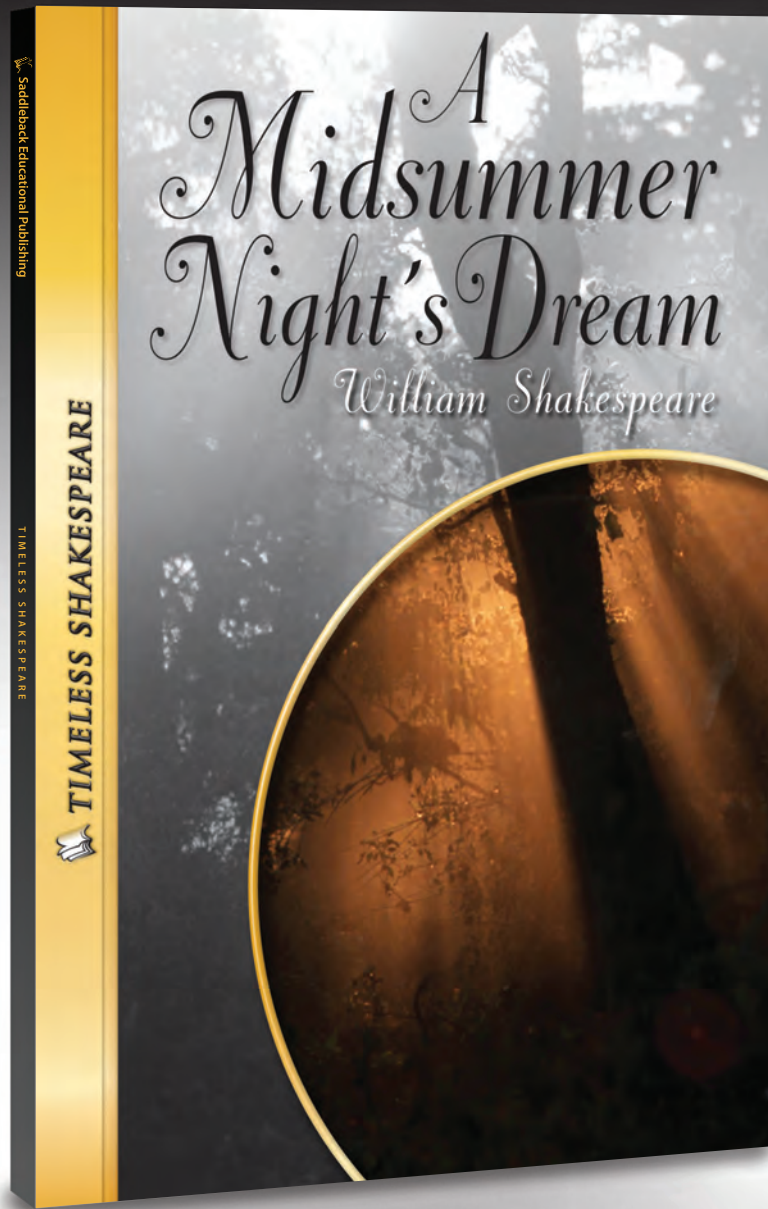




*TIMELESS SHAKESPEARE*

# STUDY GUIDE



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## TIMELESS SHAKESPEARE

### NOTES TO THE TEACHER

#### THE PROGRAM

*Timeless Shakespeare* were expressly designed to help students with limited reading ability gain access to some of the world's greatest literature. While retaining the essence and stylistic "flavor" of the original, each *Timeless Shakespeare* has been expertly adapted to a reading level that never exceeds grade 4.0.

An ideal introduction to later, more in-depth investigations of the original works, *Timeless Shakespeare* utilize a number of strategies to ensure the involvement of reluctant readers: airy, uncomplicated page design, shortened sentences, easy-reading type style, elimination of archaic words and spellings, shortened total book length, and handsome illustrations.

#### THE STUDY GUIDES

The *Timeless Shakespeare Study Guides* provide a wealth of reproducible support materials to help students extend the learning experience. Features include critical background notes on both the author and the times, character descriptions, chapter summaries, and seven "universal" exercises which may be used to follow up the reading of any *Timeless Shakespeare* novel or play.

In addition to the universal exercises, 27 title-specific exercises are included to review, test, and enrich students' comprehension as well as their grasp of important vocabulary and concepts. All reproducible, the worksheets provided

for Shakespeare's plays are designed to be used act-by-act as the student's reading of the play proceeds. Several exercises are provided for each act. One always focuses on key vocabulary. Others include a simple comprehension check and treatment of an important literary concept such as character analysis, point of view, inference, or figurative language. A three-page final exam is also included in every *Timeless Shakespeare Study Guide*.

