Supplementary material compiled while writing *Think on my Words*

Contents (relating to particular pages)

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From: *Poems by Sir John Salusbury and Robert Chester*, with an introduction by Carleton Brown. London: Early English Text Society, 1914

XXI
Sweet mvses come & lend your helpinge handes
to Rule my penne which quakinge standes to write
ffeare bides me stay but hope doth egge me on
to putt in practize what's my hartes delight
ffayne would I write so 'twere without offence
I'le venter once my mvse goe packe thee hence

Goe blasse abrod the prid of Britance soyle
for vertue manhood and for curtesie
The onely perle which all prowd wale doth foyle
for kindly favour and sobrietie
Kind vnto all both high & lowe degree
to Riche & poore is worthy Salusbury

Beloued of all and loyed of each wight
feared of his foes & loued of his friendes
Courteous of speech & show to all mens sight
free of his purse, the flowre of all his kine
Where e're I goe whiles lif doth last in me
my tonge shall speake of courteus Salusbury

Did Troy but stand which nowe lyes ruinate
& beauteus helen liueinge in the same
Should paris thinke with face so feminate
or smooth tounge wordes to wynne that grekish dame
No 'twere in vayne to enterprise that deed
since Salusbury lives that paris doth exceed.

Was paris beautiful? why so is Salusbury,
was paris courteus? Salusbury is more kind
Was paris manlike? & is not Salusbury
the manlikest wight in Britaine you can find
In all respectes paris vnlike to thee
Helen revives to love sweete Salusbury

Yf Salusbury did enioye faire Helens love
& had her salf within the wales of troy
The greekes were best their siege for to remoove
for 'twere in vayne gainst Salusbury to enioy
His manlike armes ffrom of the greekish wales
would tosse downe pilleres like to tennis bales

Blest be the pappes that first did give him sucke
blest be the wombe that first did him conceyve
Blest be the tyme his father had such looke
blest be the tree which sprwnge fouth such a lefe
Blest be they all & tenne tymes blest be he
for whome so meny blessinges vtred be

Curst may they be that Salusbury seekes to wronge
curst may they be that Salusbury seekes to shame
Curst may they be that with their slanderous tounge
seekes to slander sweete John Salusburys name
Curst be they all & tenne tymes curst be he
that speakes one worde against swete Salusbury

Hence mvste I goe but mvses stay you heare
I mvst departe yet shew you my good will
When I ame gon see that you doe not feare
to shew your masteres fruites of simple skill
ffor while he lives where e're he goe or ride
sweete John Salusburys name shall in him bide

Denbighe adew pray thou for Salusbury
north wales adew pray ye for Salusbury
The sweetest gemme that cures your melencolie
is kind & faire & courteus Salusbury
Pray you for him & I will pray for yee
so god blesse vs & courteus Salusbury

Nowe mvses stay I may no longer write
to dolle ame I to speake of Salusbury prais
Some finer wittes hearafter shall indite
& putt his name in coridons roondelays
Then sweete philida & coridon agree
to singe in prays of lovinge Salusbury

And I'le intreat dianas trayne to stand
to lend ye help with all their siluer stringes
The nimphes shall dance with Salusbury hand in hand
treadinge the measures on the pleasant plaines
And thus in myddest of all his mirth & glee
I'le take my leaue of courteus Salusbury
finis quoth Danielle.

XXII
But stay a while thou hast forgott thy parte
retourne againe & ere thou goe ffrom hence
Thinke vpon her whome thou arte bound in harte
in humble duty for to recompence
ffor whom he loves shee neuer hates I see
so kind & courteus is m[istress] Salusbury

ffrom princely blood & Ryale stocke she came
of egles brood hatcht in a loftie nest
The earle of derby & the kinge of manne
her father was her brother now possest
Then hapie he but thris more hapie's shee
to mache her self with lovely Salusbury

A lovelier man all europe cannot find
so kid to her & she so kind to him
Like turtles true so doth this cuple buyld
heauens graunte this their ioyes may ne're be dime
But flwrish still as doth the lawrel tree
& hartes content rest both to him & shee

Nowe mvst I goe my penne hath runne his fill
gould have I not to gwrder her with all
Butu yet to shew some parte of my good will
thebest I have I humblie parte with all
Accept it then a portion of my store
'tis my good will would god 'twere tenne tymes more

Thus for my bowldnes pardon I do crave
prayeinge the heauens to send you both content
Ioy of your ofspringe euer for to have
Admetus lif vnto you both be lent
God keepe your troope both high & lowe degree

tho last not lest vale m[istress] Ane stanley

finis quoth Danielle

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CAPITALIZED WORDS IN THE SONNETS

Words	*Sonnet numbers*
Adders	112
Aduocate	35
Ages	63
All	112
Amen	85
Antique (adj)	17
Aprill	3,21,98,104
Art(s)	68,78,127,139
Astronomy	13
Augurs	107
Autumne	97
Babe	118
Beautie(s)	14,127
Boy	126
Canker	54,70
Captaine	66
Character	85
Charter	87
Chronicle	106
Commend	69
Creation	127
Croe (113), Crow (70)	113,70
Day	28
Decembers	97
Doctor-like	66
Doue	113
Dyall	104
Dyers	111
East	132
Eauen (=even, i.e. evening)	132
Elements	45
Embassie	45
Epitaph	81
Eysell	111
Father	13
Folly	66

Painter(s)	24
Pen	81,84,106
Phaenix	19
Phisick	147
Phisition(s)	140,147
Poet(s)	17,32,79,83
Princes	14,25,55
Queene	96
Rauen	127
Reason	147
Rhethorick	82
Rose(s)	54,67,95,98,99,109,130
Sessions	30
Simplicitie	66
Somers (56), Sommer(s) (12,18), Summer(s) (5,18)	5,12,18,56
Son	13
Spheares	119
Spirit	129
Stars (14),Starre (132)	14
Sun (24,76,132), Sunne (21,33,35,130)	21,24,33,35,76,130,132
Sun-set	73
Time(s)	12,15,16,19,64,119,120,123
Truth (66), Truthes (14)	14,66
Tygers	19
Virgin	154
Vniverse	109
Well	154
West	73,132
Will	57.13
Winter(s)	2,56,97,98,104
Wolfe	96

The list ignores capitalized words at the beginning of lines and any repeated uses within an individual sonnet. Sonnet 110 also has a capitalized *But* after a colon.

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PROPORTIONS OF OLD TO MODERN SPELLINGS IN FIVE SAMPLES

(250 lines) from the First Folio

Play (50 lines)	Old spellings	Modern spellings	Modern/Total (%)

LLL. 1.1–50	46	93	67
Ham. 1.1–50	26	73	74
Temp. 1.1–50	35	92	72
1H4. 1.2.1–50	44	98	69
H5.3.1.1–50	59	132	69
Total	210	488	70

Note: The table ignores common grammatical words (e.g. *the*, *of*, *wilt*), personal names (e.g. *Francisco*), and singular/plural variants (e.g. *night*/*nights*)

Sample spellings (Ham. 1.1.1–50)

Old spellings

againe, appear'd, appeare, assaile, beleefe, burnes, centinels, downe, eares, fantasie, farewel, hast, heare, houre, intreated, leige-men, peece, reliev'd, saies, seene, selfe, sicke, speake, starre, strook, thinke

Modern spellings

against, all, along, answer, apparition, approve, beating, bed, bell, bid, carefully, come, course, Dane, dreaded, enter, exit, eyes, fortified, friends, get, give, good, goodnight, ground, guard, have, heart, heaven, hold, holla, honest, illume, king, last let, live, long, made, make, meet, minutes, mouse, night, nothing, one, part, place, pole, quiet, rivals, same, say, sight, sit, soldier, stand, stirring, story, take, there, therefore, thing, touching, tush, twelve, twice, two, unfold, watch, welcome, westward, yond

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CLASSIFICATION OF OLD SPELLINGS IN FIVE SAMPLES

(250 lines) from the First Folio (see text)

Older spelling related to modern	*Total*	*Examples*
extra final *e*	106	againe, brawle, cheekes, doe, heer moone, speake, throwes
apostrophe replacing *e*	15	appear'd, arm'd, reliev'd, say'st, wa
final *ie* for *y*	13	armie, busie, fantasie, maiestie, we
double *l* for single *l*	13	al, chearefull, dialls, divell, dreadfu schollers, vessell
ee for *ea* or *ie*	8	heere, neere, peece (piece), theeve
double consonants (other than *l*) for	7	bestirre, pitty, starres, sunne, topp

single; single for double		mistris
y for *i*; *i* for *y*	6	eyther, foyles, prayse, prythee, sm
c or *s* or *sc*	3	centinels, scedule, sythe
a for *ai*	1	gated
ey for *y*; *y* for *ey*	2	countreymen, hony
ow for *ou*	2	howre, lowder
final *e* missing	2	chast, hast
i for *e*; *e* for *i*	2	divell, mistris
oo for *oa*; *oa* for *o*	2	aboord, hoast
ou or *oo* for *u*	2	ougly (= ugly), strook (= struck)
our for *er*	1	conquerours
ei for *ie*	1	leige-men
ore for *o'er*	1	ore
Other words	8	achademe (academe), bankerout (b (battle), heyres (heirs), Navar (Nava registred (registered), spight (spit towle (toll)
Total:	195	[if !supportEmptyParas] [endif]

Note: In these examples, *i/j* and *u/v* are shown in their modern usage.
Totals ignore repeated uses across samples.

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EXCLAMATION-MARKS IN THE FIRST FOLIO

Exclamation-marks in the First Folio shown in relation to play chronology

Play	*Total instances*	*After an interjection*	*After What or How*	*After an imperative sentence*	*After an emphatic statement*	*Confused with a question-mark*
TGV	0	–	–	–	–	–
Shr	0	–	–	–	–	–
2H6	4	4	0	0	0	0
3H6	12	12	0	0	0	0
Tit	14	12	0	1	1	0
1H6	0	–	–	–	–	–
R3	24	23	0	0	1	0
Err	2	2	0	0	0	0
LLL	6	6	0	0	0	0
Rom	13	13	0	0	0	0
MND	23	20	2	0	0	1
R2	2	2	0	0	0	0
John	2	2	0	0	0	0

MV	5	5	0	0	0	0
1H4	3	2	0	0	1	0
Wiv	0	–	–	–	–	–
2H4	8	7	0	0	1	0
Ado	32	26	0	1	5	0
H5	0	–	–	–	–	–
JC	21	21	0	0	0	0
AYLI	1	1	0	0	0	0
Ham	16	14	0	0	2	0
TN	0	–	–	–	–	–
Tro	32	28	1	2	1	0
Oth	31	31	0	0	0	0
MM	0	–	–	–	–	–
Ant	19	18	0	0	1	0
Mac	5	4	0	1	0	0
Tim	7	6	0	0	0	1
AWW	2	1	0	0	1	0
Lear	23	20	0	0	3	0
Cor	19	17	0	0	1	1
WT	0	–	–	–	–	–
Temp	4	3	0	0	1	0
Cym	19	19	0	0	0	0
H8	1	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	350	320	3	5	19	3

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NUMBER OF PARENTHESES IN THE FIRST FOLIO

Play	*No of instances*
TGV	128
Shr	19
2H6	15
3H6	45
1H6	42
Tit	19
R3	76
Err	15
LLL	45
R2	73
Rom	14
MND	48
John	39
MV	14
1H4	35

Wiv	224
2H4	252
Ado	15
H5	39
JC	32
AYLI	32
Ham	45
TN	32
Tro	53
MM	76
Oth	137
AWW	14
Tim	33
Lear	31
Mac	26
Ant	46
Cor	59
WT	370
Cym	161
Temp	98
H8	121
Total	2523

EXAMPLES FROM THE FIRST FOLIO OF THE APOSTROPHE SHOWING ELISION IN GRAMMATICAL WORDS AND WORD-ENDINGS

Form *Location* *Example in First Folio*

Auxiliary verbs

have > ha’	*WT*. 1.2.267	Ha' not you seene Camillo
shall > s’	*Rom*. 1.3.10	thou’se heare our counsell
wilt > ’t, ’lt	*Ham*. 5.1.270	Come show me what thou'lt doe.
wouldst thou > woo’t	*Ham.* 5.1.271	Woo't weepe? Woo't fight? Woo't teare thy selfe?

Pronouns

he > ’a	*MWW*. 2.1.129	The humour of it (quoth 'a?)
it [after a word] > ’t	*Ham*. 5.1.123	Thou dost lye in't, to be in't and say 'tis thine: [also: to’t, for’t, is’t, on’t, etc]

it [before a word] > ’t	*Ham*.5.1.202	'Twere to consider: to curiously to consider so. [also: ’tis, ’twill, etc]
them > ’em	*TN*. 3.1.88	Ile get 'em all three already.
thou > th’	*TN*. 2.3.12	Th'art a scholler;
us > ’s	*WT*. 1.2.77	Temptations haue since then been borne to's:
you > y’	*WT*. 4.4.108	Y'are very welcome.

Articles and other noun specifiers

his > ’s	*TN*. 3.4.13	for sure the man is tainted in's wits. [also: all’s, in’s, and’s]
our > ’r	*H8*. 1.3.46	and by'r Lady
the > th’	*Ham*. 1.2.9	Th' imperiall Ioyntresse of this warlike State,
this > ’s	*Ham*. 3.2.136	my Father dyed within's two Houres.

Prepositions

against > ’gainst	*Oth*. 4.2.151	If ere my will did trespasse 'gainst his Loue,
amidst > ’midst	*1H6*. 1.2.24	But that they left me 'midst my Enemies.
amongst > ’mongst	*Shr*. 2.1.96	I may haue welcome 'mongst the rest that woo,
before > ’fore	*1H6*. 1.3.22	prizest him 'fore me?
betwixt > ’twixt	*H8*. 1.1.7	'Twixt Guynes and Arde,
in > ’i	*Oth*. 1.3.276	At nine i'th' morning,
of > ’o	*AC*. 1.2.193	The sides o'th' world may danger.
on > ’o	*Tro*. 2.1.19	A red Murren o'thy Iades trickes.
over > o’er, o’re	*CE*. 4.1.105	That's couer'd o're with Turkish Tapistrie,
to > t’	*Shr*. 1.1.216	t' atchieue that maide,

Adjectives

–est > –’st	*Temp*. 2.1.137	So is the deer'st oth' losse.

Verbs

–est > –’st	*R3*. 1.2.39	Stand'st thou when I commaund:

ITALICIZED WORDS IN THE SONNETS AND A LOVER'S COMPLAINT

Italicized words	*Location in Sonnets or A Lover's Complaint*

	(by line)
Abisme	112.9
Adonis	53.5
Alcumie (= alchemy)	114.4 (but not in 33.4)
Alien	78.3
Audit, Audite	4.12, 126.11 (but not in 49 or in *LC*. 230)
Autumne	104.5 (but not in 97.6)
Cvpid	153.1, 14
Dyans	153.2
Eaues (= Eve's)	94.13
Grecian	53.8 (an unusual adjectival use)
Hellens	53.7
Heriticke	124.9
Hews (= hues)	20.7 (but not in singular hue in 20, 67, 82 98, 104; *LC*. 287)
Informer	125.13
Intrim (= interim)	56.9
Mars	55.7
Philomell	102.7
Quietus	126.12
Rose	1.2 (but not in 54, 67, 95, 98, 99,109,130)
Satire	100.11
Saturne	98.4
Statues	55.5
Syren	119.1
Will	135.1, 2, 11, 12, 14; 136.2, 5, 14; 143.13
	A Lover's Complaint
Alloes	LC. 273

DISTRIBUTION OF HYPHENS IN THE FIRST FOLIO
THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

Hyphens in The Comedy of Errors	
Line-breaks	*Compound words/phrases*
aduer-sitie	a-crosse
an-swer'd	Aqua-vitae
Ar-madoes	a-row
As-pect	Base-Viole
batte-ring	calues-skin
bee-ing	cherrie-stone
can-not	deepe-diuorcing

dea-lers	else-where
e-nough	foole-beg'd
ex-ploits	foot-ball
for-sake	Fortune-teller
hi-ther	Gold-smith
Idi-ot	hand-writing
loo-seth	headie-rash
Ma-ster	ill-fac'd
mer-rie	leane-fac'd
o-bey	life-preseruing
o-uer	Loue-springs
Porpen-tine	needy-hollow-ey'd-sharpe-looking-wre
Pro-uerbe	no-face
ra-ther	ore-wrought
re-couer	other-where
res-cue	o-uer-shooes
re-turn'd	out-facing
ve-rie	Pea-cocke
vn-ruly	Rope-maker
whatso-euer	sap-consuming
writ-ten	Schoole-master
yon-der	sea-faring men
	selfe-harming
	selfe-same
	ship-wrackt
	shoulder-clapper
	soule-killing
	spoon-meate
	sweet-fac'd
	sweet-sauour'd
	thred-bare
	vn-vrg'd
	wealths-sake
	well-dealing
	wind-obeying
Total: 28	41

SHAKESPEARE 'FIRST RECORDED USAGE' IN THE *OED*

This is a summary of an investigation of the first uses of (the senses of) words ascribed to Shakespeare by the *OED*, as of 2008. Dates of texts are those used by the *OED*. Abbreviations and superscripts refer

to the part-of-speech labels used by the *OED*. All totals are likely to reduce as further investigations of earlier texts continues.

Regrettably, it is no longer possible to use the *OED* in this way, as they have since replaced year-specific dating with *a1616* (i.e. before 1616).

The categories are as follows:

> Shakespeare is the only recorded user of the word (in one or more senses): total 309.
>
> Shakespeare is the only recorded user of a word in a particular sense, but someone else uses the word in a different sense, though not until at least 25 years later: total 48.
>
> Shakespeare is the first of several people using a word, in one or more senses, but the later usages do not occur until at least 25 years later: total 1035.
>
> Shakespeare is the first of several people using a word, in one or more senses, but the later usages occur within 25 years: total 462.
>
> Shakespeare is the first of several people using a word, in one or more senses, whose later usages occur at least 25 years later; however, a different sense of the word occurs within 25 years: total 151.
>
> Shakespeare's is the first and only recorded usage, but the item is a corruption, such as a malapropism: total 10.
>
> Shakespeare is the first user of a word in a particular sense, but there is one or more earlier uses in another sense: total 185.

If all words are accepted, the total is 2200. However, only the first three categories are really strong candidates: 1392.

Shakespeare is the only recorded user of the word (in one or more senses): total 309

The strongest case for a Shakespearian coinage is when he is the only person recorded as using a word (in a particular word-class), in one or more senses, or on one or more occasions. (The proviso about word-class allows for such cases as *attorney* as a verb, where the noun use of the word dates from long before.)

abrook, acture, adoptedly, adoptious, a-hold, allayment, allottery, anthropophaginian, apathaton, appertainment, askance (v), attask, attemptable, attorney (v), auguring (a)

ballow, barful, bass (v), becomed, belee, belock, beloving (a), bepray, besort (n), besort (v), betumbled, birthdom, bitter-sweeting, bitume, boggler, bold-beating, bragless, braid (a), bubukle, budger

candle-holder, capocchia, carlot, casted, caudie, cern (v), chapeless, charge-house, chirurgeonly, cloistress, cloy (v 2 senses), cloyment, cockled, codding, co-mart, compulsative, conceptious, concernancy, concupy, confineless, confirmity, congreet, congrue, conspectuity, continuantly, convive, copataine, correctioner, counter-caster, counter-seal, crack-hemp, cubiculo, curdy (v), cyme

Dansker, demi-puppet, derogately, directitude, discandy, dishabit, disliken, disproperty, disvouch, dotant, down-gyved

eft (a), emballing, embarked, embrasure, empatron, empiricutic, emulate (a), emure, enacture, encave, enridged, enschedule, ensear, enshield (a), ensteep, escot (v), evil (n 2 senses), exceptless, expiate (a), exposture, exsufflicate, extincture

fashion-monging, fedarie, felicitate, fig (v), fit (v), flap-dragon (v), fleshment, frutify, fustilarian

gratulate (a), gull-catcher

half-checked, hardock, hay (n), heartling, hewgh, high-borne, Hobbididancce, hodge-pudding

incardinate, immask, immoment, immure (n), imperceiverant, implorator, importless, inaidable, infamonize, inherce, inhoop, injoint, insisture, insultment, intenible, interjoin, intrenchant, intrince, invised, irregulous

kickie-wickie

labras, land-damn, Lethied, looped

marcantant, meal (v), mered, misadventured, misbehaved, misdread (n), misgraffed, misprized, mistership, Moorship, moraller, mose (v), moulten, moy (n)

nayward, near-legged, necessitied, non-come, non-regardance

oathable, obliquie, obstruct (n), offendress, omittance, oneyers, out-crafty, outdwell, over-dyed, overgreen, over-office, overperch, overpost, over-ripen, overstink, overweathered

pannell (v), parling, pauser, phantasim, phese, phraseless, please-

man, plighter, portage, practisant, precipit, precurrer, predict (n), probal, pugging (a)

quatch, questant, questrist

razorable, recomforture, recountment, rejoindure, reputeless, restem, revengive, right-drawn, rug-headed

scamel, scrimer, self-substantial, sessa, sharded, signeur, signeury, skains mate, sleided, slish, so-forth, soil (n), sola, solidare, sortance, speciously, squire-like (adv), sternage, stricture, substractor, successantly, suffered, superscript (n), supervise (n), suppliant (a), suraddition, suum, swoltery, sympathized

tallow catch, temperality, testern, thoughten, tranect, twilled

uncape, uncheck, uncolted, uncuckolded, uncurbable, uncurse, undeeded, undercrest, under-fiend, under-hangman, under-honest, unfair (v), ungenitured, unhacked, unhaired, unimproved, unowed, unpay, unpinked, unplausive, unprovoke, unqualitied, unrecalling, unrecounted, unrecuring, unseeming, unseminared, unshout, unshrubbed, unsisting, unspoke, unsured, untempering, unweighing, unwit (v), unwrung, uplocked, uprighteously, upswarm (v)

vail (n 2 senses), varletto, vizament

wappened, water-rug, wealsman, well-allied, well-dealing, well-derived, well-desired, well-entered, well-forewarning, well-labouring, well-noted, well-possessed, well-sailing, well-saying, well-seeing, well-seeming, well-took, well-weighing, well-wished, wenchless, windring, wragged, wreakless, wroath

Shakespeare is the only recorded user of a word in a particular sense, but someone else uses the word in a different sense, though not until at least 25 years later: total 48.

These examples are very close to the first category above. My use of 25 years (= a generation) is discussed in *The Stories of English*. The [ ] date is the next recorded usage of the word in the different sense.

attributive (a) 1606 [1840]
becoming 1600/1606 [1853]
bedroom 1590 [1616]
bestill 1602 [1770]
bonnet (v) 1607 [1858]
brooded 1595 [1674]
cital 1596 [1760]
considered 1602 [1627]

demure (v) 1606 [1651]
despised 1592 (1667) [1450]
extracting 1601 [1654]
eye-glass 1611 [1664]
fated 1601 [1697]
fathomless 1606 [1638]
fitment 1608; 1611 [1851]
foxship 1607 [1863]
gibbet (v) 1597 [1646]
gnarling 1597 [1812]
half-cap 1607 [1893]
hob nob 1601 [1660]
impair (a) 1606 [1839]
jaded 1593 [1631]
jure 1596 [1818]
kitchen (v) 1590 [1721]
mid-season 1610 [1902]
observing (a) 1606 [1628]
offering 1596 [1656]
out-burn 1597 [1742]
over-stain 1595 [1885]
pilcher 1592 [1635]
protester 1601 [1651]
recollected 1601 [1628]
salt rheum 1590/1604 [1809 US]
scandalled 1610 [1639]
sea-wing 1606 [1681]
sedged 1610 [1688]
self-abuse 1605 [1728]
self-offence 1603 [1628]
spectatorship 1607 [1712]
stranger (v) 1605 [1863]
subcontract 1605 [1842]
tetter (n) 1607 [1911]
torcher 1601 [1891 US]
unbraided 1611 [1821]
uncomprehensive 1606 [1667]
unfolding 1603 [1821]
vastly 1593 [1664]
window (v) 1606 [1639]

Shakespeare is the first of several people using a word, in one or more senses, but the later usages do not occur until at least 25 years later: total 1035.

If he is the first to use a word in a particular sense, and his usage is at least a generation away from the next user, then there is very little difference with the first category above. A date followed by another in ( ) shows the next usage in that sense; - shows that there was no next

usage for that sense.

The more senses in which he uses a word (separated here by a semi-colon), the more likely it is that the usage is his.

The crucial point is the distance between S's use and the next recorded instance in any of its senses, i.e. in the first example it is 1602 to 1723.

abhorred 1602; 1605 (–; 1723)
abjectly 1588 (1622)
abodement 1593 (1651)
abruption 1606 (1652)
abutting 1599 (1674)
Academe 1588 (1642)
accessible 1610 (1667)
accoutred 1596/1601 (1652)
accuse (n) 1593 (1647)
accused 1593 (1728)
Acheron 1590 (1637)
acorned 1611 (1855)
acquired 1606 (1651)
acutely 1601 (1673)
added 1606 (1718)
adjunct (a) 1595/1600 (1826)
admiringly 1601 (1823)
Adon 1592 (1630)
adsum 1593 (1854)
advantaged 1603 (1654)
adversely 1607 (1881)
advertising (a) 1603 (1779)
affrighted 1604 (1702)
after-supper 1590 (1637)
agued 1607 (1787)
aidance 1593 (1633)
aidless 1607 (1637)
airless 1601 (1847)
alarm-bell 1597 (1641)
alarmed 1605 (1667)
allaying 1607 (1658)
allegiant 1613 (1848)
allicholly 1591/1598 (1736)
amazedly 1590/1605 (1640)
amazing 1593 (1659)
anchoring 1605 (1879)
anear 1608 (1669)
an-hungry 1607 (1681)
annexment 1602 (1824)
antre 1604 (1818)

appearer 1608 (1646)
apperil 1607 (1632)
applauding (a) 1607 (1704)
apple-john 1597 (1623)
argal 1602 (1861)
aroint 1605/1605 (1816)
arouse 1593 (1791)
arrivance 1604 (1646)
asinego 1606 (1714)
askant (pr) 1602 (1633)
assailable 1605 (1673)
assassination 1605 (1674)
assembled 1591 (1718)
assubjugate 1606 (1883)
atomy 1597 (1681)
attending 1588; 1592 (1720; 1793)
attest 1606 (1646)
avouch 1602 (1860)
awakening 1592 (1646)

back-sword-man 1597 (1857)
bail (v) 1600 (1852)
ballad-monger 1596 (1756)
bandying 1591 (1662)
barber (v) 1606 (1815)
barefaced 1590/1602; 1605 (1762; 1687)
baring 1601 (1753)
barky 1590 (1656)
barn (v) 1593 (1647)
based (a) 1610 (1817)
baseless 1610 (1815)
bass-viol 1590 (1638)
basta 1596 (1632)
basting 1590 (1720)
bated 1596 (1637)
batler 1600 (1865)
battered 1592 (1680)
batty 1590 (1883)
baubling 1601 (1849)
bawcock 1599 (1862)
beached 1590/1607 (1889)
be-all 1605 (1830)
bear-like 1605 (1663)
bedabble 1590 (1644)
bedazzle 1596 (1870)
beetle (v) 1602 (1798)
befortune 1591 (1855)
beggared 1599 (1790)
beguiling 1593 (1646)

behaved 1602 (1713)
behowl 1590 (1838)
Bellona 1605 (1667)
belonging 1603 (1867)
bemad 1605 (1655)
bemeet 1605 (1656)
bemock 1607/1610 (1798)
bemoil 1596 (1636)
bescreen 1592 (1657)
besmirch 1602 (1700)
besmirched 1599 (1864)
bethump 1595 (1657)
betrayed 1597 (1660)
betrim 1610 (1812)
bettering 1600 (1876)
betting 1599 (1855)
bewailing (a) 1613 (1862)
bewitchment 1607 (1830)
biddy 1601 (1875)
bifold 1609 (1818)
birthplace 1607 (1789)
blabbing 1593 (1637)
black man 1591 (1738)
black-browed 1590 (1687)
blastment 1602 (1803)
bloodied 1597 (1631)
blood-stained 1596 (1725)
blue-cap 1596 (1627)
blue-eyed 1610 (1656)
blue-veined 1593 (1797)
blusterer 1597 (1624)
bodikin 1598/1602 (1733)
boding 1593/1594 (1702)
bold-faced 1591 (1635)
bona-roba 1597 (1680)
bonded 1597 (1844)
bookful 1599 (1879)
botch (n) 1605 (1645)
bottled 1594 (1768)
bow-wow 1610 (1651)
boys'-play 1596 (1672)
breaking 1590/1593 (1655)
briareus 1606 (1852)
brimfulness 1599 (1891)
brisky 1590 (1894)
brooch (v) 1606 (1865)
broomstaff 1613 (1711)
bully-rook 1598 (1697)
bumbailiff 1601 (1638)

burdened 1594 (1697)
butchered 1594 (1837)

caged 1596; 1609 (1650; –)
calumniating 1606 (1711)
camping (a) 1601 (1872)
canary (v) 1588 (1812)
cannibally 1607 (1702)
canopy (v) 1600 (1698)
caparison (v) 1594; 1600 (1797; 1623)
caper (v) 1588 (1635)
capriccio 1601 (1634)
cased 1595 (1634)
casing 1605 (1812)
castigate 1607 (1665)
Cataian 1598/1601 (1630)
cater 1600 (1713)
cat-like 1600 (1789)
caudle 1607 (1672)
censuring (a) 1606 (1638)
centure 1595 (1624)
cerement 1602 (1820)
ceremoniously 1596 (1621)
chaffless 1611 (18??)
chaliced 1611 (1858)
champion (v) 1605 (1821)
changeful 1606 (1697)
channel (v) 1596 (1644)
chanson 1602 (1639)
chapless 1592/1602 (1812)
characterless 1606 (1830)
cheerer 1599 (1639)
cheese-paring 1597 (1771)
chidden 1606 (1651)
childness 1611 (1856)
chimney-top 1601 (1832)
chop-fallen 1602 (1711)
choppy 1605 (1858)
churchlike 1593 (1852)
Cimmerian 1588 (1797)
circummure 1603 (1636)
climate (v) 1611 (1849)
clod-poll 1601 (1817)
closing (a) 1610 (1667)
clot-poll 1606; 1611 (1632; –)
cloud-capped 1610 (1825)
cloyless 1606 (1813)
coign 1605 (1818)
cold-hearted 1606 (1742)

collected 1610 (1704)
collied 1590 (1634)
combless 1596 (1883)
co-mingle 1602 (1856)
committed 1593 (1649)
commutual 1602 (1627)
companion (v) 1606 (1803)
compassion 1588 (1627)
compelling (a) 1606 (1850)
comply 1602; 1604 (1628; 1634)
compunctious 1605 (1781)
condoling 1590 (1654)
confirmer 1595 (1626)
confix 1603 (1859)
conflicting 1607 (1667)
congregated 1601 (1667)
conquering 1591 (1651)
consanguineous 1601 (1656)
consigned 1606 (1754)
contaminated 1606 (1805)
contending 1592 (1676)
contentless 1607 (1675)
contriving (a) 1606 (1691)
control (n) 1590/1601; 1594 (1788; 1649)
copper-nose 1606 (1822)
corragio 1601/1610 (1850)
corresponsive 1606 (1658)
couching (a) 1596 (1816)
counted 1594 (1813)
counterfeiting (a) 1593 (1627)
coursing (a) 1599 (1735)
court-hand 1593 (1640)
cowed 1608 (1745)
crank (v) 1592/1596 (1830)
craven (v) 1611 (1645)
creating (a) 1611 (1810)
creating (n) 1605 (1715)
credent 1602; 1603/1611 (1800; -)
crestless 1591 (1828)
crimeful 1593/1602 (1877)
crimeless 1592 (1621)
crimson (v) 1601 (1743)
crushed 1599 (1795)
cuckoo-bud 1588 (1821)
cudgel (v) 1596; 1602 (1679; 1679)
cudgelling 1606 (1663)
culled 1588 (1665)
cullionly 1605 (1645)
curbed 1597 (1862)

cursing (a) 1599 (1892)

daisied 1611 (1720)
dangling 1593 (1635)
Dardan 1606 (1813)
Dardanian 1596 (1623)
darting (a) 1606 (1634)
dateless 1593 (1624)
dauntless 1593 (1667)
dawn 1599/1603 (1697)
dawning 1588 (1667)
dead man's fingers 1602 (1853)
deafened 1608 (1678)
deafening 1597 (1667)
deceptious 1606 (1789)
deep-mouthed 1595/1599 (1662)
defeated 1602 (1660)
definement 1602 (1867)
defunctive 1601 (1920)
delighted 1603/1604 (1634)
deluding 1596 (1649)
depositary 1605 (1712)
deracinate 1599/1606 (1659)
derived 1590 (1638)
despairing 1591 (1697)
destined 1597 (1637)
dewdrop 1590 (1667) [?1310]
dey-woman 1588 (1828)
diable 1598 (1765)
dialogue (v) 1597; 1607 (1781; 1685)
differency 1607 (1640)
ding (n) 1600 (1801)
disbench 1607 (1874)
discarded 1595 (1718)
disedge 1611 (1647)
dislimn 1606 (1826)
disorb 1606 (1800)
disproportion 1593 (1631)
dispurse 1593 (1625)
disquantity 1605 (1633)
disquietly 1605 (1630)
dissembly 1599 (1684)
disturbed 1592/1601 (1763)
disturbing 1592 (1812)
divest 1605 (1767)
dobbin 1596 (1862)
dog-weary 1596 (1699)
domineering 1588 (1683)
double-lock 1592 (1748)

doughy 1601 (1648)
dower (v) 1605 (1847)
dowerless 1605 (1768)
downstairs 1596/1597 (1631)
dragon's tail 1605 (1786)
droplet 1607 (1788)
dropsied 1601 (1631)
drug (v) 1605 (1828)
duello 1588 (1613)
duteous 1593/1594/1605 (1645)

