

Speak like a Pro: a field guide to Elizabethan English

Some of you may be wondering how we could possibly know what the language sounded like more than four hundred years ago. After all, even the venerable eight-track had yet to hit the scene, so recordings of Shakespeare himself muttering over his manuscripts are, in a word, scarce.

We may not have sound recordings, but we do have examples of the language in another form - writing. This was a time of explosive creativity, and some of the greatest wordsmiths of the English language were creating some of the most famous works of written art we have today.

Much of those works are poetry, and not the freeform Beatnik poetry we've come so familiar with in smoky coffee shops. Elizabethan poets used strict rhyming schemes and crafted poetry that was as much architecture as literature. As scholars were examining the rhymes, they noticed words paired together that just didn't rhyme according to how we would them, and realized that the language must have sounded different. When these strange pairings were compared against each other, patterns emerged - it seemed that words of similar structures were consistently paired.

Moreover, the Elizabethan era would have been a haven for those of us not blessed with good spelling. They didn't have spelling rules, and simply spelled words as they sounded. Hooked on Phonics would have made a killing!

Basically, we have a really good guess at how they spoke so many years ago. Is it possible we're completely wrong? Sure! But we've got good evidence that we're at least close.

Also, there's no way that England had one accent across its whole great nation. In America today, if you go to the four corners of the country, you'll hear people speaking very different versions of English. You can make a good guess at which neighborhood a Londoner grew up in by their accent.

Is there any wrong way to speak Elizabethan English? Yes - by not even trying.

Sounding Funny Is Fun! (No, really, it's actually a blast)

The biggest changes from our modern tongue come in the vowels. You remember kindergarten, right? A-E-I-O-U and Sometimes Y? In the English language, the vowels are the most flexible sounds, bending and morphing around the consonants they are framed with. In Elizabethan English, the vowels are the sounds that are the most different from our modern accent.

Some pronunciations stay the same (we love those!) and some change. Let's start at the top. We'll give the letter - or the sound - and examples of how that letter sounds in our modern accent, then explain the differences:

Vowels

A - cat, hat

This version of the *a*, the *short a*, is basically the same. It is drawn out a bit, held onto just a little... caaat, haaat.

A - father, walking

This *short a* changes to a *flat a* like in "pant". So *father* rhymes with *rather*, *walk* sounds like *whack*.

A - take, make, stable

This *long a* becomes an *eh* sound. So *take* sounds like *tek*, *make* sounds like *mek*, *stable* like *stebel*. Funny huh?

E - head, dead

The *eh* sound of these words becomes an *ay* or *ai* sound. So *head* and *dead* rhyme with *braid*.

I and Y - lie, die, my, by

The *long i* sound becomes an *uh-ee* sound. If you say *my* really really slowly, it sounds like *m-ah-ee*... instead, we're going to say *m-uh-ee*. This isn't *oi* like Yiddish! *Lie* sounds like *l-uh-ee*, *die* sounds like *d-uh-ee*, *my* sounds like *m-uh-ee*, *by* sounds like *b-uh-ee*.

I - hit

The *short i* stays the same (yay!) and rhymes with *it*.

O - come

This one becomes much darker and rounder... almost a *u* sound. You can almost throw in a *uh* sound too. So *come* becomes *coom*, *of* becomes *uh-ooov*.

U - cup, cut

The *short u* sound combines with the "oo" sound, like "coop". If the *short u* and the *oo* sound had babies, that's what the *short u* should sound like. So *cup* becomes *coop*, *cut* becomes *coot*.

Let's add an R

The *r* in Elizabethan English is more exaggerated, a *hard r*, but isn't quite the pirate "ARRRR!", or a rolled *r*. It's a consonant you can really chew on... never be afraid to lean on it and draw it out a little.

ER - mercy

This sound rhymes with *air*, and the *r* is emphasized. *Mercy* becomes *maircy*, *terse* sounds like *tairce*, *curse* becomes *cairse*.

OR - Lord

This takes on a very round mouth shape and the *short o* is almost an "oo" sound. *Lord* becomes *loord*, *ford* becomes *foord*.

The Diphthong!

Diphthongs are not what happens when women wearing low rise jeans and thong underoos sit down. Rather, they are vowel combinations... In modern English, we usually shorten diphthongs to one quick sound... Elizabethan English usually uses both letters. After all, why would you put both in if they weren't to be used? There is one exception, but that will be pointed out below.

