



In the time of Elizabeth I, theatre-going was very popular. Plays were performed without scenery, and sometimes a signboard was carried across the stage to indicate where the action was supposed to take place. The better-off people sat on the balcony, while the poorer people, called groundlings, paid a penny to stand around the stage, drinking beer and smoking pipes, which were passed from hand to hand, booing if the play was bad and cheering or crying if they liked it.

perform: aufführen
scenery: Kulissen
signboard: Schild
indicate: angeben
stage: Bühne
violence: Gewalt
bloodshed: Blutvergießen
entertain: unterhalten
audience: Zuschauer

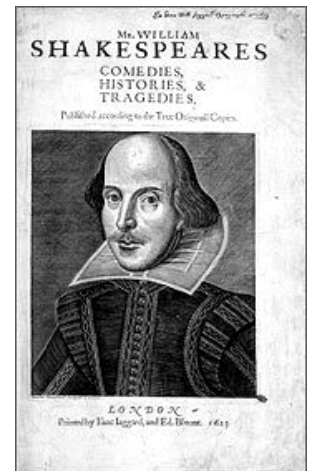
What people expected was a good mixture of violence, bloodshed and romance, and, last but not least, a good deal of fun, so that even in tragedies, clowns used to appear on the stage between the acts of the play to entertain the audience with their jokes.

All these elements were integrated in Shakespeare's plays, so they became very popular – and they still are.

Some plays by Shakespeare:

- Romeo and Juliet
A Midsummer Night's Dream
The Merchant of Venice
Hamlet
Macbeth
The Tempest
As You Like It

William Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon and died in 1616. When Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway he was 18 and she was 26. They had 3 children. Shakespeare not only wrote plays; he also performed on stage as a professional actor in London.



Translate:

- 1. Die Schauspiele von Shakespeare waren sehr beliebt.
2. Die Zuschauer jubelten den Schauspielern zu. (Past progressive tense: ing-Form)
3. Shakespeare selber erschien auf der Bühne.
4. Die Leute erwarteten Spaß – sogar in Tragödien.
5. Clowns unterhielten die Zuschauer.
6. Sie standen Bier trinkend herum und sie buhten, wenn das Spiel schlecht war.