

West Campus Studio Theatre  
March 15–18, 22–25

# A Midsummer Night's Dream

**By William Shakespeare**

Directed by

**Kris Wing Peterson**

**BYU**arts  
BYUARTS.COM

## Teacher's Packet

By Spencer Fields, *Dramaturg*  
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Lesson plans by Isabella Beals and Judy Schnebly,  
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# Welcome to Young Company!

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## About BYU Young Company

The Young Company serves as a training ground for both BYU actors and teaching artists wanting to work in theatre for young audiences. The group performs in front of 16,000 young people each year on topics that deal with everyday struggles encountered by people of all ages.

## What is a dramaturg, and why do they make teacher's packets?

As described on the website for LMDA (Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas,) dramaturgs today have a variety of responsibilities. "Working in theatres and playwrights' organizations, in colleges and universities, and on a project-by-project basis, dramaturgs contextualize the world of a play; establish connections among the text, actors, and audience; offer opportunities for playwrights; generate projects and programs; and create conversations about plays in their communities."

In an effort to "create conversations" about the Young Company productions in our local communities, the dramaturgs at BYU create teacher's packets to share with all educators who will participate in these touring shows. We hope you will use them to enhance the experience your students have and further engage with the performance in ways that are meaningful specifically to your students. We hope you'll discover helpful approaches to learning more about the form and content of our productions in the attached lesson plans and activity ideas!

## Welcome Letter

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*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.

Our show is unique also because it will invite your students to not only watch the show, but as you soon will see, participate in this classic Shakespearean tale. We hope that as the students see the show start to go off the rails and one of their classmates help get it back on track that they will feel empowered knowing that they also can create change and perhaps even save their own dreams.

The madcap nature of 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.

We also hope that you enjoy the activities and lesson plans that are found in this packet. As a dramaturgy team and as teaching artists we have tried hard to create experiences for the students that build upon what they see in the show and will help them to personally have more fun and even feel empowered while also playing.

Spencer Fields  
*Dramaturg*

## Theatre Etiquette

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Just like the performers, the audience also has an important role to play. Because some of the students may not have attended a play before, below are expectations to help them prepare for our performance!

- Remember to use the restroom before the show.
- No photography, please, and be sure to turn off your cellphones.
- Before the play starts, quietly follow the actors' instructions when they are seating you.
- Remember to sit flat on the floor with your legs crossed. This allows everyone to see the actors better and prevents limbs from falling asleep during the show.
- During the show, follow the actors' instructions when you are asked to participate.
- Don't speak with your neighbors during the show. We want everyone to be able to hear the actors.
- Please enjoy the show and laugh when you think it's funny!
- You can clap at the end.

# Wiggle Workout

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**Title:** Walk Like Shakespeare!

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Activity Description:**

Shakespeare used similar characters throughout his many plays and the same actors in his acting troupe played these characters. When the students watch the show today, have them look for the following four archetypes: the carer, the trickster, the warrior, and the sovereign. To help them remember these archetypes lead them through the following poses and movements:

The Carer: Place both hands on your heart and walk around the room. Look at the others around you.

The Trickster: Bend your knees so that you are closer to the ground and walk and spin around the classroom in curved lines. The Trickster never takes the expected way to get somewhere.

The Warrior: Place one hand over the heart like the Carer and another straight up in the sky like you are holding a sword. March around the room with purpose!

The Sovereign: Place the palms of your hands at your temples and have your fingers extend straight up. You now have a crown on your head! Walk carefully with purpose around the classroom.

All four of these types of characters will be in the show today and the poses that the students just made were actually part of the audition process for the actors. The way that the actors performed these simple poses helped our director know what part they should be in. See if you can tell which archetype is which character in the show!

## Play Synopsis - *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

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In their home of Athens, teenagers gather at the ultimate sleepover. There is a complicated love triangle, gossip, and problems occur. As the dynamics of the teenagers' world begin to grow with seniority and looks, who has the final say?

