School

Diana Nash

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**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**A Master of Fine Art's Thesis**

**By Diana Nash**

**MFA Theatre: Theatre Directing**

**Lindenwood University**

**Spring 2001**

COMMITTEE IN CHARGE OF CANDIDACY

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## Prospectus

William Shakespeare wrote plays for the masses -- the aristocrats as well as the common people. While his dramas, tragedies, and comedies were controversial, sometimes bawdy, and always physical, in the twentieth century, secondary school educators have come to think of Shakespeare's plays as literature for academic study. Middle schools rarely cover any Shakespearean plays in the classroom. Students traditionally start to study Shakespearean scripts in high school. In high school, freshman usually read Romeo and Juliet; sophomores read Julius Caesar, Macbeth, or Hamlet. Most secondary curriculums do not include a Shakespearean comedy.

While it is true that occasionally a high school produces a Shakespearean play, middle school directors shy away from his work. Perhaps directors and teachers fear the language, the length, or the literary complexity. However, if these plays were originally written and produced for common, uneducated audiences, why are they considered off limits for educated middle school students?

This thesis addresses whether Shakespearean plays, specifically A Midsummer Night's Dream, can be a productive, enjoyable part of a middle school student's education. The thesis will be five chapters long. The first chapter will discuss several productions of A Midsummer Night's Dream. The chapter will address various directors' adaptations: scripts, sets, and costumes. Chapter Two will analyze the script. The third chapter will be an original version of A Midsummer Night's Dream written specifically for middle school students. Chapter Four will review information gathered before, during, and after Francis Howell Middle School's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. Chapter Five will review whether this production was a productive,

enjoyable part of the middle school actors', crew's, and audiences' education.

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## Chapter One:

## Shakespeare For Middle School?

William Shakespeare's plays are rarely found in middle school curricula. While drama is a normal part of 6th, 7th and 8th grade language arts texts, nothing as challenging as Shakespeare is found in those books. Why not? A common explanation is that his plays are simply too difficult for middle school students to understand. I decided to challenge tradition. This thesis asks and answers the question: Can Shakespeare be successfully taught in middle school?

First, I had to decide which Shakespearean play was most appropriate for middle school. Peggy O'Brien, a national expert on teaching Shakespeare, wrote that students should be introduced to his works in the fourth grade, recommending Macbeth as their first play; eighth graders, according to Ms. O'Brien, like Henry II (O'Brien 10). While her opinions are based on extensive experience, I was afraid to try a major Shakespearean drama.

My experience directing middle school productions indicated that the students like comedy. Since I prefer comedy to drama, I decided that producing a comedy would at the very least be enjoyable. The Taming of the Shrew is my favorite Shakespearean play, but like most of his plays, the production only has a few female roles. Also, the content tends to be adult in nature. After interviewing several middle school teachers, I decided A Midsummer Night's Dream would be a better choice than The Taming of the Shrew. The play offers a better potential male/female balance than most Shakespearean plays. In addition, the story line is more appropriate for middle school students than The Taming of the Shrew. Finally, a fellow director had performed

in A Midsummer Night's Dream and directed the play twice. She became my resource person during the production (Devino).

Next, I needed a clear definition of "successfully taught." I used several criteria:

1. I would review and adapt the play as needed for middle level.
2. The students would produce the play.
3. Supplementary teacher aids would be used to enhance learning.
4. Students would evaluate the production.

First, I read and edited the play. I chose a cast from the approximate 100 students who auditioned and who applied for the various parts and positions. I asked language arts and social studies teachers if they would like to participate in the Shakespearean unit. If so, I wanted to know what types of supplementary materials they wanted to use in their classrooms. Finally, I surveyed and interviewed the teachers and students before and after they saw the production.

The idea of rewriting Shakespeare seemed sacrilegious until I discovered that all Shakespearean plays are rewrites (Scott 356). As a matter of fact, A Midsummer Night's Dream is the most popular Shakespearean comedy in modern times (Vaughn 370). In the 17th and 18th century, it was fashionable to play Midsummer in an adapted form. For example, The Merry Conceit of Humours of Bottom the Weaver, a light comedy based on the mechanicals' plot, was produced in 1661. David Garrick turned the play into a full-scale opera in 1775 (Scott 370). The musical version of A Midsummer Night's Dream was produced in the 1900s. Felix Mendelsohn's acclaimed score which includes the classic "Wedding March" was written for A Midsummer Night's Dream.

My edition of A Midsummer Night's Dream, found in Chapter Three of this thesis, is based on Alan Dubrand's Shakespeare Made Easy, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Modern English Version Side-By-Side With Full



Original Text. I also used A Shakespeare Glossary by C. T. Onions and Charles Boyce's Shakespeare A to Z as resource guides. The script is primarily based on Dubarand's Modern Version. I did not modify or shorten the plot, but I did exclude and change language as needed. Many of the long speeches are gone or reduced to several lines. The mechanicals always speak in prose as they do in the original Durband script. All other characters speak in poetry.

The technical aspects of the production posed interesting questions. A Midsummer Night's Dream was written for a famous or royal couple's wedding (Durband 15). While most of Shakespeare's plays were produced in The Globe Theatre, this one may have been produced at a wedding reception as well. Regardless of where the play was first performed, several things are known about Shakespeare's Elizabethan Theatre. First, minimal set and props were used; the characters were dressed in fine Elizabethan clothing; and the productions played to the lower, middle, and upper classes (Durband 12). Add to these restrictions the fact that William Shakespeare rarely, if ever, wrote stage directions, and it is certain that the staging, costuming, and lighting for A Midsummer Night's Dream is the product of centuries of directorial decisions.

Movies have best recorded these directing decisions. Dieterle and Reinhardt's 1935 film version starring James Cagney, Mickey Rooney, Olivia DeHavilan and Dick Powell costumed the fairies in gowns and wings dancing through the woods. The set and costuming is appropriate for Italy in the early 1600s. Micheal Hoffman's 1999 production starring Kevin Kline, Michelle Pfeiffer, Rupert Evertt and Calista Flockhardt is set in the late 1800's. The fairies are much like those in the earilier Dieterle film: angelic, winged spirits in a magical

wood. The mortal story, however, is costumed and set in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Italy.

Most directors choose to produce Midsummer as a period piece. Since the play takes place in Athens, a director could chose the fashion of early 17th century Italy for the lovers and the royals, or she could decide to duplicate Shakespeare's Elizabethan costuming.

My production, however, was contemporary. Several artists' work influenced my decision. The 1996 film, Romeo and Juliet directed by Baz Luhrman, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes is set in contemporary times. The middle school students I surveyed, particularly the girls, enjoyed this film. Although the movie script was in verse, students said they understood the story (Student Survey November). My second source for a modern setting was Peter Brook's production. He directed Midsummer at the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford upon Avon in 1970. Ignoring 300 years of directing tradition, Brook's play took place in a white rectangular room with cushions for the actors to sit on. Ropes and trapeze were suspended from the ceiling allowing the fairies to perch overhead, observing the mortals. Brook's modernized Midsummer was a success because it focused on the language: its imagery, lyricism, and fantasy (Vaughn 377).

My production took place in a contemporary American Midwestern town. The students and I chose VanGogh's "Starry Night" for the backdrop. We used large cubes for our set. When I did not have enough cubes for the wedding scene, I used chairs. The costumes were also modern. The royals dressed in country club fashion: upscale summer dresses, khakis and polo shirts. The lovers wore conservatively stylish clothes: dark jeans, black slacks, and name brand shirts like Old Navy and Tommy Hillfiger. Students called this group "the preps." The fairies' were costumed as hippies, clad in faded jeans and

decorated shirts. We used face paint to create their magical characters. Music and lighting reinforced the action. They also helped the audience differentiate between the reality and the fantasy scenes.

After I laid the ground work, I addressed my second criteria: students would produce the play. This is my standard for teaching all drama. Plays are meant to be seen, not read. If at least two-thirds of communication is nonverbal, a script gives the reader two third or less of the story. A written play is a two dimensional blueprint for a larger than life experience. The trained eye can see the potential on the page, but a novice can not comprehend the vision hidden in the dialogue. Even so, language arts teachers traditionally have students either read plays to themselves or, more commonly, aloud to the class. To enhance the dramatic experience, the teacher usually explicates as the students read (O'Brien 10).

Shakespeare, like most playwrights, wrote his plays to be performed, not read (O'Brien 2). Imagine how the fight scene between Hermia and Helena can be reduced to an emotional zero as students stumble over the lines from behind their desks. Or consider how Bottom's transformation to an ass can be overlooked unless the class sees him stride into the room with a donkey's head on his shoulders.

Shakespeare is commonly taught for at least two years in high school. The Cannons in the Francis Howell School District Language Arts Curriculum requires Romeo and Juliet the freshman year and Hamlet and Macbeth the junior year (11). Students spend two years reading Shakespearean tragedies. Ivor Brown stated, "Like most schoolboys I have been sickened of Shakespeare, by education. I was wearied almost to revolt by the examination business of commenting and annotating. By the age of eighteen, I was allergic almost beyond hope of therapy"

(Qtd. in Epstein 4). Clearly listening to a play poorly read is academic torture, while watching or participating in a play can be a dynamic experience.

Finally, theatrical productions offer authentic or real life learning situations. The traditional teaching model presents information through lectures, readings, and paperwork. For example, the students would read the play. Teachers would use objective tests, work sheets and essays to assess student retention in the traditional model. In this traditional setting, students answer questions and take tests on the play they read. Authentic lessons, like enacting plays, invite authentic assessment: evaluating student learning by seeing what the student can do with the presented information. Students are evaluated on how they work during the play.

District and state educational standards have historically required traditional student assessment, such as final exams. Now Missouri's "Show Me Standards" include performance and critical viewing as required secondary skills. The Francis Howell School District High Schools require that all courses give a final examination that counts as twenty percent of the student's final grade. Ten percent of the examination must be an authentic assessment, and ten percent must be comprehensive exam (Francis Howell Board).

Authentic assessment, such as play productions, forces teachers and students to be involved with class content, causing higher student retention than lectures or reading and writing assignments. Tell a student something, and he or she will remember less than five percent of what he or she has heard. Have the student read something, and retention might increase to ten percent. Worksheets and other written exercise may push the student to remember nearly twenty percent. If a student actually uses the content to do something, retention increases

to seventy-five percent or beyond. When students teach other students learning jumps to ninety percent retention (Learning).

Students in the cast and crew of A Midsummer Night's Dream reported clearly understanding the play. While the actors grasped the characters and story earlier in the production than did the crew members, by the time the show went up everyone understood the play (Francis Howell). Some of my most rewarding memories are students explaining the story to other students. Cast members taught crew members, who taught other crew members. As each layer of the production, (lights, sound, costumes, and props) was added, A Midsummer Night's Dream became a middle school play that the audience could understand.

Frankly, I was not sure our viewing audience would get it; however, I was determined to make their trip to the theatre a success. Approximately a third of our middle school students signed up to see the play. I offered all the teachers a summary, character packet, vocabulary crossword, Globe Theatre history, Shakespeare biography, and an Elizabethan costume page. Teachers requested several other types of lessons: color pages, a writing exercise, and a history of marriage. These sheets are in the appendices of this thesis.

Teachers started coming up with their own supplementary materials, making them available to one another. One teacher showed an excellent videotape on William Shakespeare from the Arts and Entertainment's show Biography. Another teacher simplified scenes from the play that her students performed in class. Teachers asked cast and crew members to explain the production to their language arts and social studies classes. As the show dates grew closer, the excitement in the building grew. Faculty members were asking if their classes could be squeezed into the building performance. Ticket sales for the evening

performance had been slow. Suddenly students and parents were buying tickets for the evening show.

With all the frenzy of a production date looming, I still was not sure if the audience would understand the play. This thesis asked the question whether A Midsummer Night's Dream can be successfully taught in middle school. The night before the show opened it occurred to me the answer may be "no." I took some comfort in knowing the fifty students involved in the production had learned a great deal; however, I was not prepared to disappoint the audience.

Since our performances started as early as 9:00 AM and as late as 7:00 PM, surveying and interviewing was the only way to measure the play's success. We performed four times in our building during the school days as well as once in the evening at the high school auditorium. By the end of the first performance day, student and teachers were giving the play excellent reviews. We still had to work on volume and timing, but teachers and bright students understood the play. Shakespeare wrote for the masses. Did the middle school masses understand the play?

Clearly, my students entertained their fellow classmates. No one needed a survey to measure the laughter when Bottom turned into an ass or the gasp of surprise when Hermia slapped Lysander across the face. Yet, objective analysis required a more scientific evaluative tool than comments, laughter, gasps or applause. The survey and interview results found in Chapter Four of this thesis indicate that student appreciation for Shakespeare and A Midsummer Night's Dream doubled. True, some students reported never understanding the play, but they were a small group. Even those students when interviewed said they understood parts of the play. Frequently, the less diligent students enjoyed the mechanicals more than any of the other characters. One

students reported the mechanicals reminded him of The Three Stooges (Francis Howell Student).

In post-production interviews, students made revealing comments. A boy commented that producing A Midsummer Night's Dream in its entirety showed respect for the middle school student body. The class agreed. They were tired of middle school literature books that were censored for their protection. Several groups applauded the actors' abilities to memorize and make all the lines easy to understand. Many students discussed the costuming. "I loved the hippies!" "The donkey's head was hilarious!" Gags like the mechanicals crashing into each other each time they entered the stage were big successes. Of course the fight scenes were a favorite (Francis Howell Student).

Francis Howell Middle School's A Midsummer Night's Dream was not perfect. Fortunately, I believe that educational theatre is not about perfection; it is about experience. My students made Shakespeare come to life for their school. The cast and crew included academically poor students as well as excellent students. Two cast members who were repeatedly celebrated for their performances, Titania and Bottom, struggled to make "C's" in their middle school courses (Midsummer Cast). Clearly, both of these below average students were more successful on stage than in a classroom.

Producing A Midsummer Night's Dream is not about academic or intellectual gifts; it is about artistic enthusiasm. I was concerned going into this project. I learned a great deal during the production; however, one thing that stands out is if a director is brave enough to challenge a literary giant like Shakespeare, her cast and crew will march full behind her.

Chapter Two:  
Analyzing A Midsummer Night's Dream

A script never starts at the beginning of a story. The dialogue includes the previous action that tells the director and actors where the script joins the characters. The given circumstances found in the script determine the setting. (Hodge 18). They include:

- (1) environmental facts (the specific conditions, place, and time);
- (2) previous action (all that has happened before the action begins); and
- (3) polar attitudes (point of view toward their environment held by the principle character) (Hodge 18).

As the director discovers the given circumstances, he or she can decide how the play will come to life, moving from the past forward to the present when the play takes place (Hodge 10).

The dialogue is not only the key to understanding the given circumstances, but it also determines the dramatic action, characters, and ultimately the playwright's ideas (Hodge 10). The ideas are the play's core meanings: philosophical statements that unfold through the dramatic action (Hodge 47). The dramatic action is divided into rhythmic beats. These beats or units have their own moods and tempos (Hodge 50).



A *Midsummer's Nights Dream* Script Analysis

[The following citations are from my adaptation of the play found in Chapter Three]

I. Given Circumstances

A. Environmental facts

1. Geographical location, including climate

a. The play is set in the town and a nearby wood.

Lysander: "We plan to sneak out of town."

Hermia: "And in the wood, where you and I often met . . ." (78).

Quince: ". . . meet me in the palace wood, a mile outside the town" (81).

b. Act One, Scene One, is set on the Duke's estate.

Stage Directions, "Athens, The Duke's Estate. Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate, and the Attendants" (73).

c. There is a green spot and some hawthorn bushes in the wood where the mechanicals practice.

Quince: ". . . here is a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green spot shall be our stage, this hawthorn bush our house . . ." (94).

d. The mechanicals' play is set in a fictitious wood. The play set includes a great wall.

Quince: "Then there is another thing; we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisbe, says the story, did talk through the crack in the wall" (95).

e. The main characters in the mechanicals' play, Pyramus and Thisbe, meet at Ninus' tomb.

Flute: "I'll meet you at Ninny's [Ninus'] tomb" (96).

f. The fairies are from fairyland.

Titania: "When you [Oberon] have stolen away from fairy land,  
 . . ." (84).

Titania: "I would not sell my child for all of fairy land  
 . . ." (85).

g. Act 5, the wedding celebration, takes place at the Duke's  
 estate. The mechanicals perform their play at the estate.

Snug: "The Duke is coming from the temple" (120).

Bottom: "The Duke has dined. Get your apparel . . . No more  
 talking: away . . ." (120).

When the newlyweds go to bed, they move directly from one room  
 in the Duke's house to another.

Theseus: "Come now, what dances do we have to wear away the  
 time between supper and bed?" (121).

Theseus: "It is midnight. Lovers, to bed" (131).

Immediately after the wedding party walks away, Puck blesses  
 the Duke's palace.

Puck: "Now until the break of day,

Through this house each fairy stray.

To the best bride-bed will we,

Which by us shall blessed be;

So shall all the couples three . . ." (132)

h. It is warm outside.

The mechanicals rehearse outside.

Quince: ". . . meet me in the palace wood, a mile outside  
 the town, in the moonlight. We will rehearse: . . ." (81).

The lovers sleep outside.

Lysander: ". . . you [Hermia] are tired from wandering in the  
 wood.

. . . We'll rest, Hermia, if you think it is good

And wait for daylight to travel on" (89).

Lysander: "It is dark and I have lost my way, I need to rest"  
(111).

Demetrius: "If I ever find you in the daylight. Now, go away;  
I'm going to lay down right here . . ." (112)

Helena: "What a long night.

. . . I'll sleep until the daylight . . ." (112)

2. Date: year, season, time of day

a. A Midsummer Night's Dream covers four summer days and  
nights: April 28, 29, 30, and May 1.

Hippolyta: "Four days will pass into night,

Four nights will quickly dream away,

And we [she and Theseus] will see our wedding day" (73).

b. Act Two and Three takes place at night in the woods.

When Hermia and Lysander plan to run away together, they plan  
to meet at night.

Hermia: "We must not see each other until tomorrow night"  
(78).

The mechanicals rehearse in the woods at night.

Quince: ". . . I ask you, request you, and desire you, to  
know them [the lines] by tomorrow night; meet me in the wood  
. . ." (81).

The couples wander through the woods at night.

Hermia: "Dark night, I can see nothing" (104).

Lysander: "It is dark and I have lost my way, I need to rest"  
(111).

c. Act Five takes place at the couples' wedding reception.

Theseus announces the exact date in Act Four: May Day, May 1.

Theseus: "Today my bride, Hippolyta, and I are off to the wood to celebrate May Day with a morning hunt" (116).

Later in Act Four, Theseus invites the lovers to wed at his marriage ceremony that evening.

Theseus: "When we get married tonight . . . , these couples shall be married, too" (118).

d. The mechanicals' play takes place at night.

Quince: ". . . there are two hard things, that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight" (94).

### 3. Economic environment

There are four economic groups represented in A Midsummer Night's Dream: the royals, the lovers, the fairies, and the mechanicals.

a. The main royal character, Theseus, is a duke. His title implies that he is wealthy.

Egeus: "Theseus, our renowned Duke!" (73).

b. Theseus owns an estate or palace, which includes the town's forest.

Quince: ". . . meet me in the palace wood . . ." (81).

Quince: "We will meet at the Duke's oak tree" (82).

c. Theseus employs Philostrate, a personal assistant.

Theseus: "Is there a play to fill these quiet hours?"

Philostrate: "Here, mighty Theseus."

Theseus: "What is there to amuse us?"

Philostrate: "Here is a list of the shows that ready.

Which would like to see" (122)?

d. The Duke and Hippolyta celebrate their wedding day with a May Day hunt, an expensive activity.

Theseus: "Today my bride, Hippolyta, and I are off to the woods to celebrate May Day with a morning hunt" (116).

Theseus: "Tell the huntsman to wake them [the lovers] with their horns . . ." (117).

e. The mechanicals expect to be paid very well for performing at the Duke's wedding reception.

Snug: "We would have made a fortune if we could have put on the play" (120).

f. The lovers are not as financially well off as the royals are; however, they are well off. Lysander demonstrates his wealth while courting Hermia, and refers to Demetrius and his financial position when defending his right to wed Hermia.

Egeus: "And [Lysander has] stolen her heart with bracelets Made of your hair, rings, trinkets, flowers, . . ." (73).

Lysander: "I am, my Lord, from a family as good as his [Demetrius'],

I am as wealthy as he: my love is more than his;

My fortunes every way equal his, . . ." (75).

g. Lysander also has wealthy relatives.

Lysander: "Listen, I have a wealthy, widowed aunt, . . ." (76).

h. The mechanicals are working men.

When Peter Quince, a carpenter, calls the roll, he states each person's occupation.

Quince: "Nick Bottom, the weaver?" (79).

Quince: "Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?" (80)

Quince: "Robin Starveling, the tailor?" (80).

Quince: "Tom Snout, the tinker?" (80).

Quince: "Snug, the joiner. . ." (80).

In Act Five the Philostrate also announces the mechanicals' financial class when Theseus asks who the player are.

Theseus: "Who are the actors?"

Philostrate: "Craftsmen and laborers, that work here in town,  
 . . ." (122).

i. The fairies' economic system is not based on money, but on royal position: title, land, and subjects.

Titania is the queen of the fairies.

Fairy: "And I serve the fairy queen [Titania] . . .

Our queen and all her elves will be here soon" (82).

Oberon is the king of the fairies.

Puck: "The king [Oberon] will have a party here tonight"  
 (82).

Titania has a mortal child that she says was given to her. Oberon says she stole the child. The boy creates a power struggle between the two.

Puck: "For Oberon is violently angry  
 Because she [Titania] stole a lovely boy,  
 And jealous Oberon wants the child" (82).

Oberon: "I merely want the little boy for my attendant."

Titania: "Set your heart at rest;  
 I would not sell my child for all of fairyland" (85).

Oberon: "Give me that boy, and I will go with you."

Titania: "Not for your entire fairy kingdom" (85).

#### 4. Political environment

a. The law recognizes marriage.

Theseus: "Now, fair Hippolyta, our wedding is near  
 . . ." (73)

Quince: ". . . to play in our performance before the

Duke and the Duchess at their wedding" (79).

Oberon: "Wedded, with Theseus and his bride,  
 . . ." (116)

Snug: "The Duke is coming from the temple. There are two  
 more couples to be married" (120).

b. The government is a monarchy.

