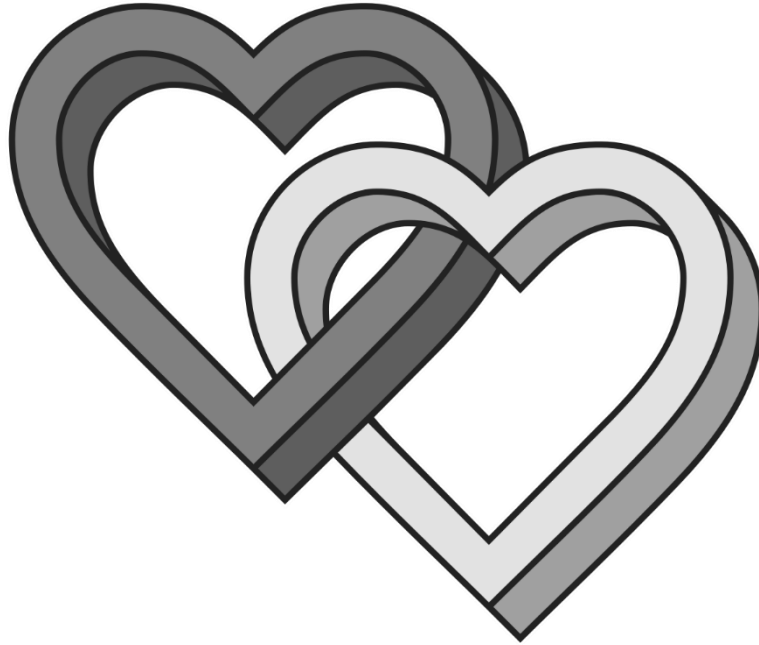


# Study Booklet

## A Midsummer Night's Dream



### Love and Conflict

Hermia

-

Lysander

-

Demetrius

-

Helena

## Fundamentals

1	Who wrote <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> ?	William Shakespeare
2	When was the play first performed?	Mid-1590s (probably 1595)
3	What genre is the play?	Comedy
4	Where is the play set?	Athens
5	In which two domains does the action take place?	Athens and the woods
6	What is the name of the Duke of Athens?	Theseus
7	What is the name of his bride-to-be?	Hippolyta
8	What is the name of the Fairy King?	Oberon
9	What is the name of the Fairy King's servant?	Puck
10	What is the name of the Fairy Queen?	Titania
11	What is the name of Hermia's father?	Egeus
12	Who is Hermia betrothed to at the beginning of the play?	Demetrius
13	Who does Hermia love?	Lysanda
14	Who does Helena love?	Demetrius
15	Which character embodies power, order and authority?	Theseus
16	Which character embodies paternal authority?	Egeus
17	Which character embodies the spirit of mischief?	Puck
18	Which domain is representative of reality and established conventions?	Athens
19	Which domain is representative of magic and disorder?	Woods
20	Who was the Queen of Carthage?	Dido
21	Who was the Trojan warrior who jilted her?	Anaeas
22	Who is Cupid?	The Roman God of Love
23	Where are the Taurus mountains?	Southern Turkey
24	What is Acheron a reference to?	A river in the Underworld
25	What is a soliloquy?	A speech delivered alone on stage

## Act 1, Scene 1

**Hermia** is in love with **Lysander**. However, she is betrothed to **Demetrius**.

**Hermia's** father, **Theseus**, insists that she marries **Demetrius**.

**Theseus**           What say you, **Hermia**? Be advised fair maid           50  
To you your father should be as a god;  
One that composed your beauties, yea, and one  
To whom you are but as a form in wax  
By him imprinted and within his power  
To leave the figure or disfigure it.                           55  
**Demetrius** is a worthy gentleman.

**Hermia**           So is **Lysander**.

**Theseus**                           In himself he is;  
But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,  
The other must be held the worthier.                   60

**Hermia**           I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

**Theseus**           Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

**Hermia**           I do entreat your grace to pardon me.  
I know not by what power I am made bold,  
Nor how it may concern my modesty,               65  
In such a presence here to plead my thoughts;  
But I beseech your grace that I may know  
The worst that may befall me in this case,  
If I refuse to wed **Demetrius**.

