

## 7. A Midsummer Night's Dream

wane  
pomp  
vexation  
lamentable  
extempore  
entreat  
progeny  
dissension  
entice  
dank  
flout  
disdainful  
surfeit  
prologue  
odious

preposterous  
derision  
sojourn  
amiable  
upbraid  
enamor  
loathe  
visage  
amity  
seethe  
tedious  
premeditate  
audacious  
epilogue  
reprehend

Learn these words from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Set I

1. **wane** (WAYN) v. decline in power, intensity, influence, importance; become gradually smaller or weaker; draw to an end or close

The moon wanes when it decreases in size and roundness as it passes from a full to a new moon. My interest in sports faded or waned after I graduated from college. Young bucks challenged the old stag for leadership of the herd as they sensed his waning powers. As the day wanes and the sun sinks into the horizon, the farm hands head back to their bunks. The noun "wane" means "a gradual decrease or decline."

2. **pomp** (POMP) n. showy, splendid or magnificent display; ostentation  
Graduation ceremonies are a time for pomp and celebration. A pompous (POM pus) person tries to seem important by showing off in a way that is too dignified or pretentious. Displays of pomposity (pom POS ih tee) therefore appear ridiculous rather than dignified.

3. **vexation** (vek SAY shun) n. annoyance, irritation, trouble, distress  
Our unmade beds, unwashed dishes, and undone chores contributed to our mother's vexation. The doctor said it would help to control my blood pressure if I did not let little things vex me. I find her whiny, screechy voice vexatious.

4. **lamentable** (luh MEN tuh bul) pitifully sorrowful, regrettably unfortunate, deplorable  
After Paul worked two full-time jobs the whole summer to pay for college, we found it lamentable that he could not go but had to stay home and help support his family when his father suffered a stroke. "Lament" can be a verb as when we lament or grieve for friends who died in a plane crash; "lament" can also be a noun as when we heard the howling lament or mourning of the Seeing Eye dog for her recently deceased owner.

5. **extempore** (ik STEM puh ree) adj. & adv. without preparation, unrehearsed, off-hand, impromptu  
When actors improvise or say their lines on the spur of the moment and not from memory, they speak extempore or impromptu (im PROMPT too). The adjective "extemporaneous" (ik stem puh RAY nee us) means the same as "extempore" or "impromptu." Some professors give excellent extempore, extemporaneous, or impromptu lectures without any notes or

preparation. Often, a speech seems more natural and appealing when one delivers it extempore, impromptu, or extemporaneously.

6. **entreat** (en TREET) v. ask earnestly, beg, plead, implore  
My children entreat me to let them stay up to see the late-night movie. My own parents would never bend their rules for me no matter how persuasive my entreaty or pleading request.

7. **progeny** (PRAHJ uh nee) n. children, offspring, descendants  
My grandparents were fruitful and multiplied; their progeny includes eleven children and sixty-seven grandchildren. We honor our progenitor (proh JEN ih tur) or ancestor who first came to the United States.

8. **dissension** (dih SEN shun) n. disagreement, especially one that causes hostility within a group; quarrel, discord, strife  
“Dissension” suggests a difference of opinion that fosters hostility. “Dissent” (dih SENT) may be a noun meaning “disagreement” or a verb meaning “disagree,” not necessarily suggesting bad feeling. In other words, a teacher may encourage students to dissent from her opinion, but the dissent must be presented rationally and respectfully so as not to arouse angry and chaotic dissension.

9. **entice** (en TYS, rhymes with “precise”) v. tempt, lure, attract, allure  
I resisted the enticement of chocolate fudge cake and stuck to my diet. In Greek mythology, the beautiful singing of the Sirens from an island surrounded by rocks would entice sailors to their death. Therefore, a seductively beautiful woman who entices or lures men is called a siren. Samson yielded to the enticements of the siren Delilah.

10. **dank** (DANK) adj. unpleasantly damp  
I ruined my books by storing them in a dank basement. We could imagine the misery of former prisoners when we visited the dank dungeon.

## Working With Words

Complete the following sentences by using each of the following words only once: wane, pomp, vexation, lamentable, extempore, entreat, progeny, dissension, entice, dank.

