

The life of Shakespeare

Lesson Plan

Topic: The life of Shakespeare

Level: A2

Time: 80 minutes

Aims

- To develop students' ability to read for detail, read aloud, transcribe dictated text, ask and answer questions
- To develop students' vocabulary of life events
- To give practice with reading, writing, listening and speaking, focusing on pronunciation
- To raise students' awareness of Shakespeare, his life and work

Introduction

This lesson is about Shakespeare's life. It provides students with an insight into the major events of his life, with a focus on pronunciation of past tense forms, asking questions and the lexis of life events.

Preparation

Print a **Task 1 - Timeline: Shakespeare's life** worksheet to share between groups of 3 or 4 students. Cut the first page into strips.

For the remaining tasks, copy the Student A worksheets for half your students, and the Student B worksheets for the other half. Make enough copies for each student to have one set of either the A or B worksheets.

Procedure

Warmer - What do you know about theatre? (5 mins)

- Ask students if they have been to the theatre. Ask them to work in small groups and discuss their experiences - which plays have they seen? Do they know the names of any famous playwrights? Have they seen any English plays or heard of any English playwrights?
- Ask groups to report back to class. With the whole class, ask whether any students have heard of Shakespeare or seen any of his plays (or films based on them). Can they name any of his plays? Do they know when he lived or anything about his life?

Task 1 - Timeline: the life of Shakespeare (10 mins)

Tip - this task can be modified to suit your class. If you wish to do this as a whole class activity, make only one copy of **Task 1 - Timeline: Shakespeare's life - dates** student worksheet, enlarging it to A3 size, stick it to the wall or desk and give pairs of students (or individuals) an event each to match to one of the dates.

This task can be made easier for lower level students by sticking a few of the events next to the correct date before the students start the task.

Ask students to work in small groups (of 3 or 4, depending on class size) and arrange the events of Shakespeare's life (cut into strips) from the **Task 1 - Timeline: Shakespeare's life - events** worksheet in the correct order, on the **Task 1 - Timeline: Shakespeare's life - dates** worksheet, matching dates to life events.

- This will test students' ability to think logically about the usual order of events in a person's life. Emphasise that no prior knowledge of Shakespeare's life is needed to establish the order.
- Do not give the students the answers to **Task 1**, as they will check some of the answers themselves in **Task 2 – Reading: checking the dates**.

Task 2 – Reading: checking the dates (10 mins)

- Ask the students to read the text and check that their answers are right.
- N.B. The following dates are not mentioned in the text: 1557, 1571, 1585, 1596, 1597, 1603. Students' answers for these dates can be checked after they have read the text.

Answers:

1557	<i>William's parents, John Shakespeare and Mary Arden, were married.</i>
1564	<i>William was born in Stratford-upon-Avon.</i>
1571	<i>William started school.</i>
1582	<i>William married Anne Hathaway.</i>
1583	<i>William and Anne's first child Anne was born, five months after their wedding.</i>
1585	<i>William and Anne had more children, twins Judith and Hamnet.</i>
1585	<i>In the same year the twins were born, William started working in the theatre in London.</i>
1589	<i>After he started working in the theatre, William wrote his first plays.</i>
1596	<i>William and Anne's son Hamnet died, aged eleven.</i>
1597	<i>After Hamnet's death, William bought 'New Place', a big house in Stratford.</i>
1603	<i>William acted in a play at the theatre for the last time.</i>
1616	<i>William died in Stratford-upon-Avon.</i>

Task 3 – Vocabulary: working out the meaning of words (10 mins)

- Ask students to write a simple definition of the words, using their own explanations.

Suggested answers:

1. *to slip* *to fall over on wet ground*
2. *career* *all the jobs you do during your working life*
3. *comedy* *a funny play*
4. *history* *a play about events in the past*
5. *tragedy* *a play with a sad ending*
6. *to inherit* *to get money/a house/possessions from a person who has died*

- Check that students can recall the meaning of these words by asking:

Would you probably slip in sunny or rainy weather? Why? (Rainy, because the ground is wet.)

Is a job the same as a career? (No, a career is all the jobs in your life, not just one job.)

What kind of play makes you laugh, a comedy or a tragedy? (A comedy makes you laugh, but a tragedy makes you sad.)

Who do you inherit things from? (Someone who has died, often a family member or friend.)

Task 4 – Making questions (10 mins)

- Ask students to unscramble the words to form questions, then ask each other their completed questions, checking the answers in the text.

