

Shakespeare

Topic

William Shakespeare

Aims

- To learn about Shakespeare
- To practise reading skills
- To practise question formation
- To develop speaking skills

Age/level

Young learners aged 12+ or adults
CEFR level B1/B2

Time

60 minutes approximately

Materials

1. worksheet (one per learner)
2. reading texts (one A and one B per pair of learners)

Introduction

This lesson may be useful as an introductory lesson on Shakespeare. 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 and quiz activities. They then practise question formation and speaking with an information-gap reading activity about Shakespeare's life and legacy and a theatre-themed 'Find someone who' activity. Finally, they try to complete some famous Shakespeare quotes and consider what they might mean.

There are lots more materials available on the TeachingEnglish website to do further work on Shakespeare and his plays with your secondary learners:

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/shakespeare-teens>

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-teens/uk-culture/shakespeare>

You and your learners can also find out more about Shakespeare with these links:

<https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Shakespeare>

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/explore-english-shakespeare>

Procedure

1. Shakespeare mind map	<p>Tell your learners to imagine that you're a very famous Briton! Get them to ask you yes/no questions until they guess who you are (William Shakespeare).</p> <p>Alternatively, write an anagram of WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (e.g. MALILIW RAKESHAPEES) on the board and have a race to see which pair of learners can work out the name first.</p> <p>Once you have established that Shakespeare is going to be the topic for the lesson, write the word 'Shakespeare' inside a circle on the board. 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, then ask learners to work in groups and produce their own mind map on the worksheet. Groups can then compare with other groups.</p> <p>This will help you to know how much or how little your learners already know, in order to gauge the level of input for the class.</p>
2. Shakespeare quiz	<p>Ask learners to work in teams – these can be pairs or groups, depending on your class size. Ask learners either to read the questions on the worksheet or to put their worksheet away and listen to you reading the questions aloud.</p> <p>In their teams they discuss each question and agree their answer, circling it on the worksheet or writing on a separate piece of paper. If you are reading the questions, set a time limit for discussion and agreeing answers between each question.</p> <p>Then ask teams to swap worksheets or answer papers with another team. Read out the answers, and teams mark each other's before swapping back.</p> <p><i>Answers: 1b, 2a, 3c, 4a, 5b, 6c, 7b, 8a</i></p>
3. Information-gap reading	<p>Tell the 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. If necessary, give them an example, e.g. write 'I really like _____' on the board and elicit the question that finds the missing information: 'What do you really like?'</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Now 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. Again, do an example if necessary, e.g. write 'A: I really like _____ but I hate tea' and 'B: I really like coffee but I hate _____' on the board and demonstrate how A asks B and B asks A.</p> <p>Then put one learner from group A with one from group B, reminding them not to show each other their text. When they've finished, they can put their texts side by side to check their answers.</p>

4. Find someone who	<p>First ask learners to complete the last row of the table with something they'd like to find out about their classmates. Depending on your learners, elicit how to form the questions for each row, i.e. 'Can you name ...' etc., and allow them to write them down if they need the support.</p> <p>Then demonstrate the activity and explain that when someone answers 'yes' to a question, they need to do two things: write the person's name, then ask them a follow-up question. Elicit ideas of possible follow-up questions, for example 'Which one is your favourite?' or 'How many more do you know?' for the first one. Finally, tell learners that they can only write a person's name once, i.e. they need to find a different person to answer 'yes' for each row!</p> <p>As learners are mingling and completing the table, monitor carefully so that you can offer some constructive feedback at the end. When they finish, you can also ask learners to report back on the most interesting or surprising thing they found out.</p>
5. Complete the Shakespeare quotes	<p>This task can be used as is with higher levels or adapted for lower levels.</p> <p>For higher levels, put learners into pairs and they try to match the halves of the quotes. They can then compare with another pair and say what they think each quote means.</p> <p>To make this slightly easier, you (or the learners) can cut up the halves so that they can match them physically and more easily move them around if they change their minds. Encourage your learners to look for words that normally go together, such as 'borrow' and 'lend' or 'blind' and 'see'.</p> <p>For lower levels, you could adapt this 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 and say which they agree with.</p> <p><i>Answers: 1d, 2g, 3a, 4h, 5b, 6c, 7f, 8e</i></p>

Contributed by

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