East Indies 1598 (1667)
ecce 1596 (1665)
Edward 1598 (1817)
effectless 1588 (1673)
effuse (n) 1593 (1631)
elbow (v) 1605 (1673)
elf (v) 1605 (1721)
embound 1595 (1633)
embrace (n) 1592 (1633)
employer 1599 (1668)
emptying 1605 (1651)
enchafed 1604 (1801)
enchantingly 1600 (1748)
encompassment 1602 (1882)
encrimsoned 1597 (1824)
encroaching 1593 (1649)
end (v) 1607 (1632)
end-all 1605 (1876)
enfranchisement 1595/1601 (1626)
enhearse 1600 (1633)
enmesh 1604 (1669)
enrapt 1606 (1790)
ensky 1603 (1763)
enswathe 1597 (1827)
entame 1600 (1768)
enthrone 1606 (1651)
entwist 1590 (1683)
Erebus 1596 (1667)
even-handed 1605 (1843)
eventful 1600 (1781)
exacting 1603 (1716)
excitement 1604 (1633)
expertness 1601 (1682)
expressure 1598/1601/1606 (1656)
extolment 1602 (1640)
eye-beam 1588 (1639)
eye-wink 1598 (1818)

facinorious 1601 (1636)
fairyland 1590 (1665)
fanged 1602 (1670)
fangless 1597 (1823)
fap 1598 (1818)
far-off 1590 (1632)
fathered 1601/1605 (1856)
fat-witted 1596 (1797)
featureless 1600 (1860)
fee-faw-fum 1605 (1711)
fern-seed 1596 (1630)
festinate 1605 (1822)
festinately 1588 (1886)
fielded 1607 (1808)
fiendlike 1605 (1716)
fill (n) 1596; 1606 (1648; 1632)
film (v) 1602 (1656)
fineless 1604 (1839)
finless 1596 (1775)
fishify 1592 (1768)
fitful 1605 (1744)
fives 1596 (1639)
fixture 1598 (1791)
flame-coloured 1596 (1647)
flaw (v) 1613 (1638)
flawed 1605 (1632)
fleckled 1592 (1700)
fleer (n) 1604 (1654)
footfall 1610 (1826)
foppish 1605 (1657)
foregone 1600/1604 (1656)
forgetive 1597 (1800)
forging 1592 (1679)
foul-mouthed 1595 (1655)
founded 1605 (1671)
foutre 1597 (1622)
Franciscan (a) 1592 (1667)
Frenchwoman 1593 (1870)
fronting (a) 1597 (1711)
full-hearted 1611 (1851)
futurity 1604 (1664)

Galen 1598 (1652) [?1369]
gallian 1591/1611 (1630)
galloping (n) 1605 (1687)
gally (v) 1605 (1704)
gentlefolk 1594 (1732)
ghastly 1593 (1813)
gibber (v) 1604 (1791)

girded 1599 (1627) [an earlier citation in *Beowulf*]
glass eye 1605 (1639)
glaze 1601 (1816)
glib (v) 1611 (1640)
glow (n) 1600 (1727)
gnarled 1603 (1803)
go-between 1598 (1631)
goldenly 1600 (1840)
gormandizing 1597 (1652)
grannam 1597 (1625)
grass-plot 1610 (1685)
gravel-blind 1596 (1818)
graveless 1606 (1855)
graze 1604 (1701)
green-eyed 1596/1604 (1627)
grey-coated 1592 (1853)
grumbling (a) 1596 (1635)
grumbling (n) 1610 (1645)
guessing (a) 1605 (1668)
guiding (a) 1601 (1671)
guiltily 1594 (1662)

half-cheek 1588 (1860)
halt (n) 1599 (1775)
hatch (n) 1597/1602 (1624)
heart-sore 1591 (1856)
heart-struck 1605 (1667)
heaving (a) 1606 (1697)
hedge-pig 1605 (1889)
hell-born 1593 (1667)
Hellespont 1591 (1657)
herblet 1611 (1814)
herb-woman 1608 (1642)
hic jacet 1601 (1654)
high-day (int) 1610 (1687)
highmost 1592 (1688)
high-pitched 1593 (1875)
high-reaching 1594 (1667)
high-wrought 1604 (1702)
hillo 1602 (1751)
hinge (v) 1607 (1864)
hoarding (a) 1595 (1641)
hoarding (n) 1593 (1639)
home-keeping 1591 (1826)
homo 1596 (1649)
honoured 1601 (1644)
hoo (int) 1606/1607; 1607 (1883; 1851)
horridly 1602 (1660)
hostile 1594/1596 (1659)

hot-blooded 1598 (1837)
hum (int) 1596/1598 (1847)
hunchbacked 1598 (1635)

idle (v) 1592 (1882)
ignobly 1591/1607 (1718)
ill-boding 1591 (1641)
ill-got 1593 (1693)
ill-starred 1604 (1763)
ill-tempered 1601; 1601 (1661; 1825)
illume 1602 (1788)
ill-used 1594/1600 (1656)
immediacy 1605 (1658)
imminence 1606 (1882)
impaint 1596 (1729)
impartment 1602 (1647)
impede 1605 (1698)
impleach 1597 (1829)
import (n) 1588; 1601 (1647; 1685)
importantly 1611 (1647)
impress (n) 1602/1606 (1758)
impress (v) 1596/1605 (1652)
impressed 1605 (1768)
inaudible 1601 (1626)
inauspicious 1592 (1635)
incarnadine 1605 (1639)
inched 1605 (1651)
inclip 1608 (1855)
incorpsed 1602 (1828)
increasing (a) 1597 (1677)
indart 1598 (1882)
indirection 1595/1601; 1602 (1710; 1634)
indistinguishable 1606 (1873)
indistinguished 1605 (1646)
inscroll 1596 (1898)
insculpture (n) 1607 (1646)
inshell 1607 (1814)
instinctively 1610 (1774)
insulter 1592 (1714)
insulting 1591 (1697)
insuppressive 1601 (1742)
interchangement 1601 (1796)
intertissued 1599 (1652)
intruding 1602 (1830)
inurn 1602 (1711)
inventorial 1604 (1830)
inviting (a) 1600; 1604 (1684; 1667)
irreconciled 1599 (1691)
iterance 1604 (1850)

jaunce (n) 1598 (1875)
jaunce (v) 1593/1598 (1792)
jig (v) 1588; 1604 (1633; 1713)
jointress 1602 (1697)
joint-ring 1604 (1703)
judgement-day 1591 (1642)
juiced 1592 (1626)
Juno-like 1607 (1896)

kecksy 1599 (1800)
keech 1613 (1773)
kingdomed 1606 (1838)
king-killer 1607 (1681)
kissing 1590 (1784)
kitchen-wench 1590 (1678)

label (v) 1601 (1786)
lack-lustre 1600 (1782)
lagging 1593 (1655)
languageless 1606 (1848)
lapse (v) 1601; 1611 (–; 1649)
laughable 1596 (1693)
leaky 1606/1610 (1677)
leap-frog 1599 (1672)
leer (n) 1598 (1667)
lengthened 1594/1611 (1705)
lethargy (v) 1605 (1769)
lewdster 1598 (1839)
logger-headed 1596 (1643)
lonely 1607 (1634)
loo (int) 1605/1606 (1681)
looked (a) 1593 (1666)
looking 1590 (1756)
lovered 1597 (1879)
love-token 1590 (1626) [an earlier citation in Beowulf]
lower (v) 1606 (1680)
low-spirited 1588 (1655)
lune 1611 (1778)
lustihood 1599/1606 (1794)

majestically 1596 (1670)
malignancy 1601 (1656)
mammock (v) 1607 (1641)
mangling 1592 (1794)
manifested 1603 (1653)
mansionry 1605 (1876)
marriage-bed 1590 (1675)
melted 1599 (1660)

mended 1595 (1859)
merited 1603 (1787)
miching malicho 1602 (1836)
militarist 1601 (1860)
milk-livered 1605 (1760)
millioned 1600 (1749)
minimus 1590 (1879)
minutely 1605 (1668)
miracle (v) 1611 (1656)
misplaced 1595 (1685)
misquote 1596 (1699)
mistaking 1596 (1688)
mistful 1599 (187?)
mist-like 1592 (1813)
mistreading 1596 (1647)
moble 1603 (1655)
mockable 1600 (1837)
monster (v) 1605; 1607 (–; 1833)
monumental 1601; 1604; 1606 (1657; 1647; 1632)
moonbeam 1590 (1626)
morris 1590 (1706)
mortifying 1596 (1638)
motionless 1599 (1634)
mountain snow 1592/1602 (1845)
mountebank (v) 1607 (1702)
mousing (a) 1605 (1904)
moved 1592/1610 (1644)
muddy (v) 1601 (1652)
mull (v) 1607 (1687)
multipotent 1606 (1632)

narrow-mouthed 1600 (1629)
nayword 1598; 1601 (1828; 1664)
neat's tongue 1596 (1626)
neglected 1600 (1634)
neglection 1591/1608 (1628)
neighbouring 1601 (1641)
Nemean 1588/1602 (1649)
nervy 1607 (1671)
Nessus 1606 (1835)
Nestor 1588 (1614)
never-dying 1596 (1633)
new-create 1604 (1680)
new-devised 1588 (1637)
new-fallen 1592; 1596/1600 (1621; –)
new-form 1610 (1675)
new-risen 1591/1596 (1650)
newsmonger 1596 (1654)
new-sprung 1592 (1622)

night-fly 1597 (1767)
night-owl 1593/1601 (1691)
night-walking 1594 (1641)
night-wandering 1593 (1651)
nodding 1590 (1634)
noiseless 1601/1605 (1667)
nook-shotten 1599 (1688)
Norweyan 1605 (1817)
notedly 1603 (1797)
novum 1588 (1614)

oar (v) 1610 (1725)
obduracy 1597 (1670)
obscenely 1588 (1642)
obscured 1590/1598 (1763)
observingly 1599 (1828)
offenceful 1603 (1970)
onwards 1600 (1697)
operant 1602/1607 (1677)
operate 1606/1611 (1671)
opposeless 1605 (1789)
opposing 1608 (1792)
oppugnancy 1606 (1711)
opulency 1607 (1692)
orbed 1597/1601 (1649)
Ottomite 1604 (1818)
outbreak 1602 (1818)
outbreathed 1597 (1760)
outdared 1593 (1644)
outfrown 1605 (1807)
outgrow 1594 (1655)
out-Herod 1602 (1800)
outlustre 1611 (1655)
outpeer 1611 (1838)
outpray 1593 (1666)
out-prize 1611 (1657)
outroar 1606 (1649)
outscold 1595 (1764)
outsleep 1590 (1814)
outstay 1600 (1635)
outswear 1588/1596 (1690)
outsweeten 1611 (1867)
outswell 1606 (1809)
out-talk 1596 (1672)
out-villain 1601 (1814)
outvoice 1599 (1681)
outweigh 1597 (1646)
overcanopy 1590 (1623)
over-credulous 1605 (1651)

over-eye 1588 (1638)
overglance 1588/1599 (1883)
overgrowth 1602 (1667)
overhang 1599 (1628)
over-kind 1611 (1899)
over-leaven 1602 (1644)
overname 1596 (1902)
overparted 1588 (1614)
overpay 1601/1611 (1702)
over-picture 1606 (1856)
overpower 1593 (1639)
overrate 1611 (1674)
over-red 1605 (1826)
overscutched 1597 (1813)
oversize 1602 (1878)
oversnow 1600 (1697)
over-tedious 1591 (1668)
overteem 1602 (1818)
overview 1588 (1644)
ox-head 1595 (1703)

pageant (v) 1606 (1641)
pageantry 1608 (1656)
paiocke 1602 (1899)
pale-faced 1592 (1635)
pander (v) 1602 (1666)
parkward 1598 (1886)
parti- 1588 (1638)
partner (v) 1611 (1819)
pash (n) 1611 (1674)
pebbled 1600 (1720)
pellet (v) 1597/1606 (1870)
pelting (n) 1605 (1830)
peregrinate 1588 (1853)
persistency 1597 (1672)
persistive 1606 (1757)
personating 1607 (1695)
perusal 1600; 1602 (1644; 1653)
petition (v) 1607 (1637) [1631, 1634]
Phoebe 1590 (1681) [?1390]
pibble-pabble 1599 (1953)
pig-nut 1610 (1693)
pioned 1610 (1650)
placcate 1588; 1599 (1632; 1822)
plantage 1606 (1825)
pleached 1606 (1896)
plodder 1588 (1691)
plodding 1588 (1645)
plumpy 1606 (1755)

posied 1597 (1720)
pouncet-box 1596 (1820)
prabble 1599 (1883)
preceptial 1599 (1837)
precurse 1602 (1817)
predecease 1593 (1828)
predeceased 1599 (1880)
preformed 1601 (1866)
preparedly 1606 (1647)
presented 1592 (1631)
preyful 1588 (1624)
primogenitive 1606 (1842)
primy 1602 (1828)
prison-gate 1590 (1794)
profitless 1599 (1643)
promising 1601 (1654)
prompture 1603 (1633)
propertied 1606 (1633)
property (v) 1595; 1607 (1758; 1833)
prophetic 1595/1605; 1604 (1647; 1632)
proposer 1602 (1714)
protesting (n) 1599 (1702)
protractive 1606 (1687)
published 1605 (1644)
pudency 1611 (1794)
pulpiter 1600 (1681)
pupil age 1596/1607 (1631)
puppy-dog 1595 (1664)
purr (v) 1601 (1801)
push-pin 1588 (1645)

qualifying 1606 (1704)
quartering 1591 (1692)
queen (v) 1611/1613 (1790)

radiance 1601/1605 (1667)
ransomless 1588 (1645)
ranting (a) 1598 (1706)
rat-catcher 1592 (1623)
rated 1595/1596 (1758)
ratifier 1602 (1742)
raw-boned 1591 (1638)
recanting 1593/1607 (1648)
receiving 1599 (1634)
reclusive 1599 (1661)
regardfully 1607 (1647)
regreet 1595; 1596 (1631; 1639)
relenting 1593 (1630)
reliance 1607 (1687)

relume 1604 (1726)
remarked 1613 (1771)
remediate (a) 1605 (1906)
repair (n) 1595/1611; 1600 (1647; 1638)
repasture 1588 (1614)
repeated 1611 (1642)
replenished 1594/1611 (1641)
reprobance 1604 (1878)
required 1601/1604 (1720)
resurvey (v) 1599 (1661)
revealing 1593 (1927)
reverb 1605 (1854)
reverted 1590 (1621)
reviving 1592; 1601 (1667; 1656)
revokement 1613 (1651)
revolted 1593/1611 (1667)
reword 1597; 1602 (–; 1874)
right (n) 1590 (1634)
riveted 1606 (1753)
rondure 1600 (1868)
rooky 1605 (1800)
rootedly 1610 (1653)
rose-cheeked 1592/1607 (1642)
rose-lipped 1604 (1750)
routed 1606 (1678)
rubied 1608 (1634)
rubious 1601 (1819)
rumination 1600 (1658)
rumourer 1607 (1886)
runnion 1598/1605 (1655)

sacked 1593 (1632)
sacrificial 1607 (1656)
satisfying 1604 (1725)
savagery 1595; 1599 (1794; 1867)
scaffoldage 1606 (1889)
scarfed 1596 (1837)
scholarly (adv) 1598 (1868)
schooldays 1590/1594 (1798)
scrippage 1600 (1812)
scuffle (n) 1606 (1645)
sea-like (adv) 1606 (1864)
seamy 1604 (1837)
seated 1605 (1667)
sect 1604 (1864)
seemer 1603 (1647)
self-killed 1600 (1671)
self-slaughter 1602 (1649)
self-slaughtered 1593 (1621)

semblative 1601 (1814)
sepulchre (v) 1591; 1605 (1616; 1634)
sequestered 1600 (1766)
servant (v) 1607 (1632)
seven years 1593 (1647)
severing 1592 (1635)
shard-born 1605 (1830)
sheeted 1604 (1630)
sheltered 1594 (1671)
sherris 1597 (1876)
shifted 1595 (1648)
shipwrecking 1605 (1671)
should (n) 1604 (1854)
shudder (n) 1607 (1824)
shunless 1607 (1897)
sickly (v) 1602 (1637)
silliness 1604 (1634)
silverly 1595 (1818)
silver-white 1588 (1715)
sire (v) 1611 (1835)
sister (v) 1608 (1748)
sistering 1597 (1625)
skimble-skamble (a) 1596 (1630)
skim-milk 1596 (1712)
skirted 1598; 1605 (1895; 1730)
skyey 1603 (1799)
skyish 1602 (1816)
slab (a) 1605 (1844)
sledded 1602 (1821)
slickly 1596 (1973)
slightness 1607 (1691)
slippered 1600 (1837)
sliver (v) 1605/1605 (1654)
slug-a-bed 1592 (1648)
sluggardize 1591 (1798)
smirched 1599/1599 (1746)
smutch (v) 1611 (1655)
snail-slow 1596 (1803)
sneak-cup 1596 (1673)
sneap (n) 1597 (1876)
sneaping 1588/1611 (1882)
soaring (a) 1607 (1665)
soiled 1605 (1811)
solicit (n) 1611 (1639)
soliciting (a) 1605 (1704)
soundless 1601 (1663)
sowl 1607 (1636)
sphered 1606 (1820)
spilth 1607 (1812)

spirit-stirring 1604 (1740)
spleenful 1588; 1593 (1631; 1616)
splitting (a) 1593/1606 (1624)
sprag 1598 (1810)
springhalt 1613 (1639)
squabble (v) 1604 (1677)
squeaking (n) 1596 (1653)
stealthy 1605 (1728)
still-stand 1597 (1837)
stitchery 1607 (1780)
stone jug 1596 (1906)
streaked 1596/1611 (1656)
strewment 1602 (1834)
struck 1594 (1629)
successfully 1588; 1600 (1647; -)
sucked 1600 (1667)
sufficing 1606 (1640)
suffocating 1604 (1667)
suggesting 1591 (1828)
sully (n) 1602 (1683)
sumless 1599 (1667)
summer-cloud 1605 (1671)
superflux 1605 (1632)
superserviceable 1605 (1815)
surfeited 1605/1610 (1784)
surviver 1602 (1634)
surviving 1593; 1593 (1660; 1820)
sustaining (a) 1605/1610 (1817)
swag-bellied 1604 (1748)
swallowed 1600 (1667)
swan's-down 1606 (1807)
swelled 1611 (1670)
sweltered 1605 (1814)

tamely 1597 (1631)
tangled 1590 (1634)
tanling 1611 (1830)
tardily 1597 (1791)
tardiness 1605 (1751)
Tarpeian 1607 (1671)
tearing (a) 1606 (1686)
tempest-tossed 1592/1605 (1681)
tender-minded 1605 (1907)
tented 1604 (1725)
tested 1603 (1689)
testril 1601 (1905)
Thessalian (a) 1590 (1667)
thick-sighted 1592 (1628)
threateningly 1601 (1819)

three-foot 1590 (1675)
three-inch 1596 (1626)
three-legged 1596 (1685)
threnos 1601 (1840)
throw (v) 1610 (1683)
thumb-ring 1596 (1639)
thunder-bearer 1605 (1661)
time-honoured 1593 (1751)
Timon 1588 (1711)
tirrit 1597 (1892)
tithed 1607 (1845)
tod (v) 1611 (1797)
toged 1604 (1862)
tortive 1606 (1656)
trade-fallen 1596 (1631)
tranced 1605 (1665)
triplex 1601 (1654)
trippingly 1590/1602 (1819)
triumviry 1588 (1656)
true-born 1591/1593 (1645)
true-bred 1596 (1690)
twin-brother 1598 (1727)

umbered 1599 (1624)
unaching 1607 (1721)
unaneled 1602 (1740)
unauspicious 1601 (1656)
unbefitting 1588 (1659)
unbless 1600 (1631)
unbloodied 1593 (1791)
unbonneted 1604/1605 (1818)
unbookish 1604 (1644)
unbreeched 1611 (1800)
unbuild 1607 (1642)
unchanging 1593 (1625)
uncharmed 1592 (1757)
unchary 1601 (1818)
unclaimed 1600 (1738)
unclew 1607 (1645)
unclog 1607 (1678)
unconfinable 1598 (1669)
undeaf 1593 (1933)
underpeep 1611 (1827)
under-skinker 1596 (1631)
undeserver 1597 (1630)
undinted 1606 (1636)
undistinguishable 1590 (1645)
undivulged 1605 (1854)
undreamed 1611 (1827) [1636]

unduteous 1598 (1645)
unearthly 1611 (1795)
uneducated 1588 (1676)
unexperient 1597 (1750)
unexpressive 1600 (1629)
unfamed 1606 (1724)
unfathered 1597 (1726)
unfilial 1611 (1648)
unfix 1597/1605 (1775)
unfool 1598 (1632)
unforfeited 1596 (1663)
unfrequented 1588 (1653)
ungained 1606 (1860)
ungalled 1590/1602 (1621)
ungored 1604 (1647)
ungravely 1607 (1698)
ungrown 1592/1596 (1633)
unhand 1602 (1655)
unhatched(a1) 1601 (1794)
unhelpful 1593 (1643)
unhidden 1599 (1829)
unkinged 1593 (1818)
unkinglike 1611 (1892)
unlicked 1593 (1618)
unlincensed 1608 (1685)
unlink 1600 (1635)
unmeritable 1594/1601 (1797)
unmitigated 1599 (1814)
unmusical 1607 (1637)
unmuzzle 1600 (1639)
unnerved 1602 (1659)
unpitifully 1598 (1709)
unpolicied 1606 (1654)
unpolluted 1602 (1653)
unpossessing 1605 (1757)
unpregnant 1602/1603 (1868)
unpremeditated 1591 (1619)
unprevailing 1602 (1693)
unprofited 1601 (1796)
unpruned 1588; 1593 (1619; 1621)
unraked 1598 (1659)
unreal 1605 (1645)
unreversed 1591 (1648)
unrivalled 1591 (1667)
unscratched 1595 (1667)
unsex 1605 (1793)
unshrinking 1605 (1706)
unshunnable 1604 (1839)
unshunned 1603 (1648)

unslipping 1606 (1822)
unsmirched 1602 (1784)
unsolicited 1588/1613 (1680)
unsphere 1611 (1643)
unstooping 1593 (1816)
unsullied 1588 (1621)
unswayable 1607 (1945)
unswear 1595/1596 (1640)
untalked 1592 (1669)
untender 1605/1611 (1678)
untented 1605 (1822)
unthread 1595 (1634)
untimbered 1606 (1814)
untreasure 1600 (1819)
unvarnished 1604 (1780)
unvulnerable 1607 (1666)
unwedgeable 1603 (1802)
unwept 1594 (1633)
unwhipped 1605 (1732)
unyielding 1592 (1724)
up-pricked 1592 (1777)
uproar (v) 1605 (1811)
uproused 1592 (1796)
upstairs 1596 (1658)
upturned 1592 (1797)
urging 1590 (1615)
useful 1595; 1606 (1646; 1634)
useless 1593 (1623)
ushering 1588 (1613)

vagrom 1599 (1863)
valueless 1595 (1684)
varied 1588/1588 (1718)
varletry 1606 (1757)
vastidity 1603 (1812)
vaulting 1605 (1637)
versal 1592 (1664)
viewless 1603 (1634)
villagery 1590 (1822)
violated 1593/1600 (1625)
visiting (a) 1606 (1710)
votary 1603 (1639)
vulnerable 1605 (1696)

wafture 1601 (1742)
waned 1593 (1640)
war-proof 1599 (1777)
warranted 1600/1603/1605 (1693)
warring 1608 (1697)

war-worn 1599 (1757)
watch-case 1597 (1671)
watch-dog 1610 (1770)
water-drop 1593/1606; 1605 (1821; 1818)
water-fly 1606 (1655)
waverer 1592 (1640)
weather-fend 1610 (1788)
week (int) 1588 (1719)
well-accomplished 1588 (1650)
well-behaved 1598 (1633)
well-bred 1597 (1634)
well-composed 1606 (1651)
well-descended 1611 (1650)
well-divided 1606 (1634)
well-educated 1588 (1704)
well-famed 1606 (1870)
well-fitted 1588 (1656)
well-flowered 1592 (1845)
well-married 1592/1600 (1741)
well-painted 1593/1604 (1901)
well-reputed 1591/1601 (1642)
well-respected 1596 (1633)
well-saved 1600 (1851)
well-warranted 1603 (1644)
well-won 1596 (1786)
wenching (a) 1606 (1719)
wheeled 1606 (1633)
whereuntil 1588 (1818)
white-bearded 1596 (1914)
wifelike (a) 1613 (1796)
wrack 1591 (1666) [error for rack]
writing 1592 (1711)

Xantippe 1596 (1691)

yellow (v) 1600 (1629)
yelping 1591/1623 (1664)
yoking 1592 (1643)
young-eyed 1596 (1777)

Shakespeare is the first of several people using a word, in one or more senses, but the later usages occur within 25 years: total 462.

Shakespeare is the first recorded user of a word in a particular sense, but other people use the same word-sense either in the same year or up to (but not including) 25 years of his usage. In such cases we might reasonably conclude that the usage was current. ( ) shows the date of the next usage of the word by someone else. [ ] contains the date of

any related senses which fall in between these two dates.

abode (v) 1593/1603 (1603)
abstemious 1610 (1632) [1624]
adulterate 1590/1594 (1607) [1592]
affecting (a) 1598 (1611)
after-time 1597 (1603)
a-height 1605 (1622)
a-high-lone 1597 (1604)
ajax 1588 (1596)
ambuscado 1592 (1598)
anchovy 1596 (1620)
apoplex (v) 1602 (1624)
arch-villain 1603 (1623)
assailing (a) 1592 (1592)
atomy 1591 (1605) [1595]
attorneyship 1591 (1598)

bald-pated 1603 (1606)
bandit 1593 (1594)
bateless 1593 (1595)
beachy 1597 (1621)
bemonster 1605 (1608)
benet (v) 1602 (1614)
beseech (n) 1606 (1625)
bet (v) 1597 (1600)
bewhore 1604 (1623)
black-faced 1592; 1594 (1611; 1773)
blood-sucking 1593 (1601)
blue coat 1593 (1598)
bodement 1605 (1613)
boot (n2) 1593/1599 (1596)
boundless 1592 (1592)
bow-hand 1588 (1596)
braggartism 1591 (1601)
buck-washing 1598 (1611)
bump (n1) 1592 (1611)
buzz (int) 1602 (1608)
buzz (n1) 1605 (1612)
by-room 1596 (1615)

cacodemon 1594 (1594) [1398]
calf-skin 1590/1595 (1604)
candle-waster 1599 (1599)
canopied 1593 (1611)
carbonadoed (a) 1601 (1615)
casket (v) 1601 (1603)
character (v) 1591/1600; 1602 (1609; 1641)
charmingly 1610 (1611)

charneco 1593 (1594)
childed 1605 (1615)
chimney-piece 1611 (1622)
choir (v) 1596 (1610)
chuck (n2) 1588/1599 (1607)
circling 1588 (1611)
clack-dish 1603 (1608)
clamour (v2) 1611 (1630)
clang (n) 1596 (1615)
clangor 1593 (1605)
clyster-pipe 1604 (1622)
cock-shut 1594 (1603)
commeddle 1602 (1612)
commixture 1588/1593 (1601) [1592]
compact 1591; 1590 (1597; 1652)
compeer 1605 (1615)
conceitless 1591 (1613)
condolement 1602; 1608 (1602; 1670)
conflux 1606 (1612)
conjointly 1601 (1615)
consort 1588; 1590 (1609; 1611) [1588, 1590, 1594, 1599]
countless 1588/1592 (1607)
court-cupboard 1592 (1606)
courtship 1588; 1592; 1593; 1596 (1601; 1630; 1638; 1676)
cow (v) 1605 (1616)
critic 1588 (1598)
crop-ear 1596 (1618)
crossly 1593 (1596)

daff (v) 1596/1599/1599; 1597/1606; 1604 (–; 1601; –)
dapple (v) 1599 (1620)
dareful 1605 (1614)
day-bed 1594 (1613)
day's-work 1594 (1610)
dedicated 1600 (1611)
deem (n) 1606 (1629)
defeat (n) 1599/1602; 1599 (1621; 1645)
defunction 1599 (1617)
despite (pr) 1593 (1602)
devote (a) 1596 (1597)
devoted 1594 (1611) [1600]
dexteriously 1601 (1605)
dickens 1598 (1600)
direness 1605 (1610)
disgraceful 1591 (1615) [1597]
disgracious 1594 (1611) [1598]
dishearten 1599 (1606)
dishonoured 1603/1605 (1611)
dishorn 1598 (1603)

dismask 1588 (1599)
dispose (n) 1590; 1606 (1594; 1609)
distilment 1602 (1611)
distractedly 1597/1601 (1608)
distrustful 1591 (1600)
disturb (n) 1594 (1597)
disvalue 1603 (1605)
dog's-leather 1593 (1611)
down-fallen 1596 (1602)
downtrod 1596 (1606)
Dowsabel 1590 (1593)
drab (v) 1602 (1624)
drollery 1597; 1610 (1606; 1614)
dry-nurse 1598 (1618) [1614]
duellist 1592 (1616)

edged 1591 (1593)
effigies 1600 (1615)
elf-lock 1592 (1596)
embraced 1596 (1599)
employment 1593; 1595; 1597/1598 (1658; 1603; 1607)
encage 1593 (1595)
enfetter 1604 (1611)
engrafted 1600 (1611)
enjoyer 1600 (1607)
enrank 1591 (1610)
entreasure 1597 (1610)
enwheel 1604 (1621)
eryngo 1598 (1599)
exhale 1594; 1599 (1611; 1601)
exhibiter 1599 (1613)
eye-ball (n) 1592 (1607)
eyestring 1601 (1607)

fading (n) 1611 (1611)
fair-faced 1588; 1595 (1607; 1616)
fantastico 1597 (1600)
farm-house 1598 (1603)
fashionable 1606 (1609) [1607, 1608]
fer (v) 1599 (1611)
fever (v) 1606 (1624)
figo 1599 (1600)
fire-eyed 1596 (1601)
fire-new 1594 (1599)
flap-dragon (n) 1588 (1599)
flewed 1590 (1592)
flirt-gill 1592 (1613)
fluxive 1597 (1605)
fly-bitten 1597 (1598)

fortune-teller 1590 (1612)
forward (v) 1596 (1605)
foster-nurse 1600 (1607)
frampold 1598 (1600)
freezing (a) 1611 (1625)
French crown 1590 (1599)
fretful 1593; 1602 (1594; 1632)
furrowed 1599 (1615)