1. My little brother would \_\_\_\_\_ me to let him ride my bicycle.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ among the jury made it almost impossible to reach a verdict.
3. When I first saw my dreary, dark, and \_\_\_\_\_ apartment, my heart sank.
4. As the years passed in the simple and pleasant surroundings of the monastery, the former soldier's memories of slaughter and starvation began to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. My radical politics, rebellious friends, and decision not to join his firm accounts for my conservative, strait-laced father's \_\_\_\_\_ with me.
6. Although she had never married or had children, the professor regarded the college as her family and the students as her intellectual \_\_\_\_\_.
7. I find it \_\_\_\_\_ that an initial interest in exercise for health can turn into an obsessive competitiveness that results in injuries from overexertion.
8. Some like the \_\_\_\_\_ and pagentry that comes with high office; others like to wield power quietly and unobtrusively away from the public spotlight.
9. Can I \_\_\_\_\_ you away from your present job by doubling your salary if you work for me?
10. Because the celebrity excelled at \_\_\_\_\_ remarks, interviewers knew he would always be a good guest even at a moment's notice.

## Vocabulary Power Through Shakespeare

Match the word on the left with its definition.

- |                   |                             |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| ___ 1. lamentable | a. offspring                |
| ___ 2. wane       | b. unrehearsed              |
| ___ 3. progeny    | c. showy display            |
| ___ 4. dissension | d. unpleasantly damp        |
| ___ 5. entreat    | e. tempt                    |
| ___ 6. vexation   | f. disagreement             |
| ___ 7. dank       | g. plead                    |
| ___ 8. extempore  | h. become smaller or weaker |
| ___ 9. entice     | i. annoyance                |
| ___ 10. pomp      | j. sorrowful                |

## *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

### Words in context of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Set in mythical times in the city of Athens in ancient Greece, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* begins as Duke Theseus of Athens speaks to Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, of their forthcoming wedding:

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour  
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in  
Another moon—but O methinks, how slow  
This old moon **wanes**.

Theseus eagerly anticipates the upcoming wedding that will take place in four days with the coming of a new moon, but for a lover those four days until the old moon **wanes** or comes to an end drag slowly. He tells his director of entertainment to “stir up the Athenian youth to merriments...with **pomp** and revelling.” While Theseus prepares for his wedding with **pomp** or magnificent displays and joyous amusements, a nobleman troubled by his daughter’s refusal to marry the man he selected for her comes to the duke. The working out of this problem, an amateur play production for the royal wedding, and the enchantment of fairyland interweave in this magical, lighthearted comedy that culminates in a triple wedding.

The nobleman tells Theseus,

Full of **vexation** come I, with complaint  
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.

The nobleman is full of **vexation** or greatly troubled because his daughter Hermia has fallen in love with Lysander and thus refuses to marry Demetrius, the father’s choice. Theseus rules she must be obedient to her father’s will. If in four days—the date of Theseus and Hippolyta’s wedding—she will not marry Demetrius, then she must either die or become a nun and remain chaste in a monastery for the rest of her life.

Left alone, Lysander and Hermia discuss their plight. He comments that “the course of true love never did run smooth.” He then suggests that they go to his aunt who lives some twenty miles away outside the power of Athenian law and there get married. They will meet the next night in the woods outside Athens and run away. Hermia passionately swears to join him. They then tell their friend Helena—whose heart Demetrius won

before he fell in love with Hermia—of their plan. When Lysander and Hermia leave her, Helena says she will inform Demetrius, whom she still loves, of Hermia's flight.

