

Roman Numerals

L.1. To read Roman numerals to 1,000 (M) and recognise years written in Roman numerals (y5). Revision for Y6

Context

It's useful to talk to your child about the history of Roman numerals so that they realise the various counting systems in the ancient world before the creation of Roman numbers and our own numerical system. For example, you could talk to them about the Etruscans, who lived in central Italy before the Romans and had their own numeral system with different symbols.

Give the children some context on how Roman numbers were widely used throughout the Roman Empire in everyday life and, following the fall of the Roman Empire, how they were used throughout Europe up until the 1600's. Ask them to

Learning the basics

It's really important for children to learn what Roman Numerals look like, how they combine together to make different numbers and how to read/convert them.

Understanding what Roman numerals represent can feel like deciphering a code. It can be challenging but can also present some really fun options for learning. To get started, show children 'the basics'. While Year 4 are only required to learn 1-100, there's no reason why you can't also introduce 500 = D and 1000 = M and share with them all 7 symbols.

1	5	10	50	100	500	1000
I	V	X	L	C	D	M

Helpful Hints

I II III IV V
VI VII VIII IX X
XI XII

When a symbol appears **after a larger** symbol, it is **added** (eg: VI = V + I = 5 + 1 = 6), and when a symbol appears **before a larger** symbol it is **subtracted** (eg: IX = X – I = 10 – 1 = 9). You can make up a rhyme or saying that can help with the learning:

*When “left” is small and “right” is bigger,
Subtract the “left” from “right-hand” figure.*

The first 12 Roman numerals are probably the most important to focus on as these are the numerals need for telling the time. Children should then also become aware that they shouldn't use the same symbol more than three times in a row (e.g. 4 is written as IV not IIII).

Looking for Roman numerals in the environment

Encourage your child to look for examples of Roman numerals around them. Below are some examples.



Using a Roman Numeral Square

It is important to help your child understand that numerals can be combined to make lots of different numbers. You can show them a 1-100 Roman numeral square then explore various number combinations and explain how the numerals 'work'.

You can also cut up the square and get them to put back together, like a jigsaw- you can make this as complicated or as simple as you want!

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
XI	XII	XIII	XIV	XV	XVI	XVII	XVIII	XIX	XX
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
XXI	XXII	XXIII	XXIV	XXV	XXVI	XXVII	XXVIII	XXIX	XXX
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
XXXI	XXXII	XXXIII	XXXIV	XXXV	XXXVI	XXXVII	XXXVIII	XXXIX	XL
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
XLI	XLII	XLIII	XLIV	XLV	XLVI	XLVII	XLVIII	XLIX	L
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
LI	LII	LIII	LIV	LV	LVI	LVII	LVIII	LIX	LX
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
LXI	LXII	LXIII	LXIV	LXV	LXVI	LXVII	LXVIII	LXIX	LXX
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
LXXI	LXXII	LXXIII	LXXIV	LXXV	LXXVI	LXXVII	LXXVIII	LXXIX	LXXX
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
LXXXI	LXXXII	LXXXIII	LXXXIV	LXXXV	LXXXVI	LXXXVII	LXXXVIII	LXXXIX	XC
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
XCI	XCII	XCIII	XCIV	XCV	XCVI	XCVII	XCVIII	XCIX	C

Facts about Shakespeare: Answer sheet

Translate the Roman Numerals into numerals we use today! If you need to you can use the Roman numeral square to help you. Write your answers in the frames.

1. There are more than **LXXX** variations recorded for the spelling of Shakespeare's name

2.

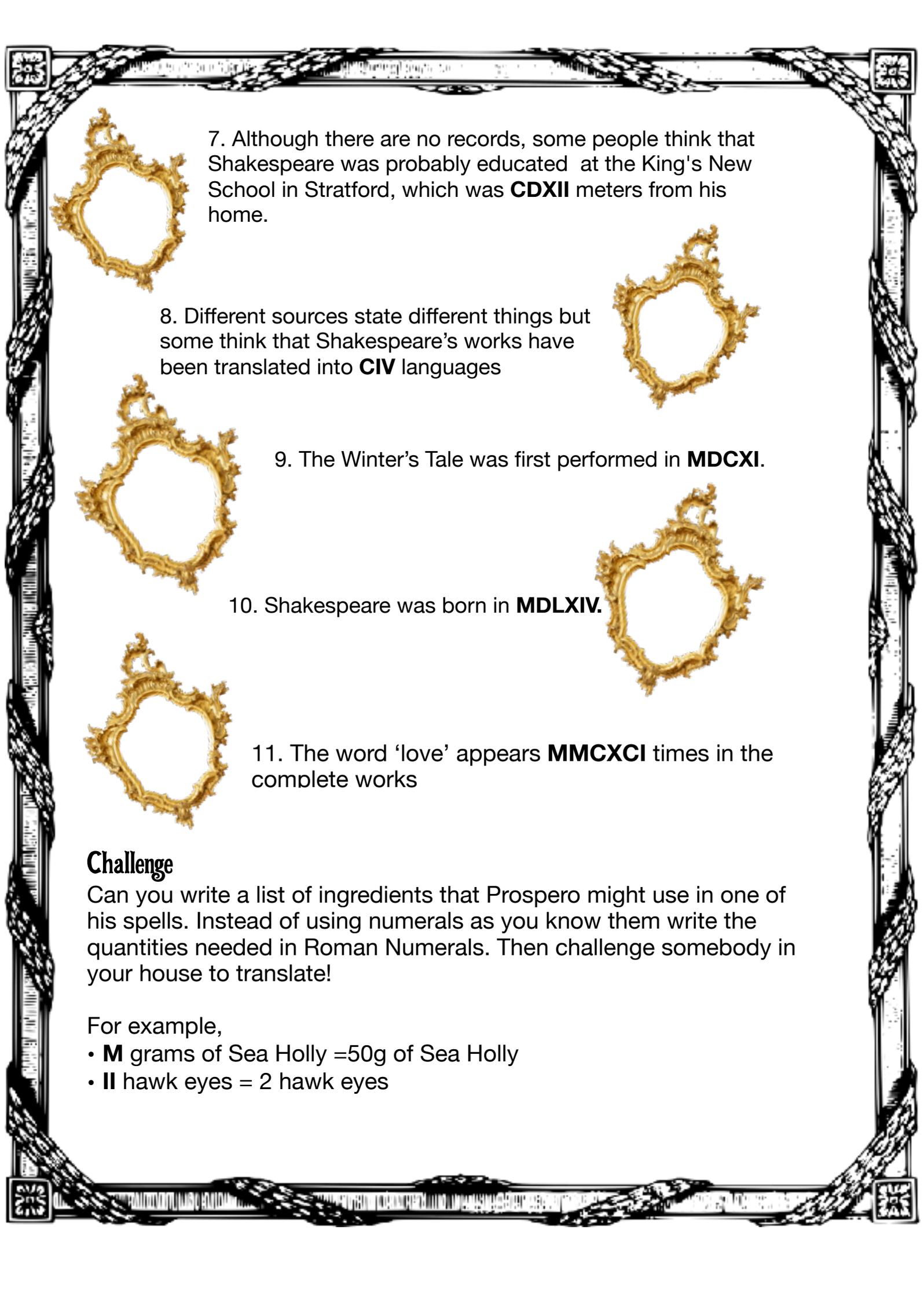
2. If Shakespeare was alive today, he would have been **CDLV** years old in 2020!

3. Shakespeare was **LII** years old when he died.

4. Shakespeare's plays contain **CC** references to dogs

5. ...and **DC** references to birds

6. Using your answers from 4 and 5, what does Shakespeare reference more, dogs or birds?



7. Although there are no records, some people think that Shakespeare was probably educated at the King's New School in Stratford, which was **CDXII** meters from his home.



8. Different sources state different things but some think that Shakespeare's works have been translated into **CIV** languages



9. The Winter's Tale was first performed in **MDCXI**.



10. Shakespeare was born in **MDLXIV**.



11. The word 'love' appears **MMCXCI** times in the complete works

Challenge

Can you write a list of ingredients that Prospero might use in one of his spells. Instead of using numerals as you know them write the quantities needed in Roman Numerals. Then challenge somebody in your house to translate!

For example,

- **M** grams of Sea Holly = 50g of Sea Holly
- **II** hawk eyes = 2 hawk eyes

