

Romance: A Midsummer Night's Dream

Context

In the strictest academic terms, a romance is a narrative genre in literature that involves a mysterious, adventurous, or spiritual story line where the focus is on a quest that involves bravery and strong values, not always a love interest. However, modern definitions of romance also include stories that have a relationship issue as the main focus. Written in the mid-1590s, probably shortly before Shakespeare turned to *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is one of his strangest and most delightful creations, and it marks a departure from his earlier works and from others of the English Renaissance. The play demonstrates both the extent of Shakespeare's learning and the expansiveness of his imagination. The range of references in the play is among its most extraordinary attributes: Shakespeare draws on sources as various as Greek mythology (Theseus, for instance, is loosely based on the Greek hero of the same name, and the play is peppered with references to Greek gods and goddesses); English country fairy lore (the character of Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, was a popular figure in sixteenth-century stories); and the theatrical practices of Shakespeare's London (the craftsmen's play refers to and parodies many conventions of English Renaissance theatre, such as men playing the roles of women). Key areas of context relevant to this play would be: the Elizabethan Era, Gender Roles, Social Class.

Narrative Summary

Four Athenians run away to the forest only to have Puck the fairy make both of the boys fall in love with the same girl. The four run through the forest pursuing each other while Puck helps his master play a trick on the fairy queen. In the end, Puck reverses the magic, and the two couples reconcile and marry.

Themes / Ideas

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Romance | |
| Love | |
| Appearance & Reality | |

Key Vocab

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Antagonist | |
| Conflict | |
| Dramatic Irony | |
| Intrigue | |
| Protagonist | |
| Reconciliation | |
| Resolution | |
| Romance | |
| Stagecraft | |
| Treachery | |

Reading

| | |
|--|--|
| Retrieve, Interpret, Infer, Consider, Compare - YR8 EXAM Q1/2 INFER, COMPARE | |
| Analyse Methods (language) - NOTE YR8 EXAM ANALYSE METHODS | |

Writing

| | |
|---|--|
| Letter: Persuade | |
| Speech: Persuade | |
| Prepositions, Conjunctions | |
| Sentences: Clauses (subordinating and coordinating) | |
| Speech | |

Media

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Representation | |
|----------------|--|

Assessment

| | |
|---|--|
| HT5: Yr8 EXAM Reading: Analyse 2 x Non-Fiction Texts (infer, compare, language) | |
| HT6: Writing: Letter: Persuade | |
| HT5/6: Spoken English: Perform | |

Romance: Twelfth Night

Context

In the strictest academic terms, a romance is a narrative genre in literature that involves a mysterious, adventurous, or spiritual story line where the focus is on a quest that involves bravery and strong values, not always a love interest. However, modern definitions of romance also include stories that have a relationship issue as the main focus. Shakespeare wrote Twelfth Night near the middle of his career, probably in the year 1601. Most critics consider it one of his greatest comedies, along with plays such as As You Like It, Much Ado About Nothing, and A Midsummer Night's Dream. Twelfth Night is about illusion, deception, disguises, madness, and the extraordinary things that love will cause us to do—and to see. Twelfth Night is one of Shakespeare's so-called transvestite comedies, a category that also includes As You Like It and The Merchant of Venice. These plays feature female protagonists who, for one reason or another, have to disguise themselves as young men. It is important to remember that in Shakespeare's day, all of the parts were played by men, so Viola would actually have been a male pretending to be a female pretending to be a male. Key areas of context relevant to this play would be: the Elizabethan Era, Gender Roles, Social Class.

Narrative Summary

Twelfth Night is a fast-paced romantic comedy with several interwoven plots of romance, mistaken identities and practical jokes. Separated from her twin brother Sebastian in a shipwreck, Viola disguises herself as a boy, calls herself Cesario, and becomes a servant to the Duke Orsino. He sends her to woo the Countess Olivia on his behalf, but the Countess falls in love with Cesario. Meanwhile Olivia's uncle, Sir Toby Belch, gets drunk with his friend Sir Andrew Aguecheek and they play a trick on Malvolio, Olivia's steward. Eventually Sebastian turns up and causes even more confusion, chaos and comedy.

Themes / Ideas

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Romance | |
| Love | |
| Appearance & Reality | |

Key Vocab

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|----------------|--|
| Antagonist | |
| Conflict | |
| Dramatic Irony | |
| Intrigue | |
| Protagonist | |
| Reconciliation | |
| Resolution | |
| Romance | |
| Stagecraft | |
| Treachery | |

Reading

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|--|--|
| Retrieve, Interpret, Infer, Consider, Compare - YR8 EXAM Q1/2 INFER, COMPARE | |
| Analyse Methods (language) - NOTE YR8 EXAM ANALYSE METHODS | |

