

The Midnight Shakespeare Club – Making Connections

Post-Show Activity for Grades 6-12

Goals

- Students will identify and analyze claims regarding human connection from their experience with viewing *The Midnight Shakespeare Club*.
- Students will connect evidence from the play and their lived experience to support their claims.
- Students will develop critical thinking through group discussion and written reflection.

NOTE: This activity has been aligned with TEKS and [Universal Design for Learning](#). Demonstration of Learning and TEKS can be found at the end of this document. [Artful Thinking Routines](#) are regularly referenced to encourage critical thinking.

Materials Needed

- Re-Sourced Guide for *The Midnight Shakespeare Club* (found [here](#)).
- *The Midnight Shakespeare Club* Story Web and Outline (included).
- Writing materials or digital devices for note-taking.
- Art supplies.

Introduction

- Ask students, “How do people form connections with each other?”
 - “How can stories, plays, or shared interests help people connect?”
 - “Have you ever felt connected to someone because of the version of them you imagined, and then realized the real person was different?”
- Bridge to the play: In *The Midnight Shakespeare Club*, connection happens through Shakespeare.
 - Robin connects to Demetri through the story of *Romeo and Juliet*.
 - Weaver uses Shakespeare’s words to calm herself and express what she feels.
 - The play also borrows from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, where people in the forest get confused about love and connection.
- “As we talk today, we’ll think about how Shakespeare helps these characters connect — and how those connections can be real, mistaken, or changing.”

Group Discussion

- Begin by brainstorming with the class a list of claims they can make about connection in the play.
- Encourage claims that connect both to *The Midnight Shakespeare Club* and to the Shakespeare plays it references.
- Possible examples:
 - Shakespeare gives characters words for feelings they do not know how to say on their own.
 - Stories can help people connect, but they can also feed into delusions or blow things out of proportion.
 - People can love the idea of romance more than the real thing.

- Shakespeare’s plays connect people across time because the emotions in them are still recognizable.

Claim, Support, Question

- Refer to the Artful Thinking Routine [“Claim, Support, Question”](#) for guidance for the following activity.
- Divide students into small groups and assign or let them choose one claim.
- Have each group collaborate to explain the claim using evidence from:
 - *The Midnight Shakespeare Club*
 - When relevant, the Shakespeare scenes or references inside the play
 - Draw on the script, performance choices, class discussion, prior knowledge, or related Shakespeare reading.
- Identify support:
 - What specific moments in the play support your claim?
 - What Shakespeare references or scenes support your claim?
 - What do the characters say or do that shows a connection forming – or weakening or breaking down?
- Ask a question:
 - What is left unresolved?
 - What gaps do you see in your claim?
 - What is a potential opposing point of view?

Notes for UDL alignment: Bridge the language of the students (the way they phrased their ideas) with any academic or formal variations you wish to support. Example from A Christmas Carol: “Just cause you’re poor doesn’t mean you’re a bad person” would be another way of saying “Dickens’s critique of poverty and inequality.” Learn more about UDL guidelines for language and symbols [here](#).

Group Work Time

- Each group will create a visual representation of their claim, support, and question(s). They can choose from various formats, including:
 - A poster that includes moments from *The Midnight Shakespeare Club* and/or the Shakespeare plays referenced in it, visuals, and explanations of their reasoning.
 - A collage using magazine cutouts, drawings, or digital images that symbolize the relationships in the play and the Shakespeare worlds the characters enter.
 - A short multimedia presentation that combines images, text, and audio to show how the play uses Shakespeare to explore connection.
- Encourage students to make visible links between:
 - The characters’ actions and their claim.
 - The symbolism of the forest and flowers and their claim.
 - The use of Shakespearean text and their claim.
- Use a visible timer while students are creating and give verbal warnings.

- Keep the list of claims visible if possible.
- Encourage use of the Story Web, Outline, discussion notes, and any memories from the show.

Sharing and Feedback

- Designate a stage area and have each person or group present their work, explaining their theme and how it was expressed in the play.
- If time allows, students can display their work in a gallery walk.
- During presentations, use “See / Think / Wonder” to encourage reflection from the rest of the class:
 - What did you see in this visual? Objectively, without interpretation. Just visual details.
 - What do you think is happening in this visual? What do you see that makes you think that?
 - What do you wonder? What questions come up for you as you look at this?

TEKS

English Language Arts and Reading (Grades 6–12)

- (2A–E), (3A–C), (5A–C), (6A–B), (7A), (8A) – Analyze theme and genre; interpret character and plot development; make inferences and draw conclusions with textual evidence;

