

Shri Shivaji Shikshan Sanstha Pusad, Sanchalit

SHRI VITTHAL RUKHMINI ARTS, COMMERCE AND SCIENCE COLLEGE, SAWANA



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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**Asso.Prof. Shaikh Bilal Shaikh Husain
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(M.A.English , M.Phil)**



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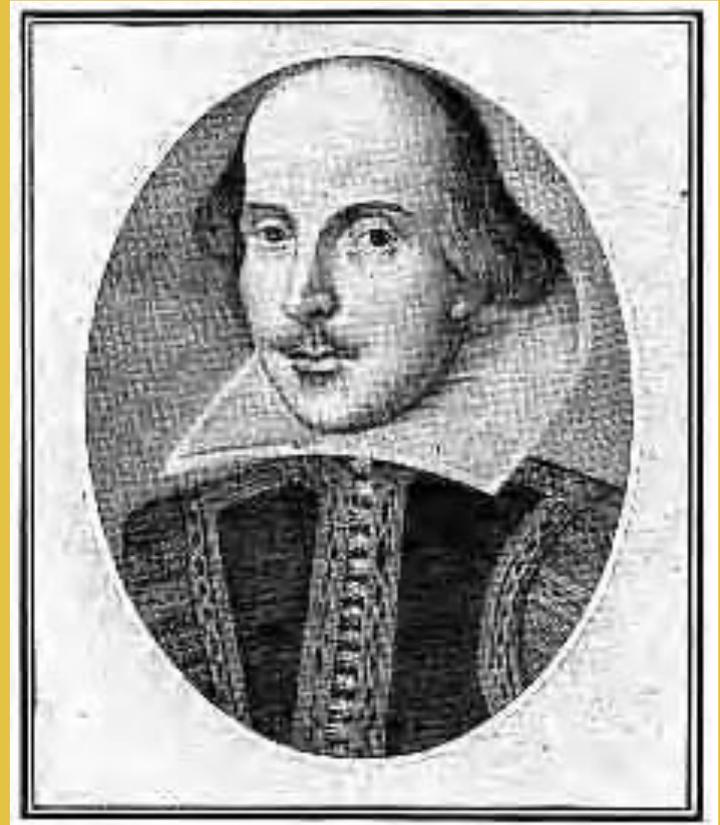
King Lear is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare

It tells the tale of a king who bequeaths his power and land to two of his three daughters, after they declare their love for him in a fawning and obsequious manner.

His third daughter gets nothing, because she will not flatter him as her sisters had done.

William Shakespeare

- Born in April 1564 in Stratford-on-Avon
- Received a classical education including Latin, Greek, history, math, astronomy, and music
- Most likely began as an actor
- Wrote 38 plays, including comedies, histories, tragedies, and romances
- Wrote 4 lengthy poems and a sonnet cycle



King Lear is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare

- ❑ Originally drafted in 1605 or 1606.
- ❑ Its first known performance on St. Stephen's Day in 1606, was a 1608 publication in a quarto of uncertain provenance.
- ❑ In which the play is listed as a history.
- ❑ *The Tragedy of King Lear*, a revised version that is better tailored for performance, was included in the 1623 First Folio.
- ❑ Modern editors usually conflate the two, though some insist that each version has its own individual integrity that should be preserved.

Act and Scene

No. of Act	No. of Scene
Act I	Five
Act II	Four
Act III	Seven
Act IV	Seven
Act V	Three

Character List

King Lear King of Britain. Lear is the protagonist whose willingness to believe empty flattery leads to the deaths of many people.

Goneril Lear's eldest daughter who, after professing her deep love for her father, betrays him and plots his murder.

Regan Lear's second daughter. Regan joins forces with Goneril to destroy their father. Regan initially appears less harsh than her elder sister, but in the end, she proves to be as blood-thirsty as Goneril.

Cordelia Lear's youngest daughter. Cordelia genuinely loves her father, but her refusal to flatter him leads to her tragic death.

Fool Loyal member of the king's court. The Fool assumes the role of protector to Lear when Cordelia is banished.

Character List

Earl of Gloucester Lear's cohort and loyal friend. Gloucester is a foolish old man whose inability to see the truth in his youngest son's words parallels Lear's own difficulties with Goneril and Regan.

Earl of Kent / Caius Lear's loyal friend and supporter. Although banished, Kent disguises himself as Caius in an effort to stay close to his king.

Edgar / Poor Tom Gloucester's older son. Edgar is Gloucester's only legitimate heir, but he must flee and hide from his father, disguised as Poor Tom, when he comes under suspicion.

Edmund Gloucester's younger, illegitimate, son. He is an opportunist whose ambitions lead him to form a union with Goneril and Regan.

Duke of Albany Goneril's husband. Albany grows in stature during the play and ultimately finds the strength to resist his wife's efforts to have Lear killed.

Duke of Cornwall Regan's brutal husband. Cornwall is vicious and savage as he tries to eliminate Lear and Gloucester.

Character List

Oswald Goneril's steward. Oswald is a willing accomplice to Goneril's plotting and proves a foil to Kent's devotion to Lear.

King of France Marries Cordelia. France is honorable and willing to support Cordelia's efforts to rescue her father.

Duke of Burgundy Suitor for Cordelia. Burgundy rejects Cordelia when he discovers that she will bring him no dowry.

Curan Gloucester's servant.

Old Man Tenant of Gloucester.

Servants to Cornwall Cornwall's retainers, who attack him in defense of Gloucester.

Doctor Attendant to Cordelia.

Characters- Evil

Edmund-Gloucester's Bastard Son who resents his position;
cunning in his schemes

Regan (wife of Cornwall) and Goneril (wife of Albany)- Lear's
daughters who are interested in power and do not care about
their father

Analysis of William Shakespeare's King Lear

King Lear is one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies; indeed, some critics have considered it *the* greatest. It is certainly one of the bleakest. The plot and subplot deftly weave together the principal themes of the play, which include reason, madness, blindness of various kinds, and – perhaps most crucially of all – the relationship between a father and his children.

The Plot and Subplot: Two Parallel Stories

- ❑ Lear and his daughters: Main Plot.
- ❑ Edgar and his father and brother: subplot.
- ❑ Parallel stories: their closeness in plot and direction render them mirrors of each other.
- ❑ Both Lear and Gloucester have faith in the wrong child and reject the right one.
- ❑ Hook: begins in media res (in the middle of things) Kent, Gloucester (Gloucester), and Edmund enter stage already in conversation.

Major Themes

Explore the different themes within William Shakespeare's tragic play, *King Lear*. Themes are central to understanding *King Lear* as a play and identifying Shakespeare's social and political commentary.

Power

Important is the notion of power — who has it, how one obtains it, how one defines it, and how it plays into *King Lear*.

Nature's Law

Nature, in varying forms, is another theme prevalent in *King Lear*. Lear's view of nature is one that holds certain values, such as respect for one's parents and loyalty to one's king.

Doubling

Doubling (to create either oppositions or parallels) adds tremendously to the *King Lear* experience.

Parent-Child Relationship

Throughout the audience is privy to the conflicts between father and child, and to fathers easily fooled by their children.

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