

QUESTION:

WHO WAS  
WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARE?

ANSWER:

Probably the world's  
most famous poet playwright.

A writing genius. He lived  
(1564 to 1616) in the days of

Queen Elizabeth (the Elizabethan


period in English history). Plays were popular then.

What was his genius? His understanding of people.

His skill with words. His sense of drama--What would  
please an audience. The English language and the  
English theater have never been the same since.

Everyone should know about William Shakespeare.





# WHERE DID SHAKESPEARE LIVE?

## In and around **LONDON, ENGLAND**

At that time (about 1600), London was a busy, bustling walled city. It was having a Renaissance (RE-BIRTH) of arts and sciences under two monarchs who loved the theater.



daughter of  
Henry VIII  
and  
Anne Boleyn

### **Queen Elizabeth**

(reigned from 1558 to 1603)

a liberal-minded monarch who enjoyed the theater and wrote plays for special performances. Shakespeare gave 32 performances at her court during her reign.



Son of  
MARY  
Queen of  
Scots

### **King James I**

(reigned from 1603 to 1625)

also wrote poems and plays. Saw many plays performed (at least half of them written by Shakespeare).

Only major disasters in Shakespeare's time were the plagues of 1592-94 and 1613, which closed the theaters.



Little is known of

WILLIAM

# SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE

EXCEPT THESE HIGHLIGHTS



## 1 BORN April 23rd 1564



in **STRATFORD-ON-AVON**

near London

LONDON  
94 MILES

## 2 HIS FAMILY was "well-off"



**HIS FATHER**

John Shakespeare

GLOVEMAKER

SHOP KEEPER

LAND OWNER

and BAILIFF (Mayor) of STRATFORD



**HIS MOTHER**

Mary Arden

inherited land

which was

bequeathed

to William

William had 7 brothers and sisters

## 3 HIS EDUCATION



He probably attended the free grammar school until 15, mainly studying LATIN. Read much Mythology, Ovid, Plutarch's Lives, etc., which he used as sources.

## 4 HE MARRIED

Anne Hathaway  
Nov. 27, 1582



she was  
8 years  
older

and they had 3 children



SUSANNA



HAMNET + JUDITH

TWINS

## 5 HE LIVED IN LONDON



most of his life-- and had little to do with Stratford, although he became its third largest landowner, and eventually retired there.

## 6 A GREAT ACTOR

By 1592, he was recognized as a successful actor on the London stage-- as well as a leading poet. He was a member of a repertory group-- Chamberlain's Men.

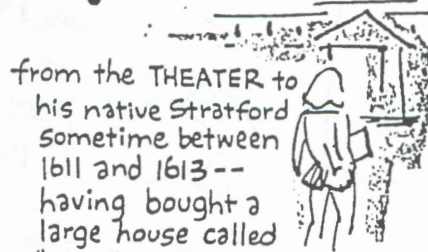


## 7 HE WROTE AT LEAST 36 PLAYS



as well as sonnets and other poems. He revolutionized the English stage with his dramatic and poetic genius.

## 8 HE RETIRED



from the THEATER to his native Stratford sometime between 1611 and 1613-- having bought a large house called "New Place."

## 9 HE DIED ON HIS 52nd BIRTHDAY

April 23,  
1616  
in Stratford



and was buried in the chancel of the Church of Holy Trinity.



...first of all-- Shakespeare became famed as a

# POET

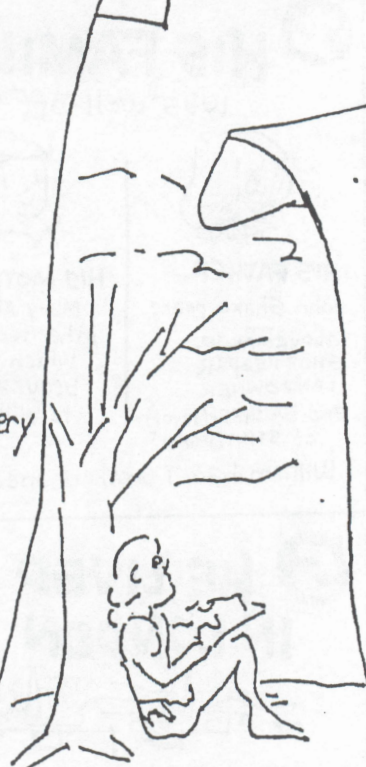
in London's intellectual group

...he wrote (1592)

