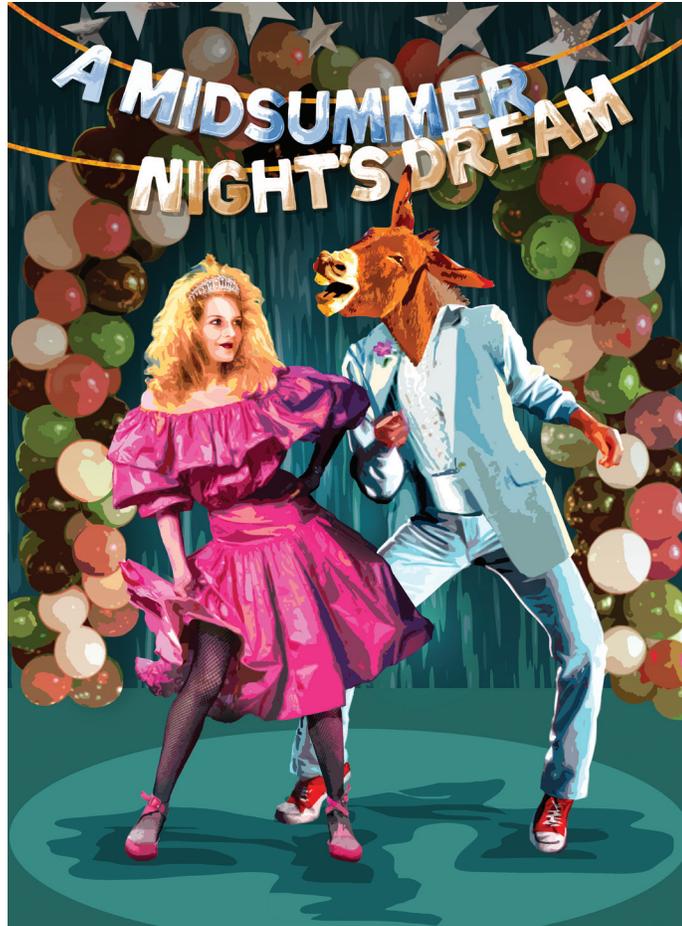


PROJECT DISCOVERY STUDY GUIDE



by **William Shakespeare** • Directed by **Tyler Dobrowsky**

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Prepared by Trinity Rep's Education Department, Maggie Seymour, and Camille Shea



trinity **repertory** **company**

201 WASHINGTON STREET • PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903

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THEATER AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE AND DISCUSSION

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND GO OVER WITH YOUR CLASSES BEFORE THE SHOW

TEACHERS:

Speaking to your students about theater etiquette is ESSENTIAL. Students should be aware that this is a live performance and that they should not talk during the show. **If you do nothing else to prepare your students to see the play, please take some time to talk to them about theater etiquette in an effort to help the students better appreciate their experience.**

It will enhance their enjoyment of the show and allow other audience members to enjoy the experience. The questions below can help guide the discussions. Thank you for your help and enjoy the show!

ETIQUETTE:

What is the role of the audience in a live performance? How is it different from seeing a film? Why can't you chew gum or eat popcorn at a live theater performance? Why can't you talk? What can happen in live theater that cannot happen in cinema?

Reiterate that students may not chew gum, eat, or talk during the performance. Please make sure all cell phones and pagers are turned off. Recording devices and cameras are strictly prohibited. If there is a disturbance, they will be asked to leave and the class will not be invited back to the theater. Students may not leave the building during intermission.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BEFORE SEEING THE SHOW AT TRINITY REP:

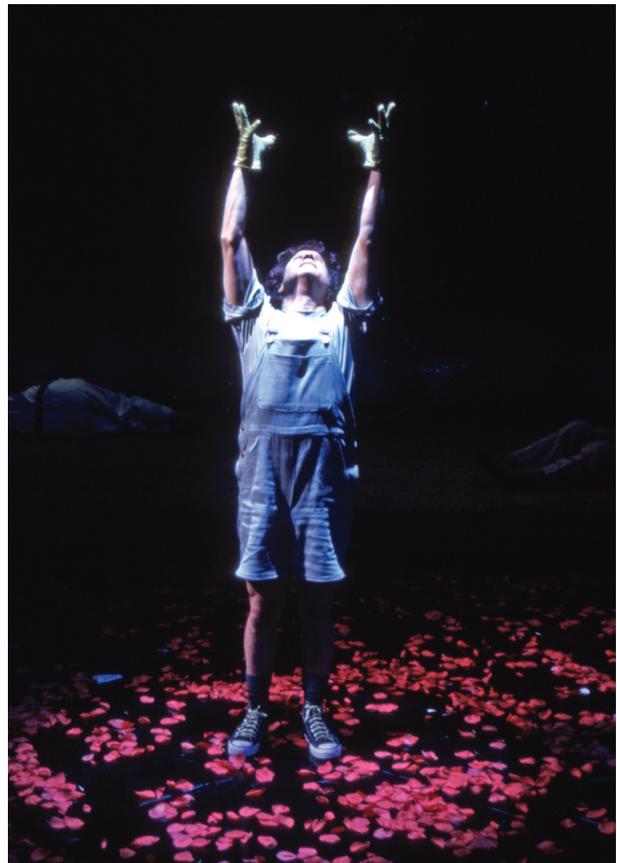
What are the differences between live theater and cinema? (Two dimensional vs. three dimensional; larger than life on the screen vs. life-size; recorded vs. live, etc.) Discuss the nature of film as mass-produced, versus the one-time only nature of live performances. Talk about original art works versus posters. Which do they feel is more valuable? Why?

Observation #1 – When you get into the theater, look around. What do you see? Observe the lighting instruments around the room and on the ceiling. Look at the set. Does it look realistic or abstract? Try to guess how the set will be used during the show.

Observation #2 – Discuss the elements that go into

producing a live performance: The lights, set, props, costumes, and stage direction. All the people involved in the “behind the scenes” elements of the theater are working backstage as the play unfolds before the students’ eyes. Tell them to be aware of this as they watch the show. Observe the lighting cues. How do special effects work? How do the actors change costumes so fast?

Actors in a live performance are very attuned to the audience and are interested in the students’ reactions to the play. Ask the students to write letters to the actors about the characters they played and to ask questions of the actors. Send these letters to: Trinity Repertory Company, c/o Education, 201 Washington St., Providence, RI 02903 or email to: education@trinityrep.com.



Stephen Berenson in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1997)

USING THIS STUDY GUIDE IN YOUR CLASSROOM

A LETTER FROM OUR SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER, MATTTIBBS

Welcome to Trinity Rep and the 49th season of Project Discovery! The education staff at Trinity Rep had a lot of fun preparing this study guide, and hope that the activities included will help you incorporate the play into your academic study. It is also structured to help you to introduce performance into your classroom through the

- Community Building in Your Classroom
 - Inspiration and Background on the Artist
 - Entering and Comprehending Text
 - Creating Text for Performance
 - Performing in Your Class
 - Reflecting on Your Performance

Trinity Rep's Project Discovery student matinees help high school students in the following common core areas (for more information on the National Core Arts Standards, visit <http://nationalartsstandards.org/>):



Resident acting company member, Joe Wilson Jr., leading an in-school workshop

- Initiate and participate effectively in a ranges of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively (CCS. ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1)
- Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme (CCSS.RL.9-10.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (CCSS. RL.9-10.44)
- Investigate how cultural perspectives, community ideas, and personal beliefs impact a drama/theatre work (TH: Cn10.1.1.)
- Analyze and compare artistic choices developed from personal experiences in multiple drama/theatre works (TH: Re8.1.1.)
- Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/ theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices (TH: Re7.1.1.)
- Evaluate and analyze problems and situations in a drama/ theatre work from an audience perspective (TH: Re9.1.1.)

Enjoy the show!

