

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# William Shakespeare

## A Mid-Summer Night's Dream | Background

**Directions:** The best way to remember authors is to act as though they are people that you know in real life. Try to remember the basics, but also random facts about each author. In the long run, it is the random things that we retain. This is an autobiographical overview of the enigmatic William Shakespeare.



### **So they say...**

Way back in 1564, 400 years before The Beatles left Great Britain for America, a William Shakespeare was born to John and Mary Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon. His father was a glover and his mother was the daughter of a wealthy landowner. His actual date of birth remains unknown. However, estimations have been proposed due to baptismal records in April of 1564.

Shakespeare's existence and early life is a bit of a mystery. However, Shakespearian scholars believe he attended the King's New School in Stratford and later grammar school. There is a marriage record in existence to Anne Hathaway in 1582. Shakespeare was 18 years old and Anne was 26 years old. They had three children together between the years 1583-1585. The eldest was a daughter. Then, they had twins, a boy and a girl. At age 11, the boy twin, Hamnet, died. Then, there is a lapse in time until 1592 when Shakespeare joins the London theatre scene. At that point in time, Shakespeare abandoned his family for the life of a playwright and actor.

Shakespeare, throughout his writings or the writings that bear 80 various versions of his name, contributed almost 3000 new words to the English language. Today, his works are quoted second to The Bible. All in all, he wrote 37 plays and 154 works that we know of. His plays are typically divided into three categories: tragedies, comedies, and histories. His poems are mostly in the form of sonnets. Some believe that Shakespeare was a pen name due to the lack of institutionalized education in William Shakespeare's past. Nonetheless, Shakespeare and the King's Men wrote (and borrowed) a compendium of literature that serves the fundamental basics of secondary literature courses in both the United States and the United Kingdom.

