

Life:

William Shakespeare is considered to be the greatest of all dramatists all over the world. He was born on 23rd April 1564, at Stratford-upon-Avon in Henley Street as the oldest son of a glove maker John Shakespeare and his wife Mary Arden. He had one sister and one brother. William attended the local grammar school. When he was 18, he married Anne Hathaway from the nearby village of Shottery. She was eight years older than he and already pregnant. They had two daughters – Susan and Judith and a son Hamnet. Hamnet and Judith were twins, but Hamnet died at the age of eleven. There are nearly no records of Shakespeare's life during the seven years that followed except one mention that they probably still stayed at Stratford-upon-Avon. But in 1592 he came to London and joined a group of actors known as the Lord Chamberlain's Men. Eight years later he bought his own theatre with six more members of the company. It was called the Globe Theatre and it was an outdoor theatre where the actors played in the open air. It is also important to remember that in Shakespeare's time there were no actresses and all women's roles were played by men. Also one actor played more roles than one. First Shakespeare helped adapt or re-write older plays but later he started to write his own plays and he was very successful. Both the Queen Elizabeth I. and James I. liked him very much. One day, during a performance of Henry VIII the Globe was destroyed by fire. The Lord Chamberlain's Men became the King's Men under the patronage of James I. His plays were first published in 1623.

The success of his plays increased from year to year, so that at about the end of the century Shakespeare was both famous and wealthy. In 1610 he went back to his home town where he bought a house called New Place and lived a quiet life with his family. The strange thing is that he died on the same day as he was born in the age of 52. The legend says that he died after a loud and noisy birthday celebration with his friends. He is buried at local Trinity Church. Here his wife and other members of this family are also buried. There are only two portraits of Shakespeare, which are authentic and one of them is the bust in Stratford-upon-Avon at Trinity Church. A memorial to him is also in Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey. Today there is the Royal Shakespeare (or Swan) Theatre, which is visited by tourists from all over the world.

Work:

Shakespeare was a big poet and wrote some nice sonnets, but he is best known for his plays. He wrote 37 plays, tragedies, comedies, historical plays and romances, which is something between tragedy and comedy:

Tragedies: *Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth* and plays which are something between tragedy and a historical play – *Julius Caesar, Anthony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus*.

Comedies: *The Taming of the Shrew, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, The Merry Wives of Windsor, As You Like It, Twelfth Night*.

Romances: *Pericles, The Winter's Tale, The Tempest*.

Historical plays: *Richard II, Richard III, Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI*.

In his plays Shakespeare ignores the three unities of the classic drama, that of place, time and action. The place of action changes from scene to scene, there are usually two or three plots, tragedy is mingled with comedy, and rhymed and blank verse and prose are used in turns. The plots are not original but their performance is. His plays are still popular because his dramas express general truths, those which are permanent in human life and nature.

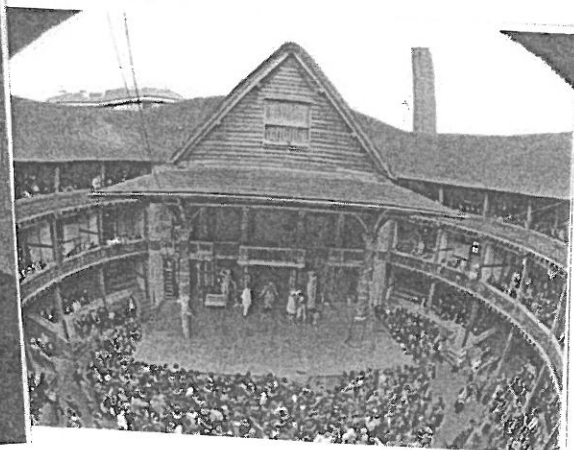
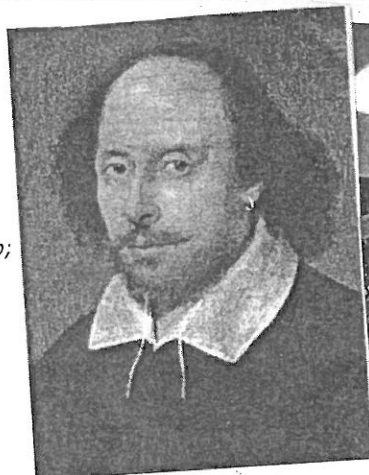
Romeo and Juliet:

