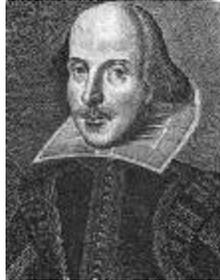


Shakespeare Forever!



“...our schools may be wasting precious years by postponing the teaching of many important subjects on the ground that they are too difficult... The foundation of any subject may be taught to anybody at any age in some form.”

Jerome Bruner, The Process of Education

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Program Outline and Overview

Grade Levels and Students: Nineteen students with various academic levels participated in this program and met daily in a 2nd grade inclusion classroom. We used one classroom computer and students only needed to know how to use the mouse. I am currently using this program with a 3rd grade class. This program can easily be adapted for students in a general education or inclusion 2nd, 3rd, or 4th grade classroom. It can be used with a small or large group of students. The program addresses the needs of an inclusion class by using many hands-on activities, including dramatic play, rhythmic lessons, and graphical organizers. The major difference between the grade levels is that more students will read the plays independently in the higher levels, whereas in 2nd grade and possibly in 3rd grade, the teacher will engage more of the students through read-alouds, guided reading, and shared reading.

Implementation: This program is implemented as part of the daily three-hour reading and writing workshop block for a four-week author study on Shakespeare. An alternative implementation is to spread the program out over four months, doing one week of Shakespeare per month. All that is necessary for this unit to be successful is a space for sharing books and writing, two or three Lois Burdett Shakespeare Can Be Fun books, and at least one book with actual lines from Shakespeare's plays. It also helps to have one computer with PowerPoint software. Also, if possible, I highly recommend that students be exposed to a Shakespearean actor who works with children and that students take at least one field trip that exposes them to Shakespearean drama. Some suggestions for these activities are listed in the Resources section.

Major Goals: The instructional purpose of this program is to instill an appreciation for and a familiarity with Shakespeare in elementary-age students who are in the early stages of literacy. The program reinforces specific reading strategies that are crucial for growth in literacy. These strategies include: Understanding Sequence; Comparing and Contrasting; Making Predictions; Finding Word Meaning in Context; and Identifying Figurative Language. The English Language Arts NYC Performance Standards that are achieved in this program are: Reading E1b, E1c; Writing E2b, E2c; Speaking, Listening, and Viewing E3b; Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language E4a, E4b; and Literature E5a, E5b.

Overview: The themes that Shakespeare's plays touch upon are universal in a way that appeal to children as well as to adults. This program's approach to Shakespeare makes students confident and engaged about leading literate lives both in and out of school. Shakespeare has motivated my students to become better readers and more creative writers. Their eyes light up at the simple mention of Shakespeare, and they are more engaged in listening to, reading, and writing about his plays and characters than about any other author we have studied to date.



Lesson Plan I: Introduction to William Shakespeare (90 minutes)
(Best done around Halloween time, but not required).

Aim: Who is William Shakespeare?
What do the lines in his plays sound like?
What is the difference between a tragedy and a comedy?

Materials:

- *Life of Shakespeare* PowerPoint presentation (see Resources)
- Text of the witches' chant from *Macbeth* (see Resources)
- Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss
- Writing journals
- Pattern for paper witches (see Resources)
- Black, green, yellow, and white construction paper
- Tape or glue

Direct Instruction: (20 minutes)

Motivation: Who is William Shakespeare? (Write a few student answers on the board.)

Give students a quick introduction to Shakespeare (born in England, wrote plays and poems during the 1600s, the most famous writer in the world, usually studied by high school and college students). Tell students they will learn more about his life from the PowerPoint presentation they will see in a few minutes.

Tell them that Shakespeare's plays have a certain rhythm, and sound it out using the witches' rhyme from *Macbeth* (see Resources section). Have them repeat it. Then read a few lines from Green Eggs and Ham and discuss the similar rhythm they hear.

