

A Midsummer Night's Dream Study Packet

*Inside this packet are study questions, vocabulary activities, rhetorical/speech activities, and literary terms for the entire play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. DO NOT lose this packet. I will choose random days/times to take up the packet for daily grades, so be ready. If you lose your packet, you can print a new copy from the website, but it is your responsibility.

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Written by William Shakespeare, approx. 1600

Historical Background

The Renaissance is the period of _____ history that began in _____ in the 1300s and spread throughout Europe over the next _____ centuries. The word **renaissance** means "_____" and during the Renaissance there was a rebirth of interest in _____, architecture, and _____ based on Classical (ancient _____ and _____) sources. Shakespearean scholars believe that Shakespeare read many English translations of works by _____, Ovid, Apuleius, and other classical writers and was deeply _____ by some of them.

Shakespeare borrowed the _____ of Theseus and _____ from Greek _____. Theseus was the national hero of _____. He was a friend of _____ and the survivor of many adventures, including his slaying of the _____, a creature half man and half _____. Hippolyta was Queen of the _____, a group of female _____. Theseus took her _____ and then married her.

The play is set in Ancient _____ (Greece) where everyone is preparing for the marriage of Duke Theseus and Queen Hippolyta, but once the setting moves into the woods, it takes on the features of a typical English _____ from the 1600s.

❖ Elements of a Shakespearean Comedy:

- Has a troublesome beginning, but a happy _____.
- Presents struggle of young lovers to overcome _____, usually imposed by _____.
- Separation and _____.
- Mistaken _____
- A _____ servant
- _____ plots
- Frequent use of _____ (play on words)

❖ 3 plots:

1. Athenian lovers (_____, Demetrius, _____, and Lysander)
2. Fairies' _____ (_____ and Oberon)
3. Craftsmen's _____ of wedding play

○ "Pyramus and Thisbe":

- This story is going to be performed as _____ on the night of the Duke's _____. It is similar to _____.

❖ Themes:

- Love
 - Love is _____, unpredictable, _____, natural, etc.
- Friendship
 - Friends vs. _____
- Family relationships
 - _____ control
- Social Expectations
 - Gender _____
- Fantasy vs. Reality
 - Things aren't always as they _____.
 - Dreams
 - Impossible _____ possible
 - _____ features (mixed-up settings)

A Midsummer Night's Dream Literary Terms Review

1. Simile: _____
 - a. Find a simile used by Theseus in Act I, i (pg. 2)

 - b. In the simile above, what two things are being compared?

2. Metaphor: _____
 - a. Find the metaphor used by Theseus in Act I, i (pg. 3)

 - b. In the metaphor above, what two things are being compared?

3. Personification: _____
 - a. Find an example of personification used by Titania in Act II, i (pg. 15).

 - b. In the example above, what item/thing is being personified?

4. Dramatic Irony: _____
 - a. Find example of dramatic irony on pg. 18 of Act II, I (used by Oberon)---mark in your book.

- b. Explain why the lines can be considered dramatic irony:

5. Situational Irony:

- a. Find an example of situational irony on pg. 19 of Act II, scene I (used by Oberon)---mark in your book.
 b. Explain why the lines can be considered situational irony:

- c. How are these lines an example of foreshadowing?

6. Pun: a play on words

- a. Find the pun used by Bottom in Act III, i (pg 29).

- b. Explain why this is a pun

7. Soliloquy:

8. Monologue:

9. Dynamic character:

- a. Identify a dynamic character from *Midsummer*. Explain your choice.

10. Static character:

- a. Identify a static character from *Midsummer*. Explain your choice.

11. iambic pentameter:

12. prose:

- a. Which characters speak in prose? _____

13. verse:

- a. Which characters speak in verse? _____

A Midsummer Night's Dream Vocabulary List

(For each, you will need to record the part of speech, the definition, and a page number where it can be found in the play!)

1. nuptial
2. mirth
3. revel
4. feign
5. cloister
6. austerity
7. dote
8. extenuate
9. edict
10. base

11. knavish
12. beguile
13. wanton
14. progeny
15. promontory
16. disdainful

17. enamored
18. rebuke
19. derision
20. bequeath
21. sojourn
22. spurn
23. jest
24. stature
25. negligence

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Act I-II Study Guide

Act I, scene i.

