



# Intro to Shakespeare



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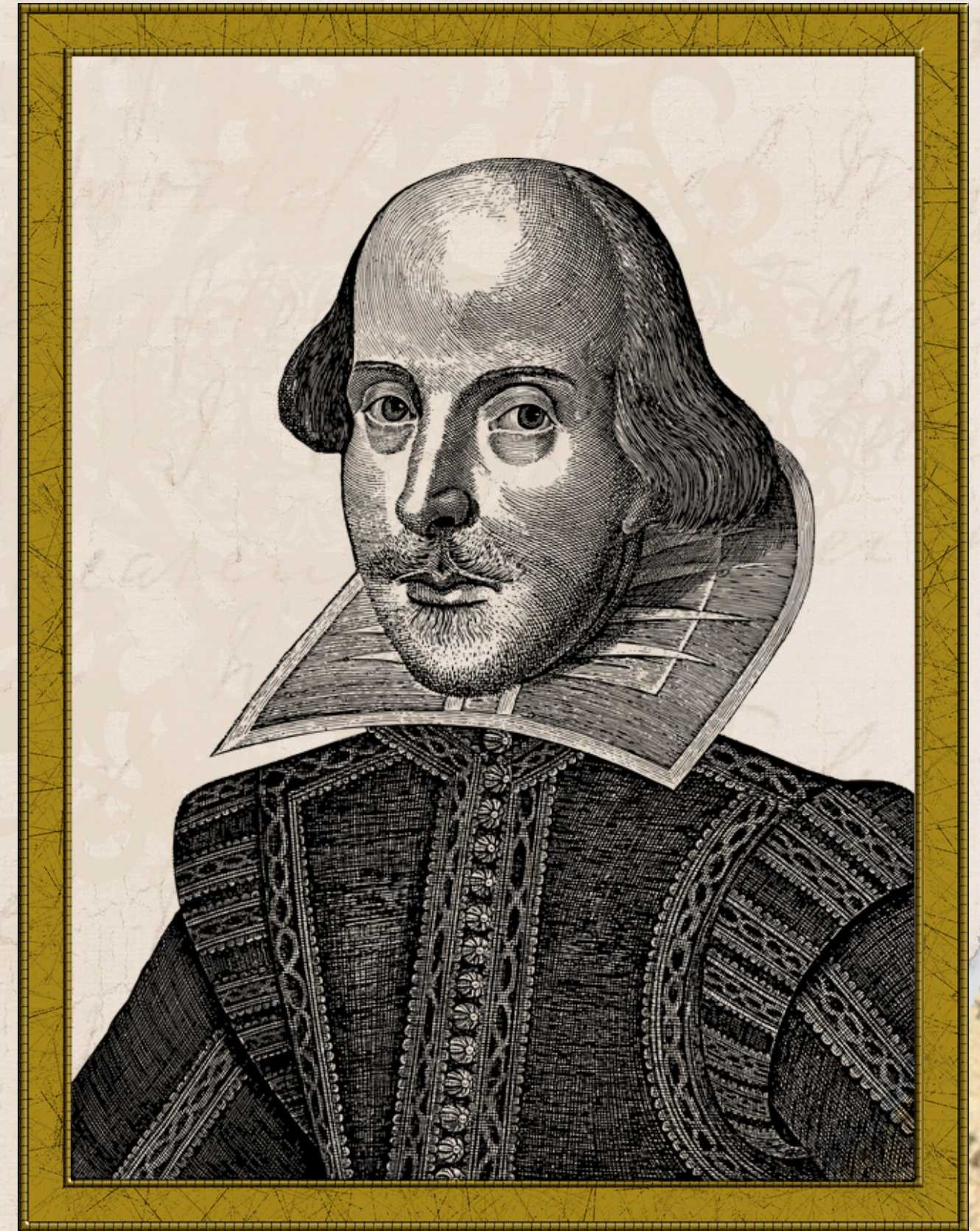
**03** The Language of Shakespeare

- How to read a play
- How to read Shakespeare
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# Who was William Shakespeare?

- Born in April 1564
- Thought to be one of the greatest playwrights in history.
- Wrote approximately 38 plays, 154 sonnets, and two long narrative poems.
- Plays are known for their complex characters, intricate plots, and beautiful language.
- Known for: "Romeo and Juliet," "Hamlet," "Macbeth," and "Othello."
- Not much is known about his personal life, which has led to a lot of speculation and debate among scholars and fans.





# Why is Shakespeare important?

- influenced a lot of the English language
  - correct spelling; compound words; suffixes/prefixes
- performed his plays in front of royalty
- started political & societal discussions
- established a lot of themes we see/use today
  - love; coming-of-age; dramatizing history





# Movies inspired by Shakespeare



## Hamlet

The entire plot of The Lion King derives from Shakespeare's play "Hamlet"



## Romeo and Juliet

Many stories with "star-crossed lovers" who cannot be together because of a feud or some other reason comes from Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet"



## Othello

While the story of Aladdin isn't exactly Shakespeare, Iago is one of the characters in the play "Othello" and is the 'bad guy' immediately telling us the parrot was never going to be a good guy



# Words we use today because of Shakespeare

He invented over 1700 words

<b>admirable</b>	"All that glitters is not gold."	<b>bedroom</b>	"Wild-geese chase"	<b>lonely</b>
<b>barefaced</b>		<b>excitement</b>		<b>manager</b>
<b>belongings</b>		<b>fashionable</b>	"A laughing stock"	<b>satisfying</b>
<b>dawn</b>	"As good luck would have it"	<b>generous</b>		<b>useful</b>
<b>hostile</b>	"Break the ice""	<b>informal</b>	"In a pickle"	<b>Gossip</b>



# How to read a play

## ACT I

### SCENE 1

*The football-club locker-room. The locker-room is dark and empty. The main lights are switched on. OLD JOHN and TONY enter stage right. OLD JOHN is walking with the help of a stick.*

OLD JOHN      New paint job is it?