#### USING THE STUDY GUIDES

Before assigning any of the reproducible exercises, be sure each student has a personal copy of the *Glossary* and the *Facts About the Author* and *About the Times*. Students will need to be familiar with many of the literary terms in order to complete the worksheets. Obviously, the *Facts About the Author* and *About the Times* lend themselves to any number of writing, art, or research projects you may wish to assign.

The title-specific exercises may be used as a springboard for class discussions or role-playing. Alternatively, you may wish to assign some exercises as homework and others as seatwork during the closing minutes of a class period.

All exercises in this Guide are designed to accommodate independent study as well as group work. The occasional assignment of study partners or competitive teams often enhances interest and promotes creativity.

## **WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**

(1564–1616)

William Shakespeare is widely regarded as the finest poet and playwright who ever lived. Yet he was the son of illiterate parents and never attended college!

Much of this remarkable man's life is shrouded in mystery. He had been dead almost a hundred years before anyone wrote a short account of his life. But we do know that his mother, Mary Arden, was the daughter of a prosperous farmer. His father, John Shakespeare, was a successful glove maker who also traded in wool, hides, and grain. They lived in an English market town called Stratford-on-Avon, where William was born in 1564. Their house still stands.

Until the age of 13 or 14, Shakespeare probably attended the Stratford grammar school where he read the great Latin classics of Cicero, Virgil, and Seneca. Some stories say that he had to leave school early because of his father's financial difficulties. But there is no official record of his life until 1582, when he married Anne Hathaway at the age of 18. By 1585, he and Anne had three children. No one knows for

sure what happened to him during the next seven years, although one account says that he was a schoolmaster. In 1592, however, records reveal that he was working in London as both an actor and a playwright. By that year, he had published two popular poems and written at least three plays.

Records from various sources show that Shakespeare became wealthy. In 1597, he bought one of the grandest houses in Stratford. (It had 10 fireplaces!) The next year he bought 10 percent of the stock in the handsome Globe Theater and a fine house in London. His artistic life was very busy and productive. His theatrical company, known as the King's Men, presented a variety of plays, week after week. It is thought that he rehearsed in the mornings, acted in the afternoons, and wrote at night.

After 1612, he spent most of his time in Stratford with his family. He died there, at the age of 52, on April 23, 1616. The tomb of the great literary genius still stands at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford.

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### **FACTS ABOUT THE TIMES**

#### **In 1564, when Shakespeare was born...**

About 100,000 people lived in London; the horsedrawn coach was introduced in England; the great Italian sculptor and painter, Michelangelo, died; an outbreak of plague killed more than 20,000 Londoners.

#### **In 1616, when Shakespeare died...**

Sir Walter Raleigh began his search for El Dorado; tobacco was becoming a popular crop in Virginia; Pocahontas died; the Catholic church forbade Galileo from conducting any further scientific investigations.

## A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

### FACTS ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

**Theseus**, Duke of Athens  
**Hippolyta**, Queen of the Amazons, a warrior race of women, defeated in battle by Theseus  
**Egeus**, an Athenian citizen  
**Hermia**, Egeus's daughter  
**Lysander**, a young man who loves Hermia  
**Demetrius**, a young man who loves Hermia  
**Helena**, Hermia's friend who loves Demetrius  
**Peter Quince**, a carpenter

**Nick Bottom**, a weaver  
**Francis Flute**, a bellows-mender  
**Robin Starveling**, a tailor  
**Tom Snout**, a tinker (mender of pots and pans)  
**Snug**, a joiner (cabinet maker)  
**Puck (Robin Goodfellow)**, a fairy  
**Oberon**, king of the fairies  
**Titania**, queen of the fairies  
**Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth,** and **Mustardseed**, four fairies who serve Titania

---

### SUMMARIES BY ACT

#### ACT 1

Theseus, the Duke of Athens, and Hippolyta look forward to their wedding in four days. Egeus speaks to Theseus about his daughter Hermia, who refuses to marry Demetrius and wishes instead to marry Lysander, whom she loves. Egeus asks Theseus for his right to give her to the man of his choice or send her to her death, as the law allows. Theseus agrees. Hermia has four days to decide what to do. Lysander and Hermia decide to run away from Athens and get married. They plan to meet that night in the woods. Helena, who loves Demetrius, is told about their plan. She decides to tell Demetrius what Hermia is doing and to follow him when he follows Hermia. Meanwhile, a group of actors are also in the woods. They are rehearsing a play to put on at the duke's wedding.