AI - fair

In this case, both letters are pronounced. The *a* is a *short a* and the *i* is like the Elizabethan *i*. The *r* is hard, and a little exaggerated (but not rolled or the pirate *rrrrrr*). So "fair" becomes *fah-ay-err*.

AY - say

Pronounce both letters - so *saay-ee*.

EI - either

This is the diphthong exception. It becomes an "ay" sound, so *either* becomes *ayther*.

OU - mouse

Pronounce both letters, so *mouse* becomes *muh-oose*. Not "moose"... round out the *ou* sound and make it darker. *House* becomes *huh-oose*.

OW - brown

This is very similar to the OU - the W is after all, a *double u*. *Brown* becomes *bruh-oon*.

Consonants

Most of the consonants stay the same. There are a few, however, that do change.

C - precious

Modern English has turned the "cious" letter combination into "shun". We're going to turn the *c* into an *s*, and then say the rest of the letters. *Precious* sounds like *preh-see-uhs*, *musician* sounds like *myu-zih-see-un*.

G and V - speaking, ever

The G that appears at the ends of words can be dropped. Likewise, the V in the middle of words can often be dropped as well. This is especially appropriate for lower class characters. *Speaking* becomes *speakin'*, *listening* becomes *listenin'*, *ever* becomes *e'er*, *even* becomes *e'en*. Lower classes might even drop the *v* in *heaven*, making *hea'en*.

H - hoop

Every H is spoken (think *Pygmalion*, which was retold as *My Fair Lady*). *Hoop* is never *oop*, but always spoken with the letter H. Hand, heavy, hark, all use the H.

K - knight

Modern English has turned the leading K in words like knight and knife silent. At this time, it was sometimes spoken, especially by the lower classes. *Knight* becomes *kuh-night*, *knife* becomes *kuh-nife*.

R - art

Remember the R from "lord"? Same deal... lean on it a little! Chew on it and enjoy it... R's are very fun to say. Arrrrt! (Ok, that's a little piratey)

S - compassion

The double S, and sometimes single S, has become a *sh* sound in modern times. However, back in the day it was spoken as a hard s... instead of *compashun*, we're going to say *comp-ah-see-ion*, and instead of *surely* pronounced *sherly*, it becomes *soor-ly*.

T - righteous

Like the S, sometimes a T isn't a T - it's a CH. Nowadays we say *richus*, but in Elizabethan speak we'd say each letter and get *ri-tee-ous*. *Pastures* goes from *paschurs* to *pas-toors*.

No really, how does it sound?

Now that you have seen some explanations of pronunciation, let's see it in action. You'll see each entry twice - with normal spelling and with phonetic spelling. Remember that the rules are a good guide, but not strict... perhaps you might feel that some words could be pronounced a little different!

An extra O in a word indicates a rounder, darker sound, like when used with OR.

*Good provender, labouring horses would have,
good hay and good plenty, plough-oxen do crave;
To hale out thy muck, and to plough up thy ground,
or else it may hinder thee many a pound.*

-Thomas Tusser: Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry, 1557

*Goood provender, leh-boour-ing hoorses woould haive,
goodd hai and gooodd plenty, ploooough-oxen do crave;
To hehle oout thuh-ee mooock, and to ploough oop thuh-ee groound,
or else it mehee hinder thee many a poound.*

*Fatal Hemp, which Denmark doth afford,
doth furnish us with canvas and with cord.
Cables and sails - that winds assisting; either
We may acquaint the east and West together.
- Sylvester, 1520*

*Feh-tal Hemp, which Denmaark doth affoord,
doth furnish uos with canvas and with coord.
Ceh-bles and sehls - that winds assisting; aither
We meh-ee acq-ueh-nt the East and West togaither.*

Words words words

Ok, great, you have an accent (no, really, with a little practice, you do!). But what to do with it? I'm sure you've come across some Shakespeare at one point or another, and he sure didn't write the way we speak today.

Now don't think you've got to be running around talking like the Bard. That man was very likely the biggest genius of the English language, and he was writing for the purpose of entertainment - he was deliberately twisting and turning the words in the most creative ways he could. He certainly wasn't walking down the street talking like his characters did! Use his material as inspiration, not a road map.

