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# Will's Words: How William Shakespeare Changed the Way You Talk

*Jane Sutcliffe , John Shelley (Illustrations)*

**Will's Words: How William Shakespeare Changed the Way You Talk** Jane Sutcliffe , John Shelley (Illustrations)

When Jane Sutcliffe sets out to write a book about William Shakespeare and the Globe Theatre, in her own words, she runs into a problem: Will's words keep popping up all over the place! What's an author to do? After all, Will is responsible for such familiar phrases as "what's done is done" and "too much of a good thing." He even helped turn "household words" into household words.

But, Jane embraces her dilemma, writing about Shakespeare, his plays, and his famous phrases with glee. After all, what better words are there to use to write about the greatest writer in the English language than his very own? As readers will discover, "the long and the short of it" is this: Will changed the English language forever.

Backmatter includes an author's note, a bibliography, and a timeline.

## Will's Words: How William Shakespeare Changed the Way You Talk Details

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Author : Jane Sutcliffe , John Shelley (Illustrations)

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# From Reader Review Will's Words: How William Shakespeare Changed the Way You Talk for online ebook

## Becky says

First sentence: Dear Reader: We have to talk. I have failed you. I set out to write a book about the Globe Theatre and its great storyteller, William Shakespeare. About how the man was an absolute genius with words and wove those words into the most brilliant and moving plays ever written. But that's just the trouble. You see, I wanted to tell you the story in my own words. But Will Shakespeare's words are there, too, popping up all over the place. It's not my fault. Really. Will's words are everywhere. They're bumping into our words all the time, and we don't even know it.

Premise/plot: Sutcliffe's picture book for older readers does a great job introducing readers to the sixteenth century theatre. And her emphasis on "Will's Words" shows the relevance Shakespeare still has in today's world. It is part narrative. But on each spread, she focuses on words--phrases--Shakespeare either invented himself (coined) OR kept alive (sustained) through the longevity of his plays. She uses the word or phrase in her narrative, and then explains it. Each word is explained and/or defined. Sometimes this includes "what it meant then, what it means now." But she also always includes: WHERE it came from--which play, which act, which scene.

Words include:

for goodness' sake  
what's done is done  
too much of a good thing  
outbreak  
excitement  
of a sudden  
wild goose chase  
fashionable  
money's worth  
hurry  
with bated breath  
a sorry sight  
heart's content  
well behaved  
send him packing  
good riddance  
love letter  
laugh oneself into stitches  
foul play  
make your hair stand on end  
cold-blooded  
hot-blooded  
bloodstained  
dead as a doornail  
seen better days  
into thin air  
amazement

the short and long of it  
not budge an inch  
eaten out of house and home  
green-eyed monster  
household words

My thoughts: I really loved this one. It is for older readers. I don't think the typical preschooler is going to care about the word origin of the phrase "dead as a doornail." But for older students (mid-to-upper elementary on up) what a treat!!! Be sure to watch the Horrible Histories music video about Shakespeare!

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### **Tammy Prater says**

This review originally published at: <http://everydayroads.blogspot.com>

Will's Words: How William Shakespeare Changed the Way You Talk is a beautifully crafted book for children up to about 10 years old. Sutcliffe writes about Shakespeare, his life, his works, and most importantly, his words in a way that is both educational and engaging.

Sutcliffe begins by trying to use her own words to discuss Shakespeare, the Globe Theater and a little bit of London's history, but she quickly finds Will's words cropping up. She decides there are no better words to use than those of the man himself--William Shakespeare. The book alternates between a bit of history using those words or phrases created by Shakespeare and definitions of those phrases complete with the plays they originate in.

Let me also say Shelley's illustrations are fabulous. I found myself getting lost in London, looking at the people, the buildings, the birds.

I believe this book works on a lot of levels, most importantly as an early introduction to the works of Shakespeare and an understanding of the human link to history. Everything comes from somewhere and understanding where these everyday phrases and words originate will put the children who read it on a path towards deeper understanding of history and their place in this world.