The scene then shifts to Athenian workmen who prepare to produce a play for the duke's wedding. These goodhearted, simple, unsophisticated folk are well-meaning but deficient actors. They decide to perform a play which they call "the most **lamentable** comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe." Of course, a **lamentable** or sorrowful comedy is a contradiction, but such matters do not bother their less than subtle theatrical minds. The play dramatizes the myth of the handsome youth Pyramus and his beautiful lover Thisbe. Their parents, whose homes are separated by a wall, prohibit their marriage. Through a chink in this wall, the young lovers communicate. One day, they decide to run away and meet that night at the tomb of a king. Thisbe arrives first but sees a lion by moonlight. She drops her cloak and flees. The lion, with mouth bloody from a recent kill, then mauls the garment. Pyramus arrives, sees the bloodstained cloak, concludes that Thisbe is dead, and kills himself with his sword. Thisbe returns, realizes what happened, and plunges her lover's sword into her heart. Peter Quince, a carpenter and the soundest in judgment of the workers, directs the play; Nick Bottom, a weaver and the most boisterously enthusiastic of the actors, plays Pyramus. Another actor, Snug, who will play the part of the lion, fears he may not learn his lines in time because he has trouble memorizing. Quince reassures him that he "may do it **extempore**, for it is nothing but roaring." Since a roar requires no preparation, Snug can do his part **extempore** or without rehearsal. Quince then says to the amateur cast,

Here are your parts, and I am to **entreat** you, request you, and desire you, to con [learn] them by tomorrow night, and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight.

Quince **entreats** or implores his fellow workmen to learn their parts so they will be ready for rehearsal the next night.

In the same forest where the cast will rehearse and where the four Athenian lovers have gone, Oberon, king of the fairies, and Titania, queen of the fairies, accidentally meet. Titania had left Oberon to live by herself. No sooner do they meet than they begin a jealous quarrel. Titania says that nature's harmony has been disrupted by their constant fighting which causes epidemics, floods, failed crops, and unseasonable weather:

And this same **progeny** of evils comes  
From our debate, from our **dissension**.

The **progeny** or offspring of their **dissension** or quarrelling are the disruptions of nature that now plague the land. Oberon says they can end these evils if Titania would only give him a little boy to be his attendant. Titania refuses to let Oberon have this boy. She says that the boy's mother was a devotee of hers from India who died giving birth to him.

And for her sake do I rear up her boy,  
And for her sake I will not part with him.

When Titania leaves, Oberon calls for Puck, a mischievous fairy in his service. He tells Puck that Cupid's arrow once missed its mark and landed on a flower making it a love potion. Place the juice of this flower on someone's sleeping eyelids and the person will fall madly in love with the first creature the individual sees upon waking. Oberon sends Puck to fetch this flower. The fairy king plans to use this potion on Titania and not remove its spell until he gets the Indian boy from her.

At this point Demetrius enters followed by Helena. Oberon makes himself invisible so that he can overhear their conversation. Demetrius tells Helena,

Do I **entice** you? Do I speak you fair [speak kindly to you]?  
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth  
Tell you I do not nor I cannot love you?

Demetrius says that he does not **entice** or lure her and does not love her. He further rebukes Helena by saying he will harm her if she follows him in the forest. After they depart and Puck returns with the flower, Oberon decides to help Helena by making Demetrius reciprocate her love. He tells Puck to put some of the love potion on the eyelids of a man whom Puck will recognize by the man's Athenian clothes. Oberon then finds Titania sleeping and anoints her eyes with the flower's juice.

By this time Lysander and Hermia have lost their way in the woods and decide to lie down and rest. For modesty's sake, Lysander separates himself a considerable distance from Hermia. Puck arrives, sees Lysander in his Athenian clothes, and notices "the maiden sleeping sound on the **dank** and dirty ground." Puck assumes that Hermia on the **dank** or damp

ground is the despised maid forced to lie apart from the man she loves. Puck then squeezes drops from the magic flower on Lysander's eyelids and returns to the fairy king.

Learn these words from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Set II

1. **flout** (FLOWT, rhymes with "shout") v. scorn or mock

The defiant student expressed his contempt for authority when he flouted the formal dress code regulation by appearing in only his underwear. If you flout the warnings about excessive eating and alcoholic drinking, you may get gout (a painful inflammation of the joints, especially in the big toe).

