

6.  Write about the Belarusian authors you know. Use *who*, *whose*, *whom*, *which*.

HELP BOX

1. ... is the author, ... is famous for his book 2. It is a story, ... tells us about ... 3. The main character, ... name is ... , lives in the country / city / town / place which is ... 4. He / she has got a friend / family ... 5. One day he / she ... 6. It happens so that ... 7. In the end the main character ... , which is great / sad / lucky / happy.

Lesson 4. They have stood the test of time

1a. Read the title of the lesson and guess what you are going to read and speak about.

1b. Is it necessary to study classical literature at school? Do you enjoy reading it? Who is your favourite author?

2a. Who wrote these books? Look through the texts and decide which author you would like to read about.

2b. Choose a text (A–D) and read about the writer. Make notes to tell your classmates about him / her.

HELP BOX

when he / she was born; where he / she lived; his / her family and education; when and where he / she started writing; his / her famous books; what impressed (впечатлило) you about the author

playwright = an author who writes plays

A. Nearly 450 years after his death **William Shakespeare**, a famous playwright, continues to be the greatest writer in the English language. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564. His father sold gloves and became an important person in the town. William, one of eight children, was the eldest son, and educated at the local grammar school. He married when he was

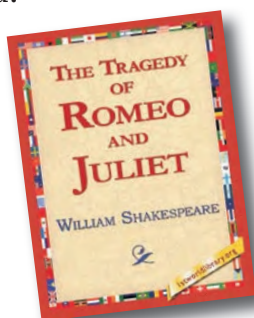
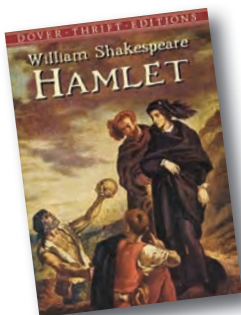
only 18 and his wife, Anne Hathaway ['æn 'hæθəweɪ], was eight years older than him. They had two girls and a boy who died at the age of 11.



Nobody knows how Shakespeare began to write, or when he entered the theatre. But we know that he left his family and moved to London shortly after his marriage ['mæɪɪdʒ] to start an acting career. By 1592 he had become a leading playwright. He worked in the theatre troupe which was so popular, that King James I gave it the right to perform at his court [kɔ:t], and it became known as “The King’s Men”.

Shakespeare wrote 37 plays, including *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, and many others. His plays made his theatre the most important company in the country. He also wrote poems and sonnets.

In 1610 he returned to his native town of Stratford-upon-Avon. His life was much quieter there. He was very successful and rich in his time. He had a big house and owned (владел) a lot of land and he part-owned two theatres in London, where his plays were regularly performed.



However, this historical figure is still surrounded by mystery. Some critics doubt¹ whether he wrote the plays at all. They argue that for a literary genius ['dʒi:niəs] his education and life experiences were very limited (ограничены) – he was not a widely travelled author.

co = together with

¹ **doubt** [daʊt] – сомневаются

But a recently published book by James Shapiro proves that the plays are Shakespeare's own, though many of his later plays were co-written.

The fact is that Shakespeare's plays are still popular today and performed in lots of theatres round the world.



B. Arthur Conan Doyle ['ɑːθə'kɒnən'dɔɪl] was born on 22 May 1859 in Edinburgh, Scotland, to a father of Irish origin, Charles Altamont Doyle, and an Irish mother, Mary Foley.

Conan Doyle was sent to the Roman Catholic Jesuit school, Stonyhurst, at the age of nine and then continued at Stonyhurst College.

From 1876 to 1881, he studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh. In 1885 he became a doctor of medicine¹.

Several times from 1891 to 1892 Conan Doyle tried to open a medical practice, first in Plymouth ['plɪməθ], then in Portsmouth ['pɔːtsməθ] and finally in London. Business was never very successful and he had a lot of free time to discover a range of other talents and interests. He joined football, bowling, political, literary and cricket clubs and began writing stories again. His first story appeared in Edinburgh before he was twenty.

He was married twice – in 1885 and then in 1907 after his first wife's death, and had five children in these two marriages.

His first notable literary creation, called *A Study in Scarlet*, appeared in 1887. It introduced Sherlock Holmes and his friend Dr. Watson ['wɒts(ə)n] for the first time.

In 1892, the first out of five collections of Sherlock Holmes stories was published. In 1893, the year of his father's death, Doyle decided to kill Sherlock Holmes and did so in December that year. He wanted to be remembered for his historical novels rather than his detective. But the government and public wanted to see Sherlock Holmes back to life, so a story about Sherlock Holmes's secret mission for the government during a time of war appeared in 1903. 1917 was the last year a Sherlock Holmes story was published.

¹ **a doctor of medicine** – учёная степень «доктор медицинских наук»

By 1920, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had become one of the highest paid writers in the world. But after the death of his son Kingsley, his brother Innes and other close relatives shortly after World War One and his mother's death in 1921 Doyle was in deep depression. He found comfort in spiritualism, which tried to find proof of life after death. On 7 July 1930, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle died from heart disease.