Egeus: "Theseus, our renowned Duke!" (73).

Qunice: ". . . to play in our performance before the Duke  
 and the Duchess at their wedding" (79).

Qunice: ". . . make the Duke say . . ." (81).

Qunice ". . . you would frighten the Duchess . . ." (81).

c. Fathers have the legal right to select their daughter's  
 husbands.

Egeus: "This man [Demetrius] has my consent to marry her  
 [Hermia] . . ." (73).

Egeus: ". . . she will not marry Demetrius,

She is my daughter; I can decide her fate;

Which shall be either to marry this gentleman [Demetrius],

Or die" (73).

Theseus: "It is within his [Egeus'] power to leave you  
 [Hermia] as your are, or destroy you" (74).

Hermia: "What is the worst that may happen to me,  
 If I refuse to wed Demetrius?" (74).

Theseus: "You may never see a man again.

. . . If you do not marry your father's choice,

Can you endure living as a nun?" (74).

Theseus: ". . . live forever a lonely, single life,

For disobedience to your father's will,

Or else to wed Demetrius" (75).

d. Women are legal possessions ruled by their fathers or husbands.

Egeus: "And she [Hermia] is mine, and I give her to Demetrius" (75).

Oberon: "Wait, rash woman; I am your lord?"

Titania: "Then I must be your lady;" (84).

e. The royals have legal power over the commoners.

Bottom: "I grant you, friends, if you should frighten the ladies out of their wits, they [the duke and his friends] would have no more discretion but to hang us;" (81).

Theseus: "I overrule you, Egeus [concerning his daughter's marriage]

When we [Theseus and Hippolyta] get married tonight in the temple, these couples shall be married, too" (118).

f. The fairies live in a monarchy.

Fairy: "And I serve the fairy queen [Titania], . . . Our queen and all her elves will be here soon" (82).

Puck: "The king [Oberon] will have a party here tonight;" (82).

Puck: "Fear not, my lord [Oberon]; your servant shall do so" (88).

Puck: "Captain of our fairy band [Oberon]" (102).

Puck: "Believe me, king of shadows [Oberon], I made a mistake" (109).

Oberon: "Now my Titania, wake my sweet queen" (115).

g. Theseus' kingdom has fought in a war.

Oberon: "I know your love for Theseus,

Didn't you lead him after a war

Through the glimmering night . . ." (84)



Theseus: "We'll have none of that. I've already told my love enough war stories" (122).

h. Children are property. They are owned and can be stolen.

Puck: "Because she [Titania] stole a lovely boy for her attendant.

She's never had so sweet a boy.

And jealous Oberon wants the child" (82).

Titania: "I would not sell my child for all of fairyland.

. . . she [his mother] was mortal and died in childbirth.

And for her sake I rear up her boy,

And for her sake I will not part with him" (85).

Oberon: "Give me that boy, and I will go with you."

Titania: "Not for your entire fairy kingdom" (85).

#### 5. Social environment

a. The community respects Duke Theseus' position. Citizens, such as Egeus, come to him for solutions to their problems.

Egeus: "I come to you a father in distress,

Furious with my daughter Hermia" (73).

Egeus supports Theseus' choice even when Theseus disagrees with Egeus.

Theseus: "I overrule you, Egeus.

When we [Theseus and Hippolyta] get married tonight in the temple, these couples shall be married, too" (118).

b. Weddings are a major social event.

Hippolyta: "Four days will pass into night,

Four nights will quickly dream away,

And we [she and Theseus] will see our wedding day" (73).

c. Courting is a social norm.

Egeus: "You, you Lysander, you have given her [Hermia]  
poems,

And exchanged love-tokens with my child:

You have serenaded her in the moonlight,

And stolen her heart with bracelets . . ." (73).

Lysander: "He [Demetrius] chased Nedar's daughter, Helena,

And won her heart: and the sweet lady,

Still dotes and worships this unfaithful man" (75).

Lysander: "Just as you [Helena] dote on Demetrius, may he dote  
on you" (78).

d. Romantic problems are a normal part of courting.

Lysander: "Ah me! For all that I have ever read,

The course of true love never did run smooth;" (76)

Hermia: "To be too high born to love a commoner,

Or too old to be engaged to someone young."

Lysander: "Or else to have your family chose."

Hermia: "O hell! To have anyone choose your love.

If true lovers have forever been crossed,

These troubles stand as a rule in life.

Then let us learn patience,

Because this is a normal cross to bear" (76).

e. Perceived beauty is a reason for romantic struggle.

Helena: "Throughout town I am thought as beautiful as she  
[Hermia].

But Demetrius does not think so;

And as he is wrong to dote on Hermia,

So I am wrong to dote on him.

But before Demetrius wanted Hermia,

He showered me with oaths that he was only mine;" (78).

f. Fighting and trickery are a part of romantic relationships.

Demetrius tries to trick Lysander with words.

Demetrius: "Relent, sweet Hermia, and Lysander, give up  
Your crazed desire to have what is mine." (75)

Lysander: "You have her father's love, Demetrius:  
Let me have Hermia's:

"[Pointing to her father] Why don't you marry him?" (75).

Demetrius pursued Helena, won her heart, and quickly abandoned  
her.

Lysander: "He [Demetrius] chased Nedar's daughter, Helena  
And won her heart: and the sweet lady,  
Still dotes and worships the unfaithful man" (75).

Helena tries to trick Demetrius.

Helena: "[an idea] I will go tell him [Demetrius] that fair  
Hermia's is running away;

Then he will go to the wood tomorrow night

Pursue her; and for this information,

If I have his thanks, that will be all I have.

But at least I will get to see him again" (78).

Demetrius rejects Helena.

Demetrius: "I do not love you, stop chasing me . . ."

Helena: "You make me love you, hard-hearted man, . . ."

Demetrius: ". . . I tell you in plainest truth

That I do not, I cannot love you?" (87).

Demetrius: "Go away! If you follow me, believe me

I shall do you mischief in these woods."

Helena: "[glad] Yes, in the temple, in the town, the field

Do me mischief. Oh, Demetrius!" (88).

Lysander breaks up with Hermia.

Hermia: "Why are you [Lysander] so rude: What changed you,  
My sweet love"

Lysander: "Your love? Get out you wench!" (106).

Rivalry for Helena causes a fight between Demetrius and  
Lysander.

Demetrius: "I say I love you [Helena] more than he can."

Lysander: "If you do, prove it."

Demetrius: "Come on" (106).

Lysander: "Demetrius, I will keep my word and fight you"  
(106).

Hermia loses Lysander to Helena, so Hermia fights with Helena.

Hermia: "You [Helena] cheat! You liar,

You common slut! What, did you sneak in at night

And steal my lover?"

Helena: "Will you keep on until I have no choice but to tear  
you apart with my words? You are such a puppet! You are so  
easy!"

Hermia: "A puppet? Easy? Why! Oh, that is the way the  
game goes. How is it that I am so low, and you so high on a  
pedestal? I am not yet so low that my nails can not reach  
into your eyes" (107).

g. Social mores and the law allow the father to arrange his  
daughter's wedding, or at least require his consent before a  
match is made. Egeus chooses Cemeteries for his daughter  
Hermia's husband. She, however, is in love with Lysander.

Egeus: "Come here, Demetrius. [To the Duke] Sir,

This man has my consent to marry her.

Come here Lysander: and, [To the Duke] sir,

This man has bewitched my child:

. . . Because of this, she will not marry Demetrius,  
 She is my daughter; I can decide her fate;  
 Which shall be either to marry this gentleman,  
 Or die" (73).

h. True love is a source of great happiness.

Theseus: "Here come the lovers, full of joy and happiness"  
 (121).

i. Young people believe they should marry a spouse they love.

Lysander: "But I have the advantage over Demetrius  
 The beautiful Hermia loves me.

Why shouldn't I protect my right" (75).

Hermia would rather remain single than marry a man she does  
 not love.

Theseus: "If you do not marry your father's choice,  
 Can you endure living as a nun?" (74)

Hermia: "So I will live, my lord,  
 Before I will give my virginity  
 To a husband I do not love" (74).

Theseus loves his fiancé.

Theseus: "Come, my Hippolyta, my love" (76).

j. Children run away to avoid parental control.

Lysander: "Listen, I have a wealthy, widowed aunt,

She has no child; her house is far from here,

She respects me as her only son.

There, gentle Hermia, marry me;

And there your father and the Duke

Cannot follow us" (76).

Hermia: "Lysander and I are running away from this place"  
 (77).

k. Friendships are valuable.

Hermia: "And in the wood, where you [Helena] and I often met  
And shared sweet secrets with one another" (78).

Hermia: "Farewell, sweet playfellow [Helena];" (78).

Titania: "His mother was a follower of mine

By night we gossiped together;

And sat on the beach watching ships,

We laughed to see the sails fill

And grow big like her pregnant belly. . ?

But she was mortal and died in childbirth.

And for her sake I rear up her boy,

And for her sake I will not part with him" (85).

Bottom: "Where are you, lads? Where are my friends?" (120).

Quince: "Let us hear it, Bottom, you good friend" (120).

l. Fairies travel in bands.

Fairy: "Our queen and all her elves will be here  
soon" (82).

m. Fairies have celebrations.

Puck: "The king will have a party here tonight:" (82).

Titania: "If you [Oberon] will politely dance in our circle,  
And see our moonlight celebration, go with us;" (85).

Titania: "Come now, a dance, and a fairy song;" (89).

Oberon: "Music, music: come, my queen, take hands with me,  
And dance . . ." (116).

n. Fairies court one another.

Titania: "And having changed yourself [Oberon] to a shepherd,  
sat all day,

Playing the pipes, and writing love poems

To a loving Phillida" (84).

o. The fairies interfere in the mortals' romantic relationships.

Oberon orders Puck to place a magical potion on Demetrius' eyes causing Demetrius to fall madly in love with the first living creature he sees, hopefully Helena.

Oberon: "A sweet lady [Helena] is in love  
With a young boy that rejects her: anoint his eyes;  
But do it when the next thing he sees will be the lady" (88).

Oberon: "Have you put the love juice on the young stylish man's [Demetrius'] eyes . . .?"

Puck: "I did it while he was sleeping . . ."

[Enter Demetrius and Hermia]

Oberon: "Stand close: this is the same man."

Puck: "This is the woman, but not the man" (100).

Puck accidentally put the potion on Lysander's eyes causing him to love Helena.

Lysander: "Helena, I love thee, by my life I do:" (106).

To correct this romantic error, Puck places the magic potion on Demetrius' eyes.

Oberon: "[Puck] Go around the woods, swifter than the wind,  
And find Helena. She is love sick and pale.

Trick her into coming here

I'll put the magic in his [Demetrius'] eye's before she  
[Helena] comes" (101).

Demetrius sees Helena and falls madly in love with her.

Consequently, no one wants Hermia and both men want Helena.

Demetrius: "[waking] O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine,  
To what, my love, shall I compare your eyes,  
Your red lips, your snow white skin,

O let me kiss you!"

Helena: "O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent

To plot against me for your amusement:

. . . You both are rivals, and love Hermia;

And now both rivals, to make fun of me" (103).

p. It is dangerous for women to be in the forest at night.

Demetrius: "You [Helena] risk your good reputation too much,

To leave the city and give yourself

Into my hands when I do not love you;

You trust the opportunity of night

And the evil thought a deserted place invites

With the prize of your virginity" (87).

Lysander: "[Sits next to Hermia] One place shall be a pillow

For us both.

One heart, one bed, two hearts, and one promise of love."

Hermia: "No, good Lysander; for my sake, dear,"

Lysander: "O understand my innocence!

. . . Just lie beside me, so I can rest."

Hermia: "Lysander, you talk very sweetly;

But out of love and respect

Lie further off, this distance

Is proper for a bachelor and a young maid" (90).

Demetrius: "I order you [Helena] do not haunt me like this."

Helena: "O will you leave me alone in the dark? Do not"

(91).

q. The upper class politely regards the working class as

beneath them socially as well as educationally.



Hippolyta: "I love not to see simple men overstretching themselves,

Or performing duties that give them pain."

Theseus: "Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing."

Hippolyta: "He says they can't act."

Theseus: "The kinder of us to give them thanks for nothing.

Out pleasure shall be to take their mistakes;

And regard them seriously" (123).

Theseus: "This fellow [Qunice] does not understand punctuation"

Lysander: ". . . It is not enough to speak, but to speak correctly."

Hippolyta: "Indeed, he's played on his prologue like a child on a recorder;

He made a sound, but it makes no sense" (124).

Theseus: "If we [the royals and the lovers] imagine no worse of them [the mechanicals] than they think of themselves, They may pass for excellent men" (127).

r. The working class accepts this lower class position.

Qunice: "If we offend, it is with goodwill.

You should think, we come not to offend.

But with good will to show our simple skill" (123).

s. Frightening ladies is dangerous!

Qunice: "And you should do it too terribly, you would frighten the Duchess and the ladies, and they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all" (81).

Bottom: ". . . if you should frighten the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us;

The smallest monstrous mouse that creep on the floor,  
May now, perhaps, quake and tremble.

When Lion roars in a loud rage,  
Know that I, Snug the joiner, am  
A fierce lion, no lioness.

If I should enter with a lion's roar,  
Into this gentle place, my life would be worthless" (127).

t. Theatre groups are common in the community.

Quince: "Is all our company here?"

Bottom: "You best call them, man by man, according to the  
script."

Quince: "Here is the list of every man's name fit to play on  
our performance before the Duke and Duchess at their wedding"  
(79).

Philostrate: "Here is a list of the shows that are ready?"

Theseus: "The Battle with the centaurs, to be sung by a  
eunuch? . . .

The religious frenzy of the drunken women, tearing apart  
Orpheus in their fury, . . .

A long, short play about young Pyramus and his love: a very  
comic tragedy" (122).

## 6. Religious Environment

a. The world is divided into fairy spirits and mortals.

Puck: "How now, spirit, where are you going?" (82).

Puck: "Farewell, you silly spirits; I'll be gone; Our  
queen and all her elves will be here soon" (82).

Fairy: "Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
. . ." (82).

Titania: "I beg you, gentle mortal . . ." (97).

Fairy: "Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
. . ." (82).

Titania: "I beg you, gentle mortal . . ." (97).

Peaseblossom: "Hail, mortal!" (98).

b. The mortals are Christians. Their language and behavior reflect this background.

Helena: "I wish my prayers could move his affection" (77).

Hermia: ". . . pray for us;" (78).

Hermia: "Because this is a normal cross to bear" (76).

Titania: "To bless your favorite Hippolyta's wedding  
. . ." (84).

Helena: "I'll follow you [Demetrius], and make a heaven of  
hell, . . ." (88).

Snout: "Mother of God . . ." (93).

Bottom: "God help us . . ." (94).

Quince: "Bless you, Bottom . . ." (96).

Titania: "What angel wakes me . . . ? (97)

Hermia: "Heavens protect Lysander . . ." (112).

c. Weddings are a religious ceremony.

Theseus: "When we [Theseus and Hippolyta] get married tonight  
in the temple . . ." (118).

Snug: "The Duke is coming from the temple. There are two  
more couples to be married" (120).

d. Women are supposed to save their virginity for the wedding  
night.

Theseus: "Can you endure living as a nun?" (74)

Hermia: "So I will live, my lord,

Before I will give my virginity

To a husband I do not love" (74).

Lysander: "[Sits next to her] One place shall be a pillow  
For us both.

One heart, one bed, two hearts, and one promise of love."

Hermia: "No, good Lysander; for my sake, dear,"

Lysander: "O understand my innocence!

. . . Just lie beside me, so I can rest."

Hermia: "Lysander, you talk very sweetly;

But out of love and respect

Lie further off, this distance

Is proper for a bachelor and a young maid" (90).

e. Murder is immoral.

Hermia: "Can be, you [Demetrius] have murdered him

[Lysander]; . . . ?

You look like a murderer, deadly and grim" (100).

f. Stealing is wrong.

Puck: "For Oberon is violently angry

Because she [Titania] stole a lovely boy for her attendant"

(82).

g. Honesty is important.

Lysander: "Keep your promise, love" (77).

Hermia: "Keep your word, Lysander" (78).

Lysander: "Look when I promise I weep; and promises

That come so honestly, must be true."

Helena: "Your cunning increases more and more.

These promises are for Hermia: are you giving her up?

Your promises are empty, they mean nothing" (102).

Bottom: "Curse your stones for so lying to me!" (126).

h. Duty is a valued character trait.

Theseus: ". . . nothing can be better than when done out of duty" (123).

Theseus: "I value these men's simple respect more than smooth talkers

That have no serious meaning or respect" (123).

i. True love is ordained by a power higher than the fairies, perhaps by God.

Oberon: "You [Puck] have made a huge mistake, And put the love-juice on some true-love's eyes.

Because of your mistake

Some true love is ruined, not a false love made true" (101).

j. Mortals believe in magic.

Egeus: "This man [Lysander] has bewitched my child [Hermia]" (73).

Bottom: "I have had the most weird vision. I dreamt . . ." (119).

Demetrius: "I don't know by what power, but by some power, my love for Hermia died. Now the only object of my affection is Helena" (118).

Demetrius: "It is beyond me to say what I dreamt" (119).

Hippolyta: "Maybe something supernatural happened" (121).

k. Love is a type of magic. Once under its spell, it is impossible to escape.

Lysander: "He [Demetrius] chased Nedar's daughter, Helena, And won her heart: and the sweet lady,

Still dotes and worships this unfaithful man" (75).

Helena: "You [Demetrius] make me love you, you hard-hearted man,

Stop using your powers to attract me . . ." (87).

Lysander: "Why should I stay when my heart tells me to go?"  
(104).

1. Fairies have magical powers.

Fairy: "Are you [Puck] not he,  
That frightens the maidens in the village,  
Sours the milk, and sometimes labours in the kitchen,  
And makes the breathless housewife work without success,  
And sometimes stops the brew from turning into beer,  
Misleads night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?  
. . . You do their work, and they shall have good luck?" (82)

Oberon: ". . . Since I am invisible . . ." (86).

Puck: "Sometimes a horse I'll be, sometimes a hound,  
A hog, a headless bear, sometimes a fire" (96).

Puck places a spell on Bottom, and he has a donkey's head on  
his human body (96).

Titania: "I am a royal spirit, no common woman;  
. . . I will take away your [Bottom's] mortal character and  
make you magic like the fairies" (97).

Puck: "I'll travel the earth in no time flat" (86).

Titania: "Music. . . make music that causes a magical sleep"  
(116).

Oberon: "Which [the wedded couples] by us [the fairies]  
shall blessed be;  
So shall all the  
Ever true in love be;  
Their children will good health see.  
Prosperity shall be their fate,  
Fairies will guard their gates" (132).

m. The magical power that causes love is in the hands of supernatural forces: fairies and gods.

Hermia: "I swear to you by Cupid's best arrow,  
By all the vows that men have spoken to women," (77).

Oberon " . . . I saw Cupid shoot his arrow into the night;  
The golden arrow fell onto a pure white flower  
Turning its blooms to purple.

. . . the juice of it [the flower] when laid on sleeping eyes  
Will make a man or woman madly dote  
On the next living creature that it sees" (86).

Oberon: "I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,  
And drop the liquor of it [the flower] in her eyes:  
The next thing she sees when she wakes,  
. . . She shall pursue it with her soul full of love" (86).

Oberon: "And with the juice of the flowers I'll streak her  
[Titania's] eyes,  
And make her full of hateful fantasies"

" . . . You [Puck] take some of it, . . .  
A sweet lady is in love  
With a young boy that rejects her: anoint his eyes;  
But do it when the next thing he sees will be the lady.  
. . . Put enough juice on his eyes, that he may prove  
More fond of her than she is of him;" (88).

Oberon: "What you see when you wake,  
You will for your true love take; . . ." (89).

Puck: "On whose eyes I might place  
This flower's juice to stir up love.  
. . . Peasant, on your eyes I sprinkle  
All the power this juice does hold.

When you wake let love forbid  
 You to sleep or close these eyelids" (90).

Oberon: "Which by us [the fairies] shall blessed be;  
 So shall all the couples three  
 Ever true in love be; . . ." (132).

n. Fairies have followers.

Fairy: "And I serve the fairy queen . . ." (82).

Puck: "I am Oberon's jester. . ." (83).

Titania: "His mother was a follower of mine, . . ." (85).

o. There are good spirits and bad spirits.

Oberon: "Well, now, mad spirit! What mischief is there in  
 this haunted grove?" (99).

Puck: "When ghosts troop home to churchyards.  
 Damned spirits all return to their wormy beds."

Oberon: "But we are not dark spirits:" (110).

p. If the supernatural creatures have good or bad times, their  
 behavior causes changes in nature.

Titania: ". . . out brawls have made the people miserable.  
 The weather is bad. Their animals won't work.  
 Their corn rots in the fields.

. . . Diseases do abound. And these evils come from our  
 debate,  
 from our disagreements" (84).

Oberon: "Once I sat upon a cliff,  
 And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back  
 Uttering such beautiful songs  
 That the rough sea grew calm and stars shot madly from their  
 orbits" (85).



q. Beside fairies and God, fate is an element in the mortals' life.

Puck: "Fate makes the decision then" (101).

Flute: "And I like Juliet, am yours until Fate kills me" (126).

r. Nature has power.

Bottom: "O why, Nature, did you make lions?" (129).

## B. Previous Action

The previous action includes things that happened before the play began or offstage during the play. The dialogue exposes these events so the audience understands the necessary background information. The actors narrate the previous action while enacting the present action. It is the director's responsibility to make sure that this narration is not dull, but recalled as a necessary part of the emotional drama occurring on stage (Hodge 21).

Two marriages are planned before the play begins. Duke Theseus and Hippolyta are engaged, and Egeus, Hermia's father, has arranged her marriage to Demetrius. Hermia refused to marry Demetrius. She fell in love with Lysander who had courted her with flowers, trinkets, jewels and love songs. Both Demetrius and Lysander have the same high economic and social standing, yet Hermia gave her love to Lysander.

The town's people have been talking about Demetrius. Demetrius wooed and left Helena, Hermia's closest childhood friend. Everyone in town assured Helena that she was as fair as Hermia, but Demetrius still rejected her.

Hermia and Helena were childhood friends. All of their lives, they have played and talked together. They even went to school where Helena was known as a rough, bossy girl. During their childhood, they met at a particular spot in the woods. Hermia, Helen, and Lysander met at that same spot.

