Saying goodbye

People didn't start saying goodbye until the early 1800s. In Shakespeare's time, the usual way of leaving someone was to say '**farewell**', or '**fare you/ye well**', with '**fare thee well**' as a more intimate alternative.

Another way was to use a French word, '**adieu**' (pronounced 'ad-yoo') - especially if you were going away for a long time. This is how Juliet bids farewell to Romeo, after their first meeting:



Did you know?

The word 'goodbye' used to be a sentence: '**God be with you**.' Shakespeare's characters use a similar expression: '**God bye**' or '**God bye you**'. If you want to add an extra note of care and concern to your 'goodbye', then instead of 'God bye ye', say 'rest you merry' (rest meant 'stay').

TRY THIS!

Write all the words you can think of that you might use to say goodbye. You can include Shakespeare's words and other languages too!

So, how shall we part from each other, after reading Will's words? A friendly way is to use the verb *commend*, which adds a note of 'kind regards' to a farewell. Here's a 'goodbye' used by a Merchant in *The Comedy of Errors*:

'I commend you to your own content.'

He means 'I wish you everything that you would wish for yourself'.

And that is our wish to you!
Happy word-warrioring, brave
Word Warrior of Will!

Well Done!

You have completed all the activities and you are now a

WILL'S WORD WARRIOR



If you enjoyed this booklet and want to find out more about Shakespeare, then go to our website at: www.shakespeareweek.org.uk and click on Kids' Zone, where you will find lots more fun things to do. If you want to read some of Shakespeare's plays and stories then you could check out Marcia Williams' retellings at www.walker.co.uk. Marcia did all the beautiful drawings in this booklet.

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WILL'S WORD WARRIORS

VOLUME II

CHAT LIKE SHAKESPEARE



This warrior booklet belongs to:

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SHAKESPEARE WEEK

Text and activities provided by Professor David Crystal and Ben Crystal.
Illustrated by Marcia Williams.

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WILL'S WORD WARRIOR

Hail, youngling!

Shakespeare's plays are full of people talking to each other – they're full of conversations! The characters tell each other their hopes and dreams, their plots and plans, and reveal their thoughts and feelings. And they also pass the time of day in casual chat – just as we do today.

But our language has changed in the past four hundred years, so if we want to chat like Shakespeare's characters did, we need to know some of the words and phrases they used.

In this booklet we'll introduce you to FIVE things that happen when we have a conversation.

- We need to greet each other. How did Shakespeare's characters say 'hello'?
- We need to listen to each other. How did Shakespeare's characters pay attention?
- It's good to be nice to each other. How did Shakespeare's characters show they were being polite?
- We can also be rude to each other. How did Shakespeare's characters make it clear they were not being polite?
- And then we need to leave each other. How did Shakespeare's characters say goodbye?

If you use some of the ideas in this booklet when you talk to your friends, you'll eftsoons get an idea of what a Shakespearian conversation sounds like.

Good fortune, friends!



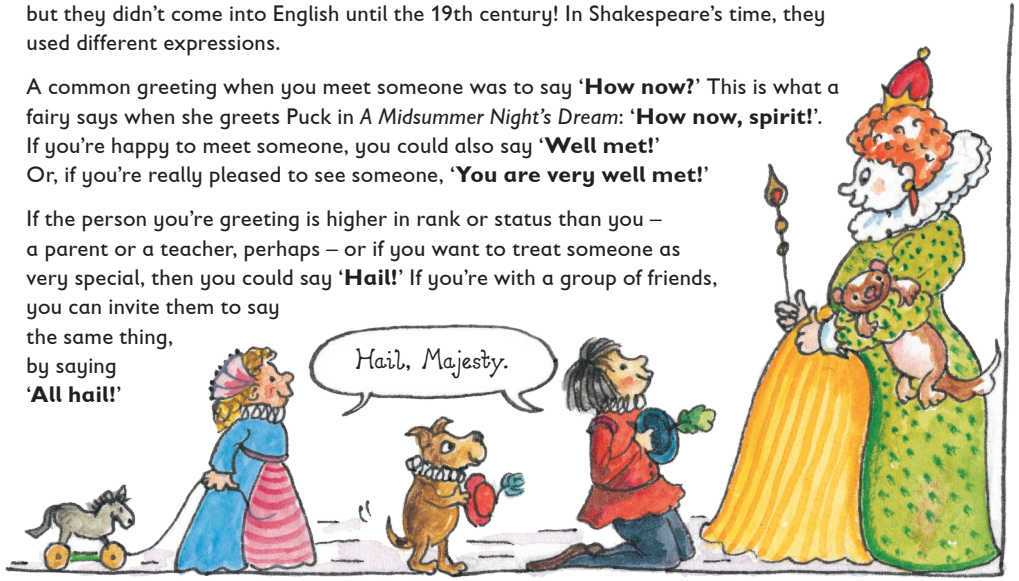
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Saying hello

Today 'Hello' or 'hi' are two of the commonest ways we have for greeting someone, but they didn't come into English until the 19th century! In Shakespeare's time, they used different expressions.

