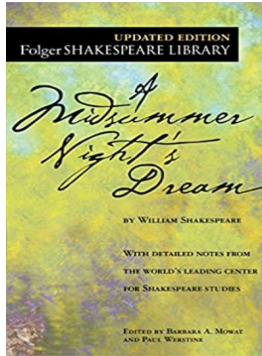


## Proposed Core Literature Titles

The following summary is provided by the California Department of Education's "Recommended Literature List", and the top three Google searches of the book title and author name that produced a description of the title.

### A Midsummer Night's Dream

Proposed Grade Level: 7



**Title:** A Midsummer Night's Dream

**Author:** William Shakespeare

**First Published:** 1993

**Lexile:** 590

**Proposed Grade Level:** 7

#### California Department of Education, Recommended Literature List:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/rl/>

This title is on the CDE Recommended Literature List.

**Annotation:** Fairies, love, and magic involve young Athenian lovers, a boisterous group of local tradesmen, and the monarchs and subjects of a fairy kingdom. (Circa 1596.)

**Copyright:** 1987

**Original Copyright:** 1596

**Grade Level Span:** 9-12

**Genre:** Drama

**Classification:** Classic

**Topic:** English-Language Arts/General

**Discipline:** English-Language Arts/Vocabulary; Visual and Performing Arts

#### Description From Top 3 Google Searches:

Search: "Midsummer Night's Dream" by William Shakespeare

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_Midsummer\\_Night%27s\\_Dream](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Midsummer_Night%27s_Dream)

The play consists of four interconnecting plots, connected by a celebration of the wedding of Duke Theseus of Athens and the Amazon queen, Hippolyta, which are set simultaneously in the woodland and in the realm of Fairyland, under the light of the moon.

The play opens with Hermia who is in love with Lysander, resistant to her father Egeus's demand that she wed Demetrius, whom he has arranged for her to marry. Helena, Hermia's best friend, pines unrequitedly for Demetrius, who broke up with her to be with Hermia. Enraged, Egeus invokes an ancient Athenian law before Duke Theseus, whereby a daughter needs to marry a suitor chosen by her father, or else face death. Theseus offers her another choice: lifelong chastity as a nunworshipping the goddess Artemis.

Peter Quince and his fellow players Nick Bottom, Francis Flute, Robin Starveling, Tom Snout and Snug plan to put on a play for the wedding of the Duke and the Queen, "the most lamentable comedy and most cruel death of Pyramus and

Thisbe". Quince reads the names of characters and bestows them on the players. Nick Bottom, who is playing the main role of Pyramus, is over-enthusiastic and wants to dominate others by suggesting himself for the characters of Thisbe, the Lion, and Pyramus at the same time. Quince insists that Bottom can only play the role of Pyramus. Bottom would also rather be a tyrant and recites some lines of Ercles. Bottom is told by Quince that he would do the Lion so terribly as to frighten the duchess and ladies enough for the Duke and Lords to have the players hanged. Snug remarks that he needs the Lion's part because he is "slow of study". Quince assures Snug that the role of the lion is "nothing but roaring." Quince then ends the meeting telling his actors "at the Duke's oak we meet".

In a parallel plot line, Oberon, king of the fairies, and Titania, his queen, have come to the forest outside Athens. Titania tells Oberon that she plans to stay there until she has attended Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding. Oberon and Titania are estranged because Titania refuses to give her Indian changeling to Oberon for use as his "knight" or "henchman", since the child's mother was one of Titania's worshippers. Oberon seeks to punish Titania's disobedience. He calls upon Robin "Puck" Goodfellow, his "shrewd and knavish sprite", to help him concoct a magical juice derived from a flower called "love-in-idleness", which turns from white to purple when struck by Cupid's arrow. When the concoction is applied to the eyelids of a sleeping person, that person, upon waking, falls in love with the first living thing they perceive. He instructs Puck to retrieve the flower with the hope that he might make Titania fall in love with an animal of the forest and thereby shame her into giving up the little Indian boy. He says, "And ere I take this charm from off her sight,/As I can take it with another herb,/I'll make her render up her page to me."