Answers:

Student A:

1. *What did Shakespeare's father do? – He was a glove maker.*
2. *How did Shakespeare meet his wife? – They met at a market when Shakespeare's brother slipped in the mud and Anne helped him to stand up.*
3. *When did they marry? – They married in 1582.*
4. *How many children did they have? – They had three children.*
5. *Who died when he was eleven?/Who was eleven when he died? – Hamnet was eleven when he died.*

Student B:

1. *How many plays did Shakespeare write? – He wrote thirty seven plays.*
2. *Where did Shakespeare work? – He worked in London.*
3. *What happened in 1613? – The Globe burnt down.*
4. *When did Shakespeare die? – He died on his birthday in 1616.*
5. *Who inherited most of his money? – His daughter Susanna inherited most of his money.*

The life of Shakespeare
Student A worksheets**Task 2 – Reading: checking the dates**

Is your timeline correct? Read the text below and check the order of the events on your timeline.

William Shakespeare was born on the 23rd of April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, in England. His father was a glove maker, and they were not poor. His father became an important person in the town.

William was the eldest boy in the family, so he had to help his father. One day, he went to a market with his younger brother, Edmund. Edmund slipped because it was muddy, and a young woman helped him to stand up. Her name was Anne Hathaway. After this meeting at the market, William and Anne fell in love, and they married in 1582. Anne gave birth to their first child, Susanna, in 1583. At first, William and Anne lived with William's parents, but they moved to another house in 1584. Their son Hamnet, was born in 1585, but sadly he died when he was only eleven.

In 1587 William moved to London. He asked his brother to look after his wife and children, and he sent money home to Stratford and visited when he could. During his career, he worked as an actor, and he also wrote thirty seven plays: seventeen comedies, ten histories and ten tragedies, as well as poems. Shakespeare became rich and famous, and he had enough money to buy an expensive house in Stratford, called 'New Place'. His company of actors had enough money for a new theatre, The Globe, built in 1599. During a play in 1613, a fire started and The Globe burnt down. Fortunately, nobody was hurt, but Shakespeare seems to have written less in the years after the accident.

William only came back to Stratford for the last five years of his life. He died on his birthday, aged 52, in 1616, and was buried in a church in Stratford. His daughter Susanna inherited most of his money and possessions.

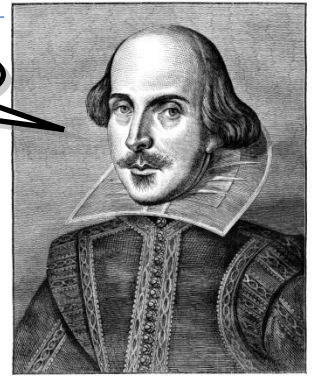
Task 3 – Vocabulary: working out the meanings of words

What do these words mean? Write your own explanation:

1. to slip (paragraph 2) _____
2. career (paragraph 3) _____
3. comedy (paragraph 3) _____
4. history (paragraph 3) _____
5. tragedy (paragraph 3) _____
6. to inherit (paragraph 4) _____

Task 4 – Making questions (Student A)

Where was I born?



a) Put the words below in the correct order to make questions:

1. did what do father Shakespeare's?

2. meet did wife Shakespeare his how?

3. marry they did when? _____
4. they many how have children did? _____
5. eleven he died when who was? _____

b) Ask your partner your questions and check their answers using the text.

Task 5: Grammar: past simple

Find the past simple form of these verbs in the text. Which ones are regular and which are irregular?

become	<u>became</u>	go	_____	do	_____
inherit	_____	have	_____	build	_____
spend	_____	work	_____	live	_____
is	_____	write	_____	die	_____
burn	_____	visit	_____	slip	_____
fall	_____	help	_____	marry	_____
give	_____	start	_____	bury	_____

Task 6 – Pronunciation

With your partner, practise saying the following past simple verbs and decide how their ending is pronounced. Write the verbs in the correct column in the table below:

inherited worked lived died visited
 slipped helped moved started

[ɪd]	[d]	[t]
inherited		

Task 7 – Dictation (Student A)

Read the following text to your partner, giving him/her time to write what you say.

In 1587 William moved to London. He asked his brother to look after his wife and children, and he sent money home to Stratford and visited when he could. During his career, he worked as an actor, and he also wrote thirty seven plays: seventeen comedies, ten histories and ten tragedies, as well as poems.

Check your partner’s writing – is it the same as the text above?

Now listen to your partner and write what he/she says. 

Shakespeare _____ rich and famous, and he _____ enough _____ to buy an expensive _____ in Stratford, called ‘New Place’. His _____ of actors _____ enough money for a new theatre: The Globe, built in _____. However, during a play in _____, a fire _____ and The Globe _____ down. William _____ his working life in _____, and he only _____ back to Stratford for the last five _____ of his life.

Ask your partner to check your writing.