2. **disdainful** (dis DAYN ful) adj. scornful and contemptuous

The arrogant prince treated his servants disdainfully. After he lost his money and health, the once disdainful egotist became quite humble and even compassionate. "Disdain" can be a noun meaning "contempt" or a verb meaning "show contempt or scorn, think unworthy of notice or response." In Aesop's fable of the lion and mouse, a lion grabs a mouse but disdains to kill it. Later when the lion becomes entangled in a hunter's net and the mouse sets him free by chewing through the rope, the lion's disdain changes to appreciation.

3. **surfeit** (SUR fit) n. excess or overindulgence, especially in food and drink

The wedding reception provided a surfeit of rich food and expensive champagne. The verb "surfeit" means "supply or feed to excess." The children surfeited on sweets at the birthday party; that evening they all had stomachaches.

4. **prologue** (PRO log) n. introduction

The prologue of *Romeo and Juliet* gives background information about the play and sketches the plot by telling how it will take the deaths of "a pair of star-crossed lovers" from feuding families to reconcile the households. When the infant Hercules grasped a deadly serpent in each fist and squeezed the life from them, the act was a prologue to his future heroic feats.

5. **odious** (OH dee us) adj. hateful, offensive, disgusting, repulsive, repugnant, abhorrent

After hearing the prophecy of three witches, the once valiantly noble Macbeth becomes an odious villain who kills—among others—his comrade, his king, and an innocent woman and her child.

6. **preposterous** (prih POS tur us) adj. ridiculous, obviously absurd, contrary to reason  
Do you find it preposterous to have a pet rhinoceros? Do not take Mr. Abe Surd as your business partner; he talks rationally but will act preposterously.

7. **derision** (dih RIZH un, rhymes with "vision") n. ridicule, mockery  
After his business venture failed, the merchant had to endure his rival's derision. When the ailing prisoner asked for a doctor, his cruel guards responded with derisive (dih RY siv) or mocking gestures. The massive thug laughed with contempt and derided his elderly, frail-looking victim when the old man warned him not to use violence; however, the supposed victim—a world-famous judo master—had the last laugh.

8. **sojourn** (SOH jurm) n. temporary stay, visit & v. stay, visit, or reside temporarily  
Every summer we sojourn in our cottage in Victoria, Canada. Life on this planet is a mere sojourn; we are all sojourners here during our brief stay.

## Working With Words

Complete the following sentences by using each of the following words only once: flout, disdainful, surfeit, prologue, odious, preposterous, derision, sojourn.

- One of the most famous introductions in literature is Chaucer's \_\_\_\_\_ to *The Canterbury Tales*.
- We enjoyed our month's \_\_\_\_\_ in London before returning to our home in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Whereas my older sister always wanted to obey the rules, my rebellious younger sister would continually \_\_\_\_\_ authority.
- When the researcher advertised for subjects willing to participate in a study showing the effects of chocolate ice cream on memory, she had a \_\_\_\_\_ of applications.
- The physically deformed and shockingly evil Richard III is one of Shakespeare's most \_\_\_\_\_ villains.
- The spoiled, pampered princess thought no one worthy of her and snubbed her suitors with \_\_\_\_\_ contempt.
- Our ancestors would have considered air travel, instantaneous world-wide communication, and transplants of vital organs \_\_\_\_\_.
- If someone would have predicated our modern achievements in transportation, communication, and medicine to our ancestors, they might have laughed in \_\_\_\_\_.

## Vocabulary Power Through Shakespeare

Match the word on the left with its definition.

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| ___ 1. disdainful   | a. scorn or mock |
| ___ 2. prologue     | b. introduction  |
| ___ 3. preposterous | c. ridiculous    |
| ___ 4. sojourn      | d. excess        |
| ___ 5. odious       | e. mockery       |
| ___ 6. surfeit      | f. visit         |
| ___ 7. flout        | g. contemptuous  |
| ___ 8. derision     | h. hateful       |

## A Midsummer Night's Dream

### Words in context of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Helena now finds her way to the sleeping Lysander. He awakes and declares his love for her. Helena thinks Lysander mocks her and says it's bad enough that Demetrius rejects her but now Lysander "must **flout** my insufficiency....in such **disdainful** manner me to woo." She feels that Lysander **flouts** or mocks her because she is insufficient in beauty and therefore he **disdainfully** or contemptuously woos her. As Helena runs away, Lysander says,

She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there,  
And never mayst thou come Lysander near.  
For, as a **surfeit** of the sweetest things  
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings...  
So thou, my **surfeit**..  
Of all be hated, but the most of me!