Galloway 1597 (1597)
gangrene (v) 1607 (1626) [1614]
gaping (a) 1588 (1607)
generous 1588; 1588 (1603; 1656)
gloomy 1588 (1602) [1590]
glove (v) 1597 (1606)
glutton (v) 1600 (1602)
gnarl (v) 1593 (1596)
Golgotha 1593 (1604)
Goliath 1591 (1607)
graced 1593/1605 (1605)
greasily 1588 (1607)
grime (n) 1590 (1612)
guardage 1604 (1621)
gust (n1) 1588/1600 (1612)

happy(v) 1600 (1600)
hare-finder 1599 (1611)
hawking (a) 1601 (1601)
heart-burning (a) 1588 (1590)
helm (v2) 1603 (1607)
high-lone 1597 (1602)
hint (n) 1604/1610/1611; 1604 (1621; 1609)
Hiren 1597 (1598)
hollo (int) 1588 (1589)
homespun (n) 1590 (1604)
honeyless 1601 (1609)
honey-tongued 1588 (1598)
horn-book 1588 (1589)
hovering (a) 1611 (1635) [1630]
howl (n) 1599; 1605 (1697; 1605)
hurly 1596 (1600)
hurricano (n) 1605/1606 (1627)
hurry (v) 1590/1591; 1592; 1595 (1602; 1601; 1621)
hush (a) 1602 (1607)

idle-headed 1598 (1614) [1599]
impartial 1593; 1597 (1601; 1620)
impose (n) 1591 (1605)
incony 1588 (1592)

increaseful 1593 (1599)
individable 1602 (1602)
infectiously 1606 (1612)
injurer 1595 (1611)
inlay (v) 1596 (1606) [1598]
inship 1591 (1615)
insinew 1597 (1611)
insinuating 1591 (1592)
instate 1603 (1614) [1613]
insteep (v) 1599/1604 (1611)
intercepter 1601 (1611)
interchain 1590 (1603)
interposer 1596 (1617)

Jack-a-Lent 1598; 1598 (1604; 1654)
jade (v) 1601/1613; 1606 (1626; 1615)
jaunt (n) 1592 (1599)
jet (v2) 1588/1594 (1590)
Joan 1588/1595 (1612)
juvenal 1588 (1607)

knit (n) 1596 (1603)

lady-bird 1592 (1599)
lady-smock 1588 (1597)
lamely 1591/1594 (1599)
lament (n) 1591 (1592)
land-rat 1596 (1609)
law (int) 1588 (1602)
lieutenantry 1604/1606 (1604)
lip (v) 1604/1606 (1605)
list (n6) 1602/1606/1613 (1622)
livery (v) 1597 (1611)
loggerhead 1588 (1595)
long-legged 1590 (1592)
love-letter 1598 (1622) [1240]
luggage 1596 (1596)
lugged (a1) 1596 (1598)
lustick 1601 (1607)

madame 1599 (1599)
madcap 1588 (1598) [1589]
Madeira 1596 (1612)
malefaction 1602 (1624)
manager 1588/1590 (1598)
marrowless (a1) 1605 (1607)
masterpiece 1605 (1605)
Mephistopheles 1598 (1598)
metamorphize 1591 (1596)

mewl (v) 1600 (1611)
mimic (n) 1590 (1599)
misgiving (n) 1601 (1612)
Monarcho 1588 (1596)
Monmouth 1599 (1605)
montant 1598/1599 (1598)
moral (v) 1600 (1608)
mothy 1596 (1598)
mountaineer 1610 (1625)
mournfully 1607 (1611)
movingly 1591 (1611)
muffled 1593 (1599)
murdering piece 1602 (1603)
muset 1592 (1595)
mutineer (n) 1610 (1630)

naiad 1610 (1622)
neglectingly 1596 (1616)
negotiate 1599 (1601)
new-built 1596 (1597)
Newgate 1596 (1600)
niggard (v) 1600; 1601 (1609; -)
nimble-footed 1598 (1618)
numbered 1611 (1628)

obsequiously 1594 (1608) [1599]
ode 1588 (1589)
off-cap 1604 (1606)
offenceless 1604 (1611)
orange-tawny 1590 (1594)
outdare 1596; 1607 (1613; 1674)
outlook (v) 1595 (1600)
outsell 1611 (1625)
outstare 1596 (1602)
out-tongue 1604 (1607)
overblown (a1) 1596 (1601)
over-cool 1597 (1616)
over-veil 1591 (1606)

palliament 1588 (1593)
palmy (a) 1602 (1617)
passado 1588 (1598)
paternal 1605 (1614) [1611]
peaking 1598 (1622)
pedant 1588 (1599) [1596]
pedantical (a1) 1588 (1603)
peeping (n2) 1593 (1593)
pendulous 1605 (1605)
perplex (v) 1595/1604 (1611)

picked-hatch 1598 (1599)
pious 1602; 1603/1605 (1628; 1616)
pip (n2) 1596 (1620) [1604]
poniard (n) 1588 (1590)
pooh (int) 1602 (1604)
poppering 1592 (1609) [?1529]
portcullis (v) 1593 (1611)
premeditated 1590 (1593)
prevailment 1590 (1599)
pribble-prabble 1598 (1615)
priceless 1593 (1607)
printless 1610 (1634)
prodigiously 1595 (1605)
Promethean (a) 1588 (1597)
Prometheus 1588 (1595)
puke (v) 1600 (1623) [1601]

quarrelsome 1596 (1616)
quillet (n2) 1588 (1609)

red-tailed 1601 (1611)
refuge (v) 1593 (1594)
relier 1593 (1616)
relish (v2) 1591/1593 (1608)
remorseful 1591 (1610) [1592]
remorseless 1593; 1593 (1612; 1742)
repine (n) 1592 (1600)
reportingly 1599 (1611)
reposal 1605 (1614)
reprieve (n) 1598/1603; 1603; 1607 (1680; -; 1623)
repure (v) 1606 (1611)
resolve (n) 1591; 1592 (1602; 1600)
retirement 1596; 1599; 1603 (1643; 1615; 1654)
revolting (a) 1593/1595 (1611)
Rialto 1596 (1611)
ripening (a) 1592 (1602)
roadway 1597 (1600)
roguery 1596 (1611)
rooting (a2) 1594 (1613)
rouse (n3) 1602; 1602; 1602 (1626; 1619; 1616)
rout (v10) 1611 (1617)
ruffling (a1) 1596 (1607) [1606]
ruttish 1601 (1602)

sanctuarize 1602 (1609)
sanded 1590 (1607)
'sblood 1598/1599/1604 (1606)
scale (v1) 1603/1607 [1622]
schoolboy 1588 (1599)

screech-owl 1593; 1606 (1612; 1819)
scroyle 1595 (1601)
scrubbed 1596 (1607)
sea-maid 1590/1603 (1609)
sea-salt (a) 1588 (1596)
self-glorious 1599 (1611)
sentinel (v) 1593 (1598)
shelvy (a1) 1598 (1609)
shipwrecked 1590 (1593)
shooting star 1593 (1607)
short-lived 1588; 1588 (1608; 1645)
shuffling (a) 1596 (1609)
silk stocking 1597 (1611)
slaughtered 1588; 1593 (1597; 1669)
slaughterer 1591 (1611)
slaughtering (a) 1588 (1592)
'slid 1598 (1606)
sluice (v) 1593 (1599)
sneak (v) 1596; 1599 (1604; 1607)
sneak-up (n) 1596 (1620)
snip-snap (adv) 1588 (1596)
soft-hearted 1593 (1602)
solus 1599 (1605)
sonance 1599 (1608)
sonneting 1588 (1597)
soothing (a) 1599 (1603)
soothsay (v) 1606 (1611)
spectacled 1607 (1624)
spitting (n1) 1613 (1631)
splitted 1593 (1597)
sportive 1590; 1594/1600 (1593; 1855)
squinny (v1) 1605 (1608)
stanchless 1605 (1612)
stanza 1588 (1596)
stelled 1605 (1628)
stockish 1596 (1612)
strumpet (v) 1590; 1600 (1608; 1632)
stuck (n2) 1601/1602 (1614)
subdued 1604 (1615)
subduement 1606 (1619)
sued 1607 (1621)
sully (v) 1591/1612; 1596; 1611 (1657; 1654; 1615)
sunlike 1596 (1611)
supervise 1588 (1596)
supplicant (a) 1597 (1605)
surreined 1599 (1601)
swagger (v) 1590; 1597/1599; 1605/1606 (1612; 1599; 1613)
swift-footed 1600 (1617)
swift-winged 1591 (1592)

switch (n) 1592 (1600)

tallow-face 1592 (1616)
tardy (v) 1611 (1623)
three-pile 1603 (1607)
three-piled 1588; 1603 (1616; 1605)
tied 1591 (1597)
tightly 1598 (1598)
tiring-house 1590 (1612)
tirra-lirra 1611 (1613)
torrent 1601 (1609) [uncertain usage in 1398]
torture (v) 1588; 1593 (1611; 1594)
torturer 1593 (1597)
tranquil 1604 (1623)
trash (v) 1610 (1619)
tucket 1593/1599/1601 (1605)
tu-whit, tu-whoo 1588 (1594)
twin-born 1599 (1610)
twinned 1607/1611; 1611 (1621; 1641)
twire 1600 (1602) [1601]
two-headed 1596 (1596)

udge 1598 (1603)
unaccommodated 1605 (1627)
unacted 1593 (1613)
unappeased 1588 (1597)
unattainted 1592 (1600)
unbacked 1592 (1613)
unbated 1596; 1602 (1611; 1815)
unbegot 1593 (1604)
uncomfortable 1592 (1615) [1592]
uncontemned 1613 (1634)
uncropped 1601 (1610)
uncurbed 1599 (1621)
uncurl 1588 (1601)
undeck 1593 (1598)
underprize 1596 (1598)
undervalue 1596 (1612) [1599, 1611]
undishonoured 1590 (1613)
unfeed 1605 (1628)
ungartered 1591 (1607)
ungoverned 1591; 1594 (1622; 1606)
unhappy (v) 1593 (1605)
unhardened 1590 (1608)
unhatched (a2) 1601 (1619)
unhospitable 1601 (1612)
unlive 1593 (1600)
unmitigable 1610 (1628)
unmuzzled 1601 (1604)

unparagoned 1611 (1611)
unpathed 1611 (1628)
unpeg 1602 (1611)
unscarred 1594 (1598)
unscissored 1608 (1631)
unscorched 1601 (1612)
unseconded 1597 (1608)
unshown 1606 (1614)
unsounded 1591; 1593 (1616; 1607)
unspeak 1605 (1615)
unstringed 1593 (1599)
untent 1606 (1611)
untirable 1607 (1607)
untired 1594 (1616) [1600]
untread 1592/1596 (1615)
untrim 1600 (1611)
untutored 1593; 1593 (1598; 1644)
unvenerable 1611 (1616)
unweeded 1602 (1624)
unwillingness 1593 (1600)
upcast (n) 1611 (1619)
upshoot 1588 (1603)
usuring 1607 (1609)

valorously 1599 (1614)
vary (n) 1600 (1605)
vasty 1596/1599 (1605)
vaultage 1599 (1605)
via (int) 1596; 1596; 1598 (1596; 1611; 1821)
viliaco 1593 (1599)
votress 1590 (1607)
vouch (n) 1603 (1610)

weather-bitten 1611 (1624)
well-beseeming 1588/1596 (1611)
well-conceited 1597 (1598)
well-foughten 1599 (1622)
well-ordered 1606 (1615)
well-read 1596 (1607)
well-refined 1600 (1611)
widen 1607 (1627)
wind-shaked 1604 (1624)
winnowed 1602/1606 (1611)
wittolly 1598 (1605)
worm-hole 1593/1599 (1615)

zany 1588 (1596)

Shakespeare's is the only use of a word in a particular sense, but there

is a related sense used by someone else within 25 years: total 29.

balked 1596 [1597]
Bergamask 1590 [1602]
bewailed 1600 [1624]
buzzer 1602 [1606]
circumstanced 1604 [1611]
climature 1604 [1615]
coasting (n) 1606 [1621]
combustious 1592 [1594]
composture 1607 [1614]
disdained 1596 [1598]
equivocal 1601 [1601]
expedience 1593/1596/1599/1606 [1608]
informal 1603 [1608]
initiate (a) 1605 [1610]
large-handed 1607 [1628]
obliged 1596 [1604]
overhold 1606 [1627]
purse-taking 1596 [1611]
push (int) 1599 [1605]
reinforcement 1607 [1617]
shelve 1591 [1598]
spright (v) 1611 [1611]
unbred 1600 [1622]
unprizable 1601 [1604]
unquestionable 1600 [1603]
unswayed 1594/1600 [1615]
untitled 1605 [1612]
valued 1605 [1607]
worn-out 1593 [1612]

Shakespeare is the first of several people using a word, in one or more senses, whose later usages occur at least 25 years later; however, a different sense of the word occurs within 25 years: total 151.

The following are cases where a word develops different senses, and some of those other senses are used within 25 years of Shakespeare's use. Would they have influenced each other? For example, adjunct (n) in its basic sense is used by Shakespeare in 1588, and is also used by someone else in the same year, but in the context of logic. ( ) shows the date of the next recorded use in the same sense. [ ] include the dates of the other senses that fall within the 25-year period.

accommodation 1604 (1650) [1616]
acting (n) 1601 (1853) [1603]
addiction 1604 (1634) [1625]
adjunct (n) 1588 (1677) [1588, 1589, 1610]
aerial 1604 (1697) [1606, 1610, 1621]

affect (v) 1606 (1722) [1611]
amazement 1595; 1602; 1606 (1641; 1611; 1671) [1596]
ambassy 1588 (1742) [1600]
annexion 1600 (1641) [1611]
apostrophe 1588 (1611) > 1588 (1727) [1611]
applause (n) 1596 (1623) [1601, 1612]
audaciously 1588 (1611) >1588 (1855) [1611]
auspicious 1601; 1610 (1756; 1858) [1614, 1616]

bachelorship 1591 (1833) [1611]
backing 1596 (1633) [1607]
battalia 1594 (1639) [1613]
belly (v) 1606 (1790) [1624]
blanket (v) 1605 (1865) [1609]
blushing 1593 (1648) [1613]
bounding 1593 (1789) [1597]
bower (v) 1592 (1798) [1596]
branchless 1606 (1879) [1611]
buskined 1590 (1704) [1595]

cake (v) 1607 (1708) [1615]
catling 1592/1606 (1708) [1612]
circumstantial 1600; 1611 (1616; 1727) [1608]
cold-blooded 1595 (1826) [1602]
compromise 1596 (1799) [1598]
compulsive 1602; 1604 (1637; 1655) [1611]
confining 1595 (1691) [1597]
critical 1590/1604 (1665) [1601]
crossness 1599 (1677) [1605]
curl (n) 1602 (1665) [1615]
curvet 1592; 1600 (1682; 1649) [1613]

death's-head 1596/1597 (1684) [1605]
defeature 1590/1592 (1797) [1592, 1598, 1609]
denote 1592; 1598 (1632; 1646) [1612]
design 1588/1594; 1605 (1659; 1657) [1593]
discontent 1588 (1659) [1591, 1605]
disliking 1592 (1649) [1596]
dislocate 1605 (1658) [1623]
dispunge 1606 (1876) [1622]
distasteful 1607 (1639) [1607, 1611]
distracted 1590; 1602/1607 (1657; 1667) [1598]
distressful 1591/1604; 1599 (1750; –) [1601]
dropped 1600 (1797) [1611]
dwindle 1596/1605 (1649) [1610]

educate 1588 (1863) [1607]
Elysium 1599 (1640) [1599, 1603, 1616]
enamelled 1590/1591 (1854) [1604, 1613]

enchanted 1593 (1846) [1596]
ensconce 1590/1593; 1598 (1628; 1826) [1590, 1590, 1600]
epileptic (a) 1605 (1655) [1608]
estate (v) 1590 (1622) [1609]
exposure 1605; 1606 (1853; 1793) [1611]
extravagancy 1601 (1634) [1625]

fooling (n) 1601 (1827) [1609]
fount 1593/1613 (1641) [1593]
frugal 1598 (1656) [1603]

gabble (n) 1601 (1638) [1602]
gallantry 1606 (1635) [1613]
garden-house 1603 (1678) [1607, 1607]
germen 1605 (1691) [1628]
gossip (v) 1590; 1601 (1611; 1716) [1611]
grafter 1599 (1770) [1616]
grey-eyed 1592 (1670) [1596]
grovel 1593 (1634) [1605]

hand (v) 1610/1611 (1721) [1624, 1631, 1634]
hard-handed 1590 (1883) [1593]
heated 1593 (1751) [1617]
humour (v) 1588/1590; 1588 (1656; 1648) [1605]

impawn 1596 (1625) [1613]
impressure 1600/1601 (1631) [1607]
incidency 1611 (1663) [165]
inducement 1594; 1601 (1632; 1648) [1594, 1605, 1605]
ingenuous 1588/1611 (1653) [1598, 1599, 1607, 1611]
inventory 1601 (1645) [1622]
investment 1597/1602 (1794) [1615]
invitation 1598 (1654) [1611, 1615]
invulnerable 1595 (1596) [1663]

joinder 1601 (1884) [1607]

launder 1597 (1664) [1610]
light-heeled 1590 (1647) [1602, 1613]
locking (n) 1611 (1776) [1632]
lustrous 1601 (1742) [1605]

majestic 1601/1610 (1664) [1610]
marketable 1600/1610 (1652) [1602]
mew (int) 1596 (1718) [1606]
misconceived 1591 (1612) [1595]
money's-worth 1588 (1875) [1604]
mud (v) 1593; 1610 (1686; -) [1593]
multitudinous 1605; 1607 (1794; -) [1606]

neglect () 1588/1600; 1591 (1665; 1634) [1597]
nighted 1604/1605 (1882) [1605]

O (n) 1588/1590/1599; 1605 (1838; 1649) [1611]
obscene 1593 (1664) [1598]
Olympian 1593 (1667) [1603]
ostent 1596 (1646) [1598]

palate (v) 1606 (1739) [1610]
poster 1605 (1651) [1605]
press (n) 1596 (1667) [1599]
proficient (n) 1596 (1678) [1602, 1610]
prologue (v) 1601 (1680) [1622]
proof 1592/1607 (1631) [1602]
puisne (a) 1600 (1635) [1613]

rancorous 1590 (1667) [1590, 1592]
refractory 1606 (1653) [1610, 1613, 1617]
respeak 1602 (1855) [1620]
rigol 1593/1597 (1733) [1599]
rival (v) 1605 (1654) [1609]

sanctimonious 1603 (1652) [1604]
sapless 1591; 1591 (1678; 1618) [1598, 1602]
sate 1602 (1712) [1613]
Scotch 1599 (1669) [1606]
scraping 1593 (1618) [1599]
screw (v) 1605; 1611 (1615; 1669) [1611, 1611, 1612, 1612, 1614, 1622]
secure 1593; 1604/1605 (1697; 1655) [1602, 1602, 1610, 1617, 1617]
securely 1588/1593 (1631) [1597]
shag 1592 (1634) [1596]
sheet (v) 1606 (1807) [1621]
snail-paced 1594/1606 (1646) [1601]
sphery 1590 (1634) [1600]
spirit (v) 1599 (1644) [1608]
squash 1590/1601/1611 (1887) [1611]
still-born 1597 (1648) [1607]
submerge 1606 (1688) [1611]
successful 1588; 1588/1596 (1617; 1638) [1592]
supervize 1588; 1593/1593; 1600 (1606; 1596; 1600) [1591, 1597, 1600, 1605]

tenantless 1591 (1814) [1613]
tetchy 1592 (1639) [1592]
traditional 1594 (1644) [1600]
transcendance 1601 (1644) [1625]
tutor 1592 (1621) [1592]

unaware 1592 (1667) [1598]
unbosom 1588 (1645) [1610]
uncompassionate 1591 (1663) [1608]
uncurrent 1601 (1639) [1611]
undress 1596 (1674) [1598, 1615]
unfirm 1592 (1625) [1601, 1616]
unfledged 1602; 1611; 1611 (1669; 1717; 1760) [1615]
unpublished 1605 (1850) [1607]
unquestioned 1601; 1603 (1655; –) [1622]
unrelenting 1588 (1621) [1609]
unurged 1590 (1623) [1594]
usher in 1600 (1656) [1613]

ventage 1602 (1776) [1615, 1623]

well-mounted 1595 (1630) [1607]
widowed 1600 (1627) [1606]
wild goose chase 1592 (1623) [1602]
worthless 1588/1591; 1591 (1664; 1611) [1592]
wry-necked 1596 (1842) [1608]

Shakespeare's is the first and only recorded usage, but the item is a corruption, such as a malapropism: total 10.

apathaton, cangenet, cardinally, dich, egma, exion, gratility, impeticos, prenzie, pulsidge

Shakespeare is the first user of a word in a particular sense, but there is one or more earlier uses in another sense: total 185.

The earlier date or dates is shown in [ ]. ( ) indicate the next recorded use of the Shakespearian sense. Two successive uses by Shakespeare of the same sense are separated by semi-colons.

act (v) 1610; 1611 (1659; 1684) [1594, 1594, 1598, 1602, 1611]
adhere 1598 /1605 [1597, 1620]
admirable 1598 (1604) [1596, 1598]
admittance 1598; 1598 (–; 1622) [1589, 1593, 1594]
adorer 1611 (1665) [1602]
advantageous 1610 (1618) [1598, 1599]
affectionately 1606 (1611) [1588]
affined 1604 [1597]
alarm (v) 1605 (1662) [1590]
altering 1611 (1646) [1605]
antic 1606 [1589]
arbitrate 1592; 1605 (1647; 1631) [1590, 1619]
ascent 1607 (1744) [1600, 1611, 1614]

attest (v) 1599; 1606 (1794; 1796) [1596]

ballad (v) 1606 (1636) [1592]
bank (v) 1595 [1590, 1598]
barricado (n) 1611 (1656) [1590]
barricado (v) 1601 (1678) [1598, 1611, 1611]
base-born 1593 (1741) [1591, 1605]
batten 1602 (1693) [1591, 1605, 1611, 1611]
bilbo 1598; 1598 (1603; 1690) [1592]
billet 1607 (1618) [1599, 1606]
bird's-nest 1599 (1760) [1597]
bitten 1613 (1789) [1599, 1616]
borne 1605 [1600]
brisk 1597; 1601 (1697; 1665) [1560, 1590]
bristly 1592 (1645) [1591]
buckler (v) 1592 [1590]
budge 1601/1607 (1630) [1590]
buoy (v) 1605 (1625) [1596]

canary (n) 1597/1601 (1641) [1592]
candied 1602 (1649) [1600, 1616]
caper (n) 1601 (1691) [1592, 1626]
carbonado (v) 1611 (1630) [1596]
cash 1599 (1641) [1593, 1595, 1596, 1614]
caviare 1602 (1822) [1591, 1620]
caw (v) 1590 (1600s) [1589]
censure 1603 (1618) [1589, 1590, 1596, 1597, 1598]
charactery 1598/1601 (1818) [1588]
coactive 1611 (1841) [1596, 1605]
cohere 1601/1603 (1634) [1598, 1606, 1616]
colly 1604 (1615) [1590]
competence 1597 (1623) [1594]
competency 1596 (1796) [1594, 1597, 1616]
composure 1606; 1609 (1665; 1613) [1599, 1601, 1603, 1609, 1612]
confectionary (n) 1607 (1616) [1599, 1605]
connive 1611 (1640) [1602]
constringe 1606 (1621) [1604]
cony-catch 1598 (1600) [1592]
court-of-guard 1591 (1647) [1590]
cudgelled 1599 (1797) [1598]

damasked 1600 (1600s) [1599, 1611]
debauch (v) 1601 (1632) [1595, 1603, 1623]
deedless 1606 (1621) [1598]
directive 1606 [1594, 1610]
disaster 1602 (1635) [1591]
disproportioned 1604 [1597]
drawl (v) 1598 (1604) [1597]

eminence 1603/1613; 1605; 1606 (1652; –; 1613) [1597, 1609]
emulate 1598 (1660) [1589, 1597, 1603, 1611]
enring 1590 (1825) [1589]
entrance (v) 1608 (1712) [1593, 1599]
enwomb 1601 (1625) [1590, 1591]
essay (n) 1600 (1605) [1597, 1598]
exalted 1601; 1601 (1631; 1665) [1594, 1623]
exist 1605 (1716) [1602]
expectance 1606 [1602, 1603, 1611]
expectancy 1602 (1805) [1598, 1600, 1620]
expeditious 1610 (1664) [1599]

foredoom 1608 (1647) [1591]

garb 1599 (1599) [1591, 1599, 1599]
groundling 1602 (1609) [1601]
gull (n) 1599 (1604) [1594]

half-faced 1593; 1595/1597 (1607; 1601) [1592]
hearsed 1602 [1592, 1608]
heel (v) 1606 (1828) [1605]
Hesperides 1608 (1860) [1590]
horrid 1601 (1602) [1590]

Icarus 1591 (1594) [1589]
impertinency 1605 (1610) [1589]
impress 1591 (1651) [1590, 1592]
incapable 1594; 1600; 1610/1611 (1623; 1628; 1674) [1591, 1601]
indent 1596 (1627) [1589]
instalment 1598 (1610) [1589]
insubstantial 1610 (1820) [1607]
interception 1599 (1611) [1597]
interpose 1601; 1611 (1632; 1656) [1599, 1602, 1603, 1605, 1606, 1615x3]

judicious 1605/1607 (1611) [1598, 1600, 1602]

kickshaw 1601 (1626) [1598, 1622]

life-blood 1596 (1601) [1590]
linguist 1591 (1593) [1588]
lob (v) 1599 (1821) [1596]
long-winded 1596 (1608) [1589]

mazard 1602 (1621) [1601]
mission 1606 (1611) [1598]
mistaken 1601 (1660) [1597]
monarchize 1593 (1649) [1592, 1606]

naturalize 1601 (1651) [1593, 1603, 1605, 1606, 1606]

outbrave 1596 (1612) [1589, 1589, 1589, 1601]
outstrike 1606 (1663) [1598]
overcount 1606 (1838) [1593]
overflourish 1601 (1861) [1597]

pair (v) 1611; 1611 (1879; 1775) [1603, 1607, 1613]
pantaloon 1596/1600 (1862) [1590]
parallel 1601; 1603; 1605; 1606 (1644; 1669; –; 1692) [1598]
partialize 1593 (1618) [1592]
peer (v) 1592/1596; 1592; 1593 (1810; 1594; –) [1591]
pencilled 1593 (1604) [1592]
perdu (n) 1605 (1614) [1600, 1610, 1611, 1612, 1622]
personate 1611 (1640) [1591, 1598, 1612, 1613, 1621]
placket 1605; 1606 (1620; 1625) [1601]
planetary 1607 (1613) [1593, 1607, 1610]
plausive 1601; 1601/2 (1767; –) [1600]
plot (v) 1594 (1601) [1589]
pocket (v) 1610 (1750) [1589, 1589, 1614]
posture 1606 (1633) [1605]
predominate 1607 (1631) [1594, 1597]
procreant 1604; 1605 (1620; 1767) [1588]
progress (v) 1595 (1624) [1590, 1596, 1610]
puzzle (v) 1602 (1662) [1595, 1605]

quill 1593 (1687) [1588]

rant (v) 1602 (1664) [1598]
rapture (n) 1607; 1608 (1634; 1611) [1600]
rascally 1598, 1606 (1682; 1660) [1596, 1600]
ravelled 1605 (1642) [1599]
rectorship 1607 (1695) [1600]
reference 1604 [1589, 1593, 1594, 1599, 1612, 1613]
reinforce 1611 (1811) [1600, 1603]
remover 1600 (1607) [1594]
rendezvous 1596/1599; 1599 (1641; –) [1591, 1594, 1599, 1600, 1600, 1600, 1608, 1608]
retired 1595; 1611; 1611 (–; 1648; 1627) [1590, 1593]
retort (n) 1600 (1734) [1597]
reverberate 1601 (1605) [1589, 1603]
rheumy 1601 (1715) [1591, 1592]
riddling 1591/1592 (1655) [1590]
rote (v) 1607 (1775) [1593]
rout (n) 1611 (1647) [1598, 1612, 1621]

sainted 1605 (1760) [1598]
scambling 1599/1599 (1639) [1589, 1592, 1611]
scandal (v) 1601 (1632) [1592]

scandalous 1603; 1611 (1617; 1681) [1592]
scarf (v) 1602; 1605 (1613; 1630) [1598, 1601]
scorched 1595 (1639) [1593]
shark (v) 1602 (1827) [1596, 1608, 1612]
shelter 1598 (1675) [1590, 1594, 1602, 1611]
shore (v) 1611 (1611) [1592]
shrivel 1608 (1682) [1588]
sleave 1605 (1868) [1591]
sleek 1590 (1634) [1589, 1599, 1601, 1602, 1603]
slope (v) 1605 (1638) [1591, 1611]
snarl (v) 1594 (1612) [1589, 1593]
sneaped 1593 [1588, 1611]
spendthrift 1610 (1654) [1601, 1607]
sphere (v) 1606 (1657) [1605, 1607]
sprightly (a) 1606; 1606; 1611 (1646; 1635; –) [1596, 1605, 1621]
spritely (a) 1606 (1670) [1598, 1602, 1611]
squander 1596 (1645) [1593, 1610, 1611]
squandering 1600 (1854) [1589]
squint (v) 1605 (1637) [1599, 1610, 1611]
stabbing (a) 1611 (1813) [1599]
star-like 1607 (1833) [1591, 1611]

topless 1606 [1589, 1596]
towering 1602 (1818) [1598]
traversed 1607 (1621) [1599, 1611]
trenchering 1610 [1594]

uncle (v) 1593 (1872) [1592, 1602]
undistinguished 1608 (1666) [1595, 1598, 1600,1612]
unforced 1604 (1665) [1598]
unrespective 1606 (1648) [1594, 1611]
unsafe 1601; 1605 (1615; 1618) [1597, 1621]
unsettle 1605 (1624) [1598]
unsettled 1611 (1693) [1591, 1593, 1594, 1594, 1599]
unsifted 1602 [1589, 1620]
unsunned 1611 (1795) [1607]
untainted 1594; 1600 (–; 1651) [1590, 1611, 1612]
unveil 1606 (1638) [1599, 1611]
unwish 1599 (1658) [1594, 1615]

vast (n) 1610 (1649) [1604]
vaunt (n) 1606 (1623) [1589]
volley 1606 (1854) [1591]

waggish 1590 (1607) [1589]
whipster 1604 (1682) [1589, 1593]
whisper (n) 1599; 1608 (1624; 1626) [1596]
wiry 1595 (1807) [1588, 1598]

yeasty 1605 (1798) [1598, 1599]

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USE OF *-TH* ENDINGS IN THE PLAYS RELATED TO PLAY CHRONOLOGY

Play	*Instances of* doth	*Instances of* hath	*Instances of other –th endings*	*Total*	*Lines per play (Riverside)*	*Averag (Lines / Total instanc*
TGV	16	56	11	93	2288	24.6 [
Shr	16	37	20	73	2676	36.6
2H6	21	61	14	96	3130	32.6
3H6	31	62	18	111	2915	26.3
Tit	29	59	11	99	2538	25.6
1H6	37	52	34	123	2695	21.9
R3	36	70	18	124	3667	29.6
KE3	42	72	13	127	2492 (C)	19.6
Err	16	36	5	57	1787	31.3

LLL	42	37	24	103	2829	27.5
Rom	46	65	9	120	3099	25.8
MND	33	38	8	79	2192	27.7
R2	33	70	13	116	2796	24.1
John	42	63	11	116	2638	22.7
MV	33	46	19	98	2701	27.6
1H4	28	52	10	90	3081	34.2
Wiv	7	60	2	69	2891	41.9
2H4	55	63	8	126	3326	26.4
Ado	24	72	2	98	2787	28.4
H5	35	58	3	96	3297	34.3
JC	30	36	7	73	2591	35.5
AYLI	25	51	6	82	2810	34.3
Ham	29	64	6	99	4042	40.8
TN	14	36	6	56	2591	46.3
Tro	35	58	4	97	3531	36.4
Oth	17	67	3	87	3551	40.8
MM	25	69	1	95	2891	30.4
Ant	5	45	5	55	3522	64.0
Mac	6	47	1	54	2349	43.5
Tim	10	29	0	39	2488	63.8
AWW	7	51	0	58	3013	51.9
Lear	17	53	2	72	3487	48.4
Per	22	40	6	68	2459 (R)	36.1
Cor	8	52	1	61	3752	61.5
WT	7	42	0	49	3348	68.3

Cym	20	78	2	100	3707	37.1
Temp	13	26	1	40	2283	57.1
H8	2	23	0	25	3221	128.8
TNK	1	17	0	18	3261 (R)	181.2
Total			420			

INSTANCES OF *YE* RELATED TO THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PLAYS

Play	*No of instances of* ye
TGV	7
Shr	4
2H6	20
3H6	8
Tit	21* Peele
1H6	23* Peele
R3	1
KE3	12* unknown
Err	0
LLL	4
Rom	12
MND	2
R2	1
John	1
MV	3
1H4	29
Wiv	1
2H4	5
Ado	1
H5	2
JC	10
AYLI	3
Ham	3
TN	5
Tro	2
More	128* Munday et al
MM	1* Middleton
Oth	1
Ant	4
Mac	3* Middleton
Tim	5* Middleton
AWW	4

Per	5* Wilkins
Lear	7
Cor	8
WT	3
Temp	5
Cym	5
H8	72* Fletcher
TNK	39* Fletcher
Total	342

FALSE FRIENDS

False friends ('faux amis') are words in one language which look the same as words in another. We therefore think that their meanings are the same, and get a shock when we find they are not. Generations of French students have believed that *demander* means 'demand' (whereas it means 'ask') or *librairie* means 'library' (instead of 'bookshop'). It is a sign of a mature understanding of a language when you can cope with the false friends, which can be some of its most frequently used words. Having a good grasp of the false friends is a crucial part of 'learning to speak French'

Shakespeare has false friends, too. A 16th-century word may look the same as its Modern English equivalent, but its meaning has radically changed. *Naughty* doesn't mean 'naughty'. *Revolve* doesn't mean 'revolve'. *Ecstasy* doesn't mean 'ecstasy'. Some of these words occur so often in the plays and poems that they can be a regular source of misunderstanding. The obvious solution – as we do in learning a foreign language – is to get to know them in advance, as part of the process of 'learning to speak Shakespearian'. A succinct account is all that we need, with the chief points of semantic contrast noted and the usage well illustrated. A false friend a day doesn't entirely keep the editor away, for there are still some difficult Shakespearian words to be learned – words that have no modern equivalent at all. *Chirurgeonly*, for example, presents a problem because it exists in the language no longer. But at least when you see *chirurgeonly* you know that you have a problem, and go to look it up. With *naughty* and the other false friends you could be fooled into thinking you haven't got a problem, and you don't look it up.

