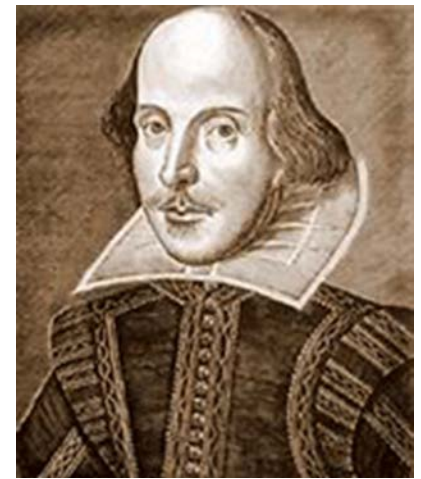


Task 5

- *From your reader of Sonnets, choose one which fascinates you, or which you find interesting.*
- *Write down your thoughts and ideas about the sonnet you have chosen so you can discuss them with a classmate or your teacher.*

Im folgenden Beispiel hat sich der Schüler Peter das berühmte Sonett 130 ausgesucht:

*My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks,
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go --
My mistress when she walks treads on the ground:
And yet by heaven I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.*



I wrote 154 Sonnets. Choose one that you like!

First Version

Shakespeare does not use metaphors like in other sonnets because the theme he treats is more specific than the others. In other sonnets he deals with crucial aspects of love, like in sonnet 116 where Shakespeare tries to explain the nature of love or in sonnet 73 in which the loss of youthful desires with increasing age are central. To make these very complex themes concrete he uses different metaphors. In this case the theme he deals with is already very concrete so he does not need metaphors but rather good rhetoric to convey his message.

It is obvious that Shakespeare plays a joke on the conceptions of love poetry, which were common to Shakespeare's day but are still present in our minds nowadays. By taking the highly idealising comparisons between nature and the poets' lover literary rather than figuratively he makes use of a very current satirical method to drag them in the mud. This method did not miss the target as I really had to laugh when I read the sonnet. Comparing the sonnets with Romeo and Juliet Sonnet 130 confirms a parallel. Even though Shakespeare has a very serious attitude towards love and its difficulties he never forgets his sense of humour. However, I think that Sonnet 130 hides a social criticism behind the humorous facing. It is this double entendre that fascinates me in this Sonnet. Moreover Shakespeare's social criticism has not lost its actuality. Humans still try to shape an idealized and idolized picture of beauty. The only difference to the past is that we have other means than poetry to communicate the picture.

The unrealistic comparison between women and nature has been displaced by the unrealistic comparison between women and the computer-enhanced models in publicity campaigns. But the consequences are worse than in Shakespeare's day if we think of rising numbers of people, who want to live up to the image of the ideal female beauty and end up in anorexia or other eating disorders. Of course Shakespeare did not foreknow this development but he already questioned the addiction to idealizing the picture of beauty.