1. **How is Hippolyta's reasoning concerning how quickly the next four days will pass different from that of Theseus?**
2. **Why has Egeus brought his daughter and her two suitors to Theseus? What does Egeus expect him to do?**
3. **What were considered the proper roles for women/daughters in Athenian society, according to Egeus and Theseus?**
4. **What is Theseus's ruling?**
5. **How does Lysander's comment about Demetrius's relationship with Helena complicate things?**
6. **What is the plan created by Lysander and Hermia?**
7. **Why does Helena tell Demetrius about their plan?**

Act I, scene ii

8. **Why does Nick Bottom want to play all the parts?**
9. **What part of the play needs to be "revised" due to ladies' being present at the performance?**
10. **What is Bottom's solution to this problem?**
11. **Where are the actors meeting the following night? Who else will be there at the same time?**

A Midsummer Night's Dream Vocabulary/Character Practice (Act I)

Act I: You will fill in the following blanks **with either Act I vocab words or character names**.

Fill in the blank

1. The attendees of _____ and Hippolyta's _____ ceremony are going to feel a sense of _____ and happiness because of the _____ that will be taking place afterwards at the reception.

2. Egeus accuses _____ of singing “_____ voice verses of _____ love” outside of Hermia’s window in an attempt to woo her.
3. Hermia’s father, _____, asks for Theseus’ support if he decides to invoke the ancient _____, or decree, of Athens stating that a father can kill his daughter if she is disobedient.
4. Theseus hopes to persuade Hermia’s decision by explaining that life in a “shady _____ mewed” among nuns is full of _____ and lacks the luxury and fun to which she is accustomed.
5. Theseus tells _____ that there will be no way to _____ the punishment for breaking the “ancient law” of Athens if she decides to disobey her father; she must die.
6. Demetrius’ character seems to be _____ and lacking proper morals, based on the fact that he wooed _____, then left her behind to pursue Hermia.
7. Because of Demetrius’ false and contemptible actions, Helena now “_____, devoutly _____, _____ in idolatry” over Demetrius. (same word in all 3 blanks)

Match Vocabulary Word to Antonyms (opposite)

Use a dictionary if you need to

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| 1. nuptial | a. scorn |
| 2. mirth | b. fanciness |
| 3. revel | c. noble |
| 4. feigning | d. divorce |
| 5. cloister | e. melancholy |
| 6. austerity | f. telling the truth |
| 7. dote | g. lament |
| 8. base | h. fraternity house (ha!) |

Craftsmen Character-to-Character Match (use your book for help!)

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Snug | a. Pyramus |
| 2. Snout | b. Pyramus’ Father |
| 3. Bottom | c. Director/Thisbe’s Father |
| 4. Quince | d. Thisbe |
| 5. Flute | e. Thisbe’s Mother |
| 6. Starveling | f. Lion |

Act II, scene i

12. **Why are Oberon and Titania in Athens?**
13. **What effect does their quarrel have on nature? Season? Humans? Give four examples.**
14. **Why does Titania want the Indian boy? Why does Oberon want the boy?**

15. What does Oberon send Puck to find?
16. What are Oberon's plans for Titania?
17. How does Helena react to Demetrius's verbal abuse?
18. In what ways is Helena's behavior inappropriate for Athenian women?
19. What does Oberon tell Puck to do about Demetrius and Helena? Why does Oberon do this?

Act II, scene ii

20. Why does Hermia insist that Lysander sleep far away from her?
21. Why does Puck anoint Lysander's eyes?
22. How does Helena react to Lysander's newfound love for her?
23. How is Hermia's dream a reflection of reality?
24. By the end of Act II, what is similar about the following pairs: Lysander and Hermia, Demetrius and Helena, and Titania and Oberon?

Overall Questions

25. What is different about the way the craftsmen (actors) talk, as opposed to the way the Athenian's and the fairies talk? Why is it written this way?
26. In what ways is each of the female characters more like a modern woman? In what ways are they like traditional Athenian women?
27. Describe Puck. How does he affect the play and the characters?

Quotes: For each, (1)explain what the quote means, (2)who said it, AND (3) how it relates to the story.

28. "The course of love never did run smooth"
29. "Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind. And Therefore is winged Cupid painted blind."

