Music and dance

From the royal court to the peasant's cottage, music could be heard everywhere in Shakespeare's England. Many people played instruments, and, according to the 1588 book In Praise of Music, workers of all kinds kept up "a chanting and singing in their shops." When people went to see a play, they expected to hear good music. In Shakespeare's plays, there are more than 300 stage directions calling for music. He used it to create atmosphere, just as it is used in films today. Trumpets and drums, for example, were played in battle scenes. Shakespeare also wrote more than 70 songs for his characters to sing.

A spring in your step
Many different dances were popular in Shakespeare's day. The galliard was a lively court dance with springing steps, leaps, and kicks, while the pavane was a stately dance, performed by a row of couples. Using long, gliding steps, ladies and gentlemen advanced, retreated, bowed, and curtseyed. Away from court, people enjoyed less formal dances, such as the wild morris, danced with jangling bells strapped to the legs.

Love song
In Two Gentlemen of Verona, Thurio, who is in love with Silvia, hires musicians to "give some evening music to her ear." They perform one of Shakespeare's many love songs, "Who is Silvia?" A piece of music performed beneath a woman's window in an attempt to win her love is known as a serenade.

SOUNDS FOR CLOWNS
The pipe and tabor were played at the same time by one person. The musician beat the tabor (drum) with one hand, while playing notes on the pipe with the other. The pipe and tabor were used to accompany jigs - the clowns' dances that were traditionally featured at the end of shows and plays.

Royal gift
This instrument was invented in 1580 by London instrument maker John Rose. He named it after Orpheus, a mythical ancient Greek musician. Rose is thought to have presented this, his first orphan, to Queen Elizabeth I, who was an avid and skilled musician.
MYSTERIOUS MELODIES
The hautboy, or shawm, made an eerie, solemn sound, which Shakespeare used to create an atmosphere of dread in his tragedies. Hautboys were often played before ghosts appeared on the stage.

LOVERS' LUTES
Lutes were often played by men when they were wooing women (trying to win their love). In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Petruchio tries to give hot-tempered Katharina a lute lesson. It ends with her smashing Petruchio over the head with his lute.

BAGPIPE BLUES
In Shakespeare's time, the bagpipe was a popular instrument in England. It was played mostly in the open air for country dances. Falstaff, in *Henry IV Part One*, says that he feels as melancholy as “the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe.”

"Let the sounds of music creep in our ears"
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice*

SOOTHING SOUNDS
The lute was a stringed instrument that was plucked to produce light and delicate notes. Many people in Shakespeare's day believed that its sweet, soothing sound had the ability to heal. In *King Lear*, the mad king is brought to his senses with music - almost certainly played on a lute.