

Roseberry Primary School – Curriculum planning

Lead Question: Who was William Shakespeare?

National Curriculum driver: History

Rationale statement

This unit will give children an opportunity to find out who William Shakespeare was and why he was famous. Children will use different sources to find out about his life and what life was like when he was alive. We will compare aspects of life such as leisure activities, housing, clothing and food. Children will find out why he is still famous today. Children will investigate the Globe Theatre and we will discuss how we still know about Shakespeare today.

Skills

Chronology

Demonstrate an awareness of the past, using common words and phrases relating to the passing of time, begin to use dates in a broad chronological framework.

Historical terms – develop and use a range of historical vocabulary.

Historical enquiry – ask and begin to answer questions about past events, understand some ways we find out about the past, use sources to show understanding of events, communicate understanding of the past in a variety of ways.

Interpreting history – identify ways the past is represented

Causes and consequences – recognise what happened as a result of people's actions and events

Similarities and differences – identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods

Significance – talk about why William Shakespeare was important.

Fieldwork opportunities:

End point

Class assembly for parents.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/famouspeople/william_shakespeare/

<http://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/william-shakespeare>

<http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/playground/exploring-shakespeare>

<http://www.dkfindout.com/uk/music-art-and-literature/shakespeares-globe/william-shakespeare/>

Q1: What can we learn from a picture? (Historical enquiry and interpreting history)

Look at a selection of portraits of Shakespeare. Children to work with a partner to say three things they have noticed and three questions they would like to ask about the picture. Collect the ideas on the board and discuss them together. Do you think he looks the same in each picture? Why? Why not? Why are there no photographs of him? Talk about when Shakespeare was alive and present this information on a timeline, linking in Grace Darling and now.

Children to do their own charcoal sketches of Shakespeare for display.

Art link – discussion about a painting.

Q2: Who was William Shakespeare? (Historical enquiry)

Use the above links to find out about who Shakespeare was, when he lived and why he is famous. When we learnt about Grace Darling, lots of the children thought that she only rescued the people so that she could become famous. Ensure that children realise Shakespeare didn't write his plays for the sole reason of becoming famous. Talk about why he might have decided to become a writer.

Create a fact file together about Shakespeare's life including a family tree.

Q3: Where did he live?

Show children pictures of buildings in and around Stratford linked to Shakespeare and tell the story of each one. Place Stratford on a map. What can you see that is different about these buildings to the houses we live in today? Children may notice the wood and the thatched roofs.

[Art link – create a collage of one of the buildings linked to Shakespeare in Stratford.](#)

Q4: What was life like for William? (similarities and differences)

Link this back to Grace Darling's life without electricity. Close all of the curtains and light a candle so that children start to understand what life was like without electric lights.

How did he write? Show children a variety of writing implements. Can they sort them into ones Shakespeare might have used and ones that we use today. e.g. typewriter, quill, chalk and slate, biro etc.

Use the above websites to research life in Tudor times. Is there anything the same? Would you have liked to have lived in Tudor times? Why? Why not?

[Link to DT – cook a Tudor recipe.](#)

Q5: How did he become famous? (causes and consequences)

Use websites and books to find out what Shakespeare did. Show some of the stories he wrote. Choose a short cartoon film of one of his plays e.g. Romeo and Juliet. Read some of the actual language he used. How is it different to the way we speak today? Investigate the theatres Shakespeare's plays were performed in. Not a lot of people could read and write in Shakespeare's time, so the Globe Theatre hung different coloured flags to let people know when a play was going to be performed, and what kind of play it was going to be (if it was sad or funny).

Q6: How is he remembered today? (significance)

A lot of the language we use today was invented by Shakespeare. Choose some familiar idioms and read them out. Do children know what any of them mean? Maybe play 'Swift or Shakespeare' where children are given lines and they have to guess whether they were written by Taylor Swift or Shakespeare. Look at modern day versions of film posters. Why do you think people still want to see them now when they were written so long ago?

[Art link - Design your own £5 note and say why you think William should be on it.](#)

Curriculum drivers

World of Work – job of a writer or an actor.

Live Well, Live Long – fire safety, link to the fire at the Globe Theatre and how fires can be avoided and what to do if there is ever a fire at home or school.

Place in the World – maps of Stratford and the surrounding villages, e.g. Temple Grafton where he was married.

Safety Net – staying safe online (review this after Online Safety training)