Just as a **surfeit** or excess of sweets becomes hateful to the stomach, so Hermia has become hateful to Lysander. He then pursues Helena. Hermia wakes from a nightmare to discover that she is alone. She determines to find Lysander.

In another part of the forest, the Athenian workmen meet to rehearse their play. Bottom says the women will be afraid when they see Pyramus kill himself. Bottom therefore suggests that they "write...a **prologue**...to say we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed...and that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver." While stating the ridiculously obvious, this **prologue** or introduction conveys the childlike naiveté of the actors. Bottom further illustrates his comic ineptitude when as Pyramus he recites his line, "Thisbe, the flowers of **odious** savors sweet," bungling what should be "odorous savors sweet" or sweet smells into **odious** or disgustingly repulsive smells.

Unknown to the actors, Puck has been observing their rehearsal. When Bottom temporarily departs from the other actors after saying some lines, the mischievous Puck transforms Bottom's head into that of an ass or donkey. As Bottom returns to his group, the others see his monstrous disfigurement and flee. Bottom then comes upon the sleeping Titania who wakes, looks upon him, and falls in love.

Meanwhile, Oberon has informed Puck that Puck put the love potion on the wrong man. Oberon begins to remedy the error by putting the love potion on the eyelids of a sleeping Demetrius. He tells Puck to bring

Helena here so that Demetrius will wake to love her. Puck, amused by the confusing events, says,

Lord, what fools these mortals be...  
Then will two at once woo one...  
And those things do best please me  
That befall **preposterously**.

He is happiest observing life at its most **presposterous** or ridiculously absurd.

Helena then appears, still pursued by Lysander. Lysander protests that his love is sincere:

Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?  
Scorn and **derision** never come in tears.

His tears prove a sincerity devoid of **derision** or mockery. The nearby Demetrius wakes up, sees Helena, and proclaims his love. Helena thinks they both mock her. Demetrius declares,

Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none.  
If e'er I loved her, all that love is gone.  
My heart to her but as guest-wise **sojourned**,  
And now to Helen is it home returned,  
There to remain.

Demetrius states that his passion for Hermia was a mere **sojourn** or temporary visit and he now returns to stay with his true love Helena. Hermia then enters this scene. The four lovers create a scene of hilarious confusion and outrage. Lysander leaves followed by Demetrius who seeks him for a duel.

Oberon and Puck, unnoticed by the four mortals, have observed their meeting and departure. Oberon tells Puck to cloud the night sky and imitate the voices of Lysander and Demetrius so as to confuse these two men about each other's whereabouts; in this way they will be led astray and not find each other for a sword fight. Finally, Lysander and Demetrius grow weary and fall asleep, unaware that they lie near each other. Weary and unaware that they wander near Lysander and Demetrius, Helena and Hermia come near the men and also lie down and sleep. Puck then applies a magical antidote on Lysander's eyes to remove the spell of the love

potion. When the mortals awake, Lysander will love Hermia and Demetrius will love Helena.



Learn these words from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Set III