Theatre I–IV

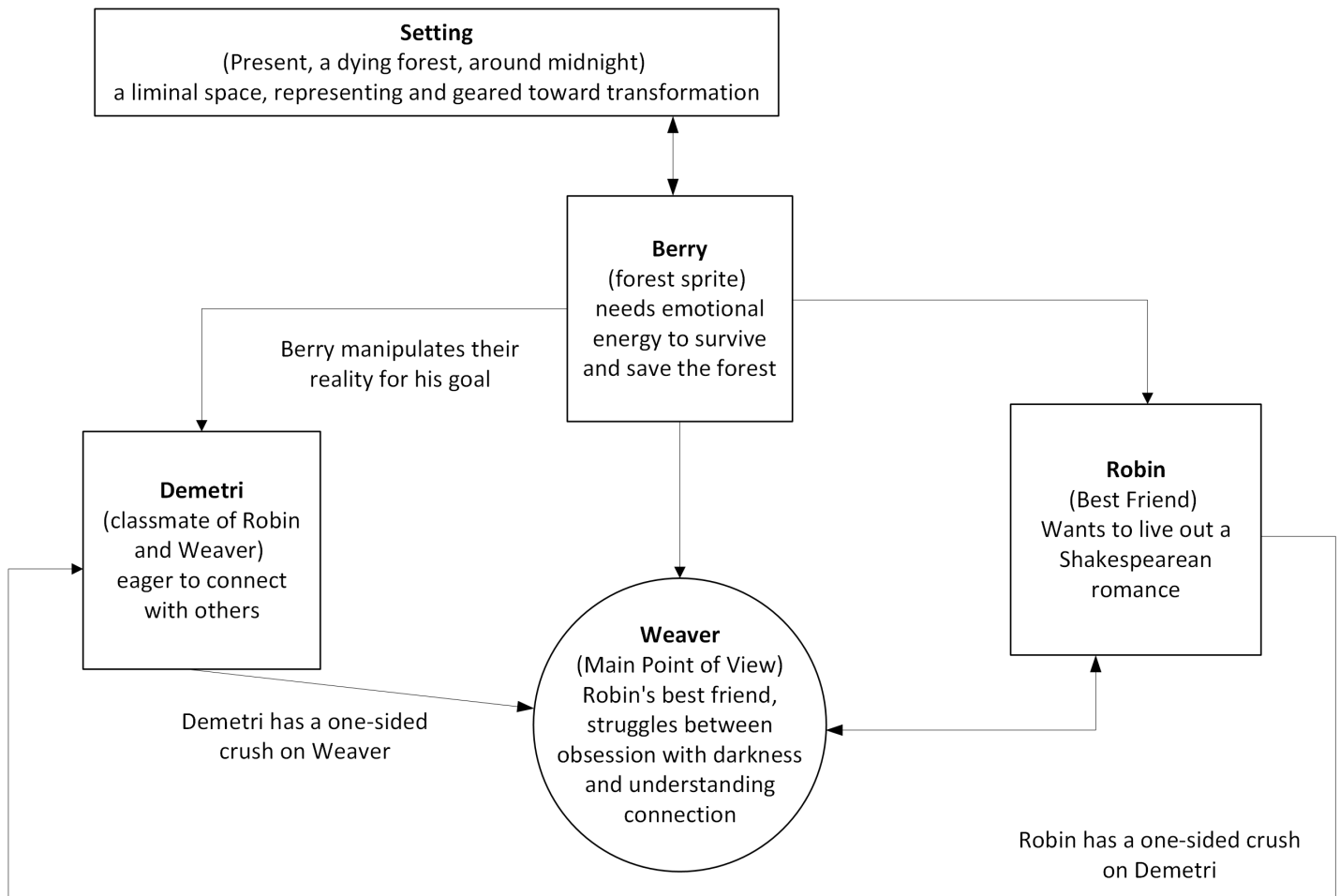
- (1A–C), (2A–C), (3A–B), (4A–B) – Develop and sustain characters using voice, movement, and imagination; interpret scripts and dramatic literature; collaborate to express ideas and themes through performance; analyze and critique theatrical works and performances.

The Midnight Shakespeare Club

Story Web and Outline

Story Web

This story web is a reference to help you remember the play. Use it to notice connections between characters, setting, and themes. You do not need to add anything unless your teacher asks you to. Use the web to support your analysis or creative response.



The Midnight Shakespeare Club

Story Web and Outline

Outline

This outline is a reference to help you remember the play. Use it to notice connections between characters, setting, and themes. You do not need to add anything unless your teacher asks you to. Use the outline to support your analysis or creative response.

Basic Play Information

- A. Title: The Midnight Shakespeare Club
- B. Playwright: Brendan Bourque-Sheil
- C. Genre: Magical Realism
- D. Setting: Present, a forest, around midnight
- E. Central Point of View: Weaver

Major Themes and Symbols

- A. Human connection as a force of life
- B. Art as a catalyst for human connection
- C. Fantasy vs Reality
- D. Violence vs Passion
- E. Symbol: The forest, flowers

Key Moments / Ideas

- A. Berry introduces the withering forest and explains his goal to bring life back to it.
- B. Weaver and Robin's violent *Titus Andronicus* performance gets their Shakespeare Club shut down by the principal.
- C. Robin attempts to recreate the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet* with Demetri.
- D. Weaver and Robin clash over how Shakespeare should be performed while Berry continues to heighten their emotions to fuel his magic.
- E. Weaver is accidentally stabbed, and Berry uses the last of his magic to save her life.

Overall Impact

- A. The play shows how Shakespeare helps people connect, revealing emotions, relationships, and truths about themselves.
- B. It explores the tension between tradition and adaptation, showing that changing stories can make them more meaningful and accessible.
- C. The ending encourages reflection on friendship, love, and how art can bring people back to life—both emotionally and symbolically.