

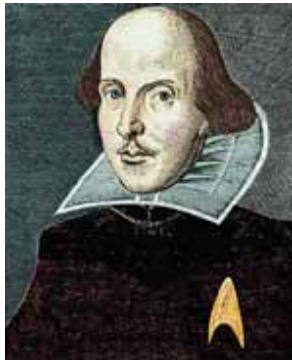
# SHAKING IT UP with SHAKESPEARE

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

was baptised in Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire, on April 26, 1564. April 23, 1564 is the day that most believe to be his birthday, but there are no records that state what day he was born. His father, John Shakespeare, was a whittawer (leather worker or glove maker) by profession and held several important town offices. His mother, Mary Arden, was from a fairly wealthy family. In all the Shakespeares had eight children, and William was their first son.

Shakespeare did not have an extensive education. He attended Stratford grammar school, a school that specifically served prominent citizens. It is not known how long Shakespeare attended, but it is assumed that this is the only education he received.

On November 28, 1582 Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, a farmer's daughter. Anne was twenty six years old when they married, and William was only eighteen. Anne and William's first daughter, Susanna, was baptised on May 26, 1582. A set of twins, Hamnet and Judith, were born two years later.



In 1596 Hamnet died at the age of eleven. Between 1585 and 1592 no records of Shakespeare were found, and that period of his life is usually referred to as "The Lost Years". Some have speculated that he either became a school teacher, became a butcher's apprentice, or was running from the law during this time.

The first evidence of Shakespeare after 1592 was in London. Here he had established himself as a playwright and actor and had found a sponsor, Henry Wriothsley. However, Shakespeare's work in the theaters came to a halt in January of 1593 when the theaters closed because of the plague. The company that Shakespeare worked for was called "Lord Chamberlain's Men" and changed their name to "The King's Men" after King James I took over in 1603. Because Shakespeare worked and performed for them, this company became the biggest and most famous acting company. Shakespeare became very wealthy as a director, writer, actor, and stockholder in "The King's Men".

In 1611 Shakespeare retired and left London. He made a will on March 25, 1616, and died on April 23, 1616. He was fifty two years old. The cause of Shakespeare's death is not known. Shakespeare also wrote his own epitaph because during his time, when the graveyard was full, people would dig up someone's corpse and burn it so that another could be buried in that person's place. This disgusted Shakespeare, and he didn't want this type of disrespect after his death. His epitaph reads as follows:

"Good Friends, for Jesus' sake forbear,  
To dig the bones enclosed here!  
Blest be the man that spares these stones,  
And curst be he that moves my bones."

To this day no one has disturbed Shakespeare's grave.



## QUEEN ELIZABETH

Born in 1533 to Henry VIII and his second wife, Anne Boleyn, she was Queen of England from 1558 to her death in 1603. She inherited the throne after the death of her half-sister, Queen "Bloody" Mary Tudor. Her reign is often called the Elizabethan or "Golden Age" because it was a time period of great advancement and achievement in England. She has been called an outstanding politician, orator, tactician, and

musician. Elizabeth's reign was marked by her effective use of Parliament and the Privy Council, a small advisory body of the important state officials, and by the development of legal institutions in English counties.

During her reign, Elizabeth unified a Protestant England against the Catholic Spanish and defeated the Spanish armada in 1588. She was responsible for English exploration of the New World and the flourishing of the economy, making England a world power. Her reign was also noted for the English Renaissance, an outpouring of poetry and drama. Elizabeth's court also became a center for poets, musicians, writers (including Shakespeare), and scholars.



## THE GLOBE THEATRE also known as the Shakespeare Globe Theatre was not only one of the most famous



The Globe Theatre, London

playhouse's of all time, but the play house where Shakespeare performed many of his greatest plays. Built from oak, deal (a board of fir or pine), and stolen playhouse frames, the 3 storey, 3000 capacity Globe Theatre, co-owned by William Shakespeare has become almost as famous as the playwright himself.

