

# To be or not to be – a Review of Children’s Shakespeare Books (#shakespearesunday)

“Nothing will come of nothing”. (*King Lear*)

Not everyone’s favourite Shakespeare quote, but it is one of mine.

I have to be honest and say that, as much as I enjoy reading and English Literature, I have always struggled to fall in love with reading Shakespeare. The language isn’t particularly accessible for a mere mortal like me and the translation of the story can sometimes get lost as a result.

I remember pulling apart, ‘A Midsummer night’s Dream’, for GCSE at school. Romeo and Juliette by Baz Lurhmann was also a huge film of my teenage years (thanks mainly to good old Leonardo Di Caprio being in it) so this did help pique my interest a little too.

I know how important Shakespeare’s works are and how they shaped our literature, so when I was offered the chance to review some Children’s Shakespeare books, I thought it was a wonderful opportunity to get my kids started on the books. I would never have considered ‘getting them started’ on Shakespeare at such a young age, but I suppose it makes perfect sense to!



The books come in a set of 20 and include the titles:

*Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*

*Twelfth Night*

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

*The Winter's Tale*

*Timon of Athens*

*The Tempest*

*King Lear*

*The Taming of the Shrew*

*Romeo and Juliette*

*Julius Caesar*

*Othello, The Moor of Venice*

*Much Ado about Nothing*

*The Merchant of Venice*

*The tragedy of Macbeth*

*Cymbeline, King of Britain*

*The comedy of errors*

*As you like it*

*Antony and Cleopatra*

*A Midsummer Night's Dream*

*All's well that ends well*

The books have child friendly pictures on almost every page, they are no longer than 60 pages long and they have large, easy to read text. They're also really colourful which my boys

loved.

My 8 year old happily read, Macbeth, in under an hour and was able to tell me what the story was about and who the main characters were. This is another feature of the books, the main characters are introduced to you at the start so you know who is going to appear and it also gives you some background information on each of them. My 7 year old has also made a start on reading one, he went for A Midsummer Nights Dream (one of my favourites!) and seems to really be enjoying the story. He is a reluctant reader too so it was lovely to see him pick up a book of his own accord and start reading it.

I think that these books are a wonderful way of making Shakespeare less daunting and I will be reading them too to refresh my brain box. You're never too old to learn something new and I'm not ashamed to admit that I don't know what all the stories are about!

I think the Children's box set of Shakespeare would make a super gift for any book worm this Christmas or for a birthday. They are also a real worthwhile investment for the bookshelf just to broaden your child's literary horizons. I would never have thought of reading my kids Shakespeare as a bedtime story but we do now.

I clearly could have done with a set myself as a child, then I wouldn't be so clueless!

[You can buy the books online from Boolino in most good book shops.](#)



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**Disclosure: I was sent this box set of books for the purpose of this review. All words, thoughts, images and opinions are my own.**