

# British Literature

## Second Edition

### Coursebook



**Oak Meadow**

Oak Meadow, Inc.  
Post Office Box 615  
Putney, Vermont 05346  
[oakmeadow.com](http://oakmeadow.com)



# Table of Contents

---

<b>Introduction</b> .....	vii
What to Expect in This Course	
Academic Expectations	

## **UNIT 1: *Beowulf***

---

<b>Lesson 1 A Hero Is Born</b> .....	3
<b>Lesson 2 The Monster’s Revenge</b> .....	7
<b>Lesson 3 The Hero’s Return</b> .....	11
<b>Lesson 4 The Translator’s Task</b> .....	15
<b>Lesson 5 The Heart of Beowulf</b> .....	27
<b>Lesson 6 Comparative Essay</b> .....	29
<b>Lesson 7 Story Elements and Images</b> .....	31

## **UNIT II: *Pride and Prejudice***

---

<b>Lesson 8 The Bennet Family</b> .....	37
<b>Lesson 9 Matrimonial Choices</b> .....	41
<b>Lesson 10 Vanity and Pride</b> .....	45
<b>Lesson 11 Service</b> .....	49
<b>Lesson 12 Money Matters</b> .....	51

---

### UNIT III: *Jane Eyre*

---

<b>Lesson 13</b> Lowood Institution .....	55
<b>Lesson 14</b> Thornfield Hall.....	59
<b>Lesson 15</b> Mysteries and Secrets .....	63
<b>Lesson 16</b> The Transformative Power of Love.....	65
<b>Lesson 17</b> Critical Analysis.....	67
<b>Lesson 18</b> Creative Project and Reflection .....	69

---

### UNIT IV: *The Once and Future King*

---

<b>Lesson 19</b> Wart’s Coming of Age .....	73
<b>Lesson 20</b> The Fairy Queen .....	77
<b>Lesson 21</b> The Education of the Future King.....	81

---

### UNIT V: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream or David Copperfield*

---

<b>Lesson 22</b> The Stage Is Set .....	85
<b>Lesson 23</b> Trials and Tribulations.....	91
<b>Lesson 24</b> Fairies, Fools, and a Fight.....	97
<b>Lesson 25</b> Creative Expression .....	101

---

### Unit VI: Poetry and Short Stories

---

<b>Lesson 26</b> Victorian Poetry .....	107
<b>Lesson 27</b> Anthony Trollope: “Relics of General Chasse: A Tale of Antwerp” .....	113

---

<b>Lesson 28 Thomas Hardy: “A Mere Interlude”</b> .....	117
<b>Lesson 29 Whitaker, Fitzgerald, and Sillitoe</b> .....	121
Malachi Whitaker: “Landlord of the Crystal Fountain”	
Penelope Fitzgerald: “At Hiruharama”	
Alan Sillitoe: “Enoch’s Two Letters”	
<b>Lesson 30 D. H. Lawrence: “The Man Who Loved Islands”</b> .....	123
<b>Lesson 31 Virginia Woolf: “Solid Objects”</b> .....	127
<b>Lesson 32 P. G. Wodehouse: “The Reverent Wooing of Archibald”</b> .....	131
<b>Lesson 33 T. H. White: “The Troll”</b> .....	133
<b>Lesson 34 G. K. Chesterton: “The Tremendous Adventures of Major Brown”</b> .....	137

## Final Project

---

<b>Lesson 35/36 Final Essay and Creative Project</b> .....	139
--	-----

## Appendix

---

Academic Expectations .....	142
Original Work Guidelines .....	142
Finding Reputable Sources .....	143
Citing Your Sources .....	144
Elements of Good Writing .....	147
The Writing Process .....	150
Works Cited .....	155



# Introduction

---

Prepare to dive into the worlds of heroes, monsters, fairies, and kings. This course presents a selection of works of British literature beginning with *Beowulf*, the earliest written work of British literature, and spanning through the twentieth century. You will explore classic stories written by some of the most widely read literary icons.

## What to Expect in This Course

In this course, there are 36 lessons divided equally into two semesters. Each lesson represents one week of study (approximately five hours of work).

