

# Who Shot Shakespeare

ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/14

AN INTERACTING PUBLICATION

LAUGH WHILE YOU LEARN



*Shakespeare's  
Globe Theatre, Bankside,  
Southwark, London.*

## Introduction to Your Teacher's Pack!

### Dear Teachers.

Discussion around our show is important and helpful for the students.

- It can help students to familiarise themselves with the subject matter of the show.
- It can help students put the show in a historical context.
- It can help students place the show in a wider social context.
- It can help students learn about other cultures and traditions.
- It can help students make useful comparisons to their own cultures and literary traditions.

Classroom discussion surrounding the subject matter of the show can provide much more than we can hope to bring in our one hour stage production!

In addition to classroom discussion we've included on-line work and INTERACTING activities that you may wish to do with your students.

We aim that students have an entertaining and educational time. We are always pleased to hear from teachers who have comments or suggestions.

You can write to us on [hello@interacting.info](mailto:hello@interacting.info)

**Remember to laugh while you learn!**

"It is not in the stars  
to hold our destiny  
but in ourselves."

*W. Shakespeare*



### DID YOU KNOW...

It was illegal for women and girls to perform in the theatre in Shakespeare's lifetime so all the female parts were written for boys. The text of some plays like Hamlet and Antony and Cleopatra refer to that. It was only much later, during the Restoration, that the first woman appeared on the English stage.





# Fun Shakespeare Facts

## FUN FACT 1

Shakespeare was buried in the Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon. He put a curse on anyone daring to move his body from that final resting place. His epitaph was:

*Good friend for Jesus' sake forbear,  
To dig the dust enclosed here:  
Blest be the man that spares these stones,  
And curst be he that moves my bones.*

Though it was customary to dig up the bones from previous graves to make room for others, Shakespeare's remains are still undisturbed.

## INTERESTING FACT 2

Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway had three children together – a son, Hamnet, who died in 1596, and two daughters, Susanna and Judith. His only granddaughter Elizabeth – daughter of Susanna – died childless in 1670. Shakespeare therefore has no descendants. Read more about [Shakespeare's family](#).

## AMAZING FACT 3

During his life, Shakespeare wrote [37 plays](#) and [154 sonnets](#)! This means an average 1.5 plays a year since he first started writing in 1589. His last play *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is reckoned to have been written in 1613 when he was 49 years old. While he was writing the plays at such a pace he was also conducting a family life, a social life and a full business life, running an acting company and a theatre.

## SURPRISING FACT 4

Few people realise that apart from writing his numerous [plays](#) and [sonnets](#), Shakespeare was

also an actor who performed many of his own plays as well as those of other playwrights. During his life Shakespeare performed before Queen Elizabeth I and, later, before James I who was an enthusiastic patron of his work.

## FUN FACT 5

Shakespeare is the second most quoted writer in the English language – after the various writers of the Bible.

## INTERESTING FACT 6

[Shakespeare's Globe Theatre](#) burnt down on 29th June 1613 after a cannon shot set fire to it during a performance of *Henry VIII*. (See our [article on interesting facts on The Globe Theatre](#).)

## INSIDER'S FACT 7

Suicide occurs an unlucky thirteen times in Shakespeare's plays. It occurs in [Romeo and Juliet](#) where both Romeo and Juliet commit suicide, in [Julius Caesar](#) where both Cassius and Brutus die by consensual stabbing, as well as Brutus' wife Portia.

## FUN FACT 8

Some of Shakespeare's signatures have survived on original documents. In none of them does he spell his name in what has become the standard way. He spells it Shakespe; Shakspe; Shakspere and Shakespear.



# INTERACTING ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS

The following activities can be used in any way teachers wish. We suggest you carefully read the activity description and then to think how to adapt them for your own classroom situation. All the activities can be quickly changed to use before or after a performance. We believe the most important objective in using the activities is to get your students up, moving and laughing while they learn!

We hope you enjoy these activities and please send us your ideas and if you want more get in touch with us [hello@interacting.info](mailto:hello@interacting.info)

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## **AUTOBIOGRAPHIES. ICE BREAKER**

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In a circle each player takes a turn to speak about themselves for about thirty seconds and then the rest of the players are invited to ask questions. There are various versions of this; one is to ask players to speak about themselves for as long as they can hold a lighted match. Another is to displace the focus from the speaker to an object, any object, could be a magic sock or a motivating pen. The leader of the group throws or passes the magic article when the action stops the person holding the object speaks. Other variations define the area of personal description for example get the person to speak for thirty seconds on their home or family or focus on likes and dislikes.

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## **ALPHABET SHAPES**

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In this team-building warm-up the leader shouts out a letter from the alphabet (saying if it is a capital or small case letter) – the group have to make the letter shape using everybody in the group. On the first few attempts no time limit is imposed but gradually the leader should introduce a time limit and keep reducing it until the group can effectively make alphabet shapes in ten seconds.

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## **CHINESE WHISPERS**

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All players sit in a circle. Two messages or statements are written out and concealed from the group. One message is whispered from one player to the next in one direction and the other message is sent in the opposite direction. Compare final messages with original messages.

### **Variation:**

Before revealing the final and original message, have all the players write down what they understood the message to be. Then read the original message followed by each consecutive message until at least the final message is reached.