—Matt Tibbs, School Partnerships Manager

UNIT ONE: SHAKESPEARE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

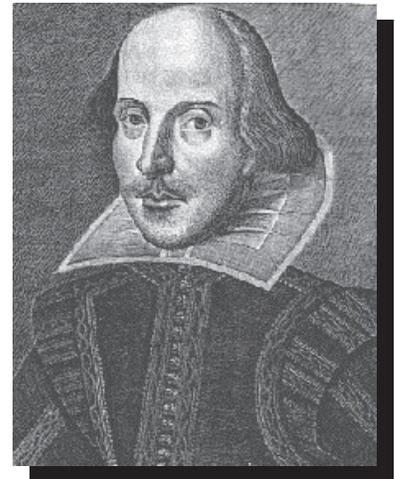
William Shakespeare was born in a little town sixty miles north of London called Stratford-upon-Avon in April of 1564, though the exact date of his birth is unknown. He was baptized on April 26th, giving us reason to believe he was actually born on April 23rd, since the customary baptism was held three days after a child's birth. By the time he passed away in 1616, he had written thirty-seven plays, two narrative poems, and one hundred and fifty-four sonnets.

Little is known of Shakespeare's life besides what is recorded in various documents such as billings and receipts. We can assume that Shakespeare went to the local grammar school in Stratford-upon-Avon when he was child, however he did not study at a university. In 1582 he married Anne Hathaway, a woman eight years older than he, and would have three children with her: Susanna, and twins Hamnet and Judith. While still married to Anne, he would move away to London where he would work as an actor and playwright. He would eventually become a shareholder of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, who would perform at The Globe and the Blackfriars Theatre.

It is said that Shakespeare passed away on his birthday in 1616. In his will, he left his wife Anne his "second best bed," which in actuality was the bed they shared together, since one's 'best bed' was always saved for one's guests. Seven years after his death, two of Shakespeare's dearest friends (and two of his best actors) John Heminge and Henry Condell had his complete works published in the First Folio. It is on the cover page of this collection that the famous playwright and Shakespeare's contemporary Ben Jonson wrote, "He was not of an age, but for all time."



Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon in modern day



SHAKESPEARE'S COMPLETE WORKS

COMEDIES

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM
AS YOU LIKE IT
CYMBELINE
LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST
MEASURE FOR MEASURE
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
PERICLES, PRINCE OF TYRE
THE COMEDY OF ERRORS
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR
THE TAMING OF THE SHREW
THE TEMPEST
THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA
THE WINTER'S TALE
TWELFTH NIGHT
TROIUS AND CRESSIDA

TRAGEDIES

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA
CORIOLANUS
HAMLET
KING LEAR
MACBETH
OTHELLO
ROMEO AND JULIET
TIMON OF ATHENS
TITUS ANDRONICUS

HISTORIES

HENRY IV (two parts)
HENRY V
HENRY VI (three parts)
HENRY VIII
KING JOHN
RICHARD II
RICHARD III

UNIT ONE: SHAKESPEARE

ELIZABETHAN ROYALTY & SOCIETY

Many of Shakespeare's plays were inspired by the tempestuous political climate of his times. During his lifetime there were two monarchs: Elizabeth and James I. Elizabeth was the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. After Henry's death, his son by his third wife reigned as Edward VI. Edward was succeeded by Mary Tudor (or "Bloody Mary"), the daughter of Henry's first wife. She became ill and died, leaving the throne to the teenaged Elizabeth I in 1558.

During Elizabeth's forty-five year reign (from 1558 to 1603), England transformed into a political power, and enjoyed tremendous cultural achievements, in no small part thanks to Elizabeth's incredible intellect, shrewd political cunning and personal charisma. Elizabeth realized great personal political advantage could be had if she remained unmarried, and while her tenure as Queen was filled with many offers of marriage, none were accepted.

Elizabeth was incredibly popular among her subjects—her public appearances drew enormous crowds, and her taste in fashion set the bar for the aristocracy and, by extension, the rest of society. Her interests were broad and varied: literature, philosophy, history, poetry, theater. Her love of art fostered an atmosphere where artists felt comfortable and encouraged, and were much more likely to find financial support.

During her reign England achieved many victories, both at home and abroad. The victory over the highly-lauded and much heralded Spanish Armada in 1588 brought prestige and respect to the country, and in 1599 England began to move towards colonization and world trade with the conception of the East India Trading Company.

However, life in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century was far from pleasant. Disease and pestilence were rampant, and the threat of lawlessness or rebellion hovered over England throughout the sixteenth century. Londoners flocked to public executions to watch criminals be hanged and, in the case of treason, disemboweled. In fact, punishment for criminal behavior during Elizabeth's time often involved some kind of public display.

Elizabethan literature often mirrored the violence, brutality and death which were so prevalent in English society. Many of Shakespeare's tragedies often involved the murder or suicide of leading characters: Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Othello, King Lear and Hamlet all conclude not only with the death of the eponymous characters, but also nearly every other major character in the play.



UNIT ONE: SHAKESPEARE

ELIZABETHAN ROYALTY & SOCIETY

The Elizabethans were also living through the Renaissance, a time when beauty and grace were valued by all classes of people as never before; where poetry, drama and language were being pushed to incredible, imaginative heights by writers such as Christopher Marlowe and Ben Jonson. There were advances in science, as well: Sir Francis Bacon invented what became the Scientific Method, which gave credence to hypothesis based only on natural observances and experimentation, as opposed to supernatural factors. English composers rivaled the finest composers in all of Europe, and in England music was cherished as never before. Music, singing and dancing were suddenly commonplace in Elizabethan society.

In short, Elizabethan society held an impressive variety of beliefs and ideas, ambitions and achievements. Among those achievements were the masterpieces written by William Shakespeare, which contain such flights of linguistic wit and genius that they have never been matched. In fact, without hyperbole, they are perhaps the most cherished pieces of literature in the history of mankind.



Queen Elizabeth I

UNIT ONE: SHAKESPEARE

LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S MEN



William Kemp, Clown of the Chamberlain's Men,
Dancing the Morris

The Lord Chamberlain's Men was the acting troupe that Shakespeare belonged to during Queen Elizabeth's reign. Actors were highly skilled: not only were they often tumblers, jugglers and dancers, but because the actors generally had little in the way of sets or costumes, actors were forced to set the scene for the audience: was it raining? Snowing? Was it night or day? All of these factors were heaped on the actors' shoulders.

If you wanted to be an actor (or "player") in a theater, you had to work for a nobleman who could give a company a license to act. If you were caught acting without a license, you were thrown in jail. Women were not allowed to perform at this time, so young boys played the female roles. Shakespeare himself had wanted to be an actor as a young boy. Once he entered puberty, and his voice deepened, his career for acting in women's roles was over, though he continued to act throughout his life.

When King James I inherited the crown, he adopted Shakespeare's company and it became known as The King's Men. By then, they were among the most popular theater companies in all of London. Shakespeare made a decent living, though not an especially lucrative one, working for the company as an actor and playwright. It was for this specific troupe of actors that he wrote his plays.

When Shakespeare wrote a new play, he never gave the entire script out to his players. They received their "sides" with their lines only, and they were given only a few days to memorize them. Then they usually rehearsed for only a few days and performed the piece once, before going on to another script. Most actors had to keep at least 15 plays memorized at all times because they would change the play every day to keep people coming back for more.

UNIT ONE: SHAKESPEARE

THE GLOBE THEATRE

As one of the senior company members, Shakespeare was also a part-time owner of the theater space called the Globe, which opened in 1598 and burned down in 1613 during a battle sequence in one of his plays (most believe it to be *Henry VIII*). It was rebuilt immediately and reopened to the public.

In 1576, James Burbage built the first theatre in London on rented land, appropriately naming it The Theatre. Later, when Richard and Cuthbert Burbage (who had inherited the theatre and the land it was leased on from their father) were unable to re-negotiate the rent of the land, the landlord reclaimed his land and claimed that since The Theatre was on his property, it was therefore legally his. Unwilling to hand over their theater without a fight, the actors proceeded one evening to take the theatre apart piece by piece, float it over the Thames, and rebuild it; they named the theatre The Globe.