### Starter Questions

- What does Theseus mean when he says, 'To you your father should be as a god'? (51)
- What does he mean when he says that Hermia is 'but as a form of wax'? (53)
- What, according to Theseus, makes Lysander 'worthier' than Demetrius? (60)
- Why does Hermia 'entreat' Theseus to 'pardon' her? (63)

### Big Question

- How is marriage presented in the extract above?

## Act 1, Scene 1

**Lysander** and **Hermia** decide to secretly leave Athens to get married.

**Lysander** I have a widow aunt, a dowager  
Of great revenue, and she hath no child:  
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues; 165  
And she respects me as her only son.  
There, gentle **Hermia**, may I marry thee;  
And to that place the sharp Athenian law  
Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me then,  
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night; 170  
And in the wood, a league without the town,  
Where I did meet thee once with **Helena**,  
To do observance to a morn of May,  
There will I stay for thee.

**Hermia** My good **Lysander**! 175  
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,  
By his best arrow with the golden head,  
By the simplicity of Venus' doves,  
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,  
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen, 180  
When the false Trojan under sail was seen,  
By all the vows that ever men have broke,  
In number more than ever women spoke,  
In that same place thou hast appointed me,  
Tomorrow truly will I meet with thee. 185

### Starter Questions

1. Why does Demetrius choose his aunt as the person he and Hermia should run to? (163-9)
2. Why does Hermia swear she will run away with Demetrius 'by Cupid's strongest bow'? (176)
3. Why does Hermia make a point of arguing that men have broken more vows than women? (182-3)

### Big Question

- How is the character of Hermia presented in the extract above and the one from before?

## Act 1, Scene 1

**Helena** is in love with **Demetrius**.

**Helena** decides to tell **Demetrius** about **Hermia** and **Lysander**'s plan to run away in the hope that he will thank her.

**Helena** Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.  
But what of that? **Demetrius** thinks not so;  
He will not know what all but he do know: 240  
And as he errs, doting on **Hermia**'s eyes,  
So I, admiring of his qualities:  
Things base and vile, folding no quantity,  
Love can transpose to form and dignity:  
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind; 245  
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:  
Nor hath Love's mind of any judgement taste;  
Wings and no eyes figure unheedy haste:  
And therefore is Love said to be a child,  
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled. 250  
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,  
So the boy Love is perjured everywhere:  
For ere **Demetrius** look'd on **Hermia**'s eyne,  
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;  
And when this hail some heat from **Hermia** felt, 255  
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.  
I will go tell him of fair **Hermia**'s flight:  
Then to the wood will he tomorrow night  
Pursue her

### Starter Questions

1. Why is love 'said to be a child'? (249)
2. What does Helena mean when she says that Demetrius 'hail'd down oaths that he was only mine'? (254)
3. What does the word 'flight' mean? (257)

### Big Question

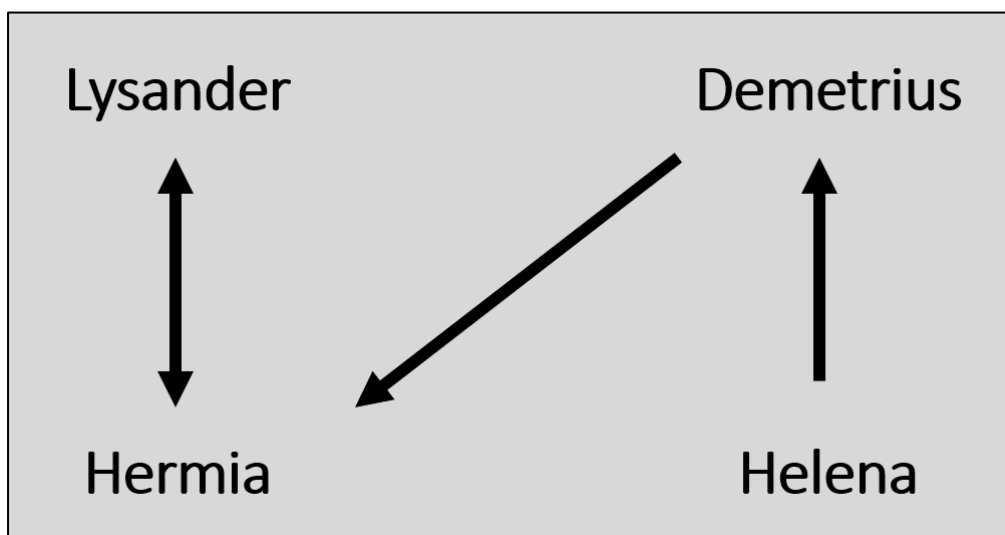
- How is the character of Helena presented in the extract above and to what extent is she similar to Hermia?

