

Would you like to come to Stratford-upon-Avon?

READING

15 ES Read the text about Stratford-upon-Avon and answer the questions.

Welcome to Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace of William Shakespeare

Stratford is a town, small in size but big in history and interest, of just over twenty thousand inhabitants. Set in the beautiful Warwickshire countryside, on the river Avon, it is one of the most important tourist destinations in the U.K. with easy road, rail and airport access. Centuries, from the Medieval Times, stand side by side as if time has stopped. So, wandering

through its streets, you get a taste of Old England.

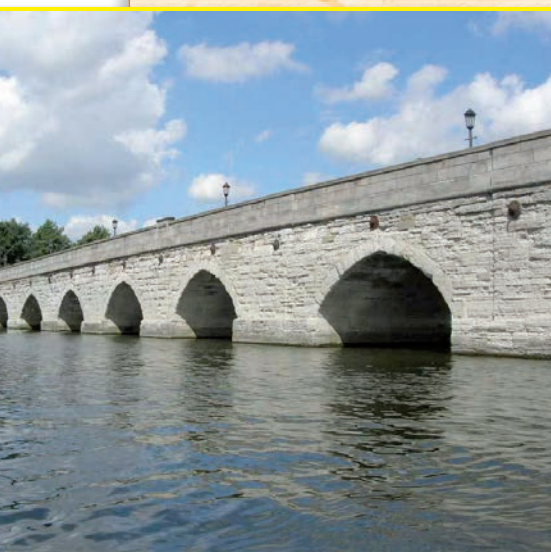
You can't miss visiting the houses and places in or near Stratford connected with William Shakespeare and his family. They offer a unique experience of the Shakespearian world in which the famous poet and dramatist was born, lived and died.

The Royal Shakespeare Company is the centre of the Shakespearian universe. Here are the finest actors and directors working in some of the best theatre space in the world. The Royal Shakespeare Company has three theatres, each with its own programme of drama: ancient, classic or modern. One of the theatres, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, and the surrounding site is going to be transformed into the finest modern playhouse for Shakespeare in the world. Stratford is not only for Shakespeare lovers or theatregoers. The town has a very rich programme of events and activities: music in the parks, river



▲ **Royal Shakespeare Theatre**

racing, river cruising, walks along the river or you can simply relax. Using the Stratford district as a base, you can enjoy the delights of the surrounding counties of Oxfordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucester. What about visiting the Cotswolds to the South, Worcester to the West and Warwick Castle, the most beautiful Medieval castle in England, to the North? They are all within an hour's journey from Stratford.



◀ **Avon river**

Shakespeare's Birthplace ▶



1. Where is Stratford-upon-Avon?
2. How can you travel there?
3. Why do so many people visit it?
4. Is it a medieval town?
5. What can you visit in Stratford about Shakespeare?
6. Where can you see a performance of one of Shakespeare's plays?
7. What is the Royal Shakespeare Theatre going to become?
8. Apart from going to the theatre, what can you do in Stratford?
9. What are the counties around Stratford?
10. What can you visit within an hour's journey from Stratford?

wander = vagabondare
get a taste = assaporare
river cruising = crociere sul fiume



LISTENING

16 **2.20** Listen to a tourist guide. He is talking about the houses and the places connected with Shakespeare's life. Tick the wrong information or the information the guide doesn't give.

1. Shakespeare's Birthplace:

- a. Shakespeare was born here in 1564.
- b. Descendants of Shakespeare lived there until the 19th century.
- c. The house doesn't contain any pieces of furniture.

2. New Place:

- a. It's the place where Shakespeare died.
- b. You can visit the rooms of the house.
- c. There's a well-kept garden in Elizabethan style.

3. Anne Hathaway's cottage:

- a. Anne Hathaway was Shakespeare's wife.
- b. Shakespeare didn't like living there.
- c. It's a typical Medieval building.

4. Holy Trinity Church:

- a. It's one of the most beautiful cathedrals in England.
- b. Shakespeare got married in this church.
- c. Shakespeare is buried here.



READING AND SPOKEN INTERACTION

17 Work in groups of three. Read this lyric from the play *As You Like It*, which Shakespeare composed thinking of his Stratford, a town in the country. With the help of a dictionary, try to understand the words you don't know. Then, in turn, answer the questions. Discuss your opinions, giving reasons.

It was a Lover and his Lass

a lyric from As you Like it

By William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green corn-field did pass,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that life was but a flower
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And, therefore, take the present time
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
For love is crowned with the prime
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.



- 1. Who are the main characters of the lyric?
- 2. How are they feeling?
- 3. What is the season of the lyric?

- 4. What are the main aspects of this season?
- 5. The spring time is the time of sounds. What are the sounds in the lyric? Who are the sounds from?
- 6. What are the poet's feelings about his town?



WRITING

18 Write a letter to your penfriend. Invite him/her to visit your town: describe some of its most interesting places, talk about the people and suggest what you can do together.