We are not sure what The Globe actually looked like, because no building or construction records survived. What we do know is brought to us by written descriptions in surviving journals, the de Witt drawing, and various sketches of all of London. We do know that the Globe had a circular shape, because in *Henry V* the chorus states,

“And shall this cockpit hold within this vasty fields of France
Or may we cram within this wooden ‘O’...”

It is believed that The Globe was actually a twenty-sided building, similar to that of the Rose Theatre which was excavated in 1989.

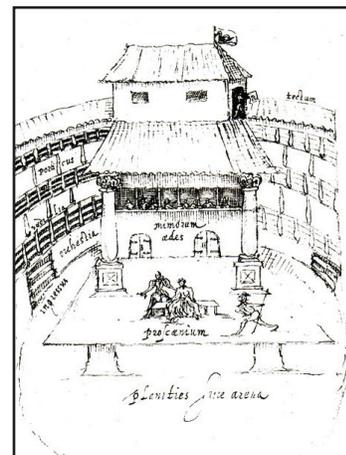
Interior. The sketch on the right is what is commonly referred to as the “de Witt Drawing.” In 1596 a student by the name of Johannes de Witt visited the Swan Theatre, a theatre similar to that of The Globe. While at the Swan he drew a sketch of the interior which his friend Arend van Buchell copied; it is his friend’s sketch of de Witt’s drawing that actually remains. It is the only remaining drawing of the interior of a public theatre from Shakespeare’s time, helping us to imagine what it was like inside.

Daylight. Plays were performed during the daylight hours, because they didn’t have any lighting system to speak of! The Globe Theatre had no roof so the light of the day could illuminate the stage. That meant that the players could always see the audience and vice versa. The players would often speak right to the people in the audience -- who would often speak right back!

Scenery. Shakespeare’s troupe didn’t really use scenery. They had basic chairs, a throne for the king, and any important props the play called for (swords, scrolls, etc.) The focus of the play was on the wording—scenery and props were simply a second thought.

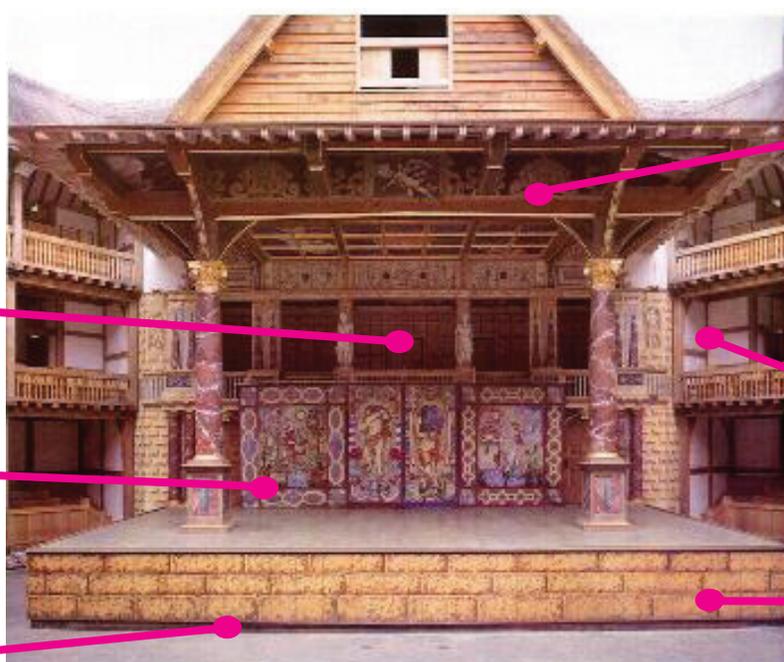
Costumes. Actors’ costumes were hand-me-downs from the nobility of the time; therefore the actors always looked current and fashionable!

Special Effects. The Elizabethan audience was more interested in hearing about the action rather than seeing a bunch of special effects. The focus was on listening; often an event in the play would take place offstage and a character would come onstage to inform the audience of what had happened. For example: In *Hamlet*, the death of Ophelia is not seen on stage but rather the story of her death is told to the audience by the Queen in Act IV: Scene vii. Of course there were some special effects used in his productions such as canons, fireworks, trapdoors and a rigging system from above.



UNIT ONE: SHAKESPEARE

THE LAYOUT OF THE GLOBE



THE HEAVENS

BALCONY OR LORD'S ROOM
(FOR THE HIGHEST CLASS, COST 6 ¢)

THE GALLERY
(FOR THE UPPER CLASS, COST 2 ¢)

TIRING HOUSE

THE STAGE

THE CELLARAGE
(UNDER THE STAGE REPRESENTING HELL)

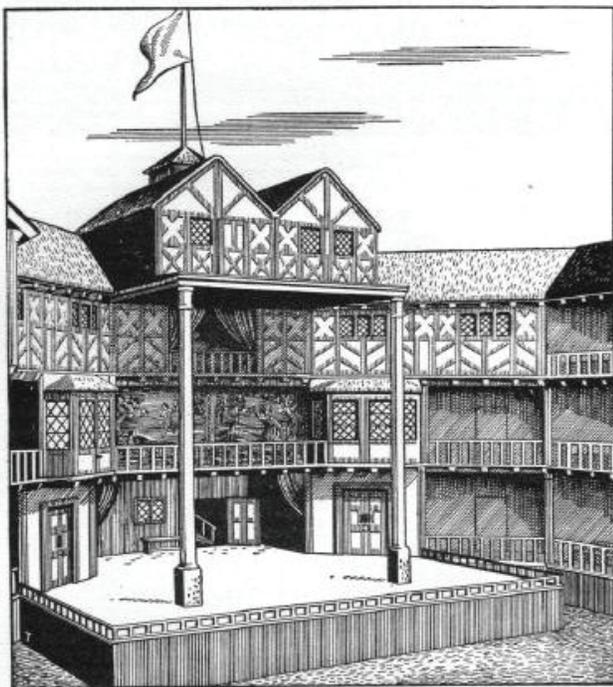
THE YARD
(FOR THE GROUNDINGS; COST 1 ¢)

UNIT ONE: SHAKESPEARE

THE GLOBE THEATRE

WHERE'S MY SEAT?

1. If you were poor then you didn't get a seat, instead you had to stand in the yard down in front of the stage; these spectators were called **groundlings**, due to the nature of their 'seats.' Here the audience members often yelled, talked directly to the actors, pushed, shoved, ate and drank all during the performance.
2. If you were moderately well-off, you could sit in the **Gallery**. Lining the walls of the theater, they provided benches and some shelter from the elements.
3. If you were wealthy you could sit in the **Lord's Room**. These were box seats with private entrances (so you wouldn't have to run into the groundlings), and were located right near the stage on the walls so that you could better hear the actors. Also, these seats allowed you to be seen by all of the spectators, making your seat a representation of your class.



FROM HEAVEN TO HELL

While the players didn't have much in the way of sets, they did have their own vertical layout of the stage, which was divided into four levels.

Hell. This was on the ground level below the stage (near the groundlings) and was accessible from trapdoors. Characters of low status or living in Hell would appear from below.

The Stage. This was the platform on which most of the action took place. There were usually two doors for character entrances, one on either side, as well as a little alcove at the back of the stage where a curtain was drawn. This little alcove was used to reveal action going on inside a house (a private scene), or to provide a hiding place for eavesdroppers.

The Upper Gallery. Directly above the stage was a little balcony to provide a different level for playing. This was often where a beautiful woman would appear (like Juliet on her balcony), because these women were considered a little bit higher in status than the male-driven world below. Often musicians were located in the top alcove to play accompanying music.

The Heavens. This space literally represented Heaven, and was located at the top of the theater, directly above the stage. The roof, which would keep rain off the actors, was painted with stars.

This vertical architecture is a representation of the class structure of the time; that is, going from the poor groundling to the elevated rich. The poor people stood in the yard and had to look up to the players on the raised platform dressed as Kings (remember, the costumes came from the nobles, so even if they were playing a King from 300 years ago, they looked like the King of the time). Standing on the same level as "Hell," the groundlings could look up and see the Heavens high above them, behind the players. Their view of the action was of humans striving for the divine.