The fairies have problems of their own. Oberon, the fairy king, and Titania, the fairy queen, have been companions for eternity. Since the middle of summer's spring, they have not met without quarreling. Their fighting caused bad weather, sluggish animals, failing crops and bad health for the mortals.

They have quarreled over several things. Titania knew Oberon was unfaithful. He left fairyland and changed himself to a shepherd, so he could court young Phillida. Oberon's favorite mortal is Hippolyta. Titania's favorite mortal is Theseus. One night after a war, Titania led Theseus to love and leave three beautiful women.

Shortly before the play begins, Titania acquired a mortal child who is her attendant. The child's mother was Titania's follower and friend. The mother died in childbirth, so Titania promised to raise the boy. Oberon has been trying to get the boy from Titania.

Oberon's hope for controlling Titania comes from the past. He was sitting on a cliff watching the rough sea. A mermaid appeared on a dolphin's back, singing beautiful songs that calmed the sea and made stars shoot across the sky. At that very moment, Oberon saw Cupid shoot his arrow onto a pure white flower turning the blossom purple. Cupid's arrow gave the juice from the flower magical power. When it is placed on a human's eye, it causes the man or woman to fall in love with the next living creature he or she sees.

Puck, also known as Robin Goodfellow, is Oberon's jester. Puck has scared young maidens and soured milk. He has made simple household chores difficult. He has caused beer to go flat and led night wanderers to harm. When ordered, Puck quickly circled the world to get the magical flower.

Meantime, Peter Quince, a carpenter from town, wrote a play for Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding. Quince organized a group of working men to perform the comedy. When Bottom, one of the players, exits the stage area, Puck places an ass's head on him. Titania takes the transformed Bottom to her camp.

Oberon mocks Titania's love for Bottom. The quarrel ends with Titania giving Oberon her lovely boy whom Oberon sends back to fairyland.

While Bottom is transformed, his friends are searching for him in town. In town, Snout, an artisan, overhears that Theseus and Hippolyta asked Lysander, Hermia, Demetrius, and Helena to join their marriage ceremony.

Philostrate previewed the mechanicals' play. He thought it was long, short, comical and tragic. He laughed so hard he cried. When he spoke with the mechanicals, he discovered this was their first play.

In the play within the play, the characters Thisbe and Pyramus had often met secretly at the wall that divided their fathers' land. They finally plan to meet at Ninus' tomb.

#### C. Polar Attitude

Principal characters in a play are caught in the world as they perceive it. The play is about how these characters either overcome their reality or are destroyed by it. The polar attitude is determined by comparing how a principal character feels about his or her reality at the beginning of the play with that character's feelings concerning the reality at the end of the play. A principal character's attitude will change during the play (Hodge 22).

A Midsummer Night's Dream has three primary groups of characters: the royals, the lovers, and the mechanicals. Each group has principal characters.

Theseus is the principal royal character. In Act One, Theseus states that Hermia must marry Demetrius, her father, Egeus' choice. Theseus: "And by my wedding day, either prepare/To live forever a lonely, single life, / For disobedience to your father's will,/ Or else to wed Demetrius" (75). In Act Four, Theseus encourages Hermia to marry

Lysander. Theseus: "Fair lovers, you [Hermia and Lysander; Helena and Demetrius] are fortunately met; / . . . I overrule you, Egeus. / When we [Hippolyta and Theseus] get married tonight in the temple, these couples shall be married, too" (118).

Theseus changes his mind during his morning hunt when he finds the lovers asleep by the tree. Hermia lies near Lysander, and Helena lies near Demetrius.

All the lovers, except Hermia, change their minds about their true love. Each returns to his or her original partner. Demetrius, however, is the lover with a clear polar attitude. At the beginning of the play, Demetrius feels he must wed Hermia. Demetrius: "Relent, sweet Hermia, and Lysander, give up/ Your crazed desire to have what is mine [Hermia]" (75). By Act Four Demetrius states,

. . . I don't know by what power, but by some, my love for Hermia died. Now the only object of my affection is Helena. I was engaged to her, my lord, before I saw Hermia; and true for a time I was sick at the thought of her, but now I wish for her, love her, long for her, And will forever be true to her (118).

Queen Titania is the principal fairy character. Her polar attitude is centered around her differences with King Oberon. Most importantly, she will not give up her attendant, a young mortal boy. In Act Two, Scene One, Titania declares "I would not sell my child for all of fairy land. / . . . I will not part with him" (85). This is the main conflict that leads to her decision to separate from King Oberon. Titania: "Fairies, let's go: / I have vowed to stay away from him [Oberon]" (83). By Act Four, Scene Two, Titania has given Oberon the boy (115). When Oberon removes Titania's love trance, she is happy to be his wife and queen.

Oberon: "Be as you [Titania] once were; See as you once saw.  
Now my Titania, wake my sweet queen."

Titania: "My Oberon! What visions have I seen!" (115).

Bottom is the principal mechanical. In Act One, Scene Two, the proud character of Bottom refuses the role of Pyramus in the play Pyramus and Thisbe (79). After Bottom has been magically transformed into an ass, and just as magically delivered from the bizarre transformation, he happily plays the part of Pyramus (125).

## II. Dialogue

### A. Choice of Words

The language of A Midsummer Night's Dream reflects the English idiom of the 1600s. Some of the words are either no longer commonly used or their meanings have changed. The following words are several examples: "Pray," "fair," "vows," "dotes," "nay," and "liquor." In Shakespeare's England "pray" meant to beg or entreat; "fair" meant beautiful; "liquor" meant juice; "nay" was no, and "dotes" was a loving dedication for a member of the opposite sex (Onions). While these antiquated words are common in the script, most of the play's language is still commonly used. Context, editing and acting help today's audience understand the historic language.

Shakespeare's word choices reflect the class of the characters. The royals and fairies' words reflect upper class language of the period. The lovers' words are middle class, and the mechanicals' word choices are lower class. These distinctions are more clearly explained in the next section.

Part of A Midsummer Night's Dream's comedy comes from Shakespeare's vocabulary. Bottom, for example, is turned into an ass. "Bottom" is a euphemism for "ass." "Ass" is a noun that captures Bottom's demanding, bossy character.

## B. Choice of Phrases and Sentence Structure

As was customary at the time, Shakespeare wrote his plays in verse. The upper and middle class characters in Midsummer speak entirely in verse; however, the lower class characters speak in prose. Poetry can contain more meaning and emotional power than prose. If the director works with the verse's dramatic and comic potential, the players and the audience will discover the depth of the play.

Plays written in verse frequently put off modern readers. Audiences adapt to the style because the director and actors interpretation make the play's meaning clear. For example, the following speech is easy to understand, but the syntax is foreign to the modern reader. Consequently, the verse's structure becomes a visual roadblock. Comprehension is possible, but most readers are not willing to push past the format.

Oberon's: "Having this juice,  
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,  
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:  
The next thing she sees when she wakes,  
Be it lion, bear, or bull,  
Or meddling monkey, or a busy ape,  
She shall pursue it with her soul full of love" (86).

When a skillful actor delivers the verse, the poetry adds to beauty, drama, or comedy. For example, Egeus' verse is bold, demanding.

Egeus: "I come to you a father in distress.  
Furious with my daughter Hermia.  
Come here, Demetrius. Sir,  
This man has bewitched my child:" (73).

Titania's romantic verse is smooth and graceful.

Titania: "I beg you, gentle mortal, sing again;  
 My ear is in love with your voice;  
 My eye sees you as beautiful;  
 And your character moves me to your side  
 At first sight, I must say, I love you" (97).

Demetrius and Helena's comical dialogue invites action:

Demetrius: "I'll run and hide in the bushes,  
 And leave you to the mercy of wild beasts."  
 Helena: "Leave then. My feelings have not changed."  
 Demetrius: "Go away! If you follow me, believe me  
 I shall do you mischief in these woods."  
 Helena: "Yes, in the temple, in the town, the field  
 Do me mischief. Oh, Demetrius!" (88).

While the mechanicals' word choices reflect the historic period, their prose is a casual contrast to the verse of the other characters.

Quince: "Have you gone to Bottom's house? Is he home yet?  
 Starveling: "He hasn't been heard from. Perhaps he's been  
 kidnapped."  
 Flute: "If he doesn't show up, the play is ruined. We will  
 have to cancel."  
 Quince: "We'd have to cancel. There is not a man in this  
 town that can play Pyramus, but Bottom."  
 Flute: "No, he has the best talent of any handyman  
 around" (120).

Not only does the reader have an easier time comprehending the mechanicals' dialogue, but the audience naturally relaxes through the mechanicals' comical prose.

### C. Choice of Images

1. Lysander: "Ah, me! For all that I have ever read,



The course of true love never did run smooth" (76).

Lysander is assuring Hermia that all lovers are troubled. This Act One line, however, goes beyond its obvious intent.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is based on the fact that, "the course of true love never did run smooth." Every couple in the play, except Theseus and Hippolyta, struggle with conflicts from inside and outside their relationships.

Lysander and Hermia want to be together, but her father is against it. Demetrius wants to be with Helena, but he changes his mind and decides to marry Hermia. Helena continues to pursue Demetrius, despite his rejection. Eventually Demetrius and Lysander both want Helena, and Hermia is left alone.

Finally, Lysander and Hermia are together; and Demetrius and Helena are a couple. Titania and Oberon spend most of the play estranged from one another, but rediscover their love.

2. Bottom: "Enough; parting is such sweet sorrow. . ." (82).

This line ends Act One. Borrowed from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, the line foreshadows the numerous romantic failures in A Midsummer Night's Dream. The play begins with the lovers longing for companions they apparently can not have. In Act Two, Oberon cannot have his Titania. In Act Five, the mechanical's perform their play Pyramus and Thisbe, the story of lovers that cannot be together.

3. Fairy: "Either I am mistaken,  
Or else, you [Puck] are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
Called Robin Goodfellow" (82).

Puck's tendency to flit happily through the mortal world wrecking havoc is captured in this Fairy's brief character

analysis. It is Puck's cavalier nature that causes the magical mistake that turns the lover's worlds upside down.

4. Oberon: "[Puck] Fetch me that flower,  
For the juice of it when laid on sleeping eyes  
Will make a man or woman madly dote  
On the next living creature that it sees" (86).

This image captures the magical process that Oberon and Puck use to control the play's romance. Each couple-- Lysander and Hermia, Helena and Demetrius, Titania and Bottom--are controlled by the juice from the flower.

5. Titania: "What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?" (97).

The verbal imagery paints a lovely picture which contrast directly with the action. Titania opens her eyes and swoons over Bottom, half man/ half jackass. It is this contrasting imagery that captures the comic moment.

6. Puck: "If we shadows have offended,  
Think but this, and all is mended,  
You were only sleeping here,  
While these visions did appear" (132).

Dreams and visions have several levels of significance. The magical nights in the woods were a blur for everyone under Puck and Oberon's spell. When the spells were removed, each person believed he or she had lost time in a dream. During Shakespeare's period, "dream" also meant an insane or crazed state, inferring that the dreamers had visions that were beyond reality (Clemens 368). This romantic notion that the lover is not in charge of his feelings or actions is central to the play.

#### D. Choice of Peculiar Characteristics

The language reflects sixteenth century England; however, the original play was set in Greece. When I rewrote the play, I set it in a Midwestern town. The verbal style remained essentially the same. This practice has been used in several productions. Most recently, the film Romeo and Juliet starring Leonardo DiCaprio was set in modern America, but the script reflected Shakespeare's England.

I adapted the play to make it suitable for middle school students' reading level. While I edited long speeches and changed antiquated or difficult language, I tried to maintain the essence of the original script. Consequently, my edition contains words not found in other Midsummer adaptations.

#### E. Sound of Dialogue

Egeus's dialogue is bold and demanding. Theseus is confident and consistent. Whether he is making a decision or evaluating the mechanical's plays, Theseus' dialogue demands attention. Early in the play, Lysander is politely persuasive and a bit demanding. After Oberon and Puck place the love spell on Lysander, Lysander's speeches become more abrupt, almost rude. Lysander regains his gentle speech pattern after Puck removes the love spell. Hermia's dialogue is even, classically feminine. Even when she is at her most frustrated, she remains restrained in her anger. Helena, on the other hand, is loud and demanding. Her persistence to win Demetrius creates a passionate delivery that ranges from comic to threatening. Oberon is a regal, self-assured character. His vocal patterns are commanding and smooth. Titania's regal delivery is lighter than Oberon's, but more certain than the other female characters. At times, her delivery is marked by sarcasm. Puck sound like a "knavish, sprite." His lines are light, playful. His dialogue captures the musical quality of the verse. Bottom has a wide range of delivery. His lines are loud, choppy,

provincial. His dialogue, like that of most of the mechanicals, is exaggerated to create a comical effect.

#### F. Structure of Lines and Speeches

As stated earlier, A Midsummer Night's Dream is a mix of prose and verse. The mechanicals lines are written in prose while the other characters speak in verse. The lines are a moderate length with occasional long speeches. I edited many of the long speeches from the play and shortened some of the moderate speeches. The editing was an attempt to make the lines and speeches shorter and easier for middle school students to comprehend.

### III. Dramatic Action

#### Breakdown of Units

#### A. Act One, Scene One

##### "The Rebellious Child"

The Royal couple parades

Egeus announces

Hermia negotiates

Theseus judges

##### "Lysander's Right"

Lysander bargains

Demetrius blushes

##### "The Lovers' Plan"

Lysander consoles

Hermia reasons

Lysander plots

##### "Helena's Determination"

Hermia relinquishes

Helena laments

The lovers confide

Helena tricks

B. Act One, Scene Two

"Casting the Play"

Qunice inquires

Bottom embellishes

Flute protests

Qunice assures

Snug considers

Bottom offers

Bottom advises

Qunice controls

"Directing Bottom"

Qunice confirms

Bottom suggests

Qunice directs

C. Act Two, Scene One

"Fairy Tales"

Fairy marches

Fairy investigates

Puck brags

Oberon establishes

Titania accuses

"The Mortal Boy"

Oberon demands

Titania defends

"The Magic Potion"

Oberon recalls

Puck obeys

Oberon schemes

"Relentless Helena"

Demetrius chastises

Helena swoons

Demetrius threatens

Helena assures

Demetrius reminds

Helena flirts

"Magic for Helena"

Oberon promises

Puck serves

C. Act Two, Scene One

"Oberon Tricks His Queen"

Titania sleeps

Oberon enchants

"The Lovers' Bed"

Lysander anticipates

Hermia corrects

Lysander justifies

"The Incantation"

Puck chants

"The Chase"

Demetrius flees

Helena surrenders

"Lysander Metamorphosis"

Lysander woos

Helena advises

Demetrius confirms

Helena reprimands

Lysander flees

Hermia fears

D. Act Three, Scene One

"Polite Censorship"

Qunice begins

Bottom interrupts

Starveling quakes

Snout endorses

Bottom considers

Bottom solves

"Technical Difficulties"

Qunice investigates

Bottom suggests

Qunice solves

Bottom models

"Rehearsal"

Puck spies

Qunice directs

Bottom acts

Flute reacts

Qunice corrects

"Bottom's Transformation"

Bottom enters

Qunice gasps

Puck plays

Bottom misunderstands

"The Queens Foolish Love"

Bottom serenades

Titania delights

"Bottom's Attendants"

Fairies appear

Titania instructs

Fairies greet

Bottom meets

E. Act Three, Scene Two

"Oberon's Glory"

Puck laughs

Oberon discovers

"Hermia's Loss"

Hermia blames

Demetrius denies

"Find Helena"

Oberon admonishes

Puck dismisses

Oberon prays

Puck delights

"Lysander Courts Helena"

Lysander promises

Helena dismisses

"Demetrius Courts Helena"

Demetrius romances

Helena rages

Lysander enlightens

"Hermia Finds Lysander"

Hermia approaches

Lysander explains

"The Women Fight"

Helena contemplates

Hermia shrugs



Helena scolds

"The Men's Conflict"

Hermia continues

Lysander insults

Demetrius concurs

Hermia begs

Lysander dismisses

"Hermia's Response"

Hermia explodes

Helena defends

Helena apologizes

Lysander counsels

Hermia considers

Helena quits

"Fixing the Magic Blunder"

Oberon blames

Oberon resolves

Puck accelerates

"Shadow Duels"

Lysander pursues

Puck tricks

Demetrius threatens

Lysander quits

Demetrius quits

"True Love Under The Spell"

Helena quits

Hermia quits

Puck chants

"Serving Bottom"

Titania snuggles

The fairies offer

Bottom requests

Titania dispatches

Bottom sleeps

"Oberon Releases Titania"

Oberon repents

Titania exclaims

"Oberon Releases the Lovers"

Oberon pronounces

Titania guides

"May Day Discovery"

Theseus leads

Lysander questions

"Theseus Endorses True Love"

Egeus orders

Demetrius retells

Theseus decides

"Was This A Lover's Dream"

Hermia reels

Helena realizes

Demetrius reviews

Lysander concurs

"Bottom is Restored"

Bottom awakes

Bottom plans

G. Act Four, Scene Two

"The Mechanics Must Have Bottom"

Qunice wonders

Flute cancels

Snug heralds

Flute laments

"Bottom Returns"

Bottom arrives

Qunice rejoices

Bottom coaches

H. Act Five, Scene One

"Critiquing the Lovers' Story"

Hippolyta contemplates

Theseus philosophizes

"The Wedding Reception"

Lover's arrive

Theseus inquires

The Philostrate offers

"The Play: A Comic Tragedy"

The Philostrate describes

Theseus selects

Hippolyta disagrees

Theseus explains

"Pyramus and Thisbe"

Qunice narrates

The audience comments

Qunice previews

"The Wall"

Demetrius jokes

Snout [The Wall] expounds

Bottom illustrates

## "The Kiss"

Flute [Thisbe] converses  
 Bottom [Pyramus] explores  
 Flute [Thisbe] confides  
 Bottom [Pyramus] proclaims  
 Bottom [Pyramus] urges  
 Flute [Thisbe] complies

## "The Moon Light And The Tomb"

Theseus chuckles  
 Snug [the Lion] protects  
 Demetrius critiques  
 Starveling explains  
 Hippolyta sighs

## "The Lion's Roar"

Flute arrives  
 Snug [the Lion] roars  
 Hippolyta praises  
 Theseus praises

## "Pyramus' Death"

Bottom [Pyramus] mourns  
 Theseus empathizes  
 Hippolyta weeps  
 Bottom [Pyramus] dies

## "The Pause"

Theseus snickers  
 Hippolyta reviews  
 Demetrius jokes

## "Thisbe's Death"

Thisbe grieves

Thisbe stabs

Theseus comments

"The Dance"

Bottom offers

Theseus selects

"Blessing the House"

Puck chants

Oberon blesses

"Farewell"

Puck atones

Puck bows

VI. Main Characters

A. Theseus

1. Desire

Theseus wants to be a wise, upright ruler. At the same time, he wants social popularity. Will Theseus do the wise thing, the legal thing, the honest thing, or the popular thing? His foremost desire, however, is to maintain and exercise power. For example, Hippolyta is an Amazon Queen whom Theseus defeated. When A Midsummer Night's Dream begins, Theseus and Hippolyta are planning their wedding. Theseus had the power to take Hippolyta, and at the same time, he gained her favor. Theseus is powerful, within legal boundaries, and popular.

2. Will

Theseus is a strong character. When Egeus brings Hermia, Lysander, and Demetrius to Theseus insisting that Hermia marry Demetrius, Theseus upholds the law: he orders Hermia to marry her father's choice or suffer the legal consequences (75).

While Theseus's decision is wise and upright, it is not popular with everyone. Ultimately, Theseus's conflicting desires challenge his will.

Is it wise, in this case to uphold the law making Hermia marry her father's choice? In Act Four, Theseus's May Day hunting party discovers the lovers sleeping in the woods. The lovers' stories move Theseus to overrule Egeus, allowing Hermia to marry Lysander and Demetrius to marry Helena (118).

### 3. Moral Stance

Theseus's moral stance is strong, until the end of the play. He consistently makes legal choices. However, those choices reflect his values, not values that benefit most of humanity. For example, capturing Hippolyta is legal, but does not benefit the Amazons, nor does it maintain her individual freedom. Theseus compromises his legal stance when he gives the lovers freedom to choose their spouses. In this case, his decision ensures individual choice and benefits those people most directly affected by his judgement.

Theseus' integrity as a duke assures his power, allowing him to set a moral standard.

### 4. Decorum

Theseus is an older man, but he has maintained a youthful look. His upright posture and powerful stride should reflect his royal position. In social situations like the May Day hunt and the wedding celebration, Theseus' direct eye contact, open gestures, and positive facial expression indicate his power and pleasure.

### 5. Summary List of Adjectives

Likeable

Powerful

Self assured

Analytical

Attractive

Philosophical

B. Hermia

1. Desire

Hermia wants to marry her true love, Lysander. She is so certain that Lysander is the man she should marry that she refuses to believe he has left her for Helena (104). Even when Lysander assures Hermia that he hates her, Hermia believes Helena must have tricked him (107).

2. Will

Hermia is willing to risk her father's good grace, as well as legal and social reprisal, to be with Lysander. Egeus states that he owns his daughter, Hermia. Theseus upholds Egeus's position, stating that Hermia must live a single, lonely life if she will not marry Demetrius (75). Ultimately Hermia is willing to run away, sacrificing her position in her hometown and her financial entitlements to be Lysander's wife.

3. Moral Stance

Hermia's moral position is based on a higher power: love. She believes that ignoring love's call would make her life miserable. She is so certain of her position that Hermia is willing to give up any future marital possibilities. The love that guides her life is protected by her other values. Lysander wants to sleep with Hermia in the woods, but she insists on protecting her reputation (89). This ultimately protects the purity of her love for Lysander.

## 4. Decorum

Hermia is a beautiful woman. Her tall, willowy body reflects a natural beauty. Her graceful, confident movement symbolizes her innocent nature. However, when Lysander rejects Hermia, her posture slumps. Her head is downcast. When Hermia decides to fight Helena, this negative posture is replaced by a powerful upright, aggressive demeanor. In the end, Hermia's decorum is as it was at the beginning of the play.

## 5. Summary List of Adjectives

Beautiful

Strong

Decisive

Gentle

Feminine

Righteous

## C. Lysander

## 1. Desire

Lysander wants to marry his beloved Hermia. He loves her, and she loves him (75). Hermia's love for Lysander affirms Lysander's belief that this is true love.