Introduce the words tragedy and comedy. (Quite simply, in a comedy, there is usually a happy ending and the main characters usually get married. In a tragedy, there is usually a sad ending and the main characters usually die.) Tell them that *Macbeth* is a tragedy and that today they will be learning a chant done by the three witches in *Macbeth*, as well as making paper witches.

Tell the students that they will be divided into four groups and that each group will have a chance to:

1. Learn the witches' chant from *Macbeth*
2. Read a PowerPoint presentation about the life of William Shakespeare
3. Make a paper witch for Halloween.



Group/Independent Work: (60 minutes)

Three stations are set up in the room. Each group should rotate and go to each station within 60 minutes.

At station 1 (15 minutes), there is the PowerPoint presentation that the students read through. Then they each write three facts they learned about Shakespeare in their writing journals.

At station 2 (15 minutes and best on the rug), the teacher teaches the witches chant, emphasizing the rhythm of the lines, saying them with expression, and adding some simple choreography.

At station 3 (30 minutes), students create construction-paper witches by following written directions and diagrams on the pattern (if a teacher's aid is available, this is the best station for her/him).

Whole Group Sharing: (10 minutes)

Each group acts out the lines of the witches' chant in the correct order, with expression and some choreography. Then the entire class performs the witches' chant together.

Notes and Advice:

- If you cannot do this lesson near Halloween, it is still appropriate. You may want to eliminate the paper witch station and shorten the 90-minute lesson to 60 minutes.
- I found that the three witches from *Macbeth* were a great first taste of Shakespeare for the students. However, *Macbeth* is a particularly bloody Shakespeare play, and I chose to go no further than this lesson regarding this tragedy.



Lesson Plan II: Figurative Language Through Letter Writing (60 minutes)

Aim: What would letters between the characters in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* say?

Materials:

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream: For Kids* by Lois Burdett
- Chart paper
- Markers/crayons
- Writing journals

Direct Instruction: (20 minutes)

Motivation: Read-aloud the first half of *A Midsummer Night's Dream: For Kids* by Lois Burdett. Read a few of the example letters in the book as you go along. When you finish reading, re-read some of the example letters.

Discuss the adjectives that the writers use. Point out that the students who wrote these letters are in second grade. Make a list on chart paper of the adjectives and other descriptive phrases that the students hear in the letters. Compare sentences with a lot of descriptive detail (from the letters in the book) to less interesting sentences like "I like you a lot." Discuss why the letters are so much more exciting with the adjectives.

Tell the students that they are going to pretend that they are characters from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Write a letter together as a class. Ask, "Who should we be?" "Whom should we write to?" Write the letter on chart paper (going over the format of letters) as the students dictate what to write. Emphasize using adjectives and descriptive phrases, referring to the list of examples.

Tell the students that they now have a chance to write a letter on their own, and that they can choose to be any character from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ask, "Who will you be?" "Who will you write to and what would you say?" Remind them to convince the person they are writing to by using a lot of adjectives and descriptive phrases.

Group/Independent Work: (20 minutes)

Students return to their desks and take out their Writer's Notebooks. They write their own letters, pretending they are characters from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Students illustrate their letters if they have time. (Be sure to look at the student letters on pages 15-19 in Samples of Student Work!)



Whole Group Sharing: (10 minutes)

Selected students read their letters out loud on the rug.

Notes and Advice:

- Before doing this lesson, read through *A Midsummer Night's Dream: For Kids* by Lois Burdett and notice the letters that are written by her second grade students. Choose ones that you think best illustrate the use of adjectives and descriptive phrases.
- For older students, the discussion of similes, metaphors, and personification is also appropriate in this lesson. In fact, I introduced these terms to my second grade class through this activity.



Lesson Plan III: Sequence of Events (60 minutes)

Aim: What is the sequence of events in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*?