### WHY BUILD SUCH A BIG PLACE?

**Shakespeare needed a new playhouse to compete.**

The 1598 decision to build the famous playhouse came about as the answer to many of *The Lord Chamberlain's Men's* problems. With the

(*The Globe* continued page 4)

# SHAKESPEARE'S INFLUENCE ON VOCABULARY

The English language owes a great debt to Shakespeare. He invented over 1700 of our common words by changing nouns into verbs, changing verbs into adjectives, connecting words never before used together, adding prefixes and suffixes, and devising words wholly original. Below is a list of a few of the words Shakespeare coined.

accused	addiction	advertising	amazement	arouse	bandit
bedroom	beached	besmirch	birthplace	blanket	loodstained
barefaced	blushing	bet	bump	caked	cater
champion	cold-blooded	compromise	courtship	countless	critic
dauntless	dawn	deafening	discontent	dishearten	drugged
dwindle	equivocal	elbow	excitement	exposure	eyeball
fashionable	fixture	flawed	frugal	generous	gloomy
gossip	green-eyed	gust	hint	hobnob	hurried
impede	jaded	lackluster	laughable	lonely	luggage
lustrous	madcap	majestic	marketable	mimic	monumental
moonbeam	mountaineer	negotiate	noiseless	obscene	ode
olympian	outbreak	panders	puking	radiance	rant
remorseless	savagery	scuffle	submerge	summit	swagger
torture	tranquil	undress	unreal	varied	vaulting
worthless	zany				

**SHAKESPEARE ALSO INVENTED** many of the most-used expressions in our language. Bernard Levin skillfully summarizes Shakespeare's impact in the following passage from *The Story of English*.

If you cannot understand my argument, and declare "It's Greek to me", you are quoting Shakespeare; if you claim to be more sinned against than sinning, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you recall your salad days, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you act more in sorrow than in anger, if your wish is father to the thought, if your lost property has vanished into thin air, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you have ever refused to budge an inch or suffered from green-eyed jealousy, if you have played fast and loose, if you have been tongue-tied, a tower of strength, hoodwinked or in a pickle, if you have knitted your brows, made a virtue of necessity, insisted on fair play, slept not one wink, stood on ceremony, danced attendance (on your lord and master), laughed yourself into stitches, had short shrift, cold comfort or too much of a good thing, if you have seen better days or lived in a fool's paradise - why, be that as it may, the more fool you, for it is a foregone conclusion that you are (as good luck would have it) quoting Shakespeare; if you think it is early days and clear out bag and baggage, if you think it is high time and that that is the long and short of it, if you believe that the game is up and that truth will out even if it involves your own flesh and blood, if you lie low till the crack of doom because you suspect foul play, if you have your teeth set on edge (at one fell swoop) without rhyme or reason, then - to give the devil his due - if the truth were known (for surely you have a tongue in your head) you are quoting Shakespeare; even if you bid me good riddance and send me packing, if you wish I were dead as a door-nail, if you think I am an eyesore, a laughing stock, the devil incarnate, a stony-hearted villain, bloody-minded or a blinking idiot, then - by Jove! O Lord! Tut, tut! for goodness' sake! what the dickens! but me no buts - it is all one to me, for you are quoting Shakespeare.

(Bernard Levin. From *The Story of English*. Robert McCrum, William Cran and Robert MacNeil. Viking: 1986).

## IAMBIC PENTAMETER

Shakespeare wrote in verse (rhyming poetry/iambic pentameter) and in prose (non-rhyming). He interwove them to show class and even morality differences between the characters. In most cases characters use verse to describe a heightened emotion or to show they have an elevated social status over another character.

Being able to use words in a witty and poetic way was a sign of good breeding and superior intellect. There are many differing forms but Shakespeare most often relied on Iambic Pentameter.

