



ALL ILLUSTRATIONS: ADOBE STOCK

A Midsummer Night's Dream

A Study Guide by Spencer Fields and Emma Rollins, Dramaturgs

Dramaturgs' Note

A Midsummer Night's Dream is anything but restful: lovers squabble, fairies meddle, a donkey-headed man runs around the woods. What better way to capture this magical—if somewhat manic—night than a sleepover. Our production plays with this setting and how this story can teach us the importance of play.

As a production put on by BYU's Young Company, this show has toured to 14 elementary and middle schools around the area, allowing children to not only watch the show but, as you soon will see, participate in this classic Shakespearean tale. The madcap nature of this show—especially when condensed to be under an hour—captures the imagination of audiences of all ages and reaffirms the importance of having places for adventure and undiluted play. While some forms of play might be darker than others (Titania being fooled into loving Bottom), and some might be entirely harmless (the fun had by the Mechanicals presenting their own special version of the myth of Pyramus and Thisbe), all of these forms of play have powerful lessons. As you watch the production today, we as dramaturgs would invite you to contemplate the lessons the characters are learning from their experiences and how your own experiences playing have helped teach you important lessons.

Thank you for coming and enjoy the show!

Spencer Fields and Emma Rollins, Dramaturgs



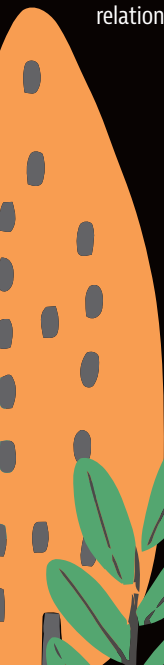
Production History

Shakespeare's plays have been performed thousands of times, in thousands of venues, with hundreds of different themes, but each show comes back to one man, from the 1500s, who wrote the plays that have been shaped and adapted in every sense of the word. Oftentimes people think of Shakespeare's plays being performed in his time, with time period costumes, accurate language, and specifics drawing back to the Elizabethan era, and yet it's very common for TV, movies, theatres, and dance groups to take Shakespeare's stories and shape them into something new.

Shakespeare often adapted his plays from an original text, which he would use to find inspiration and draw on. However, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, written between 1595 and 1596, was its own origin.

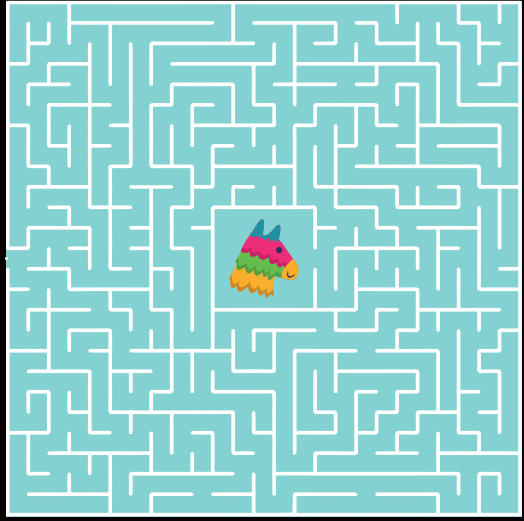
Since the beginning of the 1900s, it has had a plethora of film and TV adaptations, from the 1909 version up until episodes on classic Disney shows where they use this production to stir the pot of that episode.

Every year a different production of one of Shakespeare's works is put on here at BYU for young audiences. The last time *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was put on was back in 2015. That production featured puppets playing many of the characters we know and love. During this production one will see a version where children are at a sleepover party where gossip, relationships, maturity, and of course the drama of middle school is hot and piping.



Puck's Playground

Oh no! Titania has lost Bottom in the woods. Can you help reunite them through the maze?



Would You Rather...

...have the head of a donkey and the body of a human
OR
the body of a donkey but the torso of a human?

...have magic make you fall in love
OR
have magic make someone fall in love with you?

...run away from your family to marry someone you love
OR
marry someone you don't love?

...be a fairy for the queen Titania
OR
be a fairy for the king Oberon?

Autographs

Meet the cast after each performance!

Love Potion No. 429

This sweet treat might not have any magical powers, but whoever you make it for will certainly feel loved! Try it with the help of an adult!

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup frozen raspberries
- ¼ cup frozen sour cherries
- 1 frozen banana
- ¼ cup milk (or milk alternative)
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1 cup vanilla yogurt (or another banana if dairy free)
- 1 sprinkle of pixie dust (optional)



Put all the ingredients in the base of a blender. Blend the ingredients on high until smooth. Add more milk if you want your potion to be less thick. Pour into a glass, and if you want a crunchy extra, top with nuts. Or if you want yours like Puck's, top it off with your favorite cereal! It is best shared with two straws and a loved one.

Midnight Memories

We asked our cast, crew, and designers about some of their favorite slumber party stories! Here's what they had to say:

"We used to coordinate with our neighbors to all sleep outside in the backyard on the same night. Then, we'd sneak over to the neighbors' to chat and get up to shenanigans (i.e., toilet papering people's houses)."

—*Kris Wing Peterson*

"I remember playing capture the flag *constantly* with my friends in sixth grade. It didn't matter if we were at someone's house, at school or wherever. If we had a bracelet or a bandana or literally anything you could hold, we'd be playing the game. It was lit." —*Aunah Johnson*

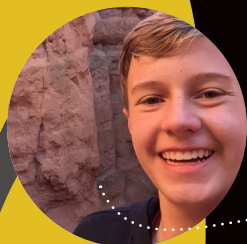
"My favorite memory was a freezing cold Klondike backpacking trip for scouts. We had a ramen noodle cook-off, which my friend and I won. Then threw Sour Patch Watermelons into each other's mouths in the tent and played a stupid game called battery toss." —*Cameron Paxman*





"We used to hold huge Uno tournaments in the library during lunch (like 20+ kids). They'd get super competitive. It was a place where introverts like me could engage however much we wanted while still feeling included in the game."

—Katie Morgan Torrie



"While my parents were on a trip, I slept over at my friend's house, which was an abnormal event. I was never allowed to do sleepovers normally. We played a lot of *Super Mario Galaxy* that weekend." —Coleman Harper



"Growing up I wasn't allowed to have sleepovers, so you can imagine my excitement when my mom announced a sleepover/group trip to a museum in LA with my friends! Since we would need to wake up really early to leave, it just made sense to all be in the same place. Boy, did I party it up! My one chance to have a sleepover and I wasn't about to waste it. I don't remember everything, but I remember it being really hard to wake up in the morning after such a fun night." —Lydia Cox

The Importance of Play

Did you know that for over 33 years the United Nations has declared that all children must have the right to play? While this might seem a bit surprising, play is an essential part of human development. When given free reign of their playing time, think of how many children choose to play "house," allowing them to practice the roles they see around them and that they will eventually fill. Not all forms of play are that analogous; for example, a child may enjoy playing with toy cars, running with them and having them perform spectacular stunts. While this probably isn't preparing the child for their future life as a NASCAR driver, it is allowing them to develop their motor skills and teaching them to enjoy movement and active forms of play. Doctors have even come up with rules for what qualifies as play. See the list to see if your favorite games qualify as play!

Play must...

- ✓ Allow some freedom of choice
- ✓ Be intrinsically motivated
- ✓ Be immersive
- ✓ Be spontaneous, not scripted
- ✓ Be enjoyable

When was the last time you played?



Play isn't just for children though. Adults also can benefit from play. Follow the QR code to our dramaturgy website to learn more about how you can play as an adult and the benefits!