UNIT ONE: SHAKESPEARE

THE GLOBE THEATRE

On the other hand, the wealthy would look down from their cushioned box seats and see poor players dressed in their hand-me-down clothing. They sat on a similar level to the Heavens where they could feel more superior. But they were also aware of how close the level of human experience and Hell were to them.

The theater was extraordinarily popular and rather inexpensive form of entertainment. All kinds of people frequented the theater. They would look across the Thames River to see if a flag were raised, which let everyone know that a show was planned for that afternoon; there were three different colored flags: red, white, and black. A black flag stood for a tragedy, a red flag for a history, and a white flag for a comedy.

Phyllis Kay and Stephen Berenson in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1997)



UNIT ONE: SHAKESPEARE

DID YOU KNOW...

...Shakespeare is given credit for introducing nearly 2,000 words into the English language, either by using foreign words, making conjunctions of two or three new words, using nouns as verbs, or simply by invention? Here are some words attributed to Shakespeare:

Alligator	Frugal	Lonely	Petition
Auspicious	Gloomy	Luggage	Puke
Castigate	Gnarled	Majestic	Rancorous
Critical	Hoodwinked	Manager	Reinforcement
Dauntless	Impede	Mimic	Rumination
Divest	Jaded	Mountaineer	Torture
Eyeball	Laughingstock	Obscene	Unmitigated
Eyesore	Leapfrog	Pedant	Worthless
			Zany

Shakespeare also coined some of these famous phrases that we still use today:

"All that glitters is not gold"	"Good riddance"
"Dead as a doornail"	"Heart of gold"
"Elbow room"	"Sorry sight"
"Full circle"	"Too much of a good thing"

Shakespeare's lines are often referenced or parodied—here are a few of Shakespeare's more famous pieces of dialogue:

"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears." (*Julius Caesar*)

"Brevity is the soul of wit." (*Hamlet*)

"To be, or not to be, that is the question..." (*Hamlet*)

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women are merely players." (*As You Like It*)

"A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!" (*Richard III*)

"What's in a name? that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet;" (*Romeo and Juliet*)

"Double double, toil and trouble; fire burn and cauldron bubble." (*Macbeth*)

**"Be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness
and some have greatness thrust upon them."** (*Twelfth Night*)

"We are such stuff as dreams are made on..." (*The Tempest*)

UNIT TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

A CONVERSATION WITH THE DIRECTOR: BACK TO THE FUTURE

Interview with Tyler Dobrowsky by Ziyi Yang

Ziyi: Is this your first time directing *Midsummer*?

Tyler: No, I did a high school production of it years ago, as part of Trinity Rep's Young Actors Summer Institute, and I have an enduring love for that production. Also, when I was younger, my brother was in *Midsummer* as Lysander and I loved that—it was somewhat infamous though because the fire alarm went off half-way through the show and we all had to go outside and wait to go back in. I've also seen a number of different versions of this play, including professional productions and Brown/Trinity MFA students' productions. I talked to other people who have directed *Midsummer* more than once, and every one of them said it's always a blast working on it, which confirms something I've always thought about the show. It's a special one. I can't wait to get started.

Ziyi: Can you tell me about your history with Shakespeare?

Tyler: I didn't do Shakespeare when I was a kid—although I did theater, I learned Shakespeare mostly from a book, or by memorizing speeches, which isn't really the best way to get introduced to Shakespeare. Then I got to play around with Shakespeare in college and realized that it was really fun to perform. Sometimes people read Shakespeare or see a poorly done production of it that is not alive, which is a shame, because I think it's the most glorious language ever written, and as a director you have a responsibility to bring that language to life

Ziyi: What is your vision of this particular production and how did it come about?

Tyler: It's very much informed by Trinity Rep's longstanding student matinee program called Project Discovery. I want the production to be accessible to kids; and as an offshoot of that, it's also my hope to make our regular, adult audiences feel alive and nostalgic for when they were young. So, long story short, I'm setting it in a high school dance during the 80s. I'm hoping to recreate the magic of being young and in love, that it both feels a little silly and a little wonderful and a little scary and for some a little nostalgic. I think that *Midsummer* is Shakespeare's funniest play and the most



Tyler Dobrowsky

enjoyable play to watch and to perform. Because it not only upends the idea of love in a farcical way, but also sends up theatre itself. Plus, in addition to the lovers' romantic entanglements and the mechanicals' playmaking, you also have this magical element, where the fairies are looking down on mortals and commenting on them. It is a magical play, in a very literal way.

Ziyi: Why the 80s? What was your experience with the 80s?

Tyler: In some ways, my experience of the 80s is one of nostalgia, because I was a child—like a young kid, not a teenager. So by the time I was a teenager, most of the quintessential 80's teen things had already happened. Curt once joked that *Ghostbusters* was our generation's babysitter, and there's probably a lot of truth to that. The 80s celebrated such a wealth of music and film that spoke directly to adolescence, and that had an influence on me. And given the Reagan Era, it was also a conservative government and a repressed time for a lot of minority communities. Since there is a sense of liberation when the lovers and the mechanicals in *Midsummer* go to the woods, it makes sense to me that you need a little bit of repression to stimulate that fight for freedom. Plus, the fashion and the music will be fresh enough for our kid audiences to relate to in a retro/vintage way, to awaken the feelings of

UNIT TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

A CONVERSATION WITH THE DIRECTOR: BACK TO THE FUTURE

falling in love for the first time. You might hear a song in the radio and it really touches you in a profound way. I think that's part of growing up.

Ziyi: What are you hoping to open up for our audiences through this production?

Tyler: I think *Midsummer* is the most fun, accessible Shakespeare that not only kids but everyone can relate to. It's an enticing mix of romantic hijinks, play, and magic. For example, the lovers in *Midsummer*—in this case high school

kids—are discovering what it's like to fall in love for the first time. Falling in love with the wrong person or trying to navigate unrequited love is something that everyone—especially young people—goes through. And like the mechanicals, everyone's had that impulse to say, "Look at me. Pay attention to me." The play has a lot to offer. I would love for the kids to fall in love with theatre through our show and remind our adult audiences why they started coming to the theatre in the first place.

The cast of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1997)



UNIT TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

CHARACTER LIST

Athenians

Theseus- King of Athens
Hippolyta- Queen of Athens
Philostrate- Servant to Theseus and Hippolyta
Egeus- Hermia's Father
Hermia- loves Lysander, betrothed to Demetrius
Demetrius- loves Hermia,
Lysander- loves Hermia and is loved by her
Helena- loves Demetrius

Players

Quince- Director
Bottom- Pyramus and becomes Titania's ass-headed
lover
Flute- Thisby
Starveling- Moonshine
Snout- the wall
Snug- the lion

Fairies

Puck- Oberon's servant
Oberon- King of the Forest
Titania- Queen of the Forest
Peaseblossom- Titania's Fairy
Cobweb- Titania's Fairy
Moth- Titania's Fairy
Mustardseed- Titania's Fairy

UNIT TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

SYNOPSIS

Theseus and Hippolyta are getting married. Egeus wants Hermia to marry Demetrius, but Hermia loves Lysander and Egeus does not approve. He threatens her that she can either marry Demetrius or live her life as a nun. Hermia and Lysander decide to runaway together just as Helena arrives. Helena discusses her love for Demetrius and how painful it is that Demetrius favors Hermia. Hermia lets Helena in on her plan to runaway with Lysander and Helena decides to tell Demetrius to win his thanks.

Quince and company come together as Quince hands out scripts and roles to his actors. The group of mechanicals is doing Pyramus and Thisby, which Bottom assures, is a very good piece of work. Bottom is playing Pyramus, however asks to play almost each role as Quince doles them out.

Switching to the woods, Oberon feels as though his Queen has replaced him with the love of a young boy she has adopted. Puck discusses the tension between the King and Queen with some fairies. They identify him



Eric Tucker and Jennifer Mudge in
A Midsummer Night's Dream (1997)

as Puck, Oberon's servant, "a shrewd and knavish sprite". Oberon and Titania arrive and accuse each other of loving Hippolyta and Theseus. From there Oberon asks Titania for the young boy and Titania refuses and leaves. Oberon sends Puck out to fetch a flower that's juices will make a person fall in love with the next living creature they see. Oberon hopes to use it to trick Titania into falling in love with an animal and giving up her page boy.

