A Midsummer Night’s Dream Discussion Questions

1. Critic and poet W.H. Auden explains that “In A Midsummer Night’s Dream, mythological characters are used to describe certain universal experiences that we cannot control” (Auden 56). Are the fairies figments of the characters’ imagination?

2. Critic Marjorie Garber say that “the wood functions...as a mirror as well as a lens” (Garber 218). Is this true?

3. Garber also discusses the “three parallel worlds” in the play: the court of Athens, the fairy world, and the world of the “rude mechanicals,” saying that “each of these ‘worlds’ is a reflection and refraction of the others” (Garber 221). Is this true?

4. Actor and Shakespeare scholar Ben Crystal says, “On the surface, it all seems pretty simple. Love mixed with love. Egotistical clown shamed and used, but unharmed. Wannabe actors succeed. Love reunited with love. Happy ending... But unpack it a bit...and a more complicated, carefully crafted piece glistens” (Crystal 86). Is it true that the play is less straightforward than it seems?

5. Crystal also says, “If there’s no sense of genuine threat, there’s no threat of genuine comedy” (Crystal 86). Does a genuine threat exist in the play?

6. In Act 1, Lysander says, “The course of true love never did run smooth” (Shakespeare 1.1.136). In Act 5, Theseus compares lovers to madmen (5.1.7-8). What does this play suggest about love?

7. Critic Harold Bloom says that “Lysander and Demetrius are interchangeable,” and while some have argued that Hermia and Helena are also interchangeable, Bloom argues that “Hermia has considerably more personality than Helena” (Bloom 153). Are the lovers interchangeable? If so, what does this suggest?

Works Cited
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Study Questions. 1. A Midsummer Night’s Dream is set in three different locations. What are these locations? How do they differ? What type of atmosphere is created in each of the different settings, and how does this come across? 2. One of the play’s major themes is love, and this theme is explored through the various relationships of the couples in the play. What aspects of love are presented in each of the different pairings? 3. In what ways do Theseus and Hippolyta parallel Oberon and Titania? 4. The characters in A Midsummer Night’s Dream have various ways of speaking. What are some of the characteristics of how the four young lovers speak? Of how Bottom speaks? Of how Titania and Oberon speak? Analyze the language of the play. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS for A Midsummer Night’s Dream FOR UNIVERSITY OR HIGH SCHOOL AUDIENCES 1. Why do you think Shakespeare took mythological and folklore tales and put them all in the same world? Does this seem to work? Why? 2. What do you think are Oberon’s intentions of the cruelty of making Titania falling in love with Bottom with the Ass’s head? Does he win the battle? Why or Why not? Do you think Titania completely loses control when under the spell? There are many characters in Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream. Take an in-depth look at the main ones identifying their key attributes and relationships and analysing their part in the play. Part of. English. A Midsummer Night’s Dream. Add to My Bitesize. Add to My Bitesize. Revise. 2. Discuss the meanings of the play’s title, A Midsummer Night’s Dream. In addition to the title, what other references do you find to dreaming in the play? What relationship is created between dreaming and theater (look, for example, at Puck’s final speech)? Why is Midsummer important to the themes of the play? 3. The play presents several different couples: Theseus and Hippolyta, Hermia and Lysander, Helena and Demetrius, Titania and Bottom, and Titania and Oberon. What aspects of love are explored in each of these relationships? 1

A Midsummer Night’s Dream By William Shakespeare

Context Question I. Given below is an extract from A Midsummer Night’s Dream. Read the excerpt carefully and answer ALL questions that follow on the next page. Do not refer to the play for answers. Context. EGEUS Full of vexation come I, with complaint 1. Against my child, my daughter Hermia. Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord, This man hath my consent to marry her.
Context

EGEUS Full of vexation come I, with complaint 1. Against my child, my daughter Hermia. Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord, This man hath my consent to marry her. A Midsummer Night's Dream. What will happen in the fairy forest? Watch this story, one of our 'Shakespeare Lives' videos, and find out! Discussion. Did you like this play? Write a comment and tell us what you think. Do you remember your dreams? Write a comment and tell us about a dream that you remember. Average: 3.994595.

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4. The characters in A Midsummer Night's Dream have various ways of speaking. What are some of the characteristics of how the four young lovers speak? Of how Bottom speaks? Of how Titania and Oberon speak? Analyze the language of the play. Midsummer Night's Dream- Act 2 Question 3: Question 2: Question 1: Question 4: By what other name is Puck known as? According to Oberon, how did the pansy become magical? Why does he tell Puck to fetch the flower? Why is Oberon angry with Titania? Why does he want the boy? What. Midsummer Night's Dream- Act 2. Question 3: Question 2: Question 1: Question 4: By what other name is Puck known as? According to Oberon, how did the pansy become magical?