

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Shakespeare and Climate

In this speech, Titania speaks of how her dispute with Oberon has disturbed the natural order, causing extreme weather and change to the seasons.

These are the forgeries of jealousy.
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By pavèd fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or in the beachèd margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have sucked up from the sea
Contagious fogs, which falling in the land
Have every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents.
The ox hath therefore stretched his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attained a beard.
The fold stands empty in the drownèd field,
And crows are fatted with the murrain flock.
The nine-men's-morris is filled up with mud,
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
For lack of tread are undistinguishable.
The human mortals want their winter here.
No night is now with hymn or carol blessed.
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound.
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,
And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set. The spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazèd world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which.
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension.

We are their parents and original.

In the 21st Century we too are seeing dramatic changes to our climate, yet in the world of lockdown we have seen a reduction in pollution and evidence of nature reasserting itself. We've all heard the stories on the news of fish returning to canals and animals reclaiming land in towns and cities.

Task: On your daily exercises you may have noticed nature changing around you over the last few weeks.

We'd like you to keep track of these changes by logging the things that you notice in what you can see, hear and smell around you. You can also add in drawings, photographs or pressings – where it is safe and ok to do so, perhaps you can collect some physical examples to include in your nature diary.

See the example below:

Date	What do I notice (see)	What do I notice (hear)	What do I notice (smell)	Photographs/ drawings/artefacts
15/5/20	Blossom is out – vibrant pink 5 new goslings with geese parents in the canal	I can hear lots of birds calling – especially pigeons and woodpeckers	Blossom is sickly sweet	

You might decide to do this as a weekly or daily journal, but like Titania in A Midsummer Night's Dream, aim to be eagle eyed in your observations of what is happening around you. Anyone can do this - be it through a window, from a balcony, out in your garden or in a park. Just do it safely.

My nature diary

Date	What do I notice (see)	What do I notice (hear)	What do I notice (smell)	Photographs/ drawings/artefacts

Challenge!

Using a wide range of sources to ensure fairness, can you research the impact that this lockdown is having on nature? Consider the following points:

- What are the positives effects?
- What are the negative effects?
- How might the nature change permanently after this has passed?
- What might we be able to do to ensure that we can maintain some of these positive changes?
- How does it affect us in the United Kingdom?
- How does it affect others around the world?
- What has happened in areas of the world with high pollution levels?
- What is the result of this change to areas of vital importance to the world's eco system - like the oceans or the rainforests?

Here are some places that you could start looking for evidence to help you build your research project.

[The Dramatic effects of lockdown on the plant](#)

[Mother Nature reasserts herself](#)

[Wildlife through the window](#)

You can present this information in any way you would like – through a detailed written report, or images and diagrams, or a video/audio presentation or by using tech in any way you feel suitable.