Demetrius and Helena enter and Demetrius attempts once more to get rid of Helena. Oberon sees this and orders Puck to put the flower juices in the Athenian man's eyes to make him fall in love with Helena.

In another part of the forest, Titania falls asleep and Oberon casts a spell on her to wake her up when some vile thing is near. Once Oberon has left, Lysander and Hermia stumble upon the place and decide to rest their weary heads. Puck puts the flower juice in Lysander's eyes, mistaking him for Demetrius. Helena and Demetrius soon run through the forest and their commotion awakens Lysander, giving Demetrius the chance to flee. Lysander, upon seeing Helena falls immediately in love with her and vows to shun Hermia and instead be Helena's knight. Helena runs off with Lysander chasing her, leaving Hermia to wake up completely alone in the forest.

Jumping back to the mechanicals, they have begun their first rehearsal and are running into a few issues. They worry that their use of swords will frighten the ladies and so have decided to add a prologue to explain the swords... and the lion. They determine that there will be moonlight, so the play can be seen. They cast an actor as the wall and begin to run the show. Puck arrives to see this rehearsal and casts a spell on Bottom to

UNIT TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

SYNOPSIS

make his head, that of an ass. The other players notice this change and run in fear, which frustrates Bottom. Within this turmoil, Titania awakens and sees Bottom, immediately falling in love with him.

Oberon wonders if his plan has succeeded as Puck arrives with the great news that Titania is in love with an ass, and the Athenian man is in love with Helena. Just at this time, Demetrius and Hermia arrive. Hermia shuns Demetrius and Puck and Oberon realize that there has been a miscommunication. To right his wrong Puck puts the flower's juice in Demetrius' eyes. Now both Lysander and Demetrius are in love with Helena and she is buying none of it. Hermia returns and is heartbroken that Lysander will not show her affection, causing Helena to think they are all playing some big joke on her. Oberon blames Puck for these messy relationships and tells him he must put more flower juice in Lysander's eyes to make him fall back in love with Hermia. Oberon also decides it is time to go get the boy from Titania and then awaken her from her spell.

Titania and Bottom fall asleep as Oberon watches. He begins to feel guilty after how easily he was able to take the child from her and awakens her from the spell. Titania exclaims that she has seen crazy things. Titania and Oberon head off to Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding.

As they leave, Lysander enters and falls asleep. Puck disguised as Lysander taunts Demetrius. Soon all the

lovers are asleep in the woods and Puck squeezes the juice into Lysander's eyes so that he will again love Hermia.

Theseus and Egeus stumble upon the sleeping lovers and wake them up. Demetrius vows his love for Helena and they consent to the marriages of these two pairs. As the adults exit, the lovers recount their dreams and head out to the wedding. Bottom then wakes up, also having had a very odd dream, decides that he will have Peter write a ballad of this dream.

The players are getting ready for the show and learn that Bottom is nowhere to be found and there will be two more weddings to add to the list. Bottom arrives and moves them all to prepare for the performance. Soon everyone is gathered together and the festivities begin. The mechanicals put on their play. With a prologue and Puck rounds out the evening with a speech for the audience to remember that if they were disappointed in the play, it was all just a dream.



Phyllis Kay, Timothy Crowe, William Damkoehler, Brian McEleney, and Dan Welch in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1997)

UNIT TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

THEMES



Katy Owen in The Globe's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2015)

Love

This play explores the nature of romantic love, as well as the interchangeability of emotions. All of the play's action is motivated and yet disrupted by love. We all tend to be attracted to beautiful beings. For a time, physical attraction might appear to be love at its most intense, but love is so unpredictable that we fall in and out of it. At one level, the play encourages the audience to consider that true love triumphs in the end, bringing happiness and harmony. At another level, however, Shakespeare suggests that the pursuit of love has the capacity to make us irrational. What is the function of Oberon's "love potion"? How do the fairies impact the various types of love in this play? Why do you think the young Athenians are so vulnerable to love and transformation?

Magic

Magic is the overarching theme of this play. This play not only engages with the supernatural elements of the mythic and fairy world, but there's also a simpler, more natural force - the magic of love, the magic of the morning dew, and moreover the magic of poetry and art. Can magic be the basis for real love? Why might Shakespeare have Puck close the play with a suggestion that we can dismiss all this magic as if it were a dream?

Dream vs Reality

This play interrogates reality by creating a dreamlike quality with layers. The idea that things are not necessarily what they seem to be is at the heart of this play, and in the very title itself. A dream is not real, even though it seems so at the time we experience it. Characters frequently fall asleep and wake having dreamt or thinking that they have dreamt. Much of the play takes place at night, and there are references to moonlight, which changes the appearance of what it illuminates. What are the different functions of dreams in this play? Why do both Bottom and the lovers call the magic of the woods a "dream"? Is it possible to live in a practical reality and still allow a little room for fancy? Are the reality of the lovers, madmen, and poets false or more deeply human in a way?

Art & Imagination

Shakespeare seems to comment on the illusion of theater, primarily through the rude mechanicals' performance and their own misconception that the audience won't be able to tell fantasy from reality. For Theseus, the imagination of all lovers, poets, and madmen is full of untruths. However, in the end, it is the magic of imagination that brings about reconciliation. Through this contrast, this play suggests that imagination can sometimes create truths that transcend reason's limits, and that theatre does have a magic that defies reality. How does the play-within-the-play reflect upon the nature of the theater?

Order vs Disorder

This play also deals with the theme of order and disorder. As Egeus' daughter wishes to marry against his will, both the familial order and the social order of Athens are challenged. When the mortals find themselves in the woods, away from their hierarchical society, order breaks down and relationships become fragmented. Just as the order of the society is disrupted, so is the order of Nature. What prompts the restoration of peace in the end, reason or magic? What is the function of marriage in this play? How do you see this tension played out today?

UNIT TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

INTERROGATION OF BORDERS

By Bradshaw Stanley and Maggie Seymour

The line between being a teenager and an adult is tested in this production. Casting adults as high schoolers, adding children to the production and setting the play at prom, this interpretation highlights the tension between adulthood and adolescence. It brings out questions are central to being a teenager, such as love and identity, and highlights a time when going to a dance can feel as exactly weighted on the cosmic scales as any singular human achievement or atrocity. The writer Dennis Cooper notes that we tend to associate being a teenager with an unsavory developmental stage, something to be got past, rather than an enduring question that we reencounter throughout our lives.



Janice Duclos, Anne Scurria, Phyllis Kay, and Timothy Crowe in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1997

Cooper says: Now I can inhabit the thoughts and emotions and motivations of adults who see teenagers as problems, as reminders of their own youth, as sex objects or triggers of sentimentality, as a dismissible, transitional, short-lived species that occupies some sort of dark age between childhood and adulthood, both of which are seen as more legitimate stages of life. People hate and fear the fact that they're getting older against their will and use that to rationalize adulthood as a more important period of life than adolescence and the teen years, and that just makes no sense at all to me. Adulthood merely lasts longer. (Interview with Dennis Cooper, *The Paris Review*) If Cooper can be heard here to ask whether we ever really "wake up" from being a teenager, then we might extend his question to the one posed at the end of *Midsummer*: can we really tell the difference in our dreams and our "slumber" from so-called reality and waking life? Since we're in the theatre, let's put it even more bluntly: can we tell the difference in acting and real life? Who gets to decide what is real life, and how? By the end of *Midsummer*, after all the intoxicating exchanges of position and desire, is there any clarity to whose wishes are being fulfilled? Or rather, hasn't desire shown itself to both undo each character as it brings them together? Is it not the process of this very undoing that, in some sense, finally allows them to meet, or even makes their contact possible? Puck's final soliloquy is addressed to the audience, after all, and not the characters, suggesting that we may ourselves be connected to this play ("And Robin shall restore amends")—and, if not to this play, then certainly to the theatres of life in common, i.e., love and politics).

