

# Abiturtraining kompakt: Shakespeare – curse or blessing for young audiences? (S II)

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„All the world's a stage“ – Mit diesen Materialien wiederholen die Lernenden Fakten zu Shakespeare und Wortschatz zur Besprechung von seinen Stücken. Sie verwenden Informationen aus aktuellen Sachtexten über Shakespeare, analysieren einen Originaltextauszug und bewerten, ob Shakespeares Texte heutzutage noch relevant sind. Digitale *LearningApps*-Übungen inklusive!

## KOMPETENZPROFIL



**Klassenstufe:** 11/12 (GK/LK)

**Dauer:** 2 Unterrichtsstunden je nach Auswahl

**Kompetenzen:** 1. Hörseh-Verstehen: einem Kurzvideo zentrale Informationen entnehmen; 2. Lese- und Schreibkompetenz: auf der Grundlage eines Zeitungsartikels bzw. Dramas zu den Bereichen *summary*, *analysis* und *comment* Texte verfassen; 3. Sprachmittlungskompetenz: die zentralen Inhalte eines deutschen Artikels in die Zielsprache mitteln

**Thematische Bereiche:** Literatur und Medien in ihrer Bedeutung für den Einzelnen und die Gesellschaft: *The impact of Shakespearean plays on young audiences today*

**Materialien:** Einstiegsimpulse, Kurzvideo, Klausurvorschläge für GK und LK, digitale *LearningApps* inklusive Hör-Seh-Verstehen

M 1

# The Elizabethan Age and Shakespeare – check the facts



Revise your knowledge on the Elizabethan time with a quiz.

**Tasks**

1. Tick the correct statement(s) on the Elizabethan age, which was named after the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1568–1603).

- 1) This time was also called the “Golden Age” because ...
  - a) ... Queen Elizabeth loved gold jewellery.
  - b) ... many people enjoyed better living conditions.
  - c) ... theatre, poetry, art and architecture flourished.
  - d) ... people had a long life expectancy.
- 2) But not everything was golden because ...
  - a) ... minor crime was punished severely with whipping and hanging.
  - b) ... culture was suffering because many people could neither read nor write.
  - c) ... men had no rights because there was a queen and not a king.
  - d) ... scientists believed in witchcraft.



<https://learningapps.org/view20810052>

- 3) The Elizabethan theatre plays ...
  - a) ... showed mainly religious themes.
  - b) ... were reserved to the elite.
  - c) ... were considered to be dangerous, immoral.
  - d) ... took place at night and the audience could eat and drink.



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- 4) The Elizabethan theatre ...
  - a) ... was very sophisticated.
  - b) ... had special sound or lighting effects.
  - c) ... only allowed women to play on stage.
  - d) ... was a place where you could meet criminals or prostitutes.

5) Typical Elizabethan plays belonged to the four genres ...

- a) ... poetry, comedy, satire and history.
- b) ... romance, tragedy, comedy and drama.
- c) ... comedy, tragedy, history and romance.
- d) ... comedy, tragedy, history and sonnets.

2. Identify these words related to theatre play. Match the term with the right definition.

monologue   playwright   prop   aside   scenery   stage direction   soliloquy

- a) This is a dramatic device in which a character briefly speaks to the audience. They accept the illusion that the other characters on stage cannot hear this comment, but only the audience. This dramatic convention allows the character to share his or her true thoughts with the audience. \_\_\_\_\_



<https://learningapps.org/view20810133>

M 2

# Shakespeare's language – typical features

Revise typical features of Early Modern English and Shakespeare's use of rhetorical devices.



In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, people spoke "Early Modern English". Look at some characteristics:

**Syntax:** The word order was very flexible. In plays, characters often use exclamations and ellipses (incomplete sentences) or contractions (e.g. it were = 'twere).

**Grammar:** Grammar use was not standardised and followed other rules. Examples:

- **Pronouns:** The pronouns "thou", "thee" and "thy" were used to address people informally, either because they were familiar or from a lower social rank. The pronouns "you", "your" were used to address people formally.
- **Verbs:** Verbs were conjugated, e.g. "I have, thou hast, he hath".

**Spelling:** There were many spelling variants for one word.

**Meaning of words (semantics):** Some words may look alike, but had a different meaning in Shakespeare's time.

**Task**

Read the following quotations. Define the rhetorical device(s) that Shakespeare employs here. Write the names in the line below.



