

# Elizabethan England

ANSWER KEY

As you enter town, you notice a group of children playing near the river. As you approach, a tall lad breaks off from the group and walks toward you. He seems to be watching out for the younger ones who continue to play, heedless to your approach. The tall lad stops before you and speaks:

"Good Morrow! Rumor has it that we would be getting some strange visitors. I am William McVain, but you may call me Wiggen. I can tell you about the life of a child in Elizabethan England if you would care to dawdle a spell. Now that you have entered this time period, it has probably jumped out that one of the biggest differences between the Renaissance and the 90's is the incredible variety of lifestyles. Many of the the 90's everyday conveniences are unavailable at this time, mostly because they simply do not exist. Silverware will not be available until later in the Renaissance, electricity has yet to be harnessed in a way that can be useable, and the schooling system is much more of a hassle. Many of the customs and behaviors of the people living during this time are also different. You cannot talk back or speak out against the church, and most of your priveleges rely on your social status.

Although this affects people of all ages, I can tell you how it directly affects the children of the Elizabethan period."

## Clothing

The first difference that is most noticeable in children of this time period is the clothing that they wear. Clothing during this time period is very important. The way you dress not only represents your wealth, but also greatly signifies your social status. If a child is dressed inappropriately, their family is considered poor and poverty-stricken. On the other hand, if a child is dressed well, the family will be well-respected and dignified. Girls are heavily dressed. They wear a chemise (a long, white garment resembling a nightdress), stockings, a leather corset, a bodice, waist-petticoats, and a gown over it. Girls and women always cover their hair, usually with a scarf or a hat. Boys usually dress to resemble their father. They wear shirts and a fitted jacket called a "doublet". They wear close fitting hoses (like tights) which are tied by lace, and breeches are worn over these. Both boys and girls wear cloaks when it was cold. With all of these tight fitting clothes on, play can be very uncomfortable for children. It is suspected that many of these children take off some of these layers when parents aren't looking. But for the most part, however, children wear this type of outfit on a regular basis.

## Role at Home

Another question you may have about this time period is what the children's role is at home. Families at this time are much larger than they are in the 90's. It is not uncommon for people to have 12 to 15 children. In rich households, there are usually many servants, leaving the children off the hook. But in poor households, you are expected to do a great deal around the house. The young babies represent the first job. Most often older sisters will take care of this job, as they do in the 90's. Another job to be taken care of are the daily chores. As mentioned before, there are no vans or cars, no postal services, no railways, no phones, no premade breads and products. All of these tasks have to be done manually, and this responsibility is usually split equally upon the younger girls and boys. Think about this for a minute. The milkman will not deliver milk right to your door, any food or meal you want to eat must be made from scratch, and sometimes the ingredients you use must be home grown.

These things make it essential for everyone in the household to do their share. Young girls enjoy helping their mothers with needlework, thus providing some of the necessary clothes and blankets for the household. Since there are not many butchers or meat markets, most of the meat products must be found and killed by ourselves. This task is usually done by the fathers, but they are often assisted by the young men. Common meats and products that have to be caught are cod, shrimp, crabs, oysters, sausages, pigeons, blackbirds, wild ducks, and partridges. All of these can be caught and made with a combined effort of all family members. Another task reserved for children is the collecting of feathers for making mattresses and pillows. It means that when the chickens or ducks were killed, they must collect the feathers and take them to be cleaned. The final responsibility we will mention is one reserved for children when they reach an adolescent age. Young men are sometimes sent to be a page in a nobleman's house, where they are taught the polite ways of society. Young women usually go to serving homes to learn how to organize a household and look after things better for the future.

## Games

Yes, times here in the Renaissance are more than just all work and no play. Girls and boys of this time period play many of the games that are now popular in the 90's. Some of the games you know, such as hopscotch and blind man's bluff, are considered old games even during the Renaissance. One poet wrote in 1611:

"To wrestle, play at stooleballe, or to runne,  
To pitch the barre, or to shoote off a gunne,  
To play at loggats, Nine-holes, or Ten-pinnes,  
To try it out at football by the shinnes."

Stoolball is still played in school in the 90's, pitching the bar is the same as "tossing the caber" in Scotland, nine-holes is a game to roll a small ball into nine holes cut in a certain pattern, and ten-pins is a variation of "modern" day ninepins. Football and wrestling are very popular but are both very rough, and players often get seriously injured. Because of this, King James I, in the early 17th century, forbade anybody at his court to play these violent games.