Also, don't think you've got to learn this all in one shot. It comes with time, and practice. You've got to speak it - annoy your household by yammering at them in your new accent and with your new words. Pick a few of the sounds and a few of the words to start with, and mix those into your speech - just a few easy changes can turn ordinary speak into extraordinary magic for our audience.

To Start and Stop a Conversation

Greetings and goodbyes were very important in Elizabethan society. The culture was driven by class structure and community, and taking time to say hello and goodbye was critical social encounters. However, they used a few different words and phrases - but they're easy to learn.

| If you want to say... | You can use: |
|---|-------------------------|
| Good morning | Give you good morning |
| Good morning | Good morrow |
| Good day (or morning, afternoon, evening) | God give you a good day |
| Good day (or morning, afternoon, evening) | Good day; Good den |
| Good afternoon or evening | Good even; Good e'en |
| Glad to see you! | Well met! |
| How are you doing? | How now? |

| Or if you want to say... | You can use |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| See you soon! | I shall see you anon |
| Be well | God save you, God keep you |
| Be well | Fare you well |

Title me this, Batman!

Class structure was much more important to Elizabethan society than in our society today. Everyone was very aware on what rung of the social ladder they were on, and addressing people around them with the proper title was important.

When addressing someone, phrase their title with a bit of thought. Make sure you refer to them with the proper respect to their station, gender, and age. Of course, by referring to someone by a title above or below their station, or favorably to their age, that title can be either flattery or an insult. Calling a middle aged woman by a young woman's title can certainly win favor, and conversely, calling a maid a crone can be quite the dig!

For the Men Folk:

| When you're talking to... | You can use |
|--|--|
| Nobility, Church Bishops, Important Officials | my lord(s), good my lord(s), your worship, noble sir(s), good gentles (for more than one person) |
| Middle Class Craftsman and Merchants, Yeoman farmers, Peasants | sir, good sir, Well met sir, Good day sir, Master, Goodman (used like Mister) |
| An older peasant | Father, Gaffer (grandfather) |
| A younger man, or close friend | Good day, my fine lads |
| A young boy | young lad, little sir, little master |
| When talking to someone with an obvious profession | Master carpenter, Master musician |
| | |
| When you want to insult a man | You can say |
| Somewhat rude, and obviously condescending | Fellow |
| You hate the man, and wouldn't mind a fight | Sirrah |

For the ladies:

| If you want to say... | You can use |
|------------------------------|---|
| The Queen | Your Majesty, Your Grace, Your Most Gracious Majesty |
| Noblewomen | my lady, noble lady, noble madam, good my lady |
| Middle class an Yeomen wives | mistress, dear mistress, fair mistress, sweet mistress (mistress is a polite title) |
| Peasants | mistress, dear mistress, fair mistress, sweet mistress (mistress is a polite title), fair wench, dear wench, sweet wench (wench just means <i>girl and wasn't insulting</i>) |
| An older peasant woman | Mother, Gammer (grandmother) |
| A young girl | little lady, little mistress, lass, sweet lass, little wench, pretty maid |
| Using their profession | Good weaver, good spinner |

Between Hello and Goodbye

Once you've greeted someone, you presumably want to do more than say good bye (well, usually... sometimes all you want to say is goodbye!). There are all sorts of commonly used words and phrases that you can mix into your language to really take your speech back a few hundred years!

Remember that just a few easy words mixed into your speech can really transform what you say to something beatifically archaic. Some of the things we say every day have translations, and learning a few of those translations shifts your everyday speech into a different era.

Please

An it pleases you (or *thee*) (an is an archaic form of "if")
I pray you (or *thee*), *Prithee* (short for *pray thee*), *Pray*

Thank you

God grant you Mercy, Grant you Mercy, Grammercy
Many good thanks, many and hearty thankings
God yield (or *God 'ild*) *you* or *thee*

Yesses an Noes

We say yes and no every day, in all sorts of situations. Our modern words "yes" and "no" were used back then, but why not opt for the more exciting Elizabethan versions?

For the word *yes*, try *aye* (rhymes with *eye*) or *yea* (rhymes with *kay*, like "ok").

Examples:

Yea, I did get me to the ale house, but I did not see thee there.
Nay, thine pig is not the fattest! But mine were the fattest, yea!

I think, I guess, I daresay - *I trow* (means believe), *I think me*, *Methinks*

I kid you not!