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Student B worksheets

Task 2 – Reading: checking the dates

Is your timeline correct? Read the text below and check the order of the events on your timeline.

William Shakespeare was born on the 23rd of April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, in England. His father was a glove maker, and they were not poor. His father became an important person in the town.

William was the eldest boy in the family, so he had to help his father. One day, he went to a market with his younger brother, Edmund. Edmund slipped because it was muddy, and a young woman helped him to stand up. Her name was Anne Hathaway. After this meeting at the market, William and Anne fell in love, and they married in 1582. Anne gave birth to their first child, Susanna, in 1583. At first, William and Anne lived with William's parents, but they moved to another house in 1584. Their son Hamnet, was born in 1585, but sadly he died when he was only eleven.

In 1587 William moved to London. He asked his brother to look after his wife and children, and he sent money home to Stratford and visited when he could. During his career, he worked as an actor, and he also wrote thirty seven plays: seventeen comedies, ten histories and ten tragedies, as well as poems. Shakespeare became rich and famous, and he had enough money to buy an expensive house in Stratford, called 'New Place'. His company of actors had enough money for a new theatre, The Globe, built in 1599. During a play in 1613, a fire started and The Globe burnt down. Fortunately, nobody was hurt, but Shakespeare seems to have written less in the years after the accident.

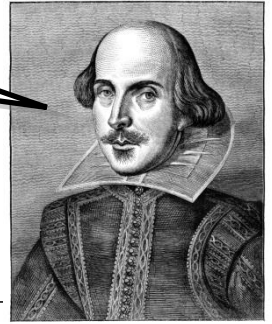
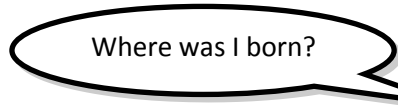
William only came back to Stratford for the last five years of his life. He died on his birthday, aged 52, in 1616, and was buried in a church in Stratford. His daughter Susanna inherited most of his money and possessions.

Task 3 – Vocabulary: working out the meaning of words

What do these words mean? Write your own explanation:

1. to slip (paragraph 2) _____
2. career (paragraph 3) _____
3. comedy (paragraph 3) _____
4. history (paragraph 3) _____
5. tragedy (paragraph 3) _____
6. to inherit (paragraph 4) _____

Task 4 – Making questions(Student B)



Put the words below in the correct order to make questions:

1. plays write Shakespeare how did many? _____
2. work where Shakespeare did? _____
3. 1613 happened what in? _____
4. die did when Shakespeare? _____
5. money his who most inherited of? _____

Ask your partner your questions and check their answers using the text.

Task 5 – Grammar: past simple

Find the past simple form of these verbs in the text. Which ones are regular and which are irregular?

become	<u>became</u>	go	_____	do	_____
inherit	_____	have	_____	build	_____
spend	_____	work	_____	live	_____
is	_____	write	_____	die	_____
burn	_____	visit	_____	slip	_____
fall	_____	help	_____	marry	_____
give	_____	start	_____	bury	_____

Task 6 – Pronunciation

With your partner, practise saying the following past simple verbs and decide how their ending is pronounced. Write the verbs in the correct column in the table below:

inherited worked lived died visited
 slipped helped moved started

[id]	[d]	[t]
inherited		

Task 7 – Dictation (Student B)

Now listen to your partner and write what he/she says. 

In _____ William _____ to live in London. He _____ his _____ to look after his _____, and he _____ money home to Stratford and _____ when he _____. During his _____, he _____ as an actor, and he also _____ thirty seven plays: seventeen _____, ten histories and ten, as well as _____.

Ask your partner to check your writing.

Read the following text to your partner, giving him/her time to write what you say.

Shakespeare became rich and famous, and he had enough money to buy an expensive house in Stratford, called 'New Place'. His company of actors had enough money for a new theatre: The Globe, built in 1598. However, during a play in 1613, a fire started and The Globe burnt down. William spent his working life in London, and he only came back to Stratford for the last five years of his life.

Check your partner's writing – is it the same as the text above?

Task 5 – Grammar: past simple (10 mins)

- Ask students to complete the table with the past simple form of the verbs (all in the text), and make a note of which are regular and irregular. N.B. the verbs are not in the same order as in the text.

Answers (r) = regular, (i) = irregular

become	became (i)	go	went (i)	do	did (i)
inherit	inherited (r)	have	had (i)	build	built (i)
spend	spent (i)	work	worked(r)	live	lived (r)
is	was (i)	write	wrote (i)	die	died (r)
burn	burnt (i)	visit	visited (r)	slip	slipped (r)
fall	fell (i)	help	helped (r)	marry	married (r)
give	gave (i)	start	started (r)	bury	buried (r)

Task 6 – Pronunciation (5 mins)

- Elicit from students the *-ed* ending of past simple regular verbs.
- Ask how it is pronounced – the same for every verb, or different?
- Ask students to say the verbs in the list and write them in the correct column, according to pronunciation. (The first one has been completed as an example.)

