

William Shakespeare (1564- 1616)

He was an English poet and playwright of the Elizabethan period.

He is widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's pre-eminent dramatist.

He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon". He was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Between 1585 and 1592, he began a successful career in London as an actor, writer, and part owner of a playing company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men. After the plagues of 1592–3, Shakespeare's plays were performed by his own company at The Theatre and the Curtain north of the Thames. When the company found themselves in dispute with their landlord, they pulled The Theatre down and used the timbers to construct the Globe Theatre, the first playhouse built by actors for actors, on the south bank of the Thames.

The Globe theatre opened in 1599.



After the death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603, the company was awarded a royal patent by the new king, James I, and changed its name to the King's Men. Acting was considered dishonourable for women and women did not appear on the stage in England until the seventeenth century. In Shakespeare's plays, the roles of women were often played by young boys. His works consist of about 38 plays, 154 sonnets and several other poems. He produced most of his known work between 1589 and 1613. His early plays were mainly comedies and histories. He then wrote mainly tragedies until about 1608. In his last phase, he wrote tragicomedies, also known as romances, and collaborated with other playwrights.



1610 portrait

First Performed	First Printed	Genre	Plays	French titles
1592-93	1597	History	<i>Richard III</i>	<i>Richard III</i>
1593-94	1623	Comedy	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	<i>La Mégère apprivoisée</i>
1594-95	1597	Tragedy	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	<i>Roméo et Juliette</i>
1594-95	1598	Comedy	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	<i>Peines d'amour perdues</i>
1595-96	1597	History	<i>Richard II</i>	<i>Richard II</i>
1595-96	1600	Comedy	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	<i>Le Songe d'une nuit d'été</i>
1596-97	1600	Comedy	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>Le Marchand de Venise</i>
1598-99	1600	History	<i>Henry V</i>	<i>Henri V</i>
1598-99	1600	Comedy	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	<i>Beaucoup de bruit pour rien</i>
1599-1600	1623	Comedy	<i>As You Like It</i>	<i>Comme il vous plaira</i>
1599-1600	1623	Tragedy	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	<i>Jules César</i>
1599-1600	1623	Comedy	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	<i>La Nuit des rois</i>
1600-01	1603	Tragedy	<i>Hamlet</i>	<i>Hamlet, prince de Danemark</i>
1602-03	1623	Comedy	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	<i>Tout est bien qui finit bien</i>
1604-05	1622	Tragedy	<i>Othello, the Moor of Venice</i>	<i>Othello ou le Maure de Venise</i>
1605-06	1608	Tragedy	<i>King Lear</i>	<i>Le Roi Lear</i>
1605-06	1623	Tragedy	<i>Macbeth</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>
1606-07	1623	Tragedy	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	<i>Antoine et Cléopâtre</i>
1610-11	1623	Romance	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	<i>Le Conte d'hiver</i>
1611-12	1623	Romance	<i>The Tempest</i>	<i>La Tempête</i>

Shakespeare also wrote 154 sonnets throughout his career for a private readership. They were published in 1609.

He appears to have retired to Stratford around 1613 where he died three years later.

His reputation did not rise to its present heights until the 19th century. The Romantics, in particular, acclaimed Shakespeare's genius, and the Victorians worshipped Shakespeare.

His plays remain highly popular today and are constantly studied, performed and reinterpreted.

Main source: Wikipedia

Quiz

- 1- In which town was Shakespeare born?
 A- Stratford C- Cambridge
 B- London D- Oxford
- 2- Which river is associated with Shakespeare's birth place?
 A- The Thames C- The Avon
 B- The Tyburn D- The Seven
- 3- When did Shakespeare write his plays?
 A- 14th and 15th Century C- 16th and 17th Century
 B- 15th and 16th century D- 17th and 18th Century
- 4- Which adjective is used to describe Shakespeare's historical period?
 A- Edwardian C- Georgian
 B- Elizabethan D- Victorian
- 5- Which noun is used as a nickname to refer to Shakespeare?
 A- The Poet C- The Writer
 B- The Playwright D- The Bard
- 6- What was the theatre in London that Shakespeare was associated with?
 A- The World C- The Circle
 B- The Britain D- The Globe
7. Which job did Shakespeare NOT do?
 A- Poet C- Actor
 B- Publisher D- Playwright
8. What was the name of Shakespeare's last company?
 A- The King's Actors C- The King's Entertainers
 B- The King's Players D- The King's Men
9. Who played the female roles in Shakespeare's plays in his time?
 A- The actors' wives C- Prostitutes
 B- Young boys D- Noble women
- 10- How much did Shakespeare write?
 A- 1 play, 38 sonnets and 154 epic narrative poems
 B- 54 plays, 5 sonnets, and 38 epic narrative plays
 C- 54 plays, 38 sonnets and 5 epic narrative poems
 D- 38 plays, 154 sonnets, and 2 epic narrative poems
- 11- Where did Shakespeare retire to?
 A- London C- Stratford-upon-Avon
 B- Brighton D- Oxford
- 12- How old was Shakespeare when he died?
 A- 49 – B- 50 – C- 51 – D- 52

Shakespeare's works

- 1. For each French title, give the original title using the following words:** A - About - Ado - All's - As - Caesar - Dream - Ends - It - Julius - Labour's - Like - Lost - Love's - Merchant - Midsummer - Much - Night - Night's - Nothing - of - of - Shrew - Taming - That - The - the - The - Twelfth - Venice - Well - Well - You -
- La Mégère apprivoisée
 Peines d'amour perdues
 Le Songe d'une nuit d'été
 Le Marchand de Venise
 Beaucoup de bruit pour rien
 Comme il vous plaira
 Jules César
 La Nuit des rois
 Tout est bien qui finit bien

2. Find in which play these characters appear:

Ariel - Falstaff - Iago - Lady Macbeth - Ophelia - Shylock

	fat, vain, boastful (<i>vantard</i>), and cowardly (<i>couard</i>) in <i>Henri IV</i>
	perfidious, infamous in <i>Macbeth</i>
	beauty, desperate love in <i>Hamlet</i>
	jealous manipulator in <i>Othello</i>
	witty (<i>spirituel</i>), aerial, funny in <i>The Tempest</i>
	Jewish, mean (<i>radin</i>), tragic in <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>

3. Match these quotes with the works they appear in:

As You Like It - Hamlet - Macbeth - Richard III - Romeo and Juliet - The Merchant of Venice - The Sonnets - The Tempest

"To be or not to be, that is the question"	
"a tale, told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."	
"All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players"	
"A pair of star-cross'd lovers" - "what light through yonder window breaks? "	
"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? Thou art more lovely and more temperate"	
"All that glitters is not gold" "The pound of flesh" "Hath not a Jew eyes?"	
"A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"	
O brave new world! That has such people in it! (Miranda)	