

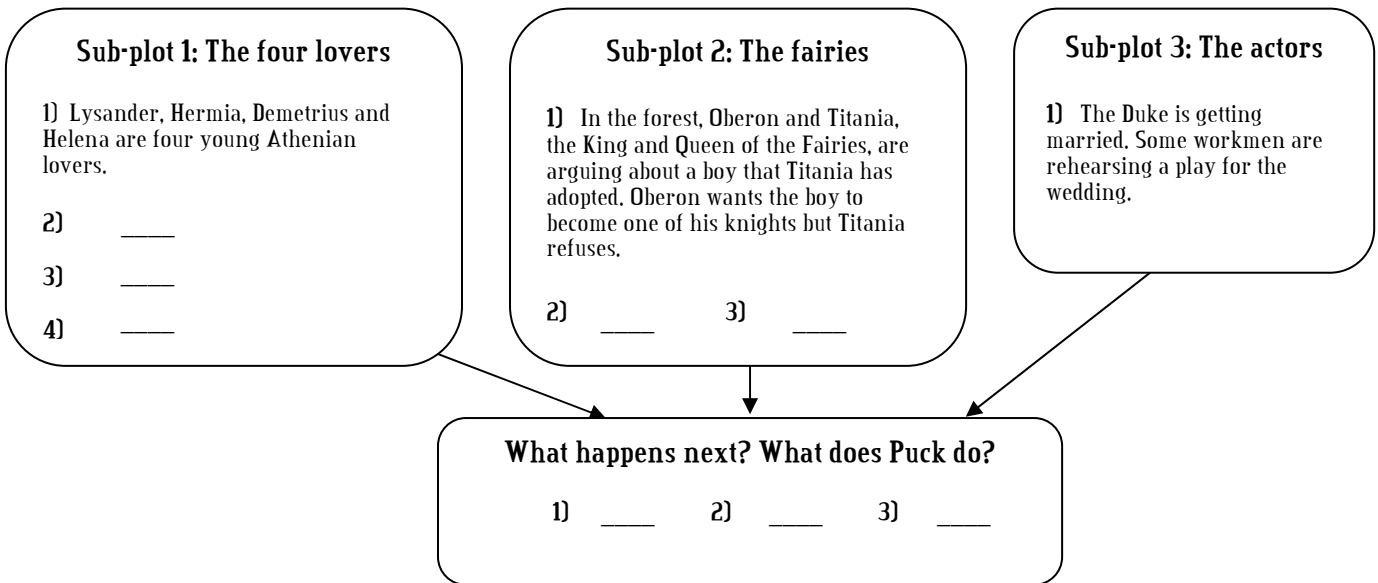


A Midsummer Night's Dream



A) The plot

As is the case with many plays, the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* contains different stories (or *sub-plots*) which happen simultaneously but gradually come together. Here are the three main sub-plots at the beginning of the play.



1) Look at the sentences below.
Put the corresponding letters a to h in the spaces above.

a) Demetrius and Helena hear about this and follow Hermia and Lysander into the woods.

b) Oberon wants to punish Titania. He tells his servant Puck to bring him a magical love potion. He tells Puck to put some drops on Titania's eyelids while she is sleeping, so that she will fall in love with the first creature she sees when she wakes up.

c) Puck makes a mistake and puts the potion on Lysander's eyes instead of Demetrius.

d) Lysander loves Hermia, and Hermia loves Lysander. Helena loves Demetrius; Demetrius used to love Helena but now loves Hermia. Egeus, Hermia's father, wants Hermia to marry Demetrius and not Lysander.

e) Oberon hears that Helena is unhappy because Demetrius doesn't love her (he loves Hermia). He tells Puck to put some drops of the potion on Demetrius' eyelids too, so that he will fall in love with Helena.

f) Puck obeys Oberon and puts the potion on Titania's eyelids.

g) Egeus goes to Theseus, the Duke of Athens, who enforces an old Athenian law. Hermia can choose to marry her father's choice, Demetrius, live for the rest of her life in a nunnery (a convent) or die. Hermia chooses to escape with Lysander into the forest.

h) Puck casts a spell on Bottom, one of the actors, to give him a donkey's head.

2) Answer the questions:

WHO?	WHAT?	WHY?
i) Who loves Hermia?	i) What does Oberon tell Puck to do?	i) Why is Helena unhappy?
ii) Who does Hermia love?	ii) What does Hermia choose to do?	ii) Why is Oberon angry with Titania?
iii) Who loves Lysander?	iii) What does Puck do to Bottom?	iii) Why does Oberon ask Puck to put some drops of potion on Demetrius' eyelids?
iv) Who does Helena love?		

3) What will happen next? Discuss with a partner then complete the sentences.

Lysander will wake up and see _____.

Titania will wake up and see _____.

When Oberon finds out that Puck has made a mistake he will _____.

4) What will happen in the end? Will everyone carry on being in love with the same people? Will the spells be reversed?

5) Go to <http://www.bardweb.net/plays/dream.html> and check your answers.

B) LANGUAGE

Shakespeare's plays were written in the language of the late 16th Century.

1) In this short dialogue between Bottom and his friends, look at the underlined words and phrases and match them with the explanations in the rectangle.

BOTTOM: Why do they run away? This is a knavery of them to make me afeard (1).

(Re-enter SNOOT)

SNOOT: O Bottom, thou art changed (2)! What do I see on thee (3)?

BOTTOM: What do you see? You see an asshead (4) of your own, do you?

(Exit SNOOT. Re-enter QUINCE.)

QUINCE: Bless thee (3), Bottom! Bless thee! Thou art translated (2).

(Exit QUINCE)

BOTTOM: I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me; to fright me (5), if they could. But I will not stir (6) from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid.

- | |
|--|
| a) they're trying to make a fool of me, to frighten me.
b) move
c) you
d) a trick they're playing on me to make me afraid
e) You've changed!
f) donkey's head |
|--|

ANSWERS (Write a letter in each space):

- 1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

2) Act out the dialogue with a partner. Include the changes you have made.

C) QUOTES

There are a lot of famous quotes in the play.

1) Read the explanations (1 - 5) and decide which quotes (a - e) they refer to.

- 1) Lysander tells Hermia that they are not the only true lovers who have had problems.
- 2) Puck tells Oberon he can fetch the magic flower (for the potion) very quickly.
- 3) Titania wakes up and hears Bottom's song (although he has the voice of a donkey).
- 4) Puck laughs at the way Lysander, Hermia, Demetrius and Helena keep falling in and out of love.
- 5) Titania is relieved to be back to normal after Oberon has removed the spell.

Quotes:

- a) I'll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes.
- b) The course of true love never did run smooth.
- c) Lord, what fools these mortals be!
- d) My Oberon! What visions have I seen! Methought I was enamoured of an ass.
- e) What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?