## "VENUS and ADONIS"

A Romantic Poem  
in the Classical Tradition  
dedicated to the Earl  
of Southampton

- full of antique rhetorical devices and Renaissance imagery
- story of goddess Venus who falls in love with Adonis.
- He is repelled by her choice of earthly over heavenly love.
- She dreams he is killed by a boar.
- When the dream comes true she returns brokenhearted to the dwelling place of the gods.



Shakespeare probably wrote many of his poems during the 1592-1594 London Plague when theaters were closed.

...and the

## "RAPE OF LUCRECE"

A Narrative Poem

- the story of the rape of Lucrece by Tarquin, his punishment, her husband's grief, and her suicide
- full of moral observations
- based on Samuel Daniel's "Complaint of Rosamunde"

one of his poems--

## "PHOENIX and the TURTLE"

appeared in a book of collected verse called "Love's Martyr"

- written in honor of Sir John Salisbury.

he wrote many

## SONNETS

expressing the idea that a poet can bring immortality to a loved one by his writings.

MOSTLY DEDICATED TO HIS PATRON, THE EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON.

Shakespeare also used

"BLANK VERSE" (unrhymed iambic pentameter) IN HIS PLAYS

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But really... Shakespeare is known as the world's greatest

# PLAYWRIGHT

(from 1592 to 1611)

He got his ideas  
from other plays --  
from the works of  
SENECA PLAUTUS,  
OVID, PLUTARCH'S LIVES,  
HOLINSHED'S CHRONICLES,  
ITALIAN PLAYS, MARLOWE'S  
PLAYS about KINGS in  
GREECE and ROME  
RATHER THAN  
from PERSONAL  
or local London  
material

↑ "he could take any  
kind of dress and turn  
it into gold"  
CAUTE



Shakespeare wrote at least

## 36 PLAYS

--all were written for his  
COMPANY-- the "KINGS MEN"  
--who paid him about  
£8 per play (\$40?)

He wrote easily -- to please  
the audience -- intuitively  
creatively -- his characters  
real.

18 published first as  
pamphlets (QUARTOS)

These plays were not  
published until 7 years after  
he died -- in a FOLIO of  
36 PLAYS (with an introduc-  
tion by Ben Johnson)  
published by John Heminges  
and Henry Condell.  
(Another play "PERICLES"  
is also generally attributed  
to Shakespeare.)

## OTHER PLAYWRIGHTS of the ERA

(in whose plays Shakespeare probably acted)

LODGE, LILLY, CHAPMAN, MIDDLETON,  
DEKKER, JONSON, MARSTON, FLETCHER,  
GREENE, BEAUMONT, HEYWOOD, WEBSTER,  
KYD, DRAYTON ---

Most of them were too  
close to Shakespeare to see his greatness --  
(many criticized him for being "unorthodox")

NOTE: OTHER ELIZABETHAN  
plays sometimes attributed  
to Shakespeare:

- "A YORKSHIRE TRAGEDY"
- "THE LONDON PRODIGAL"
- "SIR JOHN OLD CASTLE"
- "THOMAS LORD CROMWELL"
- "PURITAN WIDOW"
- "LUCRINE"



...then Shakespeare's fame grew as a brilliant

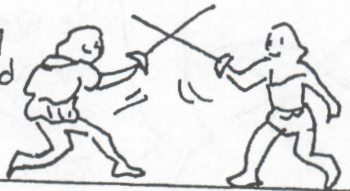


## An Elizabethan **ACTOR**

had to be an expert in

### ① FENCING

Audiences loved  
duels, battles,  
contests



### ② TUMBLING

As gods or ghosts, they  
had to disappear through  
holes in the stage



### ③ DANCING

Most plays ended  
with the whole  
company dancing



### ④ ELOCUTION

Words were often more  
important than actions.



