***William Shakespeare Biography***

**Who Was William Shakespeare?**

*William Shakespeare was an English poet, playwright, and actor of the Renaissance era. He was an important member of the King’s Men theatrical company from roughly 1594 onward. Known throughout the world, Shakespeare’s works—at least 37 plays, 154 sonnets, and 2 narrative poems—capture the range of human emotion and conflict and have been celebrated for more than 400 years. Details about his personal life are limited, though some be*

**When Was Shakespeare Born?**

*lieve he was born and died on the same day, April 23, 52 years apart.*

*No birth records exist, but an old church record indicates that William Shakespeare was baptized at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon on April 26, 1564. From this, it is believed he was born on or near April 23, 1564, and this is the date scholars acknowledge as Shakespeare’s birthday.*

**Parents and Siblings**

*Shakespeare was the third child of John Shakespeare, a glove-maker and leather merchant, and Mary Arden, a local heiress to land.*

**Wife and Children**

*Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582, in Worcester, in Canterbury Province. Hathaway was from Shottery, a small village a mile west of Stratford. Shakespeare was 18, and Anne was 26 and, as it turns out, pregnant.*

*Their first child, a daughter they named Susanna, was born on May 26, 1583. Two years later, on February 2, 1585, twins Hamnet and Judith were born. Hamnet died of unknown causes at age 11.*

**Shakespeare’s Lost Years**

*There are seven years of Shakespeare’s life where no records exist: after the birth of his twins in 1585 until 1592. Scholars call this period Shakespeare’s lost years, and there is wide speculation about what he was doing during this period.*

*One theory is that he might have gone into hiding for poaching game from local landlord Sir Thomas Lucy. Another possibility is that he might have been working as an assistant schoolmaster in Lancashire. Some scholars believe he was in London, working as a horse attendant at some of London’s finer theaters before breaking on the scene.*

**Globe Theater**

*By 1599, Shakespeare and several fellow actors built their own theater on the south bank of the Thames River, which they called the Globe Theater. Julius Caesar is thought to be*[*the first production*](https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discover/about-us/globe-theatre/#history)*at the new open-air theater.*

Additional Shakespeare comedies include:

* *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*,
* *The Comedy of Errors*,
* *Love’s Labour’s Lost*,
* *The Merry Wives of Windsor*,
* *Twelfth Night*,
* *Measure for Measure*, and
* *All’s Well That Ends Well*

