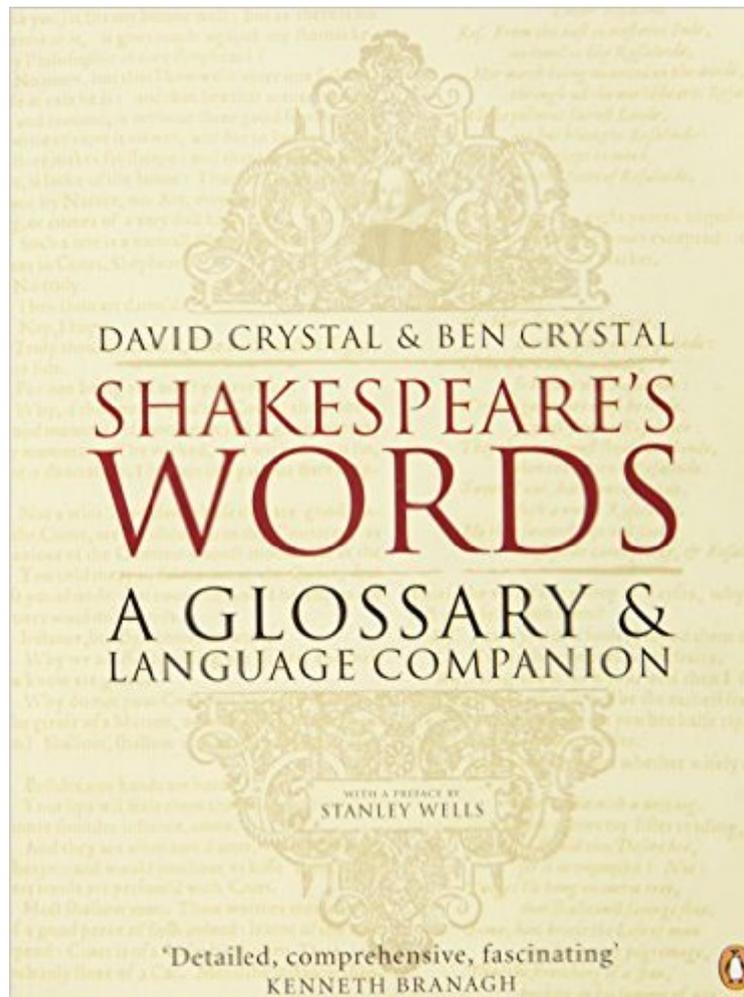


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# Shakespeare's Words: A Glossary And Language Companion



## Synopsis

A vital resource for scholars, students and actors, this book contains glosses and quotes for over 14,000 words that could be misunderstood by or are unknown to a modern audience. Displayed panels look at such areas of Shakespeare's language as greetings, swear-words and terms of address. Plot summaries are included for all Shakespeare's plays and on the facing page is a unique diagrammatic representation of the relationships within each play.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Other than a good edition of the plays, this is the one reference that you absolutely must have. It has tremendously enhanced my reading of the plays. I no longer have to wonder or guess what a word means. I believe that it was linguist John McWhorter who pointed out in one of his books that some of Shakespeare's words have changed meanings over the centuries; some of the words don't seem to fit into the context because they meant something different then. Crytal's book clear all that up. Whenever I look up a word, I jot down its meaning in the play. This makes reading and rereading simpler and better. Add to this the Arden complete plays, a fine edition and cheap in paperback, and Margaret Garber's Shakespeare After All, a readable scholarly introduction to each of the plays, and you have an inexpensive trio of books that are really all you need to enjoy reading the plays.

This book is the very, very, very best Shakespeare Reference that I've come across. It is everything that it was cracked up to be. I wish that I had this source available 50 years ago.

It may be difficult to provide a full glossary of Shakespeare's words in a portable - and inexpensive - format. The authors manage to do it very well, given the restrictions on size and cost, and even throw in some useful sidebars to make it more interesting for casual browsing. However, when they overlook uncommon or archaic words, missing these can leave the reader with a sense of incompleteness and frustration. Look up "chough" for example, a word used in several plays, but not listed here. The authors include "chuff" - but entirely miss its other meaning in its old spelling (chough) - "jackdaw." The deficiencies are not glaring, and the book is a worthwhile purchase, but I would like to see a revised edition with some of these oversights corrected.

I was very impressed by the thoroughness of the book. The dictionary-like form is easy to use and provides straight forward succinct information. It isn't just for understanding archaic words. For example, while reading Macbeth and finding Shakespeare used the word "dollars", I was curious why Scotland was using "dollars" during Macbeth's time so I pulled the book off the shelf and there it was.

After having read most of the plays the hard way, I chanced upon this book. It is very well written, explains the nuances of words and puns used in the play and the context from 1600s. It has several useful appendices -- a must for students. The play summaries at the end of the book with Venn diagrams -- displaying the relationships of dramatic personae graphically alone is well worth the price. - Mohsin ( [...] )

What an awesome idea! To put into one place definitions for the hard-to-understand Elizabethan English that one runs into in Shakespeare! Whether it be "prithee" or "forsooth" or "prating mountebank," the dictionary will help give the Shakespeare novice or pro the information needed to decipher the Bard's often-complex writing. In addition, there are frequent collections of definitions that gather together words in a single theme -- say, words related to politeness, or swear words. These collections give the reader a chance to compare many words of the same genre and gain even more insights into Elizabethan usage. The definitions are somewhat sparse, but that's probably necessary given the sheer volume of words being defined. However, each word references the play or play in which it is used. Marry! -- that is to say, "By Mary!" -- a wonderful accompaniment to anyone interested in Shakespeare!

"Shakespeare's Words" is an excellent resource. The definitions are clear and concise and the extra charts and graphs are a wonderful addition. If you have this book for definitions and "All the Words on Stage" for pronunciations, you are ready to study or perform one of Shakespeare's plays.

This book is so well organized that it is actually fun to use. I agree with the previous reviewer - I use this book and "All the Words on Stage, A Complete Pronunciation Dictionary for the plays of William Shakespeare". I had been searching for years for some help when I was researching a role. These two books have answered all of my questions.

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