Iambic Pentameter is ten syllables long with the stress placed on every second syllable. Like your heart beat - it will sound like this:

da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM

Examples from Shakespeare:

a HORSE, a HORSE my KINGDOM for a HORSE  
i SWEAR to THEE by CUPIDS strongest BOW.  
The QUALiTY of MERcy IS not STRAINED.  
aVANT thou DREADful MINisTRER of HELL.

Dr. Seuss is also a great example:  
i DO not LIKE green EGGS and HAM  
i DO not LIKE them, SAM i AM



## THE CHAIN OF BEING

The scholars E. M. W. Tillyard and A. O. Lovejoy argued that the medieval and Renaissance world inherited a special worldview called "The Chain of Being." The Chain of Being describes the medieval and Renaissance belief in a hierarchical universe ordained by God. Each link in the Chain was an individual species of being, creature, or object. Those links higher on

the Chain possessed greater intellect, mobility, and capability than those lower on the Chain. Accordingly, the higher links had more authority over the lower. For instance, plants only had authority and ability to rule over minerals. Being superior in quality to inert rock and soil, the plants had divine sanction to draw sustenance from them, and grow upon them, while the minerals and soil supported them. Animals—higher on the Chain of Being—were thought to have natural authority over both plants and minerals. For instance, horses could trample the rocks and earth; they could also eat plants. Humans in turn were thought to possess greater attributes than other animals, and could rule over the rest of the natural world, uprooting weeds and planting gardens, digging up metals and shaping them into tools, and so on. Likewise, spiritual beings like angels and God had greater ability than man, and could rule over and control humanity as well as the rest of the animals and the inanimate world.

To put it simply, the Elizabethans believed that there was and should be a place for everything and everything was and should be in its place. Even today, in these supposedly modern times, it feels good to belong, to find your niche, your place in life, your vocation, your calling. But finding your calling doesn't mean that it might not change. The same was true in Elizabethan times; you could be knighted or even ennobled. It didn't happen very often, but it could and sometimes did happen.

## SPARE TIME?

Back in time, when there weren't any iPods (eek!), cell phones (gasp), television or cars (oh no!), people found other forms of entertainment. **Gossiping was popular.** But, like flirting, you can do that anywhere, especially while doing almost any of the following.

**Attend the theatre.** Remember, this is in the afternoons, since artificial lighting with candles was limited. Young gentlemen of appearance could, for an extra fee, have their chairs put right up on the stage. There was a different play every day; perhaps 4-6 plays in a repertory season. Ladies attended, but were usually veiled or in masks.

**Take lessons.** There were plenty of professional fencing masters and dancing masters. Dancing lessons were important to keep up on the latest dances and steps, which you were expected to know. You might have found a music master to keep up your skills at the lute or virginals or other refined instruments. You could have brushed up your French, Italian, or Spanish. Castiglione says one should be seen to be good at these languages.



**Embroider.** Like gossip, you can do this nearly anywhere. Ladies may gather in the garden, or in the Queen's Privy Chamber, or some other well-lit room to do this. You might do it while watching a friend take a lute lesson or sit for a portrait.

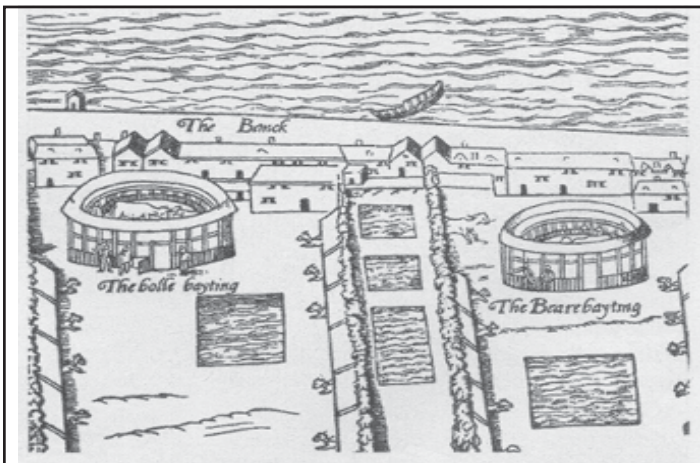


**Playcards, chess, tables (backgammon) or draughts (i.e., checkers, pronounced DRAFTS).** Card games include Primero, Taroccho (ta-RO-koh) played with tarot cards, or Trumps, and many others.

