

The Elizabethan Era (1558-1603): A Web Quest



"I may not be a lion, but I am a lion's cub, and I have a lion's heart!"
- Elizabeth I, Queen of England 1558-1603

Introduction: To fully appreciate Shakespeare's works, it is important to learn about the time period in which his works were written. This activity requires students to investigate life during the Elizabethan Era (the 16th century) in England. The investigation will enable students to understand the people, places, and events of the Elizabethan era and, in effect, provide a deeper appreciation of Shakespeare's plays. This activity will also help students understand how society influences literature. As students navigate through the websites provided below, the questions included under each topic heading will serve as guides – it is up to each group to gauge what material is essential and necessary to share with classmates.

Task: Each student will be assigned to a group of at least two members. Each group will investigate a specific topic and may do a presentation to teach the rest of the class about the topic researched. The final product may be a group slideshow created via power point/Prezi/or another alternate presentation format.

Method: Once groups are determined, teacher will assign the topic to be researched to each group. ***The sites listed are suggestions. Each group should determine the validity of the website before utilizing the information.

General Information on Elizabethan Period:

<http://www.elizabethi.org/contents/>

http://www.britainexpress.com/History/Elizabethan_life.htm

<http://www.elizabethan.org/compendium/>

<http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/index.htm>

Topic A: Clothing and Appearance of the Elizabethan Period

What were the typical clothes for people during the Renaissance? What did the upper classes wear? What did the lower classes wear? What were the cosmetics of the era? What were hairstyles like? Are there any elements of dress from that era that are still in use today?

Elizabethan Cosmetics <http://www.elizabethancostume.net/paintedface/index.html>

Elizabethan Hair <http://www2.springfield.k12.il.us/schools/springfield/eliz/hairstyles.html>

Men's Fashion <http://www2.springfield.k12.il.us/schools/springfield/eliz/mensfashion.html>

Women's Fashion <http://www2.springfield.k12.il.us/schools/springfield/eliz/womensfashion.html>

http://www.cwu.edu/~robinsos/ppages/resources/Costume_History/elizabethan.htm

Topic B: Elizabethan Health and Medicine

What were the sanitation/health conditions? What did people do when they fell ill? What were common medical treatments and medicines? What was the Bubonic Plague and how did it affect society?

<http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/elizabethan-medicine-and-illnesses.htm>

<http://www.articlesbase.com/medicine-articles/medicine-in-elizabethan-england-485130.html>

<http://www.william-shakespeare.info/bubonic-black-plague-elizabethan-era.htm>

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/middleages/health.html>

<http://www.swopnet.com/engr/londonsewers/londontext1.html>

Topic C: Youth, School, Entertainment, and Diversions of the Elizabethan Period

What were the forms of popular entertainment during this era? What did people do in their free time? What was a school day like for a student in the Renaissance? Who attended school in this period?

Children and Childhood <http://elizabethan.org/compendium/40.html>

Elizabethan Fencing <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~wew/fencing.html>

Elizabethan Card Games <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~wew/Tattershall-tb/cards.html>

Topic D: Food and Drink of Elizabethan Times

What were the typical foods of the era? Be sure to include meats, vegetables, and fruits. What were typical drinks? What methods were used to cook food? What methods were used to serve food? Did the common people eat the same as the wealthy? Be sure to differentiate in each of the above areas.

<http://www.elizabethi.org/contents/food/> <http://elizabethan.org/compendium/46.html>

<http://www.renaissance-spell.com/Renaissance-Food.html> <http://tudorhistory.org/topics/food/>

<http://www.the-tudors.org.uk/tudor-food-recipes.htm>

Topic E: Elizabeth I and Gender Roles in the Elizabethan Era

When did Queen Elizabeth I come into power? How long was she in power? Who was her father? Who succeeded her? What was her reign like? What was the status/role of women within this era? (Married? Single?) What work did women do at the time?

British History. http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/elizabeth_i_queen.shtml

Elizabeth I, queen of England. <http://www.bartleby.com/65/el/Elizbet1Eng.html>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/elizabeth_i_queen.shtml

Elizabethan women. <http://www.elizabethi.org/contents/women/>

The role of women. <http://www.william-shakespeare.info/elizabethan-women.htm>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/tudors/poverty_01.shtml

<http://elizabethan.org/compendium/9.html>

Topic F: The Elizabethan Theater

What were the various venues at which a play could be viewed? What was the price of admission at the theater? Who went to the theater? How long were performances? How were the actors paid? What type of people could become actors in Shakespeare's day?

<http://www.william-shakespeare.info/william-shakespeare-globe-theatre.htm>

<http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/about-us/history-of-the-globe>

<http://www.shakespeareinamericancommunities.org/education/elizabethan-theater>

<http://www.globe-theatre.org.uk/elizabethan-theatre.htm>