

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

Try writing your own plays and rehearsing them using cue scripts. You might find there are some advantages to working this way once you are used to it.

Here is an extract from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in which a group of actors are rehearsing from cue scripts. Quince is the company manager, Bottom is playing Pyramus and Flute the young man is playing the lady Thisby (even though he says he is too old to play the women and has a beard growing). Can you see the mistakes they make as they rehearse?

### **QUINCE**

Come, sit down,  
every mother's son, and rehearse your parts.  
Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your  
speech, enter into that brake: and so every one  
according to his cue.

### **BOTTOM (Speaking as Pyramus)**

Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,--

### **QUINCE**

Odours, odours.

### **BOTTOM**

--odours savours sweet:  
So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.  
But hark, a voice! stay thou but here awhile,  
And by and by I will to thee appear.

*Exit*

### **FLUTE (cast as Thisby)**

Must I speak now?

### **QUINCE**

Ay, marry, must you; for you must understand he goes  
but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

### **FLUTE (as Thisby)**

Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,  
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,  
Most brisky juvenal and eke most lovely Jew,  
As true as truest horse that yet would never tire,  
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.



## QUINCE

'Ninus' tomb,' man: why, you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues and all. Pyramus enter: your cue is past; it is, 'never tire.'

### **Do any of your actors make similar mistakes.**

If some of your actors have trouble with the cue script can you make it easier for them by re-wording your script?

It looks like Shakespeare sometimes had to do this for his actors as some of them are almost always cued by name – i.e. by lines like “what says Polonius?” Shakespeare knew his actors very well and so he probably knew who would struggle with his lines and might need an extra or easy cue.



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