The following texts are used in this course:

- *Beowulf*
- *Pride and Prejudice*
- *Jane Eyre*
- *The Once and Future King*
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- *David Copperfield*
- *The Oxford Book of English Short Stories*

In each lesson, you will find sections to guide your studies and deepen your understanding of the material:

- **Digging Deeper** gives you background information that helps you interpret the literature within its historical and cultural background.
- **Along the Way** offers guideposts to refer to as you read, highlighting essential text and helping you to identify core themes and concepts. The questions asked in this section are for your thoughtful consideration and are not assignments that need to be completed or submitted to your teacher. You may want to read this before the assigned reading each week so you know what to keep an eye out for, or you can wait until afterward to read it (if you are worried it will spoil the story for you).

- **Writing Tips** gives timely reminders to help you improve and refine your writing skills.
- Definitions of unusual words can be found in a sidebar. Glance over these before each reading assignment.
- At the beginning of each lesson, you will find an **Assignment Checklist** that lets you see all your assignments at a glance. (Assignments will be fully explained in the lesson.)
- At the end of the lesson, you may find a section called **Share Your Work** that provides reminders and information for students enrolled in Oak Meadow School and that also explains how to send work to their Oak Meadow teacher.

The **appendix** contains important material that you will be expected to read and incorporate into your work throughout the year. Take some time to familiarize yourself with the information in the appendix.

## Academic Expectations

The written work for this course includes comprehension and critical-thinking questions, interpretive essays, a Reader's Journal, creative projects, and creative writing. Please follow the assignments in order and write out all your responses in full sentences, maintaining clear paragraph structure. Whenever possible, support your observations with examples, specific details, and direct quotations from the readings.

You are expected to perform your work with integrity and engagement. Your work should be original and give an authentic sense of your thoughts and opinions rather than what you think the teacher who is reviewing your work wants to hear. When you use other sources, you are required to cite them accurately. Plagiarism, whether accidental or intentional, is a serious matter.

The appendix contains information regarding Oak Meadow's academic expectations and original work guidelines as well as information on plagiarism and citing your sources. It is your responsibility to make sure you understand the academic expectations and abide by them.

You will be reminded to submit your work to your Oak Meadow teacher after every two lessons. After you have submitted the first 18 lessons, you will receive a first semester evaluation and grade. At the end of 36 lessons, you will receive a final evaluation and grade.



# UNIT I:

## *Beowulf*

---

### Lessons 1–7

We begin this course with the earliest written work of British literature, *Beowulf*. We will read a translation of this epic poem whose hero becomes a king by defeating a family of dreadful monsters.

In the following lessons on *Beowulf*, references will be made to J. R. R. Tolkien's essays on *Beowulf*, taken from his critical work "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics." Published in 1936, the lecture expressed Tolkien's appreciation of *Beowulf* and brought the poem the attention and dignity it had long deserved.

Tolkien wrote,

In *Beowulf* we have, then, a historical poem about the pagan past . . . composed by a learned man writing about old times, who looking back on the heroism and sorrow feels in them something permanent and something symbolical. (26)

Tolkien's description of the *Beowulf* poet seems also to be an accurate description of the writer of *The Lord of the Rings*, and certainly Tolkien's lifelong scholarly study of Anglo-Saxon as well as his deep appreciation for *Beowulf*, influenced his own epic work.

Tolkien wrote that, for him, the poem was

. . . an opposition of ends and beginnings. In its simplest terms it is a contrasted description of two moments in a great life, rising and setting; an elaboration of the ancient and intensely moving contrast between youth and age, first achievement and final death. (28)

In this unit, we will read and analyze the underlying themes of this epic poem, answer questions, explore the Anglo-Saxon or Old English language, write short essays, and learn about the art and archaeology of the period.

So with *Beowulf* as a fitting first step on our journey into the worlds of heroes, monsters, fairies, and kings, let us begin.