I also greatly appreciate that Sutcliffe includes an accurate bibliography in the book, thus exposing children to actual literary and historical scholarship.

Well done!

Will's Words is expected to be published by Charlesbridge in March 2016. Mark your calendars!

Thanks to NetGalley for the review copy.

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### **Calista says**

This book gives a fun little history of the London plays and what life was like back then. It is also telling us phrases that Will either gave us or immortalized. "Wild-Goose Chase" "Too much of a good thing" These all

came from Shakespeare.

The art is lovely and gives the feeling of excitement and crowds. There are so many people in this book.

It's a nice introduction into Will and the world of plays. My niece did enjoy it.

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### **Peg says**

Sutcliffe combines interesting tidbits about Shakespeare's life, times, and playwriting, all while weaving in commonly used, bolded words or phrases attributed to Shakespeare. On the left of each spread is a brief history and descriptions of the times, including life in London and snippets about the theatre: use of only male actors, scarcity of sets or props, gorgeous costumes, types of plays written by The Bard (comedies, tragedies, and history plays), etc. On the right of each double-page spread are text boxes explaining the words or phrases on the opposite page—what they mean, how they are used, and from what Shakespearean play (Act and Scene) they are taken. Familiar phrases include 'for goodness sake,' 'money's worth,' 'a sorry sight,' 'send someone packing,' 'dead as a door nail.' and more. Lively prose moves the facts and explanations along well. Shelley's pen and ink drawings, colored with watercolors, present birds-eye views of London, the playwright at work, Londoners, and cutaways of the Theater and backstage. Fastidiously detailed, they capture large street scenes and individual expressions; readers will return to them again and again, discovering something new each time. The fact that so many of Shakespeare's words and expressions have become "household words" (Henry V, Act 4, Scene 3) is a testimony to him and all his works. In her Author's Notes, Sutcliffe acknowledges the paucity of information about Shakespeare and her love of his words, leading her to alter the book's intended biographical focus. A timeline and bibliography round out this fun and valuable look at Shakespeare. The book will be useful in English, Social Studies, and Art classes or as an introduction to Shakespeare before a visit to the theatre

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### **Annamaria says**

This was a very simple read but also a really interesting one! The art-work was amazing and the final note of the author made me tear up a bit!

I kindly received this book from its publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Nancy says**

Shakespeare changed the way we speak. But do we know the origin of the phrases that have become household words?

It was with great excitement that I opened Jane Sutcliffe's book Will's Words about the phrases and sayings inherited from William Shakespeare. It is beautifully illustrated by John Shelley.

As I was reading the book written for Third and Fourth Grades I was wishing I could have read it to my son when he was that age. He would have loved the detailed illustrations showing London teeming with houses and people, the views of the Thames and London Bridge with boats of all sizes carrying people across the river, the aerial views of the city and The Globe, the crowds with their ruffed neckwear and doublets. There is a great cutaway of the Globe showing all the actors and stage hands putting on A Midsummer's Night's Dream, using trap doors and dangling a fairy over the stage.

And while my son studied the detailed illustrations I would have taught him about the importance of Shakespeare, an introduction to the Bard.

The book opens in 1606, a time when people sought an escape from their daily lives and the theaters offered plays six days a week. Except during an outbreak of the plague when they were shut down. We read about the theater goers, what the experience was like, and about the actors and the stories they told. We learn that Will wrote comedies that made the audience laugh themselves into stitches and tragedies about foul play that made their hair stand on end.

It ends with the publication of the 1616 first Folio, without which Shakespeare's words would have been lost.

Included is an author's note of how she came to write the book, a bibliography and a time line of Shakespeare's life.

The long and the short of it is that you'll get your money's worth out of this book!

NOTE: I used words included in the book Will's Words.

I received a free ebook from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for a fair and unbiased review.

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### **Chris says**

This is more than a book that tells about how many of our everyday word choices and combinations were originally penned by W. S. There are wonderful explanations included for each and the opportunity to read them in context, which is more-than-excellent. It also tells of the times, of the theater, of how it all "worked." You learn lots! And the illustrations are a blast - there's so much to take in as you look and look at the details. Great timeline and bibliography included as well.