Lysander and Hermia strive to run away from her father who forbids them from getting married, while Lysander runs after Hermia whom he is in love with, while Helena is in love with Lysander. They head into the woods, find they are tired and shall progress more in the morning. When the fairies of the world come out to play and while they're dealing with their own problems, they decide to start "helping" the humans.

Meanwhile, there's a bunch of misfits assigned to rehearse a play and create something wonderful for the marriage of the king. Yet, one unlucky man by the name of Bottom gets turned into a donkey, and other tricks between the fairies continue to happen.

The fairy king commanded his willing servant, Puck to help the humans. But Puck gets confused and creates a connection between Lysander and Helena, and by doing so creates a new love triangle between everyone except Hermia.

This all comes to a culminating moment, after Puck and Oberon set things right, when the lovers wake up, each in love with the one they wanted feeling content and happy with who they end up with. Yet there is a very mismatched play with everyone trying to make ends meet but the confusion of things going awry. Luckily, in the end, one person can save the day and save Bottom from his unfortunate ending.

## Before the show...

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**Activity Title:** A Midsummer Night's Drawing

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Materials Needed:**

- Paper
- Drawing materials (Crayons, Colored pencils, Markers)

**Activity description:**

Have your students draw the most recent dream they can remember. If they can't remember any dreams they had at night they can also draw a day-dream. After they have finished their drawings (about ten minutes), have them get into groups of two. Have the students trade papers so that their partner can tell their own version of their partner's dream. Once both students have gone, have them come back together to discuss the activity. Use the following questions to prompt discussion:

- How did having someone else describe your dream make you feel?
- What did your partner guess right about your drawing? What did they guess wrong?
- What did you enjoy more interpreting someone's dream drawing or having your dream drawing interpreted?



## After the show ...

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**Activity Title:** Telling your own Story!

**Time:** 10-30 minutes (depending on the needs of the teacher)

**Materials Needed:**

- No materials needed

**Activity Description:**

Have your students gather in a circle and explain that you are going to make up your own stories now. These stories can either be with the same characters you just saw in the play or your own made up characters. The catch to making up the story is that each student can only say one word at a time. First you are going to start with a sad story then a scary story and finally a happy story. If there isn't the time for all three feel free to just do one or two. One student will start but they only get to say one word. The next word is said by the person on the right and the story then works its way around the circle. The faster the story goes the more fun the activity is. Continue each story until it seems like it reaches a natural ending, around 3-5 minutes.

After activity lead the students in a discussion. You may use the following questions to guide your discussion or other's that better suit the needs of your students:

- How did only getting one word to tell the story make you feel?
  - Did you like not having total control over the story? Did you dislike it?
- How did having everyone be able to change the story make the story different?
- Is this a good way to make up a story? Why or why not?
- Did the story go the way that you thought it was going to? What did you think of the ending?

## Lesson Plans

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### **By Their Show, You Shall Know: An Actors' Exploration of Voice and Body**

*Lesson Plan By Judy Schnebly*

**Grade:** 4-6

**Length:** 40-45 min

**Materials:**

- Printed scene for each student (attached below)
- Open space for students to rehearse and perform

**National Theatre Standards:**

Cr3.1.5.b. Use physical and vocal exploration for character development in an improvised or scripted drama/theatre work.

Cr3.1.5.a. Revise and improve an improvised or scripted drama/theatre work through repetition and self-review.

Pr4.1.6.b. Experiment with various physical choices to communicate character in a drama/theatre work.

Pr6.1.4.a. Share small-group drama/theatre work, with peers as audience.

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate understanding of the actors' tools of body and voice by utilizing them to convey emotion in a short group scene.

**Warm-up: Name Game (5-10 min):** Form students into a circle and explain the following activity: In turn, each student will say their name along with an adjective that starts with the same letter (i.e. Marvelous Maddie). Along with the name and adjective, they should do a simple action that exemplifies the adjective (i.e. putting hands on hips, pantomime putting on sunglasses, etc.). After the student presents their name and action, the rest of the class will repeat it and copy the action. Repeat this process until you have gone around the entire circle.

