

MONDAY  
Politics

TUESDAY  
Sustainability

WEDNESDAY  
Sport

THURSDAY  
Science

FRIDAY  
Culture

**THE DAY**  
Build a better world



# NEWS DETECTIVES

## TODAY'S BIG STORY

### New monarch inspired by Shakespeare poetry

Is old language still relevant? Poetry is used to capture people's emotions. The new king quoted a classic playwright during his first speeches as monarch.



Flights of angels: Horatio's words capture both his love and despair.

Horatio holds his dying friend, Hamlet, in his arms. 'Good night, sweet prince. And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest', cries Horatio.

The final words of **William Shakespeare's** famous play, Hamlet, were quoted by King Charles III days after his mother's death. Powerful words are often used in sad or **joyous** times.

"I think lots of people for many centuries have turned to the beautiful **phrases** of poets, perhaps especially Shakespeare to speak of something that is sort of beyond everyday speech," says professor of Shakespeare Studies Emma Smith.

As Prince of Wales, the King was **president** of the **Royal Shakespeare Company**. At the age of 17, he played

the lead in a production of **Macbeth**. He once famously argued with his father over whether Shakespeare really did write all of his plays.

Today, few people speak like Shakespeare. Some think his works are **irrelevant**. But others say beautiful words can give meaning to the world around us.

## KEY WORDS

**William Shakespeare:** A famous English playwright

**Joyous:** Happy

**Phrases:** Small group of words

**President:** Leader or governor

**Royal Shakespeare**

**Company:** A British theatre company

**Macbeth:** A tragedy play by Shakespeare

**Irrelevant:** Not important

**Centuries:** Hundreds of years



## YOU DECIDE

Is old language still relevant?

**YES.** Great works never age. They are still as meaningful today as they were back then

**NO.** Times have changed and so should language. We cannot connect with words used **centuries** ago.



# FURTHER READING

## New king quotes Shakespeare

**T**he King may have sought to bring “poetic shape” to emotions which otherwise could have seemed “a bit inarticulate” by quoting Shakespeare, a professor of the Bard has said.

In his speech to MPs and peers on Monday, Charles referenced lines from Henry VIII to describe his mother as “a pattern to all princes living”, and during his first public broadcast as the head of state on Friday he borrowed from Hamlet.

At the end of the historic speech, he said “May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest”, which is also said by Horatio as he pays tribute to his dying friend Hamlet in the tragedy.

Emma Smith, professor of Shakespeare Studies at the University of Oxford, told the PA news agency: “I think this is obviously poetry, this is obviously writing which means a lot to him.

“And I think lots of people for many centuries have turned to the beautiful phrases of poets, perhaps especially Shakespeare to speak of something that is sort of beyond everyday speech.”

Reflecting on Charles’ use of the Henry VIII quote, professor Smith noted that in the play it is spoken by Archbishop Cranmer about the then-princess Elizabeth, who was to become Queen Elizabeth I.



**Poet prince:** Charles III’s love of Shakespeare began when he played Macbeth in a school play aged 17.

The professor explained the play was actually written at the end of Shakespeare’s career during the Jacobean period and so was published after the death of Queen Elizabeth I.

“In terms of the play, it’s a prophecy about what she will be when she is Queen. But in terms of the audience watching the play, of course, it’s a retrospective because we know she has been Queen and she has died perhaps about a decade previously,” she said.

The professor explained that this tradition of looking to Shakespeare dates further back, saying: “Shakespeare drew on his own understanding of monarchy but... the monarchy has drawn on Shakespeare for its understanding of itself.”

She said another notable occasion

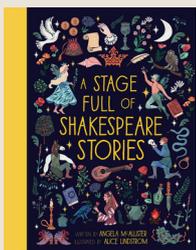
would have been when Edward VIII abdicated the throne in order to marry Wallis Simpson, which propelled Queen Elizabeth II into the direct line of succession.

“There is almost no sort of constitutional text to understand how you do that, it’s such an unthinkable thing that there isn’t a form of words for it”, she said.

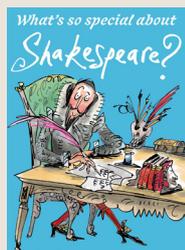
“And it’s very interesting that at that point, probably Churchill, but probably other members of the political establishment turned to Richard II, Shakespeare’s play about a king who abdicates to find a sort of an eloquent form of words to make that happen.” ■

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### Now read the book



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£11.95



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£5.94

### Answers to puzzles

**Picture this**  
The Globe

**Spot the fake**  
“Sheeran steals Shakespeare words for song”