The words "sooth" and "troth" meant truth, so you could say:

In sooth, forsooth, in good sooth, by my troth, in troth

Verily, surely, indeed (means truthfully)

Marry (by Saint Mary)

I vouchsafe (I assure that this is true)

Ok - *Good now, good*

You know? - *Trow you, Know you, Knowest thou*

Coming through, excuse me, pardon

I cry you mercy, I crave your pardon, pray pardon

Maybe, Perhaps - Mayhap, Belike, Perchance, Peradventure**No way! Really?**

Go to! Is it even so? Were it even so? E'en so? For sooth? In sooth?

Wow! Sweet! Awesome!

Marry (By Saint Mary), Now by my faith! I'faith! (short for In faith)

Oh no! Too bad!

God-a-mercy (God have mercy), God's me!, Od's me! (God save me), Alas, Well a day

Cursing

Yes, Elizabethans cursed too. Men cursed more than women, and when women cursed, they tended to be a bit more genteel.

Some exclamations are:

Alack!

Alackaday!

Alas!

Fie!

Fie me!

Out upon it!

Now, a word about *Fie*. There is another word in our modern language starting with the same letter... you all know the word of which I speak. *Fie* is not That Word! *Fie* can be used in the same *context* but it does not mean the same thing... *Fie* is Latin for "faith" (any of you recognize the term *Semper Fi*?). That Word is *not appropriate for faire*. As a note, That Word was used, but it was not naughty, and was a simple verb. If you should find yourself needing to use a word that means the same thing, try *swive*. It is also not a naughty word.

Am I here, or there?

Here, there, and over there have alternatives.

Here, where you are, is *hither*.

There, close by, is *thither*.

Over there, is *yon*.

Way over there is *yonder*.

For example:

Bring yon barrel, the barrel from yonder town, hither.

Means: *Bring that barrel over there, the barrel from that distant town, over here.*

How words work together - grammar and syntax

Elizabethans had a very loose way of speaking, especially peasants. Grammar relates to what words mean, and their proper usage, and syntax relates to how words are strung together. The great thing about Elizabethan grammar and syntax is that it is easy, because it's a little lazy.

I do love the way you do that!

You can throw *do* (or *did*) before all the verbs you use.

For example:

I do walk me down the road e'ry mornin' for me health.

I did scold Misstress Mary for bein' late.

To be, or not to be?

The verb "to be" can be used and abused in many different ways... it's one of the more common verbs, in all it's forms, so it experienced the most alteration and general misuse. Furthermore, past and present tense was used rather loosely.

For example:

Those men about the well all be peasants.

I were walking down the road. (This can mean either, "I am walking down the road" or "I was walking down the road".)

The 'ed', sort of like the id, but not.

To make a word past tense, Elizabethans added "ed" just like we do today. They also changed the spelling of words to indicate past tense (instead of speak, you can use "spoke" or "spake" - as in, "He spake a great deal last e'en about his flock.")

The "ed" was often fully pronounced, instead of today's modern convention of tacking a quick "d" sound at the end of a word. So *walked* sounds like *walk-ed*.

When one is not enough.

Aside from adding an "s" to the end of a word to make it plural, Elizabethans added "n". This was a hold over from earlier Old English. So *house* could be either *housen* or *houses*. You may recognize some words we still

When it's more better, don't not do it!

A superlative is a word that expresses degrees... for example, when something is more or less than something else. We're taught early on that things can't be "more better", which is an example of a *double superlative*. A negative is a word that the dictionary unhelpfully defines as "expressing, containing, or consisting of a negation" - however I think we all know what one is. We also know we're not supposed to double them up, turning them into the dreaded *double negative*.

Elizabethans, however, had no fear of doubling either the superlative or the negative, especially if they were lower class.

Ergo, we get to say all those gems our school teacher taught out of us:

That goose girl does not have no sense.

*I did not want me no soup.
His singing were more better than thine!
The most smallest pig has the most biggest ears.*

Contractions

Contractions come about when you mash two words together with a little apostrophe and get a whole new, if shorter, word. *Don't, won't, can't, isn't*, all contractions. They were used in the day of Good Queen Bess, but not nearly as commonly as they are today. Those I already listed should generally be avoided, along with *ain't, aren't*, or the like. Rather, say both words, *do not, will not, can not, is not*, etc.

There were some contractions that were common though, and you should spice your language up with them. Generally, if there's an *it* before a word, you can drop the *I* and scrunch the *t* in with the other word. *'Tis* for *it is*, *'twas* for *it were*, *'twere* for *it were*, etc.

