

The Language of Shakespeare

At first, Shakespearean language may seem complicated and impossible to understand. It is possible to understand with a little effort. You are going to "translate" Act 1 Prologue (pg. 20) from Shakespearean language into modern-day language. Don't worry- it's easy! Just follow the steps below and you will be well on your way to becoming a Shakespeare expert!

1. Match the Shakespearean words with the modern-day translation.
2. Read the Prologue one time to hear how the Shakespearean words sound.
3. Now go back and slowly read each line inserting the modern-day definition.
4. "Translate" the general meaning of each line into modern-day language.

**The translation on pg. 21 will also help you!

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. _____ households (line 1) | A. unfortunate |
| 2. _____ dignity (line 1) | B. hard work |
| 3. _____ fair (line 2) | C. nothing |
| 4. _____ ancient (line 3) | D. fix; repair; put right |
| 5. _____ grudge (line 3) | E. of or belonging to citizens |
| 6. _____ mutiny (line 3) | F. social status: worth; esteem |
| 7. _____ civil (line 4) | G. beautiful |
| 8. _____ fatal (line 5) | H. subject of a play |
| 9. _____ misadventured (line 7) | I. very old; in existence for a long time |
| 10. _____ piteous (line 7) | J. except for |
| 11. _____ strife (line 8) | K. deep hatred/anger; unwilling to forgive |
| 12. _____ but (line 11) | L. destined for ruin |
| 13. _____ nought (line 11) | M. full of pity |
| 14. _____ stage (line 12) | N. conflict |
| 15. _____ toil (line 14) | O. violence |
| 16. _____ mend (line 14) | P. families |

Now it's time for you to "translate" Shakespeare's words into your own!
Make sure that you understand the general meaning of each line before you write
it in your own words. You do not want to change the original meaning.

Line 1: _____

Line 2: _____

Line 3: _____

Line 4: _____

Line 5: _____

Line 6: _____

Line 7: _____

Line 8: _____

Line 9: _____

Line 10: _____

Line 11: _____

Line 12: _____

Line 13: _____

Line 14: _____

What told the Prologue to Act 1? _____

What is another word for the "prologue"? _____

What is the purpose of the Prologue to Act 1? _____