UNIT TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

DIRECTORIAL NOTE ON HIGH SCHOOL

from Tyler Dobrowsky

I'm thinking of this production as a letter not just to all of the eleventh grade students from around the state who are coming to see this show for free as part of the Grade 11 project, celebrating Project Discovery's 50th anniversary, but a letter to all the Project Discovery kids who have ever come through our doors over the past fifty years. I want to make our audiences viscerally feel how transportive and exhilarating live theater can be, as if it's their first time, even if it's their 100th. I want them to feel how wonderful theater can be to experience, how much fun it can be to perform.

A high school dance lands the play in a setting steeped in adolescent longing and lust, a place where romance or rejection could be right around the corner. It's a space where emotions run at a fever pitch—where you could

live or die moment-to-moment. Where you could have your first kiss, or where you could dance with someone you have a crush on, where you could have your heart broken, or where you could get up to no good with your friends. It's hard to overstate just how important all that feels when you're a teenager: your whole life is out there to be lived, and you're just starting to figure out who you are as an independent person, to crave and demand that independence, with the world out there holding limitless possibility. Everything feels so fresh, so vibrant, because it's the first time. Just as our first loves are seminal, so are our first plays. At least in my experience, they tend to leave a lasting impression.



Katherine Helmond and Ed Hall in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1967)

UNIT TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

SETTING: THE 80S

Every decade has its rhythm, but the 80s has its own tropes—a transcendental cocktail mix of synth music, neon lights, video games, and cocaine. In recent memory, there have been film remakes like *Footloose* and *Ghostbusters* and 80s-inspired soundtracks like *The Drive*, enjoying a slice of the limelight. The list of 80's properties optioned for future entertainment industry is a seemingly endless pit. None of this, however, quite cut the mustard as Netflix's new hit "Stranger Things" did. Acting as an addictive homage to *Dungeons and Dragons*, Stephen King, Spielberg films (*E.T.* and *Poltergeist*), and vintage 1980s television, the sci-fi horror web series has since spurred a resurgence of 80s nostalgia all too welcome in today's television scene.

For many, life seemed much simpler in the 1980s. For better or for worse, it was a time when blogs did not exist, social media was 20 years away and text was not a verb (and cellphones were the size of bricks). The Cold War ended; the Berlin Wall fell. It was also a time when popular culture reached its height, under the influence of Reagan-era American exceptionalism and consumerism.

FASHION

The decade saw the clothing styles of the late 70s evolve into heavy metal fashion. This included teased hair, shoulder pads, and ripped jeans; neon clothing came in handy, as the major theme became about making bold fashion statements; futuristic aesthetic also became a staple of graphic design.

MUSIC

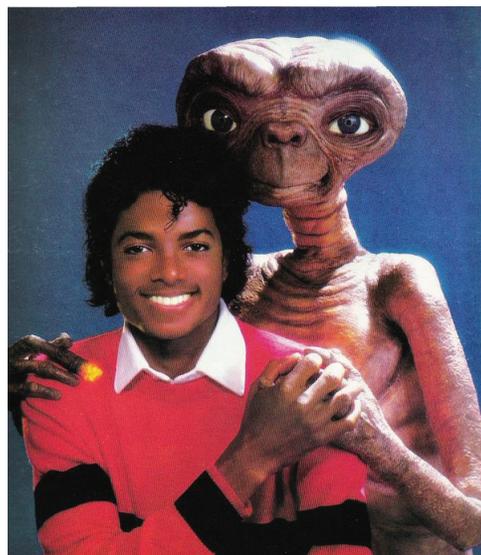
"Ladies and gentlemen, rock and roll." These words marked the launch of MTV on August 1, 1981. The debut of this new product propelled pop artists such as Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston, Prince, and Madonna to the forefront of the 80s monoculture, whose pleasure would then be replaced by the meteoric rise of the Internet. The decade also saw the emergence of dance music and

new wave, as disco fell out of fashion in its early years. Over-digitized and fragmented, music were split up into sub-genres such as house, goth, electro-pop, new wave, synthpop, and rap metal. Rap was especially successful in the latter part of the decade, with the advent of the golden age of hip hop.

FILM

For anyone who grew up during the 1980s, filmmaker John Hughes was a pop culture embodiment of that singular era: His coming-of-age comedies like *The Breakfast Club* and *Sixteen Candles*—often described as both "cheesy" and "cool"—captured the buoyancy and confusion of being young. The 80's was also credited with the creation of "high concept" picture of the modern Hollywood blockbuster, whose short cinematic plots could be easily marketable and understandable. Besides, the decade saw an increasing emphasis on science fiction, horror, and action movies, as well as on nudity in film.

Could it be that our current 80's obsession is purely nostalgic? The 80's were an analog world dreaming of digital. Now, digital, we dream ourselves back to the future.



UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

I' M NOT BAD, I' M JUST DRAWN THAT WAY

One of the most important jobs for an actor is to figure out why their character does what they do. Even if an actor is playing a villain, it is important that the actor not judge or criticize their character's actions—instead, they must play them truthfully.

1. Assign each student (or depending on the class, a group of students) one character from the play. They must take an in-depth look at that character.
2. Have them come up with things that the character say about themselves and lines that other characters say to describe them.
3. Each student or group of students must then make a presentation as to why their character is not so bad after all. Whether or not they actually believe it, encourage students to think about their character's motivations for their actions in the play.
4. Discuss with your students how actors, writers and directors must always ask why people behave the way they do.

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

LETTERS IN CHARACTER

The first part of the following activity gives students the opportunity to interact with the characters and plot points of the story. The second half of this activity allows students to get inside the character's head and understand the story from his or her perspective.

1. Have your students choose a character from the play and, using any of the following prompts, write a letter to that character: What advice would you give the character at this point in the story? What is something important that you want this character to know right now? Tell this character about an event in the story that hasn't happened yet.
2. Once everyone has finished, collect the letters and redistribute them to other students in the class.
3. Now, each student must imagine that they are the character that the letter is addressed to, and respond to it from his or her perspective.
4. Optional performance opportunity: your students could also write their responses in the form of a monologue and perform them for the class.
5. Afterwards, take a moment to debrief with your students: which part of the activity did they like the best?

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

PLAYING WITH STATUS

www.drama.ro

In your classroom, discuss the difference between “high status” and “low status”. It may mean social status, but not necessarily. A king can be of low status and a beggar of high status. It’s to do with inner confidence, how you feel about yourself and your place in the world around you. People’s status can change according to the situation they find themselves in. Status is at the core of nearly all drama.

a) Tell students to walk around the room with “high” status. Have them notice how they hold their head, their spine, how their clothes feel, how their feet move, how they breathe, whether they move quickly or slowly, evenly, or with jerks. Now have them walk with low status. Afterwards, discuss (briefly) what they noticed about high and low status.

b) Have students choose either high or low status and walk around the room. When they cross someone’s path, they should acknowledge, with a gesture or a sound, or both, the other person, according to their status. Have them repeat the exercise, reversing their status.

Note: all of the examples so far should be done fairly rapidly, i.e., no more than a few minutes of walking for each status.

c) Divide students into groups of four. Give them each a status from 1 to 4, 4 being very high status (not the 4 of the previous ex., which was fairly low) and 1 low status. It is important that only each student knows his or her status. Have them improvise a scene (give them a specific location and reason for being in the scene, and let them figure out the rest). Afterwards, have the rest of the class guess who had what status. Ask the improvisers how their experience was.

THE LANGUAGE OF STATUS

In Shakespeare, characters that belong to the lower classes, like the mechanicals, spoke in prose, whereas characters who were part of the nobility usually spoke in verse, most commonly in iambic pentameter. Characters like gods and fairies, on the other hand, often spoke in rhyming verse.

Encourage your students to think about the way they speak during this exercise and what that says about their status.

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

TABLEAUX

Creating a tableau is a simple yet active way to approach a lesson. Below are a few tableau-centric activities.

