

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Character Profiles

Choose a character (use our character descriptions below for a reminder) and create a social media profile for them. How do they describe themselves? What do they share about their lives? What are other characters writing about them?

The Athenians - inhabitants of Athens, Greece

EGEUS

Father to Hermia. He expects his daughter to marry Demetrius and is deaf to her requests to marry Lysander. He is a respected nobleman in Theseus' court and asks Theseus to impose the death penalty on Hermia if she refuses to do as he wishes. Theseus reduces the penalty, threatening Hermia with life in a nunnery if she will not marry Demetrius by his wedding day – in a week's time.

HERMIA

Daughter to Egeus and in love with Lysander. Even when threatened by her father and Duke Theseus she does not consent to marry Demetrius. She insists that Demetrius is more interested in her childhood friend, Helena, than in her. She is given a week to make up her mind and as soon as she is alone with Lysander agrees to elope with him. Before leaving she tells her friend Helena of their plans.

LYSANDER

A young nobleman of Athens in love with Hermia. Lysander is not shy of insisting that he is as good a match for Hermia as Demetrius. When Hermia's father refuses to let them marry, he persuades Hermia to run away with him and stay with relations on the other side of the wood.

DEMETRIUS

A young nobleman of Athens, Demetrius is Egeus's preferred choice to marry Hermia. Lysander points out that Demetrius has loved Helena in the past and is an 'inconstant man'. Demetrius appears completely unperturbed by Hermia's protestations of love for Lysander and her obvious dislike for him. When Helena tells him that Hermia and Lysander have run away he rushes after them.

THESEUS

The duke of Athens, whose word is law. Theseus is a hero from Greek mythology. This sets the play in a mythical Greek past. Theseus has only recently returned from conquering the Amazons, a race of warrior women, and is about to marry the conquered Amazon queen, Hippolyta. The play being rehearsed by Peter Quince's company is to be performed at the wedding feast at the end of the week.

HIPPOLYTA

The queen of the Amazons and engaged to Theseus, who defeated her Amazon warrior women in combat. The two largely act as a traditional loving couple, although there is room for interpretation, particularly in the opening scene. She shows some empathy towards Hermia, but does not interfere.

HELENA

A young woman of Athens in love with Demetrius. She is taller than Hermia (numerous references to Hermia's low height are made). Demetrius had behaved as if he was in love with her, but is now actively in pursuit of Hermia. Helena deliberately tells Demetrius of Hermia and Lysander's flight in the hope that he will go after them and take her to help him. She hopes that somehow she'll persuade him that he loves her and not Hermia. The worse Demetrius treats her, the more she throws herself at him.

PHILOSTRATE

Theseus' Master of the Revels, responsible for organizing the entertainment for the duke's marriage celebration.

The Fairies – inhabitants of the wood

OBERON

The king of the fairies, attended by his own train of fairies and Puck. Oberon and his wife, Titania, are not speaking because she refuses to let him have a 'changeling boy'. Oberon accuses Titania of fancying Duke Theseus and she in turn accuses him of lusting after Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons. Oberon's desire for revenge on Titania leads him to send Puck to find a flower, the juice of which will make her fall in love with the first thing she sees. His intention is for her to fall in love with the ugliest creature imaginable.

TITANIA

The queen of the fairies and wife to Oberon, attended by her own fairies: Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed. She has sworn to Oberon that she will not return to his bed until he gives up his pursuit of the changeling boy. Her fairies are shocked when she falls in love with the ugly Bottom with his ass's head, but she orders them to treat him well.

PUCK aka Robin Goodfellow

A mischievous fairy who shares his master Oberon's delight in tricking mortals. At Oberon's bidding, Puck sprinkles "love juice" in Titania's eyes when Bottom in his ass's head is near. Oberon has seen Demetrius treating Helena badly and has ordered Puck to also sprinkle the "love juice" in Demetrius's eyes so that he will love Helena. Puck mistakes and sprinkles the "love juice" in the sleeping Lysander's eyes. Coincidentally, Helena has fallen asleep near Lysander and

Hermia and when he wakes he sees Helena before Hermia. Disastrously, he falls instantly in love with Helena and spurns Hermia. Puck revels in this confusion.

The Mechanicals – craftsmen from Athens

PETER QUINCE

A carpenter and producer of the play for Theseus's marriage celebration. Quince does his best to keep order but is often side-lined by the most confident actor, Bottom. During the play Quince plays the Prologue.

NICK BOTTOM

The overconfident weaver chosen to play Pyramus. Bottom is convinced that he can play all the parts and is reluctant to share the limelight with anyone else. Puck delights in weaving a spell that puts an ass's head on him. The rest of the cast are horrified by this sudden transformation and, suspecting black magic, run away. Bottom is unaware of the change in his physical appearance and sings to keep his spirits up. His singing wakes Titania (as Puck had hoped) and she falls in love with the ugly mortal with an ass's head, to the shock and amusement of her fairies. He scarcely questions why the beautiful Titania should have fallen in love with him.

FRANCIS FLUTE

The bellows-mender chosen to play the female love interest in the play, Thisbe. Flute is young and beardless but insulted, nonetheless, to be chosen to play a girl. He insists that he has "a beard coming". The role is traditionally played with a falsetto, squeaky voice to get more laughs.

ROBIN STARVELING

The tailor who ends up playing the part of Moonshine.

TOM SNOOT

The tinker who ends up playing the part of Wall, dividing the two lovers.

SNUG

The joiner chosen to play the lion. He asks for his lines far in advance as he is 'slow of study'. Snug is particularly bad at roaring but worries nonetheless that his roaring will frighten the ladies in the audience.