Optional extension: Once everyone has gone, ask students to switch places with someone else in the circle, and try to repeat all the names and actions again in this new order!

**Tool 1 - Body: Creating Scenery (10 min):** Point out that in this first activity, they used two of the actors' most powerful tools - voice and body. In this next activity, we will explore the use of the body. Invite a student to read the following paragraph aloud for the class:

"In Act III, Scene I of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the mechanicals (including Quince, Snug, and Bottom the Weaver) are planning for their performance. However, they run into a

problem — they don't have any set pieces or scenery! But they come up with a solution — “some man or other must present wall”. In other words, someone has to pretend to be a wall! Like the mechanicals, we are going to use our bodies to create a scene.”

Name a setting that could have various “set pieces” in it. Some ideas are:

- Park
- Supermarket
- Castle
- Amusement park
- Restaurant/cafe
- Hotel
- Museum
- Factory
- Doctor's office
- Airport

Ask 5 or so students to volunteer to come into the center of the circle and become “set pieces” of the location. For example, if the setting is the park, one student could pretend to be a bench, another could be a light pole, another could be a slide, etc. Each of the five students will enter the scene one by one and announce what they are becoming. (i.e. “I am a bench”). Repeat this exercise 2 or 3 times, depending on time and how eager students are to participate.

**Discuss:** In what ways did you or your peers use your body to tell a story in this last activity?

**Brainstorm:** In what other ways do we use our bodies to tell a story? Answers may include facial expressions, walking speed or style, and physical position on the stage in relation to other actors or set pieces.

## **Tool 2: Voice - Vocal Countdown (5-10 min):**

*Adapted from “Introduction to Voice” by Mari Bell*

*(<https://tedb.byu.edu/?courses=introduction-to-voice-by-mari-bell>)*

Have students stand and count to 10 several times. Each time they will use a new vocal quality.

Ideas include — Drill Sergeant, Raspy, Opera Singer, Angry, Sad, Laughing, Cowboy, Three-year old, Romantically, Really Fast, Low Pitched Voice, Bored, Rock Singer, High Pitch, Very Slow, Martian voice, Sarcastic, Stern, etc.

If you have a class of students who are more accustomed to performing, you may invite individual students or just a few students in chorus to try each of these qualities as an informal performance for the class. You can also invite students to come up with more vocal qualities to try!

Optional: Instead of counting to 10, students can say a simple line of text instead that could have multiple meanings based on the vocal qualities used. Ideas include — “Where are you going?” “What are you talking about?” “I can't wait for the weekend”. Feel free to create your own!

**Discuss:** Turn to a neighbor and share what your favorite voice was to try. Why? Were some voices harder for you than others? As a class: What was your experience like? Did you learn something new about your own voice? What did each voice make your *body* want to do?

**Contentless Scenes (20 min):**

Separate students into partnerships and have them determine who will be Partner A and who will be Partner B. Write the following emotions on the board:

- Happiness
- Anger
- Sadness
- Disgust
- Surprise

Invite a student to read the following paragraph aloud for the class:

“In the final scene of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the mechanicals are going to perform for Theseus and Hippolyta. At the beginning of their performance, they say “The actors are at hand and by their show you shall know all that you are like to know”. In other words, by watching the actors, you will understand the story they are trying to tell! Every group will be given the same scene, but it does not have a setting or character descriptions. Those are for you to decide! Each group will also choose an emotion. Your goal will be to use the tools of body and voice to show us “what we need to know”. Show us with your voice and body the emotion you are trying to convey.”

**Rehearse:** Pass out the printed scenes to each group and ask them to choose an emotion. Once they have chosen an emotion, they will have 10 minutes to rehearse with their partner and make decisions on how to use their voices and bodies to convey those emotions.

**Pair and Share Performance:** Ask each group of two to find another partnership. Once everyone is grouped, one partnership will perform for the other. The partnership who is watching will try to guess which of the emotions this partnership was trying to convey. Students should have a short discussion with each other about *how* they were able to tell what emotion was portrayed through their use of voice and body. Once everyone has had a chance to perform, bring the class back together.

