

# YR 8 – RENAISSANCE (Term 1)

## 1470-1660

*When the people of the English Renaissance were faced with new information—like, um, hey guys, the earth actually orbits the sun, not the other way around—some folks just couldn't handle it. They were happy with the way things were. Which is all well and good until a Galileo jumps out of nowhere and hits you in the head with a totally different take on our galaxy. So, sometimes you have no choice but to look up and reevaluate what you know to be true.*

### What was the Renaissance?

- Started in Italy in 14<sup>th</sup> century; in England 1470-1660
- Means rebirth in French
- Writers start using classical Greek & Roman ideas in their texts
- The texts focus on humans & human emotions/desires rather than everything being about God

### Who was Shakespeare?

- Probably born in Stratford-upon-Avon on 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, 1564; died on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1616.
- Unlike his contemporaries, he wrote all 3 play genres: historical, comedy & tragedy.
- Comedies: amusing language, plot twists, mistaken identity
- Tragedies: serious language, death, tragic hero, fatal flaws
- Histories: based on real historical figures, often propaganda for the monarchy

### How did Shakespeare influence the language we use?

- Shakespeare contributed at least 2000 new words (neologisms) to English, e.g. **fashionable**, **gossip**, **torture** & **eyeball** just to name a few!
- He also invented a lot of idioms (sayings) that we use today. For example, if you're saying that a friend has a **heart of gold** or that **you're in a pickle**, you're quoting Shakespeare!

### How did Shakespeare influence the drama we see?

- Shakespeare is often credited with the mixing of genres (hybrids), e.g. tragi-comedy
- Plays targeted the masses (not just the wealthy); themes reflected their lives (universal truths).
- Characters undergo change in plays.
- Characters' choices drive the plot forward.
- Characters use contemporary (modern of the time) language.

### Who was Aphra Behn?

- Born in 1640, died in 1689.
- Worked as a British spy in 1666!
- First professional woman writer in English.
- Very successful in her lifetime – was a celebrity. Her most successful play was *The Rover*.
- She was concerned with equal rights for the genders.

## What was Shakespearean theatre like?

- People from all classes attended.
- Cost a penny to enter, another penny for a seat & another for a cushion; those wooden seats were tough on the derriere!
- Audiences would heckle & sometimes throw things at the actors.
- Women didn't act in the plays.
- Actors only given own lines with last line of previous speaker (actor).

## Why was the King James bible important?

- Published in 1611
- The first authorised (by King James) English version (largely based on Tyndale's first translation)
- Lots of people learnt to read in order to read the bible.
- Shakespeare & other writers alluded to lots of biblical stories (e.g. Adam & Eve; Judas's betrayal of Jesus) in their texts.

## Reading skills: Understanding that the analysis of language/ structure/form reveals further, distinct meanings

What is language/ structure/form?	These are techniques that writers use to impact readers/audience.
What effect does: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>language have on tone</li><li>structure on atmosphere</li><li>form on perspective?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Tone is the attitude of the writer</li><li>Atmosphere is the emotion or mood</li><li>Perspective is a point of view</li></ul>

## Writing skills: Understanding that vocabulary choice is directly linked to purpose & audience

Are longer/unusual words or specific words better?	Specific.
How do you ensure your word choice is specific?	You can have a list of banned words: good/bad/negative/positive. But also check that another word could replace yours.
How do you need to adapt your vocab choice to fit PAT?	PAT = Purpose/Audience/Type of text You will cover this more in year 9 but generally does your vocab fit these 3 headings.
How do you increase your range of vocabulary?	Listen to radio/TV/podcast/vlogger that has a wide range of vocabulary (Johnny Vaugh, Stephen Fry). Read! Do your vocab homework!

## Writing a review article

- Catchy heading (often using a pun) and subheadings
- Brief summary of the play plot (no spoilers though!)
- Facts about the play (e.g. writer, actors, awards, etc.)
- Opinion about the 'best bits' & 'worst bits'
- Draws a conclusion (disguising opinion as fact) saying whether something works for its audience & purpose

## Writing a play script

- Check back to your Greek knowledge organiser for all the details.

## Grammar

**Adjective:** describes a noun.

- Comparative adjective**, e.g. Mrs Travis is a **better** teacher than Mr. Johnson.
- Superlative adjective**, e.g. Mrs Travis is the **best** teacher.

**Adverb:** describes a verb, adjective or another adverb.

- Manner adverb**, e.g. I walk **slowly**.
- Time adverb**, e.g. I will walk **tomorrow**.
- Frequency adverb**, e.g. I walk **often**.
- Degree adverb**, e.g. I agree **completely**.
- Place adverb**, e.g. I walk **there**.

## Stretch yourself

Look up John Milton, John Donne, Edmund Spencer & Christopher Marlowe.

## Reading tasks

A fiction analysis & a non-fiction analysis

## Writing tasks

An entertaining review article & a narrative play script.

## Looking forward and back...

*Next the neo-classicals who were obsessed with antiquity. No, we're not talking about cute coffee tables in your local antique shop; we're talking about ancient Greece & Rome.*

## Language techniques

Simile
Metaphor
Personification
Alliteration
Neologism
Pun

Term of address

## Structure techniques

Act
Scene
Enjambment
Punctuation
Listing

## Form techniques

Dialogue
Monologue
Soliloquy/ aside
Stage directions
Props
Plot
Character
Playwright
Prose/verse
Fiction
Non fiction