

Year 7 | A Midsummer Night's Dream Knowledge Organiser

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a comic play which tells the story of two Athenian couples who run away to the woods. During the night, the forest fairies play tricks on them, making them fall in and out of love with each other. By the end of the night, the couples are reunited and there is a group wedding.

Key Vocabulary & Concepts		Key context		Key Quotations	
Discord	Conflict and difficulty in close relationships, for example between lovers, husband and wife, parent and child, or co-workers.	Gender	In Shakespeare’s time, women had a lower social status than men. Fathers expected to make decisions for their daughters, including who they would marry.	“The course of true love never did run smooth.”	“To say the truth, reason and love keep little company together nowadays.”
Patriarchy	A system of society or government where men hold more power than women do.	The supernatural	People in Shakespeare’s time believed in supernatural presences on earth and the power of magic much more than people do today.	“Lord, what fools these mortals be!”	“Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind.”
The Great Chain of Being	The Great Chain of Being is a hierarchical structure of all matter and life. The chain begins with God and descends through angels, humans, animals and plants to minerals.	Ovid’s Metamorphoses	An Ancient Roman text telling the story of lots of different characters’ transformations into animals, plants or objects.	“Thou art translated!”	“What angel wakes me from my flow’ry bed?”

Comic Conventions				Key Characters			
Main action is about love	The main storyline will be about losing and finding love.	Complex plot	The plot will be very complex involving lots of characters rather than focussed on one or two.	Hermia	A young Athenian woman in love with Lysander, but engaged by her father to Demetrius.	Lysander	A young Athenian man in love with Hermia.
Lovers overcoming obstacles	The main characters will have to face setbacks and separation during the story.	Resolution of problems	The problems faced by the characters will be resolved and they will get together in the end.	Helena	A young Athenian woman in love with Demetrius. Hermia's best friend.	Demetrius	A young Athenian man in love with Hermia. Previously was in love with Helena.
Mistaken identity	Characters will mix each other up and get confused about who they should be with.	Ends in marriage	The play ends with a big marriage celebration, often with multiple characters getting married.	Oberon	King of the fairies; married to Titania.	Titania	Queen of the fairies; married to Oberon.
Farce	Comedy will be created through ridiculous mix ups and absurd events.	Reason vs emotion	The story will show characters struggling with how to use reason and emotion to make decisions.	Puck	Oberon's servant; a spirit of mischief and chaos.	Nick Bottom	An Athenian actor rehearsing for a play in the woods.

Key Themes

Love	Transformation	Power	Gender	Jealousy	Chaos	Magic
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