

Welcome!

Grade 5, Unit 6

Introduction to Shakespeare: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Dear Family Member,

In this unit, students will explore Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as both literature and a living text for interpretation and performance.

What's the story?

Students will have a unique learning experience as this unit has been written as a **Quest**. Over the course of this Quest, students will **read, write, act, direct, and design**, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

What will my student learn?

Students will be asked to think about scenes from this play through the frames of **character action and character traits**, all while exploring Shakespeare's **brilliant language**. By the end of this unit, students will know the **story and major characters** of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. They will also be able to explain how Shakespeare was and is performed, and will have a strong set of tools to understand Shakespeare's plays.

Students will **write from the perspective of the characters or artists** working on a production of the play. These writing assignments encourage them to **support their thoughts** with evidence from the text and to **express their creative ideas** clearly. Throughout this unit, students will also have several **performance opportunities**, bringing the entire learning experience to life.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. Who are some of the characters you have been introduced to in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*?
Follow up: Which ones stand out to you the most? Why? How would you describe them?
2. What is the hardest part about it in your opinion? What are you starting to understand about Shakespeare's language? Why do you think he sometimes leaves out words?
3. What is onomatopoeia?
Follow up: Can you give me some examples?
4. How did some of the characters change over the course of the play?
Follow up: Why do you think they did? Who changed the most?
5. Tell me what you have learned about a monologue.
Follow up: What about dialogue? How is a soliloquy related to a monologue?
6. Let's investigate English idioms that come from Shakespeare altogether.
Follow up: Have you heard any of these before? Let's try to use one in conversation!