

Shakespeare English IV

Pay attention and take notes!!!



Why Study Shakespeare?

- Shakespeare is considered to be the greatest writer in the English language.
- His lines are more widely quoted than those of any other single author in the history of literature.
- Probably better than any author before or after him, Shakespeare understands the basic elements of the human condition—the joys, hopes, passions and weaknesses common to all men in all ages, making his appeal timeless.



SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTH

- The baptismal register of the Holy Trinity parish church, in Stratford, shows the following entry for April 26, 1564:
Gulielmus Filius Johannes
Shakespeare. The actual date
of Shakespeare's birth is not
known, but is assumed to be
April 23, 1564.
- He was born in Stratford-on-Avon, about 100 miles from London, England



SHAKESPEARE'S EDUCATION



- Shakespeare probably began his education at the age of six or seven at the Stratford grammar school, which is still standing only a short distance from his house on Henley Street.
- There he studied history and Latin writers

Shakespeare's Childhood

- There are other fragmented and dubious details about Shakespeare's life growing up in Stratford. He is supposed to have worked for a butcher, in addition to helping run his father's business.
- When he was in his early twenties, he left Stratford for London to pursue his writing career.



Shakespeare's Marriage

- Recordings in the Episcopal register at Worcester on the dates of November 27 and 28, 1582, reveal that Shakespeare desired to marry a girl named Anne Hathaway.
- Anne was 26 when she married the 18-year-old William Shakespeare.



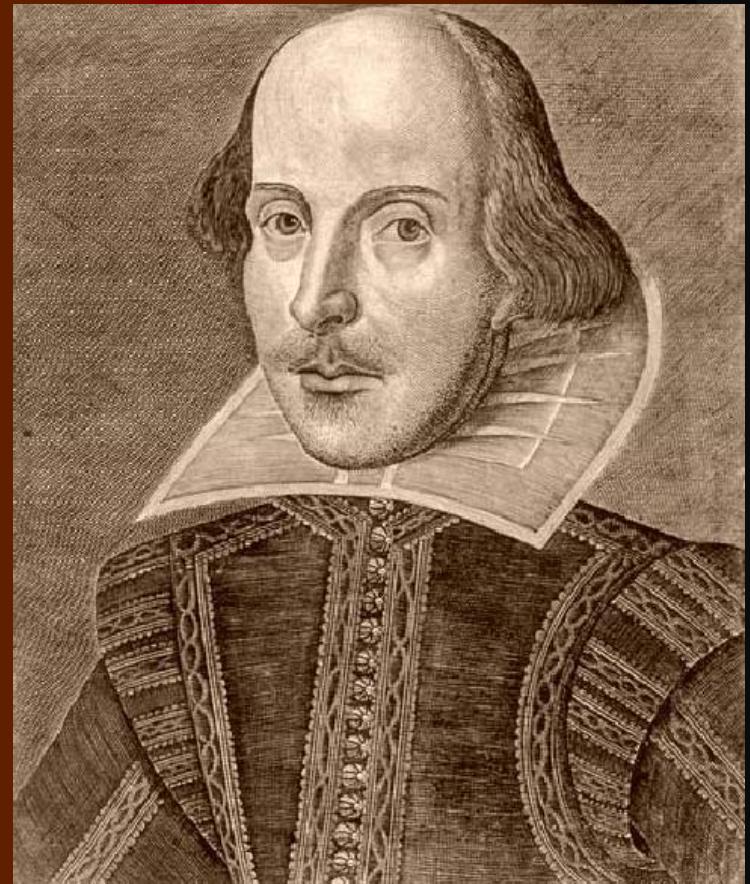
Shakespeare's Children



- Shakespeare and Anne had 3 children, Susanna, Hamnet and Judith (twins). Tragically, Hamnet died at age 11.

Important dates in Shakespeare's life and career

- By 1592, he had established himself as an actor and a playwright
- By 1594, he became a full share holder in the profits of the acting company known as *Chamberlain's Men*.
- In 1599, The Globe Theater opened.
- In 1603 the acting company changed its name to *Kings Men*, to honor King James I.