Writing

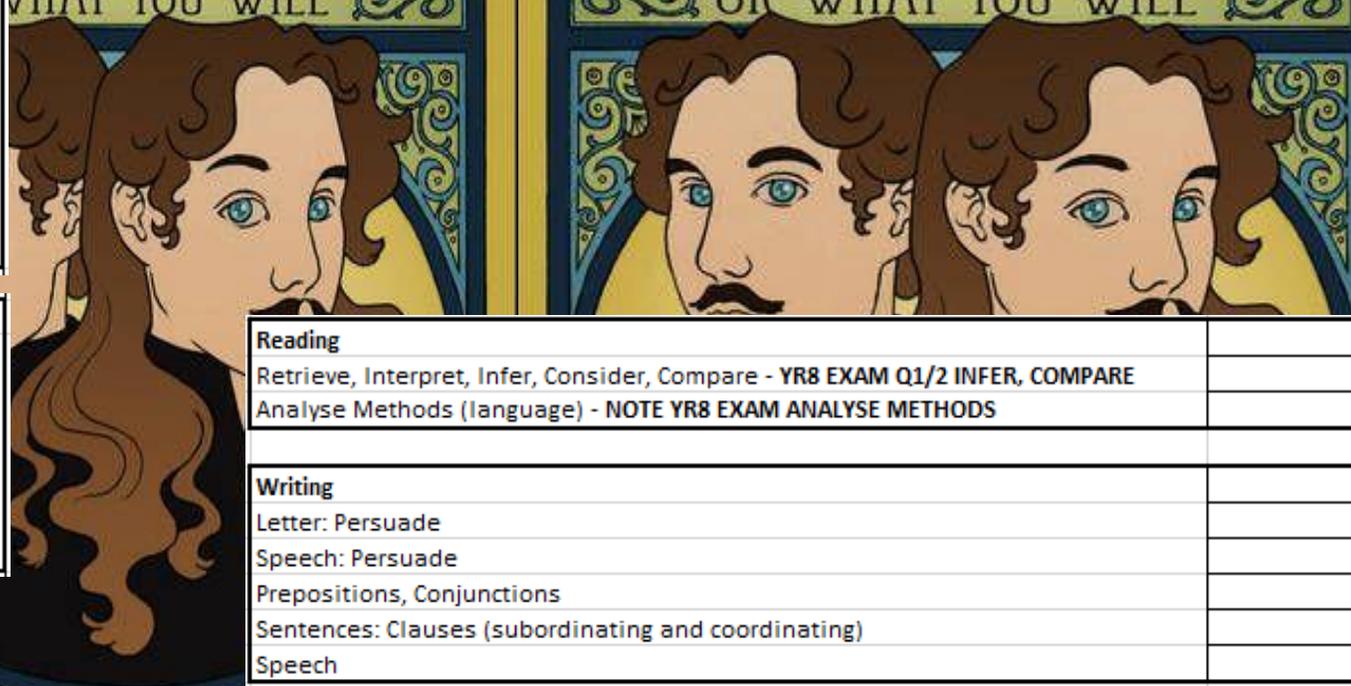
| | |
|---|--|
| Letter: Persuade | |
| Speech: Persuade | |
| Prepositions, Conjunctions | |
| Sentences: Clauses (subordinating and coordinating) | |
| Speech | |

Media

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Representation | |
|----------------|--|

Assessment

| | |
|---|--|
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| HT5/6: Spoken English: Perform | |



Romance: Much Ado About Nothing

Context

In the strictest academic terms, a romance is a narrative genre in literature that involves a mysterious, adventurous, or spiritual story line where the focus is on a quest that involves bravery and strong values, not always a love interest. However, modern definitions of romance also include stories that have a relationship issue as the main focus. *Much Ado About Nothing* is generally considered one of Shakespeare's best romantic comedies, because it combines elements of robust hilarity with more serious meditations on honor, shame, and court politics. It was probably written in 1598 and 1599, as Shakespeare was approaching the middle of his career. Like *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, though interspersed with darker concerns, is a joyful comedy that ends with multiple marriages and no deaths. Key areas of context relevant to this play would be: the Elizabethan Era, Gender Roles, Social Class.

Narrative Summary

Much Ado About Nothing is a comedic play by William Shakespeare about misunderstandings, love and deception. Benedick, Claudio and Don Pedro arrive at Leonato's house in Messina. Beatrice and Benedick bicker with each other and Claudio, a soldier, falls in love with Leonato's daughter, Hero. Don John, who is Don Pedro's evil half-brother, tricks Claudio into believing that he has seen Hero being unfaithful. Meanwhile, Don Pedro and others plot to bring Benedick and Beatrice together. Claudio accuses Hero of infidelity and refuses to marry her. Leonato is persuaded to pretend that she is dead. Hero's innocence is proven and Claudio repents. He agrees to accept Antonio's daughter in marriage and she turns out to be Hero after all! The trick to make Benedick and Beatrice fall in love succeeds and he proposes to her at the end of the play.

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