

# William Shakespeare



## Quick summary



**William Shakespeare** was an English **playwright**, poet and actor. He is regarded as the greatest writer in the English language. His most famous plays include *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Though he mostly worked in London, he was born and attended school in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. His work has remained popular for so long because he wrote about many important human **themes** such as love, power, revenge, jealousy and conflict. His plays have been translated into many languages and are performed around the world more than those of any other playwright.



## Culture and pastimes

Shakespeare lived in the Elizabethan **era** (named after Queen Elizabeth I). It was known as a time of exploration and discovery. Theatre was a major social event and all types of people went to see plays. Companies of actors travelled around England, performing in outdoor spaces such as parks or town squares. As well as providing entertainment, Shakespeare's plays helped audiences to gain a sense of their changing world through their themes, characters and settings.



## Artefacts

When Shakespeare died, many of his plays had never been printed. During his life, it is believed that lines were memorised by actors and by Shakespeare himself. In 1623, 36 of Shakespeare's plays were printed in a collection that became known as the First Folio. This meant that Shakespeare's work was recorded for the future. Without the First Folio, many of his plays would have been lost forever. It is one of the most important books in English **literature**. Original copies are now **treasured**, and can only be found in museums and private collections.



## Main events

**1564:** Born  
**1570:** Attended school in Stratford  
**1590:** Wrote first play  
**1616:** Died  
**1623:** First Folio printed



## Beliefs

Shakespeare was an important person in the **Renaissance** arts movement. It was a time when Christians changed their view of the world. Rather than focusing on an all-powerful God, people took greater interest in learning about nature and themselves to better understand their place in God's world.



## Vocabulary

**playwright:** a person who writes plays  
**theme:** subject or idea  
**era:** a long and distinct period of history  
**literature:** written work, especially with artistic value  
**treasured:** highly valued  
**renaissance:** re-birth



## Settlements



## Beliefs



## Culture and pastimes



## Location



## Main events



## Food and farming



## Travel and exploration



## Conflict



## Society



## Artefacts



# Marie Curie



Quick summary



**Marie Curie** was the youngest in a family of five children. Her parents were both teachers in Poland. Marie Curie was a very clever student who was made famous because of her influential work on radioactivity. Much of her work was done with her husband Pierre Curie, whom she met after she had moved to France to study. Pierre died suddenly in 1906 but Marie Curie continued her work and received many awards, including two Nobel Prizes. She was always looking for ways to share her work with other scientists. Marie Curie spent her whole life trying to learn as much as possible about radioactivity and its possible uses for helping others, and that is her legacy.



Location



Artefacts

Marie Curie left many diaries and notebooks for other scientists to read and to learn about her work. Many are still radioactive and have to be handled very carefully!



Society

Marie Curie's achievements came at a time when women were not given the same opportunities as men. Marie Curie had to leave Poland, her home country, and travel to France to go to university. Marie Curie was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and her legacy can be seen today in science and medicine. Her name also lives on in the Marie Curie charity that works to fight cancer.



Main events

**1867:** Born in Poland  
**1903:** Won the Nobel Prize for Physics  
**1906:** Her husband was killed in a street accident  
**1911:** Won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry  
**1934:** Died



Conflict

During the First World War (1914–18) Marie Curie helped design a mobile x-ray vehicle that could be used to diagnose soldiers' injuries. With her daughter Irène, she worked very close to the front line, where the battles were taking place.



Vocabulary

**influential:** makes people take notice  
**radioactivity:** where a substance produces energy through powerful and harmful rays  
**achievements:** things done successfully after lots of effort  
**legacy:** something left behind after death  
**diagnose:** finding out about an illness



Settlements



Beliefs



Culture and pastimes



Location



Main events



Food and farming



Travel and exploration



Conflict



Society



Artefacts





# Martin Luther King Jr



Quick summary



**Martin Luther King** was a Baptist minister and civil rights leader, who campaigned against racial inequality in the United States of America. He was an influential public speaker, inspiring people to non-violent public protest. King gave his most famous speech, 'I Have a Dream' to over 250,000 people in Washington DC. His work helped to change public opinion and forced the government to make discrimination illegal. Although King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, not everyone agreed with his beliefs, and he was assassinated in 1968. He is now known for making society fairer, and many American streets and buildings are named in his honour. His birthday, known as Martin Luther King Day, is celebrated as a public holiday.



Location

Alabama state  
Tennessee state



Society

Slavery was abolished after the American Civil War in 1865, but in the 1950s, people were still treated unequally, because of their race. In Montgomery, Alabama, an African-American woman, Rosa Parks was arrested for not giving up her bus seat to a white passenger. King organised a series of protests known as the Montgomery Bus Boycott which eventually led to the legal end of racial segregation. It was an important event in the civil rights movement and King's role in it made him very famous.



Main events

**1929:** Born  
**1955:** Helped organise the Montgomery Bus Boycott  
**1963:** Gave his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech  
**1964:** Won Nobel Peace Prize  
**1968:** Assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee



Beliefs

As a Christian minister, King followed the Bible's teachings. He believed people were equal in God's eyes and should be treated as such. He was also influenced by Indian civil rights leader, Mahatma Gandhi, who preached non-violent protest.



Vocabulary

**inequality:** unfairness  
**influential:** makes people take notice  
**inspiring:** creating feelings in a person  
**discrimination:** unfair treatment of different types of people  
**race:** a group of people with a shared culture or features  
**assassinated:** murdered for political or religious reasons



Settlements



Beliefs



Culture and pastimes



Location



Main events



Food and farming



Travel and exploration



Conflict



Society



Artefacts