Materials:

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream: For Kids* by Lois Burdett
- Sequence of events worksheet (see Sample Worksheets)--the answer key is under Notes and Advice below
- Scissors
- Crayons/markers
- Chart paper

Direct Instruction: (20 minutes)

Discuss what has happened so far in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ask, "What happened in the beginning of the play?" "What happened in the middle?" Write student answers on chart paper that is divided into three sections labeled Beginning, Middle, and End.

Motivation: Ask the students if *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a comedy or a tragedy. Discuss how they can tell.

Read-aloud the second half of *A Midsummer Night's Dream: For Kids* by Lois Burdett.

Discuss the order of events. Ask, "What happened in the end?" Fill in the 'End' section of the chart paper.

Define *sequence* as the order of events in a story. Tell students that they will now get a chance to sequence the events as they happened in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Group/Independent Work: (20 minutes)

Students return to their desks with a worksheet that contains two groups of four scrambled events that took place in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. One group of events is what happened in the fairy world and one group of events is what happened in the human world. Students are to number the events for each group in order.

Once students have correctly sequenced the events, they then choose either the fairy world or the human world and cut out the text describing those events. They then paste the events in order on a storyboard and illustrate the storyboard (see pages 20–22 in Samples of Student Work).

Whole Group Sharing: (10 minutes)

Selected students share their storyboards on the rug.

Notes and Advice:

- Answer key to Sequence of Events worksheet: Fairy World: 2,1,4,3; Human World: 4,1,3,2



Lesson Plan IV: Comparing and Contrasting (60 minutes)

Aim: What are the similarities and differences between Shakespeare’s characters in *Romeo and Juliet* and in his other plays?

Materials:

- Romeo and Juliet: For Kids by Lois Burdett
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Venn diagram worksheets

Direct Instruction: (25 minutes)

Motivation: Who knows the name of Shakespeare’s most famous love story? What do you know about it? Write student answers about Romeo and Juliet on a white board or chalkboard underneath the heading, Romeo and Juliet.

Read-aloud the first half of Romeo and Juliet: For Kids by Lois Burdett.

Ask students what characters they have met so far and list them on a white board or chalkboard.

Draw a Venn diagram on chart paper. Label one circle “Romeo” and one circle “Paris.” Ask students what they noticed was the same about Romeo and Paris. Write their answers in the middle of the Venn diagram. Explain to them that they just *compared* Romeo and Paris.

Ask students what they noticed was different between Romeo and Paris. Write their answers on the outsides of the Venn diagram. Explain to them that they just *contrasted* Romeo and Paris.

Demonstrate how, when we compare two characters, we are pointing out what is the same, and that information goes in the middle of the diagram because that’s where the circles share the same space. When we contrast two characters, we are pointing out what is different, and that information goes on the outside of the diagram because that’s where the circles have their own space.

Ask students what other Shakespeare characters they could compare and contrast in *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Let students know that they can also compare characters from different plays. Make a list of the pairs of characters that they come up with, such as Lysander and Demetrius, Helena and Hermia, Juliet and Hermia, Lord Capulet and Lord Montague, etc.

Tell students that they will now pair up and select one pair of characters from *Romeo and Juliet* and/or *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and compare and contrast them using a Venn diagram.

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Molly Buck

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Show students the Venn diagram worksheet and remind them that they must label each circle with one of the characters' names.

Group/Independent Work: (20 minutes)

Students pair up and each pair receives a Venn diagram worksheet. They are told to discuss the similarities and differences between the two characters they selected and then label the worksheet and put the information in the correct place.

Whole Group Sharing: (5 minutes)

Selected students share their Venn diagrams on the rug.

Notes and Advice:

- This is an excellent activity to do for a few days in a row. Students can work with partners during the first one or two workshops, and then create Venn diagrams on their own.



Lesson Plan V: Making Predictions (65 minutes)

Aim: What do you predict will happen at the end of *Romeo and Juliet*?

Materials:

- Romeo and Juliet: For Kids by Lois Burdett
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Writing journals

Direct Instruction: (20 minutes)

Motivation: Who can tell us where we left off with *Romeo and Juliet* yesterday? What do you predict will happen next?

