

Key terms

Play	A text written to be performed on a stage by actors and actresses.	Setting	where and when a story takes place	Elizabethan	The Elizabethan era is the time period in the Tudor period of the history of England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603). This is the period in which Shakespeare wrote the majority of his plays.
tale	An imaginative story. Often one that is well known and or has been passed down for many years. Fairy stories are often described as tales.	Protagonist	The main character. The audience usually sympathises/ identifies with this character.		
William Shakespeare	Shakespeare was born on April 23rd in Stratford upon Avon in England. He is the World's most famous playwrights and has written over 30 plays and a variety of sonnets (love poems). He wrote in three genres: tragedies, comedies and history plays that entertained and educated the crowds at The Globe Theatre, London. Shakespeare's plays are still widely read, studied and performed, because audiences are still amazed by Shakespeare's command of the English Language and his ability to write with deep insight about a variety of human emotions,.	antagonist	a character or force opposing the protagonist	Gender and marriage Race in Elizabethan era	Both 14 th -century Verona and Elizabethan England were patriarchal societies. Women were denied all political rights and considered legally owned by their husbands. Disobedience was seen as a crime against their religion. Women who did not marry were forced to live under the control of a male relative in his home or in a convent, where a woman could become a nun. Aristocratic families often required their young daughters to marry successful older men. Girls were considered eligible at the age of 14 and had to give their consent to a marriage..
		Villain	A character who harms other people.		
		Characteristics	a feature of a person or thing; what a character is like.		
Leon Garfield	Leon Garfield is a twentieth century writer who lived from 1921 – 1996. He took Shakespeare's most famous plays and re-wrote them as prose stories or 'tales'. He also wrote a number of other successful novels.	conflict	When a character faces and opposing force	Elizabethan Villain	Characters who commit and often delight in immoral, or "evil," actions, but are somehow attractive, charming, or seductive both to the audience and to the other characters.
		resolution	The ending or conclusion of a text.		
Shakespearean tragedy	The basic structure of a tragedy is: The main character is someone noble; like a king. He is someone we admire and respect, but he also has a 'tragic flaw' in his character which makes him contribute to his own destruction. The flaw is often part of his greatness but it also causes his downfall. The flaw causes the protagonist to make mistakes and misjudgements. He begins to fall from his high level. He struggles to regain his position but fails and he comes crashing down. He eventually recognises his mistakes, but too late	motivation	What a character wants and why they want it.	Religion in Elizabethan times	Almost everyone in England in Shakespeare's day was Christian. Everyone would go to church on a Sunday, or even more often. Most people believed in Hell as a very real place, and that the Devil was a specific person.
				Race in Elizabethan era	There were very few people of other races in Elizabethan England. The few there were, were generally treated with suspicion, mistrust and racist attitudes.
		Theme	A theme is a 'big' idea at the heart of the text	Magic and the supernatural	In Shakespeare's time people believed in witches. They were people who had made a pact with the Devil in exchange for supernatural powers. If your cow was ill, it was easy to decide it had been cursed. ... People accused of being witches tended to be old, poor, single women.
Shakespearean comedy	Shakespearean comedies are full of fun, irony and dazzling wordplay. They also full of disguises and mistaken identities with very complicated plots that are difficult to follow. Much of the comedy comes from characters making mistakes, and the ridiculous situations that arise from this.				