The only solution is to get to know Shakespeare's false friends well. Making the words 'true friends' is one of the most important linguistic steps you can take to deepen your knowledge of Shakespeare. This page contains 162 examples, mostly first published in the *Times Educational Supplement* in the column 'Will's Words' between 2002 and

2005, and here reproduced in revised and (in some cases) expanded form.

abroad (*adverb*) modern meaning: 'out of the country, in foreign lands'

When this word arrived in Middle English, it soon developed a range of senses, including the modern one, and we find this in Shakespeare, such as at the very end of *Macbeth* (V.vi.105) when Malcolm expresses his intention to call home 'our exiled friends abroad' (i.e. from outside Scotland). But in most of Shakespeare's uses it has no such connotation. 'If you do stir abroad, go armed', says Edmund to Edgar (*King Lear*, I.ii.167), where the word means simply 'out of the house'. And this is what Falstaff means when he says to the Lord Chief Justice, 'I am glad to see your lordship abroad' (*Henry IV Part 2*, I.ii.94); they are not in some foreign country. Even more general senses are found. When Derby says to Audley in *Edward III* (II.ii.21) 'the king is now abroad', he means 'on the move'. And when Curan says to Edmund, 'you have heard of the news abroad' (*King Lear*, II.i.7), he simply means 'everywhere'.

abuse (*noun*) modern meaning: 'misuse; strong verbal disapproval; physical maltreatment'

This noun came into English in the 16th century (the verb had already around for over a century), and quickly developed a range of senses, including the modern ones. Shakespeare uses them all – for instance, the verbal sense is present in *Henry IV Part 2*, when Falstaff tries to protest he had not dispraised Hal and Poins ('No abuse, Hal', II.iv.311). But in many contexts, obsolete senses are used. When Angelo says to disguised Mariana 'This is a strange abuse. Let's see thy face' (*Measure for Measure*, V.i.203), she has not been abusing him in any modern sense of the word. Here, *abuse* means 'hoax' or 'deception', as it does when the Countess asks Talbot to 'pardon my abuse' (*Henry VI Part 1*, II.iii.66). Several other nuances relate to the modern sense of 'misuse', as when Brutus talks about 'the time's abuse' to Cassius (*Julius Caesar*, II.i.115); here he means the corrupt practices of the times. When the Chorus asks us to 'digest / Th'abuse of distance (*Henry V*, II.Chorus.32) he is asking us to forgive the 'flouting' or 'violation' involved in treating real distance in an imaginary way. And when Warwick says to King Lewis, 'Did I let pass th'abuse done to my niece?' (*Henry VI Part 3*, III.iii.188), the sense is 'offence, wrong' – a usage first recorded in Shakespeare.

accident (*noun*) modern meaning: 'unfortunate mishap; unintentional event'

The Latin origins of this word (in a verb meaning 'happen') dominate its earliest use as a noun in English, where it means simply 'occurrence'. There is no suggestion of a disaster, which is the most

common modern usage. So when Oberon hopes that the lovers will 'think no more of this night's accidents' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV.i.67) they are simply talking about events that took place, whether good or ill. The linguistic context often indicates the positive meaning: Pucelle asks her spirits to 'give me signs of future accidents' (*Henry VI Part 1*, V.iii.4) and Prince Hal says that 'nothing pleaseth but rare accidents' (*Henry IV Part 1*, I.ii.205). The nearest we get to modern usage (but without any sense of 'fortune' or 'fate') is when the word is used in the sense of 'chance'. 'By accident, / I had a feigned letter of my master's / Then in my pocket' says Pisanio (*Cymbeline*, V.v.278), and Lucius, earlier in the scene (76), tells Cymbeline 'the day / Was yours by accident'.

addition (*noun*) modern meaning: 'combining entities in order to increase'

The modern sense, applying chiefly to numbers and physical extensions, dates from the 14th century, and this will be found in Shakespeare. But there are other nuances, most of which have disappeared from the language, which are nothing to do with 'adding up' at all. When Hamlet complains about the way the Danes 'with swinish phrase / Soil our addition' (*Hamlet*, I.iv.20), he doesn't mean they were criticising their arithmetic. Here, *addition* means simply 'title, name'. The usage is closely related to one in heraldry, where an *addition* is a mark of honour, often added to a coat of arms. When Ajax tells Hector, after fighting with him, 'I came to ... bear hence / A great addition earned in thy death' (*Troilus and Cressida*, IV.v.141), he means no more than 'distinction'. And it is this concept of 'something extra' which can be detected in several other uses. It means 'external honours' when Lear, after dividing his kingdom among his daughters, wants still to 'retain / The name and all th'addition to a king' (*King Lear*, I.i.136). It means 'exaggeration' when the Captain tells Hamlet 'Truly to speak, and with no addition' (*Hamlet*, IV.iv.17). It means 'polite form of address' when Polonious talks about 'the phrase or the addition / Of man and country' (*Hamlet*, II.i.47). And it means 'advantage' when Cassio says that he thinks it 'no addition ... / To have him [Othello] see me womaned' (*Othello*, III.iv.190).

admiration (*noun*) modern meaning: 'delighted or astonished approval'

The wonder we feel in modern usage is entirely to do with approval: we are pleased or gratified by what we see, even to the point of wanting to emulate it. This sense had developed by Shakespeare's time, but the first use of this word, when it arrived in English from French in the early 16th century, lacked the personal element. It meant simply 'amazement, astonishment, wonder'. The context often makes this clear – as when Rosencrantz says to Hamlet that 'your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration' (*Hamlet*, III.ii.334). As

the subsequent closet scene suggests, it is not admiration in the modern sense that Gertrude feels. We hear the usage again earlier in the play when Horatio tells Hamlet to 'season your admiration for a while' while hearing about the Ghost (I.ii.192). Where we have to be careful is when there is no immediate context to help us out, and where the modern sense could apply, as when Innogen says to Iachimo 'What makes your admiration?' (*Cymbeline*, I.vii.38) or Ferdinand describes Miranda as 'the top of admiration' (*The Tempest*, III.i.38). And when the King tells Lafew to 'Bring in the admiration' (*Alls Well that Ends Well*, II.i.88), namely Helena, he means – perhaps a little sarcastically – 'marvel' or 'phenomenon'.

admonish (*verb*) modern meaning: 'reprove; exhort'

This word has always contained the notion of 'warning', ever since it arrived in English (from Latin via French) in the 14th century; but its chief modern meaning, to 'warn against error or fault' is an 18th-century development. It is important to forget this sense of reproof, therefore, when listening to Pucelle asking for supernatural help: 'Now help ... ye choice spirits that admonish me' (*Henry VI Part 1*, V.iii.3). Why should she be asking spirits for help if they routinely tell her off? Of course the word does not have this nuance: it just means 'forewarn, inform'. And it means simply 'warn' when Henry talks of the French acting as their consciences 'admonishing / That we should dress us fairly for our end' (*Henry V*, IV.i.9). The same point applies to the noun *admonishment*. In *Henry VI Part I* (II.v.98), Mortimer has just told Richard to be careful, and he replies: 'Thy grave admonishments prevail with me'. Similarly, Andromache asks Hector: 'When was my lord so much ungently tempered, / To stop his ears against admonishment?' (*Troilus and Cressida*, V.iii.2). Here too, the word means only 'warning'.

adventure (*noun*) modern meaning: 'dangerous, risky, or exciting undertaking'

The modern meanings were around in Shakespeare's time, but lacking the modern dramatic nuance we find when referring to adventure comics, adventure stories, and the like. Most Shakespearian uses have a more general sense of 'venture, enterprise' or the outcome of a venture. When Hotspur talks of 'the adventure of this perilous day' (*Henry IV Part 1*, V.ii.95) he is not thinking primarily of the excitement involved in the battle. Other fights, similarly, are referred to in terms of 'adventure', as when *Lewis the Dauphin talks of 'the fair adventure of tomorrow' (King* John, V.v.22). And when Warwick talks about his scouts getting into the enemy camp, he says they 'found the adventure very easy' (*Henry VI Part 3*, IV.ii.18), by which he means simply the 'enterprise'. Rosalind is the only one to use the word in another general sense, of 'experience, fortune, chance', when she says to Silvius, 'searching of thy wound, / I have by hard adventure found

mine own' (*As You Like It*, II.iv.41).

artificial (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'not natural, resulting from art or artifice'

The modern sense has been in the language since the 14th century, and it can be heard in Shakespeare when Richard talks about wetting his cheeks 'with artificial tears' (*Henry VI Part 3*, III.ii.184). But around the beginning of the 16th century a positive sense emerged, 'displaying artistry', and this is the sense required when Helena says to Hermia 'We ... like two artificial gods / Have with our needles created both one flower' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III.ii.203) or when someone in *Timon of Athens* describes a painting as displaying 'artificial strife' (I.i.38). The sense of 'skilful' is also present when Lysimachus suggests to Marina that she use her 'prosperous and artificial feat' to revive Pericles (*Pericles*, V.i.71). The skill is turned to darker purposes when Hecat tells her witches of a potion which will raise 'artificial sprites' (*Macbeth*, III.v.27). Here it means 'produced by the black arts'.

awful (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'exceedingly bad, terrible'

Since the 18th-century, the meaning of awful has weakened to that of a negative intensifier: we say such things as *You've been an awful time* and *I'm an awful duffer*. As an adverb, especially in American English, it can even be positive: *That dinner was awful good*. In Shakespeare, it was used only in its original Anglo-Saxon sense of 'awe-inspiring, worthy of respect'. In *Pericles*, Gower describes Pericles as a 'benign lord / That will prove awful both in deed and word' (II.Chorus.4). This meaning is easy to spot when awful goes with words denoting power, such as sceptre, rule, and bench (of justice). It is a little more distracting when we see it used with general words, as when one of the outlaws in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* tells Valentine that they have been 'Thrust from the company of awful men' (IV.i.46).

baffle (*verb*) modern meaning: 'defeat efforts, frustrate plans'
When people are baffled, these days, they are at a mental loss, unable to work out what is going on – a state of mind that applies as much to frustrated detectives as to crossword-puzzle solvers. It is a sense which developed in the 17th century. In Shakespeare's time, two other meanings were present, now both obsolete. The older sense, from the mid-16th century, was to 'disgrace publicly', referring especially to a knight being treated with scorn. This is the meaning we need when Mowbray says to King Richard 'I am disgraced, impeached, and baffled here' (*Richard II*, I.i.170), or when Falstaff tells Prince Hal 'call me a villain and baffle me' (Henry IV Part 1, I.ii.101). Then, during Shakespeare's lifetime, a more general meaning was emerging – to expose someone or something to ridicule. 'How have they baffled thee!' says Olivia to Malvolio, tricked by Sir Toby and his companions

(*Twelfth Night*, V.i.367). And Pistol says to Falstaff, 'shall good news be baffled? (Henry IV Part 2, V.iii.105) – in other words, treated with contempt.

banquet (*noun*) modern meaning: 'elaborate ceremonial meal'

When the word came into English from French in the 15th century, it seems to have been in the modern sense – an occasion of sumptuous feasting. Then, a century later, a slighter sense emerged, and this is the one usually found in Shakespeare, where a banquet (often spelled *banket*) is a light meal – what we would today describe as 'refreshments' – or even just one part of such a meal – appetizers or dessert. The slighter sense is shown by the adjectives when Capulet talks of 'a trifling foolish banquet' (*Romeo and Juliet*, I.v.122) or Timon talks of 'an idle banquet' (Timon of Athens, I.ii.152). The concept of a huge feast would make no sense when Sly is said to have 'a most delicious banquet by his bed' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction 1.37). A banquet, moreover, can be prepared in a rush: Enobarbus tells the servants to 'bring in the banquet quickly' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, I.ii.12). And the sense of a light meal taken hurriedly is captured in Henry VIII, where there are two references (I.iv.12, V.iv.64) to a 'running banquet'.

bashful (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'sensitively modest, excessively self-conscious'

Bashful came into the language in its modern sense in the mid-16th century – a modification of an originally French word, *abash*, plus a suffix. Shakespeare uses *abashed* once, *bashfulness* once, and *bashful* eight times, usually associated with words that demonstrate the sense of modesty. 'He burns with bashful shame', the poet says of the reluctant lover in *Venus and Adonis* (line 49). And Poins says to Bardolph, 'Come ... you bashful fool, must you be blushing?' (*Henry IV Part 2*, II.ii.72). But something different seems to be happening in *Henry VI Part 3* (I.i.39). Warwick tells the other nobles: 'The bloody parliament shall this be called, / Unless Plantagenet, Duke of York, be king, / And bashful Henry deposed, whose cowardice / Hath made us by-words to our enemies'. Bashful Henry? Yes, he is portrayed as a sensitive man, but the modern sense doesn't quite suit the association with cowardice This seems to be more the sense encountered in such other contemporary usages as *a bashful army*. It means 'easily intimidated, readily daunted'.

batty (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'crazy, eccentric'

This usage developed around the beginning of the 20th century, very much associated with the slang of the social class described by such authors as P.G. Wodehouse. Its origins relate to the idiom 'to have bats in the belfrey', referring to people whose behaviour is wildly

unpredictable or eccentric, and is thus equivalent to 'crazy, dotty'. None of this was relevant in Shakespeare's time. In an original and solitary instance, he attaches one of his favourite word-coining suffixes, *-y* (as in *vasty*, *plumpy*, *steepy*) to bat to produce an adjective with the literal meaning: 'bat-like'. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Oberon tells Puck about the Athenians: 'o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep / With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep' (III.ii.365). It is a vivid coinage - but it never caught on. There is just one other recorded example in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, from a naturalist in 1883.

beaver (*noun*) modern meaning: 'kind of amphibious rodent; also, its fur'

Beavers were known in Anglo-Saxon times: the word is *beofor*. Then, in the 15th century, a French word, *baviere*, appears in English, referring to the lower part of the face-guard of a helmet, and in due course this came to be spelled and pronounced in the same way as the animal. There is no instance of the animal in Shakespeare, but there are seven references to the piece of armour. There is never any real ambiguity, as the context is always one of war, not river-banks. 'He wore his beaver up', says Horatio of the Ghost (*Hamlet*, I.ii.230). 'I saw young Harry with his beaver on', says Vernon of Prince Hal (*Henry IV Part 1*, IV.i.104). But it can nonetheless take (especially young) readers by surprise, and to avoid a surreal mental image it is as well to draw attention to the older meaning. When King Richard exclaims, 'What, is my beaver easier than it was?' (*Richard III*, V.iii.50), he is not enquiring after a rodent's state of health. And when Grandpré talks about Mars peeping faintly 'through a rusty beaver' (*Henry V*, IV.ii.42), it is not the animal that is in a bad way.

beetle (*noun*) modern meaning: 'type of insect'

The word *beetle* is known from Anglo-Saxon times: *bitula*. We find it several times in Shakespeare, as when Isabella talks about 'the poor beetle that we tread upon' (*Measure for Measure*, III.i.82). But also in Old English we find bietel referring to a kind of beating instrument, which by Shakespeare's time had come to mean a heavy ram. So when Falstaff exclaims, 'fillip [i.e. strike] me with a three-man beetle' (*Henry IV Part 2*, I.ii.230), he is not talking about a super-sized coleopteran, but of a sledgehammer that would take three men to lift it. And when Petruchio curses his servant for being a 'whoreson, beetle-headed, flap-eared knave' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, IV.i.143), he means no more than 'block-headed'. However, the figurative sense may well derive from the insect. When Mercutio, referring to his face-mask, says 'Here are the beetle brows shall blush for me' (*Romeo and Juliet*, I.iv.32) or Horatio talks of the cliff 'that beetles o'er his base into the sea' (*Hamlet*, I.iv.71), both usages refer to something that overhangs or is prominent, probably an allusion to the tufted antennae found in

some species of beetle.

belch (*verb*) modern meaning: 'noisily expel wind from the stomach'

This word, in its modern meaning, has been in English since Anglo-Saxon times, and it early developed a figurative usage, describing the way people can give vent to their feelings as a cannon or volcano 'belches' fire. The sense of 'vomit', literally or metaphorically, was common too, and we find this in Shakespeare when Emilia describes women as filling men's stomachs: 'when they are full, / They belch us' (*Othello*, III.iv.102), or when Ariel describes the 'three men of sin' as being 'belched up' by the sea (*The Tempest*, III.iii.57). It must also be the character-note for Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*. The more general sense is also found in Shakespeare, where the stomach is not involved. Cloten, talking of Innogen's rebuff, says 'the bitterness of it I now belch from my heart' (*Cymbeline*, III.v.135). Here it means simply 'discharge, emit'. Similarly, with the adjective, *belching*. When Pericles (in Pericles, III.i.62) and Nestor (in *Troilus and Cressida*, V.v.23) talk about the 'belching whale' they mean 'spouting'. We must dismiss any notion of a noisy burp.

bladder (*noun*) modern meaning: 'urinary tract'

The dominant modern usage relates to excretion, but that nuance is irrelevant in the three places where Shakespeare uses the word. When Romeo talks about the apothecary, whom he plans to visit to buy poison, he describes his shop as containing 'empty boxes, / Green earthen pots, bladders' (*Romeo and Juliet*, V.i.46), by which he means simply 'vessels derived from animals for storing liquid'. And when Thersites talks of 'the rotten diseases of the south... bladders full of impostume' (*Troilus and Cressida*, V.i.20, in the Quarto text only) he is referring generally to any cavity or vessel in the body. The remaining usage, in *Henry VIII*, sometimes takes the reader by surprise. This is when Wolsey says 'I have ventured, / Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders' (III.ii.359). Here the reference is simply to an air-filled bag which can be used in the manner of a lifejacket - what we would toady call 'water-wings'.

blasted (*adjective*) modern meaning: expression of general dislike, 'damned'; 'intoxicated, high'

The intensifying meaning, as in *You're too blasted smart*, is a 19th-century development; the application to alcohol or drugs a development of the late 20th century. Shakespeare uses only the original meanings of the word, which began to come into the language in the 16th century. Growing things are said to be *blasted*, meaning 'blighted' or 'withered'. Macbeth meets the witches on a 'blasted heath' (*Macbeth*, I.iii.76) and Richard describes his deformed arm as a 'blasted sapling' (*Richard III*, III.iv.69). The sense of 'accursed' or

'malevolent' is never far away. We see this meaning again when Antony shouts at Cleopatra in a jealous rage: 'You were half blasted ere I knew you' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, III.xiii.105). The older sense come out more clearly when blast is used as a verb, as when Ophelia describes Hamlet as 'blasted with ecstasy' (i.e. madness; *Hamlet*, III.i.161).

bootless (*adverb*) modern meaning: 'without boots'

This sense of the word is known from the 14th century; but it is not Shakespeare's normal usage, where it means 'fruitlessly, uselessly, unsuccessfully, in vain'. The word is from Old English, where it meant 'good' or 'use' (*better* comes from the same root). So when Caesar addresses the company with 'Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?' (*Julius Caesar*, III.i.75) or the Fairy enquires of Puck 'Are not you he / That ... bootless make the breathless housewife churn' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II.i.37), the issue is nothing to do with footwear. But the potential for wordplay is always there, as Glendower discovers, when he boasts of sending Henry Bolingbroke 'Bootless home, and weather-beaten back' (*Henry IV Part 1*, III.i.66). Hotspur retorts: 'Home without boots, and in foul weather too! / How scapes he agues [fevers], in the devil's name!' The adjectival use is more frequent in Shakespeare, with a related set of senses.

bully (*noun*) modern meaning: 'tyrannical coward who terrorizes the weak'

The strong modern sense dates only from the end of the 17th century, when the word described a blustering gallant or swashbuckler. Earlier, it had no such negative associations. From the 16th century we see it used as a warm form of address, more or less equivalent to 'dear friend' or 'sweetheart'. Originally used to people of either sex, it was later restricted to men: 'fine fellow'. Shakespeare usually uses it as a kind of honorific prefix to a man's name. There is something of the 'Hail fellow, well met' tone about it, for it is used by a drunken Stephano to Caliban ('Coragio, bully-monster', *The Tempest*, V.i.258), by the braggart Pistol about the King ('I love the lovely bully', *Henry V*, IV.i.48), by the rustics to the overpowering Bottom ('Bully Bottom', *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III.i.7), and regularly by the ebullient Host to Caius and Falstaff: 'Bless thee,bully doctor!' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, II.iii.16), 'Bully knight! Bully Sir John!' (V.v.14).

cabin (*noun*) modern meaning: 'compartment on a ship or aircraft; small rural dwelling'

Both meanings were present in Shakespeare's time. The transport sense is used several times – such as by the boatswain in *The Tempes*t: 'Keep your cabins' (I.i.14). However, when Shakespeare uses *cabin* in its 'dwelling' sense, it has a different meaning from that found today, where it refers to (a) a building, which is (b) permanent. When

Viola tells Olivia that a wooer should make 'a willow cabin at your gate' (*Twelfth Night*, I.v.257), she is talking about constructing a temporary hut or shelter, not building some sort of log cabin. This sense is also used by the pilgrim, talking about his love: 'She ... daffed me to a cabin hanged with care' (*Passionate Pilgrim*, XIV.3). A different sense is seen when Venus tells Adonis of a boar: 'O, let him keep his loathsome cabin still' (*Venus and Adonis*, l.637). Here the word means a natural hole in the ground – a den or cave. And it is this sense which is used metaphorically later in the poem: 'So at his bloody view her eyes are fled / Into the deep-dark cabins of her head' (l. 1038) – in other words, eye-sockets.

cabinet (*noun*) modern meaning: 'display cupboard; body of government advisers'

The modern usages all derive from the older sense of the word – a 'little room' (or cabin), especially one in which special things are displayed or special events take place. It is a short step from here to find the word applying to the furniture within such a room or to the people who meet there. In the Shakespeare canon, the word occurs only three times – twice in the long poems – and in each case it is the oldest meaning which is retained. The sense of lodging or dwelling-place is found in *The Rape of Lucrece* (442), which talks of a 'quiet cabinet' and *Venus and Adonis* (854), where the lark 'from his moist cabinet mounts up on high' (in other words, from his nest). In King *Edward III* (II.i.62), the king tells his secretary Lodowick to make an arbour 'our counsel house or cabinet' . Here the sense is one of intimacy – a private meeting-place – for his intention is to compose a love letter there.

canvass (*verb*) modern meaning: 'visit someone to get political support or find out opinions'

The modern sense began to appear in the 16th century, in such phrases as *canvass for* (someone or something), though the transitive use of the verb (as in *canvass the town*) is much later, early 19th century. Shakespeare uses the word twice, and neither time do the modern meanings work. In *Henry VI Part 1* (I.iii.36), Gloucester harangues Winchester: 'I'll canvass thee in thy broad cardinal's hat / If thou proceed in this thy insolence.' He is evidently not asking for votes. Here, the meaning is an older one, now obsolete. The verb came into the language in the early 1500s as a development of the noun *canvas*: 'toss someone in a canvas'. It could originally have been either for fun or for punishment, but by the end of the century it predominantly meant 'knock about, thrash, batter'. As so often in Shakespeare, hints about the meaning of an obscure word can be found in the context. So, in *Henry IV Part 2* (II.iv.217), Falstaff curses the swaggering Pistol: 'A rascally slave! I will toss the rogue in a blanket', and Doll Tearsheet replies, 'Do, an thou darest for thy heart.

An thou dost, I'll canvass thee between a pair of sheets.' If you don't get the meaning, you would stress the word *canvass*. The context makes it clear that it has to be on the words *I'll* and *thee.* She's basically saying: 'If you do, I'll toss you too!'

capable (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'able, competent; susceptible'

The word arrived in English from French in the mid-15th century, and soon developed a range of meanings, some of which go well beyond the senses that have remained in modern English. Thus, when Hamlet says of the Ghost: 'His form and cause conjoined, preaching to stones, / Would make them capable' (*Hamlet*, III.iv.128), he means that even stones would become receptive, after an encounter with his father. This meaning, of 'sensitive, responsive' is also seen when Phebe talks about a 'capable impressure' on the palm of a hand (*As You Like It*, III.v.23). And it adds an extra barb when Thersites retorts, being asked to take a letter to Ajax: 'Let me carry another to his horse, for that's the more capable creature' (*Troilus and Cressida*, III.iii.307). He is insulting Ajax's intelligence here, not his strength. Other obsolete senses are found when Othello asks that his bloody thoughts be swallowed up by 'a capable and wide revenge' (*Othello*, III.iii.456), where the word means 'capacious, comprehensive', and in Gloucester's promise to Edmund to make him 'capable' (*King Lear*, II.i.84), where it means 'able to inherit'.

captivate (*verb*) modern meaning: 'enthral, fascinate, enchant'

The word arrived in English from Latin in the sixteenth century in the quite literal sense of 'make captive' or 'capture', and was immediately extended to include the notion of 'take over the mind', which is source of the modern meaning. Shakespeare, however, uses the word only in its literal sense, as is usually made clear by the context. So, when Armado tells Costard, 'Thou wert immured, restrained, captivated, bound' *(Love's Labour's Lost*, III.i.123) the older sense is reinforced by the accompanying synonyms. Likewise, the military context leaves little room for doubt when the Countess talks about General Talbot sending 'our sons and husbands captivate' (*Henry VI Part 1*, II.iii.41). But there is more chance of ambiguity when, in the same play (V.iii.107) Margaret reflects, on listening to Suffolk's wooing, that 'women have been captivate ere now'. And the modern meaning is lurking in the wings when Adonis's horse is imagined to be leaping in order 'to captivate the eye' (*Venus and Adonis*, 281) or York condemns the Queen for triumphing 'Upon their woes whom Fortune captivates' (*Henry VI Part 3*, I.iv.115).

car (*noun*) modern meaning: 'motor-car, (US) also 'train carriage or tram'

The modern vehicular senses date from the 19th-century, so

'mechanical' nuances must be carefully avoided whenever we hear the word in Shakespeare. When the word first came into the language, from Latin via French in the 14th century, it had a wide range of usage, referring to any wheeled vehicle – chariots, trucks, carts, wagons, and the like. But from the 16th century, the dominant usage in literature was 'chariot', often referring to the conveyance of the sun-god, variously named as Phoebus or Phaethon. We find this reference, for example, in *Antony and Cleopatra* (IV.viii.29), *Cymbeline* (V.v.191), *Richard III* (V.iii.20), and twice in *Henry VI Part 3* (II.vi.13, IV.vii.79). Bottom declaims about 'Phibbus' car' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I.ii.31). And Sonnet 7 (line 9) talks of the sun's 'weary car' at the end of the day. But the earlier general sense also appears, referring to an earthly carriage, when Exeter talks about 'captives bound to a triumphant car' (*Henry VI Part 1*, I.i.22) and Fabian exhorts Sir Toby to be quiet: 'Though our silence be drawn from us with cares, yet peace!' (*Twelfth Night*, II.v.63).

careful (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'taking care, showing care'

The original sense dates from Old English – 'full of care' – and this is the primary sense in Shakespeare. It means 'anxious, worried' when Queen Isabel says of York: 'full of careful business are his looks! (*Richard II*, II.ii.75), when Wolsey describes Buckingham's Surveyor as a 'careful subject' (*Henry VIII*, I.ii.130), and when Henry V soliloquizes: 'Let us our lives, our souls, / Our debts, our careful wives ... lay on the King!' (*Henry V*, IV.i.224). It's a short step from there to 'caring, provident', as when Lady Capulet says to Juliet, 'thou hast a careful father, child' (*Romeo and Juliet*, III.v.107) or 'protecting, watchful', as when Pericles says he 'fled / Under the covering of a careful night' (*Pericles*, I.ii.81). And a further narrowing of sense takes us to 'painstaking, serious-minded ', when Feste reflects, 'to be said an honest man and a good housekeeper goes as fairly as to say a careful man and a great scholar' (*Twelfth Night*, IV.ii.9).

catastrophe (*noun*) modern meaning: 'sudden disaster'

The modern sense is relatively recent, recorded since the mid-18th-century. In Shakespeare's time it had a much more neutral meaning, of 'conclusion, end-point'. Shakespeare is in fact the first recorded user of the word in this sense, in *All's Well that Ends Well*, when the King talks about someone whose 'good melancholy oft began / On the catastrophe and heel of pastime' (I.ii.57). This is the sense hiding within the catch-phrase 'I'll tickle your catastrophe!', used by the Page in *Henry IV Part 2* (II.i.58) – meaning 'smack your end-point – i.e. behind'. The word also had a more technical meaning, referring to the denouement or final event in a drama. This is the sense used by Edmund when he refers to Edgar's approach as being 'like the catastrophe of the old comedy' (*King Lear*, I.ii.133). However, there is ambiguity between this meaning and the more general one when Boyet

reads from Don Armado's letter to Jaquenetta, describing the encounter between King Cophetua and a beggar: 'The catastrophe is a nuptial' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, IV.i.78).

challenge (*verb*) modern meaning: 'question, refuse to accept; defy, compete to win'

These belligerent senses characterize the modern use of this word, and they have been around since early medieval times. But just as old is a second set of senses, where people *challenge* in order to demand something as a right – 'call for, insist upon'. There is no problem with the first sense, which is routine in Shakespeare whenever one person wants to fight another. It is the second which can cause a problem. When in *Henry VI Part 3* (IV.vii.23) Edward says 'I challenge nothing but my dukedom', he is demanding to have it, not wanting to fight against it. And when in *Richard II* (II.iii.133) Bolingbroke says 'I am a subject, / And I challenge law' he does not mean he is going to break the law; he is simply demanding his rights.

competitor (*noun*) modern meaning: 'rival, antagonist'

When *competitor* came into the language, in the 16th century, there was a period of confrontation between two senses: 'someone who seeks an objective in rivalry with others' and 'someone who seeks an objective in association with others'. Of the two, it was the 'rivals' meaning which carried through into modern English; but in Shakespeare, it is always the 'partner, associate, colleague' meaning which is present. So, when Feste says of Sir Toby and Maria 'The competitors enter' (*Twelfth Night*, IV.ii.10) he does not mean that they are in opposition to each other but that they are confederates (in the task of tricking Malvolio). And when Menas says to Pompey, about the Triumvirs 'These three world-sharers, these competitors' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, II.vii.70), the two parts of the line would seem contradictory without the correct sense. The point is even more relevant when Caesar describes dead Antony, after their mutual antagonism, as 'my brother, my competitor / In top of all design' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, V.i.42).

conceit (*noun*) modern meaning: 'overfavourable opinion of oneself'

This word began in 14th-century English with a very broad sense of 'mental conception', then developed a wide range of related meanings in which the modern, pejorative sense is absent. For Shakespeare the most general sense is 'notion, idea', as when Hastings says of Richard 'There's some conceit or other likes him well' (*Richard III*, III.iv.49) or the sonneteer talks of 'the first conceit of love' (*Sonnet* 108.13). There is a shift to 'ability to understand, intelligence' when Falstaff says of Poins 'There's no more conceit in him than is in a mallet' (*Henry IV Part 2*, II.iv.236). And an evaluative sense emerges, the forerunner of the

modern usage, when the Duke confides to Proteus 'the good conceit I hold of thee' (*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, III.ii.17); here it means 'opinion, view'. The cognitive emphasis continues when the Ghost tells Hamlet, 'Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works' (*Hamlet*, III.iv.115), or when Rosaline describes Berowne's tongue as 'conceit's expositor' (Love's Labour's Lost, IV.ii.86); in these cases it means 'imagination, fancy'. It takes on darker associations when Juliet refers in the tomb to 'The horrible conceit of death and night' (*Romeo and Juliet*, IV.iii.37), where it means 'imagining', and a note of 'brooding' creeps in when Claudius describes Ophelia's ramblings as 'Conceit upon her father' (*Hamlet*, IV.v.45). But the word is not solely used of cognitive states; it can also apply to objects. When Osrick describes rapiers as having carriages 'of very liberal conceit' he is talking about their ingenious design (*Hamlet*, V.ii.150), and when Egeus accuses Lysander of having stolen Hermia 'with bracelets of thy hair, rings, gauds, conceits', he is thinking of trinkets (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I.i.33).

cornet (*noun*) modern meaning: 'conical wafer, especially filled with ice-cream; type of trumpet'

The first usage, widespread in British English, developed in the early 1900s, though a cornet of paper for carrying food or groceries was known in Shakespeare's time. The second usage, the musical instrument – originally a type of horn, later a type of trumpet – dates from the 1400s. The instrumental sense turns up several times in Shakespeare as a stage direction, when a 'flourish of cornets' is heard – meaning a fanfare (as at the beginnng of *All's Well That Ends Well*, I.ii). In the main text of the plays, however, it is found just once, in a rather different sense. When Richard tells Lucy of 'Somerset, who in proud heart / Doth stop my cornets' (*Henry VI Part 1*, IV.iii.25), the sense is of a 'troop of cavalry'. He means that Somerset is withholding his cavalrymen.

crazy (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'very strange, mentally ill; mad with emotion'
The modern meanings were beginning to come into the language in the early 1600s, but in Shakespeare we find only the earliest sense. This was essentially physical in character. Something that was crazy was full of cracks and flaws (as in modern *crazy paving*), damaged, or broken down. Bodies as well as buildings could be crazy, therefore – as when Talbot says to Bedford: ' We will bestow you in some better place, / Fitter for sickness and for crazy age' (*Henry VI Part 1*, III.ii.89). Here the word means 'frail' or 'infirm'. It is the only use of crazy in Shakespeare; but there is a related word, crazed, which is used by Demetrius to Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (I.i.92): 'yield / Thy crazed title to my certain right'. Here it means ' flawed, unsound'.

curst or **cursed** (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'under a curse, deserving

a curse'

The earliest meaning is full of religious overtones, and in its sense of 'damned' it expresses strong dislike to this day. But c.1400 another sense developed, referring to a person's disposition. Anyone who was cantankerous, shrewish, or bad-tempered would be called *curst* (usually in that spelling). Likewise, people who were very angry or fierce. These usages became dialectal in the nineteenth century, but they were strongly present in Shakespeare's day. 'Here she comes, curst and sad', says Puck of Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (III.ii.439). Women are usually described as curst – Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing* and Bianca in *The Taming of the Shrew* are famous instances – but men could be curst upon occasion. 'Be curst and brief ' says Sir Toby to Sir Andrew in *Twelfth Night* (III.ii.40). The 'angry' sense can be seen when Edmund threatens to reveal his brother 'with curst speech' (*King Lear*, II.i.64) and when the Clown in *The Winter's Tale* (III.iii.126) talks about bears: 'They are never curst but when they are hungry'.

dainty (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'delicately pretty; attractively presented; fastidious'

All the modern senses were available to Shakespeare, but we must be careful not to read them in to every use of the word. It would be possible to find the 'delicate' sense in Prospero's description of 'dainty Ariel' (*The Tempest*, V.i.95), for example, but hardly when the schoolmaster addresses the powerful Duke Theseus as a 'dainty Duke' (*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, III.v.113). Here the word means 'excellent, splendid'. The associations between words (the collocations) have also changed over the centuries. In its sense of 'refined, fastidious' we find Costard's description of Don Armado as 'a most dainty man' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, IV.i.145) and a countryman's description of a schoolmaster as a 'dainty dominie' (*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, II.ii.40) – neither likely collocations today. And we need to be on the lookout for ambiguity. When Richard tells Joan la Pucelle, talking about Charles the Dauphin, 'No shape but his can please your dainty eye' (*Henry VI Part 1*, V.iii.38), he is not being nice about her eyes, but scoffing at what she has seen with them.

dart (*noun*) modern meaning: 'pointed projectile used in a target game'
The 20th-century game of darts has dominated the use of this word, though there are some additional associated meanings, such as in dressmaking (a tapering fold in a garment) or general recreation (paper darts). The original sense, in English from the 14th century, was exclusively military: a pointed weapon, either thrown by hand (as a spear or javelin) or shot from a bow (i.e. an arrow). The context in Shakespeare invariably makes it clear that the word is being used in a military sense, but it is important to rid the mind of the modern

gaming associations, as when Martius talks of the air being filled 'with swords advanced and darts' (*Coriolanus*, I.vi.61) or Jack Cade is described as having 'his thighs [pierced] with darts' so that they resembled a porcupine (*Henry VI Part 2*, III.i.362). The task is made much easier when the word is accompanied by adjectives which emphasize its hazardous meaning. Salisbury reports Prince Edward being surrounded with 'crossbows and deadly wounding darts' (*King Edward III*, V.i.138) and Messala talks of Cassius as dead with 'darts envenomed' (*Julius Caesar*, V.iii.76).

dear (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'loved, highly regarded, esteemed'

This word has a range of positive meanings dating back to Old English, and all are found in Shakespeare, including some which are no longer current, such as 'glorious', 'precious', or 'heartfelt'. But the major problem comes with the word in its negative meanings – 'grievous', 'harsh', 'dire' – which didn't last much beyond the end of the eighteenth century. Examples include Hamlet talking about his 'dearest foe' (*Hamlet*, I.ii.182) or Prince Henry reacting to the 'dear and deep rebuke' he has received (*Henry IV Part 2*, IV.v.141). Offences, guilt, exile, peril, groans, and other unwelcome things can all be dear. Usually, the context indicates the right sense, but we have to be careful not to be caught off guard. When Romeo realizes who Juliet is (*Romeo and Juliet*, I.v.118), he exclaims: 'Is she a Capulet? / O dear account!' He isn't calling her a beloved treasure. It's a harsh reckoning.

defend (verb) modern meaning: 'protect, keep safe, support'
The sense of 'guarding from attack' goes right back to early medieval times; but it grew up alongside another, more active sense of 'warding off an attack', which has not survived today. It was active in Shakespeare's time, though, especially conveying the notion of divine prohibition. Several characters in the plays ask God to *defend* something. When Mowbray takes his oath in *Richard II* (I.iii.18), he says 'Which God defend a knight should violate!' This is asking God to forbid any violation, not to help it happen. And the same meaning applies when Othello exclaims: 'heaven defend your good souls that you think / I will your serious and great business scant' (*Othello*, I.iii.263). Any deity can be approached. Charmian in *Antony and Cleopatra* (III.iii.42) calls on her goddess in the same way. 'Hath he seen majesty?', she asks of the Messenger. 'Isis else defend'.

delicate (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'easily hurt, fragile, sickly, sensitive, finely tuned'

This word came into English in the early Middle Ages with a wide range of senses from French and Latin. Several still exist today, displaying three main semantic trends: delicate people are easily hurt; delicate things are fragile; delicate concepts are subtle. These meanings often get in the way of our understanding of Shakespeare's 30 uses of the

word. When Stephano describes Caliban as 'a most delicate monster' (*The Tempest*, II.ii.88), he does not mean that Caliban is sickly, only that he is 'pleasant, congenial', and this is what Banquo means when he says 'The air is delicate' (*Macbeth*, I.vi.10). Desdemona is called delicate four times, and Ariel twice: here the required sense is 'exquisite, dainty': 'she is a most fresh and delicate creature', says Cassio (*Othello*, II.iii.20); 'Delicate Ariel', says Prospero (*The Tempest*, I.ii.442). When Antonio describes temperance as 'a delicate wench' (*The Tempest*, II.i.46), he means 'pleasure-seeking, voluptuous', and this is the sense intended by Claudio when he talks of 'soft and delicate desires' (*Much Ado About Nothing*, I.i.282).

demerits (*plural noun*) modern meaning: 'bad qualities, faults'

This is one of those annoying words which has two contradictory meanings at the same time. Today, the general sense of the word is 'lacking merit', and this sense was around in Shakespeare's time, having entered the language in the fifteenth century from Latin: Macduff, mourning for his murdered children, blames himself: 'Not for their own demerits, but for mine, / Fell slaughter on their souls' (*Macbeth* IV.iii.225). But another sense also operated in Early Modern English, which arrived in the language in the fourteenth century from French, which had the opposite meaning of 'merits, deserving'. And this is the one you need when Othello says to Iago, 'my demerits / May speak, unbonneted, to as proud a fortune / As this that I have reached' (*Othello*, I.ii.22), or when Sicinius says to Brutus, 'Opinion, that so sticks on Martius, shall / Of his demerits rob Cominius' (*Coriolanus*, I.i.270).

demure (*adjective*) modern meaning: '(especially of women) self-consciously modest, coy'

The modern sense seems to have developed during the 17th century. When the word arrived in English from French in the 14th century, it lacked any nuance of affectation: it meant 'grave, serious, solemn'. This is the sense we find in Shakespeare. When Malvolio imagines himself giving 'a demure travel of regard' to ask for his kinsman Sir Toby (*Twelfth Night*, II.v.52) he would have been thinking of himself more as frowning than smiling. Lucrece's maid greets her mistress with a 'demure good-morrow' (*The Rape of Lucrece*, 1219): she is being grave, not coquettish. And we must avoid any hint of 'campness' when the Surveyor describes a monk as having 'demure confidence' (*Henry VIII*, I.ii.167) or Falstaff refers to Prince John and his ilk: 'There's never none of these demure boys come to any proof' (*Henry IV Part 1*, IV.iii.89). We move a little nearer to the modern sense when the word is used as a verb. Cleopatra tells Antony: 'Your wife Octavia ... shall acquire no honour / Demuring upon me' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, IV.xv.29). This seems to mean 'gaze decorously'. The demure look is waiting in the wings.

diet (*verb*) modern meaning: 'regulate food intake with health in mind'

The usual connotations of dieting, these days, relate to losing weight. Not so, in Shakespeare's time. Indeed, most uses of the verb *diet* then are to do with feeding someone up to a satisfactory level. This 'fattening' sense is required when Alençon says, of the English, 'they must be dieted like mules' if they are to fight well (*Henry VI Part 1*, I.ii.10) or Innogen says to Pisanio, 'Thou art all the comfort / The gods will diet me with' (*Cymbeline*, III.iv.182). And the sense of a steadily increasing regime is present when Iago soliloquizes about wanting 'to diet my revenge' (*Othello*, II.i.285) or when Menenius says he will watch Coriolanus 'Till he be dieted to my request' (*Coriolanus*, V.i.58) – in other words, until he will listen favourably. The modern sense is in the wings, however. When one Lord says to the other, of Bertram, 'he is dieted to his hour' (*All's Well That Ends Well*, IV.iii.28), the sense is 'limit, restrict'.

digest (*verb*) modern meaning: 'digest, swallow'

This sense did exist in Shakespeare's time, spelled both as digest and disgest. Brutus says to Cassius 'You shall disgest the venom of your spleen' (*Julius Caesar*, IV.iii.47). But it was only one of several senses that had developed a century before, all to do with 'processing', reflecting the multiple meanings of the Latin source-word. It means 'disperse' when King Henry tells his nobles to 'digest / Your angry choler on your enemies' (*Henry VI Part 1*, IV.i.167). It means 'organize' when Maecenas says 'We have cause to be glad that matters are so well disgested' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, II.ii.181). It means 'endure' (or 'stomach') when Surrey says 'But will the King / Digest this letter of the Cardinal's?' (*Henry VIII*, II.ii.53). It means 'assimilate' when Lear tells Cornwall and Albany: 'With my two daughters' dowers digest the third' (*King Lear*, I.i.128). And it means 'understand' when Menenius tells the Citizens to ' digest things rightly' (*Coriolanus*, I.i.148). There is often a play on words between mental and physical meanings, as when Richard says to Buckingham: 'let us sup betimes, that afterwards / We may digest our complots in some form (*Richard III*, III.i.200).

distracted (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'unable to think clearly, anxious'

Today the sense is quite mild: if we feel distracted our minds are not focusing well on some issue. At the end of the 16th century, when the word came into English, both as a verb and adjective, it had a much stronger meaning. Shakespeare himself is the first recorded user of a sense of great mental disturbance, 'perplexed, confused', even to the point of madness. Hamlet, having just met his father's ghost, refers to his head going round and round as a 'distracted globe' (*Hamlet*, I.v.97). When Troilus says to Ulysses, 'Accept distracted thanks'

(*Troilus and Cressida*, V.ii.192), he does not mean he is being absent-minded, but that he is agitated by what he has seen. This is the usual Shakespearian meaning, applied to people. Just occasionally, there is an even stronger nuance when the word is applied to things: when the King of France says 'to the brightest beams / Distracted clouds give way' (*All's Well That Ends Well*, V.iii.35), he means they have been divided or torn apart – a sense that stayed in the language for only half a century.

dogged (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'tenacious, persistent'

The word has rather a nice sound today: anyone who is doing something 'doggedly' is surely to be praised for not giving up. But this sense has been around only since the mid-18th century. The original use, from the 14th century, expressed the fiercer canine qualities. Shakespeare uses the word just three times. In *King John*, *war* is described as *dogged* (IV.iii.149), and the sense is plainly 'cruel, ferocious'. Earlier in the play, the same sense is conveyed when Hubert reassures young Arthur, 'I'll fill these dogged spies with false reports' (IV.i.128). He is not praising the spies for their tenacity; the spies are Arthur's enemies. And similarly, when Gloucester describes the Duke of York to the King as 'dogged York, that reaches at the moon' (*Henry VI Part 2*, III.i.158), he is thinking of him as an ambitious malevolent schemer. The relevant meaning is 'spiteful, malicious'.

doubt (*verb*) modern meaning: 'be uncertain about, hesitate to believe'

Shakespeare uses the verb in this sense, but by his time it had already developed other senses that have been lost now: 'fear, be afraid' and 'suspect, have suspicions about'. When Prince Hal says to Poins, about taking on Falstaff and the others in a fight, 'I doubt they will be too hard for us' (*Henry IV Part 1*, I.ii.179), he is saying they might lose, not win; when the Messenger approaches Macduff's wife to say 'I doubt some danger does approach you nearly' (*Macbeth*, IV.ii.67), he is advising her to flee not stay; and when Pandarus says to Cressida, about Troilus, 'I doubt he be hurt' (*Troilus and Cressida*, I.ii.276), he thinks that he is hurt, not that he isn't. The 'suspicion' sense is most famously preserved in Hamlet's soliloquy, ' I doubt some foul play ' (*Hamlet* I.ii.256), soon after reinforced by similar uses from both Gertrude (II.ii.56) and Polonius, reading Hamlet's letter to Ophelia, 'Doubt truth to be a liar' (II.ii.117).

doubtful (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'uncertain, undecided'

The modern sense has been with this word since it arrived in English at the end of the 14th century, but from the outset it displayed a range of meanings. Its sense of 'disquieting' died out in the 18th century, but it can be seen when Henry says 'Let me be umpire in this doubtful strife' (*Henry VI Part 1*, IV.i.151). Already dying out in Shakespeare's

time was its sense of 'dreadful, awful', as when Egeon talks about 'A doubtful warrant of immediate death' (*The Comedy of Errors*, I.i.69). Its other old sense, of 'fearful, worried', developed in the mid-16th century, and stayed till around 1800. It turns up half a dozen times in the plays. This is the sense required when Olivia refers to her 'doubtful soul' (*Twelfth Night*, IV.iii.27), the Bastard talks of John's 'doubtful friends' (*King John*, V.i.36), or Lady Macbeth tells her husband, 'Tis safer to be that which we destroy / Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy' (*Macbeth*, III.ii.7).

eager (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'full of keen desire, impatient longing'

The modern sense was around in Shakespeare's time – it had been in the language since c.1400 – and he (or someone) used it in *King Edward III*, when Salisbury talks of being 'eager of revenge' (V.i.115). This sense refers only to animate beings – people can be keen, not things or conditions – but in Early Modern English, anything could be eager. When Hamlet talks about the 'eager air' (*Hamlet*, I.iv.2), he means it is biting. When George talks to Richard of vexing dead Clifford with 'eager words' (*Henry VI Part 3*, II.vi.68), he means his words are cutting. In the Quarto texts of Hamlet, the Ghost tells Hamlet of a poison 'like eager droppings into milk', meaning 'sour'. And King David talks of beating the English 'with eager rods' (*King Edward III*, I.ii.25), meaning 'fierce'. The word had a much more intense set of meanings than it has today, and this intensity is found when the word is used of people too. An 'eager cry' (*Richard II*, V.iii.74) is more than just mildly excited – it is impetuously impassioned, and an 'eager foe' is more ferocious than a foe that is keen to fight (*Henry VI Part 3*, I.iv.3).

ecstasy (*noun*) modern meaning: 'intense delight, rapture'

The modern sense was emerging in the 16th century; but it was long preceded by a much wider range of senses, and these are the ones found in Shakespeare. It expressed any point on a scale of emotional intensity: the 'weak' end can be illustrated by the description of Venus, 'Thus stands she in a trembling ecstasy' (*Venus and Adonis*, 895), where it means little more than 'emotion' or 'feeling'. In the middle we have the notion of 'mental fit' or 'frenzy', well illustrated by the Courtesan's description of the increasingly confused and angry Antipholus of Ephesus: 'Mark how he trembles in his ecstasy' (*The Comedy of Errors*, IV.iv.49). And at the 'strong' end we have the various references to Hamlet by Ophelia and Gertrude, such as the latter's 'This bodiless creation ecstasy / Is very cunning in', to which Hamlet immediately replies 'Ecstasy?' and denies it, making the older sense perfectly clear: 'It is not madness that I have uttered' (*Hamlet*, III.4.142).

embossed (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'ornamented by work raised above a surface'

The modern sense is a continuation of the first sense of this word in English, referring to something which has been carved or moulded in relief. But when *embossed* arrived from French, in the 16th century, it quickly acquired a metaphorical sense, of 'swollen, bulging', and this is the one we find in Shakespeare when Duke Senior talks of 'embossed sores' (*As You Like It*, II.vii.67), Lear calls Gonerill 'an embossed carbuncle' (*King Lear*, II.iv.219), and Prince Hal calls Falstaff a 'whoreson impudent embossed rascal' (*Henry IV Part 1*, III.iii.155). However, Shakespeare also uses a second cluster of senses of embossed, deriving from a different French word which refers to hunted animals trapped en bois ('in a bush'). When Cleopatra says 'the boar of Thessaly / Was never so embossed' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, IV.xiii.3), she means 'driven to such extremes, made mad with exhaustion'. And this is the sense intended by Timon when he talks of the sea covering his grave with 'embossed froth' (*Timon of Athens*, V.i.215) – froth which has been 'driven forward' or which is, in a word, 'foaming'.

excrement (*noun*) modern meaning: 'waste matter discharged from the bowels'

This learned term (for which many colloquial alternatives exist) came into English in this sense just before Shakespeare was born, and is still with us today. But the word in Elizabethan English had a second sense, meaning 'outgrowth' – as of hair, nails, or feathers, and this is its meaning in Shakespeare. He is in fact the first to be recorded using it in this way, when Don Armado boasts to Holofernes that the King 'with his royal finger thus dally with my excrement, with my mustachio' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, V.i.98). There are a handful of similar uses, such Gertrude's description of Hamlet, 'Your bedded hair like life in excrements / Start up and stand an end' (*Hamlet*, III.iv.122), and Autolycus's 'Let me pocket up my pedlar's excrement (*The Winter's Tale*, IV.iv.709). Abstract notions can have outgrowths, too, as in Bassanio's reflection about cowards: 'these assume but valour's excrement / To render them redoubted' (*The Merchant of Venice*, III.ii.87). Not a sense to let loose in a classroom without appropriate preparation.

fabulous (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'marvellous, terrific; astonishing, incredible'

Today, the intensifying, exclamatory senses of the adjective are the only ones to be heard, and these are a distinctive mid-20th-century development. 'The picture was sold for a fabulous price.' 'That's a fabulous car!'. The oldest senses, dating from the mid-16th century, all relate literally to the notion of a fable or myth. As a result, in

Shakespearian English, we find *fabulous* meaning 'mythical, fabricated, invented'. It's used just twice in the plays. In *Henry VI Part 1*, the Countess looks scornfully at the English general Talbot, thinks that his appearance does not live up to his reputation, and says 'I see report is fabulous and false' (II.iii.17). The collocation with 'false' is a clear indication of the meaning we need. And in *Henry VIII*, Norfolk describes to Buckingham the meeting of the kings of England and France, comparing the event to a 'former fabulous story' (I.i.36). He doesn't mean that it was a marvellous story, but that it was a story befitting the realms of folklore or mythology.

fact (*noun*) modern meaning: 'actuality, datum of experience'

This word arrived in the language in the 16th century, and quickly developed a range of senses. The one which has survived is 'actuality', but in Early Modern English other senses were more dominant. The neutral idea of 'something done' gained both positive and negative associations: a noble thing done or a bad thing done. The pejorative sense was commonest – 'evil deed, wicked deed, crime' – and *fact* always has this connotation in Shakespeare. Murder, rape, cowardice, and other transgressions are all referred to as 'facts'. Gloucester describes the cowardice of Falstaff (the soldier) as an 'infamous' fact' (*Henry VI Part 1*, IV.i.30). Warwick cannot think of a 'fouler fact' than Somerset's treason (*Henry VI Part 2*, I.iii.171).The rape of Lucrece is described as a 'fact' to be abhorred (*The Rape of Lucrece*, 349). And Lennox describes the way Duncan died as a 'damned fact' (*Macbeth*, III.vi.10). The old sense hasn't entirely disappeared, however. It will still be encountered in a few legal phrases, such as 'confess the fact'.

familiar (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'easy to recognize, well-known, routine'

The modern sense of 'common, current' is quite often found in Shakespeare. Indeed, its use in Henry V (IV.iii.52) – 'Familiar in his mouth as household words' – is the first recorded use of the word in its modern sense. But other uses are not so – familiar. Several reflect the word's origins in Latin *familia* 'family'. When it first came into English, in the 14th century, it meant 'pertaining to one's family', and thus 'intimate'. By extension, it was applied to household things, such as animals and food. So, when Evans describes the louse as 'a familiar beast to man' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, I.i.18) he doesn't mean that people readily recognize it, but that it is domesticated. When Iago tells Cassio 'good wine is a good familiar creature if it be well used' (*Othello*, II.iii.300), he doesn't mean that wine is well-known but that it is congenial. And when Falstaff talks of Mistress Ford's 'familiar style' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, I.iii.42) he is talking about (what he imagines to be) her welcoming manner.

fancy (*noun*) modern meaning: 'inclination, liking'

The feeling expressed by the noun today is not especially strong – things 'take our fancy', or 'tickle our fancy'. This sense of 'whim' was available in Shakespeare's time – Don Pedro says of Benedick 'a fancy that he hath to strange disguises' (*Much Ado About Nothing*, III.ii.30) – but more usually, when talking about the emotions, the word referred to a much more profound feeling of love or even infatuation. Five lines later, in the same play, Don Pedro says Benedick 'is no fool for fancy', which would be confusing if we did not appreciate that here the word means 'love'. And similarly, when Silvius tells Phebe of 'the power of fancy' (*As You Like It*, III.v.29), or Demetrius talks of 'Fair Helena in fancy following me' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV.i.162), or Orsino describes Viola as 'his fancy's queen' (*Twelfth Night*, V.i.385), they are all saying much more than simply 'I fancy her'.

fantastic (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'excellent, good beyond expectation'

The modern sense dates only from the 1930s. Earlier senses, from the 14th century, focused on the notion of 'fantasy'. At first, it referred to things 'existing only in the imagination', as when Bolingbroke talks of 'thinking on fantastic summer's heat' (*Richard II*, I.iii.299). Then it was applied to people or things that were imaginative or fanciful (Ophelia's 'fantastic garlands', *Hamlet*, IV.vii.168), or to people who behaved in an extravagant or eccentric way. 'To be fantastic may become a youth' says Julia to Lucetta (*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II.vii.47); and in *Venus and Adonis* we hear of insects 'soothing the humour of fantastic wits' (line 850). It is a short step from here to the notion of 'dressed in a fanciful way'. When we see Lucio in the character-list of *Measure for Measure* described as 'a Fantastic', it means he is a showy dresser. The 'fanciful' meaning is also seen in the adverb, as in the stage direction, 'Enter Lear fantastically dressed with wild flowers' (*King Lear*, IV.vi.80). The line is not an accolade about Lear's costume: the gloss is 'bizarrely, grotesquely'.

fearful (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'causing fear; dreadful, terrible'

Fearful is one of those interesting words where two opposed senses came into the language at about the same time. In addition to its causative sense, which is the dominant one today, there was also a subjective sense, where the fear comes from within the person ('full of fear') . When Cassius talks of a 'fearful night' (*Julius Caesar*, I.iii.126), the sense is causative. But when Clifford talks of 'the fearful French' (*Henry VI Part 2*, IV.viii.41) he means they are frightened not frightening. And a similar sense of 'timid' or 'timorous' is found when John describes a messenger as having a 'fearful eye' (*King John*, IV.ii.106), the Friar calls Romeo a 'fearful man' (*Romeo and Juliet*, III.iii.1), and the disguised Duke says to the Provost, 'I see you fearful' (*Measure for Measure*, IV.ii.183). Sometimes only context can decide

the meaning, as when Warwick offers York the throne in 'the palace of the fearful King' (*Henry VI Part 3*, I.i.25). At this point Warwick and York are on top: the sense has to be subjective.

fondly (*adverb*) modern meaning: 'affectionately, lovingly'

The modern usage was beginning to come into the language in Shakespeare's time; indeed, in the *Oxford English Dictionary* Shakespeare is the first recorded user of the word in this sense, when he has King Richard talk about a mother 'playing fondly with her tears' upon meeting her child after an absence (*Richard II*, III.ii.9). But usually Shakespeare uses the word in its original sense of 'foolishly, stupidly'. This is the sense needed when, in the same play, Fitzwater talks about 'fondly' spurring on a horse (IV.i.72), where the meaning of 'lovingly' conflicts with what is involved in spurring. The linguistic context usually helps: 'What my great-grandfather and grandsire got / My careless father fondly gave away', says Clifford, imagining what Prince Edward might say (*Henry VI Part 3*, II.ii.38): here 'careless' immediately suggests the required meaning. But in a sentence like Adriana's to Dromio of Syracuse – 'How fondly dost thou reason' (*The Comedy of Errors*, IV.ii.56), the actor must know the older meaning of the word before she can say the line in the appropriate tone of voice.

formal (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'official, polite, ceremonious'

The nearest we get to the modern meaning in Shakespeare is in *The Taming of the Shrew* (III.i.59), when disguised Lucentio addresses disguised Hortensio: ' Are you so formal, sir?'. Here *formal* means ' punctilious,' or 'stiff'. A similar sense of 'outward show' is present when Brutus tells his colleagues to act 'as our Roman actors do, / With untired spirit and formal constancy' (*Julius Caesar*, II.i.277). Here it means 'external' or 'surface'. But in other contexts we see the earliest meaning of *formal*, from the late fourteenth century, where it simply meant 'pertaining to the form of something' – in other words, identifying something as being in its normal or complete state. So when Cleopatra says to a Messenger, 'Thou shouldst come like a Fury crowned with snakes, / Not like a formal man (*Antony and Cleopatra*, II.v.41), she means 'like a sane, rational person'. And when Richard talks of his playing on words ' like the formal Vice, Iniquity' (*Richard III*, III.i.82), the word refers to the 'stock' or 'conventional' way in which this character was portrayed.

gale (*noun*) modern meaning: 'storm, tempest'

In modern English, gales are not pleasant things. They make us sea-sick, cause nautical disasters, and damage houses. If gales are forecast, we avoid them. This strong sense has been around since the 16th century, but it developed in parallel with a milder sense, where the word meant simply 'wind', without any connotation of severity or

danger. Often, it was synonymous with 'breeze', and conveyed the pleasant connotations which that word has today. In Shakespeare, usage is entirely in that direction., with the word being accompanied by adjectives with strongly positive connotations. Gales can be 'merry' (in *King Edward III*, III.i.77), 'happy' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, I.ii.47), and 'auspicious' (*The Tempest*, V.i.315). In *Henry VI Part 3*, King Edward has been worrying about the 'black cloud' of the enemy. 'A little gale will soon disperse that cloud', says his brother George to him (V.iii.10). The concept of a 'little gale' seems paradoxical, until we remember the milder meaning of the word in those days.

garb (*noun*) modern meaning: 'style of clothing'

This interesting word came into English from French probably when Shakespeare was in his twenties, and it was avidly seized upon by several writers. It always had the general sense of 'manner, style, fashion'. Avoid the 'clothing' sense in Shakespeare, for that did not evolve until a decade after his death. So, when Iago says to himself, of Cassio, ' I'll ... / Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb' (*Othello*, II.i.297), he is talking about what he's going to say and not about how he's going to look when he says it. Gower describes the Welshman Fluellen as not speaking English 'in the native garb' (*Henry V*, V.i.80). And Hamlet brings his conversation with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to a close, saying: ' Let me comply with you in this garb' (*Hamlet*, II.ii.372) – 'let me observe the courtesies with you in this way', shaking hands with them.

gender (*noun*) modern meaning: 'grammatical class; social notion of sex'

The grammatical sense of this word goes back to the early Middle Ages, but the sociological sense is a 20th-century development. The grammatical use is to be found in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (IV.i.65), where Evans condemns Mistress Page for having no understanding of 'the cases and the numbers of the genders'. But in the handful of other instances in Shakespeare, the noun has a much more general sense: 'kind, sort, type'. This is the sense required when Iago, talking to Roderigo, compares their bodies to a garden: 'supply it with one gender of herbs or distract it with many' (*Othello*, I.iii.320). And when Claudius worries about 'the great love the general gender bear' towards Hamlet (*Hamlet*, IV.vii.18), there is a similarly general sense of 'common people'. *The Phoenix and Turtle* has a further example: a crow is described as having a 'sable gender' (line 18) – black offspring. The sexual sense emerges in the verb, when Othello talks of 'a cistern for foul toads / To knot and gender in' (*Othello*, IV.ii.61): here the word means 'copulate'.