**Sit for a portrait.** The painter would make several visits, or you could visit him. You would approve his sketches and his progress, and promise to pay the bill.

**Dance.** Nobles would dance very courtly dances when they would go to visit each other. Nobles danced to show off the beautiful clothes they wore and the steps that each noble man and woman knew. Villagers would dance at festivals like May Day and at harvest festivals. Villagers danced to celebrate another season and life.

**Visit the bear pit.** Bear baiting consists of letting a pack of crazed hounds loose on a chained bear, and

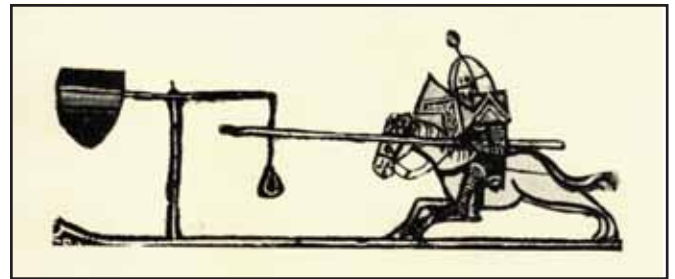


This image is a portion of the Agas map of London (the sketches for which were made between 1569 and 1590, then printed in 1631). You can see the bull- and bear-baiting rings that scholars believe were possible prototypes for the three-tiered, unroofed theater buildings. Other scholars believe that plays took place in these arenas merely by setting up removable booth stages in the arena.

watching from a safe distance while the beasts fight. Very popular. Almost as much fun as a public hanging. Even the Queen thinks this is great fun.

**Visit your tailor.** This could take hours, especially if you took along some friends.

**Jousting** was a popular sport that involved running at an opponent with a lance and trying to knock him off his horse. Shields and armor were involved, of course. Jousting tournaments were held for the rich; they were forbidden to common folk. Jousting, like any other sport, was



another excuse for the rich to show off their armor, clothes and animals. Preparation for the joust involved the quintain, which properly knocked a person off their horse if the person didn't hit the quintain just right.

**Archery.** Outside of being a tournament sport, archery involved a skill that was used in battle. Since the common people were the most numerous in battle, the commoners participated in the sport as well. The shaft of the arrow was generally made out of wood, since metal would be too heavy. The head of the arrow was made out of iron. Archers have always held a very important place in military life. During Henry V's reign in the middle ages, 6,000 English soldiers shot down 85,000 French soldiers at Agincourt, a famous battle depicted in William Shakespeare's Henry V.



**Sing.** In that time, musical literacy was expected in the upper class of society. You would make your own music. The lute, virginal, viola, recorder, bagpipe

and the fiddle were favored instruments of that time. A popular form of entertainment in the countryside was the ringing of church bells. Elizabethans also loved to hear music. Since there was no access to a recording studio, the music had to be performed. In the major towns, official musicians, better known as Waits, gave free public concerts. The wealthy people hired musicians to play during dinner.

## THE GLOBE continued

end of a lease on the Blackfriars Theatre in 1597, *The Lord Chamberlain's Men* (Shakespeare, J & R Burbage, G Byran, John Hemmings, Augustine Phillips, Thomas Pope and Will Sly) had no where else to readily perform their plays.

This acting troupe needed a new playhouse and fast as their rivals, *The Admiral's Men* already had the the Rose Playhouse to perform their plays.



