

## Shakespeare – background and context

### Section A

#### Who was William Shakespeare?

1. Read through this information about Shakespeare. **Find out and write down 10 facts** about him – what DO we know? What DON'T we know for certain?

<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/shakespeares-life> (British Library website - "Shakespeare's Life")

2. **Create a timeline of the life of William Shakespeare** with at least 15 points on it. What do we know about him and what he did? What are the key events in his life?

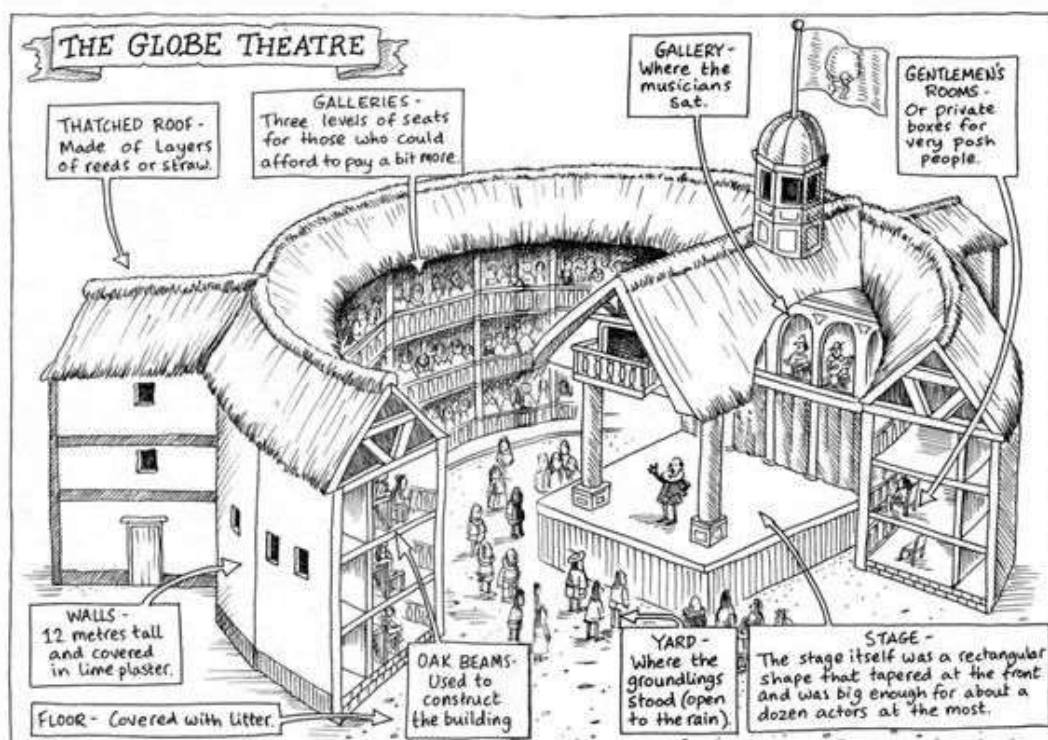
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3RyQxEpMY> (Youtube – NowYouKnowAbout "The story of William Shakespeare")

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wv7-nnUN5QI> (Youtube – BBC Teach "Introducing Shakespeare")

### Section B

#### What was the Globe theatre like? What was it like to watch a play in the Elizabethan times?

3. Look at the image below of the Globe Theatre – the theatre Shakespeare's theatre company had built and performed in. Answer the following questions:



- a. Explore the virtual tour of the Globe theatre, clicking on the images to find out extra information. **Bullet point the key information** you find out about what it was like to be in the Globe theatre in Elizabethan England.
- b. The theatre had no electric lighting (only candles and flaming torches), no roof and no microphones/sound system. **What impact do you think this would have on the plays, the actors, the audience and the experience of watching a show at this theatre?**
- c. The cheapest tickets were for those standing in the Yard, around the end of the stage.

**What do you think** it would have been like to watch one of Shakespeare's plays from that position?

**Write a paragraph**, from the point of view of a 'groundling', describing what it was like to watch a performance of a Shakespeare play.