Discuss how we make intelligent predictions. Emphasize that it is important to use what we know about the characters, the events, and the author.

Read the second half of Romeo and Juliet: For Kids by Lois Burdett, but stop before the last three pages. During the read-aloud, stop on every few pages and have students predict what will happen next.

When you get to the third-from-last page, close the book and tell them that you are not going to read the end just yet. First, they are going to predict what they think will happen at the end of *Romeo and Juliet*, using what they know about the characters, the events, and the author. Tell them that they must use details. For example, if they think Romeo and Juliet are going to run away together and be happy, they must describe how they escape. If they think one or both of them will die, they must use details. (But emphasize to them that they can use details without being gory.)

Group/Independent Work: (20 minutes)

Students return to their desks and write about their predictions in their writing journals.

Whole Group Sharing: (15 minutes)

Selected students read their predictions. Then the teacher reads the last three pages of the play.



Lesson Plan VI: Word Meaning In Context (60 minutes)

Aim: How do we figure out what a word means when we are reading independently if we do not have a dictionary?

Materials:

- Macbeth: For Kids by Lois Burdett
- A Choice of Shakespeare's Verse by Ted Hughes (or another resource with actual lines from Shakespeare's plays)
- Worksheets with lines from *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (see Sample Worksheets)
- Crayons
- White construction paper
- Writing journals

Direct Instruction: (20 minutes)

Motivation: Have students recite the witches' chant from *Macbeth*. Prompt them if they do not recall the entire thing. Ask, "How did we know what a cauldron was?" Discuss how we can use different parts of a sentence to help us figure out words we do not know.

Tell students that today they are going to listen to some of Shakespeare's actual writing and figure out what words means that they may not know. Let them know that most people do not read Shakespeare until high school, but if they use this strategy (i.e., finding word meaning in context), they will b able to read some of his actual writing in elementary school.

Write a list of the new words that they will hear on chart paper from a passage out of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Tell students to listen for those words as you read and try to figure out what they mean. After reading the passage, discuss what the new words mean by going through each word on the list and repeating the line that contains the word. Repeat this exercise with a passage from *Macbeth* or *Romeo and Juliet*.

Tell students they will now partner up and receive a piece of paper with a line from either *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *MacBeth*, or *Romeo and Juliet*. As partners, they are to discuss what the line means and write it in their own words, using the strategy for learning new words that they practiced.

Group/Independent Work: (20 minutes)

Students then pair up and each receives a piece of paper with one line from either *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Students translate the line in their own words, writing in their journals. Once they have discussed their translation with the teacher, they write their own words underneath the actual Shakespeare line and then illustrate the paper to demonstrate what the line means.

Whole Group Sharing: (10 minutes)

Selected students share their translations on the rug and discuss how they figured out what new words meant. Be sure to congratulate them on reading and understanding the Bard's own words!



Sequence of Events worksheet

Directions: Put the following events from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in order by writing the number 1, 2, 3, or 4 in the boxes provided. First sequence the events in the Fairy World, and then sequence the events in the Human World.

Fairy World

- Oberon tells Puck to find the magic flower so that he can play a trick on Titania.
- Titania and Oberon argue over the boy that Titania has.
- Titania wakes up and falls in love with Nick Bottom, who has a donkey's head.
- Titania's fairies, Peasblossom, Moth, Cobweb, and Mustardseed, sing Titania a lullaby.

Human World

- Lysander and Demetrius argue over who loves Helena the most.
- Egeus, Hermia's father, tells her that she has to marry Demetrius.
- Puck makes a blunder and puts the love potion in Lysander's eyes.
- Hermia and Lysander run away together into the woods.



Word Meaning in Context worksheet

Directions to teachers: Type each of these groups of lines on the top of a piece of white construction paper, with the name of the play on the top in larger font and then center the text. The children write their own words and draw their illustrations below these lines after conferencing with the teacher about their translation. There are many other lines from Shakespeare's plays that can and should be used as well.

