Intro to *the Bard*

<u>William Shakespeare</u>

1564-1616, in Stratford, England
Married at 18
Became a writer and actor and moved to London, England

Opus includes: 38 plays, 2 narrative poems, 154 sonnets, and a variety of other poems.

<u>Technical Features:</u>

Unusual Word Arrangement:

I ate the sandwich.
I the sandwich ate.
Ate the sandwich I.
Ate I the sandwich.
The sandwich I ate.
The sandwich ate I.

<u>Poetics:</u>

Blank Verse: unrhymed iambic pentameter.

Iambic Pentameter: five beats of alternating unstressed and stressed syllables; ten syllables per line.

'So fair / and foul / a day / I have / not seen'

'The course / of true / love nev/er did / run smooth'

Word Ommissions: Leaving words out to keep the poetry moving

Modern slang:

"Been to class yet?"
"No. Heard Smith's givin' a test."
"Wha'sup wi'that?"

Means:

"Have you been to class yet?"
"No, I have not been to class. I heard that Mrs. Smith is giving a test today."
"What is up with that?"

Shakespearean Contractions: Unique vocab
'tis ~ it is
ope ~ open
o'er ~ over
gi' ~ give
ne'er ~ never
i' ~ in
e'er ~ ever
oft ~ often
a' ~ he
e'en ~ even

Act I Scene I: Scene Analysis:

Characters Included: Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate, Egeus, Hermia, Demetrius, Lysander, Helena

Setting: town square, or sometimes Theseus's garden

Translation of 3 phrases:
Early Modern → Modern

How chance the roses there do fade so fast →
Why do the roses die so quickly
So quick bright things come to confusion →
So quickly good things come to an end
I have a widow aunt, a dowager Of great revenue, and she hath no child. →
I have a rich aunt, who owns property, and doesn't have kids

.

Retell the events of the scene in simple English:

Theseus, Duke of Athens, has just defeated Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazonians, in battle. He's now getting ready to marry her. He sends Philostrate to encourage the people of Athens to start celebrating and assures Hippolyta that the two of them can go from being enemies on the battlefield to being properly married.

An Athenian nobleman, Egeus, arrives with his daughter, Hermia, and two young men, Demetrius and Lysander. Egeus has come to Theseus to complain that his daughter won't marry Demetrius, as he has ordered her to do, because she wants to marry Lysander instead. If Hermia chooses not to marry Demetrius, she will either be killed or forced to become a nun as punishment. Theseus says she can have until his wedding day to make a decision.

After everyone else departs, Lysander proposes that they run away from Athens and live with his aunt. Hermia agrees to meet him in the forest the following night. Just then, Helena, who is in love with Demetrius, passes by. Hermia and Lysander tell Helena about their plan to run away, which would leave Demetrius for Helena. Even though Hermia is her friend, Helena decides to tell Demetrius about Hermia's plan to run away, in the hopes that he'll feel grateful to her.

Allusion to Greek Myths:

Theseus as the Duke (or King, alternatively) of Athens
Hippolyta Theseus's queen

The Athenian lovers:

- Lysander - in love with Hermia
- Hermia -
- Helena
- Demetrius

Fairies:

- Oberon (king of the fairies)
- Titania (Queen of the fairies)
- Puck could be compared to Eros, the Greek god of sexual love and beauty.

"Mechanicals" or craftsmen

- Nick Bottom
- Peter Quince

Act I, Scene i
Hermia loves Lysander and is determined to be with him

- Lysander is in love with Hermia and is determined to be with her
- Demetrius feels entitled to marry Hermia
- Theseus will use the force of the law against Hermia if she does not follow her father's wishes

Act I Scene II