

Study Guide for *A Super Groovy Night's Dream*
By Charlie Lovett

- 1) The playwright establishes the time period of the play in the very first line. Why do you think he chose 1969? How might the play have been different if he had chosen a different time period?
- 2) The playwright's other Shakespeare-inspired plays, such as *Romeo and Winifred* and *Omelette: Chef of Denmark*, are parodies of Shakespearean originals. Would you classify *A Super Groovy Night's Dream* as a parody? Why or why not? If it is not a parody, what is it?
- 3) Shakespeare often uses language to tell us something about the character who is speaking. Low born characters, for instance, usually speak in prose while nobles speak in poetry. How does the author of *A Super Groovy Night's Dream* use language to create character? How do the different characters use language? How does their vocabulary and syntax differ? Pick a character (perhaps the one you are playing) and look carefully at the language he or she uses. What does it tell you about the character?
- 4) *A Super Groovy Night's Dream* follows the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* closely. What parts of Shakespeare's original did the playwright omit? Why do you think he left out these scenes, speeches, incidents, or characters? Are there parts of the original that you wish he had left in? Why?
- 5) Many of the characters in *A Super Groovy Night's Dream* are based on Shakespearean originals. Is yours? Pick a character who also appears in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. How does this character differ in *A Super Groovy Night's Dream*? Do you think the essentials of this character's personality are the same despite the change in time and place? Why or why not?
- 6) Which characters in the play do you think are least connected to any Shakespeare originals? Why do you think the playwright included these characters? Do they add to the humor of the play? Who do you think is the funniest character in the play? Why?
- 7) Comedy depends on a combination of comic characters and "straight" characters. Who do you think are the straight characters in *A Super Groovy Night's Dream*? Why?
- 8) Why do you think the playwright chose to make Egeus the quarterback of the football team? Why is Theseus the principal? Why is Philostrate the drama teacher? If you were to update another Shakespeare play to an American high school in 1969, what jobs or roles in the school would you give to the main characters? Why?
- 9) Where in *A Super Groovy Night's Dream* does the playwright use the exact same language that Shakespeare used in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*? Why do you think he chose to use Shakespeare's words in these places? Pick one of the scenes that uses Shakespeare's words and try rewriting it in your own words. Which version do you like better? Why?
- 10) The "play within the play" of *Pyramus and Thisbe* remains one of the funniest Shakespeare scenes four hundred years after it was originally written. Do you think this scene is funny? Why or why not? Is it funnier when you read it on the page or when you see it staged? Why? What can this scene teach you about comedy?



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11) How does Robin Goodfellow (or Puck) ingratiate himself to the various groups of students? Why do you think they accept him? Do you think he is essentially an honest or dishonest character? If he is dishonest, is his dishonesty justified by what he is trying to do? Should we be willing to break rules if there is a higher principal at stake?

12) Why does the drama club call themselves the Rude Mechanicals? What are Rude Mechanicals? The original working title of the play was *Rude Mechanicals*. What does the title *A Super Groovy Night's Dream* tell you that the title *Rude Mechanicals* doesn't? What would you title the play if you had to change the title? Why?

13) Comedy can be created when characters believe things about themselves that the audience knows to be untrue. What examples can you find of this in *A Super Groovy Night's Dream*?

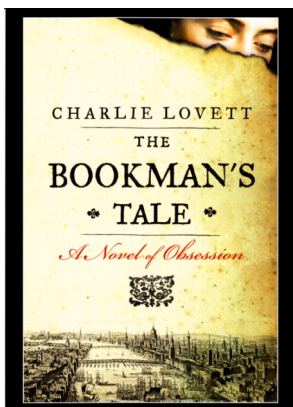
14) In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the love potions and the transformation of Bottom into a donkey seem to be due to magic. What replaces magic in *A Super Groovy Night's Dream*? What does this replacement tell us about the difference between 1600 and 1969?

15) In comedy, buffoons, braggarts, and bad guys usually get what they deserve. Are there characters in *A Super Groovy Night's Dream* who get what they deserve? Who? Why? Are there characters who don't get what they deserve? Who? Why?

16) All drama depends on conflict. What are the conflicts in *A Super Groovy Night's Dream*? How are they resolved? Which conflicts would you say are part of the main plot and which are part of the subplots? Are there any conflicts that remain unresolved at the end of the play?

17) Some of Shakespeare's plays are centered on one main character with a few other major parts (for instance *Hamlet*). These plays leave one (or a few) actors with the bulk of the work. Would you say that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is such a "star vehicle"? Why or why not? If so, who is the star? Is *A Super Groovy Night's Dream* more of an ensemble piece than Shakespeare's original or less? Why? Do you prefer star vehicles or ensemble pieces? Why?

18) What is Puck saying in his final speech? Why do you think the playwright chose to copy this speech from Shakespeare? How does Simple's final line at the end of the play change the way the audience feels? How would the end differ if Simple kept quiet and Puck finished the play? If your character shouted something out at the end of the play, what would it be?



Charlie Lovett's newest book is *The Bookman's Tale: A Novel of Obsession*. Published by Viking Pres, June 3, 2013.

A mysterious portrait ignites an antiquarian bookseller's search through time and the works of Shakespeare for his lost love. Guaranteed to capture the hearts of everyone who truly loves books, *The Bookman's Tale* is a former bookseller's sparkling novel and a delightful exploration of one of literature's most tantalizing mysteries with echoes of *Shadow of the Wind* and A.S. Byatt's *Possession*.