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About the course Beginner Level english Drama

The dramatic arts grew and flowered in England during the Renaissance. This period produced some of the most distinguished names in the history of drama, including William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, and Ben Jonson. Even today, their work continues to provide matter for scholars and entertainment for viewers, in England and elsewhere. Scholars often refer to the English plays of the late 1500s and early 1600s as either Elizabethan drama or English Renaissance drama. However, neither of these terms is completely accurate. The term Elizabethan refers to Elizabeth I, whose reign began in 1558. However, there was no system of scheduled play performances in England until the 1580s. Also, although Elizabeth died in 1603, English drama continued to flourish until 1642. The term Renaissance also poses problems. It is true that the English drama of this period reflected the new artistic ideas of the Renaissance, which had spread to England from other parts of Europe. However, "Renaissance" art generally grew out of a desire to revive the culture of ancient Greece and Rome. English drama, by contrast, was mostly a business, aimed at attracting the money and applause of the semieducated masses. In general, the term Elizabethan is more appropriate than Renaissance for referring to the plays written and performed during Elizabeth's reign. However, the two terms put together reflect a tension in the English drama of this periodâ€”and, in fact, in English society as a whole. Authors wanted to show respect for English traditions while making a place for new ideas. Elizabethan drama reflected common social views about the love of God, of country, and of community. Yet at the same time, it relied on strange and unusual images that alarmed many religious and public officials. Some authorities saw theaters as a threat to society and tried repeatedly to shut them down. [Image not available for copyright reasons] London's Theaters. Elizabethan London had two distinct types of theaters. Large, open-air playhouses, such as the Globe, the Red Bull, and the Rose, first appeared in the late 1500s. These theaters attracted a mixed audience. Wealthy patrons sat in the upper levels, while the lower classes stood in front of the stage. These large playhouses made it necessary for plays to include broad, bold effects that appealed to the lower-class spectators.

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