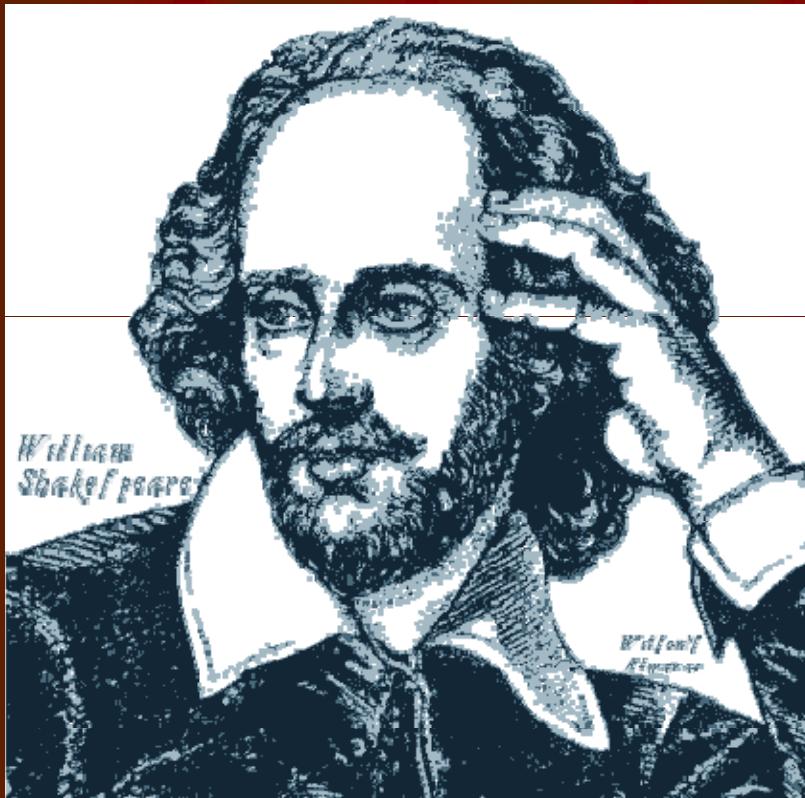


Death of a Poet



- In his early 40's, Shakespeare retired and returned to his home in Stratford-on-Avon
- Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616 at age 52.
- He is buried within the chancel and before the altar of the Trinity Church in Stratford.
- After his death, friends and co-workers collected and published his plays in a book called *The First Folio*, published in 1623.
- In all, Shakespeare wrote thirty-seven plays, 154 sonnets and five long poems.

Shakespearean Plays



- Credited with writing 37 plays in his lifetime (possibly more)
- His plays can be classified into three main categories: comedy, tragedy and history.
- Four additional hybrid plays are classified as tragicomedies.
- *The Tragedy of MacBeth* is classified among Shakespeare's tragic plays, and was written around 1605-1606.





Characteristics of Shakespeare's Writing Style

- **Puns**—A humorous play on words indicating different meanings. (Example: The dentist said, "My occupation is filling.")
- **Metaphors**—A comparison of two unlike things not using the words "like" or "as". (Example: *Music* is the *best medicine* in the world.)
- **Conceits**—Whimsical, extravagant, fanciful ideas; an extended metaphor with a complex logic. (Sonnets)
- **Blank verse**—Five feet per line, each beat consists of an unaccented syllable followed by an accented syllable—technically known as (unrhymed) *iambic pentameter*.
- **Soliloquy**—(soliloquies, plural) A speech that an actor gives while on stage alone. He is talking to himself.
- **Asides**—Something that an actor says to the audience that the other players can't hear.





The English Renaissance

- Shakespeare lived in a time known as the Renaissance, meaning “re-birth”. The Renaissance started in Italy in the 14th century and spread from there across Europe. It reached England during the time of the Tudor House, and was at its height in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.
- The Renaissance was an age of growing sea power, sea exploration and continuing growth in science and the arts.
- During this time, England developed into one of the greatest powers of the world.
- It was also a time of religious turbulence in England in the wake of the Reformation under King Henry VIII, as Protestants and Catholics vied for power and control over the English Church and monarchy, and puritans sought to “purify” the Church.
- The success of Shakespeare is largely due to the time he lived in, and to the benevolent patronage of the arts by both of the monarchs who reigned during his lifetime.



Tudor England

Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603)



- Reigned from 1558-1603, a period often referred to as England's "Golden Age".
- Daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.
- Defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588.
- Never married.
- A conservative Protestant, she reinstated the Protestant church in England after the Catholic rule of her half sister, Mary, had abolished it. Her policies towards the religious factions in England achieved a lasting peace during her reign, and became one of her greatest achievements.
- She loved the arts, and created the environment in England for literary masterpieces and theater to flourish—bringing English drama to a height that it has never since attained.

Stuart England

King James I (1566-1625)



- Reigned both Scotland and England
- Son of Mary, Queen of Scots. Ascended the Scottish throne in 1567 when he was only 1 year old, after his mother's execution for conspiracy against the English throne.
- Ascended the English throne in 1603 upon the death of Elizabeth I.
- Under his reign, the Elizabethan "Golden Age" of literature and drama continued in England.
- Responsible for having the Bible translated into English for the first time, giving us the "King James Version". (Prior to this time, all Bibles in England were written in Latin.)
- Though himself popular with his subjects, his "Divine Right of Kings" doctrine would spark the English Civil War after his death, and lead to the execution of his son, Charles I.

The Globe Theater

- Shakespeare performed his plays here.
- Constructed in 1599, on the banks of the Thames River (London).
- Octagonal in shape, capacity: 3,000.
- Play time: 2 hours. Cost of general admission: 1 penny.
- Flags, trumpets and fliers told when there would be a play.
- The flags also told the audience what type of play they would be seeing: **RED** for **history**, **WHITE** for **comedy** and **BLACK** for **tragedy**.
- In 1613, the original Globe was destroyed accidentally when a cannon misfired and set the thatched roof on fire. The theater was rebuilt, but then burned down again in 1644.
- In 1999, a new Globe Theater was completed in London on the Thames River.





Definition of a Tragic Hero

- Man of high birth.
- Has great promise, ability, and integrity of character.
- Has a *tragic flaw*, or weakness, which will ultimately lead to his downfall.
- Has a capacity for suffering (conscience). Does not endure passively, but fights back, seeks remedies.
- His actions involve him in choices.
- Dies at the end of the play.
- Downfall comes through:
 - His Tragic Flaw (inaction, ambition, etc.)
 - Supernatural causes (maybe the gods interfere)
 - Fate/ill-luck
 - Combination of all of these
 - Sometimes it goes beyond the limits of common sense
- Some are compromisers, some are ambitious (a lust for power), some are completely loyal or some simply cannot act (irresolution, inaction, etc.).

