Questions from Writing Exercise 1.1, “Shakespeare’s Characters,” FYSE.

1. Why does Shakespeare deliberately not create a new character for the role of the Duke of Athens? Given all the original characters in the play, why did Shakespeare resurrect one from ancient myths?—Kayla

2. What are Lysander’s true voice and personality and what purpose does it serve for him to hide them?—Andrew

3. How, why, and when does Theseus abandon his “cool reason”?—Michael

4. How does Hippolyta’s obvious departure from her traditional and expected character figure into this play and its attitude toward the power and independence of women? Steven D.

5. [With respect to Oberon’s treatment of Titania,] does the effort to indulge in ones personal desires make one insensitive to the methods by which they are achieved?—Dennis

6. “Why does Helena pursue Demetrius?”
   “Why does she reject ihs affection when Demetrius finally expresses his love?”—Kiya

7. Is Helena more intelligent to judge the incidents of the night based on what she already knows about her friends, or foolish in refusing to acknowledge how their views of her have changed?—Steven B.

8. As revealed through language and the play structure, could it be possible that Puck is a subconscious fragment of Oberon? (maybe incorporate the theme of “disturbance beneath the surface”)—Stewart

9. What do the confident remarks from Bottom’s lines show about what genuine love is, and do his characteristics reflect any of the marriages at the end of the play?—Kathryn

10. Why/how is Helena so frequently caught in the play’s conflicts/opposing forces and how does her character help to develop the idea of love being both true and irrational?—Kaitlin

11. What archetypes does Oberon represent in the story and how does his role illustrate the themes of imagination, fantasy, and divine power in this play? —Killian

12. What boundaries or lines does Puck cross in A Midsummer Night’s Dream? Does Puck intend to create chaos in the human world, or was it an honest mistake? Is Puck acting of his own free will, or is there a higher supernatural being or force controlling him? What do other characters think of Puck? Is that different from the audience’s opinion of him?—Amy

13. Does Oberon represent a higher power or is he, like the mortals, a part of fate’s plan?—Madison

14. What positive and negative traits does Helena display, and which side of her personality proves to be the one that Shakespeare wanted the audience to see?—Jake

15. Does Puck differ from them (the other characters) because he is a superior, immutable force? Or is he an integral, unavoidable facet of human[oid] nature? Is Puck a puppeteer or a part?—Claire