

# ***A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare (Published by Folger)**

**Approved for use in Honors Communication Arts II and Communication Arts II**

## **Summary**

One of Shakespeare's most commonly performed comedies, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is the story of love's folly. Hermia runs away with Lysander to avoid a marriage (forced by her father) to Demetrius. Helena, Hermia's best friend, tells Demetrius of the plot in hopes that he will see how much she loves him. The four wind up in the woods outside Athens. Also in the woods is a group of mechanicals who are rehearsing a play for Duke Theseus' wedding. There, Puck, the mischievous servant of Oberon, King of the Fairies, turns one of the mechanicals, Bottom, into an ass. Titania, under the spell of Oberon, sleeps nearby, and when she wakes, Oberon's spell causes her to fall madly in love with Bottom. The same spell is haphazardly applied to Lysander and much mayhem and confusion occurs. Eventually all is righted, and the play ends with the mechanicals performing their play for the Duke and the lovers at their weddings.

## ***Connection to the Curriculum***

Since freshmen study *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a logical choice for the sophomore year. Taking many of the same situations and themes of *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare turns the situation of arranged marriage into a comedy. This affords students the opportunity to examine elements of a classic comedy and contrast them with the elements of a tragedy they studied as freshmen.

## **Standards**

### ***Course Objectives (Benchmarks)***

**Reading:** 1.2- The students read fluently. 1.3- The students expand vocabulary. 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

**Literature:** 2.1-The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text

**Writing:** 3.2- The students use a writing process that includes preparing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing to produce a written text.

### ***Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)***

#### **Reading:**

1.2.1- The student adjusts reading rate to support comprehension when reading narrative texts.

1.3.2- The student engages in connotative vocabulary practice.

1.3.5- The student identifies, interprets, and analyzes the use of figurative language including similes, metaphors, analogies, hyperbole, and symbolism.

1.4.9- The student uses prior knowledge, content, and text type features to make, revise, and confirm predictions.

1.4.10- The student generates and responds logically to literal, inferential, evaluative, and critical thinking questions before, during, and after reading text.

1.4.13- The student compares and contrasts varying aspects in one or more appropriate-level texts.

1.4.14- The student explains and analyzes cause-effect relationships in appropriate-level narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

#### **Literature:**

2.1.1- The student identifies and describes different types of characters.

2.1.2- The student analyzes the historical, social, and cultural contextual aspects of the setting and its influence on characters and events in the story.

2.1.3- The student analyzes and evaluates how the author uses various plot elements to advance the plot and make connections between events.

2.1.4- The student analyzes themes, tone, and the author's point of view across a variety of literary works and genres using textual evidence and considering audience and purpose.

2.1.5- The student identifies, analyzes, and evaluates the use of literary devices in a text.

#### **Writing:**

3.1.5 and 3.2.5- The student produces technical, personal, persuasive, narrative, and expository writing.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

*Although this comedy's plot relies on the magic powers of a nectar to cause the characters to fall in and out of love, this light play examines the fickle nature of human beings. The contrasting worlds of humans and fairies develops the fantasy nature of the story.*

## **AP Connections**

Students benefit from a broad reading base of Shakespeare for both the study of syntax at the APIII level and literature at the APIV level.

## **Additional Unit Design Connections**

Coming soon