As an author, he wrote plays, verse, memoirs ['memwə:z], short stories, historical novels (*The Lost World*), and supernatural fiction. But he will be mostly remembered as the creator of one of the greatest literary detectives ever to live.

C. Joanne Rowling [dʒəʊ'æn'rəʊlɪŋ], author of the best-selling Harry Potter series of books, was born on 31 July 1965, the same day as her famous boy-wizard hero. The family, including her parents and younger sister Di, lived near Bristol, in south-west England. Her father worked on airplane engines for Rolls Royce.



Joanne – called Jo by her family and friends – did well at school, and was the top girl in her class. Her favourite subjects were English and foreign languages. After finishing public school with top honours¹ in English, French, and German, Rowling went on to study French at the University of Exeter ['eksɪtə]. She graduated from the university in 1986 and over the next few years worked as a secretary in different firms.

What she really wanted to do, however, was to write. Rowling wrote her first story, *Rabbit*, at the age of five or six. Later, she tried her hand at writing novels, but she had never finished writing any novel before she wrote the Harry Potter books. It was during the difficult time when she came back to Britain with a baby daughter after her unsuccessful marriage in Portugal.

Following its publication in Britain in June 1997, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* quickly became a hit with children and adults alike and won numerous awards². The Harry Potter series includes seven books – one book for every

¹with top honours ['ɔ:pəz] – с отличием; ²awards [ə'wɔ:dz] – награды

year that Harry spends at Hogwarts. In 2000, the 35-year-old author J.K. Rowling became the highest-earning woman in Britain. She received an OBE (Order of the British Empire ['empərə]), a medal awarded by the Queen, in March 2001. At the end of that same year, she married her second husband, and in 2003 and 2005 gave birth to a boy and a girl.

In 2008 she was named the 12th richest person in Britain. Rowling's books have been translated into more than 60 languages, and more than 300 million copies have been sold around the world. The first four books have been made into films, and all four are among the top twenty highest-grossing films of all time. In February 2004, Forbes magazine named her as the first person ever to become a billionaire [ˌbɪljə'neə] from writing books.

After finishing the Harry Potter series in 2007, J.K. Rowling went on to write a detective series under a pseudonym of Robert Galbraith. The first book in the series, the *Coocoo's Calling*, was published in April 2013 as a debut novel and the real name of the author was kept secret for some time. The other books in the series are *The Silkworm*, which was released in June 2014, *Career of Evil* (October 2015), *Lethal White* (September 2018), and the fifth novel, *Troubled Blood*, published in September 2020.

In 2020, Joanne Rowling returned to children's books and from 26 May to 10 July published online a new children's story called *The Ickabog*. Free access to the book was Joanne Rowling's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. A print edition of the story was released on 10 November 2020, and a lot of the money from the book sale was donated to charity. On 13 April 2021, it was announced that a new children's book – *The Christmas Pig* – would be released in October 2021.



D. Vladimir Korotkevich (26 November 1930 – 25 July 1984) is an extremely talented Belarusian author who was born in 1930 in Orsha, Vitebsk region. In 1954 he graduated from the Philological Department of Kiev University and taught first in a village school in the Kiev region of Ukraine and then in his home town, Orsha. Later, he completed a literature (1960) and then cinematography (1962)

course in Moscow. Literature became his main occupation. His first published work was a poem which appeared in 1951, and was later followed by three collections of verse. V. Korotkevich also wrote a number of novels, including *The Dark Castle Olshansky* and *The Wild Hunt of King Stakh* («Дзікае паляванне караля Стаха», 1964), as well as plays, essays, articles, screenplays for films, and some very interesting detective and adventure stories. He is a winner of several national literary awards.

This is how Andrei Khadanovich, a modern Belarusian poet, describes his first experience of reading Korotkevich: “It was 1989. I was 16 years old. I unfolded the book by Uladzimir Karatkevich with the first part of *The Ears of Rye under Thy Sickles* («Каласы пад сярпом тваім»). It was an unbelievable experience. I lost track of time and came back to reality only when I had finished the book. When you have opened the book it’s difficult to close it. I was looking forward to reading its continuation like today’s children look forward to reading another Harry Potter book.”


Korotkevich has a lot to offer. His literary works are full of romanticism, rich imagination and emotions. They encourage love and respect to our motherland.

2c. In groups of four exchange the information about the authors. Have you read any books by these authors? Which books would you like to read? Why?

3.  Write 10–15 sentences about your favourite author.

Lesson 5. An interview with an author

1. What modern writers do you know?

2a.  Listen and read the fact file about a modern British author of books for children and answer: What facts impress you? What fact is the most interesting?

Fact file

Jacqueline Wilson is a British best-selling children’s novelist. Only in the UK, her books sold more than 40 million copies.