



Fairy Tales

Recommended year group: Year 7

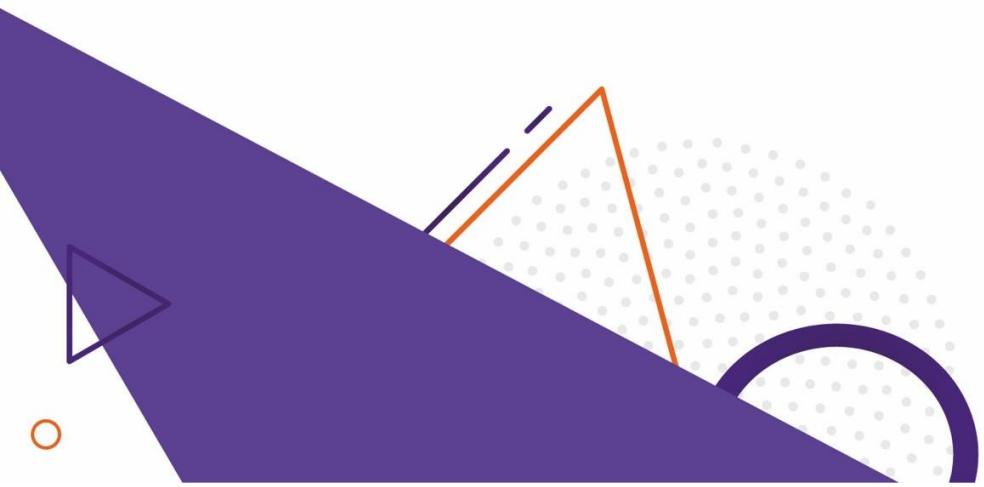
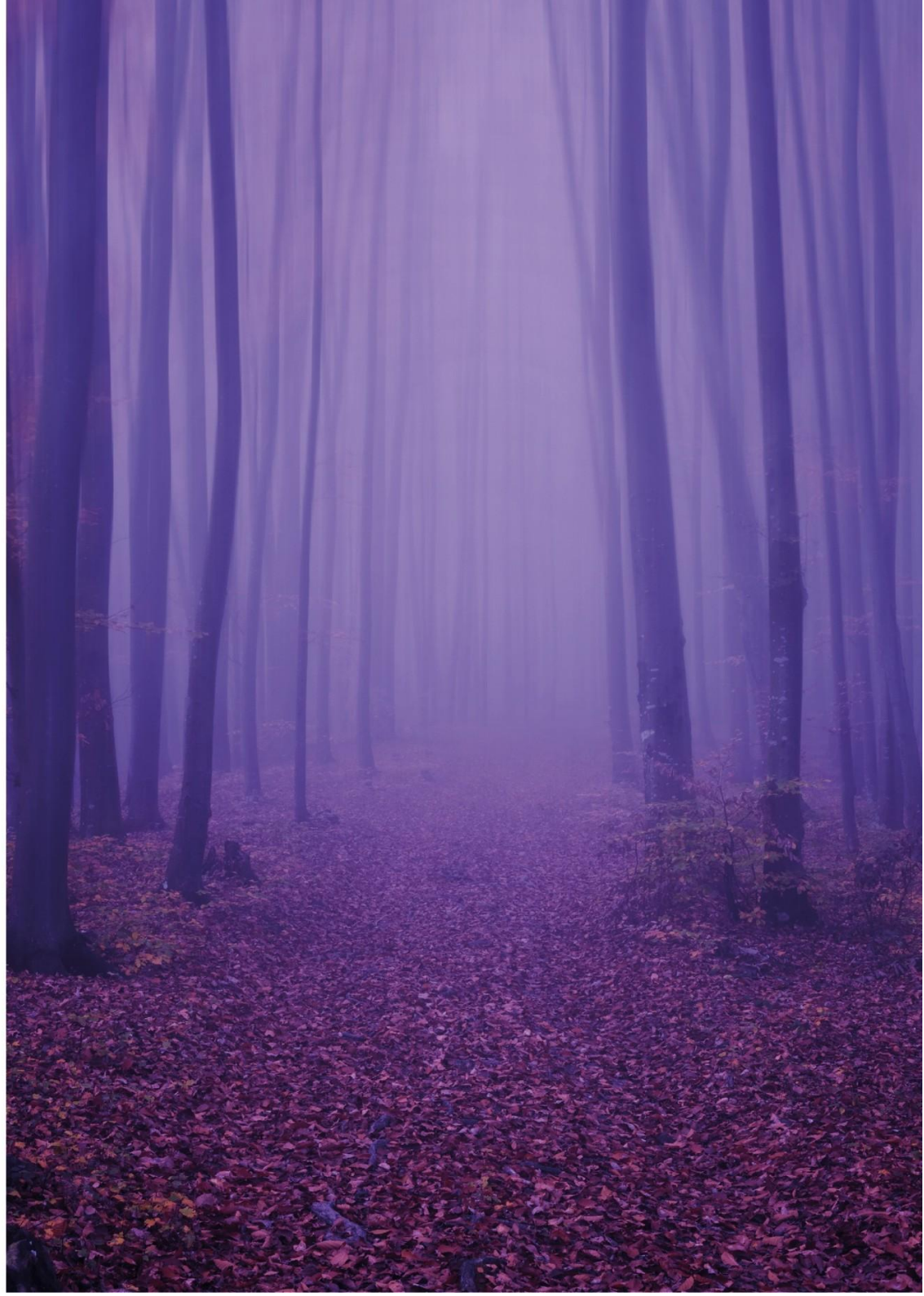
Subject focus: Art, Drama, English