## Lesson

# 1

# A Hero Is Born

---

We will read *Beowulf* in three parts. We will be reading the version of *Beowulf* translated by Seamus Heaney, a contemporary Irish poet and Nobel Prize winner. This translation is an acclaimed masterpiece. Heaney’s spoken reading of his translation can be listened to at the following link:

“Beowulf—Seamus Heaney: Part 1 of 2”

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=AaB0trCztMO](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AaB0trCztMO)

## Learning Objectives

- Analyze the literary technique of foreshadowing.
- Study the effect of word choice on conveying tone.
- Summarize the sequence of story events.

### Digging Deeper

This story is in verse, honoring the historic oral tradition. Lines are numbered for ease of reference (e.g., line 41 or lines 41–45). For thousands of years, oral storytelling was the best way to preserve culture and history. Stories, songs, cultural myths, and personal histories were all handed down orally from generation to generation.

Verse is usually meant to be spoken aloud in the way a storyteller would have entertained crowds long ago. If you read this aloud, the pronunciation rules in “A Note on Names” (found in your *Beowulf* text on page xxvii) will be helpful. You can also read the poem to yourself as if you were reading aloud.

The first part of the poem takes place during Beowulf’s youth, and for the most part the events occur in the land of the Danes, where the King’s Hall has come under repeated attacks each night from the monster, Grendel.

### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- Read the first three pages of the introduction.
- Begin reading *Beowulf*, lines 1–989.
- Define vocabulary words.
- Write a story summary using vocabulary words.
- Write two to five sentences about each question.
- Complete a project of your choice.

**anathema** (110) *n*:  
an abomination; a  
curse

**bothy** (140) *pl*:  
bothies, *n*: a small  
cottage or hut

**thane** (194) *n*: a  
man who held  
land granted by  
the king or lords

**stalwart** (494) *adj*:  
loyal, steadfast

**mizzle** (596)  
*n*: light rain or  
drizzle

**bawn** (721) *n*:  
a fortified wall  
surrounding a  
tower or castle

**ignominious** (842)  
*adj*: disgraceful,  
shameful

## Along the Way

While you are reading, keep notes about passages that feel significant to you. You can highlight or underline these passages in your book, bookmark them with sticky notes, make a note of the line numbers, or keep track in whatever way works best for you.

Consider the following:

- Note how the language in lines 212–227 conveys the temperament and demeanor of the warriors: “climbed eagerly up the gangplank”; “away with a will”; “vaulted over the side.” Even the way the ship and crossing are described sets the stage for recognizing the importance of their arrival.
- Notice how Beowulf states as evidence of his qualifications his former victories with beasts, trolls, and sea brutes (lines 420–422). Do you think Beowulf boasts foolishly (lines 453–440, lines 632–638, and lines 677–687), or is his righteous passion sincere?
- When the hero’s battle begins, it moves with dramatic speed and daring (lines 744–820). You may find yourself wanting to read it a second time because the excitement and immediacy of the scene encourages the reader to race through it.

## Assignments

### Reading

1. First read the initial three pages of Seamus Heaney’s introduction. (The remainder of the introduction is better understood when you have finished reading the poem.)
2. Begin reading *Beowulf*, lines 1–989. You may find that the rhythm and style of language feels unfamiliar at first, but as you continue reading, imagine you can hear the storyteller’s voice. Allow the words to wash over you and create their own world.

### Writing Tips

The standard writing guidelines that should be used throughout this course are as follows:

- Compose a rough draft.
- Revise for content (add details as necessary) and form.
- Proofread your essay.
- Make corrections and edit for clarity.
- Polish your final draft.
- Proofread again.

Follow all writing conventions regarding punctuation, grammar, spelling, capitalization, etc. When your work is complete, include a title to identify your topic if your writing is longer than two paragraphs. Your essay should be typewritten, or handwritten in ink, printed on one side of the paper only.

### Writing

1. Write brief definitions of the following vocabulary words. Be sure to include the part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb) in your definition. The line where each word first appears is noted so that you can see how the word is used in the context of the story.

mead (5)

mettle (659)

foundling (7)

baleful (726)

torque (81)

fen (763)

interlopers (253)

harrowed (767)

undaunted (286)

2. Write a two- to five-sentence summary of what has happened so far in the story using all the vocabulary words above. Alternately, you may make up an original story line in the epic style of *Beowulf* and summarize it using the vocabulary words.
3. Answer each of these questions with a two- to five-sentence short answer:
  - a. Line 86 introduces the first monster. Pay careful attention to how he enters the story. What do we learn about him before he enters the action at line 115?
  - b. Grendel wreaks havoc for “twelve winters, seasons of woe” (line 147). Notice how the use of this particular language expresses the bleakness of the time. How would this passage have felt if the author simply wrote “twelve years”?