Other popular games are battledore, shuttlecock, leapfrog, see-saw, and bowling the hoop. Those who live by a river or a stream learn how to swim, and fishing is also a very common pastime. Tennis and billiards are played in noble households, but ordinary people do not play them during this time. Archery is enjoyed by people of all ages, and most people have their own bows. Falconry is very common but mostly enjoyed by adults rather than children. In falconry, dogs are used to disturb wild birds. These wild birds are then attacked by falcons.

Children also have a certain amount of toys at home to play with. Rocking horses and all kinds of toy animals are common, and boys usually have toy soldiers. All of the toys are hand made and much more simpler than those of the 90's, but children play with them often.

Attention class! Settle down, boys! Everybody sit in you proper rows and take out your horn books. We will start today with a new song on the organ called *Greensleeves*. Oh, who are you? You must be new here. Oh, my name is James, but you must call me head-master Robinson. I'll show you around and explain what we do here in the Mount Joy Schoole of boys founded 70 years ago by my grandfather.

As you probably know, schools are only for boys now-a-days, and girls are rarely accepted. A young ladies' and women's place is in the kitchen and the home, taking care of the children and serving food.

## Alphabet

As you know, our alphabet has only 24 letters with the capital I and J interchangeable. The J is often used as the capitioal form of I. The letters U and V are similarly equivalent, with I being used at the beginning of a word and U used toward the middle. For instance, your "I have an uncle" is written as "J haue an vncl."

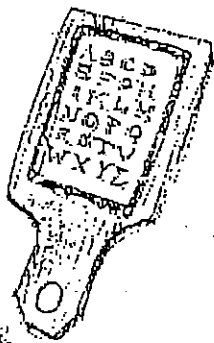
There is a special character to represent your *th* that resembles a *y*. It actually comes from an ancient runic letter called 'Thorn'. When you see "Ye Olde Tea Shoppe", the "ye" should be pronounced as *the*.

There are no dictionaries, so our spelling is largely built on custom, and we write words phonetically, or by the way they sound. Still, the normal way of spelling is very similar to the way you spell. The most obvious difference is that we often add a final "e" to words that we don't necessarily need them. For example "school" is often written as "schoole". In printed books, there are two principle typefaces: Blackletter type and Roman. The Blackletter type, like the secretary hand, is derived from medieval writing; it looks like what we sometimes like to call "Old English". Roman type, like *italics*, is associated with classic learning and is currently replacing Blackletter type entirely. Your writing is based on Roman type. *Italics* are also used especially to set important words off from surrounding Roman text.

## Etiquette and Rules

Etiquette is taught and will be enforced throughout all of your schooling, but will mainly be taught at home. You are required at all times to be well-mannered and polite and cannot speak to any adult unless you are spoken to first. (Emergencies are an exception, though). Don't interrupt or argue with an adult. You should be grateful for any kindness at all given by an adult. Stand when an adult enters a room, take off your hat, and bow or curtsy, even if you hate that particular adult.

## The Horn Book



In Petty schools, you learn the alphabet from a horn book, not at all like the book you have in your pocket, but rather like a little wooden bat like the kind you would use in cricket. The alphabet and the Lord's prayer are written on a piece of paper. The paper is stuck on the wooden bat and a thin, transparent piece of deer or elk horn is fixed over it. Since the horn is transparent, you will be able to see the alphabet underneath. The books are to be shared between yourself and several students during class because books are extremely expensive. Wealthy families can afford their own horn book, and sometimes the families crest, code of arms, or symbol is inscribed on the back.

The Mount Joy Schoole for boys is an example of a petty school. If a family is rich or the boy shows enough talent to earn a scholarship, he might go to a grammer school. This stage of school lasts five to ten years, typically to age 12 or so. A child can sometimes get in at 7 or 8, but either he has to be wealthy or the father must have a clever way to get the money from someone else. The "grammer" taught at grammer school was Latin language and literature. I'm debating about including French or Greek; Latin is our main emphasis. A boy who learns Latin can not only absorb the wisdom of ancient authors, but can also read the works of some contemporary scholars, for Latin is the international language. Older students at my schoole are expected to speak Latin at all times in the classroom and will be punished for speaking English. Grammer schoole teachers like myself are mostly likely University graduates. Since it is very rare for a girl to be admitted to a petty school, you can only imagine how hard it is for one to be admitted to a grammer school. However, there are special boarding schools for girls. I won't accept them here!