## 2. Will

Lysander is determined to marry Hermia. He allows Egeus to drag him before Duke Theseus to whom Lysander pleads his case. When Theseus rejects Lysander's request to marry Hermia, Lysander plans to run away with Hermia giving up any financial or social benefits his community offers. Further, when Hermia is overwhelmed by their situation, Lysander



patiently calms her, telling her, "The course of true love never did run smooth" (76).

Later, Puck bewitches Lysander with the love potion magically changing Lysander. He no longer wants to marry Hermia. In fact, he no longer wants to be near her. As soon as the spell is removed, however, Lysander's determined will returns.

### 3. Moral Stance

Lysander's moral position is socially acceptable. He is pleasant, polite, compassionate and appropriate. His morals are based on what is best for him. This philosophy causes questionable behavior. Lysander easily plans for Hermia and him to run away because the move gives him what he wants: Hermia. At no point does Lysander stop and consider the long-term impact on Hermia, her father, or Lysander's aunt. When Helena rejects Lysander's advances, he persists. Later as Hermia begs Lysander to take her back, he insults her calling her a cow, a snake and a wench (106). In each of these cases, Lysander's moral position is based on his personal desires.

### 4. Decorum

Lysander is a strong, well built young man. His good looks and relaxed demeanor give him a desirable quality. It is easy to see why Hermia loves Lysander. His gentle touch and engaging eye contact pull her to him. Passions - love, anger, hate, desire - all enhance his movements, gestures, and facial expressions.

### 5. Summary List of Adjectives

Handsome

Romantic

Passionate

Considerate

Compassionate

D. Helena

1. Desire

Helena wants to be with Demetrius. This is a desire that was fulfilled at some time before the play begins; however, Demetrius left Helena (118). His rejection intensifies Helena's longing. Since Demetrius's rejection, Helena believes she has lost her beauty (77).

2. Will

Helena wants Demetrius so desperately that she goes to exaggerated, comic lengths to get his attention. At the end of Act One, Helena plots to get Demetrius to go to the woods with her. She knows her plan will not win Demetrius's affection, but she is happy just to spend time with him (78). Helena chases Demetrius through the woods, throws herself at him, and begs for his love. Despite his obvious rejection and blatant threats, Helena continues pursuing him. Helena remains tenaciously devoted to Demetrius when Lysander starts wooing her.

3. Moral Stance

Hermia's morals follow her heart, and her feelings are obvious. She longs for justice questioning why Demetrius rejects her. Yet, she lies to Demetrius to get him into the woods. She throws herself at his feet. She begs him to treat her like a dog, to strike her (87). Certainly, these values can not be described as just. Further, Helena wants others to assign her value. She wants Demetrius to see her as beautiful, but she does not see herself as beautiful. Moral

stance in Helena's life is based on what is going on around her making her, values uncertain at best.

#### 4. Decorum

Helena would be attractive if she slowed down long enough to fix her hair and straighten her skirt. She runs around the stage. Her movements are bold, awkward, and comical. When Helena is disappointed, she pouts. Her face clearly shows her frustration and desperation. When Helena provokes Demetrius or Hermia, her face is up, too close to the other person. Her shoulders and arms are back. Helena does not calm down until the wedding celebration.

#### 5. Suggested List of Adjectives

Frustrated

Messy

Loving

Attractive

Tenacious

Aggressive

#### F. Demetrius

##### 1. Desire

Demetrius wants to marry Hermia. As the play begins, it quickly becomes apparent that Demetrius' desire vacillates. Before the play begins, he courts Helena and rejects her (118). In Act One, he wants Hermia to be his wife, although Hermia does not want him as a husband (74). By Act Four Demetrius's desire has been changed by Puck's love potion, and again he wants to marry Helena.

## 2. Will

Demetrius is determined, but he lacks the power to change hearts. Consequently, his desires are self-centered and misplaced. Helena continually pleads for Demetrius' affection. Her groveling only angers him. When Hermia refuses Demetrius's marriage proposal, he enlists her father Egeus's support. His will is unbent by the prospect of living with Hermia, a woman who would rather die a virgin than be his wife (74). Only the magic of the love potion changes Demetrius's will to a position that might bring success: marriage to Helena.

## 3. Moral Stance

While Demetrius's actions are morally tolerable, his moral stance is questionable. Demetrius considers his desires beyond anyone else's desires. He does not care that he breaks Helena's heart. In fact, he threatens to assault and rape her if she does not leave him alone (87). Hermia pleads with her father and Theseus not to force her to marry Demetrius. Her obvious disgust with the prospect of being his wife in no way changes Demetrius's will. His disregard for his beloved Hermia's happiness exemplifies his conceit. This self-centered moral base makes Demetrius dangerous. When Hermia can not find Lysander, she thinks Demetrius killed him. Demetrius is innocent, but unconcerned that Lysander might be injured (101).

## 4. Decorum

Demetrius is a large, powerful man. His posture and movement are refined, but his rough exterior is obvious. His clothing reflects his vanity. While Demetrius's nonverbal

behavior is self-centered, it is pleasing to those he wants to please. In other words, Demetrius is rough with Hermia when he casts her off, but gentle with her when the magic potion changes his feelings for her.

#### 5. Suggested List of Adjectives

Feral

Conceited

Strong

Handsome

Blunt

Inconsistent

#### G. Oberon

##### 1. Desire

Oberon wants true love to win out. He scolds Puck for changing a true love into a false love with the love potion (101). Despite Oberon's devotion to true love, he is more than willing to confuse lovers to achieve his desired results. For example, he wants Titania to be his queen; however, he orders Puck to place a spell on her so she will believe herself in love with an ass. This, in Oberon's opinion, is not abandoning true love, but merely manipulating Titania, so he can get what he wants.

##### 2. Will

Oberon's will is directly connected to his powerful position as a king. He works whole-heartedly to assure true love's success; however, he feels safe in playing with love's dynamics in the process. Not only did Oberon make Titania fall in the love with an ass, he also transformed himself to romance Phillida while he was married to Titania (84). After

each romantic trick, Oberon works to set true love right. When Puck places the love potion on the wrong eyes, Oberon makes sure the wrong is corrected. After Titania surrenders her mortal attendant, Oberon removes the love spell that caused her to love the ass, and Titania is once more his.

### 3. Moral Stance

Oberon is above earthly morality. He is compassionate, kind, unfaithful, and conniving; however, he works toward mankind's betterment. Oberon believes true love must be protected. At the same time, he commits adultery. He also causes his wife to fall in love with another. Yet, when Puck accidentally causes Lysander and Demetrius to fall in love with Helena, Oberon insists on correcting the error.

### 4. Decorum

Oberon is majestic. His posture is straight, and his movements are controlled. When he is with his subordinates, he maintains his regal demeanor. However, when Oberon is with Puck, he relaxes. His facial expressions and gestures becomes more fluid. He shows emotion easily, laughing and yelling freely. Oberon shares this intimate behavior with the audience. He makes eye contact with the audience; nods, gestures, and speaks to the crowd.

### 5. Summary List of Adjectives

Majestic

Powerful

Expressive

Spiritual

Competitive

Romantic

## H. Titania

### 1. Desire

Titania wants to keep her mortal child as an attendant. The boy's deceased mother was Titania's follower. She is raising the boy for his mother (85). She only gives him up when she is placed under Oberon's spell.

### 2. Will

Titania is unwilling to bend her will. Oberon offers to escort Titania to a party if she gives him the boy, but she will not. Titania will not surrender the boy for Oberon's entire fairy kingdom (85). Her will is only bent when Oberon places her under a spell. Then Titania gives Oberon the boy.

### 3. Moral Stance

Titania's morals center on her interest and well being. Mortals are merely playthings. She protects the orphaned mortal boy until Oberon tricks her into giving the boy to him. She has fairy servants for her and her lover, Bottom. Before the play begins, Titania helps Theseus celebrate his war victory by giving him three women (84). Clearly, the favors she bestows on Theseus, the mortal boy, and Bottom are rarely given to mortals. When Titania awakes from her spell, she is shocked to find herself on the ground with mortals.

### 4. Decorum

Titania is soft, beautiful, and elegant. Her hair and costuming create an angelic look. When she is happy, she speaks gently and moves gracefully. But when Oberon finds Titania in the woods in Act One, Titania's verbal and nonverbal behavior becomes determined, and at times stern.

### 5. Summary List of Adjectives

Angelic

Commanding

Faithful

Royal

Spiritual

Loving

## I. Puck

### 1. Desire

Puck's desire is to do his duty: entertain and serve Oberon. He is Oberon's jester. Puck loves playing practical jokes, like making the milk maids fall off their wooden stools. He is amused when he discovers that his magical love potion has caused the wrong man to chase after the wrong girl. His more practical duties include doing Oberon's bidding. For example, he went around the world as quickly as possible to find Cupid's magic purple flower. He righted the love potion blunder, and he blessed the wedding house.

### 2. Will

Puck is weak willed. While this relaxed attitude causes errors, it adds humor to the play. In one instance, Puck put the love potion on Lysander's eyes instead of Demetrius's eyes. When Oberon finds out, Puck simply turns his error into a reasonable, comical blunder (109). Oberon did not describe the young gentleman well enough. What fun for two men to be in love with the same woman (102). Puck's strong sense of duty to Oberon offsets his weak will. Puck not only puts Titania under the love potion's spell, he also makes sure her new love is revolting. In addition, Puck's report to Oberon is highly entertaining. He tells Oberon, "My mistress is in



love with a monster;" "When in that moment, it came to pass,/  
Titania waked, and straightway loved an ass" (100). Puck is  
both a dutiful and entertaining attendant.

### 3. Moral Stance

Puck stays within the boundaries of decency, unless departing from those boundaries might provide humor. When Titania awakes from the potion to meet her new love, it is Puck's job to make sure the first creature she sees is something disgusting. Puck places an ass's head on Bottom (96). This is creative and funny, but not necessarily to anyone's benefit. Puck's states his moral position at the close of the play:

"If we shadows have offended  
Think but this, and all is mended,  
You were only sleeping here,  
While these visions did appear" (132).

### 4. Decorum

Puck is light on his feet, frequently dancing around the stage. His costume is colorful, like a jester's or a clown's. Puck's gestures and facial expression add to his likable, humorous behavior. Not only does he clown for Oberon, but he clearly clowns for the audience as well. He, like Oberon, makes direct eye contact with the audience, occasionally delivering lines and speeches to the crowd.

### 5. Summary List of Adjectives

Funny

Gregarious

Child-like

Magical

## Exaggerated

## J. Bottom

## 1. Desire

Bottom's desire is to produce, direct and act in "Pyramus and Thisbe" before Duke Theseus and the wedding party. In Act One, Scene Two, it is clear that Qunice is the play's director, but Bottom keeps trying to take charge. As Qunice hands out the parts, Bottom states why he should have every part (79). Bottom's desire only changes after he is released from Oberon's magical potion. Then Bottom willingly plays Pyramus in the wedding play.

## 2. Will

Bottom wants to have all the jobs in the production, so he demonstrates his excellent skill as each part is given to each player; but this is as far as Bottom is willing to go to secure what he wants. When Flute protests playing Thisbe, a lady, Bottom promises to wear a mask and change his voice. Snug is the lion; however, Bottom demonstrates his dramatic roars hoping he might play this part as well as several others (81). Bottom offers endless suggestions, but he stops pushing at that point. In the end, Bottom does exactly what Qunice, the director, wants him to do.

## 3. Moral Stance

Bottom's morals are common for the workers. He is faithful to his friends. He starts and finishes the play, offering directing and technical advice. He immediately returns to his friends when he is released from the potion. He calls the other workers "lads" and "masters" (120).

Bottom and his friends respect the upper class. Bottom is honored to play before the duke. The money is good and the performance is a mark of success (120). He is also knows that certain rules must not be broken: ladies must not be frightened (81), the audience must not be offended (123).

#### 4. Decorum

Bottom is rough, poorly dressed, and loud. His large, rough movements and loud voice are exaggerated when he acts. He has a tendency to stay downstage center, upstaging the other players.

#### 5. Summary List of Adjectives

Gregarious

Dramatic

Talented

Naïve

Poised

Uneducated

### VI. Idea

#### A. Meaning of the Title

The title, A Midsummer Night's Dream, relates to events that occurred on Midsummer Night, June 23. During Elizabethan times, the St. John the Baptist Festival was celebrated on June 24. The evening before, known as Midsummer Night, and the day of the festival, were associated with merrymaking, superstitions, dances, pageants, and revelry. The midsummer night suggested magic and witchcraft more than any other Elizabethan night (Clemen 360).

Elizabethan's would associate the word "dream" with madness or bizarre behavior. Shakespeare's audience would interpret A Midsummer

Night's Dream to mean a midsummer night's madness probably brought on by working in the summer heat (Clemen 360).

The title makes a statement about true love. Throughout the play, Shakespeare questions love's source. Does true love come from magic like the fairies? Does it come from practical decisions made by parents, like Egeus? Is love discovered when two people court as do Lysander and Hermia? Perhaps love is established when a man strikes a deal with another man, like Egeus and Demetrius. The title, A Midsummer Night's Dream suggests that true love's source is supernatural: part magic, part decision, part mystery. Falling in love is like the Elizabethan holiday, Midsummer Night.

#### B. Philosophical Statements in the Play

1. ". . . The course of true love never did run smooth" (76).

This line delivered by Lysander to Hermia, is the most famous line from the play. Any of the lovers could have made this statement. Oberon and Titania would have agreed. All the couples in the play have romantic problems, except Theseus and Hippolyta. Sometimes the problems come from outside the relationship, and sometimes the problems come from within the relationship.

When Lysander says this to Hermia, he is consoling her. She is crying because her father has forbidden their marriage and arranged for her to marry Demetrius. Lysander affirms that his love for Hermia is true. Her father's choice, Demetrius's desire, or Theseus's judgement are merely problems. They are not signs that Hermia and Lysander's love is false.

The lines below follow Lysander's statement.

Hermia: "To be too high born to love a commoner, or too old to be engaged to someone young"

Lysander: "Or else to have your family choose"

Hermia: "Oh hell! To have anyone choose your love" (76).

Sixteenth century lovers struggled with the problems Hermia and Lysander discuss. People from different economic or social classes were not allowed to marry. People from different generations could marry if the marriage was arranged. Certainly, fathers had the legal right to choose their daughter's husbands. "The course of true love never did run smooth," is a classic statement. Whether evaluated by Elizabethan standards or current standards, love is forever challenged by social convention.

2. "These are fantasies of your jealousy" (84).

Titania tells Oberon that he is imagining the romantic favors she gave Theseus. Oberon believes that Titania arranged lovers for Theseus. Titania believes that Oberon made love to other women. While Titania's complaint is more serious than Oberon's, she never mentions her jealousy, only his. This statement reflects the male domination during sixteenth century Europe. Oberon is jealous. Rather than discuss his right to be unfaithful verses her required fidelity, Titania tries to manipulate Oberon.

All the lovers suffer from this fantastic jealousy. Helena imagines Hermia is a desirable woman because she is attractive, so Helena longs to have Hermia's good looks. Hermia believes Helena stole Lysander away. Demetrius wants Hermia, while Lysander and Hermia want each other. Demetrius and Lysander want Helena at the same time. Each lover's perception causes needless jealousy.

3. ". . . Some true love is ruined, not a false love made true" (101).

Oberon believes that true love is powerful. While he frequently manipulates lovers, he makes sure that true lovers are together in the end. Although he is unfaithful to Queen Titania, he returns to her. He gives Helena her true love, Demetrius. Finally, Oberon makes sure that Lysander and Hermia are together.

At the beginning of A Midsummer Night's Dream, Egeus and Demetrius plan a false love. The rest of the play is about Oberon's attempt magically to establish and bless true love.

4. "Lovers and madmen have such creative minds,  
Their fantasies are more than a reasonable  
Man could understand" (121).

Theseus delivers this line to his new wife, Hippolyta. When Theseus defeated the Amazons, he acquired Hippolyta as a victory trophy. His marriage is not a true love; it is an arranged relationship. It follows that Theseus does not suffer from the lunacy that lovers must endure. His marriage is practical and reasonable, not creative.

Theseus' romantic perspective provides the contrast to the lovers and fairies. The lovers want to define "true love." The fairies use their magic to create love. need to expose true love's magic. Theseus' relationship with Hippolyta becomes the reasonable, but bland explanation for choosing a spouse.

In addition, Clemens' article explains that Elizabethans would interpret A Midsummer Night's Dream as A Midsummer Night's Madness (Clemens 360). In this line, Shakespeare clumps madmen and lovers in the same creative category. Again, this statement establishes the philosophy that lovers are mad.

## Chapter Three:

The Script: A Midsummer Night's Dream

Act One

Scene One

Athens, the Duke's Estate. Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate and Attendants

Theseus: Now, fair Hippolyta, our wedding is near  
How slow the time passes.

Hippolyta: Four days will pass into night,

Four nights will quickly dream away,  
And we will see our wedding.

[Enter Egeus and Hermia his daughter, Lysander, and Demetrius]

Egeus: [cheerfully] Theseus, our renowned Duke!

Theseus: [cheerfully] Egeus: What is the news with you?

Egeus: I come to you a father in distress,  
Furious with my daughter Hermia.

Come here, Demetrius. [to the Duke] Sir,  
This man has my consent to marry her.

Come here, Lysander; and, [to the Duke] sir,  
This man has bewitched my child:

[To Lysander] You, you Lysander, you have given her poems,  
And exchanged love-tokens with my child:

You have serenaded her in the moonlight,

And stolen her heart with bracelets

Made of your hair, rings, trinkets, flowers,

All very impressive to a young girl;

You have stolen my daughter's heart,

Turned her obedience to stubborn rebellion.

[To Theseus]And, my gracious Duke,  
Because of this, she will not marry Demetrius,  
She is my daughter; I can decide her fate;  
Which shall be either to marry this gentleman,  
Or die.

Theseus: What do you say, Hermia? Listen, beautiful girl,  
To you your father should be as a god:  
He made you beautiful; yes, he formed you,  
It is within his power to leave you as you are, or destroy  
you.  
Anyway, Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Hermia: So is Lysander.

Theseus: Seen by himself he is;  
But in this situation, since he lacks your father's approval,  
Demetrius is a better choice.

Hermia: I wish my father saw with my eyes.

Theseus: Rather your eyes must see with his judgment.

Hermia: I beg your pardon.  
I do not know where I found the courage  
To plead like this in your presence;  
What is the worst that may happen to me,  
If I refuse to wed Demetrius?

Theseus: You may never see a man again.  
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires,  
Ask yourself as a young maiden,  
If you do not marry your father's choice,  
Can you endure living as a nun?

Hermia: So I will live, my lord,  
Before I will give my virginity



To a husband I do not love.

Theseus: Take time to think,  
And by my wedding day, either prepare  
To live forever a lonely, single life,  
For disobedience to your father's will,  
Or else to wed Demetrius.

Demetrius: Relent, sweet Hermia, and Lysander, give up  
Your crazed desire to have what is mine.

Lysander: You have her father's love, Demetrius:  
Let me have Hermia's;  
[Pointing to her father] Why don't you marry him.

Egeus: [Angry] Lysander, true, he has my love;  
And because I love him I give him what is mine;  
And she is mine, and give her to Demetrius.

Lysander: I am, my Lord, from a family as good as his,  
I am as wealthy as he; my love is more than his;  
My fortunes every way equal his,  
But I have the advantage over Demetrius;  
The beautiful Hermia loves me.  
Why shouldn't I protect my right?  
I'll say this to Demetrius' face,  
He chased Nedar's daughter, Helena,  
And won her heart: and the sweet lady,  
Still dotes and worships this unfaithful man.

Theseus: I must confess I have heard as much,  
And planned to speak to Demetrius about it:  
But I was busy and it slipped my mind,  
Demetrius and Egeus, come with me;  
I have some private advice for you both.

For you, fair Hermia, prepare yourself  
 To do your father's will;  
 Or vow to live a single life.  
 Come, my Hippolyta, my love.  
 Demetrius and Egeus, come along.

Egeus: We will follow you with pleasure.

[Exit all but Lysander and Hermia]

Lysander: Well then, my love? Why is your cheek so pale?

Hermia: My cheeks are waiting for a storm of tears.

Lysander: Ah me! For all that I have ever read,

The course of true love never did run smooth;

Hermia: To be too high born to love a commoner.

Or too old to be engaged to someone young.

Lysander: Or else to have your family chose

Hermia: O hell! To have anyone choose your love.

If true lovers have forever been crossed,

These troubles stand as a rule in life.

Then let us learn patience,

Because this is a normal cross to bear.

Lysander: Yes, it is true, Hermia:

Listen, I have a wealthy, widowed aunt,

She has no child; her house is far from here,

And she respects me as her only son.

There, gentle Hermia, marry me;

And there your father and the Duke

Cannot follow us. If you love me, then,

Leave your father's house tomorrow night;

And meet me in the wood,

Where I met you once with Helena

On a May morning,  
I will wait for you there.

Hermia: My good Lysander,  
I swear to you by Cupid's best arrow,  
By all the vows that men have spoken to women,  
Tomorrow I will meet you there.

Lysander: Keep your promise, love.

Look, here comes Helena.

[Enter Helena]

Hermia: [Cheerful] God's speed, fair Helena! Where are you going?

Helena: You call me fair? Take that back!

Demetrius loves your beauty. O happy you!

I wish my voice were your voice

My words your sweet words

If I owned the world,

I would give it all to be changed for Demetrius

Teach me how to look like you and with what art

You sway Demetrius' heart!

Hermia: I frown at him, yet he still loves me.

Helena: I wish your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

Hermia: I curse him, yet he loves me.

Helena: I wish my prayers could move his affection!

Hermia: The more I hate him, the more he follows me.

Helena: The more I love him, the more he hates me.

Hermia: His folly, Helena, is not my fault.

Helena: It is your beauty's fault; I wish the fault were mine!

I wish I were as beautiful.

Hermia: Take comfort: he will not see my face again;

Lysander and I are running away from this place.

Lysander: Helen, we will tell you our secret.

Tomorrow night, when the moon is just right  
To conceal our lovers' flight,  
We plan to sneak out of town.

Hermia: And in the wood, where you and I often met

And shared sweet secrets with one another  
There, my Lysander and I shall meet,  
And then run away from here  
To seek new friends and stranger companies.