- c. The hero is introduced in line 194 but remains unnamed, so we first come to know him by his reputation and actions. Line 248 again refers to the hero's status before Beowulf finally introduces himself in line 343. What effect does this style of introduction have on your feelings about him before Beowulf enters the story?
4. Choose one of the following projects:
    - a. Draw a picture of what Grendel's "home" might look like. Make it as detailed as you can (e.g., carcasses of half-eaten animals, human remains, bones, a nest, etc.).
    - b. Write a journal by one of the warriors accompanying Beowulf on his quest. Write multiple entries. Begin the journal before they set sail and end it after Grendel has been defeated.
    - c. Write a ship's manifest for Beowulf's journey to Heorot. This manifest should include a list of the cargo and passengers. (Make up realistic names.) It should be a detailed account of what was brought on board for this particular trip. Remember to include weaponry and food. Try to make the list sound authentic.

### SHARE YOUR WORK

You will be sharing your work from lessons 1 and 2 after you have completed lesson 2.

## Lesson

# 2

# The Monster's Revenge

---

During a hero's journey, one monster (or monstrous challenge) is never enough. While Beowulf has accomplished what he set out to do, his courage will be further tested.

## Learning Objectives

- Examine the use of archetypes in literature.
- Reflect on how the *story within a story* technique affects pace and flow.
- Determine what the text says explicitly.

### Digging Deeper

As translator, Seamus Heaney notes in the introduction that this poem “possesses a mythic potency.” Deadly monsters are needed to “show off Beowulf’s physical might and his superb gifts as a warrior” (ix, xiv).

In addition to the three agons (or struggles) Beowulf faces, he also finds himself in “three archetypal sites of fear: the barricaded night-house, the infested underwater current, and the reptile-haunted rocks of a wilderness.” As you read about Beowulf’s second challenge, think about how the use of these “archetypal sites of fear” lend added import and tension to the adventure.

### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- Read lines 989–1905.
- Answer questions with a one- to two-sentence short answer.
- Answer three questions with a one- to two-paragraph essay.

**agon** *n*: a conflict between the protagonist and antagonist in a literary work

**archetypal** *adj*: representative of something common to the human experience

**mere** (1364) *n*: a sea or lake

**bulwark** (1389) *n*: a defensive wall; a person or institution that acts as a defense

**alacrity** (1825) *n*: eager and cheerful readiness

## Along the Way

- *Foreshadowing* is a literary technique that escalates the tension by hinting at what is to come. Notice how foreshadowing is used in lines 1233 and 1241, leading to the introduction of “an avenger,” Beowulf’s new foe (1257).
- Beowulf charges forth to meet his new foe, true to form in word and deed (1492). His character is consistently courageous and driven, as evidenced by line 1536: “Life doesn’t cost him a thought.” Consider how this story is character-driven (as opposed to plot-driven) and defined by Beowulf’s strong presence.
- Inspiring respect and loyalty in those around him is a quality of a true hero. Beginning at line 1840, Hrothgar speaks from his heart about his feelings for Beowulf. Consider how this further defines and solidifies Beowulf’s character.
- Several times the author tells a story within the story (see lines 884 and 1070) as previous legends are recounted. How do you feel about these legends? Do you find they interrupt the story’s flow? Do they give you clearer insight into the scene or characters?

## Assignments

### Reading

Read lines 989–1905. Be sure to make note of significant passages; this will help you answer the questions below. You may find it useful to read the questions beforehand to guide your reading and note-taking.

### Writing

1. Answer each of these questions with a one- to two-sentence short answer:
  - a. Beowulf came from an old folktale told in Britain, yet the events in the poem do not take place in Britain. If he were alive today, where would Beowulf live, and where would the great hall of Heorot be?
  - b. How is Heorot, Hrothgar’s hall, described?