Some contractions were less a mashing of words and more a dropping of them... For instance, instead of *I will go to bed soon*, try *I will to bed soon*, or instead of *I'll have none of that*, try *I'll none of that*.

O' the matter of of

Ever wonder where we got that silly little o in front of the word *o'clock*? Ok, perhaps not, but it came from the old convention of dropping the F from the word *of*. For example, *It were one o' the clock*, demonstrates the longer form *o'clock*. *It were bread made o' barley* is another example.

Yoda, oh Yoda

The great character Yoda was not entirely original in his funny speech patterns. Elizabethans also mixed their syntax around, so you finally have an opportunity to talk like Yoda in public (in case you weren't already)!

For example:

Instead of *He is a difficult nave, most true*, try *A most difficult nave he were, in sooth!*

Instead of *I will go to the tavern anon*, try *Anon, to the tavern I will get me*.

This word, that word, what's the difference?

Why must a verb always be a verb? Or an adjective an adjective? Elizabethans certainly didn't feel that a word must be banished to one *type*.

When a noun can be a verb:

*Do **guest** your friends and **feast** them heartily.*

When a noun is an adjective:

*That **cow** woman applied her **stampede** tongue most viciously.*

When an adjective is a verb:

***Fierce** me not so readily, I beg you **gentle** me instead.*

When an adjective is an adverb:

***Sudden** do you **sneak** upon me, **ready** with harsh words.*

Go ahead and listen to yourself talk

Never use one word when five will do! Since the primetime TV lineup during Elizabeth's reign was even worse than it is today, the people used their words as entertainment. Language was a thing to wound, to cheer, to woo, to vent, and wherever possible you should embellish your speech with exuberance.

Instead of:

I was walking down the road.

Try:

Yea it were true, down the road I did walk me well, upon my two feets most ready for the task.

Instead of:

You have a pretty mouth.

Try:

Upon thine visage I see a coral blush so fine, as a rose before the bloom, seated daintly above thine chin and below such a divinely sculpted nose as e'en to turn an angel green about the face and neck.

Instead of:

Hand me my bag, quick.

Try:

Do you not see that satchel o'er yon upon that fine stout table? Do but hand it this way, as I were needin' it upon my person. After all a lass must ha'e her things about her lest she find herself wantin'. Get to it, you lay about excuse for a man, I do ha'e me most urgent and important things to apply my considerable value upon. Why, my verbosity alone is surely now being missed in some place, in some how.

Thou isn't just misspelling though

If you've ever tried learning a Romance language, you've probably come across formal and informal versions of *you*, *your*, *us*, etc. One would never address a married French woman as *mademoiselle* (meaning young girl, or young woman), nor a young girl as *madame* (meaning mature woman, not just in age) in polite conversation. French, like the rest of the Romance languages, have formal and informal versions of *you*, *your*, etc. By purposely misusing the formal or informal version, you could flatter or insult (referring to someone of slightly higher class with the informal version implies that they are low, and that you may see them as lower status than you... them's fightin' words...)

English used to have formal and informal versions too, but somewhere along the way we narrowed it down to just one. Hollywood would have us think that saying *thee* and *thou* was the old and only way of speaking, even the royal way of speaking, but that's just not the case. In Good Queen Bess's time, *thou* was informal, and *you* was formal. Read on, gentle readers, for an explanation.

The formal version in English is *you*. This was used to address people of higher social status, strangers, or people you wanted to flatter (by implying they had higher status than

you). If one were a peasant, one would use *you* when addressing someone of middle or upper class. If one were middle class, one would use *you* when dealing with nobles. One would use *you* when addressing one's boss. Horses are also addressed with *you* since they are such noble creatures.

The informal version in English is *thou*. This was for your friends or family, or your social inferiors. When one addresses their brother or best friend, one says *thou*. When one is a noble addressing a peasant, one says *thou*. When one addresses an animal that is not a horse, one says *thou*.

There are two schools of thought on how to use *you* and *thou* since we have an audience. The kind patrons of our event really expect us to say *thou* across the board... but history dictates that we use *your* sometimes... How do you handle that? Some lean towards using *thou* in most situations because as much as we are here to breath life into history, we are also here to entertain. It is up to you, and your best judgment, on how to handle it.

So how do you use *thee* and *thou*?

Oh, it's so easy, gentle readers.

