**mellt.de – Infotexte: Teaching Shakespeare in Context**

**Shakespeare in context – times, life, stage, language**

1. **Kurzer Infotext für OER-Übersicht**

OER-Sammlung aus Unterrichtsmaterialien und Arbeitsblättern, die in zentrale Themen rund um Shakespeares Leben, Zeitalter, Sprache und Bühnengestaltung einführen. Die Materialien bieten abwechslungsreiche Aufgabenformate und Shakespeares Werk in den Kontext seiner Zeit einzuordnen und können als Einführung oder als begleitende Unterrichtsstunde bei der Behandlung / Lektüreeinheit eines bestimmten Theaterstücks verwendet werden oder auch als eigenständige Mini-Unterrichtseinheit zu Shakespeare.

Lerngruppe: Sekundarstufe I/II

This collection of OER materials introduces Shakespeare's life, historical era, language, and stagecraft through engaging worksheets and varied task formats. The resources help contextualize Shakespeare's work within his times. They can be used as an introduction before studying specific plays, as a while-reading lesson when focusing on a particular play, or as a stand-alone mini teaching unit on Shakespeare.

**Target group:** Lower and upper secondary level

1. **Längerer Infotext**

The embedded lesson plans and worksheets were created in a seminar on “Teaching Shakespeare” by students studying for their Master of Education at Kiel University in the winter term 2024/25. Lesson flow chart and material set of different worksheets is part of the download package for each group material which also includes all the worksheets, expectation grids and further materials.

These materials provide teachers:

* with a selection of ready-made or easily adaptable worksheets and teaching scenarios that contextualize William Shakespeare and his works through his times, life, language and stage practice.
* short lesson flow charts give an overview of phases and activities to implement when using these worksheets.
* they can be used as an introduction before studying specific plays, as a while-reading lesson when focusing on a particular play, or as a stand-alone mini teaching unit on Shakespeare.

The M.Ed. students were encouraged to make use of AI tools to generate initial ideas for reading comprehension quizzes and for their annotations as language scaffolding if they also created text sheets with extracts from the play for classroom use.

1. **Kürzere Info-Texte für jedes OER-Paket**

Shakespeare in Context: Life 1

**Authors**  
Frankie Arndt & Antonia Richter

**Content**  
In this lesson, students explore Shakespeare’s family background and the key events that shaped his work as a playwright. Activities include a creative “Wanted Poster,” a fun facts worksheet, and a Kahoot quiz for consolidation.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes printable worksheets and quiz link)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Life” by Frankie Arndt & Antonia Richter (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International.

Shakespeare in Context: Life 2

**Authors**  
Johanna Hamdorf, Lara Marquardt & Jacqueline Peters

**Content**  
This set of OER worksheets introduces students to William Shakespeare’s life. After reading a short informational text, students reconstruct a timeline of key events and reinforce their knowledge through a Kahoot quiz. The lesson serves as an engaging first encounter with Shakespeare and his historical background.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes metadata and links to external resources)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Life” by Johanna Hamdorf, Lara Marquardt & Jacqueline Peters (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International.

Shakespeare in Context: Life 3

**Author**  
Madeleine Mörtzschky

**Content**  
This OER lesson introduces William Shakespeare and his cultural significance. Students learn about his biography and legacy through a video, reading text, and comprehension quiz. The material is designed as a foundation before reading one of his plays in class.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes embedded video link and quiz worksheet)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Life” by Madeleine Mörtzschky (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International -International.

Shakespeare in Context: Times 1

**Authors**  
Lasse Gaußmann, Erik Jacobsen, Frithjof Jans & Malte Stötera

**Content**  
This OER material focuses on historical and social contexts of Shakespeare’s life, particularly the impact of the plague on Elizabethan society. Students engage critically by comparing these experiences to the Covid-19 pandemic, developing both language and analytical skills.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes reading text, video link, annotated worksheet, and Kahoot quiz)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Times” by Lasse Gaußmann, Erik Jacobsen, Frithjof Jans & Malte Stötera (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

Shakespeare in Context: Times 2

**Authors**  
Jona Behnke & Lennart Kalke

**Content**  
This lesson introduces students to the social structures and belief systems of the Elizabethan Age. Through a fact sheet, comprehension tasks, and vocabulary support, learners build foundational knowledge for understanding Shakespeare’s plays in their historical context.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes fact sheet, comprehension worksheet, and vocabulary support)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Times” by Jona Behnke & Lennart Kalke (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

Shakespeare in Context: Language 1

**Author**  
V.A.

**Content**  
This OER lesson explores the function of Shakespeare’s language within the theatre context. Students analyze how his words convey stage action, setting, and atmosphere, and apply this understanding to a passage from *Macbeth*.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes vocabulary aids and comprehension tasks)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Language” by V.A. (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International.

Shakespeare in Context: Language 2

**Author**  
Carolyn Block

**Content**  
Students discover Shakespeare’s idioms and their meanings through reading, analysis, and practice tasks. By exploring idioms still used in modern English, learners expand their vocabulary and deepen cultural awareness of linguistic heritage.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes comprehension tasks, solutions, and online quiz link)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Language” by Carolyn Block (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International.

Shakespeare in Context: Language 3

**Author**  
Jana Fehr

**Content**  
In this lesson, students explore idioms coined by Shakespeare that remain in today’s English. Through illustrated examples, creative texts, and comprehension tasks, they learn about non-literal meaning and deepen their language awareness.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes AI-generated illustrations, stories, and quizzes)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Language” by Jana Fehr (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International.

Shakespeare in Context: Stage 1

**Authors**  
Annemarie Jessen & Paula Paelke

**Content**  
This lesson focuses on the playhouses of Shakespeare’s time. Students compare historical and modern theatre design and strengthen their reading and media literacy through comprehension and visual tasks.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes visual comparison materials, fact sheet, and reading quiz)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Stage” by Annemarie Jessen & Paula Paelke (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

Shakespeare in Context: Stage 2

**Authors**  
Melissa Schaefer, Jan Schwellnus & Toni Wohlmann

**Content**  
This OER lesson introduces students to the special effects used in the historical Globe Theatre. The unit combines reading comprehension with visual material and annotation activities to foster textual and contextual understanding.

**Format**  
PDF and editable source files (includes AI-generated image, fact sheet, annotations, and quiz)

**License**  
CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International

**Citation**  
“Shakespeare in Context: Stage” by Melissa Schaefer, Jan Schwellnus & Toni Wohlmann (Kiel University / Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, CAU) under CC-BY-NC-SA-4.0-International.