

How Well Do You Know Shakespeare?

1. In what year was Shakespeare born?
 - A. 1616
 - B. 1558
 - C. 1592
 - D. 1616
2. Shakespeare was born in what town or city?
 - A. London
 - B. Stratford-upon-Avon
 - C. Oxford
 - D. Stratford
3. The names of Shakespeare's father and mother were:
 - A. Abraham and Sara
 - B. William and Anne
 - C. John and Mary
 - D. Shakespeare and Mary
4. Shakespeare attended the Stratford Grammar School, also known as the King's New School:
 - A. From 1569 to 1579
 - B. He did not attend school.
 - C. There are no records of his school attendance, but it is highly likely he attended that school.
 - D. He attended from 1579 to 1584.
5. Who did Shakespeare marry?
 - A. Judith Sadler
 - B. Susanna Hall
 - C. Anne Hathaway
 - D. Mary Queen of Scots
6. How old was Shakespeare when he got married?
 - A. 18
 - B. 22
 - C. 20
 - D. 16
7. Shakespeare was the father of how many children?
 - A. 3
 - B. 2
 - C. 10
 - D. 1
8. Shakespeare left his home town of Stratford because:
 - A. He was caught poaching on the lands of Sir Thomas Lucy and fled to avoid prosecution.
 - B. He was apprenticed to his father who was a butcher. He hated the work and ran away to London.
 - C. He was accused of murdering a man.
 - D. He was accused of stealing a horse.

- C. He took a job as a school teacher in the country, and left to pursue this career.
- D. It is not known for sure how or why he left.

9. What Elizabethan writer called Shakespeare an “upstart crow”?

- A. John Lyly
- B. Christopher Marlowe
- C. Ben Jonson
- D. Robert Greene

10. The London theaters were closed on account of a virulent outbreak of the plague in 1593 and part of 1594. Specifically, what disease was this?

- A. Tuberculosis
- B. The Plague of Frogs
- C. Bubonic Plague
- D. The pox

11. To whom did Shakespeare dedicate his long narrative poems *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*?

- A. Queen Elizabeth
- B. Sir Walter Raleigh
- C. William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke
- D. Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton

12. In 1598 Francis Meres published a commonplace book (diary) called *Palladis Tamia*. In it he listed several of Shakespeare’s plays: *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *Love’s Labour’s Won*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *Henry IV*, *King John*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Romeo and Juliet*.

So we know that these were written by 1598. Which play known to exist by that time is NOT in Meres’ list?

- A. *The Jew of Malta*
- B. *The Taming of the Shrew*
- C. *The Tempest*
- D. *The Two Noble Kinsmen*

13. How many plays did Shakespeare write?

- A. 8
- B. 38
- C. 108

14. Which type of plays did Shakespeare not write?

- A. Tragedies
- B. Comedies
- C. Musicals

15. Is it possible to say in exactly what order Shakespeare's plays were written?

- A. Yes
- B. No

16. In 1594 Shakespeare became one of the founding members of what acting company?

- A. The Lord Chamberlain's Men
- B. The King's Men
- C. The Royal Shakespeare Company

17. In what year was the Globe Theater built?

- A. 1594
- B. 1599
- C. 1608
- D. 1613

18. Some time after 1599-1600 Shakespeare turned from writing predominantly romantic comedies and history plays to tragedies. Which five plays are known as his "great tragedies"?

- A. *Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra*
- B. *The Merchant of Venice, Henry IV Part 1, Henry IV Part 2, Henry V, Twelfth Night*
- C. *King John, Henry VI Part 1, Richard II, Richard III, Henry VIII*
- D. *Measure for Measure, Troilus and Cressida, Coriolanus, Timon of Athens, Cymbeline*

19. In 1603 Shakespeare's acting company, The Lord Chamberlain's Men, became the King's Men. Which king was their patron?

- A. George III
- B. James I
- C. Edward III
- D. Henry VIII

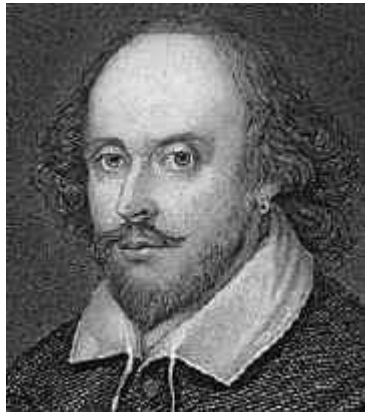
20. Beginning around 1608 Shakespeare wrote 4 plays, *Pericles Prince of Tyre, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest*, often categorized as:

- A. Masques
- B. Romances
- C. Melodramas
- D. Dark Tragedies

21. In his later years, Shakespeare collaborated with what author on the play *The Two Noble Kinsmen*?

- A. Thomas Middleton
- B. Francis Beaumont.
- C. Christopher Marlowe.
- D. John Fletcher.
- E. Ben Jonson

22. What kind of poetry did W. Shakespeare invent?
A. Tragedy
B. Comedy
C. Sonnet
23. Which of Shakespeare's characters said "To be or no to be...?"
A. Macbeth
B. Othello
C. Hamlet
24. In which period of English history was Shakespeare alive?
A. Elizabethan
B. Georgian
C. Victorian
25. Who played Romeo in the 1996 film version of "Romeo and Juliet"?
A. Leonardo DiCaprio
B. Johnny Depp
C. Brad Pitt
26. In what year did Shakespeare die?
A. 1599
B. 1616
C. 1623
D. 1642
27. In what year was the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays, called the First Folio, published?
A. 1599
B. 1616
C. 1623
D. 1685
28. You are truly a Shakespeare aficionado if you know this one: which fellow actor(s) did Shakespeare remember in his will?
A. Richard Burbage, John Heminges and Henry Condell
B. Will Kempe
C. Robert Armin
D. Thomas Pope, Will Sly and William Beeston
29. Is it reasonable to think that someone other than William Shakespeare (1564-1616) of Stratford-upon-Avon wrote the works attributed to him?
A. Yes
B. No



Answers:

1. **A.** Christopher Marlowe, another important Elizabethan dramatist was also born in 1564. Marlowe lived until 1593. Shakespeare died in 1616.

