

William Shakespeare (B1)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Are there many theatres in your town?
2. Do you like going to the theatre? Why (not)?
3. Do you prefer films or plays? Why?
4. Have you ever seen any of Shakespeare's plays? If so, which ones?

B – Listen and answer

Read these incomplete statements. Then listen (without reading) and complete them.

1. There are _____ manuscripts written by Shakespeare himself.
2. Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, in _____.
3. He got married at the age of _____.
4. Nothing is known about him till _____ years later, when he was in London.
5. He wrote 39 plays, _____ sonnets and 3 narrative poems.
6. He _____ at the age of 49.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. What is Shakespeare often called?
2. What did Ben Jonson foresee about Shakespeare?
3. Why do we know so little about Shakespeare's life?
4. Which line of Shakespeare's is known all over the world?
5. What effect did he have on the English language?
6. What other fields besides literature have been influenced by his works?
7. Where did he spend his last years?
8. How old was he when he died?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from singular to plural.)

1. We met a French _____ on the plane. They'd just got married and were on their honeymoon.
2. This isn't an _____ translation of the text. There are quite a lot of mistakes in it.
3. My cousin's a well-known actor. He's _____ in several theatrical productions in London.
4. Simon's wife is _____. The baby's expected in June.
5. Those birds flying over the lake must be _____, not geese. Look at their long necks!
6. Our local greengrocer's sells a lot of exotic fruit, _____ mangoes and papayas.

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam? (Paper 1, Reading: Part 5)

Choose the correct word in brackets for each space.

Stratford-upon-Avon is only two hours from London by train, which makes it an ideal option for a day ¹ _____ (*journey/voyage/travel/trip*) for those who would like to find out more about Shakespeare and Tudor times.

In Henley Street, visitors can see the cottage in which Shakespeare is thought to ² _____ (*have been/be/have/had*) born. It consists of six rooms, and was both the family home and the place where William's father ³ _____ (*went/took/carried/got*) on his business as a glovemaker.

Another interesting building is the Guildhall, which dates from 1417. From the 1560s ⁴ _____ (*forwards/onwards/towards/backwards*), the first floor of the building was used as the King's New School. It is almost certainly the school that Shakespeare ⁵ _____ (*studied/attended/frequented/registered*), as it was a free school and was just a short distance from his home.

Anne Hathaway's family home is about a mile from the centre of Stratford. It was occupied by the Hathaway family for 13 generations, ⁶ _____ (*until/since/unless/while*) the last descendant left it in 1911.

F – Write about it

Write about one of your country's most important writers of the past. Include information about:

- his/her biography;
- what kind of works he/she wrote;
- his/her most famous works.

Answers

B – Listen and answer

1. no 2. 1564 3. 18/eighteen 4. 8/eight 5. 154 6. retired

C – Read and answer

1. He's often called "the Bard of Avon". 2. That he would never be forgotten because his works are timeless. 3. Because he left no diaries and had no direct descendants. 4. "To be or not to be". 5. He introduced over 1,700 original words into English, as well as 80 phrases still in current use. 6. He has also influenced art, music and even psychiatry. 7. He spent them in Stratford-upon-Avon. 8. He was 52.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. couple 2. accurate 3. performed 4. pregnant 5. swans 6. such as

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?

1. trip 2. have been 3. carried 4. onwards 5. attended 6. until