

Creating the all new Shakespearean sonnet

We have been looking at Shakespeare's sonnet, 'Shall I compare you to a summer's day' in recent lessons. Now it is your turn to write a similar sonnet, using Shakespeare's as a template. Follow the guidelines below to create a successful Shakespearean sonnet:

- Choose your subject first. You might want to address a footballer, a singer, a film star, a book character – it is entirely up to you. It needs to be someone famous, **not** your neighbour or a friend or a teacher!
- Decide whether you are going to write a complimentary sonnet or otherwise and what you are going to compare your person with. For example, you might decide that you want to compare a really good singer to a racing car or a bad actor to soggy cabbage ... again it is up to you.
- Write a list of comparisons that you can make. Soggy cabbage is all very well but can you sustain the comparison through fourteen lines of poetry? You might find that you run out of things to write after two lines.
- Start your sonnet with 'Shall I compare you to ...' and then finish the line with your chosen idea.
- Have a go at keeping the same rhythm to your poem as Shakespeare does, that is try to have 10 syllables in each of your lines: don't give up until you have at least tried!
- Try to use the same rhyme scheme as Shakespeare – again, don't give up until you have at least tried it!
- Use the dictionaries and thesauruses to help you create a lyrical and eloquent sonnet.
- Good luck!