**Early years**

William Shakespeare was an English poet, playwright and actor. He was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon. His father, John Shakespeare, was a successful artisan. William was the third child in the family. His parents had eight children in total. William Shakespeare went to Stratford grammar school.

In 1582 Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, who was the daughter of the local landowner. At that time Shakespeare was 18 years old and Anne was 8 years older than him. In 1583 Anne gave birth to their daughter Susanna. In 1585 the couple had twins – son Hamnet and daughter Judith. Unfortunately, Hamnet, the only son of William Shakespeare, died at the age of 11.

**Life in London**

Later Shakespeare moved to London. He lived and worked in this city for many years. During that time Shakespeare wrote most of his plays and became a successful playwright.

In 1599 a theatre was built on the south bank of the River Thames. It was named the Globe. This was the theatre where Shakespeare's company performed. Work at the theatre made Shakespeare a wealthy person. He was not only a playwright, he also took part in theatrical performances.

**Later years**

Several years before his death Shakespeare moved to Stratford. He died on 23 April 1616. Some research shows that at the end of his life he was in poor health.

**Shakespeare’s works**

Among his works there are such masterpieces of the world literature as "Romeo and Juliet", "A midsummer night's dream", "Othello", "King Lear", "Hamlet" and many others. Apart from that Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets.

William Shakespeare's influence extends from theatre and literature to present-day movies, Western philosophy, and the English language itself.