

# Classic LITERATURE

## Shakespeare's Genres

Modern Effects  
of Romance,  
Tragedy, History,  
and Comedy

### Hamlet

The Madness of  
Scandinavia

### Henry V

How the Courage of a  
King Wins a War

### Romeo and Juliet

The Principle of True  
Love and Hormones

### A Midsummer Night's Dream

An Introduction to  
the Mythical Realm



Classic Literature

# Shakespearean Genres

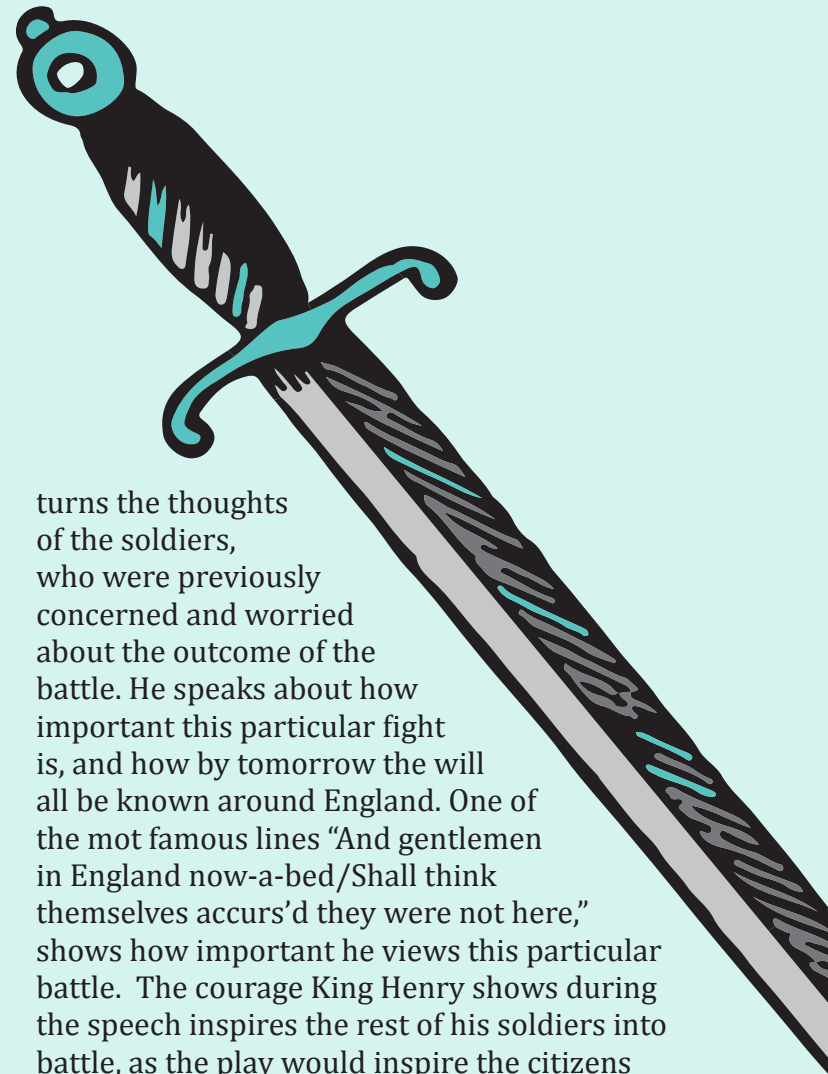
Although writing in every genre, he uses the emotions of characters and conflicts to help make it possible to determine the exact genre in which each play was intended.

## The King Henry the Fifth Histories

Courage is the main influence and overall feeling of Henry V. As a history Shakespeare has made this as close to true life as he possibly could at the time. While a true history of our time would be a nonfiction play or novel, Shakespeare was still writing to please the masses, therefore taking certain liberties with the personal interactions of the King.

The Battle of Agincourt is a well-known part of the Hundred Year's War. A battle which when began, was almost a sure lose for the English, ended in a victory. This turned the war around in favor of the English. At the end of this battle King Henry V married the French king's daughter. All of these events Shakespeare explores in the play, with his own words.