From *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them into shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

The course of true love never did run smooth.

I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment:
If you were civil and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury...
If you were men, as men you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so;

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact

If we shadows have offended
think but this and all is mended
that you have slumbered here while these visions did appear,
and this weak and idle theme is no more yielding than a dream

From *Macbeth*

All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury
Signifying nothing.



Look like th' innocent flower, but be the serpent under't.

Avaunt and quit my sight!
Let the earth hide thee!

From *Romeo and Juliet*

Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.

What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet

O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she



Resources:

General:

- The *Shakespeare Can Be Fun* Series by Lois Burdett – [A Midsummer Night’s Dream: For Kids](#), [Macbeth: For Kids](#), [Romeo and Juliet: For Kids](#)
- [A Choice of Shakespeare’s Verse](#) by Ted Hughes (ed.)

Introduction to Shakespeare (Lesson I):

- *Life of Shakespeare* PowerPoint presentation: <http://danaelayne.com/britishlit.html> - click “The Life of Shakespeare PowerPoint” link
- Text to Macbeth’s witches’ chant (slightly adapted to emphasize the rhythm):
*Fair is foul and foul is fair,
Hover through the fog and air,
Double, double, toil and trouble
Fire burn and cauldron bubble*
- Paper witch pattern: <http://www.dltk-holidays.com/halloween/mpaperwitch.html>

Additional Resources:

Books:

- [Bard of Avon: The Story of William Shakespeare](#) by Peter Vennema
- [The Best-Loved Plays of Shakespeare](#) by Jennifer Mulherin and Abigail Frost
- [The Budding Genius Book of Reproducible Activities](#) by Carole Marsh and Kathy Zimmer
- [A Child’s Portrait of Shakespeare](#) by Lois Burdett
- [The Children’s Shakespeare](#) by Edith Nesbit
- [The Complete Works of William Shakespeare](#) (many publications)
- [Hamlet: For Kids](#) by Lois Burdett
- [Shakespeare for Children](#) by Jim Weiss
- [Shakespeare for Kids: His Life and Times: 21 Activities](#) by Colleen Aagesen and Margie Blumberg
- [The Tempest: For Kids](#) by Lois Burdett
- [Twelfth Night: For Kids](#) by Lois Burdett
- [Under the Greenwood Tree: Shakespeare for Young People](#) by Barbara C. Holdridge (ed.)
- [William Shakespeare and The Globe](#) by Aliko
- [William Shakespeare: Poetry for Young People](#) by David Scott Kastan, et al

Live Performance:

- Shakespeare’s Haunted House at Belvedere Castle in Central Park – Free! Check out <http://www.geocities.com/zorikh/schedule.html> for annual details.



Dear Hermia, your eyes
Shine like Crystal's and
jewels. I hate Demetrius.
I Love you Hermia.
From Lysander.



Dear Hermia, How do you get so beautiful? Do you know how to get beautiful? My heart is beating for Demetrius. If he nevr likes me I would be heart broken.

Love Helena

love Helena



C Dear Nick's bottom,

P

H I think you like Titania and I know

D

V Titania likes you too because Puck

M

5 put the love juice on Titania.



Dear Donkey,

I hope you come again, with your darling nose it's just like
a rose. With your touch your my prince, with the fairs
around I treat you with respect. if you get harmed
I'll be there for you. It's better with you around
because we can go on amazing adventures together.