Answers

[ɪd]	[d]	[t]
<i>inherited</i>	<i>lived</i>	<i>worked</i>
<i>visited</i>	<i>died</i>	<i>slipped</i>
<i>started</i>	<i>moved</i>	<i>helped</i>

Task 7 – Dictation (5 mins)

- Ask students to work in pairs and dictate the gapped text to each other, checking each other’s work when they have finished.

Task 8 – Speaking and listening: interview with Shakespeare (10 mins)

- Divide students into pairs (you could ask them to work with someone different so they have practice of listening to the pronunciation of other students).
- Ask students to think of some questions they could ask Shakespeare about his life, making sure they know how to form past simple questions, e.g. “Where did you live?” “Did you have any children?” “When was your birthday?” etc. Write a few of your students’ suggestions on the board. Students can then continue and produce their own questions, based on the information from **Task 2**. They can write down their questions in their notebooks to help them remember.
- Once the questions are ready, students swap partners and use their questions to interview another student who plays the role of Shakespeare, asking him about his life.
- If time allows, pairs of students can “perform” their interview for other members of the class, with others giving constructive feedback on their performance.

Cooler – What can you remember? (5 mins)

- With students working in small groups (3 or 4), ask them to recall at least five facts about Shakespeare's life (without looking at their worksheets or notes), using past simple to make full sentences. If students are particularly quick to finish the task, ask them to recall more than five facts.

Idioms from Shakespeare: a Matching Game

Some of the most colorful and expressive phrases in English are idioms from Shakespeare. We still use many of them in everyday conversation. They are like a shorthand way of expressing some of our deeply-held beliefs about human nature and experience. That makes them important (though often not easy) to understand.

Idioms from Shakespeare Still Used Today

I used this infographic of Shakespeare idioms:

https://twitter.com/esl_expressions/status/595048170138292224/photo/1 to make the matching game below.

While checking some of the references, I found

<http://www.bbcamerica.com/anglophenia/2014/04/45-phrases-coined-shakespeare-450th-birthday/> with most of those expressions and others. It also gives the play each idiom was taken from. (In each case, when I checked, the BBC's came directly from Shakespeare. I've used their wording or spelling when the two sites disagreed. For example, 'baited' in the infographic is a misspelling.)

Shakespeare did not invent all of these expressions. Sometimes he 'borrowed' colorful phrases he heard or read. However, he is the first written source for most of them, and he made them popular. People found many of them useful ways to express their feelings or experiences, and so many of them are familiar to most native English speakers—a part of our heritage and our thinking patterns.

Teaching Suggestions:

The matching game below is a chance for students to consider some of these idioms and try to work out their meanings in a low-pressure, game setting.

You can print just that one page for each student, or perhaps even better for pair or group work (possibly with mixed level pairs or teams of three.) The team with the most correct matches wins.

At the bottom of the answer page are some links to more resources for teaching Shakespeare to ELLs. If you would like live links, go to the interactive equivalent of this page on EnglishHints:

www.englishhints.com/idioms-from-shakespeare.html

There are many more matching games on EnglishHints. Most of the interactive versions are linked from www.englishhints.com/vocabulary-games.html (as well as a few from the Grammar Practice page).

Printable pdf classroom versions of games are on www.englishhints.com/esl-classroom-games.html

(See the sitemap on the nav bar if these links give you trouble.)



Can you guess the meanings of these idioms from Shakespeare?

Match the Shakespeare idioms on the left with their meanings on the right. (The first one has been done for you.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. <u>A</u> green eyed monster | A. jealousy |
| 2. ___ set my teeth on edge | B. stay out of sight, unnoticed |
| 3. ___ heart of gold | C. not good or bad |
| 4. ___ faint hearted | D. glad something is over or gone |
| 5. ___ bated breath | E. kind and generous |
| 6. ___ so-so | F. whatever happens |
| 7. ___ good riddance | G. limited breathing due to tension, awaiting news |
| 8. ___ lie low | H. irritate or bother me |
| 9. ___ come what may | I. timid or afraid |
| 10. ___ in a pickle | J. feelings can make us ignore obvious problems |
| 11. ___ wear my heart upon my sleeve | K. I'll find a way to get what I want |
| 12. ___ full circle | L. acting so foolishly that others mock you |
| 13. ___ break the ice | M. frightening |
| 14. ___ wild goose chase | N. in a difficult situation |
| 15. ___ the world is my oyster | O. things have come back to where they started |
| 16. ___ laughing stock | P. a hopeless effort with no chance of success |
| 17. ___ makes your hair stand on end | Q. whatever I feel is obvious to everyone |
| 18. ___ love is blind | R. start something |

