

Here at Reach Cambridge, we are keen that students not only explore Cambridge, but experience some of the other excellent places that the UK has to offer. All of our students visited Stratford-upon-Avon today, before splitting into two groups - one went to Warwick Castle, one to see a performance of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* by the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Stratford-upon-Avon is where William Shakespeare (also called 'the Bard of Avon') grew up. The city is really quaint, with historic buildings still intact but housing modern shops so that the narrow streets remain very beautiful. It's not hard to picture arguably the world's most famous poet being inspired by Stratford, and the trip is an amazing chance to visit both the house where he was born and the church where he was buried. What better setting to actually watch one of Shakespeare's plays? The RSC are the leading company performing the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, and it was really interesting to see their stripped-back interpretation of *The Merchant of Venice*.

The rest of the students went to Warwick Castle, a medieval castle with history dating all the way back to William the Conqueror and 1068. With a chance to explore the towers, turrets and trebuchets of the castle, along with its beautiful grounds and birds of prey show, the time flew by.

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