

YEAR 7 KNOWLEDGE
ORGANISER:
A Midsummer Night's Dream (c.1595-1596)



Context: Shakespeare's Ideas

- Although Shakespeare was writing hundreds of years ago, his works are still relevant today. Many of his plays are social commentaries, exploring how and why people act the way they do.
- Shakespeare may be questioning the impact of control, specifically male power (patriarchy) on women, and the oppression of women when living in a patriarchal society.
- Shakespeare may be highlighting the consuming power of obsession, by exploring the things people do and the ways they act when they are obsessed with something or someone.

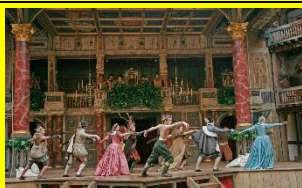
Key Knowledge

What is a play?

Plays are divided into acts and scenes.

Plays have stage directions, which give information such as: how a

character is feeling; how a character should speak, act or move; any key technical elements such as lighting, sound, costume, staging or props.



How did audiences experience plays during the Elizabethan era?

Many of Shakespeare's plays were experienced at the Globe theatre.



The theatre had different sections depending on their class. Plays were not just for the affluent; they were designed to be enjoyed by all classes. Shakespeare included dramatic devices such as

props and soliloquys to ensure that all of the audience understood what was happening.

What are the conventions of a comedy play?

There is a more light-hearted tone to the story. There is a happy ending, usually involving a marriage.

Characters must overcome an obstacle in order to have the happy ending.

There is conflict between control and freedom.

Plot

Act 1: **Hermia** and **Lysander** love each other but are not allowed to marry, so decide to run away to the forest to get married in secret.

Demetrius wants to marry **Hermia**. **Helena** loves **Demetrius** so Helena tells Demetrius about the plan. They follow **Hermia** and **Lysander** into the forest.

Act 2: In the forest, Oberon and Titania are arguing. Oberon sees **Demetrius** and **Helena** arguing and commands Puck to use the potion on the Athenian man to make him fall in love with **Helena**. However, the first Athenian man Puck sees is **Lysander**, so he puts the love potion on him. **Lysander** falls madly in love with **Helena**.

Act 3: Puck sees Bottom in the forest and transformed his head into a donkey's head. He puts the love potion on Titania, who falls in love with Bottom. Puck puts the love potion on **Demetrius** so that he falls in love with **Helena**. As a result, both men love **Helena** so there is chaos. Puck eventually drops a herb in **Lysander's** eyes to put him back to normal.

Acts 4 and 5: Oberon finds Titania and Bottom and decides that he has had enough fun. Puck drops a herb in her eyes, she wakes and leaves with Oberon. The lovers return to Athens where Bottom and the other actors perform their play at the wedding of the three happy couples: Theseus and Hippolyta, **Lysander** and **Hermia** and **Demetrius** and **Helena**.

Characters

Theseus The duke of Athens. He is a strong and strict ruler of the city.

Hippolyta Theseus's bride. She was a fearless warrior.

Egeus Hermia's stubborn father who wants her to marry Demetrius or be put to death.

Hermia Egeus's daughter who is in love with Lysander.

Lysander

Before the love potion: He is in love with Hermia and runs away to the forest with her.

After the love potion: Falls in love with Helena.

Demetrius

Before the love potion: He wants to marry Hermia and is disgusted by Helena's love.

After the love potion: Falls in love with Helena. He never has the effects of the love potion removed from him.

Helena Hermia's friend who is desperately in love with Demetrius.

Oberon The king of the fairies who controls the love potion.

Titania The fierce queen of the fairies who falls in love with Bottom when the love potion is put on her.

Bottom An actor who has his head turned into a donkey by Oberon. Titania falls in love with him when she is under the love potion's influence.

Puck Oberon's mischievous servant who puts the potion on people's eyes.

Key Vocabulary

Word	Meaning
affluent	Having a lot of money or possessions.
characterisation	What a writer makes a character like (as a fictional 'person')
conflict	a serious disagreement, battle or struggle between two sides or ideas.
convention	The usual way of doing something.
dramatic irony	When the audience knows something that the characters don't.
malicious	Describes someone who does or says things that are meant to upset someone.

manipulate	To control or influence someone or something unfairly.
obsession	The state of always having something on your mind.
obstacle	Something that blocks someone's way or prevents progress.
oppression	The treatment of a group of people in an unfair way, often by limiting their freedom.
patriarchy	A society where men hold the power and women are usually excluded or oppressed (patriarchal society).
remorse	Deep regret or guilt for a wrongdoing.
setting	The time and place of events in a story.
severe	Describes something very strict or harsh.
social commentary	Writing about issues in society.
social inequality	When people in society don't have the same status, rights or opportunities.
society	People living together as a community.
soliloquy	A speech in a play that the character speaks to themselves or to the audience, rather than to the other characters.
victim	someone who has been harmed, often by other people
vulnerable	Describes something or someone in a situation where they can be easily harmed.