

# Famous British authors

Engelsk



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## William Shakespeare (1,86 ns)

You have probably heard the name William Shakespeare before. But do you really know who he was? Shakespeare is one of the greatest English writers of all time. In fact, he is often called the national poet of England.

Shakespeare was born in 1564 in a small English town called Stratford-upon-Avon. His exact date of birth is unknown, but he was baptised on 26 April 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, was a councillor and a successful glove manufacturer. His mother, Mary Arden, came from a wealthy farmer family. While Shakespeare grew up, he went to the local school called King's New School where he was taught Latin and grammar.

When Shakespeare turned 18, he married Anne Hathaway, who was 26 years old at the time. They had three children together. Shortly after the wedding, they had their daughter Susanna, and two years later they had a set of twins named Hamnet and Judith.

In the following years, Shakespeare went away to London to pursue a career in writing. He began writing plays for the London theatres in the 1590s. His plays were performed by a group called the Lord Chamberlain's Men which soon became the leading theatre company of London. When the new King, James I, ascended to the throne, he sponsored Shakespeare's theatre group, and they changed their name to the King's Men. They later built their own theatre called The Globe, which was located next to the river Thames in central London.

As the theatre company grew and became more acclaimed, Shakespeare slowly became a wealthy man. He continued writing plays and also took part in them himself as an actor.

Throughout adulthood, Shakespeare divided his time between his career life in London and his family life with Anne and their children back home in Stratford. Shakespeare died on 23 April 1616. He was 52 years old, and to this day, no one knows how or why he died.

During his life, Shakespeare was very productive and wrote many kinds of texts, including 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long poems, and a few other verses. He is probably best known for his many plays. He wrote comedies, tragedies, and histories (plays about historical figures/ events). Among his best known plays are, for example, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Macbeth.

Shakespeare's language is full of symbols, wordplays, and ironic comments about the contemporary world. Sometimes, he even made up his own words that still exist in the English language today. Hidden underneath the stories of Shakespeare's plays, he often includes his own thoughts on the role of the theatre and what it is like to be a writer.

Furthermore, Shakespeare is the man behind many unforgettable and famous sayings such as Hamlet's "To be or not to be? That is the question."

Shakespeare's works have had a massive influence all over the world and his texts are still widely read, interpreted, cited, and performed today. This means that you can run into Shakespeare in schools, films, theatres, songs, dictionaries, and many other places.

## Charles Dickens (0,64 ns)

Charles Dickens is a famous English author from the 19th century. Many of his books are still read today and have also been adapted into movies and plays.

Charles Dickens was born in England in 1812. He had 7 siblings and it was difficult for his parents to earn enough money for the family. This meant that Charles had to leave school early and started working in a factory when he was only 12 years old to help his parents. Later, Charles got a job as a reporter for newspapers, which became his way out of poverty and the beginning of his life as an author.

He started writing sketches and books. One of his most famous novels, *Oliver Twist*, is inspired by his own childhood and tells the story of an orphan boy living in the streets. This novel made Dickens world-famous. In the following years, Dickens wrote many books, such as *A Christmas Carol* and *Great Expectations*. He often used experiences from his own difficult childhood, writing about people who were struggling to find their way in a dark and brutal world.



## Oscar Wilde (0,6 ns)

Oscar Wilde was born on 16th October 1854. He was an Irish poet and dramatist, and one of his best known plays is the farce "The Importance of Being Earnest". Other notable works include "The Picture of Dorian Gray", "The Happy Prince" and "The Canterville Ghost". He is also known for quotes such as "I can resist everything except temptation" and "In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it."

He was born in Dublin, but went to Oxford University, where he became known for his great wit and his unusual appearance. He got married in 1884 and had two sons. The marriage was not a happy one as Wilde was a homosexual and later went to jail for "indecent behaviour". After he went to prison, he was declared bankrupt. He came out of prison a broken man. He was sentenced to hard labour, and that destroyed his health. He died not long after his release.

To this day, Oscar Wilde and his works still influence popular culture.



## The Canterville Ghost (0,49 ns)

The story about the Canterville Ghost by Oscar Wilde was first published in 1887. It is about the ghost of a person who had committed a terrible crime when he was alive – he killed his wife. His wife's brothers decided to punish him, and they locked him up in a room to starve to death. While this is all very sad, the story itself is actually a comedy. The ghost haunts the estate Canterville Chase for several hundred years – and he is very good at it. People are terrified, and that makes him proud of himself.

However, things change when an American family moves into the estate - and hard times come to the ghost. They are not afraid of him, and the family's two twins torment him. In the end, he receives help from the girl in the family, Virginia, and he is then able to find peace at last.