<https://learningapps.org/view20810211>

a) My only **love** sprung from my only **late!**  
Too **early** seen **unknown**, and **known** to late!  
Prodigious birth of love in me,  
That I must **love** a loathed **enemy**.  
*Juliet speaks to the Nurse (I, 5, ll. 137–140). Shakespeare, William: "Romeo and Juliet". Ed. Roma Gill. Oxford School Shakespeare: OUP. 2005.*

b) My **bounty** is as boundless as the sea,  
My **eyes** as deep; **the more I give** to thee  
**The more I have**, for both are infinite.  
*Romeo speaks to Juliet (II, 2, ll. 133–135). Shakespeare, William: "Romeo and Juliet". Ed. Roma Gill. Oxford School Shakespeare: OUP. 2005.*

c) **Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player**  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
and then is heard no more: **it is a tale**  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.  
*Macbeth reacts to the news of his wife's death (V, 5, ll. 25–27). Shakespeare, William: "Macbeth". Ed. Roma Gill. Oxford School Shakespeare: OUP. 2004.*

d) Your face, my thane, is **as a book** where  
men  
May read strange matters. To beguile the  
time,  
Look **like the time**, bear welcome in your  
eye,  
Your hand, your tongue; **look like**  
**th'innocent flower**,  
But **be the serpent under't**.  
*Lady Macbeth speaks to her husband (I, 5, ll. 61–65). Shakespeare, William: "Macbeth". Ed. Roma Gill. Oxford School Shakespeare: OUP. 2004.*

# A rapper explains – Shakespeare’s sonnets

M 3

## Tasks

1. Watch how rapper MC Lars explains Shakespeare’s sonnets in a video clip (8:25 min.). <https://raabe.click/ShakespeareRapper> [last access: 02/07/2021]



Take notes on the following questions:

- a) What are the topics that MC Lars gives as examples of Shakespeare’s interests?
- b) What does he explain about the Italian poet Petrarch and the Petrarchan sonnets?
- c) What is the typical form and rhyme scheme of an English sonnet?
- d) What is sonnet 18 about?



<https://learningapps.org/view20810227>

2. Let’s turn to the original text.

Read Sonnet 18 and add the rhyme scheme to each line. Identify the volta, the rhyming couplet, the quatrain.



Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate:

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer’s lease hath all too short a date:

- 5 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,

And often is his gold complexion dimm’d;

And every fair from fair sometime declines,

By chance, or nature’s changing course, untrimm’d;

But thy eternal summer shall not fade

- 10 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st;

Nor shall Death brag thou wander’st in his shade,

When in eternal lines to time thou art rest;

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,

So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Source: Shakespeare, William: "Sonnet 18". In *New Riverside Shakespeare*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1997.

3. Extra for fun: Watch another hip hop video (3:32 min.) by Akala. What Shakespearean phrase does he mention? <https://raabe.click/ShakespeareHipHop> [last access: 02/07/2021]



4. In this context of hip hop and rhythm, describe the cartoon below.



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M 4

# Talking about the relevance of Shakespeare at school

Practise vocabulary to express your opinion and learn how to talk about Shakespeare's relevance

Students deal with Shakespeare classics in the English classroom. Yet, there are many students who ask if they really have to study Shakespeare. Only few ask if they may study him. Consequently, it is a constant matter of debate whether his plays are still relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Tasks**

1. Match the corresponding sentence halves which show you how to argue **in favour** of studying Shakespeare.

1	Shakespeare's plays focus on timeless ...	a)	... culture enormously as he coined many proverbs and idioms and is omnipresent even in today's language.
2	Many modern films, poems, songs etc. refer ...	b)	... timeless and current parallels to many current issues.
3	His plays are meant to be performed which ...	c)	... different media like watching a stage performance, a movie, or reading a cartoon of the story.
4	It is attractive to study his plays since students can access them with ...	d)	... invites to modern interpretations that reflect students' 21 <sup>st</sup> century reality.
5	The moral questions about good and evil, justice and fairness, power and ambition are ...	e)	... to famous passages of his plays and are part of the general knowledge.
6	Shakespeare's language influenced the English language and ...	f)	... topics like love, loss, revenge, rage, discrimination that are still relevant.

5. Fill in the gaps to learn how to argue **against** studying Shakespeare at school.

Grammar – outdated – grasp – rhetorical – intimidates – identify – gender – Early – ... – contradicts – stage – requires

There are many reasons against studying Shakespeare at school. First of all, students struggle with understanding \_\_\_\_\_ Modern English as it is \_\_\_\_\_. Moreover, Shakespeare wrote his plays to be performed on \_\_\_\_\_ and not to be analysed line by line. So a close text analysis \_\_\_\_\_ the original purpose of enjoying actors and their actions on stage. Instead, students worry about \_\_\_\_\_ devices. Furthermore, there is a risk that students might give Shakespeare's texts not a true chance, because his work has been so "deified" for ages and this \_\_\_\_\_ them. Apart from that, students prefer focussing on topics they \_\_\_\_\_ easily with. They would rather read a novel or study a play by a 21<sup>st</sup> century author who speaks their language and deals with a recent issue like the \_\_\_\_\_ debate, the fight against racism or climate change. Finally, it \_\_\_\_\_ hard background work to understand Shakespeare's plays as theatre conventions were different, and belief systems like the \_\_\_\_\_ of Being need to be considered to \_\_\_\_\_ certain ideas in the text.