1. **amiable** (A [pronounced like the letter "a"] mee uh bul) adj. friendly, good-natured, pleasant, cordial, congenial  
Susannah's amiable personality wins her many friends. Do not fight with your brother but settle your differences amiably. Guard dogs like Doberman pinschers do not have reputations for amiability with strangers.
2. **upbraid** (up BRAYD) v. scold or criticize severely; reproach, reprimand  
The coach upbraided us for playing sloppy basketball.
3. **enamored** (ih NAM ur) v. inflame or fill with love; charm, captivate  
We knew we were in for a long evening since the speaker was enamored with his own voice. Passionate readers are enamored of books.
4. **loathe** (rhymes with "clothe" as in "I will clothe you in a mink coat") v. dislike intensely, hate, detest  
What do you do when you love someone who loathes you? The monster filled us with fear and loathing. Do not confuse "loathe" with "loath" (rhymes with "both") which means "reluctant, unwilling, averse." Although I was offered a generous salary, I am loath to work for a company whose products I loathe.
5. **visage** (VIZ ij) n. face, appearance, countenance  
Perhaps the most famous visage in literature is that of Helen of Troy of which Christopher Marlowe (an English playwright and poet born the same year as Shakespeare) wrote: "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships..."
6. **amity** (AM ih tee) n. friendly or peaceful relations; friendship  
The United Nations strives for amity among the nations of the world.
7. **seethe** (SEETH, rhymes with "breathe") v. be disturbed or agitated; boil  
"Seethe" means "to bubble, foam, or boil" as when the surf seethes with foam or a boiling teakettle seethes. "Seethe" also means to boil in agitation or rage. As my father saw me parking his new sports car after return-

ing from a small collision, he seethed in anger. When I asked him if he was happy I did not get hurt, his seething temper erupted like a volcano.

8. **tedious** (TEE dee us) adj. tiresomely long or dull; boring, wearisome  
The neglected housewife thought her life was one long tedious routine of doing the same chores over and over and over again. She tried to relieve her tedium or boredom and weariness by watching soap operas and reading romance novels.

9. **premeditate** (pree MED ih tayt) v. plan or think out in advance  
Although the actor's response to the questions seemed impromptu, his answers were the product of lengthy premeditation earlier that day with publicity agents. The prosecuting attorney demonstrated that the defendant's slaying of his wife for infidelity was not an instantaneous passionate reaction but a premeditated murder that he had planned for months. The professor would never consciously premeditate or plan in advance his classroom lectures so they always seemed natural and spontaneous; however, his lifetime of study might be considered an unconscious premeditation.

10. **audacious** (aw DAY shus) adj. bold, daring, reckless; shamelessly rude, disrespectful, or insolent  
"Audacious" can mean "shamelessly disrespectful"; "audacious" can also mean "daring or bold" in either a reckless or a spirited and positive way. When David volunteered to fight Goliath, many thought David would be slain after his audacious or bold and daring decision to fight Goliath. During class a student corrected a faulty quotation of the teacher; the pompous instructor regarded the act as audacious or insolent, evidently believing that no one would have the audacity (aw DAS ih tee) or insolence to question his knowledge. Of course, the rest of the class admired their fellow student for her audacity or daring boldness to confront the teacher.

11. **epilogue** (EP uh log) n. concluding speech or poem spoken directly to an audience at end of a play; concluding part of a literary work  
The prologue of the play introduced the background for the events that would follow, and the epilogue told the fate of the characters after the play's action had concluded. In the epilogue to her historical novel, the author explained to what extent she had either conformed to or imaginatively amplified and deviated from the recorded facts.

12. **reprehend** (rep rih HEND) find fault with; scold, blame, rebuke  
 The manager reprehended the night watchman for falling asleep.  
 "Reprehend" commonly appears in its adjective form "reprehensible"  
 (rep rih HEN suh bul) meaning "blameworthy." Because the sleeping  
 night watchman was considered reprehensible for not preventing the  
 recent thefts, he was fired.

## Working With Words

Complete the following sentences by using each of the following words  
 only once: amiable, upbraid, enamor, loathe, visage, amity, seethe,  
 tedious, premeditate, audacious, epilogue, reprehend.

1. My roommate would \_\_\_\_\_ me for returning drunk in the middle of the night and waking him by slamming the door.
2. Although their countries had a long history of bitter conflict, the two foreign students in my university laboratory became close friends and maintained an \_\_\_\_\_ relationship for the rest of their lives.
3. In the \_\_\_\_\_ to his collection of scientific essays written over the last thirty years, the author describes important discoveries made after some of the essays were written.
4. The violinist performed so perfectly that not even the harshest and most severe critics could find anything to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. While my ex-wife cataloged my faults to my girlfriend, I began to \_\_\_\_\_ in anger.
6. The prosecutor showed beyond doubt that the victim's death was not an accident by proving that the accused did indeed \_\_\_\_\_ the murder.
7. If marching across the stage in the nude at your graduation ceremony is bold and reckless, would strolling through a nudist colony with your clothes on be considered equally \_\_\_\_\_?
8. Is it possible to love our enemies rather than \_\_\_\_\_ them?
9. The jagged scar, torn ear, and large canine teeth made his \_\_\_\_\_ terrifying.
10. After the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln sought to erase enmity or hatred between North and South and to restore \_\_\_\_\_ or friendly relations.
11. Fragrant incense, sparkling jewels, and rapturous music \_\_\_\_\_ my senses.
12. Dr. Samuel Johnson, author of a great eighteenth-century English dictionary, must have thought this task \_\_\_\_\_ because he wrote these lines after completing the work:

