

SHAKESPEAREAN INSULT COMPETITION



Thou mother is such an impertinent, fool-born, whey-faced strumpet that even Paris Hilton would beest disinclined to acknowledge her!

Adjectives

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artless (*uncontrolled*)

churlish (*rude, ungracious*)

currish (*mean-spirited*)

fawning (*trying to please*)

impertinent (*rude*)

roguish (*wild*)

spleeny (*hot-headed*)

villainous (*vile, detestable*)

bawdy (*filthy, obscene*)

cockered (*spoiled, pampered*)

dissembling (*lying*)

forward (*stubborn*)

lumpish (*depressed*)

ruttish (*lustful*)

surly (*uncivil, rude*)

warped (*twisted, distorted*)

bootless (*useless, worthless*)

craven (*cowardly, spineless*)

dulcet (*pleasing to the ear*)

gorbellied (*pot-bellied*)

rank (*foul-smelling*)

saucy (*insolent/defiant or lustful*)

unmuzzled (*unrestrained*)

beef-witted (*thick-headed, brainless*)

clay-brained (*stupid*)

earth-vexing (*tormenting all life on earth*)

fat-kidneyed (*gross*)

folly-fallen (*doing foolish things*)

full-gorged (*stomach full of food, stuffed*)

horn-mad (*furiously jealous (cuckold is horned)*)

ill-breeding (*mischief-making*)

knotty-pated (*dull-witted*)

motley-minded (*foolish*)

plume-plucked (*humbled*)

shard-borne (*born in poop*)

swag-bellied (*big bellied with large paunch*)

toad-spotted (*spotted like a toad*)

beetle-headed (*thick-headed, idiotic*)

dizzy-eyed (*dazzling, blinding*)

elf-skinned (*shrunk to mere nothing*)

flap-mouthed (*loosely hanging lips*)

fool-born (*coming from an idiot*)

hasty-witted (*quick witted, quick thinking*)

idle-headed (*ignorant, foolish*)

ill-nurtured (*badly raised*)

milk-livered (*cowardly*)

onion-eyed (*having eyes filled with tears*)

rude-growing (*growing wildly*)

sheep-biting (*thieving*)

tardy-gaited (*slow moving*)

whey-face (*pale face*)

Nouns

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baggage (<i>prostitute or slut</i>)	base-court (<i>servant's courtyard</i>)	braggart (<i>boastful person</i>)
bugbear (<i>hobgoblin, bogeyman</i>)	caitiff (<i>coward</i>)	carrion (<i>dead, rotting animal</i>)
clotpole (<i>blockhead, idiot</i>)	coxcomb (<i>fool</i>)	cuckold (<i>man w cheating wife</i>)
cur (<i>dog, contemptible person</i>)	flax-wench (<i>prostitute</i>)	flirt-gill (<i>rude woman</i>)
foot-licker (<i>servant</i>)	fustilarian (<i>smelly old woman</i>)	giglet (<i>giddy, playful girl</i>)
gudgeon (<i>gullibility</i>)	harpy (<i>half woman, half vulture</i>)	horn-beast (<i>cuckold</i>)
jolt-head (<i>idiot</i>)	loggerhead (<i>blockhead, idiot</i>)	lout (<i>awkward, stupid person</i>)
mammet (<i>doll, puppet</i>)	meed (<i>reward</i>)	mew up (<i>imprison</i>)
minnow (<i>insignificant object</i>)	miscreant (<i>villain, rascal</i>)	moiety (<i>portion, share</i>)
moldwarp (<i>mole-animal</i>)	morrow (<i>morning</i>)	mumble-news (<i>gossiper</i>)
ninny (<i>stupid, foolish person</i>)	noddle (<i>head</i>)	paramour (<i>woman's lover</i>)
penury (<i>extreme poverty</i>)	prolixity (<i>boring wordiness</i>)	ratsbane (<i>rat poison</i>)
strumpet (<i>prostitute</i>)	termagant (<i>scolding, nagging, bad-tempered woman</i>)	vassal (<i>servant</i>)
umbrage (<i>feeling offended</i>)	varlet (<i>knave, rogue, rascal</i>)	