Act I-II Vocabulary Practice

In the space below, write a paragraph using all act I and II vocabulary words to summarize the events of the play up to this point. YOU MAY NOT USE ANY SENTENCES FROM THE ACTIVITY ON PG.5-6 OF PACKET. Label each vocabulary word (16 total) and USE CORRECTLY depending on its part of speech:

***A Midsummer Night's Dream*
Act III-V Study Guide**

Act III, scene i

- 30. How are the actors going to keep from scaring the ladies when Pyramus kills himself?**
- 31. How are the actors going to manage the scenery like the wall and the moonlight?**
- 32. Why do the actors run away when Bottom comes back?**
- 33. What does Puck plan to do when he follows after the other actors?**
- 34. How does Bottom react to Titania and the other fairies?**

Act III, scene ii

- 35. What does Hermia accuse Demetrius of doing?**

36. After their argument, what does Demetrius decide to do?
37. How are Puck and Oberon going to correct Puck's earlier mistake?
38. Why is Helena upset when Demetrius says he loves her?
39. Of what does Helena accuse Hermia?
40. Of what does Hermia accuse Helena?
41. What physical feature of Hermia's does Helena make fun of? What does Hermia threaten to do because of this mockery?
42. Why is Helena afraid of Hermia?
43. What are Lysander and Demetrius going off to do?
44. What instructions does Oberon give Puck concerning the two men? What is Oberon going to do about Titania?

Act III Vocab Practice: Sentence Images

***For each Act III vocab word, create a sentence that depicts an image of the definition. For example, if the vocab word was *happy*, my "sentence image" could be *The party was filled with laughter and smiles*.**

1. Enamored:
2. Rebuke:
3. Derision:
4. Bequeath:
5. Sojourn:
6. Spurn:
7. Jest:
8. Stature:
9. Negligence:

Act IV, scene i

- 45. How has Bottom adjusted to Titania and her friends?**
- 46. What is Oberon's reaction to Titania's infatuation with Bottom?**
- 47. Why are Theseus, Hippolyta, and Egeus out in the woods so early?**
- 48. What is Theseus's first explanation for why the young people are in the woods?**
- 49. What is Demetrius's explanation?**
- 50. What is Theseus's decision concerning the young people?**
- 51. How is Bottom going to use his experience in the play for the Duke?**

Act IV, scene iii

- 52. What opinion do the craftsmen now have of Bottom since they think he is lost?**
- 53. What do they most regret losing by not being able to perform the play?**

Act V (see page 11-12)

Overall Questions

- 54. How is Helena to blame for all the confusion in the woods?**
- 55. How does Theseus prove himself to be a wise leader?**
- 56. How does Oberon prove himself to be a wise king?**
- 57. What part does friendship play in this story? Is loyalty of importance?**
- 58. How are dreams important during this story?**
- 59. Compare/contrast the difficulties of Hermia and Lysander with those of Pyramus and Thisby.**

Quotes: For each, (1) explain what the quote means, (2) who said it, AND (3) how it relates to the story.

- 60. "Reason and love keep little company these days"**
- 61. "Lord what fools these mortals be!"**

Act V**Pyramus and Thisbe****Written by: Ovid**

Pyramus was the handsomest youth, and Thisbe the fairest maiden, in all Babylonia, where Semiramis reigned. Their parents occupied adjoining houses; and neighbourhood brought the young people together, and acquaintance ripened into love. They would gladly have married, but their parents forbade. One thing, however, they could not forbid- that love should glow with equal ardour in the bosoms of both. They conversed by signs and glances, and the fire burned more intensely for being covered up. In the wall that parted the two houses there was a crack, caused by some fault in the structure. No one had remarked it before, but the lovers discovered it. What will not love discover! It afforded a passage to the voice; and tender messages used to pass backward and forward through the gap. As they stood, Pyramus on this side, Thisbe on that, their breaths would mingle. "Cruel wall," they said, "why do you keep two lovers apart? But we will not be ungrateful. We owe you, we confess, the privilege of transmitting loving words to willing ears." Such words they uttered on different sides of the wall; and when night came and they must say farewell, they pressed their lips upon the wall, she on her side, he on his, as they could come no nearer.

Next morning, when Aurora had put out the stars, and the sun had melted the frost from the grass, they met at the accustomed spot. Then, after lamenting their hard fate, they agreed that next night, when all was still, they would slip away from the watchful eyes, leave their dwellings and walk out into the fields; and to insure a meeting, repair to a well-known edifice standing without the city's bounds, called the Tomb of Ninus, and that the one who came first should await the other at the foot of a certain tree. It was a white mulberry tree, and stood near a cool spring. All was agreed on, and they waited impatiently for the sun to go down beneath the waters and night to rise up from them. Then cautiously Thisbe stole forth, unobserved by the family, her head covered with a veil, made her way to the monument and sat down under the tree. As she sat alone in the dim light of the evening she descried a lioness, her jaws reeking with recent slaughter, approaching the fountain to slake her thirst. Thisbe fled at the sight, and sought refuge in the hollow of a rock. As she fled she dropped her veil. The lioness after drinking at the spring turned to retreat to the woods, and seeing the veil on the ground, tossed and rent it with her bloody mouth.