And weary of his task, with wondering eyes,  
 Saw from words piled on words a fabric rise,  
 He cursed the industry, inertly strong,  
 In creeping toil that could persist so long,

## Vocabulary Power Through Shakespeare

And if, enraged he cried, heaven meant to shed  
In keenest vengeance on the guilty head,  
The drudgery of words the damned would know,  
Doomed to write lexicøns [dictionaries] in endless woe.

## *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

*Match the word on the left with its definition.*

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| ___ 1. seethe        | a. detest            |
| ___ 2. audacious     | b. boring, wearisome |
| ___ 3. enamor        | c. blameworthy       |
| ___ 4. loathe        | d. concluding part   |
| ___ 5. reprehensible | e. plan              |
| ___ 6. amity         | f. bold              |
| ___ 7. visage        | g. boil              |
| ___ 8. epilogue      | h. charm             |
| ___ 9. premeditate   | i. face              |
| ___ 10. tedious      | j. friendship        |
| ___ 11. amiable      | k. scold             |
| ___ 12. upbraid      | l. friendly          |

Words in context of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

**M**agic still casts its spell on Titania as she tells Bottom,

Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,  
While I thy **amiable** cheeks do coy [caress],  
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek, smooth head,  
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

“**Amiable**” here means “lovely, loveable,” slightly different than the modern meaning of “friendly, pleasant.” Oberon watches as Titania lovingly strokes and kisses ass-headed Bottom. When Titania and Bottom fall asleep, Oberon says that recently he “did **upbraid**” or scold her for doting on Bottom. He then asked her for the Indian boy which she immediately gave him. Oberon now feels sorry for his queen and releases her from the spell that makes her love Bottom. When she awakes, Titania says,

My Oberon, what visions have I seen!  
Methought I was **enamored** of an ass.

She then looks upon the sleeping Bottom with whom she was **enamored** or passionately in love and exclaims,

O how mine eyes do **loathe** his **visage** now.

Titania now **loathes** or hates his **visage** or face. Reconciled with Titania, Oberon says,

Now thou and I are in new **amity**.

**Amity** or friendship between Oberon and Titania is restored.

With the arrival of day, Theseus's hunting party comes to the forest and finds the four lovers sleeping near each other. The lovers awake but cannot fully explain what happened. Demetrius then tells Theseus that he no longer loves Hermia and wishes to marry Helena. With this happy resolution to the lovers' problems, Theseus proclaims that the two couples will join him and Hippolyta for a triple wedding ceremony. To complete

the happy outcome of events, Bottom wakes up in another part of the woods restored to his normal form and rejoins his friends.

Reflecting on the young lovers' strange story of their night in the woods, Theseus says,

Lovers and madmen have such **seething** brains....  
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet  
Are of imagination all compact [composed].

The **seething** or agitated minds of lovers, lunatics, and poets all share a surfeit of imagination.

Theseus then asks his director of entertainment what will be the amusement for the evening. The entertainment director lists several options, among which is

“A **tedious** brief scene of young Pyramus  
And his love Thisbe”....  
A play there is, my lord, some ten words long,  
Which is as brief as I have known a play;  
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long,  
Which makes it **tedious**.

The director says that the play is short but not short enough to prevent it being **tedious** or tiresome. He advises that this play acted by common laborers is not for Theseus. However, Theseus insists on the play. Theseus explains his choice by saying that many great men of learning have come

To greet me with **premeditated** welcomes,

but out of fear have become flustered and silent.

