

# SHAKESPEARE

## Scenery, Stage Properties and Costumes

### Task 1 VOCABULARY

Match the words and phrases on the left with those on the right so that they are the same or similar in meaning.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To be accustomed to something</li><li>2. To expect</li><li>3. Props</li><li>4. Audience</li><li>5. Household</li><li>6. Much ado</li><li>7. Fleece</li><li>8. Imperial crown</li><li>9. Neptune's fork</li><li>10. Armor</li><li>11. Not to mind</li><li>12. Scenery</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Not to be bothered, not to think something is a problem</li><li>B. Something that the emperor wears on his head</li><li>C. To be used to something</li><li>D. To think something will happen</li><li>E. Things on stage</li><li>F. People who watch a play</li><li>G. People who live together in one house</li><li>H. A lot of fuss, concern</li><li>I. Something the god holds in his hand</li><li>J. What soldiers wore for protection in the old times</li><li>K. the woolen coat of a domestic sheep or long-haired goat</li><li>L. the painted scenes or hangings and accessories used on a theater stage</li></ol>
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### Task 2 SPEAKING

In pairs, answer the questions below.

1. Do you remember the last show you went to see in a theatre? What was it? What were the scenery, stage props and costumes like?
2. What do you think the scenery, stage props and costumes were like in Elizabethan theatre?

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## Scenery, Stage Properties and Costumes

### Task 3 READING

Read the text below and write 10 questions based on the text. When finished, work in a pair with a friend. Ask each other questions and answer your friend's.

Today's audiences are accustomed to watching movies and television programs in which sets and costumes are realistic. If the story takes place in a park, we expect the background scenery to be of a park, and if the story takes place during the 1700s, we expect the sets, properties, and costumes to be from that time.

Shakespeare's plays were written for stages on which there were few, if any, sets or properties - props, as they are now called - so the actors had to tell the audience where the story took place. The members of the audience, for their part, had to listen to where the setting of the play was and use their imaginations. For example, just before *Richard III*, they would be told the setting was a street in London. In *Romeo and Juliet* the chorus, in a prologue, tells the audience the play is about two households in Verona. In *Much Ado About Nothing* Leonato says, "Don Pedro . . . comes this night to Messina." If he is coming to Messina, it is where the action of the play is going to take place.

A list of properties for a play might be as simple as one golden fleece, one bay tree, three imperial crowns, a ghost's crown, a box to be used as a table or chair, and Neptune's fork and garland. Except for these, there might be no scenery at all. As far as costumes were concerned, they could be almost anything the actor wanted. If the play was about Romans such as Julius Caesar or Titus Andronicus and the actors wore armor, the armor they wore would probably have been sixteenth century armor rather than Roman armor.

This creates what is called an anachronism, an error in time, with the actors wearing costumes from one time period while the play is set in another. Shakespeare's audience did not mind this, however, because even though the plays were set in many different periods of time and many different places, the plays were really more about the England of his time than anything else.

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#### **Task 4 SPEAKING**

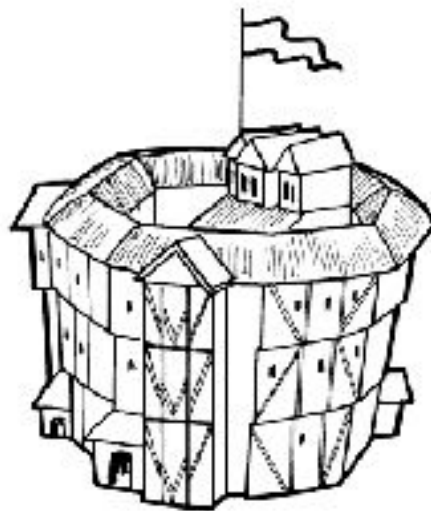
**All the world is a stage:** Think about what props you would need to stage Romeo and Juliet. Get into groups of three or four and brainstorm on the properties you think would be absolutely necessary for the play to be successful.

Make a list and compare it with others in the class.

#### **HOMEWORK:**

Go to the website below and find out more:

<http://www.britainexpress.com/History/elizabethan-theatre.htm>



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