### Schoole days

If you plan on attending Mount Joy, be prepared to work hard! I adhere to the typical school hours: 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with Breakfast and Dinner served. There is a break during the day. You must eat supper at your own home. You will have Thursday and Saturday afternoons off, with two week holidays for Christmas and Easter. School is never in session on Sundays, because it is a day of rest, and you're expected to go to mass. Some grammer schools board their students, but mine, since we are located in towne, is a day school.

### Home Schooling

You don't have to go to school, and if your family lacks the funds or they need you to work, you will stay home and help out with the family business. Most people I know cannot read or write, unfortunately, and can do little else besides their particular jobs.

I've seen where a man has to sign a deed or a contract and must draw a symbol that recognizes him because he can't write. Most girls do not go to school, unless they show a talent that surpasses that of most boys. They instead stay at home and learn to sew, spin, cook and run the house. Even in the smallest of houses, there is so much to be done that they keep busy. Wealthy girls are also taught reading and writing, but they still do not get the same schooling as boys.

### Funding and Punishment

All schools are paid for by rich men who want their own children to have an education. Unlike yours, none of our schools are paid for by public money. If you are caught being naughty or you come in late to my classroom, be forewarned! I have a birch rod handy to dole out any punishment or I may have to hit you on the hand with a ferula, (a flat piece of wood, similar to a ruler with a circular knob on one end), to make my point! One school master I know used to beat his pupils on a cold morning to keep himself warm. You should be glad you aren't thinking of going to HIS school!

# School Yard

Good morrow, and welcome to the schoolyard. The King has asked me, Percy McFie, to instruct you on the language of our time. You have a mighty strange accent and you won't fit in unless you learn to speak like us.

## Pronunciation

Before we teach you any words, you'll have to know how to pronounce them. For example, in want, the *a* sounds like the *a* in *far*. It's very long and drawn out. The word *make* is pronounced so it could be written *mek*. *I* is pronounced *uh-ee*. the word *head* is pronounced *haid*. The word *mercy* is pronounced *maircy* with a hard *r*. *Neither* is pronounced *nayther*. *Lord* has a drawn out *oo* sound.

## Vocabulary

Since I don't recognize o'er half the words you're saying, I'd better give you a lesson in vocabulary. I've been able to figure out that your *never* is our *ne'r*. I've also noticed a few other changes: *Until later*, or *see ya'* is *anon*. *Fare-thee-well* is another common closing to a conversation, literally translated into *bye* or *goodbye*. *Day* is *morrow*. *Good morrow* is a common greeting in place of your 'hi' or 'hello'. As you would find in your courts, *nay* is used as a negative, most commonly instead of *no*. *Aye* or *yea* are used to answer positively, translated as *yes*.

There are other ways to answer a question. When the answer is unclear *mayhap*, *perchance*, or *belike* are used as *maybe* or *sure*, *whatever*. To ask "why?", *wherefore* is used. *Oft* is *often*, and *enow* translates into *enough*. As you can see, these words are shorter now, than in your future times. *Aroint* means *away*. *Verily* can be translated to *very* or *truly*. *Prithge* or *pray* translates to *please* and should be used when talking to any elder, and is recommended for polite conversation. *Grammarcy* is also a good idea to use when speaking to elders, because it means *thank you*. Definitely not to be used when talking to a respectable person, or a polite, formal conversation is the word *fie*, which translates to some very bad curses. In other words, please don't use this.

Well, as long as we are on the subject of naughty words, we have quite a bundle of insulting phrases. They are started with *thou* and are followed by an adverb, a hyphenated adjective, and finished off with a noun. For more information on those dirty words, contact my assistant, Morley. You can find him at Elizabethan Insults. There you will find insults such as "Thou gleeking pox-marked jolthead" and other such nonsense!

## Thou, thee, and you

*Thou* and *you* are the informal and formal (respectively) way to address people. *Thou* is like the 'tu' in French or Spanish, 'du' in German, or 'ty' in Russian. *You* can be used as plural, or 'vous' in French or 'usted' in Spanish. *Thou* should be used when speaking to a family member, a friend, some menial nobody you want to look down on, or anyone you to whom you'd say "Hey, man, how's it going?" On the other hand, you should use *you* if you are talking to your boss, an elder, royalty, members of the clergy, perfect strangers, anyone to whom you'd address as 'Sir' or 'Ma'am', or those who are superior to you, such as the creators of this page!

in the nominative case, and *shee* in a subjective case. (The nominative case is used when the pronoun is the subject of the sentence, and the subjective case is used when the pronoun is the subject for the sentence.)