#### ACT 2

In the woods near Athens, fairies meet. They talk about an argument between the fairy queen, Titania, and the fairy king, Oberon. To get even with Titania, Oberon asks Puck, a mischievous fairy, to get a special flower for him. Juice from that flower, "laid on sleeping eyes," will cause the sleeper to fall in love with the first creature it sees upon awaking. He plans to put this juice on Titania's eyes, so she will fall in love with some woodland creature. Demetrius and Helena enter, and Oberon listens in on their conversation. Demetrius tells Helena to stop following him, as he is not interested in her. Oberon decides to help Helena by using the magic flower juice on Demetrius. When Puck brings the flower, Oberon tells him to put the juice on the eyes of a man wearing "Athenian clothes." In another part of the woods, Titania goes to sleep. Oberon

places the flower juice on her eyes and leaves. Hermia and Lysander soon fall asleep, too. Puck enters, puts the juice on Lysander's eyes, and then leaves. Demetrius and Helena then enter; Demetrius is still asking her to leave him alone. When Demetrius exits, Helena sees Lysander sleeping. She wakes him up. When he sees her, he falls in love with her and forgets all about Hermia.

### **ACT 3**

Titania is sleeping in the wood, when the actors arrive. Bottom wears a donkey's head as part of a spell Puck has cast on him. Titania wakes up and sees Bottom, immediately falling in love with him. When Oberon realizes that Puck has put the flower juice on the wrong man's eyes, he becomes very angry. Determined to fix what has gone wrong, Oberon puts the love-juice on Demetrius's eyes. Later, when Demetrius sees Helena, he falls in love with her right away. Helena becomes very angry, thinking both men are making fun of her. Hermia and Helena argue, and Oberon blames Puck for all the confusion. Oberon figures out a way to fix things. When, after a long and confusing night, the four lovers fall asleep in the wood (near each other but not aware of it), Puck puts the flower juice on Lysander's eyes.

### **ACT 4**

Titania and Bottom play and relax in her chamber. When they sleep, Puck and Oberon enter. Oberon has Puck remove the donkey head from Bottom to break the spell Titania is under before waking her. When she wakes up, she hates the sight of Bottom and dances with Oberon on the ground near the sleeping Athenians. As morning approaches, the

fairies leave. Theseus, Hippolyta, and Egeus enter for a May Day rite in the forest. The sleepers awake and kneel to Theseus, who asks why they are there—since Lysander and Demetrius are rival enemies. Lysander remembers having left Athens with Hermia the night before. Demetrius explains that he followed them and that Helena followed him. He says he doesn't know why his love for Hermia melted "like the snow," but now he loves only Helena. Theseus rules that both couples shall be wed at the same wedding ceremony planned for him and Hippolyta. It will be a triple wedding! The four young Athenians wonder if they are awake or dreaming. Meanwhile, Bottom wakes up, remembering a strange dream that he cannot explain. He joins his fellow actors for further rehearsal.

### **ACT 5**

After the triple wedding, Hippolyta and Theseus are talking at the palace. When the four lovers enter, Theseus and Hippolyta wish them joy and happiness on their wedding day. Bottom and the other actors enter and begin their play. It doesn't make much sense, but Hippolyta and Theseus and the others watch politely. When it's over, Theseus says good night and tells the other two couples that they should all meet again in two weeks for another feast. Puck gives a final speech, and Oberon and Titania enter, with their fairies, to lend some enchantment to the sleeping house. They dance, and then Oberon says they will go through the house to bless the sleeping couples.

## TIMELESS SHAKESPEARE

### LITERARY GLOSSARY

**aside** lines spoken by an actor that the other characters on stage supposedly cannot hear; an aside usually shares the character's inner thoughts with the audience

**Although she appeared to be calm, the heroine's aside revealed her inner terror.**

**backstage** the part of the theater where actors prepare to go onstage, where scenery is kept, etc.

**Before entering, the villain impatiently waited backstage.**

**cast** the entire company of actors performing in a play

**The entire cast must attend tonight's dress rehearsal.**

**character** a fictional person or creature in a story or play

**Mighty Mouse is one of my favorite cartoon characters.**

**climax** the outcome of the main conflict of a play or novel

**The outlaw's capture made an exciting climax to the story.**

**comedy** a funny play, film, or TV show that has a happy ending

**My friends and I always enjoy a Jim Carrey comedy.**

**conflict** the struggle between characters, forces, or ideas at the center of a story

**Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde illustrates the conflict between good and evil.**

**conclusion** the resolution of all plot conflicts, bringing a story to a close

**That play's conclusion was very satisfying. Every conflict was resolved.**

**dialogue** words spoken by the characters in a novel or play

**Amusing dialogue is an important element of most comedies.**

**drama** a story, usually not a comedy, especially written to be performed by actors in a play or movie

**The TV drama about spies was very suspenseful.**

**event** something that happens; a specific occurrence

**The most exciting event in the story was the surprise ending.**

**figurative language** colorful wording not meant to be taken literally, but to form a colorful, sharp picture in the mind