## Review Questions

1. Who wrote the play?
2. Where is the play set?
3. What is the name of Hermia's father?
4. Who is Lysander in love with?
5. Who is Hermia in love with?
6. How is Helena in love with?
7. Who is Demetrius in love with?
8. What is a 'dowager'?
9. What does 'beseech' mean?
10. Who is the God of Love?
11. What is a 'soliloquy'?
12. What does the word 'patriarchy' mean?

## Remember...

- **Demetrius loves Hermia**, but Hermia does not love him
- **Hermia loves Lysander** and **Lysander loves her**, but Hermia's father will not allow them to get married
- Hermia and Lysander plan to run away and get married in secret
- **Helena loves Demetrius**, but he does not love her
- Helena tells Demetrius about Hermia and Lysander's plan to run away



## Act 2, Scene 1

**Hermia** and **Lysander** have left Athens and are somewhere in the woods.

**Helena** follows **Demetrius** into the woods to tell him that she is in love.

- Demetrius** I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.  
Where is **Lysander** and fair **Hermia**?  
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me. 565  
Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood;  
And here am I, and wode within this wood,  
Because I cannot meet my **Hermia**.  
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.
- Helena** You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant; 570  
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart  
Is true as steel: leave you your power to draw,  
And I shall have no power to follow you.
- Demetrius** Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?  
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth 575  
Tell you, I do not, nor I cannot love you?
- Helena** And even for that do I love you the more.  
I am your spaniel; and, **Demetrius**,  
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:  
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me, 580  
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,  
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.

### Starter Questions

1. What does Demetrius tell Helena not to do? (563)
2. Who does Demetrius say he will 'slay' and who 'slayeth' him? (565)
3. What does Helena mean when she says her heart is 'true as steel'? (572)
4. What does Helena mean when she says to Demetrius that she is his 'spaniel'? (578)

### Big Question

- How does Helena use language to convey the strength of her feelings towards Demetrius in the extract above?

## Act 2, Scene 1

**Oberon** is the Fairy King. **Puck** is his servant and jester.

**Puck** has obtained a magic herb that makes people fall in love with the first person they see.

**Oberon** orders **Puck** to use the herb juice on **Titania**, his wife, to get revenge on her.

**Oberon** also orders **Puck** to use the herb juice on **Demetrius** after witnessing him being 'disdainful' towards **Helena**.

**Puck** Ay, there it is.

**Oberon** I pray thee, give it me.

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,  
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,  
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine, 630  
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:  
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,  
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;  
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,  
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in: 635  
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,  
And make her full of hateful fantasies.  
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:  
A sweet Athenian lady is in love  
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes; 640  
But do it when the next thing he espies  
May be the lady: thou shalt know the man  
By the Athenian garments he hath on.  
Effect it with some care, that he may prove  
More fond on her than she upon her love 645

### Starter Questions

1. What does Oberon ask Puck to give him? (627)
2. How does Oberon describe Helena? (639)
3. What 'effect' does Oberon expect the herb to have on Demetrius? (645)

### Big Question

- What does the extract above reveal about love and relationships?



## Act 2, Scene 2

**Lysander** and **Hermia** get lost in the woods and, feeling exhausted, fall asleep.

Finding them, **Puck** wrongly assumes that **Lysander** is **Demetrius** (the 'disdainful youth') and uses the herb juice.

**Helena**, separated from **Demetrius** and lost in the woods, encounters **Lysander** and **Hermia**.

**Helena** wakes **Lysander** and, seeing her, he instantly falls in love with her.

**Lysander**            Transparent Helena! Nature shows art,  
                            That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.  
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word                                765  
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

**Helena**             Do not say so, Lysander; say not so  
                            What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what though?  
Yet Hermia still loves you: then be content.