**Class discussion:** How did your peers use their voices and bodies to show their emotion? What did you learn about voice and body from this exercise?

**Resources:**

(scene adapted from <https://www.tkapow.com/ContentlessScenes.pdf>)

A: Hi!

B: Hello.

A: How's everything?

B: Fine. I guess.

A: Well?

B: Well what?  
A: What did you do last night?  
B: What do you mean?  
A: What did you do last night?  
B: Nothing.  
A: Nothing?  
B: I said, nothing!  
A: I'm sorry I asked.  
B: That's all right.

**“Weeds of Athens He Doth Wear” (Act II, Scene I):  
An Exploration of Costume Design in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream***

*Lesson Plan By Judy Schnebly*

**Grade:** 6-8

**Length:** 45-50 min

**Materials:**

- Google Slides Presentation (printed or shown digitally)
  - [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/16WiRGEpXnuK2r5oS6WccEZbOhNWQ\\_QGOGZWA8fGYLa7M/edit](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/16WiRGEpXnuK2r5oS6WccEZbOhNWQ_QGOGZWA8fGYLa7M/edit)
- Printed templates for costume design
  - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DqmyXpes1S7h4aAJm8tj6OwUGmRWj1MFLpkPIiU1vhg/edit>
- Blank paper for students to take notes on
- Pencils, erasers and colored pencils, crayons, or markers to draw with

**National Theatre Standards:**

TH:Re7.1.4.a. Identify artistic choices made in a drama/theatre work through participation and observation.

TH:Cr1.1.4.b. Visualize and design technical elements that support the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate artistic choice by analyzing costume renderings from productions of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and creating original costume designs that support the story through technical elements of design.

**Warm-up- Occupational Charades (5 min):**

In small groups, or as a class, conduct a brief game of charades. No words may be spoken, but sound effects can be used along with pantomimed actions. As each student comes up, give them a word to act out for the group to guess. In this game, each charade will be an occupation - specifically an occupation that requires a specific hat or piece of clothing “costume” in real life. Some examples include: firefighter, chef, football player, dancer, construction worker, scientist, surgeon, magician, and astronaut . Feel free to add your own!

**Intro to costume design (5 min):**

**Explain:** In this game, we saw examples of different occupations that require different outfits. In our lives, we wear “costumes”, or different types of clothes depending on what activities we do, what job we have, or even to show our personality. Costume design is also an important job in the theatre.

**Watch:** “Backstage at “Wicked” with Costume Designer Susan Hilferty” (1:51)

<https://youtu.be/W2Ja2uAOVZo>

**Discuss:** Questions such as the following: What did you learn about the job of a costume designer? How does the job of a costume designer impact the production? How does each costume create the world of the show? How are costume designers problem-solvers?

Today we will explore how the costumes in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* support the story and its characters.

### **First Impressions/Renderings Gallery Walk (10 min):**

**Explain:** A rendering is a drawing of what a costume will look like on a character. Renderings communicate and give us clues about what each character is like or what circumstances they might be in. Costume designers make renderings for each character in a production.

**Present:** Present the renderings from the slideshow linked below. (Fun fact: The renderings in the center of each slide are the renderings from the BYU production your class will see!) If shown digitally, students will take notes as each slide is presented. If printed out, place slides around the classroom and have students do a "gallery walk" and take notes as they come to each one.

Separate students into small groups of 3-4 students each. Each group will need a sheet of paper, which they will separate into 4 equal sections. Each section will correspond to one of four characters - Puck, Lysander, Helena, and Titania.

**Record:** In each square, students will record 3 things about the character — "Guess, Want to Know, & Know" (see example below). After viewing the renderings, students should write a few bullet points for the first two categories - 'guess' and 'want to know'. There is no need to be "correct"— the purpose is to write down what the costume conveys or what they can assume about this character simply based on their clothes.

\*The "know" section of the notes will be added to at a later point in the lesson.