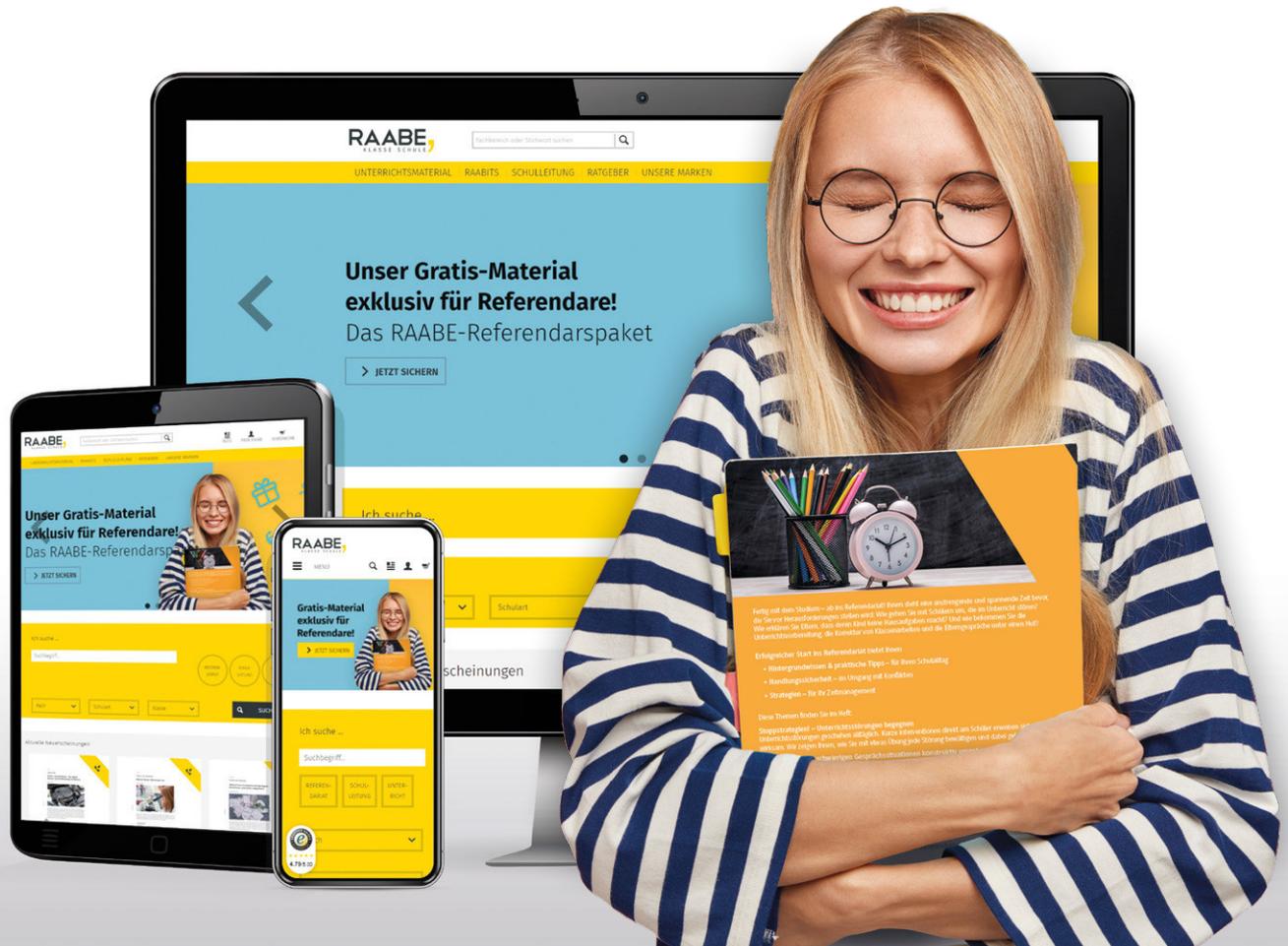
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<https://learningapps.org/view20810368>

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