As an implied rule, superiors are addressed by their title and surname, inferiors by their Christian name. If you do not practice the Christian religion, then you are, mostly likely, looked down upon by your whole community and are probably not addressed by superiors at all. If, however, you are, you might be called *man*, *fellow*, or *woman*, or another inferior name. *Sirrah*, however, is the worst, because it is sometimes an insult.

General terms of respect include *master* and *mistress*. These can simply be a polite form of address, but they are particularly used by servants speaking to their employers, or by anyone speaking to a gentleman or gentlewoman. They were also referred to as titles, when using *master* and then a last name, it is considered a form of gentleman; when *master* is before a first name, it is a polite way for addressing a commoner. Commoners are also called *Goodman* or *Goodwoman*, especially if they are the head of a yeomanly household. When speaking with a close friend, common titles were *friend*, *cousin*, or *coz*. Do you understand friend?

#### To be and to have

Like your future English language, there are different forms of both *to be*, and *to have*. Depending on who is the subject of the sentence, different forms of *to be* and *to have* are used. With the infinitive, *to be*, you would say or see written:

- I *am*
- thou *art*
- he/she/it *is*
- we/you/they *are*

With the infinitive *to have*, there are also different forms. Here they are:

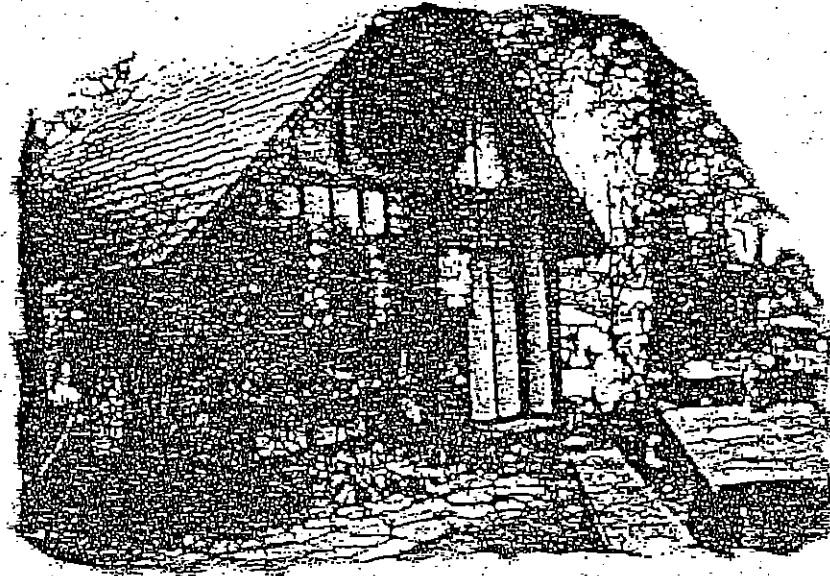
- I *have*
- thou *hast*
- he/she/it *hath*
- we/you/they *have*

# Taverns

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| Town | Clothing Shoppe | School | School Yard | Tavern | Food Table |  
| Travelling Musicians | Wedding | Children |

## Back to Town



Greetings! You have chosen the best tavern in town - RenTavern of the Spilled Ale! I am the owner, Jonathan Forest. The tavern is the bar of your time. It's a place where people gather, drink, and have a merry time. Our most popular item is a drink called mead, made from fermented honey, and is very sweet, and at the same time, very intoxicating. We keep our drinks in barrels outside. You may have seen them when you came in. Sometimes they are filled too much and when the temperature changes or the keg is moved it may burst. It's quite a sight, my friend. Men from all across town rush over with their mugs to get as much of the free ale as possible. Mind you, the ale on the ground is not drunk, but what remains in the barrel is heartily consumed by the public. Since you're new around here, it would be a good idea to carry your cup around if a keg should burst.

We have come a long way since the 1400s when most of the population had little or no leisure time. But with the breakdown of the feudal system and the increase in travel, people are beginning to have more money and more leisure time. This has been good for business as people have begun to spend a lot of their extra time and earnings in taverns. We have become the chief alternate center of social life to the church, which doesn't sit too well with the clergy, let me tell you! Why we even have had weddings and wakes performed here presided over by itinerant priests. But that was before the church passed laws making such non-church religious events illegal.

You are welcome to look around if you like. We have a common room where you can be served food

and drink. There are a few sleeping rooms upstairs if you care to stay the night. If you want to take your drink outside in the yard, there is a table there for you to sit at. If you have any horses or donkeys that need tending, you can take them to the stable out back, but watch that your horse doesn't trample the kitchen garden or the chickens.

