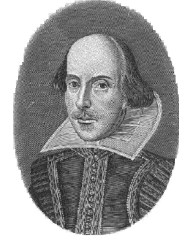


WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616)



William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564 on April 23rd. His father was a glove maker and an important man in the town. Shakespeare attended school and he studied classical poetry, plays and history that later inspired his plays. He left school at the age of fourteen.

Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway in 1582, when he was only eighteen years old. The next year they had a daughter named Susanna. In 1585 they had twins: Hamnet and Judith.

Between 1585 and 1592 Shakespeare joined a theatrical company. By 1592 he became a famous dramatist and actor in London. An outbreak of a deadly disease called “the plague” closed the theatres in the early 1590s. Around this time Shakespeare began writing poetry and published his first poems.

The theatres reopened in 1594 and Shakespeare returned to the stage as part of a troupe called “The King’s Men”. He stayed with this group for many years. He worked as a dramatist and actor. In 1599 the company built “The Globe”, a theatre near London. Shakespeare wrote some of his great tragedies and comedies around this time. He created *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth* and *Twelfth Night*.

Shakespeare’s works were very popular. Even Queen Elizabeth I went to the theatre to see Shakespeare’s plays!

Around 1610 Shakespeare returned home to Stratford-upon-Avon. He died there in 1616.

Shakespeare is considered the best playwright of all time. He wrote about 37 plays, including *The Taming of the Shrew*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *As You Like it*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Tempest*, ...

“To be or not to be, that is the question” is probably the most famous line that Shakespeare ever composed. You can even find it in your Workbook! Where?