If the person is the subject of a sentence (it's all about them!), use *thou*:
Thou art a swine and a rogue! What dost thou want?

If the person is the object, and *thee* receives or modifies or modifies the action:
I would sit with thee and spake. Whence I have received from thee the papers, I shall be ready to move on.

It's not yours, it's MINE, ALL MINE!!!

Thy and *thine* are the possessive forms of the informal *thee* or *thou*. *Thee* and *thine* mean the same thing - you use *thine* before a word that starts with a vowel (just like *a* and *an* - *a car*, *an elephant*).

For example:

Thine elegant speech is most pleasing.

Thy cat were a most corpulent creature, barreled about middle.

My and *mine* are used the same way; in front of a vowel use *mine*, otherwise *my*.

For example:

Mine excellent judgment suggests thy face could be improved by the application of my fist.

Possessive form of you (*your*) stays the same.

When is *st* not a street?

No, not a saint, I'll get to those later. *St* is a verb ending. When using *thee* and *thou*, you should alter you verbs just a bit. We do the same thing in our modern tongue... In the sentence, "He goes that way," the verb is *go*, but it becomes *goes*. The Elizabethan way of speech alters its verbs similarly, though it uses different endings.

When one uses *thou* with, for example, the verbs *talk*, *eat*, *love*:

thou talkest, thou eatest, though lovest

When one uses *he, she, it, we, or they*, verbs can end in *-th*:

we talketh, we eateth, we loveth

These can seem hard... start slow with them. The *thou* verb forms are generally easier... start with those and work up.

When you love to hate, and hate to love

Boy did Elizabethans love language. When insulting or wooing, the more flowery and extravagant the phrases the better...

In the realm of cursing and insults, our modern speech offers a disappointingly narrow - and theatrically inappropriate - set of words. Fortunately, Elizabethans were not satisfied by a short list of four letter verbiage to express their discontent. They utilized every juicy word they could get their little hands on...

Thou art a swollen and a festering nave, dim of wit and slow of tongue!

Sirrah, your deficiency of even the commonest of sense is only outweighed by your lack of good taste in all things aesthetic.

One technique used in the formation of insults uses the power of three... two adjectives and a noun. What on earth am I talking about you might say?

Try:

Thou...

frothy dog-eared doorknob.

sucking vapid harpy.

mindless lack-luster cow-patty.

Some great techniques to use are repetition (*Thou art a dim witted, slow, mindless lay-about!*) and alliteration (*Thou art a backless, buck-tooth, beardless little boy!*).

Swearing isn't just for Christmas any more

Today we often say *swearing* to mean *cursing*, but in this case we're talking about *oaths*. As in, "As God is my witness, I will never starve again!", or "By the power of Grayskull!"

Elizabethans called upon higher powers to give emphasis to statements or assertions. There are all sorts of things they swore upon, including things of a religious nature, classical literary references, and more. Men swore more than women, and when women swore they tended to be more genteel and avoid religious themes.

God's wounds! S'wounds!

God's little toe!

God's teeth! S'teeth!

By my faith!

By my honor!

By my plough!

Saints!

If you've been reading this packet through, you may remember a note about saints and getting to them later. And now we're there! Though England was technically protestant at this point, there were still a few conventions held over from being Catholic. One of those things was swearing upon saints... if you know your saints, and what each stood for, you can call on them in the realm of their expertise to lend your words weight. If you don't know your saints, there are many great references - essentially saint's dictionaries - available.

Sweet, sweet words

Like insults, words of flattery were heavily embellished. They compared their subject with many great and divine things, exaggerated their charms. One might flatter a mature woman by commenting on how young and fair she was, or a small man by referencing how strong and vibrant he was. When you're in a comic situation, never underestimate the power of the wildly out of place compliment - if someone is being small minded, compliment them on how wise they are.

Instead of:

Thou art a good cook.

Try:

Thy culinary skills are both boundless and artful, each dish like unto art in flavor and presentation and a treat for both eye and tongue!

Instead of:

I think I do like thee.

Try:

Thou art my muse, inspiration for mine every breath and bringer of laughter and song unto mine heart, an angel fair gracing me with the divine light of the heavens.

Endearing Qualities

Well, endearing words anyway. Elizabethans did not use words like *honey*, *babe*, *sugar pie* for their near and dear. Instead they used words like:

my dearest

my darling

sweetin'

sweetheart

sweetest