Find the phrases

An **idiom** is an everyday expression which says something in an interesting way. Here are some of the idioms that Shakespeare **coined** (invented):

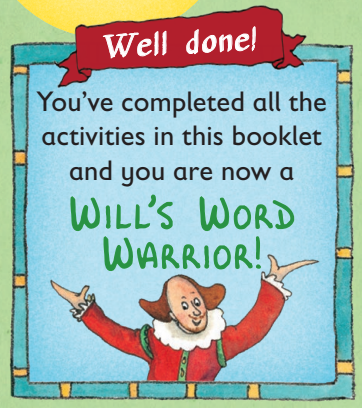
Phrase	When could you say it?	Who first said it?
with bated breath	when you hold your breath in an anxious or excited way	Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*
a tower of strength	to describe someone who gives great comfort and support	King Richard in *Richard III*
good riddance	if you're really glad to see someone leave or something unpleasant go away	The warrior Patroclus in *Troilus and Cressida*
heart on your sleeve	when you are being honest	Iago in *Othello*
a laughing-stock	to describe someone who is a source of mockery	Sir Hugh Evans in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

TRY THIS!

Here is a selection of idioms that you'll find in Shakespeare's works. Can you draw lines to join the words that go together? The first one has been done for you:

bated	**stock**
tongue	**riddance**
cold	**room**
elbow	**tied**
fancy	**circle**
full	**paced**
lie	**free**
good	**breath**
snail	**low**
laughing	**comfort**

Challenge yourself to find out what these idioms mean and try to write three or four sentences that include one of them.



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. Head to **www.Everyday-Shakespeare.com** for more lines of Shakespeare you can use everyday from David and Ben Crystal.

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WILL'S WORD WARRIORS

VOLUME III

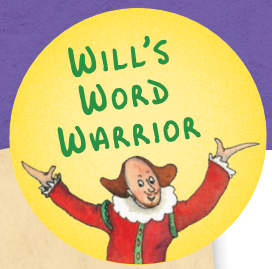
FUN WITH SHAKESPEARE'S WORDS



This warrior booklet belongs to:

.....

Activities provided by Professor David Crystal and Ben Crystal.
Illustrated by Marcia Williams.



Greetings youngling!

Will Shakespeare liked to write lots of poetry. Think of poetry as feelings and ideas organised into little parcels of language, called **poems**. As well as using poetry to write his plays, he wrote 154 little love poems called **sonnets**. Sonnets are short (14-line) poems that usually rhyme. Shakespeare's sonnets don't have names, but instead are given numbers.

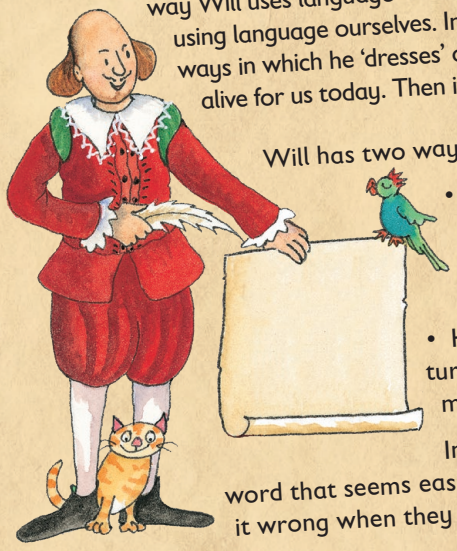
In one of the sonnets (Number 76) Will Shakespeare says he wants to find new ways to write about the person he loves:

'Know, sweet love, I always write of you...
So all my best is dressing old words new'

In the second line, rather than talking about what to wear, Will is using the word **dressing** to mean 'cover up', or 'make pretty'. Also, there seems to be some missing words. Try reading the line again this way:

All my best (writing) is dressing (up) old words (in) new (clothes)

Taking familiar words and using them in new ways is a great way of thinking about the way Will uses language – and about the way we can be creative about using language ourselves. In this booklet we'll explore some of the ways in which he 'dresses' old, familiar words, and makes them come alive for us today. Then it will be your turn!



Will has two ways to 'dress' words:

- He makes new words from old words, like turning the word **plump** into **plumpy** (both words are used to describe something having 'a full, rounded shape').
- He uses old words in new ways, like turning **ear** into a verb: I **eared** her (which means, 'I listened to her').

In the first activity we'll investigate an old word that seems easy to understand – though most people get it wrong when they first come across it!

But as one of **Will's Word Warriors**, we know you won't fall into that trap!

Good fortune, friends!

Making you think

Will Shakespeare often wrote things that apply to today just as much as they did 400 years ago!

Have you ever been frightened by a shadow? Draw a picture of a bush that's shaped like a fierce animal.

