

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

Hall's Croft

Pupil's Booklet

Questions



Be a detective!

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

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Be a detective!

Hall's Croft

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!



Hall's Croft



William left Stratford and we do not know where he went during the next six years.

The Bedroom

Amazing Fact! – People in Tudor and Jacobean times were very superstitious. Babies were often given rattles with whistles and bells on them. The family then taught the baby to blow the whistle because they thought that the noise would summon the parents if evil spirits were around. The bells were meant to keep the bad spirits away!

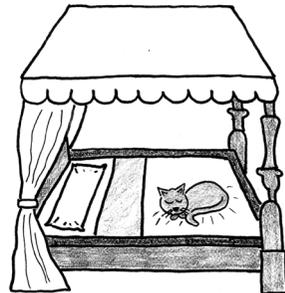
In the large picture of the mother and child that is hanging on the wall next to the bed, do you think the child is a girl or a boy? What evidence is there to support your answer?

Find the large box standing on the floor with a circular cover inside it. What do you think this would have been used for? Would you like to use one?

On the bed there is a warming pan. How do you think this warmed the bed and what made the heat?

There is a large chest at the end of the bed and it can be locked. Why do you think the family had a lockable chest kept in the parents' bedroom?

The bed has a tester (canopy) above the bed. This was common in Tudor times. What purpose do you think the tester had?



The Parlour

Amazing Fact! – In the picture of the family about to eat, most of the family members are wearing black. This shows that they were a wealthy family as to turn material a deep black colour, it had to be dyed lots of times making it very expensive!

If you look carefully at the upright timber beside the fireplace, you will see two rectangular holes cut out of it. What do you think these might be evidence of?

Look carefully around the timbers in the frame of the building. What do you think the round wooden pegs are for?

The large painting on the wall shows a family about to eat dinner. What foods can you see on the table?

William would have written his plays using a quill.



The Dispensary

Amazing Fact! – Doctors in John Hall’s time often diagnosed what was wrong with their patients by checking their urine. In fact, you did not even have to go to see the doctor yourself but could just send a servant around with your urine in a pot!

Find the picture ‘Doctor Casting the Water’, showing a doctor diagnosing what was wrong with the patient by checking their urine. How do you think they did this?

Some of the containers have spouts and some do not. Some are larger than others. Why do you think they are different?

The pestle and mortar was an important piece of equipment. What do you think it was used for?

Why did the doctor have a set of scales in his dispensary?



The Kitchen

Amazing Fact! – Bread was eaten at most meals. You could tell how wealthy somebody was by the type of bread they ate. Wealthy people ate a fine white bread and poor people ate bread made from rye (and it sometimes even had ground acorns in it!).

Hanging on the right hand side of the fireplace is a metal grill with a handle. What do you think the cook might have used this for?

At the back of the fireplace is a hanging wooden salt box. Why do you think the Tudors would have the salt in the fireplace?

Find the bellows in the fireplace. What would they have been used for?

Look up at the ceiling. Why do you think the family had hooks hanging down? What might they have hung on them?