- c. Find at least five adjectives or descriptions of Grendel. What is your impression of Grendel based on these words?
  - d. With what weapons does Beowulf propose to do battle with Grendel?
  - e. Describe the haunted mere of Grendel's mother. What feelings does this place evoke?
  - f. What is the heroic code that Beowulf follows?
2. Answer each of these questions with a detailed one- to two-paragraph essay. Use examples and direct quotations to support your observations.
- a. The poem begins (and ends) with a funeral. At the beginning, the funeral that is described is a Viking funeral for Shield. In your own words and citing passages from the text, describe this funeral.
  - b. How does Beowulf prepare for battle with Grendel? How does Beowulf overcome the monster? What is the evidence of his success in battle?
  - c. Describe the battle that Beowulf fights underwater. Whom does he fight? Why? What weapons does he use? What is the outcome?

### Writing Tips

When completing your **short answers**, use detailed, complete sentences. Your writing should be concise and succinct, and yet the questions need to be answered in a comprehensive way.

When completing your **essay answers**, use careful paragraph structure. Take the time to revise for clarity, and then proofread to polish it before submitting your work.

Good paragraphing skills include

- beginning with a focused topic sentence.
- developing supporting details.
- striving for flow and unity between sentences.
- ending with a concluding sentence (if the paragraph stands alone).

### SHARE YOUR WORK

When you finish lesson 2, please send lessons 1 and 2 to your teacher. Begin working on lesson 3. (Do not wait for comments on your first two lessons before beginning the next lesson.)

## Lesson

# 6

# Comparative Essay

---

Since *Beowulf* contains a theme common to many works of literature, you may have already drawn some comparisons with other books you have read or films you have seen.

### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- Write a two- to three-page comparative essay.

## Learning Objectives

- Examine the treatment of the classic story theme in modern film.
- Identify elements of the hero theme.
- Write a comprehensive comparative essay.

### Digging Deeper

Sometimes a book or film will intentionally do a modern retelling of a classic story. Often, however, a new work will parallel a classic tale without conscious effort. This is because classic themes are part of our culture and deeply rooted in the human psyche. Dozens of films have been created around modern retellings of classic literature, such as

*Clueless*, based on Jane Austen's *Emma*

*West Side Story*, based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*

*Ten Things I Hate about You*, based on Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*

*Easy A*, based on Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*

*Whatever It Takes*, based on *Cyrano De Bergerac*, a play by Edmond Rostand

*The Lion King*, based on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

In even more instances, parallels can be recognized between plots that are very dissimilar but contain the same basic elements, in this case heroes and monsters. Try to find a story (print or film version) that tells of a hero's journey and the monstrous obstacles to the hero's goal.

# Assignments

## Writing

Write a two- to three-page essay comparing and contrasting *Beowulf* to a book or film with a similar theme.

### Writing Tips

When writing a comparative essay, there are two main approaches, a block format and an alternating format. For this comparison, it is suggested that you choose the alternating format, as shown below.

1. Introduce your topic with a thesis sentence, stating what you intend to prove or explain in a way that draws readers in.
2. Discuss the similarities between *Beowulf* and your chosen story.
3. Discuss the differences between them.
4. Summarize your argument and draw conclusions based on your opening thesis.

### SHARE YOUR WORK

When you have completed this lesson, send lessons 5 and 6 to your teacher.

## Lesson

# 17

# Critical Analysis

---

## Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Summarize a critical literary essay.
- Identify points of agreement and disagreement.

## Assignments

### Reading

Some of the questions we have been exploring throughout these lessons are addressed and further developed through the contemporary critical essays that are included in the Norton edition. Each essay is worth reading for its depth of analysis.

Choose one of the following essays to examine more closely:

- Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gruber: From “A Dialogue of Self and Soul: Plain Jane’s Progress” (464–487)
- Susan Meyer: From “Colonialism and the Figurative Strategy of *Jane Eyre*” (488–505)
- Carla Kaplan: From “Girl Talk: *Jane Eyre* and the Romance of Women’s Narration” (506–529)
- Kelly A. Marsh: From “*Jane Eyre* and the Pursuit of the Mother’s Pleasure” (529–540)

### Writing

For this lesson on critical scholarship, you will summarize the main themes and arguments, the means through which they are explored, and the conclusion of the article you chose. You will also respond to the article according to the perspectives you have developed while reading the novel, expressing your own opinions about the ideas in the essay.