Pyramus, having been delayed, now approached the place of meeting. He saw in the sand the footsteps of the lion, and the colour fled from his cheeks at the sight. Presently he found the veil all rent and bloody. "O hapless girl," said he, "I have been the cause of thy death! Thou, more worthy of life than I, hast fallen the first victim. I will follow. I am the guilty cause, in tempting thee forth to a place of such peril, and not being myself on the spot to guard thee. Come forth, ye lions, from the rocks, and tear this guilty body with your teeth." He took up the veil, carried it with him to the appointed tree, and covered it with kisses and with tears. "My blood also shall stain your texture," said he, and drawing his sword plunged it into his heart. The blood spurted from the wound, and tinged the white mulberries of the tree all red; and sinking into the earth reached the roots, so that the red colour mounted through the trunk to the fruit.

By this time Thisbe, still trembling with fear, yet wishing not to disappoint her lover, stepped cautiously forth, looking anxiously for the youth, eager to tell him the danger she had escaped. When she came to the spot and saw the changed colour of the mulberries she doubted whether it was the same place. While she hesitated she saw the form of one struggling in the agonies of death. She started back, a shudder ran through her frame as a ripple on the face of the still water when a sudden breeze sweeps over it. But as soon as she recognized her lover, she screamed and beat her breast, embracing the lifeless body, pouring tears into its wounds, and imprinting kisses on the cold lips. "O Pyramus," she cried, "what has done this? Answer me, Pyramus; it is your own Thisbe that speaks. Hear me, dearest, and lift that drooping head!" At the name of Thisbe Pyramus opened his eyes, then closed them again. She saw her veil stained blood and the scabbard empty of its sword. "Thy own hand has slain thee, and for my sake," she said. "I too can be brave for once, and my love is as strong as thine. I will follow thee in death, for I have been the cause; and death which alone could part us shall not prevent my joining thee. And ye, unhappy parents of us both, deny us not our united request. As love and death have joined us, let one tomb contain us. And thou, tree, retain the marks of slaughter. Let thy berries still serve for memorials of our blood." So saying she plunged the sword into her breast. Her parents ratified her wish, the gods also ratified it. The two bodies were buried in one sepulchre, and the tree ever after brought forth purple berries, as it does to this day.

Source: http://ancienthistory.about.com/library/bl/bl_pyramusthisbe.htm

Answer the following questions about the story:

1. The craftsmen entitle their version of this story "The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe". How is this title appropriate for the story above? How is it inappropriate?
2. Why might it be a bad idea to perform this play at a wedding reception?
3. Compare/contrast the stories of Pyramus and Thisbe, Romeo and Juliet, and Hermia and Lysander. How are their situations alike/different?
4. What similarities do you notice about the berries at the end of this story and the special flower from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*?

A Midsummer Night's Dream Acts 4-5 Movie Analysis: Answer these questions based on your reading of Act 4 and watching of Act 5

1. How does Oberon "fix" the situation with Titania and Bottom?
2. What are Theseus, Hippolyta, and Egeus planning to do in the woods?
3. Once Lysander and Demetrius explain their reasons for being in the woods, what ruling does Theseus make?
4. In the movie, Bottom wakes up in the field in his normal clothes. What tiny item does he find from his "dream"?
5. How are the rest of the craftsmen acting because of Bottom's absence? Why do they feel this way?
6. How do the craftsmen react when Bottom returns?
7. During the wedding reception, Lysander attempts to make a toast. What is Egeus' reaction? Why does he react this way?
8. Once the craftsmen's play has been chose, the "Wall" comes out to address the prologue. What mistake does he make?
9. List 3 mistakes that Bottom makes during the *Pyramus and Thisbe* performance.
10. Why does their idea for "moonshine" not work? What do they do instead?
11. What does "Thisbe" do during "her" final speech that is a major mistake?
12. How do the men (Theseus, Demetrius, and Lysander) keep doing as the play goes on?
13. How do the ladies react to the end of the play?
14. Do you think the play was successful? Why/Why not?