Driving question

Are fairy tales relevant today?

Introduction

The intention of this theme is to complete an in-depth study of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Students will complete character and language analysis with a focus on being able to cite specific textual evidence. Furthermore, students will need to use their creative skills to create fairy tale settings and perform to an audience.



Learning Checks

Lesson 3 – Creating Settings:

C.RD.01: Refining the processes and techniques through initial practice. Selecting and testing ideas. Developing an in-depth understanding of skill.

Lesson 6 – Big Read – Love’s Cruel Sting

How does Shakespeare use language to present Helena’s thoughts and feelings through her Soliloquy?

RL.UT.01 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly

Lesson 8 – Personification

CL.WP.01: Write imaginative, interesting and developed texts (Ideas)

CL.WP.05: Select effective vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose (Word Choice).

Cultural capital suggestions

 **Read:** *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* – William Shakespeare

 **Look:** *BBC One - A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Russel T. Davies offers a dystopian take on *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, with a twist ending.

 **Listen:** William Shakespeare: Homeschool History *BBC Radio 4 - Homeschool History, William Shakespeare* A brief history of the life and times of William Shakespeare.

Key vocabulary

actor, adjective, adjudicator, adverb, analysis, audience, characters, choreographer, context, conventions, costume designer, crew, depth, description, differences, dimensions, director, diversity, dream, editing, ending, entertainment, epilogue, evidence, exclamatory sentence, expectations, exposition, extended metaphor, freeze frame, genre, gossip, iambic, impact, inference, interpret, juxtaposition, language, light technician, love, lovesick, marketing officer, materials, metaphor, mood board, morality, narrative, noun, pentameter, perform, personification, playwright, qualifications, quotations, relevance, representation, resolution, rhetorical question, roles, segment, senses, set designer, setting, shading, similarities, sketch, skills stage, stereotypes, stereotypical, stimulus, structure, synonym, theme, verb, vocabulary

Extended learning opportunities

Places to visit

This section offers a selection of virtual trips that support knowledge of key areas and attractions from the lessons:

Shakespeare’s Globe Virtual Tour – Explore the stage where *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* was performed.

<https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discover/about-us/virtual-tour/>

Shakespeare’s Birthplace Museum – Virtual or in-person visit for historical context. <https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit/shakespeares-birthplace/>

Efteling Fairy Tale Forest (YouTube Virtual Tour) – A European theme park dedicated to fairy tales. [Wandeling door het Sprookjesbos](#)   - [Geniet thuis van de Efteling - YouTube](#)



People, Place and Time

The 'People', 'Place' and 'Time' resources provide support to key knowledge throughout the theme. More specifically:

- **People:** fact files on key people who have had an influence in this theme. Students can use these to research information, or they can be used as WAGOLs for fact files.
- **Place:** provides a visual representation of a fabulous tour of favourite fairy tales from around the world.
- **Time:** highlights of the history of fairy tales. Students will explore some of this in more detail during a lesson. They provide students with further context and depth of the history of fairy tales.

Family learning opportunities

'Believe it or not' and 'Once upon a time' activities allow students to complete quests with friends, family or guardians outside of the classroom environment. These activities are engaging and provide additional context to the lessons studied in the theme.

Ideas for discussion at home:

Discuss fairy tales that you may have read to your child when they were younger. What can they remember? Ask whether they can attach a message to any classic fairy tales.

Recommended Reading

1. Grimm's Fairy Tales – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm

Free online version: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2591/2591-h/2591-h.htm>

A timeless collection of traditional fairy tales.

