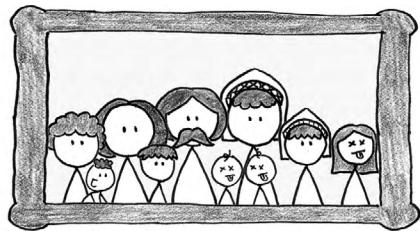


Shakespeare's Birthplace

Pupil's Booklet

Questions



The Shakespeare family: William with his parents, brothers and sisters.



Be a detective!

Find out what life would have been like
for the people who lived in this house.

www.shakespeare.org.uk

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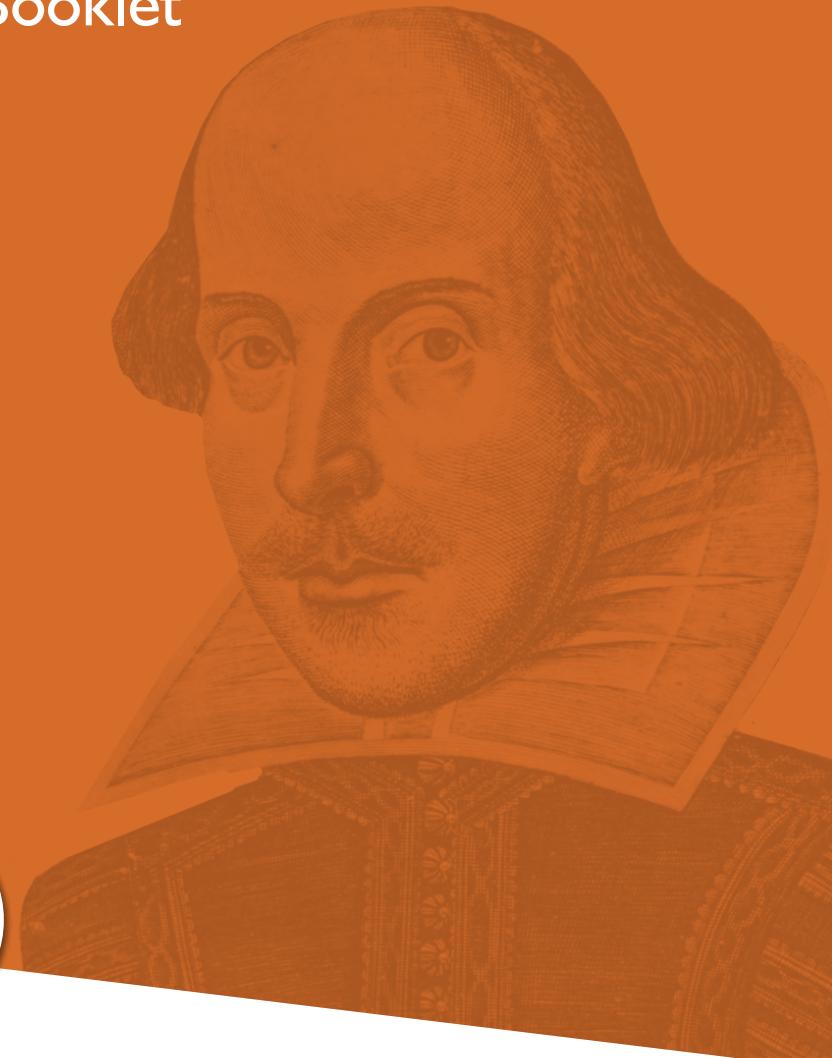
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Be a detective!

Shakespeare's Birthplace

You are visiting one of 5 houses in Stratford-upon-Avon that have a connection to Shakespeare. As you go around the house, you will see furniture and artefacts that tell a story about how this house might have looked and of how people lived over time. Some of the things you will see were made in the time that Shakespeare was alive, some were made later and others are copies of things that were used in the 16th and 17th centuries. This means that some of the things you will see today are very old.

Here are some questions to think about and discuss as you go around the house. See if you can find the answers or come up with some ideas and suggestions.

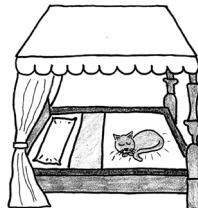
Good luck!



The Birthplace – the house where William was born.

Notes

The Birth Room (Parents' Bedroom)



Beds in Tudor times had a wood and rope construction. Why do you think people needed to use a bed key to tighten the ropes every few nights? How many people do you think were needed to do this job and why?

Can you find the small wooden tub under the window?

This was a bathtub for babies. How do you think Tudors heated the water to go in it and why has it got a linen cloth inside it?

Find the small posts sticking up from the side of the bed. They are called 'bed staves'. Why do you think Tudors needed to have bed staves and did they have more than one use?



The Parlour

Amazing Fact! – The stone floor that you are standing on is the same one that William walked on when he was a young boy

Hmmm... a bed in the parlour? What do you think it would have been like to sleep in this bed? Why do you think that Tudor beds had curtains?

How many candles can you see? Are there any other sources of light? Which do you think is the best and why? How easy would it be to do jobs in the evening (once it had gone dark)?

Can you find anything in the room that the Tudors would have used to save coins? Is it a good design? Why?

Wealthy families had thick tapestries as wall hangings. Why do you think the Shakespeare family used these linen ones instead? What job do you think the wall hangings do?

William would have written his plays using a quill.



The Glover's Workshop

Amazing Fact! – Lime, alum, egg, dog excrement and urine were used in the tanning process. This turned the animal skins into leather.



William helping his father in the glover's workshop.

Find some of the tools on the workbench. What might they have been used for in a glover's workshop? What do you think the long wooden sticks would have been used for?

Look at the leather pockets (the pouches Tudors used as they didn't have pockets in their clothes). Some of the pockets are large with a hard leather backing whilst some are much smaller and softer. Why do you think they are different?

Try on some of the gloves that are on the middle table and the shelf under the window. What do you think the different types of gloves would have been for? Why do you think some gloves would have been lined with rabbit fur?

Above the window onto Henley Street is a wooden pole used to display some of the goods that John Shakespeare would have made. What do you think the triangular-shaped items on the end would have been used for? Give reasons for your answer.



William collecting pee for tanning leather.

The Exhibition Room / Girls' Bedroom

Amazing Fact! – Lots of children became apprentices in Tudor times in order to learn a trade or job. You would have left home (somewhere between the ages of 8 and 14) and gone to live with your Master (who would teach you the job) for 7 years! You wouldn't be paid but the Master would give you somewhere to sleep and your food!

The earliest date that somebody scratched next to their name on the 'signed window' is 1806. What is the latest date that you can find?

Examine the 'signed window'. Does anybody who scratched their name into the window have the same name as you or your classmates?

Look up into the loft that would have been the bedroom for the apprentices (as well as a storeroom for fleeces). What do you think it would have been like to sleep up there? Can you think of 2 positive things and 2 negative things?

The Boys' Bedroom

Amazing Fact! – It was VERY unusual in Tudor times to have a bedroom to yourself! You would share a room (and sometimes a bed) with other members of your family and servants (if you had any). As a boy William would have shared his bed with his younger brothers Gilbert and Richard.

What sort of toys can you find in this room? Do you recognise any of them as being similar to any toys that you have played with?

Tudor girls and boys wore the same types of clothes up until the age of around 5 (see some on the bed). What reasons can you think of why families might have done this?