

Bitesize KS3 English Literature – Shakespeare A Midsummer Night’s Dream – Performance Analysis – Staging the argument between Oberon and Titania (Directors Den) transcript

PRESENTER

Here are the Directors. 12 divorces, nine law suits and three stints in rehab between them, these guys know what they want and they normally get it. Today they’re looking for innovative ways of staging the fairy fight scene from A Midsummer Night’s Dream.

It’s act two, scene one.

TITLE

DIRECTORS’ DEN

First into the Directors’ Den is set designer Geraldine. She’s hoping her organic depiction of a forest will bring this magical world to life for an audience, as the fairy King Oberon and Queen Titania row over the custody of a child, which influences the main action of the play.

GERALDINE

Set in an open air theatre, at night, using real trees and grass on stage, lit only by flame torches and moonlight. The perfect forest setting to A Midsummer Night’s Dream.

PRESENTER

Oberon does say they are ‘ill met by moonlight’, so Geraldine might be into something here.

FEMALE DIRECTOR

Geraldine, I have to admit that would be very atmospheric, and I can see the audience getting involved in the action with such a picturesque setting, there’s just one problem, what if it rains?

GERALDINE

Oh well, it does state in the script that Oberon’s bad mood affects the weather, so if it were to rain I would simply blame the fairies.

DIRECTOR WEARING BLACK SUIT

Geraldine. A Shakespearian audience might have believed in that sort of thing, but a modern crowd would tell you to get lost.

DIRECTOR WITH BEARD

People go to outdoor productions of Shakespeare all the time, I can see this being really engaging.

DIRECTOR WEARING BLACK SUIT

Well not me. I’m not paying to sit in the rain, I’m out.

Bitesize

PRESENTER

Geraldine let down by the elements there. Will designer Steve fare any better with his inventive vision for the scene?

ACTOR WITH BEARD

I do but beg a little changeling boy to be my henchman.

ACTRESS WITH BLONDE CURLY HAIR

Set your heart at rest, the fairyland buys not the child of me.

FEMALE DIRECTOR

Steve, using the smoke to represent the contagious fog and bad weather brought on by Oberon's temper was inspired.

STEVE

Thanks very much.

DIRECTOR WITH BEARD

Hi Steve, it's Peter, I like the way you use the darkness to your advantage, and Oberon is certainly a creature of the night. Well done. Tell me, how did you get the idea for torches?

STEVE

Well I use 'em a lot for my other job, I work nights.

FEMALE DIRECTOR

That's lovely, and what is it you do Steve?

STEVE

I'm a burglar.

PRESENTER

Next into the Directors' Den is young designer Walter, the Directors seem unsure if Walter has an exciting idea, or simply no idea at all.

DIRECTOR WITH BEARD

So Walter, let me just get this straight, this is just a spotlight, there is no actual set? The audience will have to use their imagination?

WALTER

Well that's correct, just a fairy glow about the stage. This whole play could be a dream, so why not let the audience use their imagination.

FEMALE DIRECTOR

Do you know what I think? I think it's cracking, this imagination business. I see it having a really eerie effect on the audience appropriate to the strange and magical fairies in the play, and, it would save a fortune on set design, actually, that's a point, how much does nothing cost?

WALTER

Bitesize

Five million pounds.

DIRECTOR WEARING BLACK SUIT

How on earth did you come up with that figure?

WALTER

Used my imagination.

DIRECTOR WEARING BLACK SUIT

Well Walter. Imagine this. I'm out.

WALTER

Okay.