is a tragedy of love. The story tells about the long vendetta between the two rich families of Verona. Romeo, the son of Lord Montague, and Juliet, the daughter of Lord Capulet, fall in love and get married secretly. But then Tybalt, who is Juliet's cousin, kills Romeo's friend Mercutio and in anger Romeo revenges Mercutio. He must escape and while he is not in Verona, Juliet is forced by her family to marry Paris, a nobleman, but she refuses and asks Friar Laurence, who had secretly married Juliet to Romeo, for help again and he gives her magic drops after which she falls asleep for a month and looks as if she were dead. Romeo learns about Juliet's death and he doesn't know about the trick. He hurries to the crypt where she lies, and commits suicide with poison at her feet. Juliet wakes up only a moment after and when she sees her young husband dead, she kills herself with his sword. Both Montague and Capulet families reconcile over the dead bodies of their beloved children.

Hamlet:

is a tragedy of the suffering and hesitation of an honest man who is not able to kill without having clear proof of guilt. Hamlet is the Prince of Denmark. His mother, a Queen, is a widow and marries Hamlet's uncle Claudius. But the ghost of Hamlet's dead father appears and tells him, that it was the Queen and Claudius who killed him. But to make sure Hamlet pretends madness in order to prove his stepfather's guilt. When a group of actors visits the castle, Hamlet asks them to perform a play about a murdered king, very similar to the murder of his own father. The new king recognises himself in the story and sends Hamlet to England to be killed. But Hamlet returns and the play ends in bloody vengeance, when Hamlet kills the whole family and he is also killed. I don't like this end because it seems to me like modern action. But I love Hamlet's monologue:

*To be, or not to be – that is the question: –
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? – To die, – to sleep, –
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, – 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, – to sleep; –
To sleep! perchance to dream: – ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.*



Romeo and Juliet

Have you ever read Romeo and Juliet in a book? Why?/ Why not?— No I haven't/ Yes I have. — Did you like it?

Have you ever seen a film based on Romeo and Juliet? Tell me about it. — No I haven't. /Yes I have.



Complete the review

short modern version ____ 1996 ____ American romantic drama ____
William Shakespeare ____ Leonardo DiCaprio, Claire Danes ____
original Shakespearean language, original dialogues but modern times, people,
teenagers ____

The Capulet and Montague families ____ represent (trpny rod) by two competing
business imperias ____
swords but modern guns ____ nobles but businessmen and real teenagers and their
parents ____

some parents ____ first names while in the books not

Verona Rome and Juliet Julie's cousin Tybalt frier Lawrence

My favourite part is ____ doplňte 6-8 větmi!

THINGS WE SAY TODAY, WHICH WE OWE TO SHAKESPEARE:

"KNOCK, KNOCK! WHO'S THERE?" "HEART OF GOLD"

"IN A PICKLE" "SET YOUR TEETH ON EDGE" "GOOD RIDDANCE"

"FAINT HEARTED" "SO-SO" "SEND HIM PACKING"

"LIE "FIGHT FIRE "BAITED "COME WHAT MAY"
LOW" WITH FIRE" BREATH" "THE GAME IS UP"

"WEAR YOUR HEART ON YOUR SLEEVE"

"NOT SLEPT "FULL CIRCLE" "OUT OF THE JAWS OF DEATH"
ONE WINK" "NAKED "TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING"

"WHAT'S DONE IS DONE" "TRUTH" "BREAK THE ICE" "WILD"

"LAUGHING STOCK" "BREADED HIS LAST" "GOOSE CHASE"

"HEART OF HEARTS" "VANISH INTO THIN AIR" "CHASE"

"SEEN BETTER DAYS" "MAKES YOUR HAIR STAND ON END"

"DEAD AS A "FOR GOODNESS' SAKE" "LOVE IS BLIND"

DOORNAIL" "FAIR / FOUL" "OFF WITH HIS HEAD"

"GREEN EYED MONSTER" PLAY / PLAY

"THE WORLD IS "BRAVE NEW WORLD" "A SORRY SIGHT"

MY OYSTER" "BE ALL / END ALL" "A SORRY SIGHT"