Idiom Matching Answers

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <u>A</u> green eyed monster** | A. jealousy |
| 2. <u>H</u> set my teeth on edge | H. irritate or bother me |
| 3. <u>E</u> heart of gold | E. kind and generous |
| 4. <u>I</u> faint hearted | I. timid or afraid |
| 5. <u>G</u> baited breath | G. limited breathing due to tension, awaiting news |
| 6. <u>C</u> so-so | C. not good or bad |
| 7. <u>D</u> good riddance* | D. glad something is over or gone |
| 8. <u>B</u> lie low | B. stay out of sight, unnoticed |
| 9. <u>F</u> come what may | F. whatever happens |
| 10. <u>N</u> in a pickle | N. in a difficult situation |
| 11. <u>Q</u> wear your heart on your sleeve | Q. whatever I feel is obvious to everyone |
| 12. <u>O</u> full circle | O. things have come back to where they started |
| 13. <u>R</u> break the ice | R. start something |
| 14. <u>P</u> wild goose chase | P. a hopeless effort with no chance of success |
| 15. <u>K</u> the world is my oyster | K. I'll find a way to get what I want |
| 16. <u>L</u> laughing stock | L. acting so foolishly that others mock you |
| 17. <u>M</u> makes your hair stand on end | M. frightening |
| 18. <u>S</u> love is blind | S. feelings can make us ignore obvious problems |

More background for those who are interested:

*to get rid of means to throw away or put out of our home and life. If someone has been in a difficult romantic relationship and his or her partner leaves, he or she may say "Good riddance!"

**In English we still talk about being "green with envy" (an expression used by American writer Mark Twain over 100 years ago), but the idea goes back at least as far as the ancient Greeks. Shakespeare used "green-eyed jealousy" in *The Merchant of Venice*, but it became a monster in *Othello*. Iago warned Othello in act 3, scene 3:

"O, beware, my lord, of jealousy; It is the green-ey'd monster, which doth mock The meat it feeds on."

Iago actually hated Othello and was trying to make him jealous. Iago created the green-eyed monster that led Othello to suspect and kill his wife—and then himself when he learned she was innocent.

Shakespeare's plays are full of powerful insights into human psychology and creative ways to express them.

Read them for yourself, with some help from modernized versions side by side with the original at

<http://nfs.sparknotes.com/> If you're wondering which one to try, look at

http://www.bbc.co.uk/drama/shakespeare/60secondshakespeare/themes_index.shtml . (They're written as if they were headlines in one of the scandal-loving tabloid newspapers.) For ideas on how to use those to teach Shakespeare, see <http://www.britishcouncil.org/blog/how-make-shakespeare-easy-english-language-learners> .

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SHAKESPEARE MATCHING

Match the phrase on the left with the Shakespeare play on the right.

- | | | |
|--|-------|------------------------------|
| 1. "A horse, a horse! My kingdom for a horse!" | _____ | A. The Tempest |
| 2. "as pure as the driven snow" | _____ | B. Macbeth |
| 3. "Be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em." | _____ | C. Taming of the Shrew |
| 4. "Beware the Ides of March." | _____ | D. A midsummer Night's Dream |
| 5. "Double, double toil and trouble." | _____ | E. Hamlet |
| 6. "he will give the devil his due" | _____ | F. Richard III |
| 7. "in the twinkling of an eye" | _____ | G. Henry IV, Part 2 |
| 8. "kiss me, Kate" | _____ | H. Comedy of Errors |
| 9. "neither a borrower nor a lender be" | _____ | I. Julius Caesar |
| 10. "O, brave new world" | _____ | J. Henry IV |
| 11. "the devils incarnate" | _____ | K. Twelfth Night |
| 12. "'tis high time" | _____ | L. Merchant of Venice |
| 13. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." | _____ | M. King Henry V |
| 14. "Lord, what fools these mortals be!" | _____ | N. Romeo and Juliet |
| 15. "wild-geese chase" | _____ | O. The Winter's Tale |