Scary

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Duke Theseus reflects on how powerful the human imagination is, and how innocent objects can easily scare us:

'In the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush supposed a bear?'

Power

In *King Henry IV Part II*, the King acknowledges that anyone in power will struggle to sleep sometimes, and says:

'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.'

TRY THIS!

Timon invites all his friends to a meal in *Timon of Athens*. His friends all tell him that he is being too kind to them, but he replies: **'We are born to do benefits.'**

We're only alive to be kind to each other, he means.

Think of five benefits you could offer to five people you know.

-
-
-
-
-



New words out of old

When Will was at school, he had classes on **grammar** – the structure of how languages work, and especially how words can be grouped into different types (nouns, verbs, adjectives and so on). One of the most dramatic ways in which he makes old words into new ones is by changing their type. He particularly loves to turn a noun into a verb.

At the end of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Octavius Caesar has won the war. He arrives at Cleopatra's court, and speaks to her very kindly and sweetly, but Cleopatra doesn't trust him at all. After he leaves, she tells her maid-servants:

'He words me, girls, he words me.'

Here the noun 'word' has been turned into a verb, and means 'to try to persuade someone with fancy words'.

Earlier in the same play, Antony is losing the war. As a defeated soldier, he might be put on display in Rome, and he asks his servant:

'Wouldst thou be windowed in great Rome?'

Here the noun **window** has also been turned into a verb.

TRY THIS!

This page is full of words, but can you **word** someone? Have fun making up a few lines to persuade someone to help you do a job you don't want to do.

TALK ABOUT THIS!

You may already be doing it!

- Have you ever told someone to **leg it** – 'to run away quickly'? Or do you know people who **text** each other on their phones? These are nouns (leg and text) being used as verbs ('to leg it', 'to text') in just the same way. Can you think of any other examples? Write some of them here:

- Have you ever been 'verbed'?



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The parts of your body

Shakespeare loved turning the parts of the human body into verbs.

In *Hamlet*, the young prince welcomes a group of actors who have come to Elsinore Castle to perform a play. Hamlet tells them how to perform a speech, and he warns them not to **mouth it** – to say the lines in an exaggerated or artificial way. Try reading the words on this page out – but mouth them!

And in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, the Gaoler's Daughter is unhappily wandering in the forest and says she doesn't care **'if the wolves would jaw me'** – what do you think she means?

Cleopatra describes her hand as a hand **'that kings have lipped'** – that is, **kissed** (it was a sign of respect to kiss the hand of someone you are meeting).



YOUR TURN!

Write a sentence to show these body-part nouns used as verbs. Some of them are quite often used in today's English.

elbow

eye

shoulder

Old words made new

Will Shakespeare often shows us how we can express everyday thoughts and feelings in a vivid and interesting way.

Imagine a situation when you're doing something you really don't want to be doing, and someone comes along and offers to help. Use these words to say thank you!



Thank you

At the beginning of *Hamlet*, the guards change on the battlements of Elsinore Castle. The soldier going off duty is delighted, and says to his replacement: **'For this relief much thanks.'**

See if you can learn this line and wish someone goodnight tonight using these words.

Good night

In *Julius Caesar*, the conspirators have been plotting, and Brutus's servant has fallen asleep. But Brutus doesn't mind, and says to the sleeping boy: **'Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber.'** It's a poetic way of telling someone to 'sleep well'.

In *The Tempest*, the drunken butler Stephano wonders how Trinculo managed to escape from the wrecked ship, and this is his reply: **'I can swim like a duck.'**



TRY THIS!

What do you think Shakespeare meant by the words in these scenarios? Talk to someone about what you think. Write a short story or draw a scene to illustrate one of them.

'Better three hours too soon than a minute too late.'

'Mine eyes smell onions, I shall weep anon*.'

'Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast.'

*anon means 'soon'

Wherefore read this booklet?

The word 'wherefore' looks just like where – this often makes people think the word is asking a question about where something is. But it doesn't mean 'where' at all. It means 'why'.

The most famous example of its use is in *Romeo and Juliet*. Juliet has fallen in love with Romeo at a party, and has found out that he's a member of the Montague family – and her family hates the Montagues!

After the party, she steps out onto a balcony overlooking her garden, and wishes Romeo had some other name:

'O Romeo, Romeo! – wherefore art thou Romeo?'

She's saying, 'why are you called Romeo?' She wants him to have another name (that her family don't hate) which would make life so much easier!



But Romeo has been listening and calls up to her. Juliet is surprised, and uses the word again:

'How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?'

In other words, 'How did you come here, tell me, and why (have you come here)?'

TRY THIS!

Draw a scene where we see Juliet on her balcony, dreaming up silly alternative names for Romeo Montague. OR write a few lines where someone asks you for help with a tricky task – but your answer must include 'Wherefore?'.