Verbs

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addle (<i>confuse</i>)	aroint (<i>step away</i>)	attend (<i>wait upon, serve</i>)
bat-fowling (<i>catch birds by hitting with a club</i>)		bewray (<i>reveal</i>)
clapper-claw (<i>beat up</i>)	descry (<i>catch sight of</i>)	doff (<i>throw away</i>)
gleek (<i>trick</i>)	glose (<i>flatter</i>)	list (<i>listen</i>)
lour (<i>threaten</i>)	mammer (<i>murmur, stutter</i>)	prate (<i>speak on and on</i>)
smite (<i>inflict a heavy blow</i>)	traduce (<i>speak negatively about</i>)	

Adverbs, Prepositions, Interjections

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before (<i>ere</i>)	nay (<i>no</i>)	oft (<i>often</i>)
probably (<i>belike</i>)	soon (<i>anon</i>)	whence (<i>where</i>)
wherefore (<i>why</i>)	whilst (<i>while</i>)	yea (<i>yes</i>)

Phrases

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get thee gone (<i>Go away</i>)	unhand me (<i>stop touching me</i>)	prithee (<i>please, I pray</i>)
methinks (<i>I think</i>)	'swounds! (<i>literally, God's wounds, a mild oath</i>)	
fie! (<i>a stronger oath; a curse</i>)	fie on't = (<i>a stronger oath = This situation makes me upset!</i>)	

be

<i>Modern</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Example</i>
are	art	MND III.i.140 Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful
be	beest, be'st	H5 V.ii.201 If ever thou beest mine
are	be	KL I.v.31 Be my horses ready?
are	been	Per Chorus.II.28 when men been
were	wast	RJ II.iv.74 Thou wast never with me [Q wert]
were	wert	2H4 III.ii.162 I would thou wert a man's tailor

Helping Verbs

<i>Modern</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Example</i>
can	canst	R3 III.v.1 canst thou quake
shall	'ce	KL IV.vi.240 I'ce try
will	'chill	KL IV.vi.235 'Chill not let go
should	'choud	KL IV.vi.238 And 'choud ha' bin zwaggered
may	mayst	R3 I.iii.203 Long mayst thou live
might	mought	3H6 V.ii.45 That mought not be distinguished
shall	's	RJ I.iii.10 thou's hear our counsel
shall	shalt	3H6 I.ii.36 thou shalt to London
should	shouldst	Oth III.iii.378 thou shouldst be honest
will	'st	Cor I.i.124 you'st hear the belly's answer
will	wilt	TG I.i.11 Wilt thou be gone?
will	wolt	Per IV.i.62 wolt out?
would	woo	Ham V.i.271 Woo't weep?
will	wot	2H4 II.i.54 Thou wot, wot thou
would	wouldst	MV II.ii.111 Wouldst thou aught with me?

have

<i>Modern</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Example</i>
have	hast	Tem I.i.19 remember whom thou hast aboard
has	hath	MW III.iv.100 A kind heart he hath
had	hadst	AW V.iii.281 where thou hadst this ring

do

<i>Modern</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Example</i>
do	dost	TN III.iv.31 Why dost thou smile so
does	doth	IH4 III.iii.92 How doth thy husband?
did	didst	TS induction.1.87 thou didst it excellent
did	didest	Ham IV.vii.56 Thus didest thou

Shakespearean Omissions

When we speak, we often reduce, compress, or omit syllables: “I’m going’ t’ town,” or “C’mere.” Shakespeare’s characters also compress, reduce, and omit:

“on” and “of” to “o” “have” to “ha”
“it” to “t” “them” to “’em”
“thou art” [you are] to “thou’rt” “taken” to “ta’en”

Shakespearean Syntax Can Change

1. I the peanut butter and jelly sandwich ate.
2. Ate I the peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
3. I ate the peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
4. Ate the peanut butter and jelly sandwich I.
5. The peanut butter and jelly sandwich I ate.
6. The peanut butter and jelly sandwich ate I.