Oh, here comes Molly, my barmaid. Molly, take these newcomers in to the common room and serve them some supper. You had better explain the house rules to them as they are foreigners.

Enter the Common Room

## The Common Room

| Town | Clothing Shoppe | School | School Yard | Tavern | Food Table |  
| Travelling Musicians | Wedding | Children |



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Hello, I'm Molly. Come sit at one of the tables. You can order beer or wine. It comes in an earthenware pitcher and you share it amongst yourselves. You have your choice of drinking vessels: pottery, leather, wooden, or glass. The food is simple but hearty. I'll bring your table a platter. I hope you have eating utensils as we don't provide them. Just use your fingers if you have to - no one will mind. If you like, you can have some trenchers to keep the food off the tablecloths. They are just stale bread "plates". I'll bring a salt cellar if you ask for it but it will cost you extra - still expensive. Don't leave the salt cellar on the table! Oh, would you look at that! That lazy kitchen boy didn't lay out fresh straw on the floor. I'll get on him as soon as I bring your food. You need it to soak up the mud from your travelling boots.

While your waiting you may want to play a few games. We have cards, dice and table-top games and if you feel like it, we have bowling games and archery shoots in the alley out back. I'll be right back with your supper.



## THE SECOND PERSON FAMILIAR / VERB INFLECTIONS

Modern English has dropped a set of pronouns and verbs called the "familiar" or *thee* and *thou* forms once used among close friends and family and to children, inferiors, animals, and inanimate objects. These old forms did, though, survive into Elizabethan England, and they appear frequently in Shakespeare. They correspond roughly to the *tu* forms of the Romance languages, the *ty* forms of the Slavic languages, the *su* forms of Greek, and the *kimi* forms of Japanese.

### Familiar Pronouns

SINGULAR PRONOUNS			PLURAL PRONOUNS			
	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd
Subject	<i>I</i>	<i>thou</i>	<i>he/she/it</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>ye</i>	<i>they</i>
Object	<i>me</i>	<i>thee</i>	<i>him/her/it</i>	<i>us</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>them</i>
Possessive Adjective	<i>my</i> <i>mine*</i>	<i>thy</i> <i>thine*</i>	<i>his/her/its</i>	<i>our</i>	<i>your</i>	<i>their</i>
Possessive Noun	<i>mine</i>	<i>thine</i>	<i>his/hers/its</i>	<i>ours</i>	<i>yours</i>	<i>theirs</i>

\*Substitute forms used before a noun beginning with a vowel

### Verb Inflections

#### 2ND PERSON FAMILIAR

Adds the ending *-est*, *-st*, or *st*

Example: *thou givest*, *thou sing'st*

#### SOME IRREGULAR VERBS

Present:	<i>you</i>	<i>are</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>will</i>	<i>can</i>	<i>shall</i>	<i>do</i>
Present:	<i>thou</i>	<i>art</i>	<i>hast</i>	<i>wilt</i>	<i>canst</i>	<i>shalt</i>	<i>dost</i>
Past:	<i>thou</i>	<i>wast</i>	<i>hadst</i>	<i>wouldst</i>	<i>couldst</i>	<i>shouldst</i>	<i>didst</i>

#### THIRD PERSON SINGULAR

Often substitutes *-th* for *-s*

Example: *she giveth* (for *she gives*)

## HANDOUT 2

### SHAKESPEARE'S UNUSUAL USAGE

#### Unusual Word Order

"Call you me 'fair'? That 'fair' again unsay." (1.1.184)

"Helen, to you our minds we will unfold." (1.1.213)

"Wherefore speaks he this / To her he hates?" (3.2.232-233)

"Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms." (4.1.41)

#### Ellipsis (Omission of Words)

"Godspeed, fair Helena. Whither away?" (1.1.183)

"As you on him, Demetrius dote on you!" (1.1.231)

"Thou shalt not from this grove . . ." (2.1.151)

#### Archaic Words and Idioms

"For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd . . ." (1.1.73)

"Nay, I can gleek upon occasion." (3.1.148-149)

"To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?" (3.2.141)

#### Words with Old Meanings

"And she respects me as her only son." (1.1.162)

"To bait me with this foul derision?" (3.2.202)

"But soft! What nymphs are these?" (4.1.131-132)

#### Familiar Pronouns and Verb Inflections

"This man hath bewitched the bosom of my child." (1.1.28)