Puck	Lysander
Guess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• he lives in the woods</li></ul>	Guess:
Want to Know: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• does he have magical powers?</li></ul>	Want to Know:
Know:	Know:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Helena</b></p> <p>Guess:</p> <p>Want to Know:</p> <p>Know:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Titania</b></p> <p>Guess:</p> <p>Want to Know:</p> <p>Know:</p>

### **“Mid-summary” & Second Impressions (5-8 min):**

**Watch:** “ANIMATION: A Midsummer Night’s Dream” (3:27) [https://youtu.be/zEwY\\_-oMOcE](https://youtu.be/zEwY_-oMOcE)

**Record:** After watching the video, each group will revisit the character notes sheet they started before and add bullet points to the “know” section for each character based on what they learned in the video.

As they do so, show the renderings again and ask students to consider the following questions: What artistic choices were made in creating these costumes? What do you think inspired these choices? What do you notice about color, texture, etc.? How do these costumes support the story? How do the circumstances of these characters affect what they wear? Discuss with your group.

**Share:** After groups have completed their note sheets, invite adjacent groups to share their findings with each other for 30 seconds-1 minute.

**Drawing a Design (10-15 min):** Invite students to imagine that they are a costume designer for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Ask: What character would you like to design a costume for? Think about the circumstances that the character is in, or what role they have in their community and in the story. How might this affect what they wear? What do you hope your costume communicates to the audience? How does it support the story?

Students can draw free-hand or use the templates provided below.

### **Gallery Walk (3-5 min):**

If time allows, ask students to present their artwork to their peers. You can facilitate a pair & share experience, a big group “gallery walk”, small group presentations, or any other method of sharing.