Assessing criticism is a valuable skill, in any field. But keeping in mind your own reading experience, and acknowledging the singular *Jane Eyre* that you have read, is essential, so feel free to disagree with the scholar’s views.

### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- Choose one contemporary critical essay to read.
- Summarize the thesis, key points, and conclusion of the critical essay.
- State your opinion on the points made by the author, and provide your reasoning.

1. First, read your chosen essay without stopping. Then, go back and read it again.

As you read the essay the second time, underline or make note of the parts that really stand out for you. This will enable you to cite strong textual evidence that supports your understanding of what the text says as well as to notice inferences drawn from the text, including any places where the material leaves matters uncertain.

One strategy is to go through the essay paragraph by paragraph, and clearly indicate the central ideas of each paragraph, which are often found in the first sentence of each paragraph. This will give you an idea of how the author is exploring the main thesis.

Next, answer the following questions.

- a. What is the main thesis or the topic of the essay?
- b. What are the strongest points made in the body of the essay?
- c. What is the conclusion?

After you address a, b, and c, write a summary of the article in one or two paragraphs. In your summary, try not to give any opinions about what you are reading—just describe what you find.

2. What ideas in this essay do you agree with or disagree with? Based on your summary, address the points you agree with and those you disagree with in a full paragraph. State your opinion and reasoning for each point you address.

### **SHARE YOUR WORK**

If you have any questions about your work or the lesson assignments, let your teacher know.

## Lesson

# 23

# Trials and Tribulations

---

## Learning Objectives: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

- Explore emphasis in spoken word.
- Research background of historical context.
- Analyze the complex story line and show how the subplots are related.

## Learning Objectives: *David Copperfield*

- Examine how language has changed over time.
- Summarize key story elements from a character's point of view.
- Explore the hero theme in depth.

### Digging Deeper

#### *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

You will notice that sometimes a word with an accent is included in the margin notes. For example, here is one note:

crowned: crownèd

This is a pronunciation guideline alerting the actor that this word needs to be pronounced with an extra accented syllable, in this case “crown-ed.” In order to make certain lines fit the meter of the verse, poets often use this technique. When you see a note like this in the margin, take a moment to reread the affected line, first saying the word as you normally would, and then with the accented syllable. See if you think adding the accent makes a big difference with how the words fit in.

#### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST: *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*

- Read acts 3–5.
- Read additional front matter.
- Give your interpretation of specific passages.
- Recap the audience's reaction to the play.
- Draw a web of the plot.

#### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST: *DAVID COPPERFIELD*

- Read chapters 5–9.
- Add to your list of characters.
- Use vocabulary words to summarize events in letters to Peggotty or David's journal entries.
- Write a hero essay.

When you hear actors use these abnormally accented words, you may think they are putting on an affectation or that it sounds awkward, but if you really listen to how the word fits into the rhythm of the passage, you might start to think about it differently.

As the play continues, certain characters and scenes may be harder to comprehend than others. Remember to go back and read the commentary after you finish each scene. That will help clarify any questions you might have.

In act 4, when everything is put right, all the wrongs are forgotten as quickly as a dream. All of those who were enchanted, including the fairy queen, seem more than willing to believe it never really happened. This quirk of humanity—shared, it seems, by the fairy realm—that lets us be quick to wish away foolish behavior provides a fittingly silly sentiment to lead us into the end of the play.

### **David Copperfield**

As David's life carries him out of the home and into the world, we see more of his inner strength and character shining through. In this section of the novel, David is cast out into the world, away from his mother and Peggotty and from anyone who loves and cares for him. Notice the tone of the story. While David is telling his story, which is full of atrocities that make our modern sensibilities cringe, he does not wallow in self-pity or seek to engender the pity of others. The tone that Dickens uses creates a very matter-of-fact atmosphere, which gives the story even more impact and realism and allows readers to fully consider and reflect on the story without being mired in sympathetic emotion.