A common greeting when you meet someone was to say '**How now?**' This is what a fairy says when she greets Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: '**How now, spirit!**'.
If you're happy to meet someone, you could also say '**Well met!**'
Or, if you're really pleased to see someone, '**You are very well met!**'

If the person you're greeting is higher in rank or status than you – a parent or a teacher, perhaps – or if you want to treat someone as very special, then you could say '**Hail!**' If you're with a group of friends, you can invite them to say the same thing, by saying '**All hail!**'



Time of day

We usually say 'good morning'. Shakespeare would also have said good '**dawning**', '**good day**', or '**good morrow**'. You could add words to it:

Good dawning to you

Give you good morrow

The good time of day to thee



Thee was the informal way of saying 'you'; Shakespeare's characters would use 'you' to important people, and 'thee' to friends.

Once the sun goes down, we say 'good evening'. Shakespeare would have said '**good even**', or would shorten it to '**good e'en**' (pronounced 'een'). But here's the interesting thing: in his day, you could greet someone with '**good e'en**' any time after 12 o'clock!

TRY THIS!

Improvise scenes where people greet each other. In the first, you're meeting one of your friends. In the second, you're meeting the mayor of your town. Act them out, or draw them if you prefer.

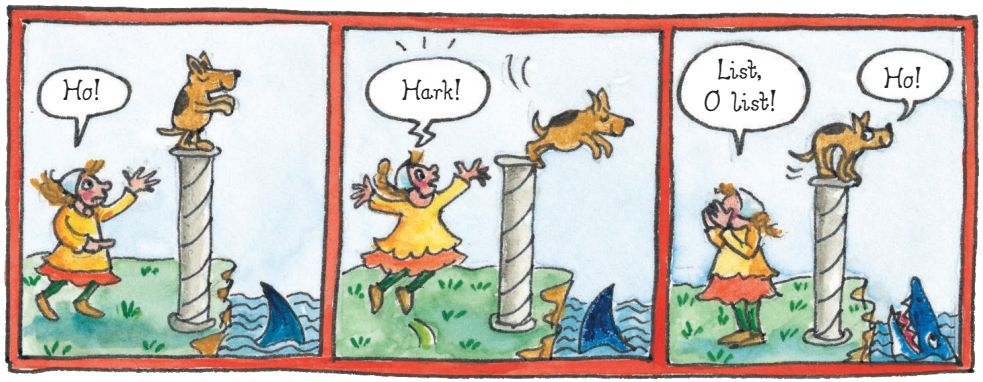
Paying attention

Imagine that you want to start a conversation with someone, but first you need to attract their attention. In Shakespeare's day, the easiest way was to say '**Ho!**' as when Lady Capulet asks Juliet if she's out of bed yet: '**Ho, daughter! Are you up?**'

Some people do still say that, but these days 'hey' is much more common.

Now imagine that you're talking to someone, and you want them to pay special attention to what you're saying. Today we might say something like 'Now listen to me' – but Shakespeare often used the word '**mark**'. When the ghost of Hamlet's father speaks to his son, he begins: '**Mark me**'. And later in the play, the maddened Ophelia tells everyone to listen to her song: '**Pray you, mark!**'

Another useful word was '**hark**'. You could say '**hark you!**' Or, if you're talking to a lot of people, '**hear ye!**'



And, as today, you could just say '**listen!**' – but Shakespeare also used a shortened form: '**list!**' When Hamlet's father is about to say what happened to him, he says this three times: '**List, list, O list!**' – he really wants Hamlet to listen to him carefully!

TRY THIS!

Here's some lines of Puck, the tricksy fairy. He's warning his master Oberon (the King of the Fairies) that daylight is approaching, and as spirits of the night they must be gone.

'Fairy king, attend, and ___ :
I do hear the morning lark...'

Puck is speaking in poetry, with seven syllables in every line, so which of these words would fit? Speak Puck's lines out loud, and try fitting each word in the gap. Tick the word or phrase that feels right to you.

- ☐ listen
- ☐ hear me
- ☐ mark
- ☐ hark you

Being polite

Asking

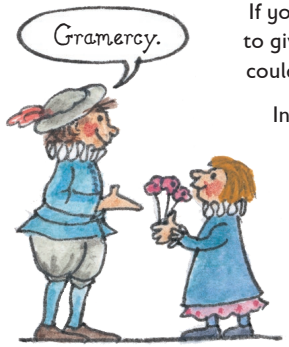
How do you ask for something politely? When Shakespeare's characters ask things, they have lots of ways of asking politely, especially if they want permission to do something. For example, they would say things like '**please you**', '**I beseech you**', or '**by your leave**'.