Farewell, sweet playfellow; pray for us;

And good luck with your Demetrius.

Keep your word, Lysander;

We must not see each other until tomorrow at midnight.

Lysander: I will, my Hermia. Helena, adieu.

Just as you dote on Demetrius, may he dote on you!

[Exit Hermia]

[Exit Lysander]

Helena [With self-pity] How much happier some are than others!

Throughout town, I am thought as beautiful as she.

But Demetrius does not think so;

And as he is wrong to dote on Hermia,

So I am wrong to dote on him.

But before Demetrius wanted Hermia,

He showered me with oaths that he was only mine;

[An idea] I will go tell him that fair Hermia's is running  
away;

Then he will go to the woods tomorrow night

Pursue her; and for this information,

If I have his thanks, that will be all I have.

But at least I will get to see him again.

[Exit]

Act One

Scene Two

[In town. Enter Quince the carpenter, Snug the joiner, Bottom the weaver, Flute the bellows-mender, Snout the tinker. and Starveling the tailor.]

Quince: Is all our company here?

Bottom: You best call them, man by man, according to the script.

Quince: Here is the list of every man's name fit to play in our performance before the Duke and the Duchess at their wedding.

Bottom: First, good Peter Quince, say what the play is about.

Then read the names of the actors:

Quince: Our play is: [reading] The most distressing comedy and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe.

Bottom: A very good piece of work, I assure you, and entertaining.

Now, good Peter Quince, call the actors

Masters, sit down.

Quince: Answer when I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver?

Bottom: Ready. Name my part.

Quince: You, Nick Bottom will play Pyramus.

Bottom: What is Pyramus? A lover or a hero?

Quince: A lover that kills himself gallantly for love.

Bottom: This performance will require some emotion.

If I do it, the audience will be reduced to tears.

I will rant and rave with my passion, and my grief.

But my real talent is for playing heroes.

[Seeing no one is interested]

Now name the rest of the players.

Quince: Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?

Flute: Here, Peter Quince.

Quince: Flute, you must be Thisbe.

Flute: What is Thisbe? A wandering knight?

Quince: It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

Flute: Nay, do not let me play a woman; I have a beard  
coming.

Quince: You shall play it in a mask, and you  
may speak in a tiny voice.

Bottom: If I may hide my face, let me play Thisbe.

I'll speak in a monstrously little voice:

'Thisne, Thisne' (in his big voice).

(In a high voice) 'Ah Pyramus, my lover dear!

Thy Thisbe dear, and lady dear!'

Quince: No, no, you must play Pyramus; and Flute, you Thisbe.

Bottom: Well, proceed.

Quince: Robin Starveling, the tailor?

Starveling: Here, Peter Quince.

Quince: Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's mother.

Tom Snout, the tinker?

Snout: Here, Peter Quince.

Quince: You, Pyramus' father; myself, Thisbe's father; Snug  
the joiner, you, the lion's part: and I hope, the cast is  
complete.

Snug: Have you written the lion's part?

If it is, give it me, for I am a slow study.

Quince: You can make it up, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bottom: Let me play the lion, too; I will roar a roar that will do any man's heart good to hear. I will roar, that I will make the Duke say, 'Let him roar again, let him roar again!'

Quince: And you should do it too terribly, you would frighten the Duchess and the ladies, and they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.

All: That would hang us, every mother's son.

Bottom: I grant you, friends, if you should frighten the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us; but I will change my voice so, that I will roar as gently as any sucking dove or a nightingale.

Quince: You can play no part but Pyramus; for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man, a proper man as one shall see in a summer's day, a most lovely, gentleman; therefore you must play the part.

Bottom: I will play the part in either your straw-color beard, your tan beard, your red beard, *the queen and all*  
Or your French- gold crown-color beard, your perfect yellow.

Quince: You will play barefaced.

Here are your parts, and I ask you, request you, and desire you, to know them by tomorrow night; meet me in the palace wood, a mile outside the town, in the moonlight. We will rehearse: for if we meet in the city, we shall be bothered with people in the street, and our play will be known. In the meantime, I will make a list of properties, *in sprite*

I pray you, do not fail me.

Bottom: We will meet, and there we may rehearse most

obscenely and courageously. Take pains to be perfect; adieu!

Quince: We will meet at the Duke's oak tree.

Bottom: Enough; parting is such sweet sorrow . . .

[Exit]

## Act Two

### Scene One

[A wood near town. Enter a Fairy at one side, and Puck at another.]

Puck: How now, spirit, where are you going?

Fairy: Over hill over dale,  
Through bush, through briar,  
Over park, over fence,  
Thorough flood, thorough fire,  
I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moon's sphere;  
And I serve the fairy queen,  
Farewell, you silly spirits; I'll be gone; Our queen and all  
her elves will be here soon.

Puck: The king will have a party here tonight;  
Take heed the queen does not come within his sight;  
For Oberon is violently angry  
Because she stole a lovely boy for her attendant.  
She's never had so sweet a boy.  
And jealous Oberon wants the child.

Fairy: Either I am mistaken,  
Or else, you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
Called Robin Goodfellow. Are you not he,  
That frightens the maidens in the village,



Sours the milk, and sometimes labors in the kitchen,  
 And makes the breathless housewife work without success,  
 And sometimes stops the brew from turning into beer,  
 Misleads night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?  
 Hobgoblin they call you, and Sweet Puck,  
 You do their work, and they shall have good luck.  
 Are not you he?

Puck: You've got it right;

I am that merry wanderer of the night.  
 I am Oberon's jester; I make him smile,  
 I trick a fat, bean-fed horse by,  
 Neighing like a filly foal;  
 And sometimes I lurk on an old gossip's bowl,  
 Looking like a roasted crab;  
 And when she drinks, I bob against her lips,  
 And pour the ale on her withered neck.  
 The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
 Sometimes mistakes me for a three-legged stool;  
 Then I slip from under her bum, and down she topples,  
 Crying, and falling into a cough;  
 And then everyone holds their hips, and laughs,  
 And sneezes and swears,  
 A merrier hour was never spent there.  
 But make room, fairy! Here comes Oberon.

Fairy: And here comes my mistress! I wish Oberon were gone!  
 [Enter Oberon the king of fairies at one side with his train,  
 and Titania the queen at another with hers]

Oberon: Too bad to meet you by moonlight, proud Titania.

Titania: What, jealous Oberon? Fairies, let's go:

I have vowed to stay away from him. [starts to exit]

Oberon: Wait, rash woman; I am your lord?

Titania: Then I must be your lady; but I know

When you have stolen away from fairy land,

And having changed yourself to a shepherd, sat all day,

Playing the pipes, and writing love poems

To a loving Phillida.

Why are you here?

To bless your favorite Hippolyta' wedding to Theseus?

You did not come to see me.

Oberon: How can you say this? For shame, Titania,

I know your love for Theseus.

Didn't you lead him after a war

Through the glimmering night

And make him love and leave fair Aegles, Ariadne, and

Antiopa?

Titania: These are fantasies of your jealousy;

Never since the middle summer's spring

Have we met on hill, in dale, forest, or field,

By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,

But our brawls have made the people miserable.

The weather is bad. Their animals won't work.

Their corn rots in the field. The humans wait for their winter

cheer; Now no night is filled with song;

Diseases do abound. And these evils come from our debate,

from our disagreements.

Oberon: Do you repent then; this is your fault.

Why should Titania cross her Oberon?

I merely want the little boy to be my attendant.

Titania: Set your heart at rest;

I would not sell my child for all of fairyland

His mother was a follower of mine,

By night we gossiped together;

And sat on the beach watching ships,

We laughed to see the sails fill

And grow big like her pregnant belly.

She would imitate the ship sailing on the land

With a pretty and swimming gait.

But she was mortal and died in childbirth.

And for her sake I rear up her boy,

And for her sake I will not part with him.

Oberon: How long do you intend to stay in this wood?

Titania: Perhaps until after Theseus' wedding day.

If you will politely dance in our circle,

And see our moonlight celebration, go with us;

If not, stay away from me, and I will stay away from you.

Oberon: Give me that boy, and I will go with you.

Titania: Not for your entire fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!

We shall fight outright, if I stay longer.

[Exit Titania and her train]

Oberon: Well, go your way; you shall not leave these woods,

Before I torment you for this insult.

My gentle Puck, come here. You remember

Once I sat upon a cliff,

And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back

Uttering such beautiful songs

That the rough sea grew calm and stars shot madly from their  
orbits.

Puck: I remember.

Oberon: That very time, I saw Cupid shoot his arrow into the night;

The golden arrow fell onto a pure white flower

Turning its blooms to purple.

Fetch me that flower,

For the juice of it when laid on sleeping eyes

Will make a man or woman madly dote

On the next living creature that it sees.

Fetch me this flower quickly.

Puck: I'll travel the earth in no time flat.

[Exit Puck]

Oberon: Having this juice,

I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,

And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:

The next thing she sees when she wakes,

Be it lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,

Or meddling monkey, or a busy ape,

She shall pursue it with her soul full of love.

And before I take this spell off her sight,

I'll make her give the boy to me.

But who comes here? Since I am invisible,

I will eavesdrop on their conversation.

[Oberon as all fairies are invisible to mortals. It should be

clear that the mortals (people) can not see him while the

audience can.]

[Enter Demetrius, Helena following him]

Demetrius: I do not love you, stop chasing me.

Where is Lysander, and fair Hermia?

I'll kill Lysander, Hermia kills me.

You told me they were hidden in this wood;  
And here am I, going crazy in the woods,  
Because I cannot find my Hermia.

Go away, and stop following me!

Helena: You make me love you, you hard-hearted man,  
Stop using your powers to attract me to you,  
And I shall stop following you.

Demetrius: Do I flirt with you? Do I say beautiful things to you?  
Or rather don't I tell you in plainest truth  
That I do not, I cannot love you?

Helena: And even for that I do love you more.  
Use me but as your dog; spurn me, strike me,  
Neglect me, lose me; only let me,  
Unworthy as I am, follow you.

Demetrius: Don't tempt me;  
For I am sick when I look at you.

Helena: And I am sick when I am not looking at you.

Demetrius: You risk your good reputation too much,  
To leave the city and give yourself  
Into my hands when I do not love you;  
You trust the opportunity of night  
And the evil thoughts a deserted place invites  
With the prize of your virginity.

Helena: Your virtue keeps me safe:  
For your, in my respect, are all the world.

Demetrius: I'll run and hide in the bushes,  
And leave you to the mercy of wild beasts.

Helena: Leave then. My feelings have not changed.

Demetrius: Go away! If you follow me, believe me

I shall do you mischief in these woods.

Helena: [glad] Yes, in the temple, in the town, the field  
Do me mischief. Oh, Demetrius!

[Exit Demetrius]

I'll follow you, and make a heaven of hell, I would die by  
your hand, I love so well.

[Exit]

Oberon: Farewell, my lady: before you leave these woods,  
You will run from him, and he will seek your love.

[Enter Puck]

Welcome, wanderer. Have you the flower there?

Puck: Yes, here it is.

Oberon: Give it to me.

I know where Titania sleeps

Wrapped in flowers and wide weeds;

And with the juice from this flower I'll streak her eyes,

And make her full of hateful fantasies.

You take some of it, and look through the woods:

A sweet lady is in love

With a young boy that rejects her: anoint his eyes;

But do it when the next thing he sees will be the lady.

You will know the man by the stylish garments he has on.

Put enough juice on his eyes, that he may prove

More fond of her than she is of him;

Meet me when the first cock crows.

Puck: Fear not, my lord; your servant shall do so.

Act Two

Scene Two

[The wood; Enter Titania with her train.]

Titania: Come now, a dance, and a fairy song;

Now, sing me asleep; Then to your duties, and let me rest.

[The Fairies sing]

Fairies sing a song

[Titania sleeps]

[Exit Fairies]

[Enter Oberon, who squeezes the juice on Titania's eyelids]

Oberon: What you see when you wake,

You will for your true love take;

Love and suffer for his sake.

Be it lynx, or cat, or bear,

Leopard, or boar with bristled hair,

In your eye that shall appear

When you wake, it will be your dear.

Wake when something disgusting is near.

[Enter Lysander and Hermia]

[Exit]

Lysander: Fair love, you are tired from wandering in the wood.

And to tell the truth, I have lost our way.

We'll rest, Hermia, if you think it is good

and wait for daylight to travel on.

Hermia: This is best, Lysander; find a bed for yourself,

I will lay here and rest my head.

Lysander: [Sits next to her] One place shall be a pillow for us both;

One heart, one bed, two hearts, and one promise of love.

Hermia: No, good Lysander; for my sake, dear.

Lysander: O understand my innocence!

Lovers understand each others meanings.

I meant that my heart is knit together with yours

Two hearts bound together by a promise.

[Lies down] Just lie beside me, so I can rest.

Hermia: Lysander, you talk very sweetly;

But out of love and respect

Lie further off, this distance

Is proper for a bachelor and a young maid.

I'll love you my entire life.

Lysander: [Getting up] All right, all right, I'll do what you ask;

I'll always be loyal to you

Here is my bed: sleep, rest

[They sleep]

[Enter Puck]

Puck: Through the forest I have gone,

But I have not found a youth

On whose eyes I might place

This flower's juice to stir up love.

Night and silence: who is here?

Stylish clothes he does wear:

This is the youth my master said

Despised the young maid:

And here the maiden, sleeping sound,

On the dank and dirty ground.

Pretty soul, she does not lie

Near this loveless wretch, this rude cad.

Peasant, on your eyes I sprinkle

All the power this juice does hold.



When you wake let love forbid  
 You to sleep or close these eyelids.  
 So wake when I am gone;  
 For I must go to see Oberon.

[Enter Demetrius and Helena, running]

Helena: Stop, even if it is to kill me, sweet Demetrius.

Demetrius: I order you go, and do not haunt me like this.

Helena: O will you leave me alone in the dark? Do not.

Demetrius: Stay at your own risk; I'm going on alone.

Helena: Oh, I'm out of breath after all this chasing,

Hermia is happy with her attractive eyes.

Why do her eyes shine so bright?

Why doesn't she have reason to cry?

I am as ugly as a bear; no wonder Demetrius runs away.

How could I ever compare myself to the fair Hermia?

[Discovers Lysander] Who is here? Lysander on the ground!

Dead or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.

Lysander, if you are alive, good sir, wake up!

Lysander: [Waking] And I would run through fire for your sweet sake!

Beautiful Helena! Nature's artwork

I can see the love in your heart.

Where is Demetrius? Oh, how his name

Disgust me; he should die by my hand.

Helena: Don't say that, Lysander!

What if he loves your Hermia? Who cares!

Hermia still loves you; Be content.

Lysander: Content with Hermia?

No, I regret the tedious minutes I have spent with her.

It is not Hermia I love, but Helena.

You are a worthier maiden.

I, being young, until now could not reason;

But now I have come to the point of human skill,

And I see you, who I have overlooked for so long.

Helena: Why was I born to be mocked like this.

Do I deserve this scorn at your hands.

It's not enough, it's not enough young man

That I did never, no, ever

Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,

But you have to flaunt my weaknesses.

You do me wrong, you do,

To pursue me in such a disrespectful way

I thought you a more gentle person

O, that I am by one man refused

And by another abused.

[Exit]

Lysander: She did not see Hermia. Hermia sleep on;

And never come near me again!

For, as sure as too many sweets things

Makes a stomach sick,

And just like a person changed, hates what he use to be

So above all things I hate you

And, with all my powers, address my love and might

To honor Helen, and to be hers alone!

[Exit]

Hermia: [waking] Help me, Lysander, help me! Do your best

To pluck this crawling snake from my chest!

Oh me, for heaven's sake! What a dream I had!

Lysander, look, how I shake with fear.

I thought a snake was eating my heart away,  
 And you just sat smiling as he preyed on me.  
 Lysander! What, you're not here? Lysander!  
 What? Gone? without a sound, without a word?  
 Where are you? Speak, if you can hear me:  
 No? Then I know you are not near.  
 Either I'll find you or I'll die trying.  
 [Exit]

### Act Three

#### Scene One

[Titania sleeps. Enter Quince, Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snout and Starveling.]

Bottom: Are we all here?

Quince: Perfect, perfect; and here's a marvelous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green spot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-bush our house, and we will do it with action, just like we will do it before the Duke.

Bottom: Peter Quince!

Quince: What say you, bully Bottom?

Bottom: There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisbe that will never work. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. What do you say?

Snout: Mother of God, a parlous fear.

Starveling: I believe we must leave the killing out.

Bottom: Not at all. Write me an introduction saying, we will do no harm with our swords,

and that Pyramus is not really killed.

That will put their minds to rest.

Quince: Well, we'll have such an introduction.

Snout: Won't the ladies be afraid of the lion?

Starveling: It will scare me, I can tell you.

Bottom: Masters, you ought to consider; to

bring in, God help us, a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing: for there is not a more fearful wild animal than your lion; we ought to look into this.

Snout: Therefore another introduction must tell he is not a real lion.

Bottom: No, you must name him by name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he says something like: 'Ladies', or 'Fair ladies', 'I would wish you' or 'I would request you', or 'I would entreat you, not to fear, not to tremble: If you think I come here as a lion, it would be a pity. No, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are; and let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.

Quince: Well, it shall be so: but there are two hard things, that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight.

Snout: Does the moon shine that night we perform our play?

Bottom: A calendar, a calendar; look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

Quince: [Looking through the almanac] Yes, it does shine that night.

Bottom: Why, then leave a drape on the great chamber window, where we play, open, and the moon may shine in at the window.

Quince: Ay, or else someone must come in with a bush of thorns

and a lantern, and say he comes to present the moonshine. Then there is another thing; we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisbe, says the story, did talk through the crack in the wall.

Snout: You can never bring in a wall. What do you think, Bottom?

Bottom: Some man must be the Wall; let him have some plaster cast about him, to signify a wall; or let him hold his fingers thus; and through that cranny Pyramus and Thisbe shall whisper.

Quince: If we can do that, then we have nothing to worry about. Come, sit down, everybody, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin; when you have spoken your part, go into that bush; and so every one according to his cue.

[Enter Puck behind]

Puck: What rough red necks have we swaggering here,  
So near the bed of the fairy queen?  
What, they perform a play? I'll be the audience;  
An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

Quince: Speak, Pyramus. Thisbe, come forward.

Bottom: Thisbe, the flowers have odious sweet smells.

[Hands her flowers]

Quince: Odours, odours . . .

Bottom: Odours sweet smell;

So has your breath, my dearest Thisby.

But listen, a voice!

Stay here a while, And I will return in a moment.

Puck: Of everyone that has played Pyramus

This is the strangest one I have ever seen.

Flute: Must I speak now?

Quince: Yes, you must. Understand, he goes but to see about the noise he heard, he will come back.

Flute: Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue;  
Of color like the red rose on triumphant briar,  
Most brisk young man and most lovely Jew,  
As a faithful horse, that never tires,  
I'll meet you, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

Quince: Ninus' tomb' man! But you must not say this yet. This is your answer to Pyramus. Speak all this part at once, cues and all. Pyramus, enter; it is 'never tires'.

Flute: Oh, as faithful as the most faithful horse, that never tires.  
[Re-enter Bottom wearing an ass's head]

Bottom: If I were beautiful, Thisbe, I'd be yours alone.

Quince: O monster! O strange! We are haunted;  
masters, run! Masters, help!  
[Screaming]

[Exit all but Bottom and Puck]

Puck: I'll follow you, I'll lead you round about,  
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through briar;  
Sometimes a horse I'll be sometimes a hound,  
A hog, a headless bear, sometimes a fire; ouch!  
[Exit]

Bottom: Why do they run away? This is a trick to scare me.  
[Enter Snout]

Snout: O Bottom, you are changed! What do I see on you?  
[Exit Snout] [Enter Quince]

Quince: Bless you, Bottom. bless you! You are changed!  
[Exit]

Bottom: I see their game: this is to make an ass of me, to frighten me, if they could; but I will not leave this place. I'll walk up and down, and sing, so they will know I am not afraid.

[Sings] "Bye, Bye Blackbird"

Titania: [waking] What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

Bottom: [Sings] Continues, "Bye, Bye Blackbird."

For indeed, who would question a stupid bird no matter how often it cried?

Titania: I beg you, gentle mortal, sing again;

My ear is in love with your voice;

My eye sees you as beautiful;

And your character moves me to your side

At first sight, I must say, I love you.

Bottom: I think, mistress, you have little reason

for that: and to say the truth, reason and love don't go together nowadays.

Titania: You are as wise as you are beautiful.

Bottom: I am neither; but if I had brains enough to get out of these woods, that would be enough for me.

Titania: Do not desire to go out of this wood;

You shall remain here, whether you want to or not.

I am a royal spirit, no common woman;

And I do love you; therefore, go with me.

I'll give you fairies to wait on you;

They will give you jewels,

And sing, while you sleep on flowers:

And I will take away your mortal character

And make you magic like the fairies.

Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed!

[Enter four Fairies: Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed]

Peaseblossom: Ready.

Cobweb: And me!

Moth: And me!

Mustardseed: Me, too!

All: Where shall we go?

Titania: Be kind and courteous to this gentleman:

Dance at his side,

Feed him with apricots and dewberries,

With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries

Safely guide my love to his bed,

And pluck the wings from colored butterflies

To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes;

Peaseblossom: Hail, mortal!

Cobweb: Hail!

Moth: Hail!

Mustardseed: Hail!

Bottom: I beg you what is your worship's name?

Cobweb: Cobweb.

Bottom: I would like to get to know you better,

Master Cobweb. If I cut my finger, I will ask

you to stop the bleeding. Your name, gentleman?

Peaseblossom: Peaseblossom.

Bottom: I'd like to get to know you better, too sir. Your name, sir?

Mustardseed: Mustardseed.

Bottom: Good Mustardseed, I know your patience well. That same

cowardly, cow has devoured many a mustardseed. We'll have to

get to know each other better, good Mustardseed.



Titania: Come, wait upon him, lead him to my camp.

[Bottom lets out a loud bray]

Tie up my love's mouth, take him silently.

[Exit]

### Act Three

#### Scene Two

[Another part of the wood, Enter Oberon.]

Oberon: I wonder if Titania is awake;

And, what she saw first,

That she must dote on with all of her heart.

[Enter Puck]

Here comes my messenger. Well now, mad spirit! What mischief  
is there in this haunted grove?