Out of this silence yet I picked a welcome,  
And in the modesty of fearful duty  
I read as much as from the rattling tongue  
Of saucy and **audacious** eloquence.  
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity  
In least speak most, to my capacity.

The great men of learning who came with **premeditated** or planned welcomes became so nervous because of the great respect and admiration

## Vocabulary Power Through Shakespeare

they felt for Theseus that their minds froze and they could not remember their lines. Such silence speaks as loudly to Theseus as **audacious** or bold eloquence. Love and tongue-tied simplicity express more than the most sophisticated and elaborate speeches.

Bottom, Quince, and the other workers then perform their play—in all their awkward, blundering simplicity—to the delight of Theseus and his court. As the play ends, Bottom asks Theseus,

Will it please you to see the **epilogue**, or to hear a ...  
dance between two of our company?

Of course, one most likely “hears” an **epilogue** or concluding speech and “sees” a dance rather than vice versa. Once again Bottom has botched his lines. Theseus selects the dance. After the completion of “Pyramus and Thisbe,” a play within the play, Puck concludes *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by addressing the audience:

Gentles [ladies and gentlemen], do not **reprehend**....  
Give me your hands, if we be friends.

Puck's lines function as an **epilogue** asking the audience not to **reprehend** or find fault with the play and to show their appreciation by clapping their hands.

## A Midsummer Night's Dream

### REVIEW EXERCISE

Select the definition closest in meaning!

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 1. entreat       | (a) beg (b) explain (c) scream (d) reward             |
| 2. wane          | (a) enlarge (b) absorb moisture (c) decline (d) panic |
| 3. disdainful    | (a) uncertain (b) scornful (c) happy (d) joyous       |
| 4. epilogue      | (a) concluding part (b) beginning (c) land (d) sky    |
| 5. reprehend     | (a) praise (b) capture (c) blame (d) understand       |
| 6. flout         | (a) scorn (b) introduce (c) depart (d) whip           |
| 7. upbraid       | (a) support (b) design (c) scold (d) wash             |
| 8. audacious     | (a) generous (b) stingy (c) noisy (d) bold            |
| 9. visage        | (a) cemetery (b) prison (c) face (d) castle           |
| 10. surfeit      | (a) excess (b) deficiency (c) appearance (d) hobby    |
| 11. sojourn      | (a) soldier (b) visit (c) weapon (d) fortress         |
| 12. enamor       | (a) escape (b) explain (c) charm (d) renounce         |
| 13. premeditate  | (a) pray (b) plan (c) anger (d) sing                  |
| 14. lamentable   | (a) sorrowful (b) playful (c) insightful (d) grateful |
| 15. dank         | (a) hot (b) cold (c) dry (d) damp                     |
| 16. amiable      | (a) athletic (b) wise (c) careful (d) pleasant        |
| 17. seethe       | (a) explain (b) disagree (c) boil (d) prepare         |
| 18. vexation     | (a) praise (b) joy (c) education (d) annoyance        |
| 19. prologue     | (a) path (b) introduction (c) conclusion (d) sign     |
| 20. loathe       | (a) collect (b) clean (c) detest (d) congratulate     |
| 21. pomp         | (a) showy display (b) athlete (c) cruelty (d) gift    |
| 22. dissension   | (a) agreement (b) disagreement (c) home (d) pain      |
| 23. odious       | (a) unimportant (b) pleasant (c) helpful (d) hateful  |
| 24. preposterous | (a) ridiculous (b) indecisive (c) stern (d) skillful  |
| 25. tedious      | (a) exciting (b) boring (c) mournful (d) confusing    |
| 26. amity        | (a) friendship (b) explosion (c) fever (d) enemy      |
| 27. extempore    | (a) cold (b) hot (c) humid (d) without preparation    |
| 28. progeny      | (a) parents (b) children (c) enemies (d) friends      |
| 29. entice       | (a) tempt (b) heal (c) disagree (d) introduce         |
| 30. derision     | (a) exploration (b) violence (c) ridicule (d) love    |