One of the most famous speeches Shakespeare wrote, known as the Saint Crispin's Day speech, is in Henry V. This is one of the most important speeches of the play, directly before the battle. It



turns the thoughts of the soldiers, who were previously concerned and worried about the outcome of the battle. He speaks about how important this particular fight is, and how by tomorrow the will all be known around England. One of the most famous lines "And gentlemen in England now-a-bed/ Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here," shows how important he views this particular battle. The courage King Henry shows during the speech inspires the rest of his soldiers into battle, as the play would inspire the citizens viewing it to support their country.

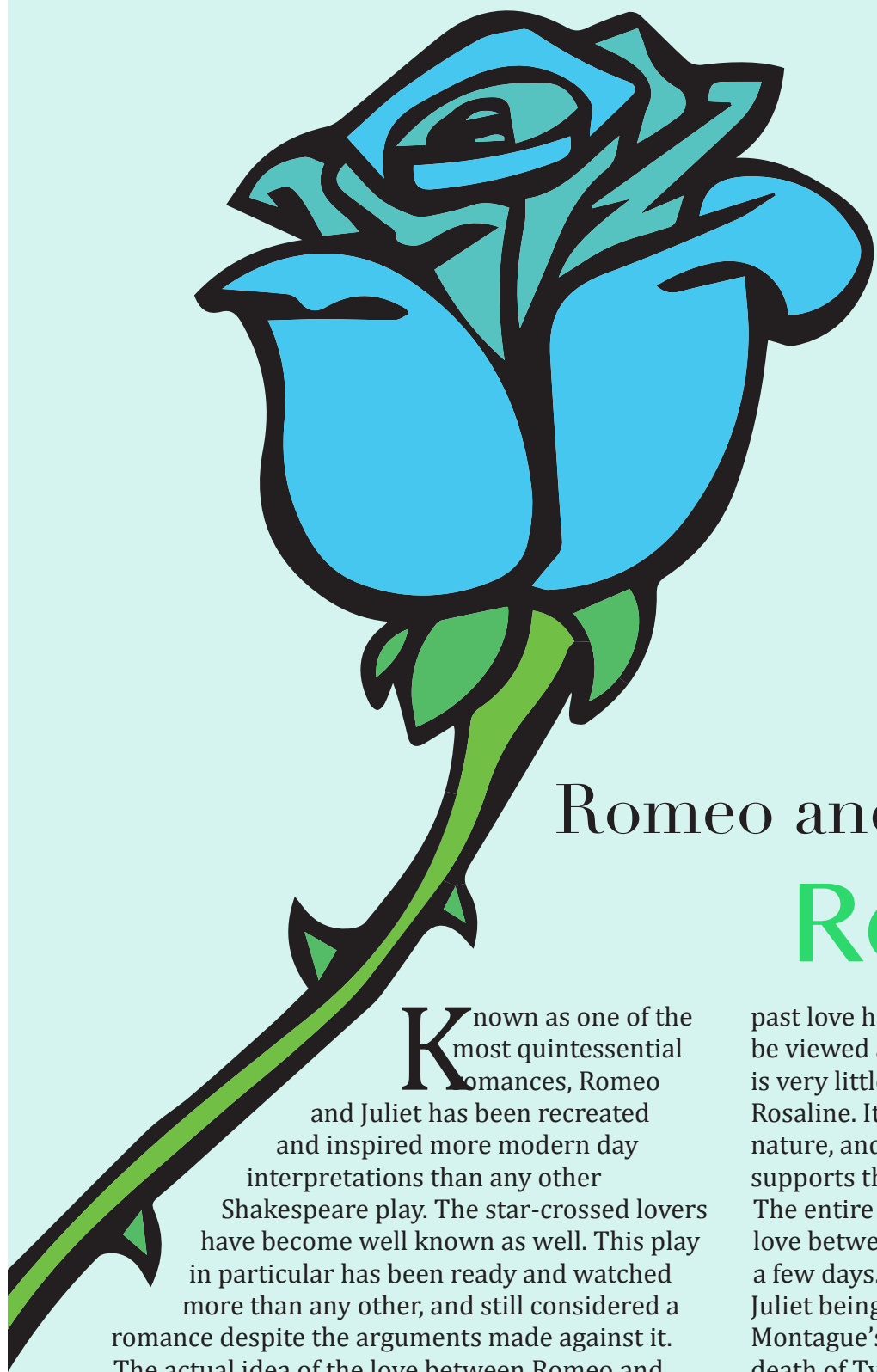


## A Midsummer Night's Dream The Comedies

A Midsummer Night's Dream has a key difference than most comedies, an introduction into the fairy world. These fairies are well fleshed out, main characters in this play, more than simply plot devices, as in others. One of the most well known fairies, and characters in all of Shakespeare, is Puck. His overall demeanor is mischievous, although does not seem to have an dark nature at all. His happiness is infectious throughout the play, even when the rest of the fairy realm is in turmoil, even when he has made a mistaken, even when he is being punished, he makes jokes, laughs, and goes right back to doing what he does best, causing hilarious havoc. Oberon and Titania are not the whole without their counterpart. The king and queen of the fairy realm are very similar in many ways. Their stubbornness and temper is something with causes the overall conflict in their world. It is difficult to make a distinction of who is right and

wrong in their argument. While Oberon eventually will win this battle over the changeling boy, but Titania is not defeated. The driving force of their relationship is a mutual respect and, like Puck, knack for pranks and mischievousness. In the end Titania awakes from her sleep, Oberon explains what he did. She is not mad or revengeful towards him. Instead she even seems amused about what happened, and their fight is over. The fairies add conflict, which drives the play. Without Puck's mistake or Oberon intervening, there would be a shorter story. They add an element of fun and happiness, which is lacking in the main storyline.