SHAKESPEARE MATCHING

ANSWER KEY

- | | | |
|--|----------|------------------------------|
| 1. "A horse, a horse! My kingdom for a horse!" | <u>F</u> | A. The Tempest |
| 2. "as pure as the driven snow" | <u>O</u> | B. Macbeth |
| 3. "Be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em." | <u>K</u> | C. Taming of the Shrew |
| 4. "Beware the Ides of March." | <u>I</u> | D. A Midsummer Night's Dream |
| 5. "Double, double toil and trouble." | <u>B</u> | E. Hamlet |
| 6. "he will give the devil his due" | J | F. Richard III |
| 7. "in the twinkling of an eye" | <u>L</u> | G. Henry IV, Part 2 |
| 8. "kiss me, Kate" | <u>C</u> | H. Comedy of Errors |
| 9. "neither a borrower nor a lender be" | <u>E</u> | I. Julius Caesar |
| 10. "O, brave new world" | <u>A</u> | J. Henry IV, Part I |
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| 14. "Lord, what fools these mortals be!" | <u>D</u> | N. Romeo and Juliet |
| 15. "wild-geese chase" | <u>N</u> | O. The Winter's Tale |

Shakespeare**Task 3 – Information gap reading****Student A**

William Shakespeare was a poet and a playwright, and is widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language. He was born in 1) _____, in central England, in 1564 and he died in 2) _____. His surviving work consists of 38 plays, 154 sonnets (a special type of poem with 14 lines), and some other poems. He is best known for his 3) _____ which have been translated into every major language and are performed more than those of any other playwright in the world.

When William Shakespeare was 18 years old he married 4) _____, and they had three children. Shakespeare went to 5) _____ to work as an actor and a writer. In 1599 the Globe Theatre was built in London and it was in this theatre, situated on the banks of the River Thames, that some of Shakespeare's plays were first performed. In 6) _____ the theatre was destroyed by a fire. However, a modern reconstruction of the theatre was built near the original site in 1997 so even today you can go to the Globe Theatre to see one of Shakespeare's plays.

(Text adapted from Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare)

Prepare your questions here (the first one is done for you):

- 1) Where was Shakespeare born?
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)

Student B

William Shakespeare was a poet and a playwright, and is widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, in central England, in 1) _____ and he died in 1616. His surviving work consists of 2) _____ plays, 154 sonnets (a special type of poem with 14 lines), and some other poems. He is best known for his plays which have been translated into every major language and are performed more than those of any other playwright in the world.

When William Shakespeare was 3) _____ years old he married Anne Hathaway, and they had 4) _____ children. Shakespeare went to London to work as an actor and a writer. In 5) _____ the Globe Theatre was built in London and it was in this theatre, situated on the banks of the River Thames, that some of Shakespeare's plays were first performed. In 1613 the theatre was destroyed by a 6) _____. However, a modern reconstruction of the theatre was built near the original site in 1997 so even today you can go to the Globe Theatre to see one of Shakespeare's plays.

(Text adapted from Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare)

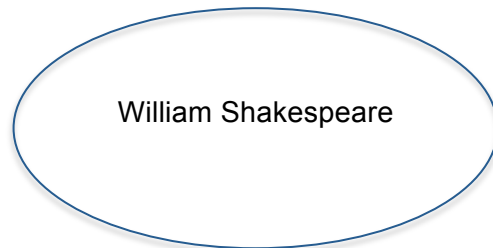
Prepare your questions here (the first one is done for you):

- 1) When was Shakespeare born?
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)

Shakespeare

Task 1 – Shakespeare Mind Map

What comes to mind when you think of William Shakespeare? Work in groups and write your ideas below:



Task 2 – Shakespeare Quiz

How much do you know about William Shakespeare? Try this quiz to find out:

- 1) When was William Shakespeare born?
 - a) 1498
 - b) 1564
 - c) 1895

- 2) In which period of English history was Shakespeare alive?
 - a) Elizabethan
 - b) Georgian
 - c) Victorian

- 3) Which of these plays was not written by Shakespeare?
 - a) Hamlet
 - b) Romeo and Juliet
 - c) The Taming of the Rat

- 4) Where was Shakespeare born?
 - a) Stratford Upon Avon
 - b) Cambridge
 - c) Oxford

- 5) How many plays did Shakespeare write?
 - a) 8
 - b) 38
 - c) 108

- 6) Which type of plays did Shakespeare not write?
 - a) Tragedies
 - b) Comedies
 - c) Musicals

- 7) What's the name of the "Shakespeare theatre" in London?
 - a) The World Theatre
 - b) The Globe Theatre
 - c) The Old Shakespeare Theatre

- 8) Who played Romeo in the 1996 film version of "Romeo and Juliet"?
 - a) Leonardo DiCaprio
 - b) Johnny Depp
 - c) Brad Pitt

Task 3 – Information gap reading

Your teacher will give you a text to read. There is some missing information in the text. Write the questions you will need to ask to find out the missing information. Then be prepared to ask your partner your questions so that you can complete your text.