**Lysander**           Content with Hermia! No; I do repent                                770  
                            The tedious minutes I with her have spent.  
Not Hermia but Helena I love:  
Who will not change a raven for a dove?  
The will of man is by his reason sway'd;  
And reason says you are the worthier maid.                                775

Things growing are not ripe until their season  
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;  
And touching now the point of human skill,  
Reason becomes the marshal to my will  
And leads me to your eyes, where I o'erlook                                780  
Love's stories written in love's richest book.

**Helena**             Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?  
                            When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?

### Starter Questions

1. What does Lysander want to do to Demetrius and why? (766)
2. How does Helena respond to Demetrius's declaration of love? (782)

### Big Question

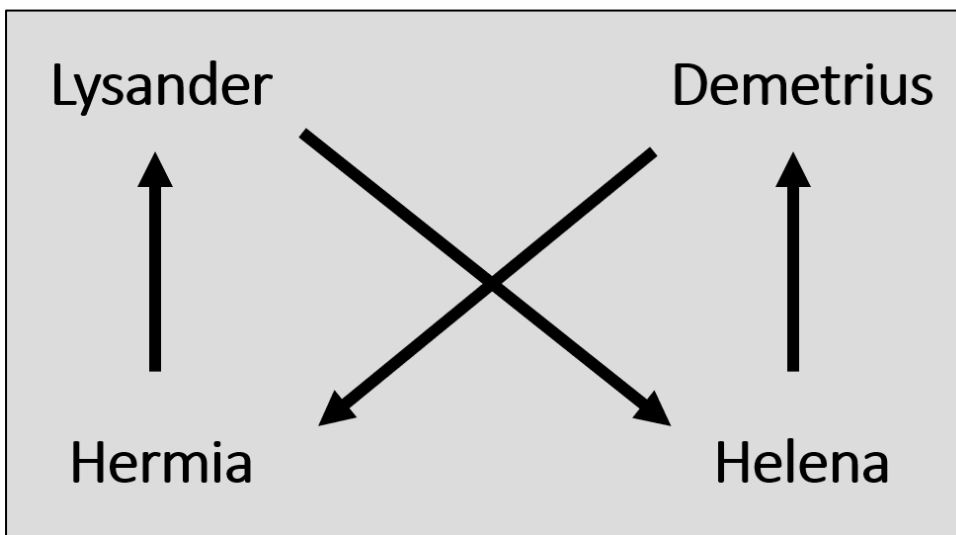
- How does Lysander use language to convey the strength of his feelings towards Helena in the extract above?

## Review Questions

1. What is the name of the Fairy King?
2. What is the name of his wife?
3. What is the name of his servant and jester?
4. What does the magic herb juice do?
5. Who is Helena in love with?
6. Who is Hermia in love with?
7. Who is Lysander in love with in A2S1?
8. Who is he in love with at the end of A2S2?
9. What does 'disdainful' mean?
10. What does 'mockery' mean?
11. What does 'infatuation' mean?
12. What does 'illusion' mean?

## Remember...

- Puck mistakenly uses the herb juice on Lysander (and not Demetrius)
- As a result, **Lysander falls in love with Helena** because she is the first person he sees
- When Lysander declares his love for Helena, she believes he is mocking her
- Helena leaves and Lysander follows her
- In doing so, **Lysander leaves Hermia on her own** in the woods



## Act 3, Scene 2

**Hermia** finds **Demetrius** and accuses him of murdering **Lysander**.

What **Hermia** does not know is that **Lysander** left her in the woods whilst she was sleeping to pursue **Helena**.

**Demetrius** grows tired of arguing with **Hermia** (who does not love him) and falls asleep.

**Puck** sees **Demetrius** and takes the opportunity to use the herb juice on him – as he originally should have done.

**Demetrius** wakes just as **Helena** arrives on the scene and he falls in love with her. Both men now love her.

<b>Demetrius</b>	<b>Helena</b> , goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!	1175
	To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne? Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow! That pure congealed white, high Taurus snow, Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow	1180
	When thou hold'st up thy hand: O, let me kiss This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!	
<b>Helena</b>	O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent To set against me for your merriment: If you were civil and knew courtesy, You would not do me thus much injury. Can you not hate me, as I know you do, But you must join in souls to mock me too? If you were men, as men you are in show, You would not use a gentle lady so;	1185       1190
	To vow, and swear, and super praise my parts, When I am sure you hate me with your hearts. You both are rivals, and love <b>Hermia</b> ; And now both rivals, to mock <b>Helena</b> :	

### Starter Questions

1. What is Demetrius implying about Helena when he calls her a 'goddess, nymph, perfect, divine'? (1175)
2. Why does Helena pleadingly ask Demetrius, 'Can you not hate me'? (1187)

### Big Question

How does Helena react to Demetrius's bold declaration of love in the extract above?