*Will Kemp, the comedian: he played Dogberry in Much Ado About Nothing. He was famous for a remarkable morris-dance he performed all the way from London to Norwich -- about 110 miles.*

Though James and Richard Burbage of The Lord Chamberlain's Men had money, there still wasn't enough. Instead they came up with a novel idea; they would each own 25% of the new playhouse whilst the rest of The Lord Chamberlain's men would each chip in the remaining 50%. This, the Chamberlain's men did, Shakespeare and the other four members of the acting troupe each owning a 12.5 % share when Will Kemp another member of the troupe, backed out.

Sure enough the playhouse was completed, opening in 1599. Not only could the circular playhouse hold up to 3000 patrons but it turned out to be a good earner, earning Shakespeare and his troupe both money from hiring out the playhouse and from ticket sales of their own performances.

### Advertising.

To announce the arrival of the new playhouse, the Lord Chamberlain's Men took the bold move of flying a flag with Hercules carrying a Globe on his shoulders to announce the imminent performance of Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar.



### The Playhouse's motto and crest.

True to it's name, above the main entrance was inscribed the words "*Totus mundus agit histrionem*" (the whole world is a playhouse), a phrase echoed in *As You Like It* ("*All the world's a stage*"). A crest displaying Hercules bearing the globe on his shoulders finished the effect...



Clearly the Lord Chamberlain's Men would need a playhouse to compete, but there was one little problem; a lack of money.

### Paying for the Playhouse: Shareholders become the key.

on their hands and comfort on the minds frequently paying more for the comfort and status, the gallery seats conferred.

### Watching a play.

Unlike today's spectacles, a Shakespearean playhouse-goer really had to use their imagination; there were no backdrops, no lighting to speak of, horrific acoustics, and few, if any, props. As such, watching a play would involve watching the actors exaggerating their movements for patrons in the galleries and shouting their lines to be heard by all.

Much of the illusion of a play had to occur in the viewer's own imagination, the only notable exceptions, being the colorful use of costumes, heralds, banners, the odd cannon, and the dramatic use of the balcony's and arras. Because there was no artificial lighting, plays typically occurred in the early afternoon, lasting from 2 pm until roughly 4 or 5 pm.

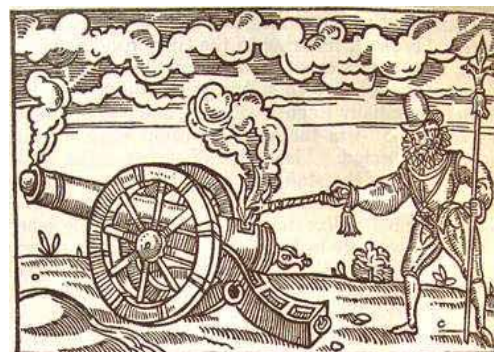


### Burnt to the ground and rebuilt again.

Tragedy struck the playhouse when amidst a performance of Henry VIII on June the 29th, 1613, a cannon fired during the play ignited the playhouse's thatched roof burning the playhouse to the ground. Rebuilt just one year later, the famous playhouse again opened its doors for business but on the opposite side of the Thames river in 1614, with the original's dangerous straw thatched roof now wisely replaced with tiles.

### End of an era.

In 1642 as Puritanical forces made their presence felt in England, playhouses no longer were a place of laughter but one of evil sin. Predictably then, all of England's playhouses were promptly closed down to protect the good people of England. Just two years later in 1644, where Hamlet was once performed, the famous playhouse was taken down, its presence replaced by housing instead. One of the greatest eras in playhouse was at an end...



### Cost of entry.

Open to all for the modest fee of just one-penny (roughly 10% of a worker's daily wage), you could stand in the yard at the center of the playhouse. Without an overhead roof, such a view was exposed, but with the stage set at eye level some 5 feet off the ground, you got the closest view in the house. For a little more (roughly two pennies), you could pay to sit in one of the playhouse's three circular galleries; the gentry with time

