

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

How does love affect us?

Exploring Love

Watch the following [clip](#) (between 10-16 minutes) from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED talk.

Whilst doing so, consider the following question: **'How does love affect us?'**

After watching the clip, think about your responses to the following questions:

- Is there a difference between men and women and how they are affected by love?
- Do people's actions change when they are in love?
- What are the different types of love?
- What are the characteristics we associate with falling in love?
- Can there be conflict between friendships when a person is in a relationship? How do they manifest? Why might this be?
- Can there be love in a friendship?
- How can love be a negative influence?

Use the 20 events of A Midsummer Night's Dream for this task:

1. Egeus tells the Duke Theseus that his daughter Hermia must marry Demetrius or die.
2. Hermia begs to marry Lysander. The Duke gives her two days to make her decision.
3. Hermia and Lysander tell Helena that are going to run away to the woods.
4. Helena, being in love with Demetrius, has told him of Hermia's flight, and follows him to the woods, hoping to make him realise he loves her.
5. In the woods some actors meet to rehearse their play.
6. Also in the woods the king of the fairies, Oberon, tries to get his Queen, Titania, to give him her Indian page boy.
7. Oberon overhears Demetrius treating Helena badly.
8. Oberon orders Puck to get a love potion to put on Demetrius's eyes so that he will fall in love with Helena.

9. By mistake Puck puts the love potion on Lysander.
10. As a trick, Oberon puts the love potion on Titania's eyes, hoping she will fall in love with something ugly.
11. Lysander, under the influence the love potion, falls in love with Helena whilst Hermia is asleep.
12. Puck plays a trick on the group of actors and puts an ass's head on the lead actor called Bottom.
13. Titania wakes up and falls in love with Bottom with the ass's head on.
14. Oberon gives Puck an antidote for Lysander and tells him to put the love potion on Demetrius's eyes.
15. Puck puts the love potion on Demetrius, who falls in love with Helena.
16. Hermia and Helena fight. Hermia can't understand why Lysander is now in love with Helena.
17. Puck uses magic to make the lovers fall asleep and gives the antidote to Lysander.
18. Titania is released from the spell and Bottom is returned to his human form.
19. There is a triple wedding, Theseus and Hippolyta, Demetrius and Helena, Lysander and Hermia.
20. The actors perform their play at the wedding.

Identify, by highlighting directly onto the 20 events, if any of your responses to the questions appear in the 20 story points.

Question: Using your analysis, can you summarise how the characters have been affected by love in a paragraph below:

E.g. Helena loves Demetrius but he does not feel the same. She tells him about Hermia and Lysander's flight to gain his favour and he pursues them, followed by Helena - jealousy and love rivalry appear.

It is important to note here that Shakespeare was under pressure to ensure that his audiences returned. It is key to remember that these are plays and not necessarily accurate representations of 16th century life. Shakespeare was manipulating character's actions and behaviours to serve the play and to keep them interesting/intriguing/comical. This is important to remember if you start to disbelieve that people would behave like this towards their friends/lovers in real life.

Question: Is there a difference between the way that men and women behave in the play? *E.g what impact does the love potion have on Lysander?*

Some useful vocabulary to support your answer:

Love, lust, control, jealousy, friendship, relationship, rivalry, respect, communication

Task: Using all of the information that you have gathered about the characters so far (including how love has affected them) you are going to physically explore these character's feelings.

Using the following events, morph yourself physically, like you are sculpting clay, in a way to show Helena's response to what is happening to her, through her body language and facial expressions

Events

- 1) Helena when she accuses Hermia of being a cheat with no shame
- 2) Helena when she says that she did love Hermia

Take photographs of the two 'sculptures' or create a gif to show the transition from one to the other.

Now repeat this task for Hermia, using these different events.

Events

- 1) Hermia bewildered by Helena's accusations.
- 2) Hermia when she accuses Helena of creating this turmoil.

Take photographs of the two 'sculptures' or create a gif to show the transition from one to the other.

Compare the two different sets of sculptures. How are the two women different? How are they similar? What advice would you give them to help them resolve their problems?

Differences

Similarities

My advice:
