

It's possible that this will be the fourth or fifth Shakespeare play you have read. It may also be possible that you were supposed to read one and have avoided it for whatever reason. This unit will not really cover very much about Shakespeare himself. There are some common misconceptions though that seem to have found their way into student beliefs over the years. One has been provided for you. See if you can search for any others based on what you have heard about him.

Misconceptions	Reality
Shakespeare wrote in Old English.	Shakespeare actually wrote in Early Modern English, which is much closer to how we speak today. People in Shakespeare's time were already well beyond Old English, which would have sounded almost as much like a foreign language to their ears as to ours.

As with pretty much everything, you should maintain some degree of skepticism when you hear someone make a claim about Shakespeare that may seem shocking or outrageous. It happens with all famous people. They are often misquoted, misrepresented or misunderstood to fit them into some kind of profile that might be interesting at the time some new article is written.

In this unit we will focus on the play *Othello*. You've just learned about various types of monsters whether they have been created by gods or by science. It also seems that those monsters may behave even worse because of the kinds of responses they receive from others around them. This play is about a monster created through manipulation.

In what ways have you felt manipulated? Can manipulation ever be a good thing? If someone is manipulated to commit a crime does that somehow make them less responsible? What type of punishment should the person manipulating receive, if any?