Puck: My mistress is in love with a monster.

While she was asleep, a crew of common working men,

Met near her camp to rehearse a play

Intended for great Theseus' wedding day.

The most stupid blockhead of the bunch,

Played Pyramus, for sport

He left the scene and entered into a thicket;

I took advantage, and at that moment

I fixed an ass's head on his shoulders.

In a moment he had to answer his Thisbe,

And out my actor comes. When they spied him,

When they laid eyes on him, off they flew like

Wild geese that have spotted a hunter,

And when they heard me stomp toward them;

They cried 'murder' cries, and called toward town for help  
 When in that moment, it came to pass,  
 Titania woke, and straightway loved an ass.

Oberon: This is better than anything I could have planned.  
 Have you put the love juice on the young stylish man's eyes  
 as I did as I asked you to?

Puck: I did it while he was sleeping - that is finished too  
 And the young woman was by his side,  
 So, when he woke, he was forced to look at her.

[Enter Demetrius and Hermia]

Oberon: Stand close: this is the same man.

Puck: This is the woman, but not the man.

Demetrius: O, why do you rebuke me, a man that loves you so?  
 Save such bitter words for your most bitter foe.

Hermia: I am only scolding you now, but I should be more severe,  
 For you, I fear, cause me to curse.

[Crying] If you have killed Lysander in his sleep,  
 Since you've already walked in blood, go all the way,  
 And kill me too.

He was more faithful to me than the sun is to the day

Would he have run away from his sleeping Hermia?

The only possible reason he has disappeared

Can be, you have murdered him;

You look like a murderer, deadly and grim.

Demetrius: That's how the murdered looks; that's how I look,  
 Broken hearted from your stern cruelty:

Hermia: What's this have to do with my Lysander? Where is he?

Ah, good Demetrius, will you please give him back to me?

Demetrius: I would rather give his carcass to my hounds.

Hermia: Get out, you pig! Get out, you swine! You have driven me past my limit. Have you murdered him, then?

O, for once tell the truth;

Did you kill him while he was awake, or asleep?

Demetrius: You are upset for nothing:

I am not guilty of killing Lysander;

Nor is he dead, for all I know.

Hermia: Tell me he is well.

Demetrius; And if I could, what would I get?

Hermia: The privilege of never seeing me again.

I would leave your hateful presence.

But you will see me no more, whether he is dead or not.

Demetrius: There is no following her in this angry mood;

I'll stay here for awhile.

I am so sorrowful and I have not slept.

I'll just lie down for a moment and take a nap.

[He lies down and sleeps]

Oberon: What have you done? You have made a huge mistake,

And put the love-juice on some true love's eyes.

Because of your mistake

Some true love is ruined, not a false love made true.

Puck: Fate makes the decision then. For every man who keeps his word, a million break their promises, one promise canceling out another.

Oberon: Go around the woods, swifter than the wind,  
And find Helena. She is love sick and pale.

Trick her into coming here

I'll put the magic in his eyes before she comes.

Oberon: Flower of this purple dye,

Hit with Cupid's arrow,  
 Pierce the apple of his eye.  
 When his love he does espy,  
 Let her shine as gloriously  
 As the stars of the sky.  
 When you wake, if she comes by,  
 Beg her to be yours alone

[Enter Puck]

[Exit]

Puck: Captain of our fairy band,  
 Helena is here at hand,  
 And the youth, mistook by me,  
 Pleading for a lover's fee.  
 Shall we their fond celebration see?  
 Lord, what fools these mortals be!

Oberon: Stand aside: the noise they make  
 Will cause Demetrius to wake.

Puck: Then will two men love one girl;  
 That would be fun enough alone;  
 And things do best please me  
 That happen quite ridiculously!

[Enter Lysander and Helena]

[They stand aside]

Lysander: Why would you think that I would love you as a joke.  
 Jokes and sarcasm never come in tears:  
 Look when I promise I weep; and promises  
 That come so honestly, must be true.

Helena: Your cunning increases more and more.  
 These promises are for Hermia's: are you giving her up?

Your promises are empty, they mean nothing.

Lysander: I wasn't thinking when I promised my love to Hermia.

Helena: Nor are you thinking now, in my mind, when you give her up.

Lysander: Demetrius loves her, and he does not love you.

Demetrius: [waking] O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine,

To what, my love, shall I compare your eyes,

Your red lips, you snow white skin,

O let me kiss you.

Helena: O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent

To plot against me for your amusement:

If you were civil, and knew anything about manners,

You would not do this much to hurt me.

Isn't hating me enough, as I know you do,

But you must join in to make fun of me too?

If you were a man, a real man,

You would not use a lady so;

You both are rivals, and love Hermia;

And now both rivals, to make fun of me.

A fine exploit, a manly enterprise,

To reduce two women to tears

With your lies and games!

Lysander: You are being unkind, Demetrius; Stop it;

You love Hermia; I am sure of this;

And here with the best intentions in the world,

I give up Hermia's love;

And your give me Helena,

Who I truly love, and will until my death.

Helena: You are wasting my time, the two of you.

Demetrius: Lysander, keep Hermia; I don't want her.

If I ever loved her, all that love is gone.

And now I have returned to Helen,

There to remain.

Lysander: Helena, it is not so.

Demetrius: Don't argue with a feeling you don't understand

Unless you consider the price you might have to pay.

Look who is coming, it's your sweetheart.

[Enter Hermia]

Hermia: Dark night, I can see nothing,

But I hear my Lysander's voice.

I heard you talking in the darkness

Why did you leave me so suddenly?

Lysander: Why should I stay when my heart tells me to go?

Hermia: What, love, could make you leave my side?

Lysander: My love, fair Helena, made me go;

Helena's beauty, lights up the night

Why are you following me? Don't you know

I hate the sight of you?

Hermia: You don't mean what you are saying; it can't be.

Helena: Oh, she is in on this plot!

Now I know you are all in on this, all three,

Came up with this sport to spite me.

You liar Hermia, most two faced maid!

Have you planned with these two

To bait me with these nasty lies?

Are all the talks that we two have shared,

The hours that we have spent,

All forgotten?

All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?

We were best friends. We liked the same things.  
We had the same thoughts. We were together always.  
And will you destroy our friendship,  
To join with these men in scorning me?

Hermia: I am amazed at your passionate words;  
I'm not scorning you; it seems that you scorn me.

Helena: Haven't you set up Lysander  
To follow me, and tell me my eyes and face are beautiful?  
And made your other love, Demetrius,  
Who just a moment ago kicked me,  
Call me goddess, nymph, divine,  
Precious, and celestial? Why does he say this  
To me who he hates? And why does Lysander  
Deny your love, so precious to him, And pursue my affection  
If it weren't with your permission.  
I have loved and not been loved in return  
You should pity me, rather than hate me.

Hermia: I do not understand what you mean by this.

Helena: Oh, keep up your story, pretend to be sad,  
And make faces behind my back,  
Wink at each other, keep the joke going;  
Someone ought to write this rude comedy down.  
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,  
You would not argue with me.  
But never mind; it's partly my own fault,  
And soon I'll either die or disappear.

Lysander: Stay, Helena, hear my excuse;  
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

Helena: O, excellent!

Hermia: Sweetheart, stop making fun of her.

Demetrius: If she can't make him shut up, I will.

Lysander: You couldn't change my mind any more than she could.

Your threats have no more strength than a crying baby.

Helen, I love you, by my life I do;

I swear by my own life.

Demetrius: I say I love you more than he can.

Lysander: If you do, prove it.

Demetrius: Come on.

Hermia: What is going to happen?

Lysander: Get away, you cow.

Demetrius: No, no; pretend to get away;

You are a coward

Lysander: [struggling with Hermia] Get off, you cat;

let go of me,

Or I will shake you off like a snake!

Hermia: Why are you so rude? What changed you,

My sweet love?

Lysander: Your love? Get out you wench!

Hermia: Are you kidding?

Helena: Oh yes, and so obviously are you.

Lysander: Demetrius, I will keep my word and fight you.

Demetrius: I wish it were backed by a guarantee.

I, frankly, don't believe you can be trusted.

Lysander: What, do you want me to hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?

I may hate her, but I'll not harm her.

Hermia: What, can you do to me that would hurt

me more than hating me?

Hate me? Why? O my, what brought you to this, my love!



I am Hermia? You are Lysander?

I am as fair now as I was an hour ago.

Last night you loved me; yet you left me.

Why did you leave me - O, my god!

I always trusted you.

Lysander: Yes, you did;

And now I never want to see you again.

Believe me, it is hopeless, there is no question, no doubt;

Nothing is more certain, nothing is truer, this is not a joke

I hate you, and I love Helena

Hermia: Is that right! You cheat, you liar,

You common slut! What, did you sneak in at night

And steal my lover?

Helena: Oh, that's fine;

Have you no modesty, no womanly shame, no reputation,

Will you keep on until I have no choice but to tear you apart  
with my words? You are such a puppet! You are so easy!

Hermia: A puppet? Easy? Why! Oh, that is the way the game goes. How

is it that I am so low, and you so high on a pedestal?

I am not yet so low that my nails can't reach into your eyes.

Helena: Please, even though you mock me,

Don't let her hurt me. I never had a sharp tongue;

I am not a shrew;

I am as a woman should be, a coward;

Don't let her strike me: maybe you think,

Because she is smaller than myself,

That I'm a good match for her.

Hermia: Smaller? Did you hear that?

Helena: Good Hermia, do not be angry with me.

I have always loved you,  
I kept your secrets, I never wronged you;  
Except that, I loved Demetrius,  
Because I loved him,  
I told him of your secret trip to this wood.  
He followed you;  
But ever since then he has threatened  
To strike me, spurn me, kill me.  
And now, so you will let me quietly go,  
To town. I will follow you no further.  
Let me go.  
You see how simple and foolish I am.

Hermia: Why, get going then! Who is it that hinders you?

Helena: Only a foolish heart, that I leave behind here.

Hermia: What, with Lysander?

Helena: With Demetrius.

Lysander: Don't be afraid, she will not harm you, Helena.

Demetrius: No, sir, she will not, even though you take her side.

Helena: Oh, when she's angry, she is smart and dangerous.

She was a vixen when she went to school;

And though she was little, she was fierce.

Hermia: Little again? Nothing to say but 'Hermia is little?'

Why do you let her to torture me this way?

Let me at her.

Lysander: Get out of here, you dwarf,

You midget, you shrimp, you tiny nothing.

Demetrius: You are butting in where you are not wanted,

She doesn't want your help. Leave her alone.

Don't talk about Helena; Don't talk for Helena

If you intend to show the tiniest love for her,  
You will regret it.

Lysander: She's not holding me back now.

So follow me, if you dare, to see whose right,  
You or me, to see who has the right to beautiful Helena.

Demetrius: Follow? No, I'll go with you side by side.

[Exit Lysander and Demetrius]

Hermia: You, maiden - all this fuss is over you.

Helena: I will not trust you, I  
Will not stay in your company.

Hermia: I am amazed, and don't know what to say.

[Exit]

[Exit]

[Oberon and Puck come forward]

Oberon: This is your fault; still making mistakes  
Or creating some kind of foolishness.

Puck: Believe me, king of shadows, I made a mistake.  
Didn't you tell me I should know the man  
By the stylish garments he had on?  
And so I found these stylish eyes  
And so far I am glad for the mistake. I think their  
quarreling is great fun.

Oberon: You see these lovers are looking for a place to fight.  
Therefore, Robin, cloud the dark night;  
So no stars or moon can light their way.  
And lead these rivals so astray  
That they never find one another.  
Pretend to be Lysander saying bitter words  
And lead Demetrius a confusing way;

And sometimes rant and rave like Demetrius;  
Making Lysander go wandering about.  
And when they fall, exhausted, and finally sleep  
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;  
It will correct the error made here tonight.  
When they next wake, all this foolishness  
Shall seem a dream,  
And the lovers will return to town  
With a friendship that will last all their lives.  
While you are busy finishing this affair  
I'll find my Queen, and beg her for the boy;  
And when she gives him to me, I'll take the magic  
Spell off of her.

Puck: My lord, this must be done quickly,  
For dawn is quickly approaching  
When ghosts troop home to churchyards.  
Damned spirits all return to their wormy beds.

Oberon: But we are not dark spirits:  
I have played in the morning light.  
But let's not waste time, make no delay:  
We must get this business done today.

Puck: Up and down, up and down,  
I will lead them up and down;  
I am feared in field and town;  
Goblin, lead them up and down.  
Here comes one.  
[Enter Lysander]  
[Exit Oberon]

Lysander: Where are you, proud Demetrius? Speak now.

Puck: Here, villain! With my sword drawn and ready.

Where are you?

Lysander: I will be with you right away.

Puck: Follow me to flatter ground.

[Re-enter Demetrius]

Follow me.

[Exit Lysander following the voice]

Demetrius: Lysander! speak again:

You coward, you ran away

Speak! Are you in some bush? Where are you hiding?

Puck: [As Lysander] You coward, you brag to the air

Telling the bushes that you are looking for a good fight?

Come on then you child.

I'll whip you with a rod.

Demetrius: Yeah, where are you?

Puck: [as Lysander] Follow my voice; we can't fight here.

[Exit]

[Re-enter Lysander]

Lysander: He stays in front of me, and dares me;

When I come where he calls, then he is gone.

The villain is much faster than I.

It is dark and I have lost my way, I need to rest.

When the daylight comes,

I'll find Demetrius, and set things right.

[Lies down and sleeps]

[Re-enter Puck and Demetrius]

Puck: [as Lysander] Ho, ho, ho! coward, why didn't you come after me?

Demetrius: Wait for me, if you dare; you will pay for this,

You run around; first here, then there,  
And you don't dare stand still, or look me in the face.  
Where are you now?

Puck: [as Lysander] Come here, I am here.

Demetrius: All right then, you mock me; you'll pay dearly for this,  
If I ever find you in the daylight. Now, go away:  
I'm going to lay down right here . . .

[Lies down and sleeps]

[Enter Helena]

Helena: What a long night.  
When daylight comes,  
I am back to town,  
Away from these detestable people;  
I'll sleep until the daylight leads me out of this mess.  
[Lies down and sleeps]

Puck: There are only three? Come one more.  
Two of both kinds makes up four.  
Here she comes, angry and sad;  
Cupid is a knavish lad,  
To make poor females mad.  
[Enter Hermia]

Hermia: I've never been so weary, so sad,  
I can not crawl any further;  
My legs won't let me.  
I'll rest here until the break of day.  
Heavens protect Lysander, if they mean to fight!

Puck: On the ground  
Sleep sound;  
I'll apply

To your eye  
 Gentle lover's, remedy.  
 [Squeezes the juice on Lysander's eyes]  
 When you wake,  
 You will take  
 True delight  
 In the sight  
 Of your former lady's eye;  
 And the country proverb known,  
 That every man should take his own,  
 In your waking shall be shown:  
 Jack shall have Jill,  
 Nought shall go ill;  
 The man shall have his lady again, and all shall be well.  
 [He leaves]  
 [Lovers lie down and sleep]  
 [Exit]

#### Act Four

#### Scene One

[The same place. Enter Titania and Bottom, with the fairies. Oberon follows them.]

Titania: My gentle love, come sit down  
 While I caress your cheeks,  
 I'll stick roses in your sleek smooth hair,  
 And kiss your fair ears,

Bottom Where's Peaseblossom?

Peaseblossom: Ready.

Bottom: Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. Where's Master Cobweb?

Cobweb: Ready.

Bottom: Master Cobweb, get something and kill the bumble bee on that thistle. Then bring me the honey bag. Be careful not to spill it. I wouldn't want you covered in honey. Where's Mustardseed?

Mustardseed: Ready.

Bottom: Shake hands with me, Mustardseed.

Mustardseed: What can I do for you?

Bottom: Nothing, good sir, but help

Cobweb to scratch. I must go to the barber's, sir, for I think I am marvelously hairy about the face. And I am such a tender ass, if my hair tickles me, I must scratch.

Titania: What, will you listen to some music, my sweet love?

Bottom: I have a reasonably good ear.

Titania: Or say, my sweet, what you would like to eat?

Bottom: Actually, a large feeder of grain; I could munch your good dry oats. I think I'd like a bundle of hay: good hay, sweet hay, there is nothing like it.

Titania: I have a fairy, that will find a Squirrel's hoard, and bring you some nuts.

Bottom: I'd rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But don't make anyone go to any trouble; I feel sleepy.

Titania: Sleep, and I will hold you in my arms.

Fairies, be gone.

[Exit Fairies]

Oh, how I love you! How I dote on you!

[They sleep]



[Enter Puck]

Oberon: [coming forward] Welcome, good Robin: see this  
sweet sight

I am beginning to feel sorry for her infatuation;  
When I met her in the woods this evening,  
She was looking for flowers for this hateful fool,  
I made fun of her; we had an argument  
For she was wrapping his hairy temples  
in the beautiful blossoms  
She stood there with tears in her eyes  
And began to wail like a babe  
After I had my pleasure taunting her,  
I asked her for that beautiful child;  
Which she gave me, and sent her fairy  
To take him to my place in fairy land.  
And now I have the boy, I will undo  
This hateful spell off her eyes.  
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed figure  
Off the workman's head,  
When he wakes he'll think this was all just a dream,  
But first I will release the fairy queen.

[Touches Titania's eyelids]

Be as you once were; See as you once saw.  
Now my Titania, wake my sweet queen.

[Titania wakes and rises]

Titania: My Oberon! What visions I have seen!

I thought I was in love with an ass.

Oberon: There lies your love. (pointing to Bottom)

Titania: How did that happen? He looks disgusting to me now.

Oberon: Sh. . . . Robin, take off his head; Put these five in a deep sleep.

Titania: Music. . make music that causes a magical sleep.

[Music plays]

Puck: [To Bottom, removing ass's head] Now, when you wake, you'll see you own foolish face.

Oberon: Music, music; come, my queen, take hands with me,  
And dance where these sleepers lie.  
Now we are friends again,  
And will tomorrow night solemnly  
Dance in Duke Theseus' house,  
And bless it with all prosperity.  
There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be  
Wedded, with Theseus and his bride, all in great fun.

Puck: Fairy King, listen;  
I hear the morning lark.

Oberon: Then, my Queen, silently  
We slip away  
Night will soon be day.

Titania: Come, my lord, and in our flight  
Tell me how it came this night  
That I sleeping here was found,  
With these mortals on the ground.

[Exit. The four lovers and Bottom still lie asleep]

[Hunting horns sound. Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, and their train]

Theseus: Go one of you, find the huntsman,  
Today my bride, Hippolyta, and I are off to the woods  
To celebrate May Day with a morning hunt.

[Exit an Attendant]

Hippolyta: I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,  
When in a wood they were bear hunting.

Theseus: Quiet, what nymphs are these?

Egeus: My lord, this is my daughter sleeping here,  
And this is Lysander, this Demetrius,  
This Helena, I wonder what they are all doing together?

Theseus: I imagine they heard of our May Day hunt,  
And came to be part of the merriment.  
But tell me Egeus -isn't this the day that Hermia should  
Announce her intentions?

Egeus: It is my lord.

Theseus: Tell the huntsman to wake them with their horns.  
[Horns sound; a shout is heard. The lovers wake up]  
Good morrow, friends. Valentine's Day is past.

Lysander: Pardon me, my lord.

[The lovers kneel]

Theseus: Please, all of you, stand up.  
I know you two are enemies.  
How come you are so at peace with one another,  
That you could sleep next to each  
And not fear for your safety.

Lysander: My lord, I am amazed myself,  
I swear, I cannot say how I got here.  
I think, I came with Hermia  
Our intent was to leave town.  
Where we might,  
Without fear of her father . . .

Egeus: Enough, enough, my lord; you have done enough;

They would have stolen away; they would, Demetrius,  
 To have defeated you and me:  
 You of your wife to be,  
 You had my consent, that she should be your wife.

Demetrius: My lord, fair Helena told me of their secret trip,  
 I followed Hermia into the woods and fair Helena followed me.  
 But, my good lord, I don't know by what power, But by some  
 power, my love for Hermia died. Now the only object of my  
 affection is Helena. I was engaged to her, my lord, before I  
 saw Hermia; And true for a time I was sick at the thought of  
 her, but now I wish for her, love her, long for her,  
 And will forever be true to her.

Theseus: Fair lovers, you are fortunately met;  
 We will hear more of this story later.  
 I overrule you, Egeus.  
 When we get married tonight in the temple, these couples shall  
 be married, too. It is late. Let's cancel the hunt and return  
 to town; three and three, We'll have a feast.  
 Come, Hippolyta.

[Exit all but the lovers and Bottom, still asleep]

Demetrius: Everything seems small and unclear,

Hermia: I think there is something in my eye,  
 I see two of everything.

Helena: Me, too;  
 And Demetrius is like a jewel I have found,  
 My own, and not my own.

Demetrius: Are you sure  
 That we are awake? It seems to me  
 We are sleep, we are dreaming. Do not you think

The Duke was here, and asked us to follow him?

Hermia: Yes, and my father.

Helena: And Hippolyta.

Lysander: And he did ask us to follow him to the temple.

Demetrius: Well then, we are awake; let's follow him,

And while we're walking, let's go over our dreams.

[Exit the lovers]

Bottom: [Waking up] When my cue comes, call me, and I  
will answer. My next line is 'Most fair Pyramus'.

Height! Peter Quince! Flute the bellows-mender!

Snout the tinker! Starveling! God's bless me!

They've snuck away, and left me here asleep!

I have had the most weird vision. I dreamt . . . ,

It is beyond me to say what I dreamt. I thought I was . . .

I thought I was a fool. No man could put into words

What I saw in my sleep.

I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream;

It shall be called 'Bottom's Dream', and I will sing it

At the end of our play for the Duke.

To make it more polite, I'll sing right after Thisbe dies.

[Exit]

#### Act Four

#### Scene Two

Quince: Have you gone to Bottom's house? Is he home yet?

Starveling: He hasn't been heard from. Perhaps he's been kidnapped.

Flute: If he doesn't show up, the play is ruined. We will have to  
cancel.

Quince: We'd have to cancel. There is not a man in this town that can play Pyramus, but Bottom.

Flute: No, he has the best talent of any handyman around.

Quince: Yes, and he has the look for it too, and the voice.

Snug: The Duke is coming from the temple. There are two more couples to be married. We would have made a fortune if we could have put on the play.