TONY            New paint. New benches. New lockers. Even got new soap for the showers.

OLD JOHN      *(Sits on a bench)* I don't recognise anything anymore. Except the smell.

TONY            Don't suppose that ever changes.

*(BRIAN enters stage left. BRIAN is wearing a tracksuit. He's been on a run and looks flushed; out of breath.)*



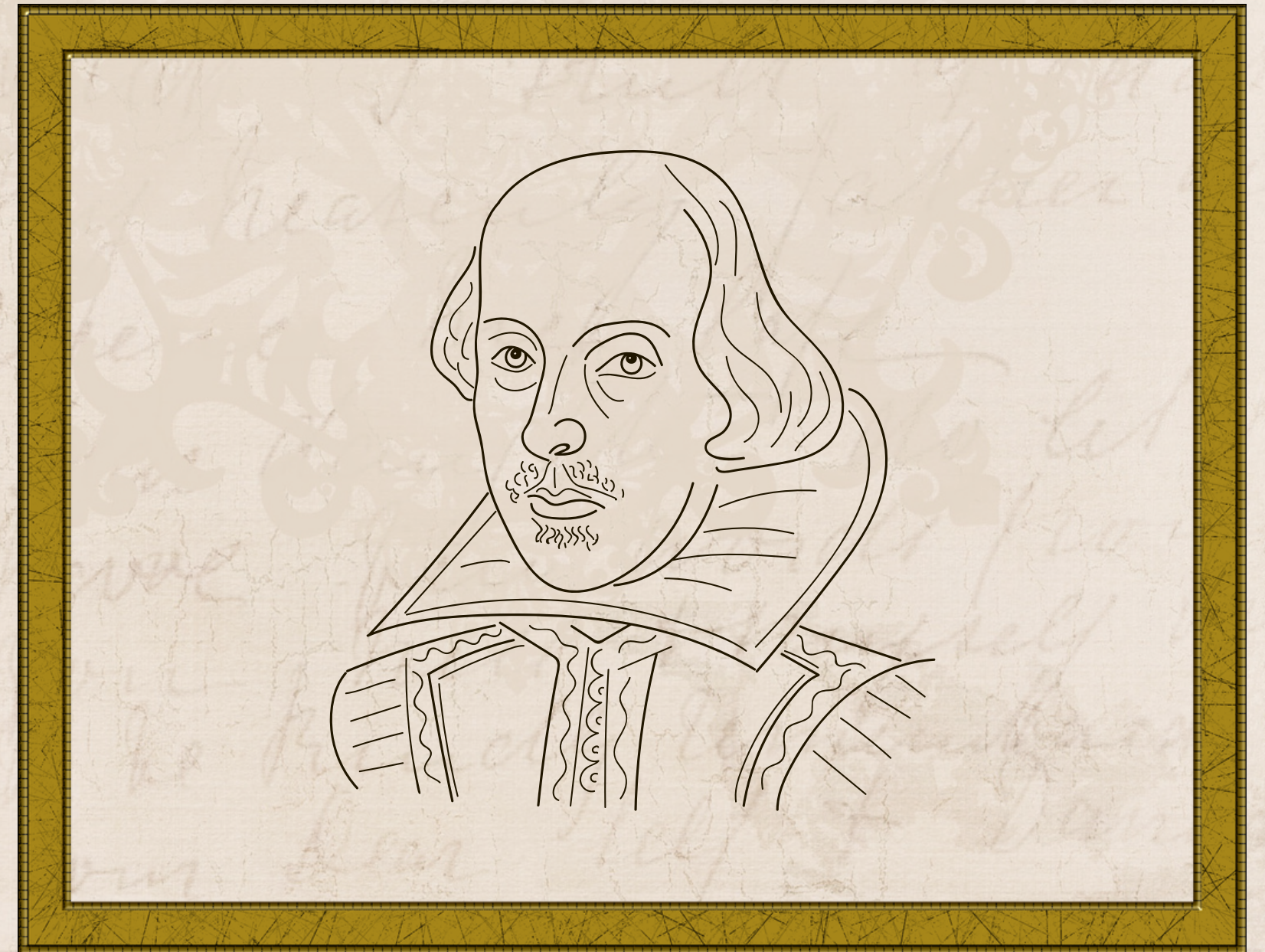
### **Remember:**

- "Thee" = "you."
- "Thou" = "you."
- "Thy" = "your."
- "Hath" = "has."

### **He changes up grammar to fit the rhymes/meter**

- Nouns or adjectives used as verbs
- Verbs and subjects which don't agree
- Omitted or implied words
- Word endings such as "-ly" applied inconsistently
- Tricky sentence construction.
  - For instance, where we say "John caught the ball," Shakespeare might write "John the ball caught," or even "The ball John caught."

# **How to read Shakespeare**



**It can be difficult, I promise I won't let you be totally lost**



# A note on meter: iambic pentameter

meter refers to the pattern of syllables in a line

iambic: An unstressed/stressed pair of syllables is known as  
an **iamb**

**Penta** means five → think “pentagram,” a five-sided figure in math,  
(an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable)

but SOFT | what LIGHT | through YON | der WIN | dow BREAKS

da DUM | da DUM | da DUM | da DUM | da DUM

Examples:

I ate my sister's soup, and it was good.  
I wish that you and I were in Japan.





# How are we reading Shakespeare?

## **No Fear Shakespeare!**

We will be using a version that has the original Shakespearean text on one side, and a modernized version of the text on the other side

## **If there's time:**

I want to show you performed versions of the show so you can experience it the way you are meant to!

