

**Warmer – some famous quotes**

a. Look at these famous quotes from Shakespeare. What are the modern-day equivalents of the underlined words?

1. 'The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.' **As You Like It**
2. 'This above all: to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.' **Hamlet**
3. 'Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice.' **Hamlet**
4. 'Many a true word hath been spoken in jest\*.' **King Lear**  
\*as a joke

b. Do you agree with what is said in the quotes? Discuss with a partner.

**Task 1 – reading about Shakespeare's grammar**

Read the following short text about the grammar that Shakespeare used, and discuss the questions with a partner.

**Changes in English grammar since Shakespeare's times**

In order to read and understand Shakespeare, it is important to know that certain aspects of English grammar have changed since Shakespeare's time. Probably the most important change is that English no longer has two 'you' forms. In Shakespeare's time, 'you' was used as a more polite form, and 'thou' as a more familiar form. 'You' was also used for addressing more than one person and 'thou' to address one person.

'Thou' also had different verb conjugations to 'you', so Shakespeare would have said 'you are', but 'thou art', 'you have' but 'thou hast'.

The third person (he, she, it) also had different verb conjugations, with, for example, 'hath', 'doth' and 'seeth' instead of the modern 'has', 'does' and 'sees'.

1. What two differences were there between 'thou' and 'you'?
2. Give an example of a Shakespearean verb ending for 'thou' and for 'he'.
3. Does your language (or any other language you know about) have two 'you' forms like Shakespearean English?

**Task 2 – Shakespeare's grammar**

Complete the Shakespearean grammar tables with the underlined words from the Warmer and the text in Task 1.

**a. Pronouns**

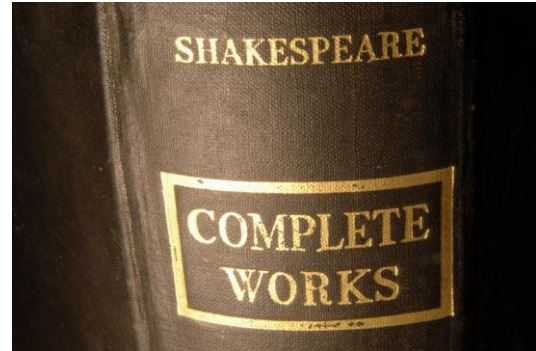
	Subject pronoun	Object pronoun	Possessive determiner	Reflexive pronoun
<b>Singular / familiar</b>	1 _____	thee	2 _____ thine	thyself
<b>Plural / polite</b>	you	ye	your	yourself

**b. Verbs**

	I	thou	he / she / it	we / you / they
<b>to be</b>				
(present)	am	art	is	are
(past)	was	wert	was	were
<b>to have</b>				
(present)	have	3 _____	hath	have
(past)	had	hadst	had	had
<b>to do</b>				
(present)	do	dost	4 _____	do
(past)	did	didst	did	did
<b>can</b>				
(present)	can	5 _____	can	can
(past)	could	couldst	could	could

**Task 3 – Shakespearean vocabulary**

*Work in pairs to match the Shakespearean vocabulary (1-15) with the modern day equivalents (a-o).*

**Shakespearean**

1. Fain
2. Farewell
3. Nay
4. Oft
5. Woo
6. Lest
7. Wherefore
8. Methinks
9. Pronounce
10. Ay
11. Swear
12. Twas
13. Perjury
14. Else
15. Prithee

**Modern day**

- a. Say
- b. Yes
- c. Otherwise
- d. Promise
- e. Telling a lie
- f. For fear that, in case
- g. Flirt or romance
- h. Why
- i. Goodbye
- j. Often
- k. I think
- l. Willingly
- m. No
- n. Please
- o. It was

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**Task 4 – modern-day Shakespeare**

- a. *What do you know about the play Romeo and Juliet? Who are the main characters? What happens in the story?*
- b. *Work with your partner to write a modern-day version of this famous speech from Romeo and Juliet. Make any changes you think are appropriate.*

*Note: In this scene Juliet has been talking to herself about her feelings for Romeo, who she has just met. Then she realises that he has overheard her.*

**Juliet:** Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,  
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night  
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny  
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!  
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay,'  
And I will take thy word: yet if thou swear'st,  
Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries  
Then say, Jove\* laughs. O gentle Romeo,  
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:  
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,  
I'll frown and be perverse an say thee nay,  
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.  
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond.

\*God (actually a Roman God)

**Task 5 – Talking like Shakespeare.**

*With a partner, write a short dialogue using as many of the words in Task 3 as you can, and Shakespearean grammar. Then read your dialogue aloud to the class.*