

Shakespeare

Topic

An introduction to William Shakespeare's life and work

Learning outcomes

- Give some information about Shakespeare's life and work
- Ask and answer questions using active and passive voice
- Explain the meanings of quotes from Shakespeare
- Express agreement and disagreement

Age and level

13-17, Adults (B1)

Time

45-55 minutes

Materials

- Information exchange (A for half the group, B for the other half)
- Student worksheet (optional)
- Presentation

Introduction

In this lesson, learners are introduced to Shakespeare as the topic for the lesson and pool the knowledge that they already have about him with a mind map. They then practise question formation and speaking with an information-gap reading activity about Shakespeare's life and work. Finally, they try to complete some famous Shakespeare quotes and consider what they might mean.

Procedure

<p>1. Task 1: Shakespeare mind map (10 mins)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put learners into pairs. Tell pairs they are going to race to solve an anagram as quickly as possible. Check they understand the meaning of anagram (demonstrate with a couple of examples if needed) Write an anagram of WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (e.g. MALILIW RAKESHAPEES) on the board or display slide 2 and explain that this is the name of a famous English writer. Write the word 'Shakespeare' inside a circle on the board or display slide 3. Ask learners what they know or what comes to mind when they think about William Shakespeare. Write a few ideas on the board to demonstrate how a mind map works, for example: <div data-bbox="486 929 1364 1187" data-label="Diagram"> <pre> graph TD A[Shakespeare] --- B[His life] A --- C[Life at the time] A --- D[His work] </pre> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In small groups, learners produce their own mind map in their notebooks or on the student worksheet (if using). Groups can then compare with other groups. Invite some groups to share information they have learned. Do not give learners extra information here as they will do an activity to find out more.
<p>2. Task 2: Information exchange (20 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell learners that they are going to read a text about Shakespeare, but there is some information missing in the text. Explain that they need to write questions to find out the missing information. G Elicit an example. 'Write He was born in ____' on the board and elicit the question that finds the missing information: 'Where was he born?' Put learners into two groups. Give each learner in one group a copy of reading text A and each learner in the other group reading text B. Within group A and group B, learners work in pairs to write the questions they need.

- Explain that they are going to work with a partner who knows the information they need, and that they know the information that their partner needs. They need to take turns to ask and answer each other's questions and complete their text.
- Put one learner from group A with one from group B, reminding them not to show each other their text. Select one pair to demonstrate the activity, if needed. The demonstrating pair ask each other question 1 and write down the answers.
- All pairs ask and answer their questions. When they've finished, they can put their texts side by side to check their answers.

Suggested questions:

Student A: 1. Where was Shakespeare born? 2. When did he die? 3. What is he best known for? 4. Who did he marry? 5. Where did he go to work as an actor? 6. When was the theatre / Globe destroyed?

Student B: 1. When was Shakespeare born? 2. How many plays did he write? 3. When did get married? 4. How many children did Shakespeare and his wife have? 5. When was the Globe Theatre built? 6. How was the (Globe) theatre destroyed?

3. Shakespeare quotes (15 minutes)

- Display **slide 4** or ask learners to look at the worksheet. In pairs, learners match the halves to make famous Shakespeare quotes. Encourage your learners to look for words that normally go together, such as 'borrow' and 'lend' or 'blind' and 'see'.
- Elicit answers or display **slide 5** to confirm.

Answers: 1d, 2f, 3a, 4b, 5c, 6e

- Join two pairs to make small groups. They discuss what the quotes mean and say if they agree or disagree with them. Invite some groups to share their thoughts.
- For lower levels, you could adapt this task by giving them the complete quotes and preparing a list of short explanations of what each quote means. Learners then need to match the quotes and the meanings.

Meanings: 1. Life is a drama and people are actors playing roles in different situations. 2. When people are in love, they can't see reality or the true nature of their loved ones. 3. There will be problems if you borrow or lend money. 4. Is it better to live – in pain and distress - or to die? 5. Don't worry about problems that can't be solved. 6. Love isn't easy.

**4. Quiz (10
minutes)**

OPTIONAL

- Put learners into pairs or small groups. If using the student worksheet, learners complete the quiz in pairs. Alternatively, read out the questions below and give them a little time to discuss and note the answers. They should not refer to notes from the lesson!
 - Depending on the level of your class, you could just read the questions and learners note the answers, or you could read the options too. Groups could hold up a piece of paper with either a, b, or c to indicate their chosen answers.
 - The pair or group with the most correct answers wins.
1. When was William Shakespeare born?
 - a. 1498
 - b. 1564
 - c. 1895
 2. How old was he when he got married?
 - a. 18
 - b. 21
 - c. 24
 3. Which of these plays was not written by Shakespeare?
 - a. Hamlet
 - b. Romeo and Juliet
 - c. The Taming of the Rat
 4. Where was Shakespeare born?
 - a. Stratford-upon-Avon
 - b. Cambridge
 - c. Oxford
 5. How many plays did Shakespeare write?
 - a. 8
 - b. 38
 - c. 108
 6. Which type of play did Shakespeare not write?
 - a. Tragedies
 - b. Comedies
 - c. Musicals
 7. What's the name of the 'Shakespeare theatre' in London?
 - a. The World Theatre
 - b. The Globe Theatre
 - c. The Old Shakespeare Theatre
 8. Finish this quote from Shakespeare: To be, or not to be:
 - a. that is the question.
 - b. and lovers cannot see.
 - c. nor a lender be.

Answers: 1b, 2a, 3c, 4a, 5b, 6c, 7b, 8a

5. Homework OPTIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ask learners to find another famous Shakespeare quote, and to research its meaning. They could present them next lesson. <p>Recommended links for quotes:</p> <p>https://nosweatshakespeare.com/quotes/famous/</p> <p>Shakespeare Quotes (901 quotes) (goodreads.com)</p>
References	Find out about mind maps here: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional- development/teachers/knowing- subject/d-h/mind-map

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www.teachingenglish.org.uk

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