1. Have the students split up into groups of 3 or 4 to create tableaux based on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. You can assign each of them one word (companionship, trust) or contrasting ideas (love vs. hate) or just themes: intolerance, love, loyalty, etc...

2. You could also tell them to pick the scene they find the most important and have their classmates guess which scene they are portraying.

3. Finally, you could have the students do a series of tableaux to follow the arc of a character (like Bottom or Hermia). Feel free to add lines of text or series of movement to these tableaux!

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MAKE IT MODERN

Give the students short (1-2 page) scenes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Have them write line by line "translations" into modern English. You can have them perform both scenes, just the modern scene, or have the team split up and do both. Encourage the students to be creative with settings, to connect to their own lives, or to use modern-day conveniences. Explain that Shakespeare's plays include many outdated traditions and thus had many inside jokes with his audiences. Be bold!

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

BABY IF YOU LOVE ME

Have the group gather in a circle and designate one person to be in the middle. The group can sit or stand, whichever is most comfortable. The person in the middle is the jester, they must go around to the people on the outside and try and make one of them laugh. Once they have succeeded, the person who laughed is the Jester and the original Jester may rejoin the circle. The Jester must say, "Baby if you love me won't you give me a smile" to which the targeted person must respond, "Baby I love you but I just can't smile". If the outside person is able to get these words out, without smiling,

the Jester must try another person. The outside circle must look at the Jester, they cannot cover their heads or avert their eyes. The Jester cannot touch the outside circle. No one on the outside circle can laugh, even if the Jester is not focused on you specifically.

Discussion Questions: What moments were the most enjoyable? What was most challenging? How did it feel as the Jester and the target to laugh or to see someone laugh? What tactics were most successful?

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

YES...YES...NO...

Have the class pair up and then designate one student as A and one as B. Have all the A's stand in a line on one side of the room and the B's on the other. Make sure the students are standing across the room from their partner and have enough space within the line for some movement. From there the pairs, working as one pair rather than a line, will say either yes or no. A and B should take turns speaking, but can only say yes or no. If they say yes, they take a step towards their partner, if they say no, they take a step back. This is first and foremost a listening exercise, observe your partner's reactions, breath before moving and take your time.

Encourage the students to listen to each other, to maintain eye contact, and move slowly. Understand what it feels like to say yes and take a step forward and

have someone say no to that. Breathe in moments when you say no and the other person disregards that and continues to move forward.

Discussion Questions: When did you move forward? What propelled you forward? What did you notice in your partner? Did your partner ever make you move back? Why? When did you feel most in control? When did you feel you were most heard? When did you see characters listen to each other in the play? What were moments characters were not listening?

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

DREAM VS REALITY

Have the class get on their feet and move about the classroom. Read these questions and encourage the class to explore the answers physically, keeping in mind their feet, their fingers and their shoulders. Remind the class between questions to focus on different body parts. Start with either dream or reality and allow the class to fully embrace one perception or the other. Encourage the class to physically explore the answers to each of these questions, try different things, try crazy things, try silly things, try ANYTHING!

- How do you walk in a dream?
- How do you speak in a dream?
- Where do your eyes fall in a dream?
- How do you interact with others in a dream?
- How does time or space affect you in a dream?
- How safe do you feel in a dream?
- Do you KNOW this is a dream?
- What happens when you become stressed in a dream?
- How does the world change when you become scared in a dream?

Once the class has explored both a dream and a reality, have them switch back and forth quickly between the two, walking in a dream, then switching to walking in reality, then switching back to walking in a dream. All the while encouraging the students to feel the differences and similarities between the two.

Discussion Questions: What were the main differences between reality and a dream? What was most challenging about either world? When did you feel present in either world? How does your understanding of dream vs. reality affect your understanding of *Midsommer*? Were there moments when they were in a dream or reality? What gave you clues as to the world they inhabited?

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

TRUE LOVE?

Pick your favorite love-story fairytale. You now have the power to rewrite the story. Oberon has given you his magic flower juice and the power of love is in your hands. No one will fall in love and the story will not progress without you manipulating love, in whatever way you see fit. Rewrite the story with your own hands playing the role of cupid. Encourage the students to add their own flare and style to the story. Encourage the students to use their power and let their hand show in the story telling.

Discussion Questions: How does using love potion change the story? How does the potion change the way people interact? How does the potion change our understanding of true love? What were the most important aspects of your story? How did it feel to have this power? What was the hardest part? What was the best part?

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

SHAKESPEAREAN INSULTS

Shakespeare has a wide range of insults sprinkled throughout all of his plays, some of which are, "clay-brained guts" "knotty-pated fool" "obscene greasy tallow-catch". For this exercise, students must create their own Shakespearean insults. Using two or three adjectives and one noun, students must create the most grotesque insults they can. Using animals, bathroom language, even school utensils they must get their creative juices flowing. To give extra guidance, give them an insult, you are dumb, you are a coward, you are boring and have them create the insult based off that.

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

101 WAYS TO READ A MONOLOGUE

A monologue, or soliloquy, is a long speech made by one person. Sometimes it can be a challenge for a young actor to take on a piece of text and perform it on his or her own, so this activity is a way to get your students to forget their inhibitions and have fun with it.

- Pick one or more of the monologues below, and hand them out to your students. You can assign or let them choose which monologue they want to do, and give them a few minutes to read it over a few times and familiarize themselves with it.

- In partners, let them read it out loud to one another a few times in whichever way they want to. After this, using your own suggestions and those of your students, throw out different ways to read the monologue. Feel free to be as wacky as you want—this is supposed to be fun. You can filter the suggestions, and pick one that you think would work and let them do it that way. Some examples of different ways to read it include (but are definitely not limited to): an aerobics instructor, an army general, a drunk, someone who desperately has to

go to the bathroom, a squirrel, the laziest person in the world, singing it, whispering it, telling it like it's a scary story, like an interpretive dancer, like they are in a musical, like a President, or a King...you can even use celebrity names and have them imitate them using the monologue.

- This can be done with all of the students working in partners or on their own at the same time. If this is a particularly brave group, you can challenge them to take your suggestions and perform individually in front of the class.

- After every willing student has performed, take some time to talk about what they got from it. Did it help them understand the monologue better? If so, how? Did they find that any of the interpretations, as silly as they may have been, actually worked and made some sense? Which ones, and why? How does this help them as actors?



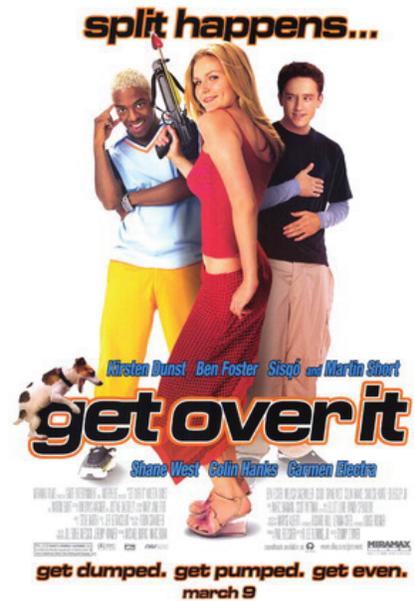
Shakespeare Cat performs Lady Macbeth's monologue from *Macbeth* (Act 5, Scene1)

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

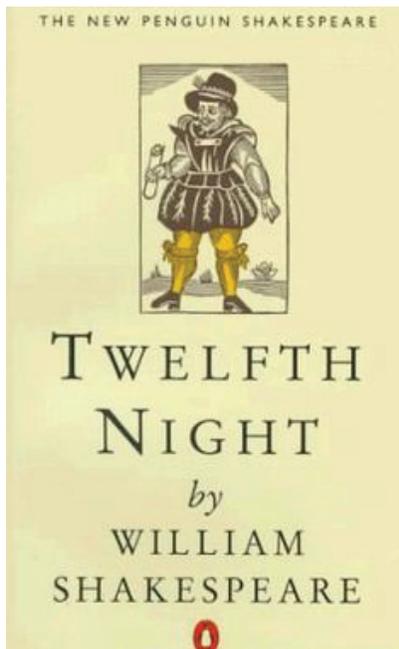
FURTHER READING AND WATCHING



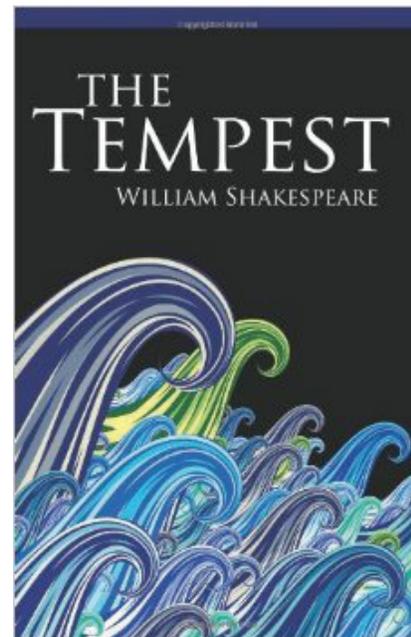
A Midsummer Night's Dream
(film, 1999)



Get Over It
(film, 2001)



Twelfth Night



The Tempest

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MIDSUMMER SCENES

THE LOVERS

HERMIA

Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

LYSANDER

Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?