Puck  
A Midsum  
Folger Theatre



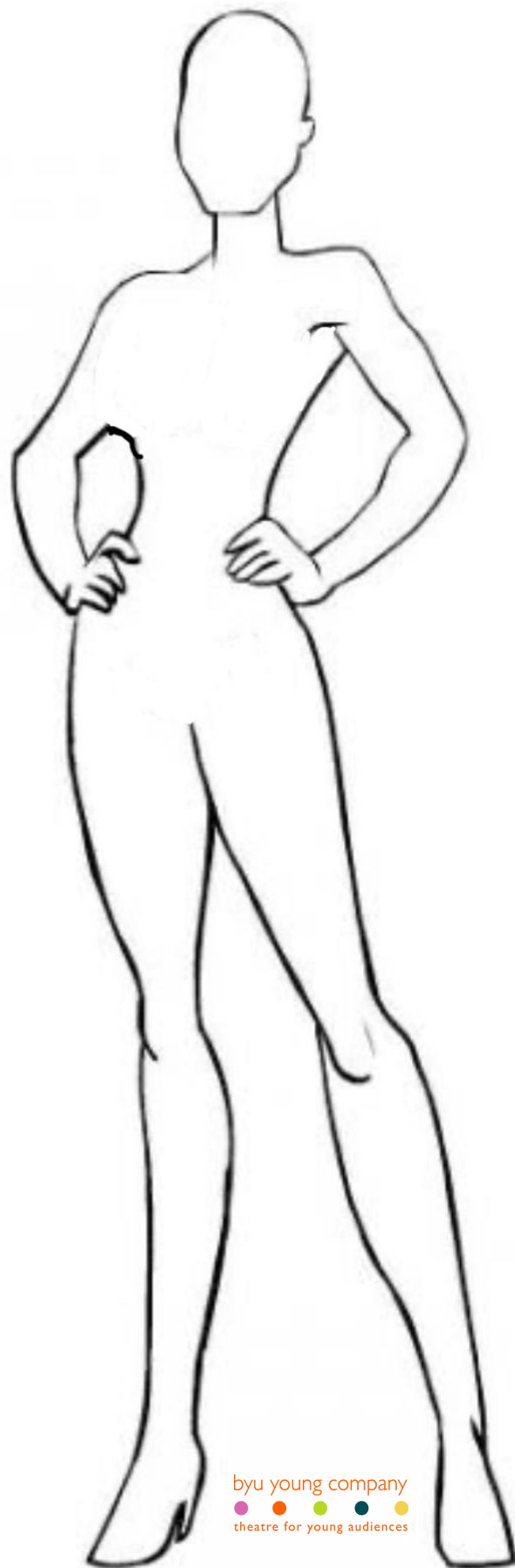
Puck

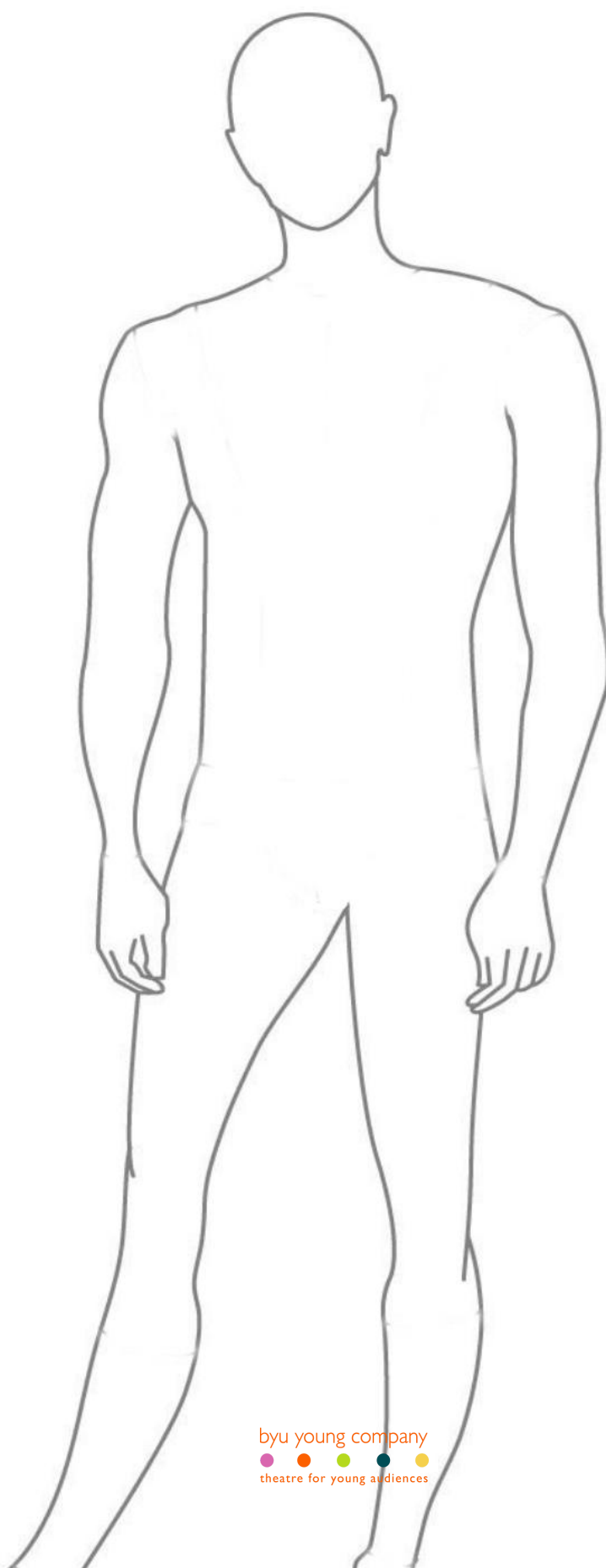
A Midsummer Night's Dream

C. J. M. 2019

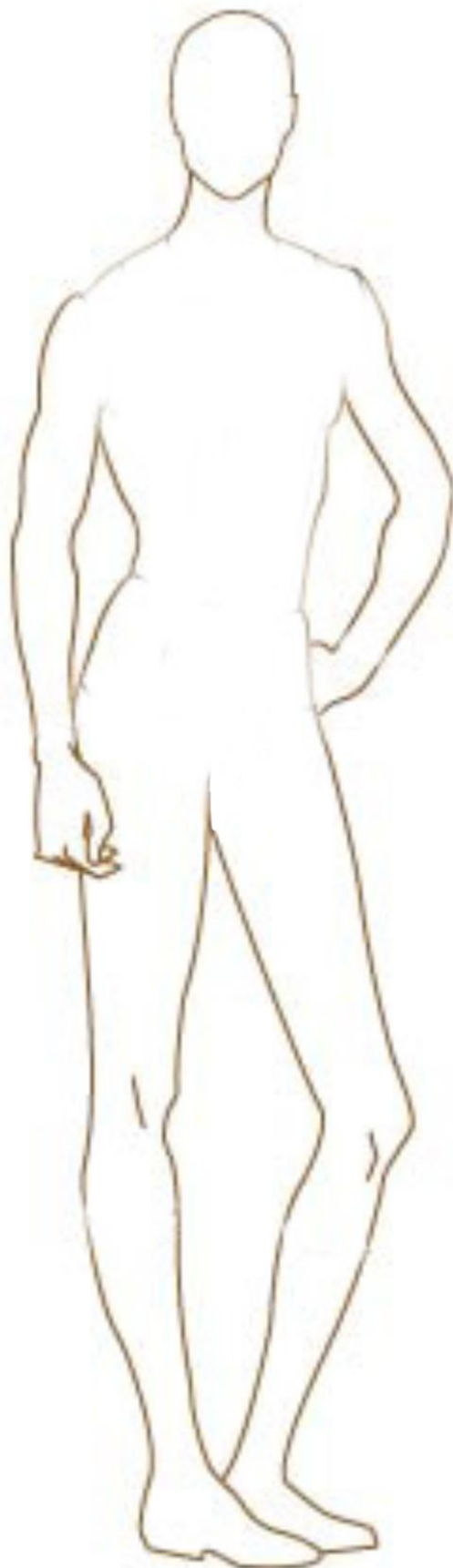












## **Creative Problem Solving with a “Little Western Flower”**

*Lesson Plan by Isabella Beals and Judy Schnebly*

**Grade:** 4-6

**Length:** 40-45 min

### **Materials:**

- Student journals/writing paper
- Student writing utensils
- Optionally: If desired, find a cloak or formal hat as a costume piece for the Duke

### **National Theatre Standards:**

TH:Cr2-5.a. Devise original ideas for a drama/theatre work that reflect collective inquiry about characters and their given circumstances.

TH:Cr2-5.b. Participate in defined responsibilities required to present a drama/theatre work informally to an audience.

TH:Re7.1.4.a Identify artistic choices made in a drama/theatre work through participation and observation

### **Objective:**

Students will develop their personal power in creativity by using devised theatre to participate in a process drama scene.

### **Warm-up (10 minutes):**

Gather students into a circle.

Ask: “Think of a recent problem you had to solve or a big decision you had to make. Perhaps it was at home, at school, or at another activity. Once you have your idea in mind, show me with a thumbs up (or some other simple indication). Now think about how you solved this problem. What resources did you use? Did your past experiences inform your decision?”

Invite students to find a partner, find their own space, and discuss their problem and how they solved it. Together, come up with two frozen pictures, or tableaux, to show these. The first frozen image will show the problem and the second will show the solution. At your signal, half of the partnerships will assume their first pose. At your signal they will switch into their other pose. The other half of the class will watch their poses. Then, switch and allow the other half of the class to perform!

Gather the student back into a circle. Explain: “In your real life, you are great problem-solvers. Today, we are going to use your problem-solving skills and your creativity skills to solve an imaginary problem based on the play *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.”

### **Character Creation (15 minutes):**

In this play, we learn that the forest is full of many characters, including magical fairies, actors rehearsing a play, and boys and girls who keep falling in love with each other. Ask the students if they remember how the boys and girls kept falling in love with each other. If they



can't remember or have not seen the play, explain that there is a magic flower whose juices make somebody fall in love with the next person they see. Inform the students that they now get to develop their own character in this world. They can choose between a fairy, an actor working on a play, or a person that has been affected by the magic flower. Give the students a few moments to choose which type of character they would like to be. Once the students have chosen their character type, invite them to invent a name for their character. Give the students a few moments to invent their character name.