2. Fairy Tales for a New Generation – Chris Colfer

Modern twists on classic tales that explore identity, resilience, and friendship.

3. The Sleeper and the Spindle – Neil Gaiman

A beautifully illustrated retelling that blends *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White*.

4. Into the Woods – Lyn Gardner

A magical adventure that plays with fairy tale conventions.

5. The Girl Who Speaks Bear – Sophie Anderson

Inspired by Russian folklore, this story explores belonging and transformation.

6. A Tale Dark and Grimm – Adam Gidwitz

A witty, slightly macabre retelling of Grimm stories. Encourages critical thinking about tone, audience, and why darker elements exist in traditional tales.

7. The Land of Stories series – Chris Colfer

Combines classic fairy tale characters with modern protagonists.

8. Fearless Fairy Tales – Konnie Huq & James Kay

Humorous, contemporary takes on traditional tales with social commentary. Great for discussing relevance and modern values in storytelling.

Why These Books Matter

Build cultural capital: Students see how stories evolve across time and cultures.

Support creativity: Links directly to our Big Write tasks on personification and descriptive writing.

Encourage discussion: Themes like identity, resilience, and morality connect to PSHE and Citizenship.

Lessons

Lesson title	Subject	Essential knowledge/concepts	Competencies	National curriculum coverage
Lesson 1: <i>A Midsummers Night's Dream</i> : A Shakespearean fairy tale	English	Discover the conventions of a typical fairy tale. Explore the connection between Shakespeare and fairy tales.	CL.SL.05: Develop and adapt discussion skills and strategies in formal and informal contexts (group discussion and interaction).	English Understanding and using the conventions for discussion and debate, as well as continuing to develop skills in working collaboratively with peers to discuss reading, writing and speech across the curriculum.
Lesson 2: Conventions of fairy tales: <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	English	Identify the conventions of a fairy tale from the exposition of <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> . List the main events in the exposition of the story.	RL.PV.01: Cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions drawn from the text.	English Develop an appreciation and love of reading and read increasingly challenging material independently through Shakespeare. Read critically through studying setting, plot and characterisation, and the effects of these.
Lesson 3: Creating Settings	Art	Explore different types of music and the emotions they evoke. Create rough sketches of your stage. Produce a mood board to gather inspiration for an art project.	C.RD.01: Refining the processes and techniques through initial practice. Selecting and testing ideas. Developing an in-depth understanding of skill.	Art Produce creative work, exploring ideas and recording experiences through sketching and mood boards. Increase proficiency in drawing techniques by practising one- and two-point perspective to show depth and space. Use a range of media and approaches to refine designs for stage settings inspired by <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> . Evaluate and analyse sketches, adding annotations to explain choices and improvements. Develop cultural understanding by linking artistic techniques to theatre design and historical context.

Lesson 4: Entertainment news	English	Work collaboratively to create a realistic news segment. Use technology efficiently, safely and responsibly.	C.DR.02: Performing to an audience (performance skills).	English Working effectively in groups of different sizes and taking on required roles, including leading and managing discussions, involving others productively, reviewing and summarising, and contributing to meeting goals/deadlines.
Lesson 5: What is love?	English	Analyse the text, identifying and explaining the key features of the middle part of the story. Explain, interpret and examine key quotations on the theme of love. Use iambic pentameter to create poetry.	RL.ID.01: Make logical inferences from texts.	English Develop an appreciation and love of reading and read increasingly challenging material independently through Shakespeare. Read critically through studying setting, plot and characterisation, and the effects of these.
Lesson 6: Love's cruel sting	English	Explain Helena's thoughts and feelings in her speech in Act 1, Scene 1. Identify and interpret Shakespeare's use of language to convey Helena's thoughts and feelings.	RL.ID.03: Identify and interpret language devices and sentence forms, including determining technical, connotative and figurative meanings, and analyse how they affect meaning or tone.	English Develop an appreciation and love of reading and read increasingly challenging material independently through Shakespeare. Read critically through studying setting, plot and characterisation, and the effects of these.
Lesson 7: Careers in theatre	PD	Identify different roles within theatre. Research the necessary qualifications, skills and experience to successfully pursue a career in theatre. Application of job role skills.	PD.CA.02: Experiencing the world of work.	Gatsby Benchmark 4 Linking curriculum learning to careers.

Lesson 7: Big Write –	English	Determine the differences between descriptive and narrative writing. Practise vocabulary, sentences and paragraphs for writing descriptively.	CL.WP.05: Select effective vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose.	English Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
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