generous (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'free in giving; ample; magnanimous'

Shakespeare is in fact the first recorded user of this adjective, but the modern meanings all developed after his death, and the commonest modern usage (the financial one) does not emerge until towards the end of the 17th century. So we must forget all about money when we hear Claudius describing Hamlet as being 'most generous' (*Hamlet*, IV.vii.134) or Holofernes addressing Armado as 'most generous sir' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, V.i.86). In such uses, the word means 'well-bred, mannerly, noble-minded'. It is the same when Edmund describes his mind as being 'as generous' as that as his brother's (*King Lear*, I.ii.8) or Desdemona tells Othello that the 'generous islanders' have invited him to dinner (*Othello*, III.iii.277). A particularly dangerous instance is in *Troilus and Cressida* (II.ii.156), where we have to forget the modern collocation of *generous bosoms* (i.e. 'large breasts'). This is where Paris is reacting to the suggestion that the Trojans give up Helen: 'Can it be / That so degenerate a strain as this / Should once set footing in your generous bosoms?' He is not suggesting that Priam, Hector, *et al* are fat.

habit (*noun*) modern meaning: 'usual manner of behaviour'

The modern meaning was coming into English in Shakespeare's time, and he employs it: 'How use doth breed a habit in a man', says Valentine in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (V.iv.1). But the more common sense, rare today (except in the context of monks), is the oldest one, dating from the early Middle Ages: 'costume, clothing'. So when Montjoy says to King Henry 'You know me by my habit' (*Henry V*, III.vi.111) or Tranio tells Vincentio that 'you seem a sober ancient gentleman by your habit' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, V.i.65) they are talking about what people are wearing not how they are behaving. The word approaches the modern meaning when it has the sense of 'bearing' or 'demeanour', as when Gratiano tells Bassanio that he is going to put on 'a sober habit' (*The Merchant of Venice*, II.ii.177) or when Orsino describes the twins Viola and Sebastian as having 'one face, one voice, one habit' (*Twelfth Night*, V.i.213).

happily (*adverb*) modern meaning: 'opportunely, luckily, fortunately'

Happily began to be used in fourteenth-century English in two senses: the modern one, and one (also expressed by *haply*) which is now obsolete: 'perhaps, by chance'. This is the one to watch out for. Sometimes it is obvious that the modern sense can't be right. The word could only mean 'perhaps' when the Provost says to the disguised Duke, 'Happily / You something know' (*Measure for Measure*, IV.ii.92). And when Baptista says to Tranio that they must find a secret place to talk, reminding him that 'old Gremio is hearkening still, / And happily we might be interrupted' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, IV.iv.54), it could hardly mean that he is looking forward to an interruption. But note occasions when Shakespeare may be using

the word with both senses in mind, as when Horatio says to the Ghost, 'thy country's fate, / Which happily foreknowing may avoid' (*Hamlet*, I.i.135).

honest (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'truthful, upright'

When *honest* came into the language from French, in the 14th century, it had the general meaning of 'held in honour, honourable, respectable'. A century later it had developed its modern sense, which is often to be found in Shakespeare. But the older meanings were still very much around. The meaning of 'honourable' can be heard when Hamlet describes himself to Ophelia as 'indifferent honest' (*Hamlet*, III.i.122) or Antony describes Brutus as 'noble, wise, valiant, and honest' (*Julius Caesar*, III.i.126). The word means 'genuine, real' when Hamlet describes what he has seen as 'an honest ghost' (*Hamlet*, I.v.138). And it means 'innocent, well-intentioned' when Hero talks about devising 'some honest slanders / To stain my cousin with' (*Much Ado About Nothin*g, III.i.84). But the most important difference from modern English is the sense of 'chaste, pure'. When Touchstone says to Audrey, 'thou swearest to me thou art honest' (*As You Like It*, III.iii.23), or Othello says to Iago, 'I think my wife be honest' (*Othello*, III.iii.381), they are not inquiring into their women's truthfulness, but their morals.

hope (*verb*) modern meaning: 'entertain a desired expectation'

Today's strongly positive meaning dates from Anglo-Saxon times, but in the 13th century an alternative usage emerged which lacked the sense of desire, and this was still present in Shakespeare's day. This new sense was more matter-of-fact, meaning 'expect' or 'envisage'. Without being aware of it, we cannot make sense of Innogen when she says, of the Queen, 'She's my good lady; and will conceive, I hope, / But the worst of me' (*Cymbeline*, II.iii.152). She hopes the Queen will think of her badly? No, she means only that she expects the Queen will do so. Hope as a noun also retained a more neutral sense, of 'likelihood, possibility'. This is needed when Mistress Ford says to her friend, about Falstaff, 'Shall we ... give him another hope to betray him to another punishment?' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, III.iii.183). Falstaff can hardly be hoping (in the modern sense) for punishment.

humorous (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'facetious, jocular, droll'

The modern sense evolved in English in the late 17th century. Before that, the meanings were chiefly related to the earlier idea of a 'humour' being one of four fluids believed to be circulating in the body and controlling a person's physical, mental, and emotional dispositions. In Shakespeare, the word usually means 'capricious, moody, temperamental'. When Le Beau describes Duke Frederick as 'humorous' (*As You Like It*, I.ii.255) he is not thinking about his joke-telling

ability; nor was Menenius renowned for his laughs, though describing himself as a 'humorous patrician' (*Coriolanus*, II.i.44). People were described as humorous, as were their temperaments (Jaques' 'sadness', *As You Like It*, IV.i.18; Achilles' 'predominance', i.e. authority, *Troilus and Cressida*, II.iii.128) and any associated emotional noises they might make (Berowne's sighs, *Love's Labour's Lost*, III.i.172). Just once, something non-human is said to be humorous, and here the medieval use of the word emerges, meaning 'humid' or 'damp': Benvolio describes Romeo as consorting with ' the humorous night' (*Romeo and Juliet*, II.i.31).

idle (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'lazy; unoccupied'

The modern meanings are quite old: the 'lazy' sense dates from the 14th century, and the 'unoccupied' one from the 16th. But by Shakespeare's time the word had developed a wide range of negative nuances, most of which are to be found in the plays. For example, when Parolles calls Bertram 'a foolish idle boy', he means he is worthless (*All's Well that Ends Well*, IV.iii.210). When Hamlet tells Horatio that he 'must be idle', he means he is going to appear mad (*Hamlet*, III.ii.100). When Antonio talks about whores and knaves as being 'idle', he means they are frivolous or wanton (*The Tempest*, II.i.170). When Brabantio says, of his suit, 'Mine's not an idle cause', he means it is not trivial or unimportant (*Othello*, I.ii.95). And when Mercutio talks of dreams as being 'children of an idle brain', he means they are fanciful or foolish (*Romeo and Juliet*, I.iv.97).

illness (*noun*) modern meaning: 'malady, sickness, ailment'

Ill arrived in the language, a borrowing from Old Norse, around 1200, but it was another 300 years before the noun is recorded. Throughout this time, the only sense for the adjective was 'bad' or 'wicked', with the noun expressing the related notion of 'wickedness or 'evil conduct'. By Shakespeare's time, illness was developing a wider range of meanings, such as 'unpleasantness, disagreeableness', and this is how it is used when Lady Macbeth accuses Macbeth: 'Thou wouldst be great ... but without / The illness should attend it' (*Macbeth*, I.v.18). She does not mean that, in order to become king, he needs to be unwell. The 'disease' sense of the word, the only modern one, does not emerge in the language until towards the end of the seventeenth century.

impatience (*noun*) modern meaning: 'intolerance of delay, restless longing'

The word has a somewhat weak force these days. We associate being impatient with an irritation that things are not turning out as we want – if mail doesn't arrive, or our bus is delayed. In Shakespeare's time, the word had a much stronger meaning. We sense it when the Duchess

of York demands of Queen Elizabeth: 'What means this scene of rude impatience?' (*Richard III*, II.ii.38), where it expresses a complete lack of composure. And it is even stronger when Talbot describes his soldier son as performing 'Rough deeds of rage and stern impatience' (*Henry VI Part 1*, IV.vii.8). Here, it means 'anger, rage'. This meaning is crucial if we are to avoid the word seeming incongruous at the end of *Coriolanus* (V.vi.146). After Aufidius helps to murder Coriolanus, a Lord says, 'His own impatience / Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame'. Only the sense of 'fury' works here; mild irritation is hardly reason enough to launch an assassination. As the Earl of Pembroke, angry to the point of rebellion against the King, says: 'impatience hath his privilege' (*King John*, IV.iii.32).

incontinent (*adjective/adverb*) modern meaning: 'unable to retain urine or faeces'

This 19th-century sense is the only one we know today. In Shakespeare's time the word had two very different senses, one of which was the ancestor of the modern usage: 'unable to restrain sexual appetite'. This is what is meant when Thersites rails against 'incontinent varlets' (*Troilus and Cressida*, V.i.94), or Timon advises matrons (he means 'married women') to ' turn incontinent' (*Timon of Athens*, IV.i.3). The other sense is found only as an adverb, meaning 'immediately, at once'. No giggles needed, therefore, when Desdemona says to Emilia, of Othello: 'He says he will return incontinent (*Othello*, IV.iii.11). earlier in the same play there is a usage with an *-ly* ending: Roderigo says to Iago, 'I will incontinently drown myself (I.iii.302). The two senses are cleverly juxtaposed by Rosalind, when she reports to Orlando the way Celia and Oliver fell for each other so quickly: 'they have made a pair of stairs to marriage which they will climb incontinent or else be incontinent before marriage' (*As You Like It*, V.ii.37)

inhabitable (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'capable of being lived in'

This sense arrived in English from Latin around 1600, and immediately went into competition with the earlier use of the word, which had arrived from French 200 years earlier. The trouble is that the two senses are totally opposite. The French took the prefix in the reversative sense: 'not capable of being lived in' – what today we would describe as 'uninhabitable'. And this is the sense you need when you hear Mowbray say to King Richard that he would fight Henry Bolingbroke even if he were 'tied to run afoot / Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps, / Or any other ground inhabitable' (*Richard II*, I.i.65). Shakespeare only uses the word once, but he was not alone in its use. In the Douai Bible of 1609 we find: 'Her cities shall be desolate and inhabitable' (*Jeremiah* 48.9) – 'uninhabited'.

injury (noun) modern meaning: 'hurt, damage, especially to the body'

This word came into English from Latin at the end of the 14th century with a very broad meaning, referring to any kind of wrongful act, most of Shakespeare's usage reflects this breadth, keeping well away from the modern sense of physical injury. When Worcester talks about 'the injuries of a wanton time' (*Henry IV Part 1*, V.i.50) he means 'wrongs' or 'grievances'. When Oberon tells Titania 'Thou shalt not from this grove / Till I torment thee for this injury' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II.i.147) he means 'insult' or 'slight'. There is no suggestion that Titania has physically hurt him! The nearest we get to the modern physical sense is when Montjoy reports the words of the French king to Henry V (*Henry V*, III.vi.120): 'we thought not good to bruise an injury till it were full ripe'. This might mean simply 'hit back at a wrong', but the context suggests a more physical sense. *Injury* here more likely means a 'sore' or 'abscess'. The Second Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet* also has the word as a verb: 'I never injuried thee', says Romeo to Tybalt (III.i.67). If it is a genuine usage (the First Quarto and the Folio both have 'injured') it must mean 'do [you] an injustice'.

innocent (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'free from guilt; harmless; artless'; (*noun*) 'dimwit'

The modern senses are the oldest ones, known in English from the 14th century, and they are often found in Shakespeare. Hero, for example, is often described as 'innocent' in Act V of *Much Ado About Nothing*. But during the 16th century a negative sense developed, so that people described as 'innocent' (either as adjective or noun) were held to be half-witted - simpletons. It is this sense of 'silly, foolish' which we must look out for in the plays. It appears very clearly when the Gaoler describes the way his daughter answered his questions 'as if she were a fool, / An innocent' (*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, IV.i.41). Parolles also describes Dumaine being whipped 'for getting the shrieve's fool with child, a dumb innocent' (*All's Well That Ends Well*, IV.iii.184). There is just one example of the adjectival use in this sense, when Benedick, alone, reflects on his poetic abilities (*Much Ado About Nothing*, V.ii.37): 'I can find out no rhyme to 'lady' but 'baby' - an innocent rhyme'. He doesn't mean that the rhyme has no wicked meaning: it's just a bad rhyme, worthy of a half-wit.

jealous (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'envious; unhappily angry'

The modern senses were well established in Shakespeare's time, but several other uses were entering the language in the 1600s which have not lasted into Modern English. The commonest in Shakespeare is the sense of 'suspicious, wary, watchful', as when Cassius tells Brutus 'be not jealous on me' (*Julius Caesar*, I.ii.71) or Edmund describes Gonerill and Regan as being 'each jealous of the other' (*King Lear*, V.i.56). In this sense it is not restricted to a human emotion: daytime, for instance, can be 'jealous' (in *The Rape of Lucrece*, l.800). When Olivia

refers to her soul as 'jealous', she means it is 'anxious, worried' (*Twelfth Night*, IV.iii.27), and this is the sense required when Erpingham tells Henry that his nobles are 'jealous of your absence' (*Henry V*, IV.i.278). It means 'solicitous, zealous' when Jaques talks of a soldier being 'jealous in honour' (*As You Like It*, II.vii.152). And it means 'doubtful, uncertain' when Brutus tells Cassius 'That you do love me, I am nothing jealous' (*Julius Caesar*, I.ii.161) – a first recorded usage in English.

jet (*verb*) modern meaning: 'spout forcefully; travel by jet'

The sense of speed associated with this word does not arrive in English until the mid-17th century. For Shakespeare, the verb had only one meaning: 'strut, swagger' – the original meaning that arrived from Latin, perhaps via French, in the 15th century. This is the sense required when Belarius tells his sons that 'The gates of monarchs / Are arched so high that giants may jet through' (*Cymbeline*, III.iii.5). He does not mean that they are moving through the gates at speed. Similarly, Malvolio is not moving fast when Fabian says to Sir Toby, 'How he jets under his advanced plumes!' (*Twelfth Night*, II.v.31). And when Cleon describes the people of Tarsus as 'jetted and adorned' (*Pericles*, I.iv.26), he means 'ornamented'. Shakespeare has one other use of this verb, as a phrasal verb, jet upon. This is when Aaron says to the lords, 'think you not how dangerous / It is to jet upon a prince's right?' (*Titus Andronicus*, II.,i.64). Here it means 'encroach upon – a development of another early sense of the verb, to 'project' or 'jut out'.

jog (*noun/verb*) modern meaning: 'nudge; moderate run or ride'

The word *jog* appeared in the 16th century. Its etymology is uncertain: it may well be an adaptation of shog, a Germanic word with similar meaning which had been in English since the late 14th century, and which is a favourite expression of Nym in *Henry V* (II.i.42, II.iii.42). 'Shall we shog?' (= 'Let's go') has since become something of a catch-phrase for bardaholics. Alternatively, it might have been a fresh onomatopoeic coinage, the sounds of the word reflecting the jerky movements involved. The basic sense is 'move along', especially with the idea of 'moving off or away'. This is the meaning we need when we hear Autolycus sing: 'Jog on, jog on, the footpath way' (*The Winter's Tale*, IV.iii.121). The modern sense might well apply here without being at all misleading, of course. But when Katherina tells Petruchio: 'You may be jogging whiles your boots are green' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, III.ii.210), she is telling him to go away, not advising him to take an early-morning gentle run.

keen (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'eager, ardent, intense' (especially in UK)

Most of the original senses of this word ('wise, brave, mighty, fierce') had disappeared from English by Shakespeare's time. But the notion of sharpness was common, used especially with reference to weapons, and also metaphorically to talk about winds, thoughts, words, and senses, where it expressed such notions as 'biting, piercing, penetrating'. What has especially to be avoided is the modern sense of 'eager' in the sense of 'sexually attracted'. This is not what Ophelia means when she tells Hamlet 'You are keen' (*Hamlet*, III.ii.257) or when Helena refers to an angry Hermia as 'keen and shrewd' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III.ii.323). Here the ladies are using the word in its older meaning: 'sharp, cutting, severe'. A milder sense is heard when Escalus says to Angelo 'Let us be keen and rather cut a little / Than fall, and bruise to death' (*Measure for Measure*, II.i.5), where the primary nuance is 'perceptive, shrewd'.

kite (*noun*) modern meaning: 'type of flying toy'

The use of this word to describe the colourful, soaring child's toy is not recorded in English until 1664. Before that, the only usage was to the hovering bird of prey – and this is the sense we find in Shakespeare. When Cassius remarks that 'ravens, crows, and kites / Fly o'er our heads' (*Julius Caesar*, V.i.84), we must not let the modern meaning interfere. The kite was perceived to be a bird of ill omen: when they were around, things were not going well. Macbeth says to his wife that their monuments 'Shall be the maws [stomachs] of kites' (*Macbeth*, III.iv.72). Pistol calls a whore 'a lazar kite' – that is, a leprous bird (*Henry V*, II.i.73). Petruchio talks about kites 'That bate [beat the wings] and beat and will not be obedient' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, IV.i.181). So it is not surprising to find the name being used as a term of abuse. 'Detested kite' says Lear to Gonerill (*King Lear*, I.iv.259).

large (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'big in number, amount, size, importance'

The sense of 'physical size' is missing from many Shakespearian uses, which tend to focus on the idea of 'extensiveness'. When Timon tells Alcibiades to 'make large confusion' (*Timon of Athens*, IV.iii.128), he means it should be widespread. When Brutus talks about 'our large honours' (*Julius Caesar*, IV.iii.25), he means 'high, great'. When Macbeth tells his guests to 'be large in mirth' (*Macbeth*, III.iv.11) or Perdita tells Florizel 'Your praises are too large' (*The Winter's Tale*, IV.iv.147) they mean 'generous, lavish'. Language and behaviour can also be large (i.e. 'grandiose'): Kent wrily comments about Gonerill and Regan's 'large speeches' (*King Lear*, I.i.184), and Gloucester dismisses Reignier's 'large style' (*Henry VI Part 2*, I.i.109). Beware also a sexual nuance, where the word takes on the sense of 'licentious, coarse'. Maecenas says Antony has been 'most large / In his abominations'

(*Antony and Cleopatra*, III.vi.93); and in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Claudio insists 'I never tempted her [Hero] with word too large' (IV.i.50) and Don Pedro refers to Benedick making 'some large jests' (II.iii.195).

leer (*verb*) modern meaning: 'look at someone unpleasantly, especially sexually'

The noun *leer* originally meant 'cheek' or 'face', and from there developed the sense of 'appearance' or 'complexion'. The modern sense of both noun and verb is always negative – it suggests a look that is sly, immodest, or malign, usually with a strong sexual element. We cannot leer innocently. But in Shakespeare's time, it had a neutral use too. The sexual sense is there in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (I.iii.41) when Falstaff says of Mistress Ford that 'she gives the leer of invitation' (we would say 'a come-hither look'). Shakespeare is the first to use the word as a noun in this way. But the verb uses in Shakespeare have no such suggestion. When Berowne says to Boyet (in *Love's Labour's Lo*st, V.ii.480) 'You leer upon me, do you?' he means no more than 'cast a side glance'. And when Falstaff tells Shallow that when King Henry V passes by ' I will leer upon him' (*Henry IV Part 2*, V.v.6) it simply means 'smile disarmingly'.

lewd (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'sexually course, suggestive, obscene'

This is a Germanic word known from Anglo-Saxon times, where it meant 'lay' (as opposed to 'clerical') and later 'unlearned'. It developed several new senses in the 14th century, but only the sexual meaning survives today. That sense turns up just once in Shakespeare, when Buckingham tells the Mayor of London that Richard is not someone to be found 'lulling on a lewd love-bed' (*Richard III*, III.vii.71). In all other cases, it is important to avoid the sexual connotations. So, when Petruchio tells a haberdasher that a cap is 'lewd and filthy' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, IV.iii.65), he means no more than 'cheap and nasty'. And when Poins tells Prince Henry 'you have been so lewd' (*Henry IV Part 2*, II.ii.58) he means only 'improper, unseemly'. The word can also be used to mean 'wicked, evil', as when Leonato describes Borachio as a 'lewd fellow' (*Much Ado About Nothing*, V.i.317), and it harks back to its earliest senses when Richard complains of people troubling King Edward with 'lewd complaints' (*Richard III*, I.iii.l61). There it means 'ignorant, foolish'.

light (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'bright; of little weight'

Both meanings derive from an Anglo-Saxon word. But in the Middle Ages, a sense also developed referring to a person who was 'light' in character – specifically, in relation to sexual matters – and this is used several times by Shakespeare. So when Dromio of Syracuse describes a

courtesan as a 'light wench', he is not referring to her weight (*The Comedy of Errors*, IV.iii.52). Berowne, too, comments that 'light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, IV.iii.361). When there is an accompanying word, such as 'wenches' or 'lust', we have a clue to the intended sense. But when the word occurs on its own, then we have to look carefully at the context if we are not to miss the nuance. 'Women are light at midnight', says Lucio (*Measure for Measure*, V.i.278). And at one point in *Henry IV Part 2* (II.iv.290), Falstaff greeting Prince Hal says: 'by this light – flesh and corrupt blood, thou art welcome'. He lays his hand upon Doll Tearsheet as he speaks. 'By this light' isn't just an innocent oath.

lover (*noun*) modern meaning: 'someone with whom one has a sexual relationship, especially illicit in character'

When *lover* came into English, in the thirteenth century, it developed several senses, but the illicit sexual sense appeared only 300 years later. Today, it has virtually taken over. So we have to be especially careful not to read it in when Shakespeare uses *lover* in the earlier sense of 'companion, comrade, dear friend'. This is the sense you need when Menenius refers to Coriolanus as 'my lover' (*Coriolanus*, V.ii.14) or Ulysses says to Achilles 'I as your lover speak' (*Troilus and Cressida*, III.iii.214). And in *Julius Caesar* remember to interpret the characters correctly when Artemidorus closes his letter to Caesar with the words, 'Thy lover' (II.iii.8), Cassius refers to himself and Brutus as 'Lovers in peace' (V.i.94), and Brutus harangues the crowd with ' Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause' (III.ii.13). The plots could get very confusing, otherwise.

mad (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'insane; (especially US) angry; (especially UK) crazy, wild'

The modern senses were all around in Early Modern English, but Shakespeare's dominant use is 'wild, excitable'. Boyet calls the ladies 'mad wenches (*Love's Labour's Lost*, II.i.243), and in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* Emilia describes men as 'mad things' (II.i.180) and the Taborer addresses his fellows as 'mad boys' (III.v.24). The modern American sense is heard in *Henry VI Part 3*, when the Queen taunts York: 'Thou shouldst be mad' (I.iv.89). And the modern sense of 'crazy, weird' is used by Arcite when he asks Palamon 'Is't not mad lodging, / Here in the wild woods' (*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, III.iii.22). The one usage which is no longer current is found in *Othello*, when Desdemona talks of her mother's maid: 'he she loved proved mad' (IV.iii.26). Here the meaning is 'wild', but with the important implication of 'faithless, inconstant'.

matron (*noun*), modern meaning: 'woman in domestic charge of a public institution, especially a hospital'

When this word arrived in English, in the 14th century, it referred simply to a 'married woman' – especially one who had a dignified position in society. Then, in the 15th century, it narrowed in meaning, referring to a married woman who was especially knowledgeable about pregnancy and childbirth. By the end of the 16th century, it had begun to be used in its modern meaning, with no restriction to marriage; matrons can be, and often are, single. Shakespeare uses the word only in its original sense. When Timon expostulates to Alcibiades about matrons, he does not have hospitals in mind: 'Strike me the counterfeit matron' (*Timon of Athens*, IV.iii.113). Nor should we expect someone in a nurse's uniform to appear when we read the stage direction: 'Enter ... an ancient matron' (*Cymbeline*, V.iv.30).

mean (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'spiteful, nasty; not generous, stingy; (US) excellent'

The modern senses have arrived since the 18th century. Shakespeare uses earlier senses expressing nuances of inferiority. When Lady Grey says to Edward 'I am too mean to be your queen' (*Henry VI Part 3*, III.ii.97), she means 'of low rank', and when we read the stage direction telling Lucentio to enter 'in the habit of a mean man' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, II.i.39), it means 'lowly, humble'. These two senses account for nearly forty instances of the word in Shakespeare, and we have to be careful not to let the modern senses interfere, especially in such phrases as 'mean woman'. A further negative meaning is 'unworthy', as when Helena refers to herself as someone ' too mean / To have her name repeated' (*All's Well that Ends Well*, III.v.59). And Americans especially have to beware not to read in their modern positive sense, as when Katherina talks about 'a very mean meaning' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, V.ii.31).

meat (*noun*) modern meaning: 'animal flesh as a food'

This is a Germanic word known from Anglo-Saxon times, where it meant 'food in general' – a usage still occasionally heard, for example in the phrase *meat and drink* ('food and drink'). The modern meaning developed in the 14th century. Both old and modern senses are thus to be found in Shakespeare, and it is not always clear which is required. But there are several cases where the older meaning is clear. When Jack Cade says 'I have eat no meat these five days' (*Henry VI Part 2*, IV.x.37) he is starving for lack of *any* food, not just fleshmeat, and the same applies to Katharina when she says she is 'starved for meat' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, IV.iii.9) or to John of Gaunt when he puns on his name: 'who abstains from meat that is not gaunt' (*Richard II*, II.i.76). The old sense of 'nourishment' is even clearer when Mercutio tells Benvolio 'Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat' (*Romeo and Juliet*, III.i.22), and the word means 'edible part' when the Fool tells Lear he has 'cut the egg i'the middle and eat up the meat'

(*King Lear*, I.iv.157).

mechanic (*noun*) modern meaning: 'person who looks after or repairs machinery'

The modern use of this word, with its emphasis on machinery and its parts, came into English in the late 17th century. Before that, it had a more general sense of a worker with a particular skill – of any kind. This is the sense we find when Coriolanus says to Volumnia: 'Do not bid me ... capitulate /Again with Rome's mechanics' (*Coriolanus*, V.iii.83). The contemptuous use here makes the sense equivalent to 'rabble'. This is the only use of the word as a noun in Shakespeare, but it appears a few more times as an adjective. The Archbishop of Canterbury describes the honey-bees as 'poor mechanic porters crowding in / Their heavy burdens' (*Henry V*, I.ii.200): the reference is to worker bees. And the sense of 'common' or 'commonplace' is dominant when Cleopatra talks about the 'mechanic slaves' that would 'uplift us to the view' (Antony and Cleopatra, V.ii.209). Related too is the word mechanical, meaning 'manual worker' or 'menial', best known with reference to the group of rustics – the 'rude mechanicals' – of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (III.ii.9).

medicine (*noun*) modern meaning: 'drug for treating disease'
The modern sense has been around since the 13th century; but later medicine began to be used for drugs which had other purposes, such as cosmetics, poisons, elixirs, and potions. Shakespeare has the original meaning when Friar Laurence draws a contrast between an effective remedy and its harmful opposite: 'Within the infant rind of this weak flower / Poison hath residence, and medicine power' (*Romeo and Juliet*, II.iii.20). But when Falstaff grumbles about his association with Poins, saying 'If the rascal have not given me medicines to make me love him, I'll be hanged ' (*Henry IV Part 1*, II.ii.18), the word means 'love potion'. And when Gonerill hears that her sister Regan is very ill, and says to herself, 'I'll ne'er trust medicine' (*King Lear*, V.iii.97), she is being ironic (having just poisoned her). *Medicine* is the Folio reading; the Quarto text is unambiguous: *poyson*.

merely (*adverb*) modern meaning: 'only [and nothing more]'

The modern usage is dismissive, often suggesting an unimportant or trivial context, and this sense was beginning to be used in Shakespeare's time, as in Jaques' famous line 'All the world's a stage, / And all the men and women merely players' (*As You Like It*, II.vii.141). But there was an earlier sense, which died out in the eighteenth century, and this has a much stronger meaning of 'utterly, entirely'. To miss the strength of feeling can result in a seriously misleading interpretation. When Rosalind, in the same play (III.ii.383), describes love as 'merely a madness', she is not playing it down: on the contrary. And when Hamlet compares the world to an unweeded garden, saying

that 'Things rank and gross in nature / Possess it merely' (*Hamlet*, I.ii.137), he means that the weeds are everywhere. The nuance needs a positive tone of voice to be clearly conveyed – an important acting note.

mischief (*noun*) modern meaning: 'petty annoyance, vexatious behaviour'

The modern use, since the late 17th century, suggests a minor kind of aberrant behaviour, often without intentional ill-will. But when the word first entered English, around 1300, it was quite the reverse. When Joan harangues her captors with 'mischief and despair / Drive you to break your necks' (*Henry VI Part 1*, V.iv.90), she is using the word in its original sense of 'catastrophe, calamity'. And when Romeo says 'O mischief, thou art swift / To enter in the thoughts of desperate men' (*Romeo and Juliet*, V.i.35), *desperate* hints at the stronger meaning required here too: 'wicked action, harmful scheme'. Similarly, Talbot talks of 'hellish mischief' (*Henry IV Part 1*, III.ii.39) and Aaron of laying 'Complots of mischief' (*Titus Andronicus*, V.i.65). A third sense, 'disease, ailment', is heard when Don John tells Conrade: 'thou ... goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief' (*Much Ado About Nothing*, I.iii.12).

mutiny (*noun*) modern meaning: 'refusal to obey military superiors'

When *mutiny* came into English, in the sixteenth century, it had both a general and a particular application. The present-day usage retains only the latter, referring to military disobedience, especially by sailors. Shakespeare only ever uses the word in the more general sense of 'riot', 'state of discord', or 'civil disturbance'. The opposed families in *Romeo and Juliet* 'From ancient grudge break to new mutiny' (Prologue, 3), Gloucester talks to Edmund about 'mutinies' in cities (*King Lear*, I.ii.107), Iago tells Roderigo to 'go out and cry a mutiny' (*Othello*, II.iii.151), and Antony says to the crowd, 'let me not stir you up / To such a sudden flood of mutiny' (*Julius Caesar*, III.ii.212). There is a metaphorical use too, meaning 'rebellion' or 'quarrel', as when King Henry says of Cardinal Wolsey 'There is a mutiny in's mind' (*Henry VIII*, III.ii.120).

naked (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'unclothed'
Apart from a few idioms (such as *naked truth*) the modern usage is entirely with reference to clothes. Not so in Shakespeare's time. His main use was in the sense of 'defenceless, undefended', as when Othello says to Gratiano 'Or naked as I am I will assault thee' (*Othello*, V.ii.256) or Wolsey says that God would not have left him 'naked to mine enemies' (*Henry VIII*, III.ii.457). But there are four other senses. When Hamlet tells Claudius in a letter 'I am set naked on your kingdom' (*Hamlet*, IV.vii.43), he means 'stripped of all belongings'.