HERMIA

What love could press Lysander from my side?

LYSANDER

Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,
Fair Helena, who more engilds the night
Than all you fiery oes and eyes of light.
Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,
The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so?

HERMIA

You speak not as you think: it cannot be.

HELENA

Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three
To fashion this false sport, in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspired, have you with these contrived
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us,--O, is it all forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,
Though I alone do feel the injury.

HERMIA

I am amazed at your passionate words.
I scorn you not: it seems that you scorn me.

HELENA

Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me and praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius,

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MIDSUMMER SCENES

Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,
To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
And tender me, forsooth, affection,
But by your setting on, by your consent?
What thought I be not so in grace as you
But miserable most, to love unloved?

HERMIA

I understand not what you mean by this.

HELENA

Ay, do, persevere, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;
Wink each at other; hold the sweet jest up:
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But fare ye well: 'tis partly my own fault;
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

LYSANDER

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

HELENA

O excellent!

HERMIA

Sweet, do not scorn her so.

DEMETRIUS

If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

LYSANDER

Thou canst compel no more than she entreat:
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers.
Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do:
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,
To prove him false that says I love thee not.

DEMETRIUS

I say I love thee more than he can do.

LYSANDER

If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

DEMETRIUS

Quick, come!

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MIDSUMMER SCENES

HERMIA

Lysander, whereto tends all this?

LYSANDER

Away, Hermia, go!

DEMETRIUS

No, no; he'll []

Seem to break loose; take on as you would follow,

But yet come not: you are a tame man, go!

LYSANDER

Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,

Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent!

HERMIA

Why are you grown so rude? what change is this?

Sweet love,--

LYSANDER

Thy love! out, tawny Tartar, out!

Out, loathed medicine! hated potion, hence!

HERMIA

Do you not jest?

HELENA

Yes, sooth; and so do you.

LYSANDER

Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

DEMETRIUS

I would I had your bond, for I perceive

A weak bond holds you: I'll not trust your word.

LYSANDER

What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?

Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

HERMIA

What, can you do me greater harm than hate?

Hate me! wherefore? O me! what news, my love!

Am not I Hermia? are not you Lysander?

I am as fair now as I was erewhile.

Since night you loved me; yet since night you left
me:

Why, then you left me--O, the gods forbid!--

In earnest, shall I say?

LYSANDER

Ay, by my life;

And never did desire to see thee more.

Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MIDSUMMER SCENES

Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest
That I do hate thee and love Helena.

HERMIA

O me! you juggler! you canker-blossom!
You thief of love! what, have you come by night
And stolen my love's heart from him?

HELENA

Fine, i'faith!
Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie! you counterfeit, you puppet, you!

THE MECHANICALS

QUINCE

Is all our company here?

BOTTOM

You were best to call them generally, man by man,
according to the scrip.

QUINCE

Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is
thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our
interlude before the duke and the duchess, on his
wedding-day at night.

BOTTOM

First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats
on, then read the names of the actors, and so grow
to a point.

QUINCE

Marry, our play is, The most lamentable comedy, and
most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.

BOTTOM

A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a
merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your
actors by the scroll. Masters, spread yourselves.

QUINCE

Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver.

BOTTOM

Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

QUINCE

You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MIDSUMMER SCENES

BOTTOM

What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

QUINCE

A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

BOTTOM

That will ask some tears in the true performing of
it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes;
I will move storms, I will condole in some measure.
To the rest: yet my chief humour is for a tyrant:
I could play a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.
The raging rocks
And shivering shocks
Shall break the locks
Of prison gates;
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.
This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players.
This is a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

QUINCE

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

FLUTE

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

FLUTE

What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

QUINCE

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE

Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming.

QUINCE

That's all one: you shall play it, and
you may speak as small as you will.

BOTTOM

An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too, I'll
speak in a monstrous little voice. 'Thisne,
Thisne;' 'Ah, Pyramus, lover dear! thy Thisby dear,
and lady dear!'

QUINCE

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

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MIDSUMMER SCENES

BOTTOM

Well, proceed.

QUINCE

Robin Starveling, the tailor.

STARVELING

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother.

Tom Snout, the tinker.

SNOUT

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

You, Pyramus' father: myself, Thisby's father:

Snug, the joiner; you, the lion's part: and, I

hope, here is a play fitted.

SNUG

Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it
be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

QUINCE

You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

BOTTOM

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

QUINCE

An you should do it too terribly, you would fright
the duchess and the ladies, that 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 that you should fright the
ladies out of their wits, they would have no more
discretion but to hang us: but I will aggravate my
voice so that I will roar you as gently as any
sucking dove; I will roar you an 'twere any
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

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MIDSUMMER SCENES

summer's day; a most lovely gentleman-like man:
therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

BOTTOM

Well, I will undertake it..

QUINCE

Masters, here are your parts:
and I am to entreat you, request
you and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night;
and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the
town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse, for if
we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with
company, and our devices known. In the meantime I
will draw a bill of properties, such as our play
wants. I pray you, fail me not.

BOTTOM

We will meet; and there we may rehearse most
obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be perfect: adieu.

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MIDSUMMER MONOLOGUES

PUCK

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
if you pardon, we will mend:
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call;
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.

TITANIA

These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land
Have every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents:
No night is now with hymn or carol blest:
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound:
The seasons alter: the spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which:
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
We are their parents and original.

HELENA

Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!
Your eyes are lode-stars; and your tongue's sweet air
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
Sickness is catching: O, were favour so,
Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
The rest I'd give to be to you translated.
O, teach me how you look, and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

OBERON

Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight:
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
And lead these testy rivals so astray
As one come not within another's way.
Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue,
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong;
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius;
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision,
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen and beg her Changling boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

UNIT THREE: DELVING INTO THE TEXT

MIDSUMMER MONOLOGUES

PYRAMUS

Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to take of truest Thisby sight.

But stay, O spite!

But mark, poor knight,

What dreadful dole is here!

Eyes, do you see?

How can it be?

O dainty duck! O dear!

Thy mantle good,

What, stain'd with blood!

Approach, ye Furies fell!

O Fates, come, come,

Cut thread and thrum;

Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

O wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?

Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear:

Which is--no, no--which was the fairest dame

That lived, that loved, that liked, that look'd

with cheer.

Come, tears, confound;

Out, sword, and wound

The pap of Pyramus;

Ay, that left pap,

Where heart doth hop: (STABS HIMSELF)

Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

Now am I dead,

Now am I fled;

My soul is in the sky:

Tongue, lose thy light;

Moon take thy flight: (EXIT MOONSHINE)

Now die, die, die, die, die. (DIES)

HERMIA

Puppet? why so? ay, that way goes the game.

Now I perceive that she hath made compare

Between our statures; she hath urged her height;

And with her personage, her tall personage,

Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.

And are you grown so high in his esteem;

Because I am so dwarfish and so low?

How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak;

How low am I? I am not yet so low

But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

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