

## Shakespeare's Life.-

Little is known about Shakespeare's life. Most details about his life are just speculation, especially the dates of his plays. However, this is the official chronology of Shakespeare's life according to the experts.

**1564:** Son of John and Mary Shakespeare, William Shakespeare is born in Stratford-upon-Avon. We don't know the exact date of his birth. However, it is traditionally celebrated on April 23rd.

**1571:** Shakespeare probably starts grammar school because children start grammar school education at the age of seven.

**1582:** Shakespeare marries Anne Hathaway of Shottery. He is eighteen years old and Anne is eight years older than William.

**1583:** Susanna, the first child of William and Anne Shakespeare, is born.

**1585 (?) :** Shakespeare leaves Stratford sometime between 1585 and 1592. He joins a theatre company as an actor and playwright.

**1585:** Twins Hamnet and Judith Shakespeare born. Hamnet dies in 1596.

**1589-90:** Shakespeare probably writes *Henry VI, Part One*.

**1592:** Another playwright, Robert Greene, publishes a pamphlet against Shakespeare. This is a proof that people in London know W. Shakespeare as an actor and playwright by this time.

London theatres are closed because of the Black Death, a terrible epidemic.

**1593:** Shakespeare can't write plays because theatres are closed. He probably begins composing his sonnets. He will write 154 sonnets.

A London publisher publishes Shakespeare's poem *Venus and Adonis*.

**1594:** Shakespeare and other actors start a new theatre company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men.

**1595:** Shakespeare probably writes *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The play is probably composed for performance at a wedding.

Shakespeare probably writes *Romeo and Juliet*.

**1596:** Shakespeare probably writes *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Actors play this comedy before the Queen during the Christmas celebrations.

**1599:** The Lord Chamberlain's Men rent land to build the Globe Theatre. Later this year, the Globe Theatre opens.

**1600-01:** Shakespeare probably writes *Hamlet*.

**1603:** The company plays *A Midsummer Night's Dream* before the Queen at Hampton Court.

Queen Elizabeth dies. The new king, James I is a generous patron of the theatre companies, especially the Lord Chamberlain's Men –Shakespeare's company. This company decides to take the name *The King's Men* to honour the new king.

An epidemic of the Black Death kills at least 33,000 people in London. They close theatres again.

**1604:** Shakespeare probably writes *Othello*.

**1605:** The *Merchant of Venice* is performed at court. The king speaks very well of this play.

**1608:** London authorities close theatres again because of a new epidemic. The playhouses can't perform any plays from spring 1608 to the end of 1609.

**1609:** Shakespeare's sonnets are published. Shakespeare doesn't authorize this publication.

**1612:** Shakespeare probably writes *Cardenio*, the only play of Shakespeare's that has been completely lost.

**1613:** The Globe Theatre burns down. A year later, the Globe Theatre reopens on the opposite bank of the Thames.

**1616:** Shakespeare dies on April 23rd.

Shakespeare wrote his plays in pieces of paper that he gave to every actor so that they could learn their part. They stored these pieces of paper or acting scripts at the Globe.

Theatre scripts were not considered as literary works of art, but only the basis for the performance. After Shakespeare's death, two members of Shakespeare's company decided to publish his 36 plays (minus *Pericles*, the thirty-seventh) as a tribute for his dead colleague. This collection is known as the First Folio.