Task 4 – Find someone who

Talk to your classmates and try to complete the table. Don't forget to ask a follow-up question

Find someone who...	Name	Extra information?
...can name three of Shakespeare's plays		
...has seen a film of a Shakespeare play		
...likes going to the theatre		
...would like to be a writer		
...would like to be an actor		
....		

Task 5 – Complete the Shakespeare quotes

Here are some famous quotes from Shakespeare. Can you match the two halves to make the quote? Compare your answers in groups.

1. All the world's a stage	a) nor a lender be.
2. Love is blind	b) that is the question.
3. Neither a borrower	c) what's done is done.
4. Good night! Good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow	d) and all the men and women are merely players.
5. To be, or not to be:	e) wherefore art thou Romeo?
6. Things without remedy should be without regard;	f) never did run smooth
7. The course of true love	g) and lovers cannot see.
8. O Romeo, Romeo!	h) that I shall say good night till it be morrow.

- What does each quote mean?

www.teachingenglish.org.uk

Warmer

What do you know about William Shakespeare? Discuss your ideas with a partner.

Activity 1: William Shakespeare: An introduction to his life

Read the biography of Shakespeare below and try to complete the missing information.

Then, visit www.bbc.co.uk/timelines/z8k2p39 to find the correct information and complete the short biography.

Shakespeare is England's most famous playwright and _____. His plays are known throughout the world and he introduced up to 300 _____ and dozens of _____ into the English language.

He was born in _____ - _____ - _____ in the year _____. He probably went to the local _____ school, King Edward VI's School, where he learnt Greek and _____. He didn't go to _____.

In 1582, he married _____, who was three months _____. In total, they had _____ children.

He left Stratford to go and live in _____, working as a playwright and actor. He performed many times for Queen _____.

Shakespeare's group built their own theatre called the _____. By now, Shakespeare was very rich. He bought the _____ house in Stratford and many other properties as investments. He had a good head for business.

He died in _____, probably of _____. In his will, he left his _____ bed to his wife. Nobody knows for certain why he did this. He is buried in Stratford.

Activity 2: The plot of *Romeo and Juliet*

Read the statements about Shakespeare's classic tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*. Some are true and others are false. With a partner, predict whether you think they are true or false, then visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romeo_and_Juliet to check your answers and correct the false statements.

Introduction

1. The plot of *Romeo and Juliet* is based on a French tale.
2. Shakespeare created the supporting characters Mercutio and Paris.
3. The play is believed to have been written between 1581 and 1585.

Synopsis

4. The play is set in Venice, Italy.
5. It begins with a street fight between the Montagues and Capulets.
6. Romeo first sees Juliet at a ball in the Montague house.
7. With the help of Benvolio, they are secretly married the next day.
8. Romeo kills Juliet's cousin, Tybalt, in revenge for his killing Romeo's close friend and ally, Mercutio.

9. For the execution, Romeo is exiled from Verona.
10. Before he leaves, he secretly spends the night with Juliet.
11. Juliet's mother offers her a drug that will put her into a coma for 'two and forty hours' on the night before her planned wedding to Paris.
12. When she is found, she is believed to be dead.
13. Romeo buys a gun to kill himself when he hears the news.
14. At the crypt where Juliet's body has been laid, Romeo is met by Paris.
15. He kills him before drinking the poison.
16. When Juliet awakens from her deep sleep, she realizes Romeo is dead and, panicking, she runs away.

Activity 3: Boy players

Visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boy_player and find out about boy players by reading the 'Boys in adult companies' section. Then, answer the questions below.

1. When did it become permissible for women to perform in the theatre?
2. Was there an official law against female actors?
3. Why were pre-pubescent boys used to play female roles?
4. Did boys also play the complex lead female roles?
5. What kinds of roles did actor John Honyman play?

Activity 4: Shakespearean language still used today

a. In pairs, you are going to find out the meaning of the phrases created or popularized by Shakespeare. Decide who is Student 1 and who is Student 2. Find out the meaning of the expressions and teach the phrases to your partner.

Student 1: Find the following phrases from *Hamlet*.

www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/phrases-coined-by-shakespeare-in-hamlet.html

1. *In my mind's eye* 2. *Make your hair stand on end* 3. *Woe is me*

Student 2: Find the following from phrases from *Macbeth*.

www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/phrases-coined-by-shakespeare-in-macbeth.html

4. *A charmed life* 5. *A sorry sight* 6. *Be all and end all*

b. Now, choose your favourite expression from the main list: www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/phrases-sayings-shakespeare.html.

Once you've chosen your favourite expression, perform and teach it to the whole class.