The commonest was '**prithee**' – short for 'pray thee'. It could be used on its own, or you could say '**I prithee**'. In *The Tempest*, the old councillor Gonzalo tries to comfort King Alonso, who thinks his son was drowned when their ship was wrecked (not knowing that the spirit Ariel saved them all). Alonso tells Gonzalo to be quiet with the words '**Prithee, peace**'. A few lines later, Gonzalo tries to give more advice, and this time he's told even more strongly to stop talking: '**I prithee, spare**!' – **spare** means 'stop'.



Can you feel the difference? If someone says to you 'Shut up!' it could sound quite rude. It doesn't sound quite so rude if they say 'Please shut up'. It's the same with **prithee**. King Alonso is very upset, but he's still trying to be polite to Gonzalo.

Thanking



If you time-travelled back to when Shakespeare was alive and you wanted to give thanks you might say 'thank you' but to be extra-polite then you could use a word from French: '**gramercy**' – short for 'grant mercy'.

In *The Merchant of Venice*, the old man Gobbo meets Bassanio. Gobbo's going to ask if Bassanio will hire his son, so he greets Bassanio very politely. Bassanio responds just as politely, and asks Gobbo what he wants:

Gobbo: **God bless your worship!**

Bassanio: **Gramercy. Wouldst thou aught with me?**

Aught meant 'anything'.

Saying sorry

How about if you want to say you're sorry? Today, people say things like 'I beg your pardon' or 'I apologise'. Or you could just say 'sorry' – but we've only used this word as an apology since the early 19th century!

Shakespeare's characters have a more fun way to apologise. They say '**I cry you mercy**', or just '**cry mercy**'. This doesn't mean they'll burst into tears! Cry meant 'call for' or 'beg for'.



Being impolite

Wouldn't it be lovely if people were nice and polite to each other all the time? But sometimes things don't work out that way. People can get impatient, irritated, cross and angry. So how did Shakespeare's characters express their feelings when they felt like this?

One of the commonest ways was to exclaim! Exclamations like '**fie**' – pronounced to rhyme with 'my' – could be used if you wanted to tell someone you're feeling cross about something they've said.

You could say '**fie**' just once, or several times – or say '**fie on you**'. You could also use 'fie' against yourself. 'Oh fie!' you might shout, if you accidentally dropped something precious.

Two other exclamations that Shakespeare liked to use both have a lovely sound to them: '**pish!**' and '**tush!**' Try them out loud now – aren't they great sounds?



You can use '**pish**' and '**tush**' when you don't like what someone says to you, or when you don't believe what they say. Can you write some exclamations into the speech bubbles above?

In *Hamlet*, the soldiers on the battlements of Elsinore Castle tell Horatio that they've seen a real ghost. He doesn't believe them. In fact, when they're waiting for the ghost to appear, Horatio is so certain that they won't see anything that he exclaims twice!: '**Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.**'

TRY THIS!

Act out or draw a scene in which one character says something truly unbelievable to a group of listeners. Give the listeners some Shakespearian exclamations as part of their reply. You could work in a group and take turns to say something utterly unbelievable!

BIGGER INSULTS



Now, if you need something a little stronger and you want to tell someone that they're doing something you don't like then you might need some other suggestions…

Shakespeare's characters spend a lot of time insulting each other, and calling each other names. Here are some of the things they say:

'**I am sick when I do look on thee!**'

'**I scorn you, scurvy companion!**' (Scurvy meant 'disagreeable')

'**More of your conversation would infect my brain!**'

And if you want to end a conversation, or tell someone to 'go away', then say '**go your ways**'. Rosalind uses it twice in *As You Like It* when she tells Orlando to leave: '**Ay, go your ways, go your ways**'. If you want to be really rude, then use the informal thy – and say '**go thy ways**'.

Here's an insult generator.
Start with thou - the informal word for 'you' - then choose one word from each column.

Thou...		
mouldy	thrice-double	ass
frothy	beef-witted	clotpole
lumpish	beetle-headed	coxcomb
puny	dizzy-eyed	minnow
reeky	flap-mouthed	lackey
saucy	idle-headed	varlet
weedy	toad-spotted	rogue

TRY THIS!

Organise an insult competition – the World Insult Olympics! Appoint someone to be the judge. When the insulting is over, everyone must say to each other '**Peace to all this assembly**'.

As the insult competition comes to a close – or as you leave class today – tell each other what Mark Antony says in *Julius Caesar*: '**Friends am I with you all, and love you all.**'

Using these words in an everyday situation is a useful way to become more familiar with Shakespeare – but perhaps don't call too many people '**puny beefwitted rogues**'…