

SHAKESPEARE

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon on April 23, 1564, to his parents, Mary Arden and John Shakespeare. Shakespeare was the third child of eight. He was the oldest surviving son because there was a plague going around called the Bubonic Plague at the time Shakespeare was born. This is also known as Black Death because it killed so many people in the Middle Ages. It supposedly killed about one out of every seven people. Not very much is known about Shakespeare's early years in life; the only way historians found about his early life was based on church records and court settlements. It was thought that Shakespeare got his education at a grammar school called King Edward VI School Stratford-upon-Avon. He married a woman eight years older than him when Shakespeare was eighteen, Anne Hathaway. Together they had three children. The first was a girl named Susanna, and then two years later, they had twins, one boy named Hamnet and a daughter named Judith. Hamnet died at the age of 11 of unknown causes. After the death of Shakespeare's only son, Shakespeare was supposedly never the same. Historians have no clue what happened in Shakespeare's life between 1585-1592. Historians call this time of his life the "lost years." No one is sure when Shakespeare started writing, but they think it was in 1592 when some of his plays were beginning to be performed on stage in London.

Shakespeare has had a lot of numerous plays, and almost all of them were performed in his time. Some of his first works include Richard III and parts of Henry VI. No one knows when many of Shakespeare's plays were written, but most historians think it was sometime in the early 1590s. Shakespeare has two famous narrative poems that many people read today, Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet.

Hamlet was first printed in 1601 and could be one of Shakespeare's most famous stories. This story is about Prince Hamlet planning revenge on Claudius for murdering King Hamlet. When he does kill Claudius, he takes over the throne of his father. One of the most famous quotes from the book Hamlet written by Shakespeare is, "To be or not to be that is the question: Whether 'tis nobler in mind to suffer, the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune Or to take arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing, end them." This is Shakespeare's longest narrative poem, and maybe one of his most tragic, but the story Romeo and Juliet is right up there with Hamlet.

Romeo and Juliet is a story that everyone in their life is going to read, especially in high school. Suppose you ask people who graduated from high school what book they remember reading. I guarantee you that most of them will mention Romeo and Juliet. That shows you how influential Shakespeare's writings are. Romeo and Juliet are about two people who love each other, but where they come from, they are indeed enemies. It is dramatic irony because since they cannot be together, but they love each other so much, they end up killing themselves together. Romeo and Juliet are to be one of his most significant pieces of work.