When Lord Bardolph describes an incomplete building project as 'A naked subject to the weeping clouds' (*Henry IV Part 2*, I.iii.61), he means 'exposed, unprotected'. When Coriolanus tells Menenius that he cannot 'stand naked' in front of the crowds (*Coriolanus*, II.ii.135), he means 'exposed to view' – or, possibly, 'wearing only an outer garment'. And when the Princess tells the King to go to 'some forlorn and naked hermitage' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, V.ii.790), she means 'bare, austere'.

naughty (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'badly behaved' [of children], 'improper' [playfully, of adults], 'sexually suggestive' [of objects, words, etc]

Modern English has totally lost the grave implications of the word that were normal in Shakespeare's day. When Gloucester describes Regan as a 'naughty lady' (*King Lear*, III.vii.37) or Leonato calls Borachio a 'naughty man' (*Much Ado About Nothing*, V.i.284) we cannot now avoid the impression that these are mild, 'smack-hand' rebukes. It is all the more important, therefore, to stress the strong sense the word had in Elizabethan English when referring to people: 'wicked, evil, vile'. This is especially relevant in contexts where the jocular sense might seem acceptable, as when Falstaff (pretending to be King Henry) calls Prince Hal a ' naughty varlet' (*Henry IV Part 1*, II.iv.420). Concepts – such as the world, the times, and the earth – can also be 'naughty', and here too we need to note that the tone is serious not playful, as in Portia's description of a candle flame in the darkness: 'So shines a good deed in a naughty world' (*The Merchant of Venice*, V.i.91). And where a sexual sense would be relevant, there is always a note of real moral impropriety, as in Elbow's description of Mistress Overdone's abode as 'a naughty house' (*Measure for Measure*, II.i.74).

nerve (*noun*) modern meaning: 'fibre conducting impulses to or from the brain'

The modern meaning was coming into the language in Shakespeare's time, but from the beginning of the 16th century the word had a different anatomical sense: 'sinew, ligament, muscle', still heard today in the idiom *strain every nerve*. A clue to the meaning can usually be found in the accompanying language. Thus Menenius talks of 'the strongest nerves' (*Coriolanus*, I.i.136), Macbeth talks of his 'firm nerves' (*Macbeth*, III.iv.101), and Hamlet refers to the Nemean lion's nerve as 'hardy' (*Hamlet*, I.iv.83). The metaphorical use of the word was also entering the language at the same time: 'strength, vigour, forcefulness', and this use is also to be found in Shakespeare. In *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (I.ii.69), Palamon talks of Creon 'who only attributes / The faculties of other instruments / To his own nerves and act' . But the modern meaning is lurking in the wings, such as when Antony says to Cleopatra: 'ha' we / A brain that nourishes our nerves'

(*Antony and Cleopatra*, IV.viii.21).

nice (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'agreeable, pleasant'

Nice has been used as a general adjective of approval only since the 18th-century. Before that, it expressed an extraordinary range of specific meanings, several of which are found in Shakespeare. A 14th-century sense, 'lustful', is found in *Love's Labour's Lost*, when Mote talks of 'nice wenches' (III.i.21). Another 14th-century sense, 'foolish', is probably dominant when sick Northumberland shouts at his 'nice crutch' as he throws it down (*Henry IV Part 2*, I.i.145). And there are several 16th-century senses. They include 'fastidious', when Henry talks to Katherine about 'the nice fashion of your country' (*Henry V*, V.ii.270); 'uncertain', when Hotspur talks about a 'nice hazard' (*Henry IV Part 1*, IV.i.48); 'trivial', when Benvolio describes the quarrel between Romeo and Tybalt as 'nice' (*Romeo and Juliet*, III.i.154); 'minutely detailed', when the narrator in *The Rape of Lucrece* talks about a painting as 'nice' (l.1412); 'subtle', when Richard accuses Edward of standing 'on nice points' (*Henry VI Part 3*, II.iv.17); and 'skilful', when Leonato talks about Claudio's 'nice fence' (i.e. fencing ability, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, V.i.75). The one thing the word never means is just 'I like it'.

O (*noun*) modern meaning: 'letter of the alphabet; zero'

As an interjection, O was very common in direct address, in Shakespeare's time – 'O false Cressid' says Troilus (*Troilus and Cressida*, V.ii.181) – and it was widely used as an emotional vocalization where today we would write Oh. But it had several specific uses as a noun. In *Love's Labour's Lost* (V.ii.45) Rosaline teases Katharine for having a face 'full of O's' – 'pimples'. In *Romeo and Juliet* (III.iii.91), the Nurse castigates Romeo: 'Why should you fall into so deep an O?' – 'sorrowful exclamation'. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (III.ii.188) Lysander says that Helena 'more engilds the night / Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light' – 'orbs', or possibly 'spangles' (of the kind used to ornament dress in the 17th century). And the word was widely used in this general sense of 'circle, sphere' – as when Cleopatra talks about 'the little O o'th' earth' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, V.ii.81) and, most famously, when the theatre is described as a 'wooden O' (*Henry V*, opening chorus, l.13).

obscene (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'sexually offensive, indecent, lewd'

The sexual meaning dominates the modern use of the word, and was indeed present from the time when it first came into English, during the 1590s. Shakespeare is actually the first recorded user, in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, but he employs it in a more general sense, as an intensifier of disgust – 'repulsive, offensive'. There are just three

quotations. Prince Hal calls Falstaff a 'whoreson, obscene, greasy tallow-catch' (*Henry IV Part 1*, II.iv.224). The Bishop of Carlisle talks of Richard's overthrow by Bolingbroke as 'so heinous, black, obscene a deed' (*Richard II*, IV.i.131). And the King in *Love's Labour's Lost* reads Don Armado's letter describing an 'obscene and most preposterous event' (I.i.236) – referring to no more than Costard's meeting with Jacquenetta within the court precinct, from which women have been banned. In modern English there are signs of a return to this intensifying sense. When we say 'he was paid an obscene amount of money', we mean 'disgusting', but without the sexual connotation.

obsequious (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'fawning, cringing, sycophantic'

The modern sense, with its dominant note of servility, was entering the language in Shakespeare's time, and can be heard when Iago talks of 'Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave... doting on his own obsequious bondage' (*Othello*, I.i.46). But elsewhere it has only older senses. The oldest, from the 15th century, was 'devoted, ready to please', in a positive sense, as when Falstaff compliments Mistress Ford on being 'obsequious in your love' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, IV.ii.2) and Angelo talks of the crowds surrounding the king 'in obsequious fondness' (*Measure for Measure*, II.iv.28). But by the end of the 16th century, a sense related to obsequies had emerged, referring to the actions appropriate after a death. This is the sense intended by Claudius when he talks of a bereaved son obligated to 'do obsequious sorrow' (*Hamlet*, I.ii.98) or by Lucius when he invites Marcus to 'shed obsequious tears' over the body of Titus (*Titus Andronicus*, V.iii.151). The sonneteer also sheds 'many a holy and obsequious tear' (*Sonnet* 31, line 5). Here the word simply means 'dutiful'.

orchard (noun) modern meaning: 'enclosure for cultivation of fruit-trees'

The word comes from Latin *hortus*, 'garden', and in the Middle Ages it developed a particular sense related to fruit-growing alongside its general use. Either sense is possible in Shakespeare, but the general sense is the more likely unless a specific reference is made to fruit – as when Shallow talks about eating 'a last-year's pippin' in his orchard (*Henry IV Part 2*, V.iii.2). There seems to be no particular reason to be thinking of fruit trees when Pandarus invites Troilus to 'walk here i'th' orchard' (*Troilus and Cressida*, III.ii.15), or Sir Toby tells Sir Andrew to look for Cesario (Viola) 'at the corner of the orchard' (*Twelfth Night*, III.iv.174). There are some quite famous orchard scenes. The Ghost of Hamlet's father tells his son that he was killed while 'sleeping in my orchard (*Hamlet*, I.v.35). Juliet is surprised to see Romeo, because 'the orchard walls are high and hard to climb' (*Romeo and Juliet*, II.ii.63). And Antony tells the people of Rome that the murdered Julius Caesar has left them in his will 'his private arbours, and new-planted orchards' (*Julius Caesar*, III.ii.249).

owe (*verb*) modern meaning: 'have an obligation to pay'

The 'paying back' senses of this word did exist in Elizabethan English. 'One time will owe another', says Menenius to Coriolanus (*Coriolanus*, III.i.241), meaning 'repay, compensate'. But the vast majority of instances in Shakespeare have a very different sense: 'own, possess, have'. Olivia says to herself 'ourselves we do not owe' - meaning that she is not in control of her own emotions (*Twelfth Night*, I.v.300). Puck addresses sleeping Lysander with the words: 'upon thy eyes I throw / All the power this charm doth owe' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II.ii.85). Lear asks Burgundy whether he will take Cordelia 'with those infirmities she owes' (*King Lear*, I.i.202). And Richard compares the crown to Bolingbroke as 'a deep well / That owes two buckets' (*Richard II*, IV.i.184). The danger of misreading is at its strongest when the subject-matter is financial. 'I am not worthy of the wealth I owe', says Helena to Bertram (*All's Well that Ends Well*, II.v.79). 'What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe', says Roderigo to Iago, talking about Othello (*Othello*, I.i.67). Vengeful contexts ('paying someone back') are also potentially ambiguous: 'I owe / My revenge properly', says Coriolanus to Menenius (*Coriolanus*, V.ii.79). And there is a play on both senses when King Philip says to Hubert, speaking of young Arthur, 'pay that duty which you truly owe / To him that owes it' (*King John*, II.i.248). Here the first use is the modern one; the second use isn't.

pack (*verb*) modern meaning: 'stow in a container, esp. in preparing for a journey; crowd together'

When the First Carrier says 'yet our horse not packed' (*Henry IV Part 1*, II.i.3), the verb is easy to understand, because the sense of 'load up' is very close to the one we have today. But when the King says to Falstaff 'Be packing' (*Henry VI Part 1*, IV.i.46) or Antipholus of Syracuse tells his man 'Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack, and be gone' (*The Comedy of Errors*, III.ii.161), they are not talking about suitcases. Here the meaning is 'depart, be off'. In a number of contexts, there is a completely unrelated set of senses, all to do with subterfuge. When Hamlet says, of Polonius, 'This man shall set me packing' (*Hamlet*, III.iv.212), he means he could easily plot or scheme. When Aaron tells Tamora's sons to find Muly, so that her black baby can be exchanged, he says 'Go pack with him' (*Titus Andronicus*, IV.ii.154) – 'make a secret arrangement'. And when Antony tells Eros that Cleopatra 'has / Packed cards with Caesar' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, IV.xiv.19) he means she has cheated - shuffled the cards in her favour. The card-sharp sense can still be heard, but the others fell out of use during the 17th century.

painful (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'feeling or giving pain; irksome'

Both subjective (feeling pain) and objective (causing pain) senses are found in Shakespeare. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, an old man is said to be 'plagued with cramps and gouts and painful fits' (line 856), and in *King Edward III*, the king proclaims 'An intercession of our painful arms' (V.i.237). The meaning extends to include such senses as 'arduous' and 'gruelling', as when King Henry talks of 'rainy marching in the painful field' (*Henry V*, IV.iii.111). But most of Shakespeare's uses of this word reflect an older, late 14th-century sense which is now lost: 'painstaking, diligent, laborious'. This is the sense needed when Coriolanus talks of 'painful service' (*Coriolanus*, IV.v.71), the Princess of 'painful study' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, II.i.23), Katherina of 'painful labour' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, V.ii.148), and the Sonneteer of a 'painful warrior' (*Sonnet* 25, line 9). The meaning is sometimes uncertain: when Ferdinand, heaving logs, says 'some sports are painful', it isn't entirely clear whether he means 'causing pain' or simply 'laborious' (*The Tempest*, III.i.1).

passenger (*noun*) modern meaning: 'someone who travels in, but does not operate, a vehicle'

The modern sense was developing in English during the 16th century: a boat or a coach could have passengers. But the older sense, which arrived in the language in the early 14th century from French, had nothing to do with vehicles. A passenger was simply a wayfarer, a traveller, a passer-by. This is how Shakespeare uses the word, and usually in dangerous contexts. The only instance of a non-threatening sense is in *Venus and Adonis* (line 91), when the poet describes Venus's desire for a kiss: 'Never did passenger in summer's heat / More thirst for drink than she for this good turn'. In the other six instances where the word appears, passengers are being robbed, fleeced, chased, suffering outrages, or even (as the Queen remarks in *Henry VI Part 2*, III.i.227) being eaten: 'Gloucester's show [i.e. appearance] / Beguiles him as the mournful crocodile / With sorrow snares relenting passengers'. When the First Outlaw says to the others (in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, IV.i.1), 'I see a passenger', we know a robbery is afoot.

passport (*noun*) modern meaning: 'document authorizing foreign travel'

This word came to be increasingly used in its present-day meanings during the 16th century, as people increasingly travelled abroad. But Shakespeare uses the word differently. When Cerimon opens a chest washed up on shore and discovers Thaisa's body, he exclaims 'A passport too!' (*Pericles*, III.ii.64). As Thaisa was thought to be dead when Pericles had the chest thrown from his ship, it can hardly be the modern sense. Rather it refers to a document giving an account of who she is. And when Helena shows Bertram's letter of rejection to the

Countess saying 'here's my passport' (*All's Well That Ends Well*, III.ii.55) – meaning that she will use it as a reason for following him – it has a more specialized sense. She is comparing the letter to the licence given to an inmate of an institution to travel as a beggar, and her choice of the word speaks volumes.

peaceful (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'friendly, amicable; calm, tranquil'

The oldest meanings of *peaceful* are the same as they are today – inclined to peace, or characterized by peace. And this is the usual meaning in Shakespeare, where the word is used in this way twelve out of thirteen times. When York asks why banished Bolingbroke's legs have 'dared to march / So many miles upon her peaceful bosom' (*Richard II*, II.iii.92), referring to England, he is describing a country untroubled by war. But in the next act, King Richard asks Scroop why Bushy and Green: 'have let the dangerous enemy / Measure our confines with such peaceful steps' (III.ii.124). This usage can make us pause. An enemy marching with peaceful steps seems to be a contradiction in terms. The problem is resolved when we realize that this is peaceful in the sense of 'undisturbed, untroubled'. The enemy is being allowed to pass unopposed.

peculiar (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'distinctive, different, strange, eccentric'

The oldest senses of this word, which arrived in English from French in the 14th century, are all to do with something belonging specifically to someone – at first property, then personal qualities. From there it developed the sense of 'individual, particular', but it seems not to have developed the modern nuance of 'odd' until the 18th century. So it is important not to read this in, when we encounter such uses as Hamlet's 'single and peculiar life' (*Hamlet*, III.iii.11), which means no more than the life of a private individual., or the captured Lucius talking about 'my peculiar care', meaning 'his own personal care' (*Cymbeline*, V.v.83). The word turns up three times in *Othello*. Iago talks about following Othello for his own 'peculiar end' (I.i.61) and later persuades him that many 'nightly lie in those unproper beds / Which they dare swear peculiar' (IV.i.69), while Desdemona (III.iii.79) comments to Othello on the absurdity of seeing her request as if she were asking him 'to do a peculiar profit / To your own person'. In all these cases, the meaning is no more than 'particular, private, personal'.

pelting (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'beating, lashing'

Today, *pelting* is a term we use chiefly of the weather – and especially in relation to forceful rain and hail. It is a usage that emerged by the

beginning of the 18th-century. In Shakespeare's time the meaning was very different: *pelting* – probably from a different etymological source – meant 'paltry, petty, worthless, insignificant', and it is important to avoid reading in any meaning of intense action. So, when Hector tells Achilles 'We have had pelting wars since you refused / The Grecians' cause' (*Troilus and Cressida*, IV.v.267), he is not referring to the ferocity of the battles but to their pointlessness. Similarly, there is no suggestion of fierceness when Palamon tells his gaoler: 'Thou bringest such pelting scurvy news continually' (*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, II.i.322). Other things that are 'pelting' in Shakespeare are locations and people: there are 'poor pelting villages' in *King Lear* (II.iii.18), a 'pelting farm' in Richard II (II.i.60), a pelting river in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (II.i.91), and a 'pelting, petty officer' in *Measure for Measure* (II.ii.112).

penthouse (*noun*) modern meaning: 'a (usually luxurious) apartment situated at the top of a tall building'

This is very much a modern meaning, first recorded in the 1920s, in the age of high-rise buildings. Shakespeare uses the word only four times, but the usage can be confusing if we do not grasp the older meaning. 'Stand thee close ... under this pent-house', says Borachio to Conrade (*Much Ado About Nothing*, III.iii.101). Under a penthouse? All becomes clear when we know that in Early Modern English the word referred to a covered way of some kind, usually a sloping porch or overhanging roof. Gratiano uses it to Salerio: 'This is the penthouse under which Lorenzo / Desired us to make stand' (*The Merchant of Venice*, II.vi.1). The other two uses are metaphorical, both emphasising the vertical dimension: Mote describes Armado's hat as resting 'penthouse-like o'er the shop of your eyes' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, III.i.16). And the First Witch uses it in cursing a sailor: 'Sleep shall neither night nor day / Hang upon his penthouse lid' (*Macbeth*, I.iii.20). His eyelids will hang over his eyes like the sloping roof of a shed. Fine images, indeed.

portly (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'stout, corpulent'

This rather elegant way of referring to someone as 'fat' is with one exception not recorded in the language until the 1720s. When the word first arrived, in the early 16th century, it meant 'stately, majestic, dignified'. This is the only possible sense when it is applied to ships, as when Salerio describes Antonio's argosies as having 'portly sail' (*The Merchant of Venice*, I.i.9) or a Lord tells Creon they have seen a 'portly sail of ships' (*Pericles*, I.iv.61), and to abstract nouns, as when Worcester talks of 'greatness' as being 'portly' (*Henry IV Part 1*, I.iii.13). The exception is Falstaff's description of himself as a 'goodly portly man' (*Henry IV Part 1*, II.iv.412), and as having a 'portly belly' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, I.iii.57). Achilles, too, is described as being of 'large and portly size' (*Troilus and Cressida*, IV.v.162). It is an unusual

use, not recorded in English again for a century. For the most part, it is the sense of 'dignity' which is to be borne in mind in encountering Shakespeare. When Capulet tells Tybalt that Romeo 'bears him like a portly gentleman' (*Romeo and Juliet*, I.v.66), he is not suggesting that the great lover is overweight.

pretence (*noun*) modern meaning: 'pretext, false behaviour, fallacious reason'

The underlying theme today is that someone isn't telling the truth or behaving sincerely, and in this sense it can be traced back to the sixteenth century. The word does sometimes have this sense in Shakespeare, as when Queen Katherine tells Henry VIII off for his taxation policy: 'the pretence for this / Is named your wars in France' (*Henry VIII*, I.ii.59). But usually the word lacks any notion of hypocrisy. When one of the lords in *All's Well that Ends Well* (IV.iii.47) says of Helena's journey, 'Her pretence is a pilgrimage', he means only that this is her intention. And it is this sense of 'plan' or 'purpose' which is the usual one in the plays, as when Edmund tells his father that Edgar has written a letter 'to feel my affection to your honour and to no other pretence of danger' (*King Lear*, I.ii.88).

prodigy (*noun*) modern meaning: 'person endowed with genius, especially a young child'

The overtones are all positive now, and have been since the 17th century, but it was not always so; and in Shakespeare we see several instances of the word's earlier sense of 'omen' or 'portent' applied to natural events, and always portending something fearful. Meteors and comets are often described as prodigies. Both Casca and Cassius use the word to talk about the weird happenings just before Caesar's death (*Julius Caesar*, I.iii.28, II.i.198), and Cardinal Pandulph describes the fearful people interpreting everyday weather signs in this way: 'they will ... call them meteors, prodigies' (*King John*, III.iv.157). The sense can be personalized, notably in Queen Margaret's description of the future Richard III, as a 'valiant crook-back prodigy (*Henry VI Part 3*, I.iv.75). Here the meaning is 'monster, abnormal birth'. Petruchio's atrocious wedding-attire evidently caused a similar response from the guests: they looked at him, he says, 'As if they saw / Some comet, or unusual prodigy (*The Taming of the Shrew*, III.ii.95).

puny (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'feeble, weak, of small growth'

This word arrived in English during Shakespeare's lifetime, and he is the first recorded user of several of its senses. The modern meanings can already be seen when King Richard, referring to Bolingbroke, addresses himself: 'A puny subject strikes / At thy great glory' (*Richard II*, III.ii.86) or Othello says that 'every puny whipster gets my sword'

(*Othello*, V.ii.242) – a really demeaning description of the person who has disarmed him, Montano. But when in *Henry IV Part 1* Prince Hal describes Francis as a 'puny drawer' (II.iv.29), the word means 'untried' or 'inexperienced'. Objects can be puny in this sense too, as when in *Henry VI Part 1* the Bastard says of Talbot's son that he did 'flesh his puny sword in Frenchmen's blood' (IV.vii.36). From the same French word is puisny 'inferior', heard in *As You Like It* when Celia talks about 'a puisny tilter that spurs his horse but on one side breaks his staff' (III.iv.39)

quaint (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'unusually attractive, especially in an old-fashioned way'

This 18th-century sense is almost all that remains of the dozen or so meanings of *quaint* which have been part of English since the 13th century, and several of these older uses are found in Shakespeare's plays. Thus we find the banquet in *The Tempest* vanishing 'with a quaint device' (III.iii.54), where the word means 'ingenious'. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Portia tells Nerissa that, dressed as men, they will tell 'quaint lies' (III.iv.69), where it means 'cunning'. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Titania talks to Oberon about 'quaint mazes' (II.i.99), where it means 'elaborate'. In *The Two Noble Kinsman*, a boy sings of daisies that are 'most quaint' (I.i.5), where it means pretty. And in some editions of *Titus Andronicus*, Demetrius describes Lavinia's chastity as a 'quaint hope' (II.iii.126), where it means 'prim'. In all these cases, the modern nuance of oddness should be carefully avoided.

queasy (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'unsettled, easily upset (especially of stomachs), uneasy, scrupulous (especially of consciences)'

We should think of Shakespeare whenever we feel nauseous, because Agrippa's reference to Rome being 'queasy' with Antony's insolence is the first recorded use of the modern sense (*Antony and Cleopatra*, III.vi.20). There's a similar use in *Much Ado About Nothing*, when Don Pedro describes Benedick's 'quick wit and his queasy stomach' (II.i.355); the gloss here is 'delicate, fastidious'. The sense of 'unease' is present in the noun, too, in Shakespare's only use, when Morton describes Hotspur and the other rebels as fighting 'with queasiness' (*Henry IV Part 2*, I.i.196). With such uses all familiar, it would be easy to assume that Shakespeare's remaining use would be the same – but we would be wrong. When Edmund reflects in *King Lear*, 'I have one thing of a queasy question / Which I must act' (II.i.17), it means 'uncertain, hazardous', or possibly 'ticklish'. He isn't feeling unwell at all.

quick (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'rapid, swift'

The modern meaning was well established by Shakespeare's time, but also common in the plays and poems are meanings which are now either obsolete or archaic. The sense of 'living, full of life' is there when Anne rejects the thought of marrying Dr Caius: 'I had rather be set quick i'th'earth, / And bowled to death with turnips' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, III.iv.84) – buried up to my neck, she means. And this is the sense used adverbially when Hamlet compares his love of Ophelia to that of Laertes: 'Be buried quick with her, and so will I' (*Hamlet*, V.i.275). A related meaning is 'lively', 'animated', 'vivacious', often heard when people talk about somebody's character. The Constable refers to the 'quick blood' of the French (*Henry V*, III.v.21); Brutus talks about Antony's 'quick spirit' (*Julius Caesar*, I.ii.29) and Casca's 'quick mettle' (I.ii.293); Nestor describes Cressida as 'a woman of quick sense' (*Troilus and Cressida*, IV.v.54); Emilia describes Arcite as having a 'quick sweetness' (*The Two Noble Kinsman*, IV.ii.13); and Richard describes the young York as 'bold, quick' (*Richard III*, III.i.155).

rage (*noun*), modern meaning: 'violent or uncontrolled anger'

The modern sense is very old, from the 13th century, but in Shakespeare's time it was supplemented by several other senses that later died out. Two are particularly important. When Antipholus of Syracuse is described three times in *The Comedy of Errors* as being in a rage, the word means 'madness', not 'anger': Adriana says of him that 'till this afternoon his passion / Ne'er brake into extremity of rage' (V.i.48). This is the sense required when Cordelia and the Doctor discuss Lear's rage: 'The great rage ... is killed in him' (*King Lear*, V.vii.78) or Juliet worries about waking in the tomb in a 'rage' (*Romeo and Juliet*, IV.iii.53). There is also a very positive sense to be noted. When Talbot talks about 'great rage of heart' (*Henry VI Part 1*, IV.vii.11) or Hotspur says he was 'dry with rage and extreme toil (*Henry IV Part 1*, I.iii.30) they are not talking about anger but about warlike spirit, martial ardour.

rapture (*noun*) modern meaning: 'ecstasy, joy, delight'

This word came into English at the beginning of the 17th century, and Shakespeare is the first recorded user of two of its senses. The first can be seen when Pericles talks about 'the rapture of the sea' (*Pericles*, II.i.156): he is referring to its ability to carry things away – reflecting the etymology of the word in Latin *rapere* 'seize'. The second occurs when Brutus talks of the reception given to Coriolanus by the people: 'Your prattling nurse / Into a rapture lets her baby cry / While she chats [gossips about] him' (*Coriolanus*, II.i.199). Here the word means a fit or convulsion of passionate excitement. Neither of these senses remains today; all we have now is the use of *rapture* to express an ecstatic state of mind. It is a meaning which became frequently used a little later in the 17th century – it is common in Milton, for example –

but it is already there, just once, in Shakespeare, when Cressida tells her lover 'in this rapture I shall surely speak / The thing I shall repent' (*Troilus and Cressida*, III.ii.129).

rarely (*adverb*) modern meaning: 'seldom, infrequently'

The modern sense was coming in the language in Shakespeare's time, but he never uses it. His meanings all derive from two senses of the adjective *rare*. The word means 'splendidly, excellently' in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* when the Gaoler's Daughter says that the King of Pygmies 'tells fortunes rarely' (III.iv.16) or the Schoolmaster tells the dancers that they have 'danced rarely' (III.v.158), and this is the sense needed in *Much Ado About Nothing* when Hero describes men as 'rarely featured' (III.i.60). The second sense is 'exceptionally, outstandingly', and this is the meaning required when Cleopatra exclaims 'O rarely base!' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, V.ii.158) or when Lysimachus thinks of marrying Marina: 'I'd ... think me rarely wed' (*Pericles*, V.i.68). The context usually resolves any ambiguity, but we have to be on our guard. When Bottom says 'I could play Ercles rarely' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I.ii.26) or Margaret asks 'Doth not my wit become me rarely?' (*Much Ado About Nothing*, III.iv.63), we have to be careful to ignore the frequency nuance that can easily come to mind.

receipt (*noun*) modern meaning: 'act of receiving; written acknowledgement of having received goods or money; (plural) moneys received'

When the word came into English in the 14th century from French, it meant a prescribed set of ingredients, in medicine or cookery – a 'prescription' or 'recipe'. Other meanings quickly followed, but the chief modern sense, as in *She gave me a receipt*, was only coming into the language in Shakespeare's time, and he never uses it in this way. Rather the word is used in four other ways: first, in the general sense of 'reception': what the belly takes in is called its 'receipt' in *Coriolanus* (I.i.110); second, in the sense of a 'receiving venue', as when Blackfriars is called a place for 'receipt of learning' in *Henry VIII* (II.ii.137); third, in the sense of 'money received' , as when Mowbray talks about the 'receipt I had for Calais' (in *Richard II*, 1.1.126); and fourth, in the sense of recipe or prescription. Helena tells the sick king of her father's medical knowledge: 'Many receipts he gave me' (*All's Well that Ends Wel*l, II.i.105). And Gadshill informs the Chamberlain: 'We have the recipe of fern-seed, we walk invisible' (*Henry IV Part 1*, II.i.87).

record (*noun*) modern meaning: 'written evidence; recognized facts; superlative achievement; musical disc'

The array of modern senses overlaps a little with those which were used in Shakespeare's time. The word is known from the Middle Ages, especially in its legal senses, but the commonest senses today (in sports and music) are 19th-century. We find four main uses in Shakespeare. There is the general sense of 'recollection, memory', found twice in the *Sonnets* (59 and 122), and illustrated once in the plays, when Sebastian reflects to disguised Viola of his father's death, 'that record is lively in my soul' (*Twelfth Night*, V.i.243). It has the sense of 'witness' when Bolingbroke tells King Richard: 'heaven be the record to my speech!' (*Richard II*, I.i.30). It is a musical instrument, a recorder, in the stage direction: 'Still music of records' (*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, V.i.137). And it comes close to one of the modern senses when Antony says 'My queen and Eros / Have by their brave instruction got upon me / A nobleness in record' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, IV.xiv.99). Here it means 'recorded history, public remembrance'.

revolting (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'repulsive, disgusting'

It is the modern meaning which sometimes causes a giggle when Cardinal Pandulph describes King John as a 'revolting son' to his mother the Church (*King John*, III.i.257) or the Lieutenant talks to Suffolk about 'the false revolting Normans' (*Henry VI Part 2*, IV.i.87). In all Shakespearian cases the meaning is different: 'rebellious, mutinous, insurgent'. The word can be used with inanimate nouns, too. Bedford appeals to comets to ' scourge the bad revolting stars / That have consented unto Henry's death' (*Henry VI Part 1*, I.i.4), and Richard hopes that his tears will 'make a dearth in this revolting land' (*Richard II*, III.iii.163). Incidentally, Shakespeare's is the first recorded usage of this word, as also of the related word revolted, whose senses include rebellious (as in 'revolted faction', *Richard II*, II.ii.57), faithless ('revolted wives', *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, III.ii.35) and delinquent ('revolted tapsters', *Henry IV Part 1*, IV.ii.28).

revolve (*verb*) modern meaning: 'perform a circular motion'

For Shakespeare, the primary meaning was 'consider, ponder, meditate'. The modern sense didn't come into the language until a century later. So when Malvolio reads the letter which tells him 'If this fall into thy hands, revolve' (*Twelfth Night*, 2.5.139), he shouldn't solemnly turn himself around (as so many actors do), but simply look very thoughtful. In the same way, Queen Margaret advises Queen Elizabeth to listen carefully to what she's been saying: 'Revolving this will teach thee how to curse' (*Richard III*, 4.4.123); and Belarius says to his sons: 'you may then revolve what tales I have told you' (*Cymbeline*, 3.3.14). In the poems, Tarquin lies 'revolving / The sundry dangers of his will's obtaining' (*The Rape of Lucrece*, 127). Note also the related word used by King Richard when darkly musing: 'The deep-revolving witty Buckingham / No more shall be the neighbour to my counsels'

(*Richard III*, 4.2.42).

rude (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'impolite, offensive; mildly obscene'

Of the two chief modern senses, it is the sexual one which is most likely to mislead. This is never the sense of the word in Shakespeare. The impolitness sense is there, as when Duke Senior tells off Orlando for being 'a rude despiser of good manners' (*As You Like It*, II.vii.93). But the word has a wide range of other uses. It often means 'violent', as when Ulysses says 'the rude son should strike his father dead' (*Troilus and Cressida*, I.iii.115) – the son is hardly being just impolite! Peasants, rebels, and brawls can all be rude in this sense. Applied to things, it means 'rough' and 'wild': hedges, walls, and castles can all be rude. When the wind and waves are rude, they are stormy. And anyone uncultured or ignorant could be called rude. Puck calls the rustics 'rude mechanicals' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III.ii.9) and Prince Hal, according to his father, has been frequenting 'rude society' (*Henry IV Part 1*, III.ii.14).

sad (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'expressing or causing grief or unhappiness'

The modern meaning is often to be found in Shakespeare, so this makes it especially important to note the many occasions when it does not apply. We need to be on the alert for two senses in particular. One is where the word means 'serious, grave, solemn'. When the Clown says to Autolycus, 'my father and the gentlemen are in sad talk' (*The Winter's Tale*, IV.iv.308), he does not mean that they are unhappy. The context often provides a clue by providing a synonym or antonym: 'Sad and solemn music' says the stage direction at *Henry VIII*, IV.ii.81; 'What was he, sad or merry?' says Cleopatra to Alexas, asking about Antony (*Antony and Cleopatra*, I.v.50). The other sense is 'dismal, morose, sullen'. This is the sense we need when deposed king Richard describes his gaoler as a 'sad dog' (*Richard II*, V.v.70), Antony talks about his 'sad captains' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, III.xiii.183), Puck refers to Hermia as 'curst and sad' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III.ii.439), and Ariel describes Ferdinand as having his arms in a 'sad knot' (*The Tempes*t, I.ii.224).

safe (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'unharmed, secure, free from risk