## Romeo and Juliet **The Romances**

**K**nown as one of the most quintessential romances, Romeo and Juliet has been recreated and inspired more modern day interpretations than any other Shakespeare play. The star-crossed lovers have become well known as well. This play in particular has been read and watched more than any other, and still considered a romance despite the arguments made against it. The actual idea of the love between Romeo and Juliet is debated. Many readers argue that they are not in fact in love, and cannot possibly be. The argument for this is true love and love at first sight. This is something incredibly difficult to argue, because many people believe neither exists, and unless experienced, love is difficult to describe. Before the play Romeo talks about his love and depression about Rosaline. This is the main cause for him meeting Juliet, and one of the reasons their love is debated. As soon as he sees Juliet this

past love has been forgotten. In many ways this can be viewed as a flaw to Romeo's character. But there is very little background known about him before Rosaline. It is possible that this is very out of his nature, and therefore Juliet is in fact special. Which supports the idea of love at first sight. The entire play is riddled with scenes showing the love between the two, even though it is only over a few days. The stakes in this play are very high, Juliet being forced to marry, the fights between Montague's and Capulet's, banishment of Romeo, death of Tybalt and Mercutio, are all reasons to speed up their relationship, including the thought of love at first sight. Their marriage, and ultimately their death are the main instances of love throughout the play. Although ending in a death, Romeo and Juliet also ends with love.



**B**eginning with a tragedy, Hamlet is a dark play from the first scene. The play delves deeper into dark plots against the prince of Denmark, but also, for the first time Shakespeare beginning to write about an inner turmoil. Hamlet is a misplaced soul. This can be sensed from the first act. His demeanor, character, and actions show that he is neither like his father, nor what his father wanted him to be. Each act new problems affect him.

The question of Hamlet's madness is huge. There is still not one answer to whether he is pretending, or has actually gone insane, or when this happens. It is not hard to imagine Hamlet's cause for madness. His father's death, mother's marriage, uncle's secret, friend's betrayal, girlfriend's suicide and insanity are some of the many things he is trying to deal with. Only a few of these things could cause a normal person to begin to lose their sanity. Even the few comedic elements end tragically with the death of someone Hamlet loves.

As all of these things pile up it's not surprising that the last scene ends in many deaths. Hamlet's death is inescapable at this point. He seems almost completely mad, that even a death is mercy.



## Hamlet **The Tragedies**