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### **Edward Sullivan says**

A fun introduction to Elizabethan theatre and the immense impact Shakespeare had upon the English language.

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### **Kristi Betts says**

During the summer my son took me to New York City specifically to see as many Broadway shows as possible. I had been to NYC one other time, but my trip (planned for over a year) coincided with the first

Stagehands Strike in the union's 121-year history! To say I was devastated is an understatement, but I have always been told things work out the way they are supposed to. I guess this trip proves the point because I had the most fantastic time I could have ever dreamed of having with my son.

While planning the trip he asked me what I wanted to see when we got to New York. I told him the only show I really wanted to see was Something Rotten! and he could choose the rest of the shows. I had only seen a short preview of the show while watching The 69th Annual Tony Awards earlier in the summer, but I was completely taken with the story line, music, and actors from the moment the curtains were raised.

If you don't know about Something Rotten!, and you love musical theater you should check it out. As soon as we left the theater (after staying around long enough to take pictures and get autographs from all of the leads, of course) I downloaded the soundtrack and listened to it all night.

Will's Words: How William Shakespeare  
Changed the Way You Talk  
by Jane Sutcliffe  
illustrated by John Shelley

I bring up this musical because while reading Jane Sutcliffe's Will's Words: How William Shakespeare Changed the Way You Talk my mind kept going back to the theater and the staging of the show. John Shelley's beautiful illustrations provide a wonderful example of the layout of London and remind me fondly of the stage set for Something Rotten! Painstaking detail can be found on each two-page spread. Jane Sutcliffe's creative text tells the story of London and the popularity of the theater while carefully including the phrases Shakespeare originally penned and we now all use routinely. Words and phrases are bold within the text of the story (printed within a colorfully framed box) and then "Will's Words" are defined and cited showing the work in which the words originally appeared. A time line of events from 1564 (the year Shakespeare was christened) to 1997 (the year the modern Globe opened in London) appears at the end of the book along with a Bibliography.

Here are a few of the phrases used within the text:

"for goodness' sake"

"what's done is done"

"wild-goose chase"

"fashionable"

"money's worth"

"heart's content"

"well behaved"

"laughed themselves into stitches"

Not only is this a fascinating look at the influence William Shakespeare has had on the spoken word, it is also a very interesting history of his works and the legacy this master left for us all. I would highly recommend this book for all levels of school libraries, but I think it would have the most impact on high school students as far as understanding the works they are generally required to read during their final years of public school. I believe this could start an interest in Shakespeare's work for younger students if they were to read this book and see how the words and phrases we say and hear have been around for hundreds of years. Will's Words would also be a great gift to any fan of The Bard.

This book will be released on March 22, 2016.

\* To comply with new guidelines introduced by the Federal Trade Commission, Charlesbridge has provided a complimentary electronic copy of Will's Words: How William Shakespeare Changed the Way You Talk for review purposes. My review is in no way influenced by the publishing company and is strictly my opinion.

This review previously published on my blog: <http://texaslibrarylady.blogspot.com/...>

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## **Nancy Kotkin says**

Text: 5 stars

Illustrations: 5 stars

Engaging introduction to William Shakespeare and his profound impact on our modern-day vocabulary. Also discusses the importance of theater as the main source of entertainment in Elizabethan England, hundred of years before television and movies. Detailed illustrations set the location and historic time period. I loved seeing the Globe Theater from all those different angles. Includes a timeline of Shakespeare's life and an extensive bibliography. This informative nonfiction picture book is a fun way to expose children to literature and the arts.

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## **Sue says**

Will's Words: How William Shakespeare Changed the Way You Talk is both a fun and interesting introduction to Elizabethan theater and Shakespeare's place in it. What a fantastic introduction for young adults or older children. The book is set up as a guide to what theater goes of the time experienced and through this guide also introduces us to words and phrases that Shakespeare either used for the first time/created or saved from linguistic obscurity. All of those mentioned in this book are still part of our common speech today. Sutcliffe also provides citations to the specific plays, acts, etc where they can be found.