Webquest: Shakespeare

by Luke Vyner

Level: Intermediate

Target age: Teenagers / Young adults

Time needed: Up to 60 minutes

Key skills: Reading, speaking

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student

Warmer

Hand out the worksheets. Direct your students to the first question and ask them to discuss in pairs what they already know about Shakespeare. Then, feed back as a class.

Activity 1: William Shakespeare: An introduction to his life

Direct your students to the Shakespeare biography and see if they can fill in any of the gaps. Then, ask them to visit www.bbc.co.uk/timelines/z8k2p39 to find the correct information and complete it.

Key:

Shakespeare is England's most famous playwright and poet. His plays are known throughout the world and he introduced up to 300 words and dozens of phrases into the English language.

He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in the year 1564. He probably went to the local grammar school, King Edward VI's School, where he learnt Greek and Latin. He didn't go to university.

In 1582, he married Anne Hathaway, who was three months pregnant. In total, they had three children.

He left Stratford to go and live in London, working as a playwright and actor. He performed many times for Queen Elizabeth I.

Shakespeare's group built their own theatre called the Globe. By now, Shakespeare was very rich. He bought the second biggest house in Stratford and many other properties as investments. He had a good head for business.

He died in 1616, probably of fever. In his will, he left his second best bed to his wife. Nobody knows for certain why he did this. He is buried in Stratford.

Activity 2: The plot of *Romeo and Juliet*

Direct your students to the statements about Shakespeare's classic tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*. Some are true and others are false. Ask your students to work with a partner to predict whether the statements are true or false, then visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romeo_and_Juliet to check their answers and correct the false statements. The statements have been divided into two sections.

Key:

Introduction

1. F – The plot is based on an Italian tale.;
2. T;
3. F – It is believed to have been written between 1591 and 1595.

Synopsis

4. F – The play is set in Verona.;
5. T;
6. F – He sees her first at the Capulet household.;
7. F – They are helped by Friar Laurence.;
8. T;
9. T;
10. T;
11. F – Friar Laurence offers her the drug.;
12. T;
13. F – He buys poison.;
14. T;
15. T;
16. F – She uses Romeo's dagger to kill herself.

Activity 3: Boy players

Explain to your students that when *Romeo and Juliet* was performed at the time it was written, female actors were prohibited on stage and so all female characters, including Juliet, were played by boy actors, also known as boy players.

Ask your students to find out more by looking for answers to the following questions by reading the 'Boys in adult companies' section on: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boy_player.

Key:

1. December 1661
2. No, it was just seen as unthinkable at that time.
3. Their high-pitched voices sounded more like women.
4. Information is a little unclear but it seems that children did play some of the complex lead female roles.
5. He played both female roles (up to the age of 17) and male roles (after the age of 17).

Activity 4: Shakespearean language still used today

Tell your students it has been said that Shakespeare contributed more words and sayings to the English language than any other individual, and most of them are still used today. He also popularized many phrases.

Put students in pairs and tell them to decide who should be Student 1 who should be Student 2. Then, ask them to find out the meanings of the phrases in their list before teaching them to their partner. They should then discuss the meanings of the phrases.

Key:

Hamlet

1. *In my mind's eye* – one's visual memory or imagination
2. *Make your hair stand on end* – something frightening
3. *Woe is me* – I am distressed; sad; grieved.

Macbeth

4. *A charmed life* – a life of guaranteed good fortune or invulnerability, by virtue of a charm or spell
5. *A sorry sight* – A regrettable and unwelcome aspect or feature. Now also used to mean something or someone of untidy appearance.
6. *Be all and end all* – The whole thing. The last word. Something that is so entirely suitable as to eliminate the need for a search for an alternative.

Finally, ask your students to choose their favourite expression from the full list to perform out loud to the class in a theatrical / Shakespearean manner:

www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/phrases-sayings-shakespeare.html.

The life of Shakespeare

Timeline for task 1 – events

Task 1 – Timeline: Shakespeare's life - events

Teacher: cut up strips and distribute to students.



William's parents, John Shakespeare and Mary Arden, were married.

William was born in Stratford-upon-Avon.

William started school.

William married Anne Hathaway.

William and Anne's first child Susanna was born, five months after their wedding.

William and Anne had more children, twins Judith and Hamnet.

When the twins were born, William started working in the theatre in London.

After he started working in the theatre, William wrote his first plays.

William and Anne's son Hamnet died, aged eleven.

After Hamnet's death, William bought 'New Place', a big house in Stratford.

William acted in a play at the theatre for the last time.

William died in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Students: with your group, put the events in Shakespeare's life in the correct order. Match each event to a date.

1557

1564

1571

1582

1583

1585

1585

1589

1596

1597

1603

1616