Flute: Bully Bottom! He's lost a sixpence a day pension for the rest of his life. He would have gotten at least a sixpence a day for his Pyramus. He would have deserved it; a sixpence or nothing.

Bottom: Where are you, lads? Where are my friends?

Quince: Bottom! O, what a great day! What a happy moment.

Bottom: Masters, I could tell you amazing things; but don't ask me, for if I tell you,  
I will tell you everything just as it happened.

Quince: Let us hear it, Bottom, you good friend.

Bottom: Not a word from me: all that I will tell you is, that the Duke has dined. Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps, meet right away at the palace; every man dressed for his part; for the short and the long is, they want to see our play. Thisbe have clean clothes: and the lion must have long nails, so they hang out for the lion's claws. And, actors, eat no onions, or garlic; for we must have sweet breath, and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more talking: away, go away  
[Exit]

Act Five

Scene One

[Town. Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate and Attendants.]

Hippolyta: It's strange, my Theseus, what these lovers  
are telling us.

Theseus: Too strange to be true. I never believe these stories.  
Lovers and madmen have such creative minds,  
Their fantasies, are more than a reasonable  
Man could understand.  
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet are imaginative.  
The madman sees more devils than all of hell can hold;  
The lover, is frantic; he sees beauty in an old hags face.  
The poet's eye, roams the world,  
Glances from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,  
His pen turning unknown things into shapes,  
And airy nothings into a place with a name.  
These creative types think of joy  
And suddenly they can find a joyful source.  
Or in the night, imagining some fear,  
They easily suppose a bush is a bear.

Hippolyta: But all their stories were the same  
It makes me think, it is more than make believe.  
Maybe something supernatural happened.

[Enter Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia and Helena]

Theseus: Here come the lovers, full of joy and happiness  
Happiness and love be yours forever.

Lysander: May even more of it fill your walks, your table, your bed.

Theseus: Come now, what dances do we have to wear away

the time between supper and bed.

What entertainment do we have planned?

Is there a play to fill these quiet hours?

Philostrate: Here, mighty Theseus.

Theseus: What is there to amuse us?

Philostrate: Here is a list of the shows that are ready. Which would you like to see?

Theseus: The Battle with the Centaurs, to be sung by a eunuch? We'll have none of that. I've already told my love enough war stories. The religious frenzy of the drunken women, tearing apart Orpheus in their fury, That's an old one. A long, short play about young Pryamus and his lover: a very comic tragedy. Comical tragedy? Long and short? How could we follow the sense of such nonsense?

Philostrate: There is this play, my lord, some ten words long,

Which is as brief as a play can be;

But it is ten words too long, my lord.

It is tedious and boring.

This play is tragic, my noble lord, it is;

Pyramus kills himself.

When I saw it rehearsed, I must confess,

It brought tears to my eyes; but I never laughed so hard.

Theseus: Who are the actors?

Philostrate: Craftsmen and laborers, that work here in town,

They have never done anything intellectual before.

And they have memorized this entire play for your wedding.

Theseus: And we will hear it.

Philostrate: No, my noble lord,

You won't like it. I have never heard the whole thing,



And it is nothing, nothing entertaining;  
Unless you can find some amusement in their efforts,

Theseus: I will hear that play.

Nothing can be better than when done out of duty.

Go, bring them in; and take your places, ladies.

[Exit Philostrate]

Hippolyta: I love not to see simple men overstretching themselves,  
Or performing duties that give them pain.

Theseus: Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

Hippolyta: He says they can't act.

Theseus: The kinder of us to give them thanks for nothing.

Our pleasure shall be to take their mistakes;

And regard them seriously.

I value these men's simple respect more than smooth talkers

That have no serious meaning or respect

Trust me, love, lovers and simple men

Speak the most when they say the least.

[Enter Philostrate]

Philostrate: Your grace, the actors are ready to begin. The Prologue.

Theseus: Let's begin.

Quince: If we offend, it is with goodwill.

You should think, we come not to offend.

But with good will to show our simple skill.

We are at hand; and by our show

You will know the story-the whole story-

Or at least what you need to know.

Theseus: This fellow does not understand punctuation.

Lysander: He hasn't learned how to stop. A good moral, my lord

It is not enough to speak, but to speak correctly.

Hippolyta: Indeed, he's played on his prologue like a child on a recorder;

He made a sound, but it makes no sense.

[A trumpet sounds. Bottom enters, playing the part of Pyramus, Flute as Thisbe, Snout as Wall, Starveling as Moonshine, and Snug as the Lion. They listen to Quince speak the Prologue, and step forward one by one as he introduces them.]

Quince: Gentle people, maybe you wonder about this show;

But wonder on, until the truth makes all things plain.

This man is Pyramus,

This beautiful lady is certainly Thisby.

This man covered with plaster - is the wall.

Wall, that vile wall, which kept these lovers apart:

And through the chink in the wall, poor souls, they are content

To whisper: about what, it's no one's business.

This man, with lantern, dog and thorny bush,

Is the Moonshine; for, I will tell you,

By moonshine did these lovers boldly

Meet at Ninus' tomb, and there to woo.

This grisly beast, Lion by name,

The trusty Thisbe, arriving first that night,

Was scared by Lion and in her fright:

She fled, and her scarf fell,

Lion picked it up with his bloody mouth and left a stain.

Soon Pyramus comes, sweet youth, so tall,

And finds his lovely Thisbe's scarf stained;

Then with his blade, with bloody awful blade,

He bravely stabbed his saddened bloody breast,

And Thisbe, waiting in a mulberry thicket,  
 Pyramus' dagger used, and died. For all the rest,  
 Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and Lovers too,  
 Explain it all in this play for you.

[Exit all the players but Snout]

Theseus: I wonder if the lion is going to speak.

Demetrius: It would not surprise me, my lord: that a lion can speak, if  
 this many asses can.

Snout: In this play I, Snout, am the wall:  
 And such a wall, as I would have you think,  
 That had in it a crannied hole or chink,  
 Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe,  
 Did whisper often, very secretly.

I am that same wall; and that is truly so.  
 And this the cranny is, formed by my fingers,  
 Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

Theseus: Would you want plaster and hair to speak better?

Demetrius: It is the wittiest part that I have heard  
 in this show, my lord.

Theseus: Pyramus comes near the wall; silence.

[Enter Bottom]

Bottom: O grim looking night, O night that is so black!  
 O night, which is when day is not!  
 O night, O night; alack, alack, alack,  
 I fear my Thisbe's forgot her promise.  
 And you O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,  
 That stands between her father's ground and mine,  
 You wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,  
 Show me your chink, to blink through with my eye.

[Snout holds up his fingers]

Thanks, courteous wall: God shield thee well for this!

But what do I see? Not Thisbe.

O wicked wall, through whom I can not see my love,

Curse your stones for so lying to me!

Theseus: I think the wall should curse back.

Bottom: No sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me' is

Thisbe's cue; she is to enter now, and I am to spy her

through the wall. You shall see it will all fall into place.

[Enter Flute]

Flute: O wall, you have often heard me complain,

For keeping my fair Pyramus and me apart.

My lips have often kissed your stones;

Bottom: See a voice; I'll go to the chink,

To spy and I can hear my Thisbe's face.

Thisbe!

Flute: My love! You are my love, I think.

Bottom: Think what you will, I am your lover,

And like Romeo I am trusty still.

Flute: And I like Juliet, am yours until Fate kills me.

Bottom: Romeo to Juliet was not so true.

Flute: Juliet to Romeo, I to you. Oh, Romeo, Oh, Romeo

Wherefore art thou, my Romeo.

Bottom: O kiss me through the hole of this vile wall.

Flute: I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

Bottom: Will you meet me at Ninny's tomb?

Flute: Come life, come death, I'll go without delay.

[Exit Bottom and Flute]

Snout: I have done my part as the Wall;

And being done, the Wall away does go.

[Exit]

Theseus: Now the Moon will come between the two lovers.

Demetrius: No solution, my lord, when walls have ears.

Hippolyta: This is the silliest stuff that I have ever heard.

Theseus: The best actors are awful, so the worst can't be any worse.

Use your imagination to make sense of the whole thing.

Hippolyta: It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

Theseus: If we imagine no worse of them than they think of themselves,  
they may pass for excellent men.

Here come two noble beasts, a man and a lion.

[Enter Snug and Starveling]

Snug: You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear  
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on the floor,  
May now, perhaps, quake and tremble.  
When Lion roars in a loud rage,  
Know that I, Snug the joiner, am  
A fierce lion, no lioness.  
If I should enter with a lion's roar,  
Into this gentle place, my life would be worthless.

Theseus: A very gentle beast, with a good conscience.

Demetrius: The most beastly actor, my lord, that I have ever seen.

Theseus: Let's listen to the Moon.

Starveling: The lantern represents the Moon.

And I am the man in the moon, so it would seem.

Demetrius: He should have worn horns on his head,

His wife is so unfaithful.

Theseus: This is the biggest mistake of all. The man should be inside  
The lantern, if he is to be the Man in the Moon.

Demetrius: He dares not go there for the candle; for you  
see, it is already out.

Hippolyta: I am tired of this Moon; I wish it would change!

Theseus: It appears, by his small light, that he  
is getting smaller: yet, he must sit this one out.

Lysander: Proceed, Moon.

Starveling: All I've got to say to you is that the  
lantern is the Moon; I, the Man in the Moon; this thorn bush,  
my thorn bush; and this dog, my dog.

Demetrius: All of these should be inside the lantern: for all  
these are inside the Moon. Silence, here comes Thisbe.

[Enter Flute]

Flute: This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?

Snug: Roar -r-r-r!  
[Thisbe runs away, dropping her scarf.]

Demetrius: Well roared, Lion.

Theseus: Well run, Thisbe.

Hippolyta: Well shone, Moon. Truly the moon shines very gracefully.

[Snug tears Thisbe's scarf and exits]

Theseus: Well moused, Lion.

[Enter Bottom as Pyramus]

Demetrius: And then came Pyramus.

Lysander: And so the Lion vanished.

Bottom: Sweet Moon, thank you for thy sunny beams;  
Thank you, Moon, for shining now so bright;  
For by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,  
I hope to see my truest Thisbe.  
But stop! O no!  
But look, poor knight,

What dreadful thing is here?

Eyes, do you see?

How can it be?

O dainty duck! O dear!

Her good scarf,

What! Stained with blood?

O God, how terrible

Theseus: This passion, and the death of a dear friend,  
would make a man look sad.

Hippolyta: Curse my heart, but I pity the man.

Bottom: O why, Nature, did you make lions,  
Since a lion has murdered my dear?  
Which is - no, no, which was - the fairest woman  
That lived, that loved, that liked, that looked with cheer.  
Come tears, confound:  
Out sword and wound  
The breast of Pyramus;  
Where my heart does beat:  
Then I die, then, then, then!  
Now I am dead,  
Now I am gone;  
My soul is in the sky.  
Tongue, lose your sight,  
Moon, take thy flight!  
[exit Moonshine]  
Now die, die, die, die, die.  
[He dies dramatically]

Demetrius: He's got the lowest score on dying.

Lysander: Less than that, man; since he is dead, he has nothing.

Theseus: With the help of a doctor he might yet recover,  
and be an ass.

Hippolyta: How come Moonshine is gone before Thisbe  
comes back and finds her lover?

[Enter Flute]

Theseus: She will find him by starlight. Here she comes,  
and her passion ends the play.

Hippolyta: I think she should not make a long speech like Pyramus;  
I hope she will be brief.

Demetrius: It is a toss up whether, Pyramus,  
or Thisbe is the better; he as a man, God help us,  
Or she as a woman, God bless us.

Lysander: She's seen him already with those sweet eyes of hers.

Demetrius: And she grieves. . .

Flute: Asleep, my love?  
What, dead, my dove?  
O Pyramus arise!  
Speak, speak!  
Dead, dead? A tomb  
Must cover thy sweet eyes.  
These lily lips,  
This cherry nose,  
Are gone, are gone!  
His eyes were green as leeks.  
Come, come to me,  
With hands as pale as milk;  
Lay them in blood,  
Come, blade, my breast stab through!  
Farewell, friends;



Thus Thisbe ends:

Theseus: Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

Demetrius: Yes, and Wall too.

Bottom: No, I assure you, the wall is down that separated their fathers. Would you like to see the epilogue, or a country dance?

Theseus: No epilogue; your play needs no excuses. Never excuses; for when the players are all dead there is no one to be blamed. It would have been funny if the man that played Pyramus hanged himself in Thisbe's stockings, that would have been a fine tragedy: It was truly a good memorable, performance. But come, your dance.

[A dance]

It is midnight. Lovers, to bed; it is almost time for the fairies. I'm afraid we will over-sleep in the morning. Sweet friends, to bed.

[Enter Puck]

Puck: Now the hungry lion roars,  
And the wolves howl at the moon;  
While the sleepy farmer snores,  
While the screech owl, screeches loudly.  
Now it is the time of night  
That the graves, all gaping wide,

[Exit all]

Every one lets forth his spirit,  
In the church-way paths to glide.  
And we fairies, that do run  
Following darkness like a dream,  
Now we frolic; not a mouse  
Shall disturb this hallowed house.

I am sent to sweep the problem

And all the trouble, out the door.

[Enter Oberon and Titania, the king and queen of Fairies, with their train]

[Oberon leading, the Fairies sing and dance]

Oberon: Now until the break of day,  
Through this house each fairy stray.  
To the best bride-bed will we,  
Which by us shall blessed be;  
So shall all the couples three  
Ever true in love be;  
Their children will good health see.  
Prosperity shall be their fate,  
Fairies will guard their gates.  
Trip away? Don't delay;  
Meet me all by break of day.  
[Exit all except Puck]

Puck: If we shadows have offended,  
Think but this, and all is mended,  
You were only sleeping here,  
While these visions did appear.  
Puck the Hobgoblin is always here for you to call  
So, good night to you, good night to you all.  
[Exit Puck]

## Chapter Four:

## Survey Results

When I announced that the Francis Howell Middle School Drama Club was going to produce A Midsummer Night's Dream, the faculty was surprised.

Teacher responses included the following:

My, what an undertaking.

How ambitious.

I can't believe you're doing Shakespeare at a middle school.

A few teachers applauded my choice, but, by in large, my colleagues were skeptical (Francis Howell Teacher).

The Francis Howell Middle School cast and crew performed A Midsummer Night's Dream five times: four times for the school and one time for the community. Approximately five hundred teachers and students saw the play during the school day, and three hundred parents and community members saw the evening performance. I surveyed the faculty and students before and after the performances to determine whether A Midsummer Night's Dream was a successful production.

Thirty-eight of the approximately sixty teachers surveyed before the show responded. This survey was designed to measure the faculty's exposure to Shakespeare, as well as their attitude towards his works. Ninety-two percent of the responding teachers were required to read or view a Shakespearean play at some point during their education. Twenty-six percent read or viewed Shakespeare in middle school, fifty-six percent in high school, and ten percent in college. Their experience included scripts, live performances, and movies. Ninety-eight percent read Shakespeare and ninety-two percent viewed a Shakespearean movie. More than half, sixty-six percent, had seen a

live performance. Since plays are meant for production, not oral or silent reading, it is not surprising that seventy percent of the teachers said they enjoyed viewing Shakespeare's plays, while only fifty-one percent reported that they liked to read his plays (Teacher Survey Before).

A teacher's personal experience affects his or her curricular choices, as well as his or her attitude during the actual teaching. One could assume that teachers who do not enjoy reading Shakespeare would not choose to read Shakespeare in their own classrooms unless forced to do so. It would also follow that teachers who enjoy seeing Shakespeare's plays would take their students to a Shakespearean play. In addition, one could infer that teachers who enjoy Shakespeare would transfer their enthusiasm to their students. Seven out of ten of the teachers found watching the plays a positive experience, but approximately half did not like reading the plays.

Since middle schools are team based, the students on a team have the same five core subject teachers. Most teams wanted to attend the school performance. The teams reported that at least one teacher on the team liked Shakespeare. That teacher led the class work for the unit; consequently, a teacher with a positive perspective taught every student who attended the play.

A successful A Midsummer Night's Dream production would not only teach students to enjoy Shakespearean comedy, it would also teach the students to appreciate live theatre.

In middle schools, language arts teachers determine student exposure to drama. The Francis Howell Language Arts Curriculum for Middle School has both required and optional units. Drama is an optional unit in the curriculum. According to Kathy Green, a member of The Language Arts Curriculum Committee, middle school language arts is

responsible for more units than can possibly be covered in a year. If a teacher has time, he or she may include a drama unit (Green).

The teacher survey included a section for language arts teachers. Ten language arts teachers responded to the survey. Seven of those teachers make curricular decisions for language arts classrooms. Five of the seven teachers or seventy-one percent do not cover the drama unit in their classrooms. The two teachers who do cover drama reported their students read the plays aloud. One of the teachers also had her students act out parts of the play, while the other teacher said that her class watched a play on video (Teacher Survey Before).

When asked if Shakespeare should be part of the middle school curriculum, the language arts teachers split: fifty, fifty. The half that said Shakespeare should not be part of middle school language had several concerns. Eighty percent thought the reading material would be too difficult for middle school students. Forty percent noted that Shakespeare was not covered in the district's language arts text. Forty percent also stated that the high school curriculum covered Shakespeare. Finally, sixty percent said the middle school curriculum already included too many units. These teachers simply did not have enough time to teach Shakespeare (Teacher Survey Before).

The same ten teachers found the school production an excellent opportunity for the students to learn from other students. Teachers used the supplementary materials to teach the unit, and the cast and crew were available for classroom presentations. One teacher said that classroom instruction in drama could never have the impact that student performances have (Teacher Survey After). Students see the school production as a break from regular language arts. They are particularly interested if someone they know is in the cast or crew

(Francis Howell Students). In this way, most of the student body is taught drama each year.

Determining the show's success included teacher response to the production. Teachers were surveyed after their classes saw A Midsummer Night's Dream. Twelve teachers saw the in-school production; ten teachers responded to the postproduction survey. Eighty-nine percent rated the performance as an excellent or good educational experience. Fifty-six percent said the production they saw was great, while forty-four percent thought it was good. Ninety percent agreed that the play was appropriate for middle school students. Only one teacher thought it was not appropriate. This teacher commented that the actors clearly understood the play, but this teacher thought the audience was confused (Teacher Survey After).

The teachers' feelings about Shakespeare before and after they saw the production did not change markedly. Seventy-seven percent of the teachers who saw the play said they felt great or good about Shakespeare before the production. After seeing the production, eighty-eight percent felt great or good about Shakespeare. All of the teachers who saw the play said they would like to see another Shakespearean play. Further, they all agreed they would like to see another student production. Sixty-three percent found the teaching aids and worksheets helpful (Teacher Survey After). Survey comments included the following:

I am very impressed with the effort the cast put into this terrific!

Very well presented.

Your students did a great job performing!

Great job!

A very worthwhile experience for cast and audience.

Thanks for the previewing activities (Teacher Survey After).

Teacher perception about Shakespeare did not change after they saw this production; however, after the production more teachers agreed that Shakespeare was appropriate for middle school (Teacher Survey After). Although the production was far from perfect, the teachers rated it as excellent or good because they were impressed with the performance level. The cast and crew's work far surpassed middle school expectations. Obviously, the school performance influenced the teacher's perspective regarding Shakespeare as a playwright appropriate for middle school.

The play's success also hinged largely on student response. Students come to Francis Howell Middle School with theatrical experience. The Francis Howell elementary curriculum, like the middle school curriculum, includes drama as an optional unit (Francis Howell School District). Although kindergarten through fifth grade teachers are not required to teach drama, when sixth grade students were surveyed, most responded that they had either been in a live production or seen one. Of the eighty-three sixth graders that answered the preproduction survey, seventy-three percent said they had performed in a play and eighty-eight percent had seen a live performance before middle school (Student Survey Before). After elementary school drama, fifty-three percent said they would like to perform in a play. Twenty-three percent said they would like to see a live performance. Two thirds of the sixth graders came to middle school wanting to be part of a theatrical performance, either as audience member, cast or crew (Student Survey Before).

Obviously, FHMS students arrive with some theatrical experience. Two hundred and fifty-nine students responded to the pre-production student survey designed in part to assess what the students knew about

Shakespeare. All of the students had heard of William Shakespeare. Three fourths reported learning about Shakespeare at school. Approximately sixty-five percent heard about Shakespeare through television or at movies. Half recalled reading something Shakespeare wrote, while seventy-eight percent said they knew at least one play well enough to retell the story. Before seeing A Midsummer Night's Dream, ninety-one percent thought Shakespeare primarily wrote love stories. Seventy-one percent thought he wrote tragedies or dramas. Only twenty-five percent knew that Shakespeare wrote comedies. These sixth, seventh, and eighth graders were most familiar with Romeo and Juliet: eighty percent knew this play. Thirty-two percent had heard of Hamlet, and twenty-four percent knew about A Midsummer Night's Dream. The students knew nine more Shakespearean plays (Student Survey Before).

The student response declared A Midsummer Night's Dream a success. One hundred ninety-six sixth, seventh, and eighth graders were surveyed after they saw the show. Eighty-six percent of the students said they clearly understood the play. Thirty-eight had excellent understanding, and forty-eight percent had good understanding. Only one percent said they were confused. Ninety-four percent said A Midsummer Night's Dream was appropriate for middle school. Eighty-one percent wanted to see another Shakespearean play. Seven out of ten students rated the production great or good. Almost ninety percent thought the play was funny (Student Survey After).

The most encouraging statistics were those that demonstrated educational advancement. While twelve percent felt great about Shakespeare before they saw the play, twenty-three percent reported feeling great about Shakespeare afterwards. The students who felt good about Shakespeare doubled after they saw the show: twenty-four



percent before, forty-eight percent after. Eleven percent thought A Midsummer Night's Dream would be confusing, but only one percent actually found it confusing. Ninety-four percent of the students wanted to see another school play (Student Survey After).

## Chapter Five:

## Evaluating the Production

As stated in Chapter One, the main purpose of this thesis was to answer the question: Can Shakespeare be successfully taught in middle school? The four areas I measured to determine "successfully taught" were the following:

1. I would review and rewrite the play as needed for middle level.
2. The students would produce the play.
3. Supplementary teacher aids would be used to enhance learning.
4. Students would evaluate the production.

