

Shakespeare 2

Live from Stratford podcasts

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| Author: Adrian Tennant |
| Level: Pre-intermediate / Intermediate |
| Age: Teenagers / adults |
| Time needed: 30-45 minutes |
| Language and skills: listening for gist, listening for details, collocations with <i>brilliant</i> |



Warm up

1. Write up the following numbers on the board:

1616, 37, 18, 52, 1564, 14, 23

Explain that these are all important numbers in the life of Shakespeare. Ask the students to work in pairs and try to guess what the numbers refer to, i.e. the year he was born, etc.

2. Next, hand out the worksheet and ask students to match the numbers to the sentences.

Answers: a. 1564; b. 23rd; c. 14; d. 18; e. 37; f. 52; g. 1616

3. Next, put students in pairs and get them to discuss question 2.

4. Monitor and then ask students for any interesting facts they know.

Vocabulary

1. Ask the students if they know any Shakespeare plays. If they can name some plays ask them what type of play each one is.

2. Hand out the worksheet and ask the students to complete the gaps. Encourage students to work together.

Answers: a. comedy; b. tragedy; c. historical.

Listening

1. Explain that students are going to hear eight people answering a question about Shakespeare. Play the listening once and then ask students what they think the question was.

Answer: *Is Shakespeare brilliant or boring?*

2. Play the listening again. Pause between each speaker to give students enough time to write the number next to the correct sentence.

Answers: a. 7; b. 4; c. 2; d. 8; e. 1; f. 5; g. 3; h. 6

Language

1. Ask students if they can remember how many times they heard the word *brilliant*. Hopefully they will say 'a lot' or something similar. Point out that when it was used it was not always preceded or followed by the same words.

2. Ask students to look at the worksheet and try to complete the sentences a-e using the words in the box.

Answers: a. brilliant for; b. a brilliant; c. Brilliant; d. brilliant from; e. brilliant but.

Speaking

1. Put students in groups of 4-5 and ask them to discuss the questions together.

2. Monitor before asking a few groups to report back on their discussion.

Useful websites

For more information on Shakespeare and his plays, you could refer to the following websites:

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

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/>

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Transcript



Introduction

Welcome to onestopenglish's Live from Stratford podcasts. We interviewed people in Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace of William Shakespeare, and asked them the question, "Is Shakespeare brilliant or boring?"

Speaker 1 (male):

I think he's brilliant for the history and poetry and all sorts that he's done, in his past. And it's great for kids for English.

Speaker 2 (female):

Right, I think he was a brilliant man in his time, very interesting if you like that sort of thing. Unfortunately I think the youngsters today do find him boring, you know. But if you're, if you're interested in his plays then ... then yes, I think they are interesting.

Speaker 3 (male):

Yes, I think Shakespeare is brilliant...err, he's, he's err ... well foundation of the erm, of the English language as we know it really, because English has become international through erm, people in other countries wanting to, err, to read his works, so ... he is brilliant. You can't put him in any other category.

Speaker 4 (female):

Brilliant! His use of language is remarkable. And his understanding of human nature is even more remarkable.

Speaker 5 (female):

Erm ... I think it's a bit boring. Nothing interests me in Shakespeare. I think it's 'cause of the old language.

Speaker 6 (female):

Personally I think it's really difficult, erm, to read Shakespeare. Well, it's, it's not written to be read anyway and you really can tell when you're trying to read it that it really is a bit exhausting because of the language, but if you see Shakespeare on stage then it's, it's really very exciting and I got really into it so yes, from that perspective I would say he's brilliant but to read he might be a bit boring!

Speaker 7 (male):

Erm, well, I think Shakespeare is ... brilliant from the point of view of, erm, the number of, erm, plays that he produced in his time. And ... I don't think many people produced anything close to that before or after him. But I think, erm, in today's society maybe less relevant, erm, to the younger generation.

Speaker 8 (female):

I suppose that Shakespeare might be boring or brilliant but because it depends how we treat it and how it is introduced to us. If it is introduced like something amazing err ... with full of action and suspense it can be very interesting. So a lot depends on literature teachers ... err ... and on the way how it is presented. Err ... because everyone can find a little bit of their lives in Shakespeare.

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Warmer



1. Answer these questions with the numbers in the box.

1616 37 18 52 1564 14 23

- In which year was Shakespeare born?
- Shakespeare was born in April, but on what date?
- How old was Shakespeare when he left / finished school?
- How old was Shakespeare when he married Ann Hathaway?
- How many plays did he write?
- How old was he when he died?
- In which year did Shakespeare die?

2. Work with a partner. What other facts do you know about Shakespeare?

Vocabulary

3. Shakespeare wrote a number of different types of play. Complete each definition with the appropriate word.

- In a _____ various amusing and funny events and situations occur. A good example of this would be *Twelfth Night*.
- The classic example of a _____ is *Romeo and Juliet*. The ending is so sad.
- A _____ play is based on events from the past. Probably his best known _____ play is *Henry V*.

Listening

4. Listen to the eight people. What question do you think they were asked?

5. Listen again. Who says the following things? Write the number of the speaker in the boxes. One answer is done for you.

- He was brilliant because he wrote so much.
- Shakespeare understood how people behave.
- Kids today aren't interested in Shakespeare.
- It's up to teachers to make Shakespeare exciting.
- He's an important historical figure.
- Shakespeare is boring because his language is old.
- People from around the world want to read his plays.
- It's not easy to read Shakespeare. It makes you tired.

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Language



6. Although *brilliant* is always an adjective it can be used in a number of different structures. Complete these sentences from the listening with the phrases in the box.

brilliant but brilliant brilliant from a brilliant brilliant for

- I think he's _____ the history and poetry ...
- I think he was _____ man in his time, ...
- _____! His use of language is remarkable.
- Shakespeare is _____ the point of view of the number of plays he produced ...
- Shakespeare might be boring or _____ it depends ...

Speaking

7. Work in groups and discuss these questions.

- Have you read or seen any of Shakespeare's plays? Did you like the play(s)?
- Do you think he's brilliant or boring? Why?
- Which writer from your country is your 'Shakespeare'? Why?