

# William Shakespeare

## 1564–1616

### When and where was Shakespeare born?

Shakespeare was born in April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon. At that time, Stratford **had** (have) a population of about 1,000, but just after his birth, 200 people **were killed** (kill) by the plague. Fortunately, William survived. His father, John Shakespeare, was a wealthy wool-trader who [ ] (own) three houses in the town. In the 1500s, it used to take two days to ride the 100 miles from Stratford to London.

### Did Shakespeare go to school?

Shakespeare [ ] (go) to his local grammar school from the age of seven until 15. Only boys [ ] (attend) school in the 16th century. They [ ] (teach) Latin and had to memorize stories from history.

### Did Shakespeare marry?

Shakespeare [ ] (marry) Anne Hathaway, a farmer's daughter, in 1582, when he was just 18 years old. Anne was 28. They had three children: Susanna in 1583, and twins, Judith and Hamnet, in 1585. Hamnet [ ] (die) of the Black Plague in 1596 when Shakespeare [ ] (live) and working in London.



## What did Shakespeare do in London?

He  (come) to London in about 1590 and by 1592 he  (become) a well-known actor and playwright. One of his first plays, Henry VI,  (perform) in the Rose Theatre in 1591. Then for two years, from 1592–1594, theatres were closed because of the plague. This was when Shakespeare  (write) most of his poetry. Most of his 37 plays  (write) between 1594 and 1613 after he  (join) an acting company called The Lord Chamberlain's Men. The actors often used to perform for Elizabeth I. In 1597, they  (buy) £10 shares in a new theatre, the Globe. This theatre was, and still is, a huge success.

## Did Shakespeare ever visit Italy?

Six of Shakespeare's plays have an Italian background, including Romeo and Juliet and The Merchant of Venice. Because of this, many people believed that he  (visit) Italy, but there is no evidence of this.

## Was Shakespeare famous in his own lifetime? When did he die?

He was famous during his lifetime. His plays and poems  (hold) in high regard by other writers. He died on April 23, 1616 in Stratford and he  (bury) in Holy Trinity church. It surprises many people that in his will the only thing he  (leave) his unfortunate wife was their 'second-best bed'!