## Act 3, Scene 2

**Oberon** now knows that **Puck** has made a mistake.

**Puck's** mistake was to use the herb juice on **Lysander** instead of just **Demetrius**.

As a result, both **Lysander** and **Demetrius** claim to love **Helena**.

**Helena**, who nobody loved at the beginning of the play, is confused and thinks she is being cruelly teased.

**Oberon** This is thy negligence: still thou mistakest,  
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

**Puck** Believe me, **King of Shadows**, I mistook.  
Did not you tell me I should know the man 1405  
By the Athenian garment be had on?  
And so far blameless proves my enterprise,  
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes;  
And so far am I glad it so did sort  
As this their jangling I esteem a sport. 1410

**Oberon** Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight:  
Hie therefore, **Robin**, overcast the night;  
The starry welkin cover thou anon  
With drooping fog as black as Acheron,  
And lead these testy rivals so astray 1415  
As one come not within another's way.

### Starter Questions

1. What does Oberon claim is 'negligence'? (1402)
2. What does Oberon mean when he says to Puck that he might have committed 'knaveries wilfully'? (1403)
3. Why does Puck refer to Oberon as 'King of Shadows'? (1404)
4. How does Puck try to justify the mistake he made? (1405-6)
5. Which lovers do you think 'seek a place to fight' (1411)
6. In Greek mythology, Acheron is a river in the Underworld – what sort of 'fog' does Oberon want Puck to conjure? (1414)
7. In simple terms, what does Oberon order Puck to do to the 'testy rivals'? (1415-6)

### Big Question

How is the relationship between Oberon and Puck presented in the extract above?

## Act 4, Scene 1

**Egeus** and **Theseus** discover the four lovers in the woods.

**Puck** has ensured that the everyone is correctly matched: **Demetrius** and **Helena**; **Lysander** and **Hermia**.

**Egeus** is initially angry (like he was in A1S1), but **Demetrius** says that he is happy with **Helena**.

**Theseus**, the Duke of Athens, rules that they should all get married.

**Demetrius** My lord, fair **Helena** told me of their stealth,  
Of this their purpose hither to this wood;  
And I in fury hither follow'd them, 1720  
Fair **Helena** in fancy following me.  
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power –  
But by some power it is – my love to **Hermia**,  
Melted as the snow, seems to me now  
As the remembrance of an idle gaud 1725  
Which in my childhood I did dote upon;  
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,  
The object and the pleasure of mine eye,  
Is only **Helena**. To her, my lord,  
Was I betroth'd ere I saw **Hermia**: 1730  
But, like in sickness, did I loathe this food;  
But, as in health, come to my natural taste,  
Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,  
And will for evermore be true to it.

**Theseus** Fair lovers, you are fortunately met: 1735  
Of this discourse we more will hear anon.  
**Egeus**, I will overbear your will;  
For in the temple by and by with us  
These couples shall eternally be knit.

### Starter Questions

1. What is the 'stealth' act that Demetrius is referring to? (1718)
2. What does Theseus mean when he says that he will 'overbear' Egeus's 'will'? (1737)

### Big Question

How does Demetrius attempt to explain his love for Helena in the extract above?

## Review Questions

1. Why does Helena think that Lysander and Demetrius have both declared their love for her in A3S2?
2. Who does Helena say are 'rivals' in A3S2?
3. Who is the 'King of Shadows'?
4. What does the word 'garment' mean?
5. What is Acheron a reference to?
6. What is Puck's other name?
7. What does to 'dote upon' someone mean?
8. Who is Theseus?
9. Whose father is Egeus?

## Remember...

- When the play ends, **all four of the characters are matched as they should be**
- Hermia and Lysander love each other
- Helena and Demetrius love each other

