

Introduction to Shakespeare Notes

Student Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Directions: As you listen to the lecture and view the Power Point, fill in the appropriate blanks. Please follow along.

Big Bill the Bard Himself:

*Shakespeare was baptized on _____ and died on _____. These dates matter--by knowing when an author lived, you can recognize what historical events may have affected them.

*Shakespeare is responsible for writing _____, _____, and _____. He was an incredibly prolific (meaning active or productive) writer.

*Shakespeare's plays have been performed _____ than those of any other playwright. His work has been translated into every major spoken language!

A Little Linguistics:

*Here is a testament to how influential Shakespeare is; he is responsible for inventing over _____, many of which are still commonly used.

*Shakespeare was able to be creative with the English language because _____ and _____ had not been standardized yet. An author could make up his/her own system to a much greater extent than today.

*Shakespeare's _____ were printed _____ by members of his company.

*Shakespeare's quartos were printed _____, but are frequently considered _____ as their printing was not directly supervised by Shakespeare himself. In fact, many scholars believe the quartos were simply poorly remembered versions of Shakespeare's plays.

Elizabethan Social Structures:

*Shakespeare's plays were _____ despite the fact that we now consider them to be examples of "high literature".

*Elizabethan society functioned in a _____ which was more of a _____ than _____ system. This meant that there was little, to no, "upward mobility"; if you were born a laborer you would never become a noble.

*Where _____ in the Globe Theater (Shakespeare's theater) denoted (revealed) your _____. Laborers, known as "groundlings", stood, nobles were in the galleries and came to see and be seen.

*Queen Elizabeth I was an _____ and was believed, by the Anglicans, to be _____ on Earth.

What are you for, *Romeo and Juliet*?

**Romeo and Juliet* is one of Shakespeare's plays based on the myth _____ and on the narrative poem *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet* which was itself from an Italian author. Thus, we cannot fully credit Shakespeare for the story, but we can credit him for the language.

**Romeo and Juliet* takes place in _____ century _____ and _____ which were city-states in what we now call Italy.

* The play contains _____ on several levels. First, it was directly discussing the nature of Italian society during the late medieval period. Second, it was a safe way for Shakespeare to comment on the ugly results of the recent English conflict between the Catholics and the Anglicans (Protestants).

Additional Notes: