

Fun Facts About Shakespearean Music!



1. Music was a BIG part of Shakespeare's plays!

In Shakespeare's time, music wasn't just something you listened to - it was part of everyday life, especially in the theater. In many of his plays, musicians played live music onstage to set the mood or help tell the story. There were songs for love, sadness, magic, and even jokes!

Guess what? The fairies in A Midsummer Night's Dream sing to make people sleep!



2. No microphones, no speakers - just real instruments!

There was no electricity in the 1500s, so musicians used acoustic instruments like:

- Lutes (a bit like small guitars)
- Recorders (like a wooden flute)
- Drums
- Viols (like a soft-sounding cello)

Activity: Draw your own Shakespeare-style band using these instruments!



3. Even kings and queens loved music!

Queen Elizabeth I, who ruled when Shakespeare was writing his plays, loved music. She even played the lute and virginal (a type of small piano). Music was played at royal parties, festivals, and big celebrations.

*Imagine you're at a royal banquet what kind of music would be playing? Fast and fun?
Slow and fancy?*



4. Some characters SING in the plays!

Shakespeare sometimes wrote songs right into the script. Characters like jesters, fairies, or magical beings often sang. These songs helped tell the story or added emotion just like in a musical today!

Example:

"O Mistress Mine" is a love song sung in Twelfth Night. Want to sing it? Ask your teacher or grown-up to help you find the tune!



5. People clapped and danced, just like today!

In the audience, people loved the music. Sometimes they even clapped along or danced if the music was lively enough! The theater was noisy and fun - not quiet like some theaters today.

Would you rather dance to a Shakespearean jig or a modern pop song? Why?



Bonus Fact:

Some musicians added sound effects to the plays like thunder made by rolling a cannonball or wind sounds using a spinning drum!

Now You Know!

Shakespearean music was magical, emotional, and fun - just like his plays.

Next time you hear a piece of old music, imagine it playing in a candle-lit theater with people laughing, clapping, and maybe even dancing!

Pronunciation Guide for Old-Fashioned Words

Say these like a Shakespearean superstar!

Word	How to Say It	What It Means
Thou	"thow" (rhymes with <i>now</i>)	You (when talking to one person)
Thee	"thee" (rhymes with <i>tree</i>)	You (also used for one person)
Thy	"thigh" (like your leg!)	Your
Thine	"thine" (rhymes with <i>mine</i>)	Yours
Art	"art" (like making art)	Are
Dost	"dust" (but with an "o")	Do
Doth	"duth" (rhymes with <i>moth</i>)	Does
Hark!	"hark"	Listen! (Like "Hey, pay attention!")
Alas!	"uh-LASS"	Oh no! or That's sad!
Fare thee well	"fair thee well"	Goodbye

Try This!

Say this sentence out loud:

"Hark! Dost thou know where thy book is?"

It means: *"Hey! Do you know where your book is?"*

Greensleeves

Sheet Music

Greensleeves

www.singing-bell.com



The image shows a musical score for the song "Greensleeves" in G major and 6/8 time. It consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. The lyrics are: "A - las, my love ___ you do me wrong ___ to cast me off ___ dis-". The second staff starts with a measure rest of 4 measures, then continues the melody. The lyrics are: "cour - teous-ly For I have loved you well and long De - light - ing in your com-". The third staff starts with a measure rest of 8 measures, then continues the melody. The lyrics are: "pa - ny Green - sleeves was all my joy Green - sleeves ___ was my de - light". The fourth staff starts with a measure rest of 13 measures, then continues the melody. The lyrics are: "Green - sleeves was my heart of gold, ___ and who but my la ___ dy Green - sleeves".

Em D C
A - las, my love ___ you do me wrong ___ to cast me off ___ dis-

4 Bm Em D C B
cour - teous-ly For I have loved you well and long De - light - ing in your com-

8 Em G D Em Bm
pa - ny Green - sleeves was all my joy Green - sleeves ___ was my de - light

13 G D Em B Em
Green - sleeves was my heart of gold, ___ and who but my la ___ dy Green - sleeves

Greensleeves

Lyrics

1 . Alas, my love, you do me wrong,
To cast me off discourteously.
For I have loved you well and long,
Delighting in your company.
**Greensleeves was all my joy
Greensleeves was my delight,
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
And who but my lady Greensleeves.**

2. I have been ready at your hand,
To grant whatever thou wouldst crave;
I have both wagered life and land,
Your love and good-will for to have.
**Greensleeves was all my joy
Greensleeves was my delight,
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
And who but my lady Greensleeves.**

3. I bought thee petticoats of the best,
The cloth so fine as it might be;
I gave thee jewels for thy chest,
And all this cost I spent on thee.
**Greensleeves was all my joy
Greensleeves was my delight,
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
And who but my lady Greensleeves.**

4. Thy smock of silk, both fair and white,
With gold embroidered gorgeously;
Thy petticoat of sendal right,
And these I bought thee gladly.
**Greensleeves was all my joy
Greensleeves was my delight,
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
And who but my lady Greensleeves.**

5. Well I pray to God on high,
That thou my constancy mayst see,
And that yet once before I die,
Thou wilt vouchsafe to love me.
**Greensleeves was all my joy
Greensleeves was my delight,
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
And who but my lady Greensleeves.**

6. Greensleeves, now farewell, adieu,
God I pray to prosper thee,
For I am still thy lover true,
Come once again and love me.
**Greensleeves was all my joy
Greensleeves was my delight,
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
And who but my lady Greensleeves.**

Hey Ho, Nobody Home

Sheet Music

Hey, Ho, Nobody Home

www.singing-bell.com

①

Hey, ho, no - bo - dy home

②

Meat nor drink nor

4

③

mo - ney have I none

Yet will I be mer - ry, ve - ry, mer - ry.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff contains the first two phrases of the song, with circled numbers 1 and 2 above the first and second measures respectively. The second staff starts with a measure number '4' and contains the final phrase, with a circled number 3 above the first measure of this staff. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Lyrics

Hey, ho, nobody home
Meat nor drink nor money I have none.
Yet will I be merry, very merry