The modern senses of safe are very old, dating from the 13th century, and by Shakespeare's time they had developed several other meanings, not all of which are used today. Some of these can be especially misleading. When Macbeth asks the First Murderer 'But Banquo's safe?' (*Macbeth*, III.iv.24), this is not a hopeful enquiry about Banquo's state of health? Here, safe means 'sure, certain' – in other words, definitely dead! This sense of being 'safely out of the way' can

also be heard when Miranda tells Ferdinand that her father 'is safe for these three ours' (*The Tempest*, III.i.21). Similarly misleading is the usage heard when King Henry, talking alone with Aumerle, is warned by York that Aumerle is a traitor. 'Villain, I'll make thee safe!' says Henry, turning on Aumerle (*Richard II*, V.iii.40). Here, the sense required is 'harmless, not dangerous'.

sanctimonious (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'pretended holiness'

The negative sense was coming into the language in Shakespeare's time: indeed, Shakespeare is the first recorded user in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, when Lucio talks of 'the sanctimonious pirate, that went to sea with the Ten Commandments, but scraped one [i.e. thieving] out of the table' (*Measure for Measure*, I.ii.8). However, his only other use of the word has no such negative connotations, and we must be careful not to read them in when Prospero warns Ferdinand that he must have no intercourse with Miranda 'before / All sanctimonious ceremonies may ... be ministered' (*The Tempest*, IV.i.16). Here, the word means 'holy, sacred, consecrated'. It is closely connected with sanctimony, which had only religious senses: 'sanctity, holiness', as when Troilus observes Cressida and says 'If vows are sanctimony, / If sanctimony be the gods' delight ... / This is not she' (*Troilus and Cressida*, V.ii.142), and 'sacred bond, religious commitment', as when Iago says 'If sanctimony and a frail vow ... be not too hard for my wits' (*Othello*, I.iii.350).

savour (*noun*) modern meaning: '(usually pleasant) characteristic smell or taste; distinctive quality'

The word came from French in the 13th-century, and always seems to have had positive associations. Savours are nice things. Shakespeare uses it in this way, as when Sly says 'I smell sweet savours' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction 2.70). But there are three places where the smell is definitely not nice: Salisbury in *King John* (IV.iii.112) talks about 'Th'uncleanly savours of a slaughter-house'; Stephano sings of 'the savour of tar' (*The Tempest*, II.ii.51); and Polixenes, appalled at the thought of seducing Hermione, asserts: 'Turn then my freshest reputation to / A savour that may strike the dullest nostril / Where I arrive' (*The Winter's Tale*, I.ii.421). *Savour* in these cases means 'stench' or 'stink'. And it is the negative sense which dominates, too, when Gonerill tells Lear: 'This admiration ... is much o'the savour / Of other your new pranks' (*King Lear*, I..iv.233). Note also the similar use of a word as a verb in *Pericles* (IV.vi.108), when Lysimachus describes the brothel: 'The very doors and windows savour vilely'.

saw (*noun*) modern meaning: 'cutting tool'

The modern meaning has been around since Anglo-Saxon times, and

so has the Shakespearian meaning of 'wise saying, platitude, maxim'. Indeed, this second sense is still heard today, but rarely – so the temptation is always to think of the tool. Usually, the context makes it unlikely that there could be any confusion. This would be the case when Jaques talks about 'wise saws' (*As You Like It*, II.vii.157) or Hamlet talks of 'All saws of books' (Hamlet, I.v.100) or the Queen talks of 'holy saws' (*Henry VI Part 2*, I.iii.56). But there is always a risk of semantic interference when we hear Hiems sing 'coughing drowns the parson's saw' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, V.ii.911) or when Phebe says 'now I find thy saw of might' (*As You Like It*, III.v.81): she means that the saying is powerfully true. And Tarquin is another who raises the possibility of a false interpretation, in *The Rape of Lucrece* (line 244): 'Who fears a sentence or an old man's saw / Shall by a painted cloth be kept in awe'.

scotch (*noun*) modern meaning: 'whisky from Scotland'

Although the adjective Scotch is used by Shakespeare – a 'Scotch jig' is referred to in *Much Ado About Nothing* (II.i.65) – the use of the word on its own to refer to a drink of whisky is much later, whisky itself being an 18th-century innovation. So when Scarus boasts to Antony that he has 'Room for six scotches more' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, IV.vii.10) we must try not to let the modern sense interfere. Scarus is showing bravery: the word means 'cut' or 'gash'. We hear it used as a verb in *Coriolanus*, when one servant tells another of how Coriolanus fought Aufidius: 'Before Corioles he scotched him and notched him' (IV.v.193). The word is very close in meaning to scorch 'cut with a knife', used when Macbeth tells his wife 'We have scorched the snake, not killed it' (*Macbeth*, III.ii.13), and some editors have (unnecessarily) replaced the word by *scotched*.

security (*noun*) modern meaning: 'safety; pledge'

The word has very positive associations in modern English, but these were sometimes lacking in the 16th-century, where there was an additional sense of 'over-confidence' or even 'carelessness'. Without this negative resonance it is very difficult to make sense of Scroop's caution to Henry V against forgiving the drunken man who had been abusive about the king: 'That's mercy, but too much security' (*Henry V*, II.ii.44). The contrast with the modern meaning is strongest when the word is used along with another word that seems contradictory, as when Artemidorus warns Caesar that 'security gives way to conspiracy' (*Julius Caesar*, II.iii.6) or Hecat advises her witches that 'you all know security / Is mortals' chiefest enemy' (*Macbeth*, III.v.32). The clash of senses is particularly striking when Aumerle says to Richard, 'we are too remiss, / Whilst Bolingbroke through our security / Grows strong' (*Richard II*, III.ii.34).

senseless (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'devoid of sense, foolish'

This meaning was beginning to come into the language in Shakespeare's day: Petruchio describes Grumio as 'a senseless villain' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, I.ii.36). But usually, at that time, the word was used with the older, literal meaning, 'lacking human sensation, incapable of feeling', and thus applied chiefly to objects such as stones, trees, and the wind. In *Cymbeline*, Innogen describes Posthumus' handkerchief as 'senseless linen' (I.iv.7).and later in the same play Pisanio calls a letter a 'senseless bauble' (III.ii.20). Referring to people, the meaning is 'insensible, oblivious'. Timon's steward bemoans the way his master spends money 'senseless of expense' (*Timon of Athens*, II.ii.1), and Innogen says to Cymbeline 'I am senseless of your wrath' (*Cymbeline*, I.ii.66). There is a play on the two meanings when in *Julius Caesar* Marullus harangues the people: 'You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!' (I.i.35). They are evidently not only incapable of feeling anything, but also stupid.

sensible (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'endowed with good sense, intelligent'

This meaning was beginning to come into the language in Shakespeare's day: Ford describes Pistol as 'a good sensible fellow' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, II.i.37). But usually, at that time, the word was used with the older, literal meaning, 'capable of receiving sensation' – in other words, 'responsive, sensitive'. This is the meaning required when Constance in King John describes herself as 'not mad, but sensible of grief' (III.iv.53) or Antipholus of Ephesus in *The Comedy of Errors* tells his servant Dromio: 'Thou art sensible in nothing but blows' (IV.iv.26). Closely related is the meaning 'perceptible by the senses, evident', heard most famously in Macbeth's speech to a dagger: 'Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible / To feeling as to sight?' (*Macbeth*, II.i.36). And Horatio says of the Ghost: 'I might not this believe / Without the sensible and true avouch / Of mine own eyes' (*Hamlet*, I.i.57).

sick (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'unwell, ill'

The modern sense of *sick* dates from Anglo-Saxon times, and by Early Modern English it had developed a number of other senses, applying to objects and concepts as well as people. An appearance could be *sick*, if it was 'pale' or 'wan', as when Romeo describes the moon's livery as 'sick and green' (*Romeo and Juliet*, II.ii.8). The air could be sick, meaning 'contaminated' or 'infected', as when Timon talks of poison hanging 'in the sick air' (*Timon of Athens*, IV.iii.111). But the sense that causes most confusion with modern usage is that of 'needing cure'. In *All's Well That Ends Well* (IV.ii.35), Bertram tries to seduce Diana, saying 'give thyself unto my sick desires'. Today, this

would mean 'revoltingly unpleasant'. But Bertram means only that Diana can cure him. And this is the required meaning when Portia says to Brutus, 'You have some sick offence within your mind' (*Julius Caesar*, II.i.268).

silly (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'foolish, stupid'

The modern sense was coming into the language in Shakespeare's time – 'This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard' says Hippolyta to Theseus (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V.i.207) – but an older set of senses dominate in the plays. When Henry VI's Queen calls herself a 'silly woman' (*Henry VI Part 3*, I.i.243), or Lodowick describes the Countess in the same way (*Edward III*, II.i.18), the word means 'helpless, defenceless'. Males can be silly too – Edward III describes a group of Frenchmen as 'poor silly men, much wronged' (IV.ii.29) – and so can sheep and lambs: 'shepherds looking on their silly sheep' says Henry VI a little later in the play (*Henry VI Part 3*, II.v.43). But when a captain describes the disguised Posthumus as being 'in a silly habit' (*Cymbeline*, V.iii.86), a different sense emerges, of 'lowly, humble'. It is there again when Orsino reflects to Viola/Cesario that Feste's sad song is 'silly sooth' – the simple truth (*Twelfth Night*, II.iv.46). We can sense the modern meaning waiting in the wings.

small (adjective) modern meaning: 'not large in size or amount'

The modern meaning of the adjective is over a thousand years old, and is common enough in Shakespeare, where we find 'small curs', 'small thanks', and many other 'little' things. But we sense a different meaning when we hear Gower describe Marina's fingers as 'long, small, white as milk' (*Pericles*, IV.Chorus.22). How can fingers be both *long* and *small*? Here, the word means 'slender' or 'slim'. We see it again when Launce describes his sister as being 'as small as a wand' (*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II.iii.20). Another meaning is 'fluting' or 'high-pitched', as when Slender describes Anne as someone who 'speaks small like a woman' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, I.i.45). And there is a third meaning, 'weak' or 'poor', heard when Edward describes a city as being 'of small defence' (Henry VI Part 3, V.i.64) – a sense that also enters into the idioms *small beer* and *small ale*.

stout (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'fat and heavy; brave and determined'

This fourteenth-century word quickly developed parallel-track positive and negative meanings. One of the positive meanings ('brave, valiant, resolute') is heard when Richard greets some Murderers with 'my hardy, stout, resolved mates!' (*Richard III*, I.iii.339). This is like the modern sense of 'stout fellow!' Another ('bold, determined') is heard when King John says to the Bastard 'adverse foreigners affright my

towns / With dreadful pomp of stout invasion' (*King John*, IV.ii.173). The negative senses are the ones most likely to mislead. The word means 'proud, haughty, arrogant' when Malvolio says to himself 'I will be strange, stout, in yellow stockings and cross-gartered' (*Twelfth Night*, II.v.164),Volumnia describes her son as having a 'stour heart' (*Coriolanus*, III.ii.78), or Salibury describes the Cardinal as 'stout and proud' (*Henry VI Part* 2, I.i.185). There is no sense of 'fatness' here. That sense did not arrive until the nineteenth century.

subsidy (*noun*), modern meaning: 'grant, financial aid'

These days the use of *subsidy* almost always has positive connotations, because the grant in question is generally given to assist an enterprise considered advantageous to a desirable public or private venture of some kind. It was not always so. From the fourteenth century, subsidies were special taxes granted by parliament to meet a particular need, and they were still present in Tudor times – as much as four shillings in the pound on land. *Subsidies* thus had an overwhelmingly negative set of connotations at the time, and it is this negative meaning which we need to bear in mind when we hear a defensive King Henry saying 'I have not ... much oppressed them [his subjects] with great subsidies' (*Henry VI Part 3*, IV.viii.45) or when the rebellious Jack Cade is told that Lord Say 'made us pay ... one shilling to the pound, the last subsidy (*Henry VI Part 2*, IV.vii.20).

supervisor (*noun*) modern meaning: 'someone who inspects or directs the work of others'

This is an unusual usage, in the way it misleads, because actually the modern sense is older than the Shakespearian one. We find references to 'supervisors of works' from the 15th century. Shakespeare uses the word in the sense of 'onlooker, spectator, observer', and is the first person recorded to have done so. The instance occurs in the First Quarto of *Othello*, where Iago says to Othello, referring to Desdemona's supposed infidelity, 'Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on?' (III.iii.392). He doesn't mean would Othello supervise the activity, but would he wish to watch it taking place? The verb has a similar sense: In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Holofernes asks Nathaniel to let him read Berowne's letter to Rosaline: 'Let me supervise the canzonet' (IV.ii.120). The letter is already written. He means 'read it through'. Hamlet turns the word into a noun, when he tells Horatio that he read Claudius's letter 'on the supervise' (*Hamlet*, V.ii.23) – gave it a quick perusal. Both of these are Shakespearen coinages, though – as with supervisor – not ones that ever caught on.

table (*noun*) modern meaning: 'piece of furniture; arrangement of data'

Both these senses (just two of many modern usages) have been in English since the Middle Ages, but another medieval sense, found several times in Shakespeare, is no longer current. This is the sense of a 'writing-tablet'- a memo-pad or notebook, we would say today – a usage which died out in the 17th century. It is most famously found in *Hamlet*, where the prince employs it three times: 'from the table of my memory / I'll wipe away all trivial fond records' (I.v.98), 'My tables – meet it is I set it down (I.v.107), and (in the First Quarto only, talking about a type of clown) 'gentlemen quote his jests down in their tables' (III.ii.46). The interference is from the furnishing sense, and it can puzzle the unwary student. The Archbishop says to Mowbray, of the King: 'therefore will he wipe his tables clean' (*Henry IV Part 2*, IV.i.199). And in *Sonnet* 122 we find: 'Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain'. Neither sonneteer nor archbishop are thinking about the furniture.

tall (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'high in stature'

Apart from a few figurative uses (such as *tall order*, *tall story*), the sense of height is the dominant one in modern English. But this sense developed quite late, in the middle of the 16th century. The Old English meanings were to do with speed of activity ('quick, ready') and good behaviour ('proper, goodly, brave'). So in Shakespeare we find a mix of meanings, and we need to be always on our guard. It is being used as today when Rosalind says 'I am more than common tall' (*As You Like It*, I.iii.113) or Silence says 'Women are shrews, both short and tall' (*Henry IV Part 2*, V.iii.33). But when Bardolph describes Falstaff as 'a tall gentleman', he is not referring to his height; this is the sense of 'brave and bold'. And the people of Illyria are not above-average height just because Sir Toby says of Sir Andrew: 'He's as tall a man as any's in Illyria' (*Twelfth Night*, I.iii.18). When talking about boats, as in 'yon tall anchoring bark' (*King Lear*, IV.vi.18), the word means 'fine, grand'. And it means simply 'good, capable', when Tranio tells Biondello that he is 'a tall fellow' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, IV.iv.17).

teen (*adjective/noun*) modern meaning: 'teenage; teenager'

This modern-sounding word in fact dates from the mid-17th century – but not as far back as Shakespeare. He knew a much older usage, deriving from an Old English word meaning 'hurt' or 'trouble', and it is this, in an extended group of senses, including 'distress' and 'suffering', which is found in the plays and poems. We hear it from the Nurse, when she talks about her (lack of) teeth: 'to my teen be it spoken, I have but four' (*Romeo and Juliet*, I.iii.14); and from Miranda to her father: 'To think o'th' teen I have turned you to' (*The Tempest*, I.ii.64). And in the poems, Adonis complains to Venus: 'My face is full of shame, my heart of teen' (*Venus and Adonis*, 808). The old usage is so different from the modern one that there is unlikely to be any ambiguity; but the present-day meaning can nonetheless interfere,

unless we consciously put it aside. Having said that, when the Duchess of York complains of 'each hour's joy wracked with a week of teen' (*Richard III, IV.i.96*), some parents might wonder whether there is any difference after all!

temper (*noun*) modern meaning: 'angry feeling; proneness to anger'

This word has developed its meaning over the centuries, from physical state to mental state to a particular kind of mental state. Today, the 'anger' meaning is the dominant one, but this is an 18th-century development, and is never found in Shakespeare. The dominant meaning then was 'frame of mind' – what today we should call 'temperament'. When Aufidius says to Coriolanus, 'You keep a constant temper' (*Coriolanus*, V.ii.90), he does not mean that the latter is always cross. Often there is a clue in the associated adjective: 'good temper' (*Henry IV Part 2*, II.i.79), 'feeble temper' (*Julius Caesar*, I.ii.129), 'noble temper' (*King John*, V.ii.40), 'comfortable temper' (*Timon of Athens*, III.iv.72). The second commonest meaning was in relation to swords, which all have a 'temper' – that is, a desirable quality or condition: 'Between two blades, which bears the better temper', says Warwick (*Henry VI Part 1*, II.iv.13). Temper for Angelo means 'self-control': 'Never could the strumpet ... / Once stir my temper' (*Measure for Measur*e, II.ii.185). And when Lear says 'Keep me in temper' (*King Lear*, I.v.44), he means 'keep me stable'

timorous (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'easily frightened, lacking in confidence'

When this word came into English, in the fifteenth century, it was immediately used in two diametrically opposed senses: 'feeling fear' and 'causing fear'. Only the former sense is found today. Shakespeare uses the word half-a-dozen times, usually in the same way as we do now, as when the French General tells Talbot 'The Dauphin's drum ... / Sings heavy music to thy timorous soul' (*Henry VI, Part 1*, IV.ii.40), or, six lines later, Talbot talks of his army as 'A little herd of England's timorous deer'. But the word can hardly mean 'fearful' when Iago tells Roderigo to raise the alarm by calling aloud 'with like timorous accent and dire yell, / As when, by night and negligence, the fire / Is spied in populous cities' (*Othello*, I.i.76). It takes something other than a fearful voice to warn everyone about a fire.

tun (*noun*) modern meaning: 'large cask' (sounds like ton)

This is an interesting false friend, because it raises a problem only in speech. In writing, the modern spelling distinguishes *tun* from *ton* (to which it is etymologically related). *Ton* nowadays is only a measure of weight. *Tun* originally referred to a barrel or large cask (usually of ale or wine) or a tub or chest. The problem is not serious when the two meanings could equally apply. So, when Falstaff is described as 'a tun

of man' (*Henry IV Part 1*, II.iv.436) or a whale ' with so many tuns of oil in his belly' (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, II.i.60), it hardly matters whether we are talking about liquid capacity or weight. But when the ambassadors bring Henry V a 'tun of treasure' (*Henry V*, I.ii.256), the unaware listener might be surprised to see on stage quite a small gift.

umpire (*noun*) modern meaning: arbitrator in certain games and contests

The sporting sense of 'umpire' seems to have arrived in English in the early 18th century. Before that it referred to someone who helped to resolve a dispute of any kind. So it is important to rid the mind of the sporting connotation when we encounter the word in Shakespeare, where it always has a general meaning of 'arbitrator, mediator'. For example, in *Henry VI Part 1*, Mortimer refers to death as a 'kind umpire of men's miseries' (II.v.29), and later in the play the King asks: 'Let me be umpire in this doubtful strife' (IV.i.151). It is not a question of our misunderstanding the meaning of the word in these cases, but of misinterpreting its force. To think of 'umpire' in its modern sense would be to treat the conflict referred to by the king as if it were a game – and it is manifestly not that. Nor is Juliet thinking of a game when she tells the Friar, 'this bloody knife / Shall play the umpire' (*Romeo and Juliet*, IV.i.63), for her thought is of suicide.

vain (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'conceited, excessively proud; ineffectual, futile, useless'

The 'futile' sense dates from the fourteenth century, but the 'proud' sense does not appear in English until the end of the seventeenth, and this is the meaning which we must be careful not to read in when we encounter the word in Shakespeare. 'Speak to that vain man', King Henry tells the Lord Chief Justice, referring to Falstaff (*Henry V*, V.v.46); he does not mean that Falstaff is conceited, only that he foolish or stupid. And this is the sense required when Sylvia says 'my father would enforce me marry vain Thurio' (*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, IV.iii.17) or when Gonerill shouts at Albany, 'O vain fool!' (King Lear, IV.ii.61). The 'proud' sense beckons temptingly at times, but the temptation should be resisted. Even when Antipholus of Syracuse says 'there's no man is so vain / That would refuse so fair an offered chain (*The Comedy of Errors*, III.ii.188), it is still only the sense of 'foolish' which would have been understood at the time.

vexation (*noun*) modern meaning: '(a relatively mild level of) annoyance, irritation'

When this word first came into English, in the fifteenth century, it was as far away from 'mild' as it could be, referring to aggressive – even physical – harassment. The strength of feeling was still present in Shakespeare's time. When Sicinius tells the Plebeians to 'Give him

[Coriolanus] deserved vexation', he is talking about 'torment, real affliction' (*Coriolanus*, III.iii.140). The sense of 'agitation, mental turmoil' is present when Iago advises Roderigo how to deal with Brabantio's joy: 'throw such chances of vexation on't, / As it may lose some colour' (*Othello*, I.i.73). And when Richard says to Lucy, 'Vexation almost stops my breath' (*Henry VI Part 1*, IV.iii.41), the word means 'anguish, profound grief'. The related adjective and verb must be interpreted in the same way. When Constance tells Salisbury about her 'vexed spirits' (*King John*, III.i.17), she is being much more than moderately upset.

vicious (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'unpleasantly fierce, nasty; dangerous; malicious'

When the word came into English, in the fourteenth century from French, it preserved the literal sense of 'relating to vice', and generally meant 'immoral, depraved'. There is just one use of this in Shakespeare, when Cordelia asks her father to make it clear that his displeasure at her is not because of any 'vicious blot, murder, or foulness' (*King Lear*, I.i.227). Otherwise we get two derived senses. One is 'defective, bad, wrong', as when Hamlet talks of men who have 'some vicious mole of nature in them' (*Hamlet*, I.iv.24) or Iago says 'I perchance am vicious in my guess' (*Othello*, III.iii.144). The other is 'blameworthy, shameful', as when Cymbeline says, of his Queen, 'It had been vicious / To have mistrusted her' (*Cymbeline*, V.v.65). The modern sense of 'nasty to the point of physical attack' began in relation to animals, especially horses, in the 18th century. There is no hint of this in Shakespeare. When we hear Adriana talking of her husband as 'vicious, ungentle, foolish, blunt, unkind' (*The Comedy of Errors*, IV.ii.21), she is not suggesting that he beats her.

vulgar (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'coarse, crude, indecent'

The modern sense developed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries out of a much more general meaning of 'common, public, general', which has been in English since the Middle Ages. The Bastard talks about the men of Angiers being left 'naked as the vulgar air' (*King John*, II.i.387). And when a Gentleman talks about an impending battle as 'Most sure and vulgar' (King Lear, IV.vi.120), he means it is 'generally known' – it is definitely going to happen. There is hardly any room for misunderstanding in such cases; but there are potential ambiguities when Balthasar talks about making 'a vulgar comment' (*The Comedy of Errors*, III.i.100). Similarly, when Suffolk says he would 'rather let my head / Stoop to the block ... / Than stand uncovered to the vulgar groom', he means 'low-born' or 'humble' (*Henry VI Part 2*, IV.i.130). And when Polonius tells Laertes, 'Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar' (*Hamlet*, I.iii.61), he is not advising him to avoid dirty jokes, but not to be plebeian, all things to all men.

wag (*verb*) modern meaning: 'move to and fro, especially with a quick, jerky motion'

The original sense of *wag* was simply 'move, be in motion', and this is found several times in Shakespeare, as when Titus says 'the Empress never wags / But in her company there is a Moor (*Titus Andronicus*, V.ii.87) or Hamlet says he will fight with Laertes over Ophelia 'until my eyelids will no longer wag' (*Hamlet*, V.i.263). One of Shakespeare's uses has stayed as a modern idiom: Jaques' 'how the world wags' (*As You Like It*, II.vii.23). The word is also a favourite verb of the Host in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, who uses it four times in the sense of 'go off, depart': 'Shall we wag?' (II.i.212), 'Let us wag, then' (II.iii.88). A rare use is Leonato's, in : Bid sorrow wag, cry 'hem!' when he should groan' (*Much Ado About Nothing*, V.i.16).

wake (*noun*) modern meaning: 'watching beside the body of a dead person, or associated observances'

In modern English, *wakes* are festive events, especially associated with Irish custom, which take place following a death. They were also held on the eve preceding a religious festival, and in this meaning the usage is now dialectal. These senses date from the fifteenth century, and it was not long before the revelry became the dominant notion. Shakespeare uses the word three times, and in none of them does it have an association with death or religion, as can be deduced from the associated nouns. In *King Lear* (III.vi.72), Edgar as Poor Tom invites everyone to 'march to wakes and fairs and market-towns', In *Love's Labour's Lost* (V.ii.318), Berowne describes Boyet as 'wits' pedlar' who 'retails his wares / At wakes and wassails, meetings, markets, fairs'. And in *The Winter's Tale* (IV.iii.99), the Clown describes Autolycus as someone who 'haunts wakes, fairs, and bear-baitings'. Fairs is the common collocation. Wakes evidently meant festivals, revels, or fetes.

wallet (*noun*) modern meaning: 'small flat holder for money, cards, etc.'

The modern use of the word arrived from the USA during the nineteenth century. It is quite a long way from the fourteenth century usage, which came into the language from French, meaning a bag for carrying things on a journey, or knapsack. Pilgrims and pedlars would carry wallets, and this type of use still has some currency today. It is how Ulysses uses the word, when he says to Achilles: 'Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back / Wherein he puts alms for oblivion' (*Troilus and Cressida*, III.iii.145). Images of Time putting these alms into the equivalent of a modern wallet should be carefully avoided. Shakespeare is the first recorded user of the word in an extended sense, meaning 'protruding lump, bulging growth', when Gonzalo describes mountaineers 'whose throats had hanging at 'em / Wallets of flesh' (*The Tempest*, III.iii.47). The mountaineers are not folding their

flesh and putting it into an inside jacket pocket.

want (verb) modern meaning: 'desire, wish, need, require'
Most of the meanings of *want* found in Shakespeare are still in use today; but there is an inevitable tendency to read in the primary modern meaning – the positive sense of 'desire' – in contexts where it does not work. It is the negative sense, of 'lack, be without' which is required when Cordelia says to Lear, 'I want that glib and oily art / To speak and purpose not' (*King Lear*, I.i.225). This could not possibly mean that Cordelia desires to be glib: she is distancing herself from her two sisters, whom she has just heard speaking in that way. Similarly, in the Epilogue to *The Tempest* (line 14), when Prospero says ' Now I want / Spirits to enforce, art to enchant' he does not mean that he desires spirits, for he has just sent them all away. He is reflecting on their absence. Over half of Shakespeare's uses of *want* are like this.

weed (*noun*) modern meaning: 'unwanted plant; ineffectual person; marijuana'

The second and third modern meanings are very recent – 19th and early 20th centuries, respectively. The 'plant' sense goes back to Old English, and it is common in Shakespeare, as in the famous line 'Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds' (*Sonnet* 94.14) – also used in *Edward III* (II.i.452). The complications come from another word weed, which derives from a completely different source in Old English, meaning 'garment'. This one developed a plural in the 14th century – a usage which can still be heard today in such phrases as *widow's weeds* – and it is common in Shakespeare. There isn't usually a problem understanding it when the context makes it clear that the weeds are being worn: 'Let me see thee in thy woman's weeds', says Orsino in *Twelfth Night* (V.i.270). But when the context isn't explicit, it can mislead. Palamon sees 'Scars and bare weeds' in Thebes (*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, I.ii.15), and Titus talks about Rome's 'mourning weeds' (*Titus Andronicus*, I.i.73). There is a nice pun on the two senses of clothing and plant when Marina says to herself, 'I will rob Tellus of her weed' (*Pericles*, IV.i.13). Tellus is the Roman goddess of the earth. Her clothing is her flowers.

wink (verb) modern meaning: 'close and open one eye, suggesting a meaning'
In modern usage, the wink is always significant, suggesting that the winker is aware of a secret, a joke, or some sort of impropriety. Although this usage was possible in Shakespeare's day ('I will wink on her to consent', says Burgundy to Henry, of Princess Katherine, in *Henry V*, V.ii.301), the usual usage was simply to 'shut the eyes'. Without appreciating this, we can read quite the wrong meaning into an utterance. When York advises his friends to 'wink at the Duke of Suffolk's insolence' (*Henry VI Part 2*, II.ii.70), he is telling them to ignore it, not to connive with it. And when Othello castigates

Desdemona for her supposed wrongdoing, by saying 'Heaven stops the nose at it, and the moon winks' (Othello, IV.ii.76), we must avoid the modern implication that the matter is not serious.

wonderful (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'arousing a mood of great happiness, satisfaction, or admiration'

The earliest sense of the word, c.1100, was the literal one, 'full of wonder'; but it soon extended its meanings to include a wide range of positive feelings. Today, these feelings are all to do with delight – as we often see in Shakespeare, but notably in Celia's repeated use in *As You Like It* (III.ii.185), 'Oh wonderful, wonderful, and most wonderful wonderful'. But there are a number of occasions where a sense of delight has to be ruled out. Audley describes the approaching French army to Prince Edward: 'This sudden, mighty, and expedient head / That they have made ... is wonderful' (*Edward III*, IV.iv.11). He can hardly be delighted, seeing as they are facing death. Here the sense is 'amazing, astonishing, extraordinary'. And so it is when Cicero says to Casca, of a storm: 'Why, saw you anything more wonderful?' (*Julius Caesar*, I.iii.14).

worm (noun) modern meaning: 'kind of invertebrate animal; earthworm; unpleasant individual'
The original meaning in Old English was 'serpent, snake, dragon'. From there, the word developed a sense of 'any animals that creeps or crawls', and from there we get the modern meanings, with their emphasis on harmlessness, smallness, or inferiority . All senses were available to Shakespeare, but we only find the first two in the plays, hence it is important not to weaken the impact of the language by reading in the dominant present-day associations. In particular, we must forget them when we hear Cleopatra ask for 'the pretty worm of Nilus' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, V.ii.243) or Hermia talk of a worm killing Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III.ii.71). Worms in this sense have venom, as affirmed by Pisanio (in Cymbeline, III.iv.36) and Macbeth (*Macbeth*, III.iv.28). However, when Viola talks of a worm infecting a bud (*Twelfth Night*, II.iv.110), she is using the word in the sense of 'microbe, bug'. Leonato uses this sense too, when he talks of Benedick's toothache as 'a humour or a worm' (*Much Ado About Nothing*, III.ii.25).

young (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'early aged'

Most uses of this word today relate to the age of a person, animal, or plant, and that is how it has been since Anglo-Saxon times. Extensions to the meaning arrived in the Middle Ages, so that things and abstract notions could be described as young, with a range of senses such as 'recent' and 'vigorous'. All of these appear in Shakespeare, where we find references to *young ambition*, *affection*, and *conception*, as well as to *young nerves* and *enterprises*, and *young hours*, *days*, and *times*.

We can readily understand the figurative uses; but we can easily miss a nuance when the meaning moves in the direction of 'immature' or 'inexperienced', as when Orlando tells Oliver 'you are too young in this' (i.e. wrestling, *As You Like It*, I.i.51). When Petruchio tells a Frenchman 'I was then a young traveller' (*Cymbeline*, I.v.41), he does not necessarily mean he was youthful. And the repartee between Katherina and Petruchio (*The Taming of the Shrew*, II.i.231) relies on a pun of two unfamiliar senses: the 'immature' meaning is strongest in her quip, 'Well aimed of such a young one'. But when Petruchio replies 'I am too young for you', he means 'strong, in good condition'.

zany (*adjective*) modern meaning: 'absurdly ludicrous'

Shakespeare is the first recorded user of this word (*Love's Labour's Lost*, V.iii.463), when Berowne describes Boyet as a 'slight zany'. The origin is Italian, where *zani* were the servants who acted as clowns in the *Commedia dell' arte* – ultimately a derivative from Gianni (= Giovanni = 'John'). Shakespeare uses it twice with the meaning 'stooge, clown's assistant', the other occasion being when Malvolio talks dismissively of people who laugh at clowns like Feste (*Twelfth Night*, I.v.83): 'I take these wise men, that crow so at these set kind of fools, no better than the fools' zanies'. In both cases, the context makes it perfectly clear that it is not a term of approbation – 'Some carry-tale, some please-man, some slight zany, / Some mumble-news...', says Berowne – and this is the major difference with modern usage, where to describe humour or a TV programme as 'zany' would be to suggest we liked it.