The illustrations are evocative of what I imagine the original Globe theater and crowd to be: busy, people of many classes, appearing to be a noisy and boisterous atmosphere.

I would definitely recommend this for any older child or young adult interested in the theater in any way (and their adult companions would very likely enjoy it too). There is an accompanying timeline of Shakespeare's life and a biography which appears to be oriented more toward adult works, (though I am not familiar with them all). There are some great books on the list which I plan to read.

A copy of this book was provided by the publisher through NetGalley in return for an honest review.

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## **Tasha says**

Though she set out to write a book about the Globe Theatre and Shakespeare himself, the author was quickly



caught up in all of the ways that Shakespeare has impacted our modern language and wrote the book about the instead. The result is a book that is immensely engaging and great fun to read. It is still in so many ways a book about the bard, his work and his theater, but it is also a vibrant and fascinating book about language and how modern colloquialisms harken back to Shakespeare himself.

Sutcliffe clearly tells the story of Shakespeare and his theater on one part of the page and then in a side note shown on a scroll on the other page she pulls words directly from her explanation and shows exactly how they connect with Shakespeare and his writing. So many of the words are surprising words like “fashionable” and “hurry.” Other phrases have interesting connections like “dead as a doornail” or “green-eyed monster.”

Shelley’s illustrations are playful and vibrant, showing the bustling London streets and the crowded theater jammed with people. Some pages show the Globe Theatre from above while another shows how the stage appeared from the audience on the floor of the theater. Care has been taken with each face even in the crowd, each person reacting in their own way to what is happening in the scene.

This book should generate lots of “excitement” and “amazement” allowing people to read about Shakespeare to their “heart’s content.” Appropriate for ages 8-12.

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### **Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says**

i loved this book! Sutcliffe describes how a Shakespearean play was viewed and performed at the Globe Theatre back in 17th century, and, in the process, introduces us to words and phrases that Shakespeare either invented in or popularized through his plays. Fascinating! I had no idea that so many of the sayings I use today originated with him. She even tells us which play the phrases or words were used in. I enjoyed reading about the audience watching the plays. How, I wonder, did the actors make themselves heard over the noise of everyone talking, coughing, and eating, or the wind blowing if it was a windy day? There was no roof, so architectural acoustics couldn't have come into play. Can you imagine performing during rain or snow? The actors had a roof over their heads, as did the wealthier audience members, but the poorer people had to stand out under the weather. And Sutcliffe mentioned that there were no bathrooms there, so did they just go anywhere, or did they have to go outside to do their business? I'm sure these questions will occur to young readers too.

What I liked best about the book was John Shelley's detailed illustrations. He must have spent hours drawing each crowd scene. He must have studied the clothing people typically wore, and some of the customs of the time. The street scenes have all kinds of little dramas going on. I noticed, however, that he depicted Shakespeare always wearing the same set of clothes, as if that was the only clothing he owned (and maybe it was!).

I think young readers will enjoy this book for the same reasons I did, but I recommend it to readers of all ages. Outstanding!

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### **Sandy says**

This is actually a fairly interesting and informative read for children about play-going and the Globe Theater during Shakespeare's time. The way that it incorporates words and phrases popularized by Shakespeare

makes it even more interesting. My only complaint - and unfortunately it's kind of a big one - is that there are no actual quotes from Shakespeare's plays to give these words context. The play, act, and scene are all cited and a basic description of the plot and how the words are used is given, but I'd really like to also see the actual phrasing so that we can really appreciate the language and the way it is used.

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## **Ami says**

As a Shakespeare lover, this was a delight to read. The illustrations were lovely and quite extensive at times and the information inside the book was delivered in an interesting manner. Not only does the audience learn about phrases that Shakespeare either coined or borrowed and made overwhelmingly popular, but we also learn about Shakespeare's life and the theatre during Elizabethan times.

Overall the book works extremely well in the picture book format. The illustrations give humorous added details to the informative text, while the words give added intellectual heft to the fun drawings. This would be a fun introduction to Shakespeare that even elementary school students could enjoy.

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