Hermia and Lysander have escaped to the same forest in hopes of running away from Theseus. Helena, desperate to reclaim Demetrius's love, tells Demetrius about the plan and he follows them in hopes of finding Hermia. Helena continually makes advances towards Demetrius, promising to love him more than Hermia. However, he rebuffs her with cruel insults. Observing this, Oberon orders Puck to spread some of the magical juice from the flower on the eyelids of the young Athenian man. Instead, Puck mistakes Lysander for Demetrius, not having actually seen either before, and administers the juice to the sleeping Lysander. Helena, coming across him, wakes him while attempting to determine whether he is dead or asleep. Upon this happening, Lysander immediately falls in love with Helena. Helena, thinking Lysander is playing a trick on her, runs away with Lysander following her. When Hermia wakes up, she sees that Lysander is gone and goes out in the woods to find him. Oberon sees Demetrius still following Hermia, who thinks Demetrius killed Lysander, and is enraged. When Demetrius goes to sleep, Oberon sends Puck to get Helena while he charms Demetrius' eyes. Upon waking up, he sees Helena. Now, both men are in love with Helena. However, she is convinced that her two suitors are mocking her, as neither loved her originally. Hermia finds Lysander and asks why he left her, but Lysander claims he never loved Hermia, just Helena. Hermia accuses Helena of stealing Lysander away from her while Helena believes Hermia joined the two men in mocking her. Hermia tries to attack Helena, but the two men protect Helena. Lysander, tired of Hermia's presence, insults her and tells her to leave. Lysander and Demetrius decide to seek a place to duel to prove whose love for Helena is the greater. The two women go their own separate ways, Helena hoping to reach Athens and Hermia chasing after the men to make sure Lysander doesn't get hurt or killed. Oberon orders Puck to keep Lysander and Demetrius from catching up with one another and to remove the charm from Lysander so Lysander can return to love Hermia, while Demetrius continues to love Helena.

Meanwhile, Quince and his band of six labourers ("rude mechanicals", as they are described by Puck) have arranged to perform their play about Pyramus and Thisbe for Theseus' wedding and venture into the forest, near Titania's bower, for their rehearsal. Quince leads the actors in their rehearsal of the play. Bottom is spotted by Puck, who (taking his name to be another word for a jackass) transforms his head into that of a donkey. When Bottom returns for his next lines, the other workmen run screaming in terror: They claim that they are haunted, much to Bottom's confusion. Determined to await his friends, he begins to sing to himself. Titania, having received the love-potion, is awakened by Bottom's singing and immediately falls in love with him. She lavishes him with the attention of her and her fairies, and while she is in this state of devotion, Oberon takes the changeling boy. Having achieved his goals, Oberon releases Titania, orders Puck to remove the donkey's head from Bottom, and arranges everything so Helena, Hermia, Demetrius and Lysander will all believe they have been dreaming when they awaken. Puck distracts Lysander and Demetrius from fighting over Helena's love by mimicking their voices and leading them apart. Eventually, all four find themselves separately falling asleep in the glade. Once they fall asleep, Puck administers the love potion to Lysander again, returning his love to Hermia again, and claiming all will be well in the morning.

The fairies then disappear, and Theseus and Hippolyta arrive on the scene, during an early morning hunt. They find the lovers still sleeping in the glade. They wake up the lovers and, since Demetrius no longer loves Hermia, Theseus over-rules Egeus's demands and arranges a group wedding. The lovers at first believe they are still in a dream and can't recall what has happened. The lovers decide that the night's events must have been a dream. After they exit,

Bottom awakes, and he too decides that he must have experienced a dream "past the wit of man".

At Quince's house, he and his team of actors worry that Bottom has gone missing. Quince laments that Bottom is the only man who can take on the lead role of Pyramus. Bottom returns, and the actors get ready to put on "Pyramus and Thisbe."

