



Why We Still Read Shakespeare Today

KS3

Ages 11-14 ⌚ 3 min read

Why Is Shakespeare Still Everywhere?

William Shakespeare died in **1616**, over **400 years ago**. So why do we still read him in school? The answer is that his stories, characters, and big ideas are timeless — meaning they're just as important to us today as they were to people watching his plays in **London's Globe Theatre** back then.

Shakespeare wrote about things that never change: love, betrayal, power, friendship, jealousy, and what it means to be human. Whether you're **13** or **30**, you understand what it feels like to want something desperately, or to feel left out, or to make a terrible mistake. That's why his characters still feel real to us.

Think of it like a video game you love — the graphics might look old, but if the story and characters are brilliant, people still want to play it.

The Language Puzzle

Yes, **Early Modern English** (the version Shakespeare used) looks strange to us. Words like "thou," "thee," and "hath" aren't words we use anymore. But here's the thing: learning to read it is actually a superpower. It's like learning to read **old handwriting** or a different style of text — at first it's tricky, but your brain adapts surprisingly quickly.

Plus, studying Shakespeare teaches you how language changes over time. English today is totally different from what Shakespeare spoke, and in **200 years**, people might find our language confusing too! Understanding Shakespeare shows you that language is alive and always evolving.

Think of it like learning to read your grandparent's diary — the words are fancier, but the emotions they felt are exactly what you'd feel today.

What We Actually Learn

When we read **Macbeth** or **Romeo and Juliet**, we're not just learning old words. We're exploring powerful themes: how ambition can destroy you, how families can

tear apart their own children, how power corrupts people. These lessons pop up everywhere — in news stories, in modern films, in our own lives.

Schools teach Shakespeare because he's a master of understanding human nature. He invented over **1,700 words** we still use today, and his way of exploring feelings through language is basically perfect. Reading him makes us better readers, writers, and thinkers about what it means to be human.