Ask the students to consider what their character's voice might sound like. Would it be similar to their natural voice? Would it be different? Invite them to practice how they would introduce their character by saying, "Hello, my name is (character name.)" Ask the students to stand up and practice introducing themselves a few times by themselves trying out some different voices. Once the students have practiced a few times, invite them to find another character in the room and introduce themselves to each other. Then, encourage them to keep finding others and introducing themselves. Allow this to happen a few times for about 1 minute.

Explain that now that the students know more about how their character talks, let's explore more about how they move. Ask the students to walk around the room. Invite them to start walking the way they think their character would walk. Invite them to consider how their character might move different parts of their body depending on their character type as they walk: their shoulders, their arms, their legs, etc. Give 1-2 minutes for students to complete this activity.

Next, ask the students to imagine that their character is walking through the woods, and they find the magic flower that makes people fall in love. Tell the students that their characters have seen this flower before and know what it does. Ask the students to show you how their character would approach the flower. Would they walk quickly or slowly? Would they want to touch the flower or keep some distance from it? Give the students a chance to show how they feel about the flower in their movements. Finally, ask the students if they are going to pick the flower or if they are going to walk away from it. Give the students a chance to act out their choice.

Finally, ask the students to consider how their character would sit down and listen during an important meeting by returning to their desks or a spot on the floor. Once the students have done so, invite them to grab a piece of paper and a writing utensil. Now that they are a little more familiar with their character, ask the students to answer the following questions about their experience with the magic flower on their paper:

- What did the magic flower look like?
- What do you think the magic flower would smell like?
- Were you excited to find the magic flower or not? Why or why not?

Give the students about 5 minutes to complete this writing activity.

### **Process Drama - Town Meeting (10 minutes)**

Explain that we will now use these characters we have developed to make a very important decision: The Duke of the land Theseus has proposed that we pull up and kill all the magic

flowers that made people fall in love because it caused so much trouble. You must now imagine how your characters would react to this news and decide if you will stand up to protect the flower or defend the Duke's idea to your fellow townsfolk.

Explain that we will have a town meeting to discuss the Duke's proposition and all the students must attend and speak in the town meeting. You as the teacher will act as the Duke and ultimately decide which side wins. Encourage the students to commit to their character and see if they can use their character's opinions to produce the best argument.

Invite all the students to arrange chairs in a circle and sit down or to simply sit on the floor. Ask them to again think about how their character would sit and listen in a very important meeting, and then give them a moment to get into character and to get into character yourself. If desired, you could put on the costume piece you want to use while you are pretending to be the Duke.

When you're ready, begin by saying: "Welcome, friends and townsfolk. Thank you for attending our meeting today. We will be discussing what to do about the magic flower in the woods that can make people fall in love with each other. I think we should destroy this flower so it cannot cause any more trouble. But I want to hear your opinions first as residents of the town and the forest. What do you think we should do? Please raise your hands if you would like to share and I will call on you."

Allow the student 5-7 minutes to share thoughts in character. Once you are reaching the end of the time, or if there is a general consensus, end the meeting by saying, "Thank you all for attending and sharing your thoughts today. I appreciate all your comments. After careful consideration, I think we will (say your final choice.)" [Alternatively, if you don't want to make the final choice, you can also say "I will deliberate more with my counselors, and we will make a final decision."]

Step out of your role of the Duke by removing the costume piece if you are wearing one, and ask the students to stand up and shake out their body to step out of character.

### **Reflection (5 minutes):**

Ask the students what they liked or what they learned and experienced in the exercise. Remind the students that like we talked about in the beginning, they are problem-solvers in their life every day. Today we practiced solving a pretend problem using their real creativity. Ask them to show you a pose that a really great problem-solver would make. Encourage them to keep being great problem-solvers and to be creative in their real-life problem-solving.