Love,
Titania ♡♡♡♡

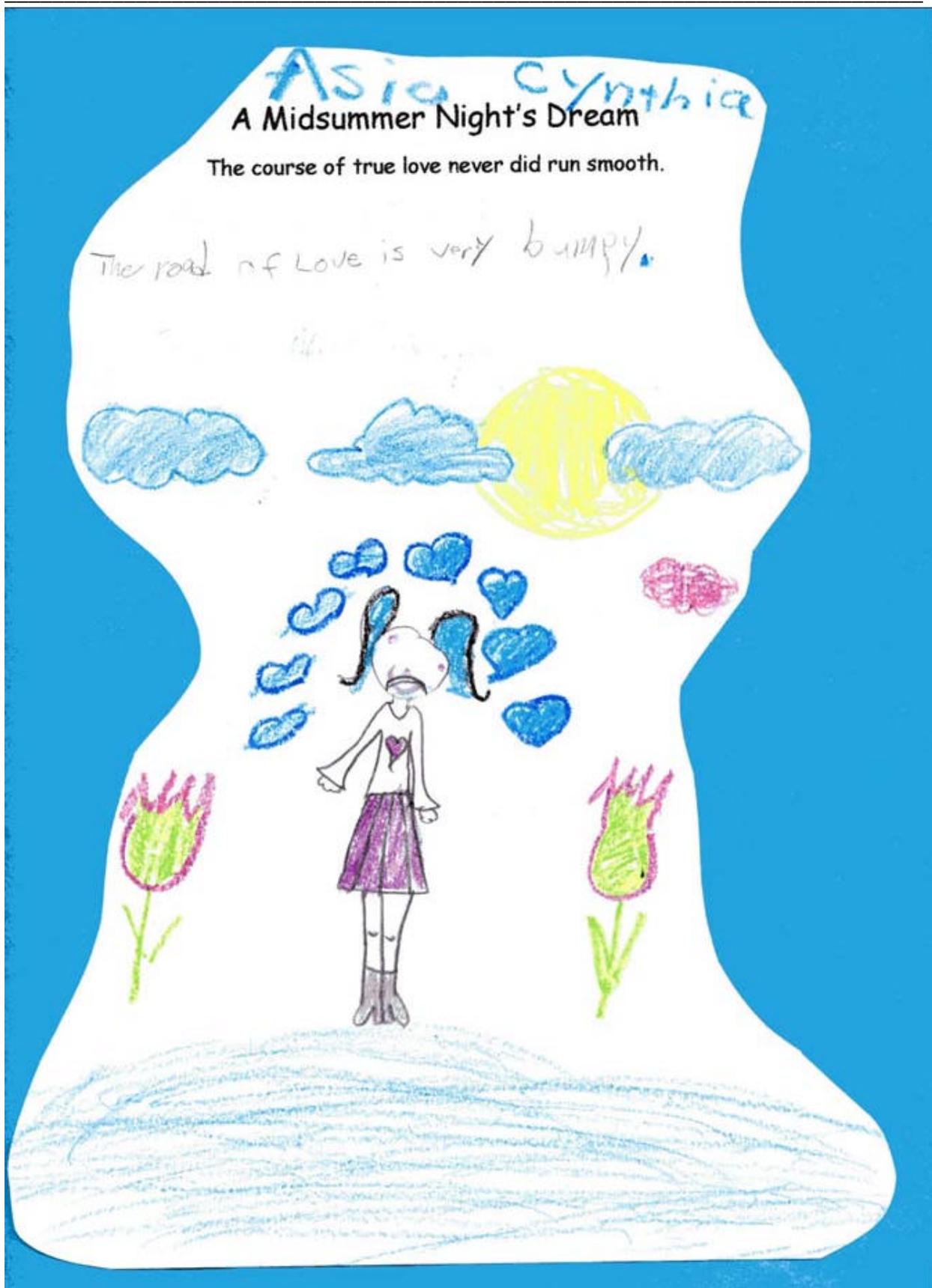


Dear Lysander,

I dream to go and run away but my father will find us every where we go, even if we go to twilight to get merry at your aunts house. My heart is full of joy, how I dream to marry you I will get my head chopped off, now I'm full of gloom, my heart is broken in pieces, my beauty is awful.

Love, Hermia







A Midsummer Night's Dream

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them into shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

The poet rolls his eyes and he looks at heaven and earth. His pen turns heaven into words. He uses his imagination.



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