**A "screaming" headline may be set in large type, but it makes no sound at all.**

**introduction** a short reading that presents and explains a novel or play

**The introduction to *Frankenstein* is in the form of a letter.**

**motive** the internal or external force that makes a character do something

**What was that character's motive for telling a lie?**

**PRE-READING**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Read the Introduction at the front of *A Midsummer's Night Dream*.

1. In what country is the story set? \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Which two characters have decided \_\_\_\_\_ and  
to run away and get married? \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What word in the Introduction  
suggests that this story is a comedy? \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. What words in the Introduction  
suggest that these story events  
take place in ancient times? \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Now look at the picture on this book's cover. What seems odd about this pair?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Have you ever known anyone who tried to stop someone else from getting  
married? What might be a good reason to do that? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
7. According to the Introduction, one character tricks the others into falling in  
love. Is it possible to pull such a trick in real life? Give your opinion.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Circle a letter to answer the question or complete the sentence.

1. Egeus complains to the duke about
  - a. his willful, disobedient son
  - b. the bad weather.
  - c. trouble with his daughter.
  - d. his noisy dogs.
  
2. Theseus tells Hermia to ask herself if
  - a. she really wanted to be an actress.
  - b. she was really in love with Demetrius.
  - c. she'd rather live in the palace.
  - d. she could live as a nun.
  
3. What "ancient right" does Egeus claim?
  - a. to choose his daughter's husband
  - b. to follow the laws of Athens
  - c. to hunt on the duke's land
  - d. to name a new duke
  
4. Lysander wants to get married
  - a. in the courtyard of the duke's palace.
  - b. to Helena.
  - c. at the home of his rich old aunt.
  - d. to Hippolyta.
  
5. Helena's heart is breaking because
  - a. she is far from Athens.
  - b. Demetrius loves Hermia.
  - c. she is lost in the wood.
  - d. Hermia loves Demetrius.
  
6. Nick Bottom says he'd rather play a hero than a
  - a. donkey.
  - b. woman.
  - c. wall.
  - d. lover.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

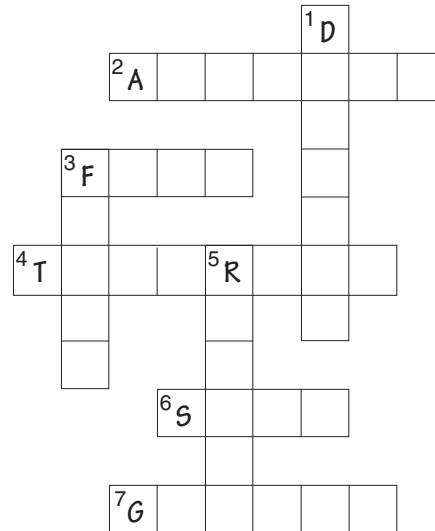
**A.** Complete the crossword puzzle with vocabulary words from Act 1. Clue words are *antonyms* (words with the opposite meaning) of the answer words.

**ACROSS**

- 2. modern
- 3. succeed
- 4. yesterday
- 6. avoid
- 7. scatter

**DOWN**

- 1. create
- 3. smile
- 5. accept



**B.** Draw a line to connect each **boldface** word from Act 1 with its *synonym* (word with the same or nearly the same meaning).

- |                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>rehearse</b>  | a. marry      |
| 2. <b>catching</b>  | b. honored    |
| 3. <b>paradise</b>  | c. heaven     |
| 4. <b>wed</b>       | d. bravery    |
| 5. <b>splits</b>    | e. divides    |
| 6. <b>respected</b> | f. practice   |
| 7. <b>courage</b>   | g. terrify    |
| 8. <b>frighten</b>  | h. contagious |

**C.** Complete these sentences with vocabulary words from Act 1.

- 1. The events in this play took place in \_\_\_\_\_ Greece.
- 2. “Don’t \_\_\_\_\_ me!” Peter Quince said to the actors.
- 3. Hermia promised to meet Lysander \_\_\_\_\_.