

Bitesize KS3 English Literature – Shakespeare

About Shakespeare – Shakespeare’s life and inspiration transcript

FEMALE PRESENTER

William Shakespeare.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

What?

FEMALE PRESENTER

I’m talking about you, not to you. Writer, poet, player and his story begins right here in London.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

What? No I was born in Stratford-upon-Avon.

FEMALE PRESENTER

What? Ain’t going Stratford, it’s miles away.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

It’s nice.

FEMALE PRESENTER

So...

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Two tickets to Stratford.

FEMALE PRESENTER

Seriously, forget it. We know his family was well off and that he was well educated; and that he got married at 18 and then he had three kids; and then he became a private tutor; and maybe a sailor in Italy or a poacher, or a fitness instructor.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Fitness instructor?

FEMALE PRESENTER

Okay, maybe not. I guess, the only thing we really know about his time in Stratford is that we don’t really know anything for sure.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Well...

FEMALE PRESENTER

No-one knows the exact details of Shakespeare’s life because no-one really wrote anything about people back then; unless you were a King or something. No-one wrote about regular people.

BOOKSHOP CUSTOMER

Bitesize

Excuse me, do you have a copy of Being Kate by the Duchess of Cambridge?

FEMALE PRESENTER

Loads of people would write stuff about Kings and Queens or write stuff just to please them, including Shakespeare, who was a right suck up.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Now that is not fair.

FEMALE PRESENTER

Well why was Banquo portrayed as so wise in Macbeth?

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Well because James I was descended from Banquo.

FEMALE PRESENTER

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Oberon? A fair vestal throned by the west. Who's that then?

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

It's Queen Elizabeth I.

FEMALE PRESENTER

You and the monarchy sitting in a tree, K I S S...

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

We could have your head cut off.

FEMALE PRESENTER

But it wasn't just the Royals that influenced Shakespeare's plays.

[PERSON IN BACKGROUND HEARD SHUSHING]

Most playwrights borrowed from history books or older stories.

And those were the ones that were playing fair.

The cheekier writers would go and see a play, copy down the words and put on a pirate version just down the road, which I think is disgusting.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Oi!

FEMALE PRESENTER

And it's still going on in modern times, with Shakespeare's plays being recycled into musicals and movies. West Side Story was based on Romeo and Juliet and Ten Things I Hate About You was based on The Taming of the Shrew. And my personal favourite, The Twelfth Knight Rises. The Bardman Trilogy continues.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Bitesize

What is that? If I wasn't dead already, I would quit.

FEMALE PRESENTER

Will mate, it's a joke. Relax, I made it up. But I'll make it up to yer, take yer to Stratford.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Oh really?

FEMALE PRESENTER

Nah.