2. **B.** Stratford was not large, but was an important market center in Warwickshire, about 100 miles northwest of London.

3. **C.** John Shakespeare married Mary Arden around the year 1557. John died in 1601 and Mary died in 1608. John was an important citizen in Stratford during Shakespeare's youth, holding many civic offices.

4. **C.** A typical grammar school day in Shakespeare's time started at 7am in winter, 6am in summer; the students worked until 11, took a 2-hour lunch, resumed at 1pm and worked until 5. Forty days vacation per year were allowed. Latin grammar and translation were the main subjects of study.

5. **C.** A marriage licence bond was issued for William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582. In Shakespeare's day a marriage certificate did not exist, and all that was necessary to conclude a marriage was the asking of the banns on three successive Sundays in church and then a ceremony before family and friends. The banns were asked only once for Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway because she was pregnant at the time the bond was issued.

6. **A** 18

7. **A.** Susanna, born in 1583, and the twins Judith and Hamnet, born in 1585. Shakespeare's only son Hamnet (named after one of Shakespeare's neighbors, Hamnet Sadler) died at age 11 in 1596.

8. **D.** There are many stories and guesses, but there is nothing amounting to proof that supports any of the theories.

9. **D.** Greene (1558–1592) was a minor Elizabethan dramatist (*Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*) and novelist (*Pandosto*). His famous criticism of Shakespeare as an "upstart crow" proves that Shakespeare had become well established in the London theater world by the year 1592.

10. **C.** In Elizabethan times any infectious disease which was widespread and caused many deaths was called a plague, but the plague responsible for closing the theaters and causing thousands of deaths over these years was bubonic plague, caused by a bacillus spread by the rat flea. During the 14th century it was called the Black Death, and was responsible for the death of one quarter to one third of the population of Europe.

11. **D.** Many people identify him as the youth addressed so affectionately in Shakespeare's Sonnets. The dedication of *Venus and Adonis* is rather formal, but the one to *The Rape of Lucrece* is much warmer, attesting a growing friendship between patron and poet. Rowe (Shakespeare's first formal biographer, 1709) reported that Southampton gave Shakespeare a reward of 1000 pounds for his poetic efforts. This sum seems too enormous by 16th century standards, but some of Shakespeare's important biographers have thought that he received such a gift.

12. **B.** *Love's Labour's Won* may be another name for the *Shrew*, or it may refer to *Much Ado About Nothing*, which may have been in existence by 1598, or it may be a play that has been lost.

13. **B** 38

14. **C** musicals

15. B. No one knows the exact order of composition. Scholars can make educated guesses, but there is not enough clear evidence to say exactly in what order they were composed.

16. A. Acting companies sought the protection and preferment of aristocrats. The Lord Chamberlain in 1594 was Henry, Lord Hunsdon, Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth. Aristocratic patronage could protect players from the city of London authorities, who were usually eager to curtail their activities.

17. B. In 1599 it was assembled south of the Thames. It was built from the timbers of the theater where Shakespeare formerly played, called The Theatre. It was owned by a syndicate made up of Richard and Cuthbert Burbage who shared in half the profits and expenses, and a group of actors, Shakespeare among them, who divided the other half.

18. A. These are generally regarded by critics as Shakespeare's greatest achievement in the genre of tragedy.

19. B. James Stuart, James VI of Scotland, became James I of England upon the death of Queen Elizabeth. He reigned from 1603-1625.

20. B. These plays share certain romantic elements not typical of the rest of Shakespeare's works, and may have been influenced by the staging possibilities afforded by the Blackfriars indoor theater, in which Shakespeare's company began to play in 1608.

21. D. Fletcher (1579–1625) and Shakespeare also seem to have collaborated on *Henry VIII* and a play which has been lost called *Cardenio*.

22. C sonnet

23. C Hamlet

24. A Elizabethan

25. A Leonardo Di Caprio

26. B. April 23, 1616.

27. C. It was printed in London by Isaac Jaggard and Ed. Blount. Its title is *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*. It was collected and edited by Shakespeare's fellow actors, John Heminges and Henry Condell. It printed 36 plays, 18 of which had never before been printed. We owe Heminges and Condell an enormous debt of gratitude. Without their work we may never have known of many of Shakespeare's masterpieces, such as *Macbeth*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, or *The Tempest*.

28. A. Burbage was said to be the greatest tragedian of his time. Heminges and Condell collected and edited Shakespeare's plays for the First Folio, published in 1623.

29. B. Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare. People who think otherwise either have not considered the evidence in a reasonable light, or they are easily deceived by silly conspiracy theories, or they are motivated by a snobbish prejudice against the real Shakespeare because he was not educated at a university (as far as we know), and was a working class citizen, rather than a member of the aristocracy.

