

Shakespeare Can Be Fun!

A Midsummer Night's Dream

For Kids



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Lois Burdett , William Shakespeare

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Change and transformation are central to the action, themes and language of A Midsummer Night's Dream. In this lucid study Helen Hackett shows how the play participates in a widespread 1590s concern with mutability; often, as here, expressed through moon-imagery, and associated with representations of the ageing Virgin Queen. However, it is also very much a play about procreative change, set at one of the 'green hinges' of the year, to use Angela Carter's phrase. The happy ending is marked by multiple marriages; and yet, these marriages have been achieved through conflict and force. Comedy veers close to tragedy, and vice versa in the inset Pyramus and Thisbe performance, illustrating Shakespeare's sense of the innate indeterminacy of genres. It is also Shakespeare's most Spenserian play in its depiction of a supernaturally animated natural world, providing the grounds for the characterization of Shakespeare as a poet of nature which was to prove so influential for Milton and the Romantics.

A Midsummer Night's Dream for Kids Details

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Author : Lois Burdett , William Shakespeare

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From Reader Review A Midsummer Night's Dream for Kids for online ebook

Heather Lei says

This book had some really good aspects. Shakespeare is one of the most influential writers in history but he is a bit difficult for elementary students to read. I really liked the idea of a book that could introduce young children to his works thereby sparking an interest in future teens to read the actual works written by the man himself.

In this aspect I think it succeeds. The story is pared down and written in a simple, yet engaging, way. Throughout the book it included illustrations, letter, and comments made by students around second grade age. These livened the book and made it more interesting to look at.

My complaint is about the quality of the poetry. Many people seem to think that poetry is just rhyming the last words of sentences that are paired together, ignoring meter altogether. Meter is a very important part of poetry and should not be neglected.

I hear your argument now. "It's just for kids, it isn't like it's Shakespeare." Well, you're right. And wrong.

There is a misconception that if something is for kids or is informal then quality doesn't matter. I argue that it does. If kids aren't exposed to quality as children, how will they recognize it or be able to produce it as adults. Stories don't have to be as complex, or deal with inappropriate issues, but they should be well composed at the very least. This is where the book falls short.

Valerie Stonesifer says

I love this series so much! The story is written in couplets and has lots of quotes from the actual play, but is easy for kids to understand. I think this is a great intro to Shakespeare. Burdett captures the mood and humor of the original play really well.

Trenare says

Kid friendly Shakespeare. The illustrations are by young kids, very cute. A nice intro to Shakespeare.

Cyndi says

Check out the art!

Dana says

My daughter and I loved these books by Lois Burdett when she was younger. What a wonderful introduction to Shakespeare! This was our FAVORITE of the series!!!

Katy says

Shakespeare for kids...a great concept. Told in poetic form, retold by kid, illustrated by kids. The possibility of how to use this play with kids is great! The plus of this book was I saw a way to differentiate reading instruction for my advanced readers.

Pam ?Because Someone Must Be a Thorn? Tee says

Great rhyme. Great Read-aloud. The artwork by kids, is kid-friendly, as is the prose. This book gets across the basics of the tale in language that kids can understand. My daughter and I loved it. (She's 10). We enjoyed the little letters that the children wrote -- chuckling over the misspellings. And she enjoyed the mischievous pranks of Puck and lovers' woes. And me... I enjoyed introducing Shakespeare's stories to her.

Highly recommend.

Suzanne says

This was so fun to read through with kids. Warning: the clever poem uses the 3 letter "a" word for donkey!

Erin says

My son's attention span is not his best feature, but this book (60+ pages, and took more than a half an hour to read) had him riveted. My daughter, who is 11 and has mostly outgrown being read to, heard us and had to listen, too.

No, it's not as well-written as the original, but it got their attention and familiarized them with the story.

Dan says

Another quality adaptation. Two stars because the play itself is not one of Shakespeare's better efforts.

Jeanette says

This really helped my 8 year old sort out all the characters in A Midsummer Night's Dream. And he loved the illustrations by kids his own age. After reading this my kids made character grids and illustrations of their own.

Now we are just about ready to read Shakespeare's original play.

Rachel says

A fun version for elementary kids makes it easy to follow the characters. This version brought the story to life for my son. He laughed and was eager to hear more as we read it aloud together. Actually, I enjoyed the simplicity of the story instead of being bogged down with deciphering the words to my child. He was able to grasp the point without losing the poetry of Shakespeare. True, it's not word for word, but the rhyming and poetic beat helped him get a great feeling for the beauty of Shakespeare.

Amanda Nuchols says

We bought this book for my 9-year-old daughter when we visited the Utah Shakespearean Festival this Summer to see "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "Treasure Island." Lois Burdett has done a fantastic job recognizing the humor of Shakespeare and making it accessible and fun for today's children. The explanation boxes are hysterical. I highly recommend this series for anyone, even adults.

Katie says

Lovely adaptation! Easy enough to understand for my 6 year old, and she really appreciated the kid-drawn pictures and letters and things. Even my 3 year old listened for the entire book!

Celia says

This series (Shakespeare for Kids... Lois Burdett) is an excellent introduction to the major plays for children. I'm using them with my daughter this year for second grade, and will probably revisit them with my son. The retelling is accessible without being "cute," and introduces some of the rhyme and meter associated with Shakespeare. The illustrations and some small notes are made by children, making them more enjoyable for young readers. I'd say this would work for most elementary school students, perhaps beginning in second grade or so.