### ⑤ ACTING

Each actor had to  
double in many  
different roles



### ⑥ MUSIC

Actors had to learn  
to play some instru-  
ment well



# ACTOR

for 20 YEARS from 1585 to 1605  
(age 21 to 41)

as a member and part owner of  
a repertory group called the

## King's Men

(formerly Chamberlain's Men)

—including—

RICHARD BURBAGE

JOHN HEMINGES

HENRY CONDELL

JOHN UNDERWOOD

THOMAS POPE

EDWARD ALLEYN

RICHARD COWLEY

AUGUSTINE PHILLIPS

ROBERT GOUGH

WILL SLY

WILL SHAKESPEARE



... as a matter of fact  
Shakespeare probably  
made most of his  
money as an actor  
and producer, not as  
a PLAYWRIGHT.

Note:  
During the Play  
of London this group  
traveled around  
the country  
and on the  
continent



# SO



# WHAT?

## SOME FAMOUS SHAKESPEARIAN ACTORS and ACTRESSES



David Garrick, Edmund Kean,  
John Philip Kemble, Charles Kean,  
Ellen Terry, Helen Hayes,  
John Barrymore, John Gielgud

the English language has never been the same -- since Shakespeare gave it imagery, poetry and drama. His phrases and ideas are quoted thousands of times every day -- in newspapers, magazines, books -- over the radio and T.V. in conversation.

-- The Anglo-American theatre owes much of its form and vigor to Shakespeare's ideas -- he made it come to life as one of the great creative arts -- his plays have provided a challenge and an opportunity to all great actors and actresses ever since.

## TODAY

① You can SEE  
Shakespeare's plays  
performed **LIVE**



in Shakespeare theatres  
in London, England ("Old Vic")  
STRATFORD, CANADA  
STRATFORD CONNECTICUT  
CENTRAL PARK, N.Y.C.  
AKRON, OHIO  
ASHLAND, OREGON  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
and at most LARGE UNIVERSITIES

② You can SEE  
Shakespeare's plays  
on **FILMS**



in theatres and on T.V..  
produced by major film companies  
-- HENRY IV, RICHARD III,  
MACBETH, HAMLET, ROMEO AND  
JULIET, MERCHANT OF VENICE  
Featuring such stars as  
LAURENCE OLIVIER, JOHN  
GIELGUD, MAURICE EVANS,  
GEORGE C. SCOTT and  
CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER

③ You can HEAR  
**RECORDINGS**  
of Shakespeare



Many of Shakespeare's  
plays have been recorded by  
such groups as The Marlow  
Company, Laurence Olivier  
(RCA Victor, Decca), Dublin  
Gate Theatre (Spoken Word  
and other.

④ and best of all  
you can **READ**



Shakespeare's plays and poems  
yourself in many new editions  
including paperbacks. Get them at  
your library or local bookstore

⑤ and **READ** about **SHAKESPEARE**

You will find many books about  
Shakespeare and his works in schools and  
public libraries. There are also general  
references and bibliographies in all  
encyclopedias.





Some things to note about Shakespeare's

# **STYLE**

## USE OF "PUNS"

(humorous play on words indicating different meanings)

## USE OF "METAPHORS"

(comparing something in terms of something else-- such as "a ship **PLOWS** the sea")

## USE OF "BLANK VERSE"

(five feet to a line--each beat consisting of an unaccented syllable followed by an accented syllable--technically known as iambic pentameter)

## USE OF "CONCEITS"

(whimsical, extravagant, fanciful ideas)

## USE OF "SOLILOQUIES"

(somebody talking to himself)

## USE OF "ASIDES"

(saying something to audience that other players can't hear)