David's age is not mentioned very often, but due to the slow pace of the novel, David is still a child of only ten during his time at school. Think back to when you were ten. How would your character have fared under the circumstances in which David finds himself? Does it make his personal strength seem more heroic when we measure it against our own capacities at the same age?

Because our vocabulary is not as large as that of Shakespeare or Dickens, there are many words that may be unfamiliar, so much so that reading these works can feel a bit like reading another language (albeit not as different as Anglo-Saxon or Middle English). All through this course, we have seen the English language change, and even something written in 1850 in England takes some getting used to. Often Dickens gives you enough information to work out the meaning of a word, but looking up words that you don't recognize or remember is a great way to expand your vocabulary.

#### **phlegmatic**

*adj*: calm and unconcerned

#### **corroborated**

*v*: confirmed

#### **exordium**

*n*: introduction or preamble

#### **crave**, also *crepe*

*n*: a type of fabric; black crape was used to signify mourning

## **Assignments: A Midsummer Night's Dream**

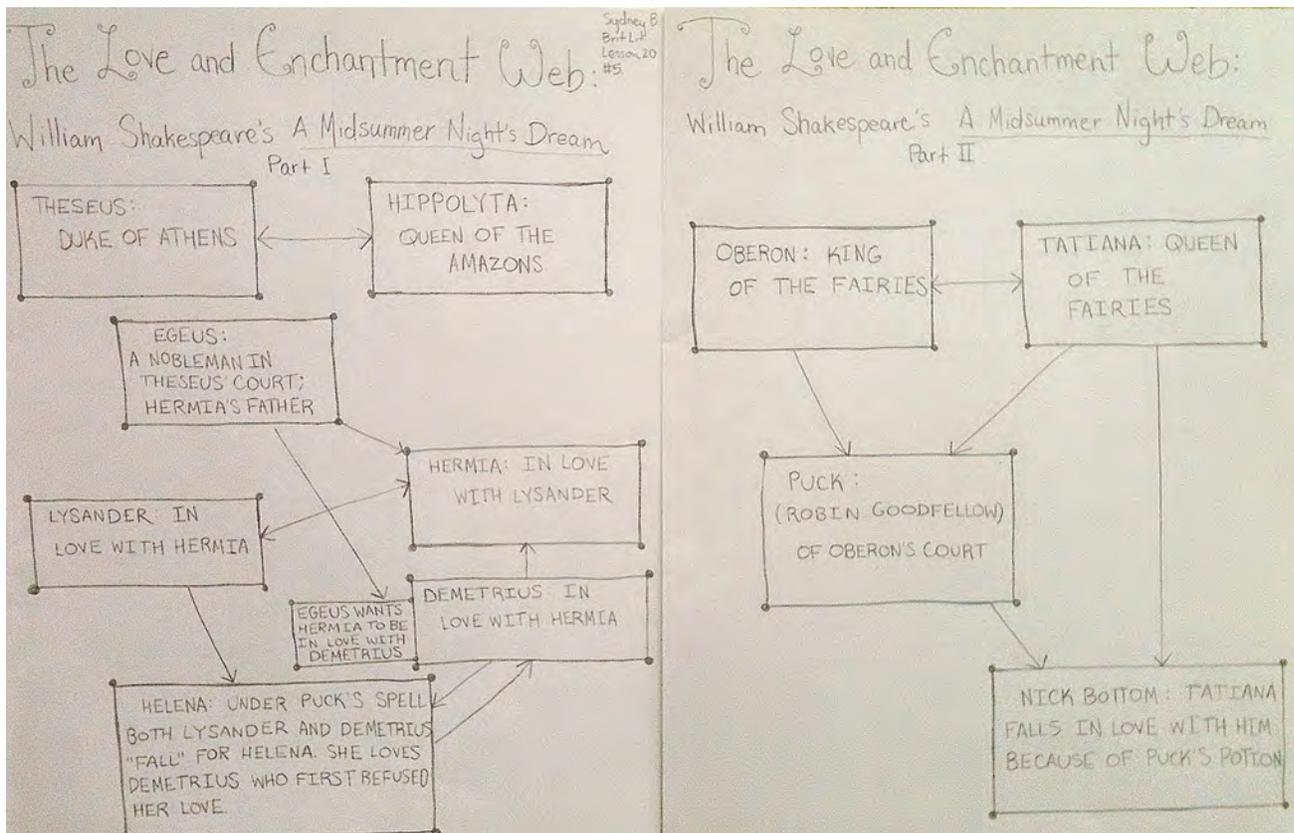
### **Reading**

1. Read acts 3–5. Continue to take notes in your Reader's Journal as the ever-more-complicated events unfold. Pay particular attention to how different events connect the characters to one another.

- After finishing the play, read “Of Imagination All Compact” (xix) and “Source, Text, and Date” (xxiii). These two short pieces will give you background that will help you further understand the play and appreciate its richness.

## Writing

- In your own words, give your interpretation of the following two passages:
  - In act 5, Theseus speaks eloquently about the “poet’s pen” (5.1.12–22). What is he saying here?
  - Just before the play begins, Theseus explains to Hippolyta why he wants to see the play despite Philostrate telling him that the actors are terrible (5.1.89–105). What is he telling her?
- Give a recap of the audience’s reaction to the play. What do Theseus, Lysander, and Demetrius think of the play? Do they and their companions enjoy the play?
- Draw a web of the plot, showing the relationships between the characters. This is a tangled plot, with the lives of the characters mixed up in an intricate web. Just like an idea web that connects one idea to the next, draw a relationship web for this play. For instance, you might start with Oberon and draw a line connecting him to Titania, who connects to Bottom, who connects to Theseus, who connects to . . . You get the idea. Your web should end up very complicated! In addition to drawing the web, add brief explanations for each connection, like this:



## Assignments: *David Copperfield*

### Reading

Read chapters 5–9. Continue to keep track of story events and characters in your Reader’s Journal.

### Writing

1. Add to your list of characters. Describe four more characters, as in the previous lesson, and then choose one physical mannerism, trait, or turn of phrase that epitomizes each character.
2. Summarize the events of each chapter in chapters 5–9, either in letters from David to Peggotty or in David’s journal entries. Use the following vocabulary words. Write in first person, from David’s point of view. Remember, in his letters to Peggotty, he would not let on how bad things were, but in his journal, he would be brutally honest. Include these vocabulary words as you write:

actuate

obdurate

efficacious

alacrity

jocular

3. Write a two- to three-page essay on the qualities of a hero. Consider the first line of the novel: “Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show” (13).

Dickens raises some interesting questions on autobiography and heroism as he begins. In Dickens’s estimation, and in your own, what are the qualities of a true hero? What are the challenges that David, our young hero, faces? Be specific, and provide examples and direct quotations to back up your opinions as you explore this topic.

### Writing Tips

When writing journal entries, you are free to write in a realistic manner. Often journal writing becomes stream-of-consciousness writing, with long sentences that link ideas together freely. At other times, journal writing can be very emotional, without regard to sentence structure or grammar. Remember, you are writing from David’s point of view, not your own. If you choose to write journal entries for writing assignment #2, feel free to write by hand. Handwriting can be very revealing, and can be used to good effect to convey emotions: bold writing to show determination, tiny writing to show depression or uncertainty, underlining and exclamation points to show extreme emotion.

**SHARE YOUR WORK**

If you have any questions about your work, the lesson assignments, or how to share your work, let your teacher know.



# Appendix

---

<b>Academic Expectations</b> .....	142
<b>Original Work Guidelines</b> .....	142
Plagiarism	
<b>Finding Reputable Sources</b> .....	143
<b>Citing Your Sources</b> .....	144
In-text citations	
Citing print, online, and film sources	
Citing images	
<b>Elements of Good Writing</b> .....	147
Varied sentences	
Strong paragraphs	
<b>The Writing Process</b> .....	150
Prewriting activities	
Writing the rough draft	
Revising	
Editing	
Proofreading	
Publishing, submitting, or sharing your work	
Five-paragraph essay	
Comparative essay	
Multimedia presentations	
<b>Works Cited</b> .....	155