In Athens, Theseus, Hippolyta and the lovers watch the six workmen perform Pyramus and Thisbe. The performers are so terrible playing their roles that the guests laugh as if it were meant to be a comedy, and everyone retires to bed. Afterwards, Oberon, Titania, Puck, and other fairies enter, and bless the house and its occupants with good fortune. After all the other characters leave, Puck "restores amends" and suggests that what the audience experienced might just be a dream.

<https://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/msnd/>

Theseus, duke of Athens, is preparing for his marriage to Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, with a four-day festival of pomp and entertainment. He commissions his Master of the Revels, Philostrate, to find suitable amusements for the occasion. Egeus, an Athenian nobleman, marches into Theseus's court with his daughter, Hermia, and two young men, Demetrius and Lysander. Egeus wishes Hermia to marry Demetrius (who loves Hermia), but Hermia is in love with Lysander and refuses to comply. Egeus asks for the full penalty of law to fall on Hermia's head if she flouts her father's will. Theseus gives Hermia until his wedding to consider her options, warning her that disobeying her father's wishes could result in her being sent to a convent or even executed. Nonetheless, Hermia and Lysander plan to escape Athens the following night and marry in the house of Lysander's aunt, some seven leagues distant from the city. They make their intentions known to Hermia's friend Helena, who was once engaged to Demetrius and still loves him even though he jilted her after meeting Hermia. Hoping to regain his love, Helena tells Demetrius of the elopement that Hermia and Lysander have planned. At the appointed time, Demetrius stalks into the woods after his intended bride and her lover; Helena follows behind him.

In these same woods are two very different groups of characters. The first is a band of fairies, including Oberon, the fairy king, and Titania, his queen, who has recently returned from India to bless the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta. The second is a band of Athenian craftsmen rehearsing a play that they hope to perform for the duke and his bride. Oberon and Titania are at odds over a young Indian prince given to Titania by the prince's mother; the boy is so beautiful that Oberon wishes to make him a knight, but Titania refuses. Seeking revenge, Oberon sends his merry servant, Puck, to acquire a magical flower, the juice of which can be spread over a sleeping person's eyelids to make that person fall in love with the first thing he or she sees upon waking. Puck obtains the flower, and Oberon tells him of his plan to spread its juice on the sleeping Titania's eyelids. Having seen Demetrius act cruelly toward Helena, he orders Puck to spread some of the juice on the eyelids of the young Athenian man. Puck encounters Lysander and Hermia; thinking that Lysander is the Athenian of whom Oberon spoke, Puck afflicts him with the love potion. Lysander happens to see Helena upon awaking and falls deeply in love with her, abandoning Hermia. As the night progresses and Puck attempts to undo his mistake, both Lysander and Demetrius end up in love with Helena, who believes that they are mocking her. Hermia becomes so jealous that she tries to challenge Helena to a fight. Demetrius and Lysander nearly do fight over Helena's love, but Puck confuses them by mimicking their voices, leading them apart until they are lost separately in the forest.

When Titania wakes, the first creature she sees is Bottom, the most ridiculous of the Athenian craftsmen, whose head Puck has mockingly transformed into that of an ass. Titania passes a ludicrous interlude doting on the ass-headed weaver. Eventually, Oberon obtains the Indian boy, Puck spreads the love potion on Lysander's eyelids, and by morning all is well. Theseus and Hippolyta discover the sleeping lovers in the forest and take them back to Athens to be married—Demetrius now loves Helena, and Lysander now loves Hermia. After the group wedding, the lovers watch Bottom and his fellow craftsmen perform their play, a fumbling, hilarious version of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe. When the play is completed, the lovers go to bed; the fairies briefly emerge to bless the sleeping couples with a protective charm and then disappear. Only Puck remains, to ask the audience for its forgiveness and approval and to urge it to remember the play as though it had all been a dream.

<https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/explore-shakespeare/shakespepedia/shakespeares-plays/midsummer-nights-dream/>

Four Athenians run away to the forest only to have Puck the fairy make both of the boys fall in love with the same girl. The four run through the forest pursuing each other while Puck helps his master play a trick on the fairy queen. In the end, Puck reverses the magic, and the two couples reconcile and marry.