Adapting A Midsummer Night's Dream was a painstaking task that continued throughout much of the production. One of my criteria for determining the script's success was telling the entire story. The children's scripts I read for A Midsummer Night's Dream included one, perhaps two, of the story lines. The adaptation found in Chapter Three includes the four stories that Shakespeare combined in the play. The high school adaptations I read were difficult for middle school students to understand because the vocabulary, prose, and poetry were written above the students' reading levels. By editing the dialogue, I lowered the script to a middle school reading level. While comprehension was more important than syntax, I wanted the dialogue to reflect an appropriate mixture of poetry and prose. The script remains faithful to Shakespeare's original balance between the two.

The surveys reflected that eighty-six percent of the student audience understood the script. Approximately ninety percent grasped Shakespeare's humor (Student Survey After). These numbers along with

audience observation determine that the script was a successful script for middle school students.

The students produced the play under my direction. During the day, I supervised the cast and crew. During the evening performance, three teachers were backstage: two supervised the green room and one supervised the stage crew. A student acted as stage manager, communicating with the booth where another teacher supervised the students working sound and lights. Students filled all crew and cast positions. Middle school students handled costumes, props, scenery, publicity, tickets, and house management. The students produced the play.

A student evaluation was determined through surveys and interviews. The results found in Chapter Four clearly indicate a positive student response. Student comprehension was above eighty percent and student interest doubled after the students viewed the play (Student Survey After).

A Midsummer Night's Dream was a success. The students understood the play. They enjoyed the performance. I do not think Shakespeare would have been surprised at the survey results, but I was. Elizabethans flocked to Shakespearean plays because he entertained the masses. Intellectuals, average citizens, and the lower class enjoyed Shakespeare's work. The FHMS faculty and student body were no different from Shakespeare's contemporaries. A Midsummer Night's Dream spoke to the audience regardless of their educational level.

## Appendix A

## Introduction to Supplementary Instructional Materials

The following supplementary materials can aid teachers in preparing their classes for A Midsummer Night's Dream. While some teachers introduced William Shakespeare, the Elizabethan period, and The Globe Theatre through lecture and discussion, others chose to cover these topics in more depth using the library's and their own resources. Most classes focused primarily on the play, presenting Shakespearean history as background. I recommended the summary, character sheet, and vocabulary crossword as essential classroom activities. Regardless of the teacher's focus, student comprehension improves when the students are prepared to see the play.

"Characters" for A Midsummer Night's Dream helps the students identify the characters. The sheet divides the players into four groups: The Royals, The Lovers, The Fairies, and The Mechanicals.

The Royals are Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate, and the attendants. Demetrius, Lysander, Hermia, and Helena are The Lovers. The Fairies are Oberon, Titania, Puck, The Fairy, Peasblossom, Cobweb, Mustardseed, and Moth. The Mechanicals include Quince, Bottom, Flute, Snout, Snug, and Starveling. The sheet briefly explains each character. "Matching the Characters" is attached for a student activity.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream Summary" identifies the five stories in the play, so the audience is more likely to understand the various plots.

"The Royal Couple or Love Story #1," Duke Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding, begins and ends A Midsummer Night's Dream.

"The Arranged Couple or Love Story #2" is Egeus and his daughter Hermia's conflict over who she will wed. In the Barron's original script set in 16<sup>th</sup> century Greece, Egeus has the legal right to place

Hermia in a convent or kill her if she will not wed his choice, Demetrius. Since I set the play in modern America, Egeus' threats are based on his physical and social power as her father, not his legal position.

"The Romantic Couple or Love Story #3" is the confusing game of musical chairs that Lysander and Demetrius play with Hermia and Helena. Hermia loves Lysander; Lysander loves her. Helena used to date Demetrius, but by the beginning of A Midsummer Night's Dream, Demetrius wants to marry Hermia, leaving Helena grief stricken.

"Quarreling Couple or Love Story #4" introduces Oberon, Puck, Titania, and the band of fairies. This story is the most complicated of the five. Oberon and Titania are fighting over a mortal attendant, a boy. To trick Titania, Oberon has Puck place a magic potion in her eyes, causing her to fall in love with a half man, half ass. In "The Magical Couple or Love Story #5." Puck, Oberon's assistant, further complicates the story by placing the magical potion on Lysander's eyes causing him to love Helena, not Hermia. After a night of magical confusion, Oberon puts things right: Titania loves him; Bottom is no longer an ass; Hermia and Lysander are together, again; and Helena and Demetrius are reunited.

"The Tragic Couple or Love Story #5" is the hilarious mischief the mechanicals create while rehearsing and performing the play, Pyramus and Thisbe.

The "Vocabulary Packet" includes an alphabetical list of words and phrases used in the play that students may not understand. Since the class will be hearing the play, not reading it, it is important that the teacher says the words aloud. A crossword puzzle is included to improve student comprehension.

Two more language arts activities are included for students use. "Survey of Sayings by Shakespeare" includes popular sayings from Shakespeare's plays that students may have heard before. "Household words," "too much of a good thing," and "the naked truth" are just several phrases on the sheet. Bartlett's Book of Quotations has pages of Shakespearean quotes; consequently, this would be an easy page to modify for various classes and age groups.

A social studies teacher wanted information that would tie her multicultural unit on marriage with A Midsummer Night's Dream. After some thought, it occurred to me that every modern day explanation for love could be found in Shakespeare's four hundred year old play. "Pick A Mate" is a one page summary about how contemporary men and women throughout the world get together: "Arranged Marriages," "Parents and Society Pick," "Friends Rule," and "The Love Factor." This supplementary sheet led to more than one lively discussion.

## Appendix B

A Midsummer Night's Dream Characters

A Midsummer Night's Dream has four distinct groups of characters:

Royals, Lovers, Fairies, Mechanicals.

**The Royals**

Theseus	The duke. He is wealthy and powerful. He is also engaged to Hippolyta.
Hippolyta	Theseus' fiancée. She is wealthy and popular.
Philostrate	Theseus' social coordinator.
Attendants	Theseus and Hippolyta's friends.

**The Lovers**

Egeus	Hermia's father. He wants Hermia to marry Demetrius.
Demetrius	Hermia's suitor. Egeus wants Demetrius to marry his daughter, Herimia. Hermia will not marry Demetrius. Demetrius used to date Helena.
Lysander	Hermia's boyfriend. Hermia and Lysander plan to run away to get married.
Hermia	Egeus' headstrong daughter. She will not marry Demetrius, her father's choice. Instead, she insists on marrying Lysander.
Helena	Hermia's childhood friend. She is crazy about Demetrius. Helena and Demetrius used to date, but now he will not have anything to do with her.

**The Fairies**

	Immortal, ageless, magical, nocturnal sprites.
Oberon	King of the fairies. Oberon is known for his way with women. Titania is his queen. In Act One, Oberon wants Titania's mortal child.

Titania Queen of the fairies. She has a beautiful mortal child. When the play begins, Oberon and she are fighting.

Puck Oberon's mischievous fairy. He loves doing naughty things.

The Fairy Titania's fairy.

Peaseblossom Members of Titania's band of fairies.

Cobweb

Mustardseed

Moth

#### **The Mechanicals**

Peter Quince A carpenter. The director of the play Thisbe and Pyramus. He also plays Thisbe's mother in the production.

Bottom A weaver. He plays Pyramus in the play.

Francis Flute A welder. He plays Thisbe in the play.

Tom Snout A tinker. He plays Pyramus' father, as well as Wall.

Sung A joiner. He plays Lion. (A joiner builds furniture.)

Robin Starveling A tailor. He plays Thisbe's mother and Moonshine.



Characters A Midsummer Night's Dream

Directions

Match the characters with the answer that best describes them.

- |     |                 |    |                                       |
|-----|-----------------|----|---------------------------------------|
| ___ | 1. Theseus      | A. | a mischievous fairy. He/she finds     |
| ___ | 2. Oberon       |    | the love potion.                      |
| ___ | 3. Lysander     | B. | the duke.                             |
| ___ | 4. Peaseblossom | C. | The fairy queen.                      |
| ___ | 5. Demetrius    | D. | Hermia's true love.                   |
| ___ | 6. Bottom       | E. | Egeus' daughter.                      |
| ___ | 7. Hermia       | F. | She loves Demetrius.                  |
| ___ | 8. Quince       | G. | narrates the play, <u>Pyramus and</u> |
| ___ | 9. Helena       |    | <u>Thisbe</u> .                       |
| ___ | 10. Puck        | H. | angry at his daughter because she     |
| ___ | 11. Snug        |    | will not marry the man he selected.   |
| ___ | 12. Titania     | I. | turns into a donkey.                  |
| ___ | 13. Egeus       | J. | plays Lion.                           |
| ___ | 14. Philostrate | K. | fairy attendant in Titania's band.    |
|     |                 | L. | fairy king.                           |
|     |                 | M. | He loved Helena. Then he              |
|     |                 |    | loved Hermia. He ends up with         |
|     |                 |    | Helena.                               |
|     |                 | N. | plans social events.                  |

## Appendix C

A Midsummer Night's Dream Vocabulary

adieu	good bye; farewell
almanac	a book containing a calendar of days, weeks, and months and usually facts about the rising and setting of the sun and moon, changes in the tides, weather, and other information of general interest.
anoint	to rub with an oily substance
brake	a marshy area overgrown with bushes and other plants
briar	a thorny bush like a blackberry or wild rose bush
cad	a man who does not behave like a gentleman, especially toward women.
carcass	a dead body
celestial	heavenly
chamber	room
conceal	cover or hide
confound	confuse
crannied	a small break or slit, like in a wall
dale	valley
discretion	individual choice or decision
dotes	to be foolishly fond of, like a grandmother dotes on her grandchild
eunuch	a castrated man; popular in the middle ages to guard woman, sing in choirs, etc.
filly foal	a young female horse
fortunes	money, wealth
oaths	promises
mock	to make fun of or ridicule
nymph	a lovely young woman
playfellow	a friend to have fun with
proverb	a short popular saying that expresses some obvious truth

repent	to feel so sorry for a past error that one changes his or her behavior
scorn	a great feeling of contempt; despising someone or something, often with some indignation (anger at something that seems unfair, unjust, mean)
shrewd	keen, witty, clever, sharp at practical affairs
shrew	a nagging, bad tempered woman
sprite	a fairy, goblin, or elf
sway	to cause to change
tedious	tiresome or boring
thicket	a thick growth of shrubs, undergrowth, or bushes
torment	to annoy, harass, or tease; to cause great pain
vixen	a bad tempered, shrewish woman
woo	to try to get someone's love, to court, "put the move on"
wretch	a miserable, unhappy person

A Midsummer Night's Dream Phrases

triumphant briar

a healthy native from southern Europe, or a thorny bush.

(used in this play for its double meaning)

making senseless blunders

making stupid mistakes

to bait me

to set me up; to get ready to trick me

passionate words

emotional words usually spoken in anger or love

The course of true love never did run smooth

When people fall in love there are always problems

a normal cross to bear

a usual problem to deal with

respects me

thinks of me

Cupid's best arrow

the love god's finest match

understand my innocence

I didn't mean what I said the way you thought I meant it. Lysander says to Hermia she should lay next to him. She thinks he wants to fool around. When she points this out, he says "understand my innocence," in other words he just wanted to lay next to her.

come to the point of human skill

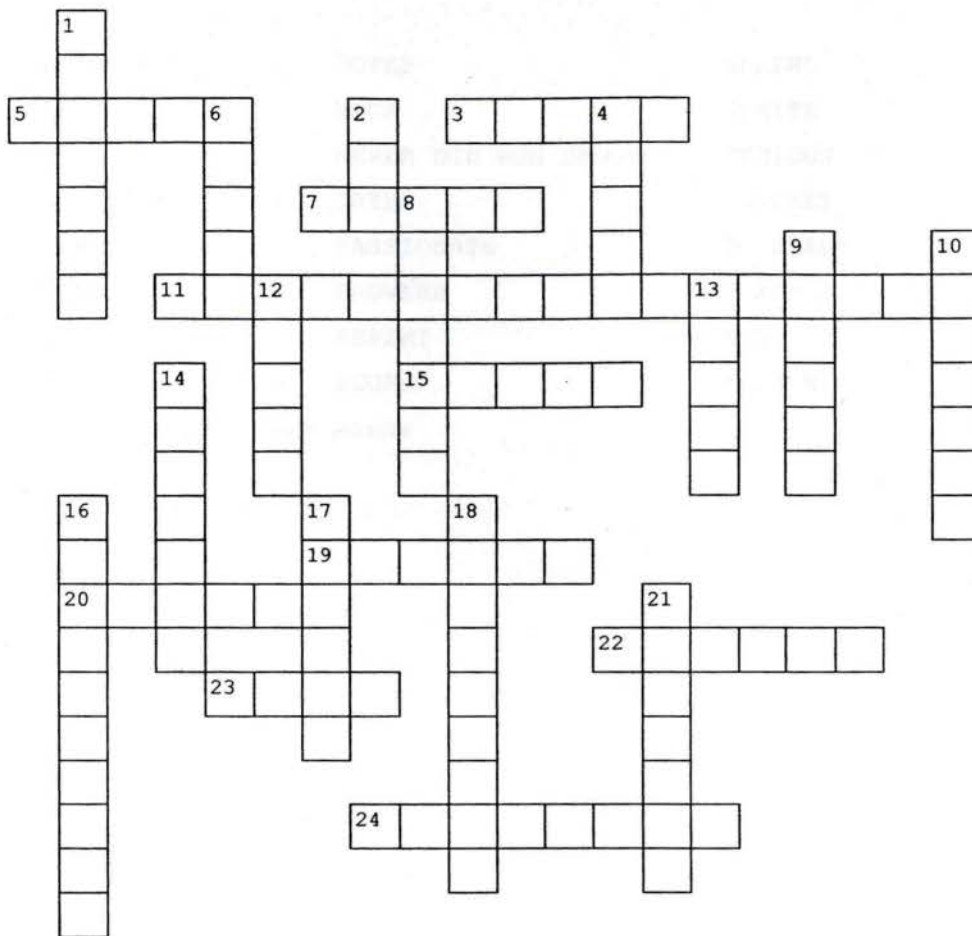
when a person thinks like a reasonable adult

ladies cannot abide

women can not tolerate

parlous fear

very scary



## Across

3. a thorny bush like a blackberry  
or wild rose bush  
5. the love god  
7. to be foolishly fond of  
11. the course of true love... (4 words)  
15. promises  
19. to feel so sorry for a past error  
that one changes behavior  
20. fairy  
22. witty; clever  
23. to make fun of or ridicule  
24. a small break or slit, like in  
a wall

## Down

1. mistake  
2. to try to get someone's love, to  
"put the moves" on someone.  
4. good bye; farewell  
6. Valley  
8. tiresome or boring  
9. a usual problem; a normal cross  
(2 words)  
10. a thick growth of shrubs or bushes  
12. a bad tempered, shrewish woman  
13. a great feeling of contempt;  
despising someone or something  
14. short popular saying that expresses  
some obvious truth  
16. emotional  
17. a miserable person  
18. heavenly  
21. room

## Word List

ADIEU	DOTES	SHREWD
BLUNDER	MOCK	SPRITE
BRIAR	NEVER DID RUN SMOOTH*	TEDIOUS
CELESTIAL	OATHS	THICKET
CHAMBER	PASSIONATE	TO BEAR*
CRANNIED	PROVERB	VIXEN
CUPID	REPENT	WOO
DALE	SCORN	WRETCH

\*No spaces between words

## Appendix D

A Midsummer Night's Dream Summary

Historians believe that A Midsummer Night's Dream was originally written for a royal wedding. The play is a combination of several love stories. A Midsummer Night's Dream is called a "classic" because these love stories could happen anytime in history.

## The Royal Couples Wedding or Love Story #1

The play begins with Duke Theseus and his fiancée, Hippolyta, planning their wedding. The play ends with their wedding reception.

## The Arranged Couple Meets or Love Story #2

Egeus drags his daughter Hermia to see Theseus. Egeus wants Hermia to marry Demetrius. Hermia wants to marry Lysander. Egeus says that Hermia must marry Demetrius or remain single for the rest of her life. Theseus agrees with Egeus. If Hermia does not marry Demetrius, she can never marry anyone.

## The Romantic Couples Struggle or Love Story #3

To avoid marrying Demetrius, Hermia and Lysander play to run away to Lysander's aunt's home where they can be married. The couple plans to secretly meet in the woods to begin their trip.

Helena, a friend of Hermia and Lysander, knows about their plan to run away. Helena was Demetrius' girlfriend. Demetrius had wooed Helena and quickly dropped her. Now Demetrius wants to marry Hermia, but Helena still loves Demetrius. In an attempt to spend more time with Demetrius, Helena tells him about the secret meeting in the wood. As Helena suspected, Demetrius wants to stop Lysander and Hermia from

running away. Consequently, Helena and Demetrius follow Lysander and Hermia through the woods. Demetrius is chasing Hermia. Helena is chasing Demetrius.

#### The Quarreling Couple's Magic Chemistry or Love Story #4

King Oberon and Queen Titania rule the fairy kingdom. The royal couple travels the world at night causing magical things to happen. Their specialty is love.

Oberon and Titania have been a couple for hundreds of years. They fall in and out of love periodically. In Act One the couple is fighting over possession of a mortal child. Titania refuses to give up the child, so Oberon seeks revenge.

Oberon sends his mischievous fairy, Puck, out to find a magical potion. When this potion is placed on a person's eyes, the person falls in love with the next living creature he or she sees. Oberon orders Puck to place the potion on Titania's eyes. Puck puts the potion on Titania's eyes when the next living creature she sees will be a half man, half donkey: Bottom.

#### The Fated Couples or Love Story #5

Oberon discovers Helena trying to seduce Demetrius who obviously wants nothing to do with her. Oberon feels sorry for the girl, so he orders Puck to anoint the "well dressed" young man's eyes when Helena is the next girl he will see. Puck finds Lysander, another well dressed young man, and anoints his eyes instead. The first living creature Lysander sees is Helena. Lysander falls madly in love with Helena and rejects Hermia. In an attempt to correct his error, Puck anoints Demetrius' eyes. Demetrius falls out of love with Hermia and



in love with Helena. In other words both men want Helena, and no one wants Hermia.

In the end, Oberion forces Puck to fix his mistakes. Puck anoints the couple's eyes correctly. Once again, Lysander loves Hermia and Demetrius loves Helena.

#### The Forbidden Couple or Love Story #6

Six workers plan a play for Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding. The play is a love story about Pyramus and Thisbe, a tragic comedy. It is a love story about two secret lovers that die for their passion.

## Appendix E

## Survey Of Sayings By Shakespeare

From Bartlett's Book of Quotations

SAYINGS	HAVE HEARD	HAVE NOT HEARD	WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
1. To be are not to be, that is the question.	_____	_____	_____
2. A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!	_____	_____	_____
3. All the world's a stage.	_____	_____	_____
4. What's in a name?	_____	_____	_____
5. Parting is such sweet sorrow.	_____	_____	_____
6. Sink or swim	_____	_____	_____
7. What the dickens?	_____	_____	_____
8. The primrose path	_____	_____	_____
9. Eaten me out of house and home.	_____	_____	_____
10. What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine.	_____	_____	_____
11. Love is blind.	_____	_____	_____
12. It was Greek to me.	_____	_____	_____
13. Bag and baggage	_____	_____	_____
14. A lean and hungry look	_____	_____	_____
15. Double, double toil and trouble	_____	_____	_____

SAYINGS	HAVE HEARD	HAVE NOT HEARD	WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
16. The naked truth	_____	_____	_____
17. The game is up!	_____	_____	_____
18. I wear my heart on my sleeve.	_____	_____	_____
19. The better part of valor is discretion.	_____	_____	_____
20. Laugh yourself into stitches	_____	_____	_____
21. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.	_____	_____	_____
22. We are in God's hands.	_____	_____	_____
23. There is something in the wind.	_____	_____	_____
24. The course of true love never did run smooth.	_____	_____	_____
25. Shut up.	_____	_____	_____

## Appendix F

## How To Find The Perfect Mate

## A Historical Guide

Different cultures today and throughout history have had different ways of helping couples get together.

## Arranged Marriages

Imagine your dad picking out your date. This is still done in Saudi Arabia. The father or both parents arrange a marriage for their child. Sometimes the engaged couple does not even see each other before the wedding.

Throughout history parents have picked husbands and wives for their children based on political and financial concerns. For example, a Spanish princess may have been married to an English king to unite the two countries. A man may have chosen a wealthy older business man for his daughter's husband thinking his daughter and grandchildren would always have money.

## Parents and Society Rule

What if you could not date a person from another religion? In some cultures, the parents and the society restrict the young man or woman's choice by requiring the couple to be from the same religion, race, financial bracket, or social background.

Some people in the United States pick wives and husbands based on parental or societal rules. In this system, the bride or groom is required to pick from the select groups. For example, a devoted Catholic family may not agree with their child if the child wanted to marry outside the Catholic Church. Another Catholic family may not approve their child's marital choice unless the child's fiancée is at least from a Christian church. Another example where parents or society might disagree with a couple's marital choice would be if one member of

the couple has a college degree and his or her fiancée is a high school drop out. If the parents, the church, or the society says no to man or woman's choice, then the two people can have a difficult time getting married.

#### Friends Pick

Would you stop dating someone because your friends didn't like the person? From the beginning of time, people have relied on their friends' opinions to help them decide who they should date. In the arranged marriage system, all friends can do is give a thumbs up or a thumbs down. In the Parents and Society Rule system or the Love Factor, friends have much more influence over the actual person a young man or woman picks as a love interest. For example, a girl may think a guy is nice, but her friends may say he is not good looking or he is not fun or he doesn't hang around with the right group, so the girl never pursues that relationship.

#### Love Factor

Do think you could pick a person to spend your life with based on a feeling? Of course you do! This is the system most Americans rely on for choosing their mates.

The love factor has always existed. The Greeks and Romans believed that gods like Cupid caused people to fall in love. During Shakespeare's time, they said the fairies sprinkled magic dust on people causing them to be attracted to one another. In the 1990's, people believe love may be based on a chemical attraction.

Modern scientists have spent time studying what causes people to be attracted to one another. They actually believe it has something to do with appearance, smell, and chemicals in the brain. A recent report in Life Magazine said that when two people first start liking each other they release a chemical that actually makes them sort of high for a

couple of months. This makes it impossible for them to see each other realistically. Two companies have even started selling expensive perfume that supposedly releases chemicals and a special smell "all your own" to attract members of the opposite sex.

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