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## **LINE GREETINGS**

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Players make two equal lines facing each other. One line is A the other B. Lines A and B walk towards each other and meet in the middle \_ line A in unison say 'Hello, how are you?' Line B reply 'Fine thanks, and you?' They shake hands and walk on. Now line A stands where line B stood and vice versa. Repeat this several times until the lines get the rhythm. Then suggest that they walk towards each other but this time as two snobs, they have to walk like snobs, talk like snobs and be a snob until they reach the other side. Then suggest : like beggars, babies, angry people, long lost friends, lovers, spies etc. Alternatively try replacing the dialogue with numbers so line a will say '1, 2, 3 and 4' and line B replies '5, 6, 7 and 8'. They should attempt that the intonation and rhyme of the numbers convey mood and character

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## **GROUP VEHICLE MIME**

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In groups players must mime a large moving vehicle. One player may be the driver or passenger but the other must form the vehicle. Players should add sound effects. Players should try to represent not only the part but how it functions. If we see train doors, how do they open? To help the players they can look at different types of vehicles and examine their major component parts. Players should be given enough time to prepare. As a warm up the entire group can look at ways of representing one or two vehicles



# The Globe Theatre



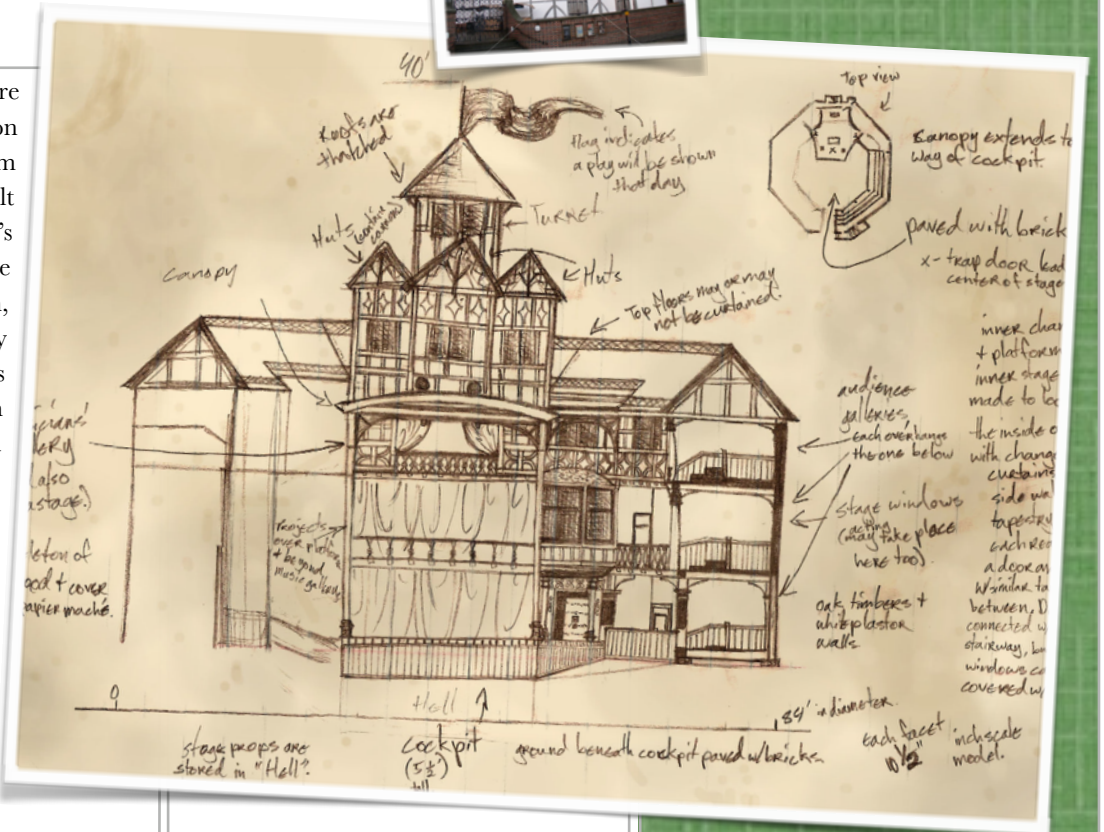
The Globe Theatre was a theatre in London associated with William Shakespeare. It was built in 1599 by Shakespeare's playing company, The Lord Chamberlain's Men, on land owned by Thomas Brend. It was destroyed by fire on 29th June 1613. A second Globe Theatre was built on the same site by June 1614 and then closed in June 1642.

**A modern reconstruction** of the Globe, named "Shakespeare's Globe", opened in 1997, approximately 230 metres from the original theatre.

**On 29 June 1613** the Globe Theatre went up in flames during a performance of Henry VIII. A theatrical cannon, set off during the performance, misfired, igniting the wooden beams and thatching. According to one of the few surviving documents of the event, no-one was hurt except a man,

whose burning breaches were put out with a bottle of ale.

Like all the other theatres in London, the Globe was closed down by the Puritans in 1642.



*Shakespeare lived a double life. By the seventeenth century he had become a famous playwright in London but in his hometown of Stratford, where his wife and children were, and which he visited frequently, he was a well known and highly respected businessman and property owner.*

## Comedy or Tragedy?

Have a look at the following Shakespearean plays and decide which category they belong to: either comedy or tragedy.

- Hamlet
- A Midsummer Night's Dream
- King Lear
- Julius Cesar
- Twelfth Night
- The Tempest
- Othello
- Anthony and Cleopatra
- As You Like It
- The Taming of the Shrew
- Macbeth

“A fool thinks himself to be wise, but a wise man knows himself to be”

*Shakespeare*