**Geoffrey Trease**

**Author**

**Cue for Treason**

**Who is Geoffrey Trease?**

1. **His Life**

Geoffrey Trease was born on August 11, 1909 in Nottingham, England and died on January 27, 1998 in Bath, England.

He was educated at Nottingham High School and Queen’s College, Oxford. Trease later worked as a schoolmaster, a social worker in London slums, and as a journalist and free-lance author.

His family were wine merchants, but from an early age he decided to become a writer.

In 1933, Geoffrey married Marian Boyer and they had one daughter, Jocelyne.

1. **His Life as a Writer**

Trease was known as a prolific British writer who published 113 books, mainly for children between 1934 and 1997. He is known for writing children’s historical novels whose content reflects his insistence on historically correct backgrounds, which he meticulously researched. Through exciting plots, strong characters (female as well as male), and meticulous attention to detail, he introduced his readers to a historical event or period, enabling them to absorb history effortlessly. His sense of fairness and belief in equality for all is a theme explored in many of his books and within their historical settings; the discerning reader will recognize many parallels with contemporary issues.

His works have been translated into 20 languages.

Geoffrey Trease is best known for his children’s novel, Cue for Treason (1940). The novel, Cue for Treason, is the story of a young Cumberland lad’s stirring adventures in the closing years of the sixteenth century, when a Spanish “Fifth Column” was plotting against Queen Elizabeth.

Geoffrey Trease wrote novels until the age of 88 when he finally “decided to call it a day” due to illness.

**Cue for Treason**

**By Geoffrey Trease**

The historical novel, Cue for Treason, was written by Geoffrey Trease. It takes place in Elizabethan England: mostly in Cumberland and the city of London, England.

The novel is based partly on historical facts, but the story remains fictitious. The author describes the characters (many that actually lived) and the setting of the Elizabethan England in the late 1500’s. The reader is introduced to many important characters such as William Shakespeare and Queen Elizabeth.

Geoffrey Trease describes the lifestyle of actors during Shakespeare’s years as a playwright. Throughout the narrative, Peter (main character) will describe sections of England, and the people he encounters.

**Define the following terms**:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cue** |  |
| **Treason** |  |
| **Elizabethan Era** |  |

**Cue for Treason**

**Information of the 16th Century**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **William Shakespeare** | Born in Stratford upon Avon  Playwright |
| **Elizabethan Theatre** | Had a trapped door in the floor known as “hell” and in the balconies above, galleries were known as the “heavens”. |
| **Sir Francis Bacon** | A writer, a lawyer, a member of parliament, a solicitor general who was accused of accepting bribes. |
| **Christopher Marlowe** | His writings influenced Shakespeare. His adventurous life included an involvement in the Secret Service. |
| **Benjamin Jonson** | An actor and playwright who befriended Shakespeare. |
| **James Burbage** | Actor who built many theatres. |
| **Richard Burbage** | Son of James Burbage. A fine actor and artist. |
| **Queen Elizabeth I** | “The Good Queen” – daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. She tried to correct all that was wrong with England when her sister Queen Mary (Bloody Mary) ruled the country. |
| **Sir Walter Raleigh** | Explorer and one of the Queen’s favorite writers. He joined his brother on a voyage of discovery and piracy to America. |
| **Lord Chamberlain’s Men** | Name of a theatrical group of actors. Came to an end when many of its members died of the plague. |
| **Tower of London** | Where the crown jewels are kept and where prisoners were tortured and beheaded. |
| **Canadian Event of the 16th Century** | Jacques Cartier discovers Canada in 1534. |
| **Gunpowder Plot** | Unhappy with the way the government treated Catholics, Guy Fawkes planned to blow up the parliament house. His attempt failed. |
| **London Bridge** | The new version was built to replace an older one made of wood, where many homes were constructed on it. |
| **London** | City built around the Thames River. It has many bridges and is home to the Royal Family. |
| **Three Major Events of the 16th Century** | Jacques Cartier discovers America  Leewenhoek invents a rudimentary miscroscope  The Spaniards sail around the world |
| **Poor Laws** | Parishes were authorized by the government to make workplaces provide work to poor people for adequate pay. Able-bodied persons who preferred begging or thieving were whipped or sent to the galleys (they had to row ships, like slaves) |
| **Legal punishment in the 16th Century** | Very cruel ways to punish people existed: whipping for begging, hanging or hand cut off for stealing and beheaded for treason. |
| **Spanish Armada** | As many as 130 armed Spanish ships attempted to invade England in 1588. They were defeated. |
| **Globe Theatre** | Octagonal-shaped theatre with a grass covered roof. Seating for up to 3000 people. |
| **Labour Laws** | Queen Elizabeth I changed English society from one of poverty to one of prosperity. She established laws specifying the hours of work, the fair wages that should be paid to workers and where employment was to be found. |



**Cue for Treason**

**Character Study**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Kit Kirkstone** | * Spirited girl * Ran away from home and her guardian * Helps Peter solve the conspiracy * Good actress * Disguises herself as a boy |
| **Peter Brownrigg** | * Runs away from home because of trouble with the authorities * Wants to be an actor * Works for the Queen * Solves the conspiracy * Acts as a superhero |
| **William Shakespeare** | * Excellent playwright, but bad actor * Helps Peter and Kit – gives them a job * Observant, kind, and compassionate |
| **Mr. Brownrigg** | * Hardworking farm woman * Protective of her children * Not realistic of the outside world |
| **Sir Phillip Morton** | * Head of the conspirators * Peter and Kit’s enemy * Was to marry Kit for her estate * Antagonist * Selfish and powerful |
| **John Somers** | * Bitter actor * Was hired to kill the Queen * Part of Shakespeare’s company * Plays small parts |
| **Sir Robert Cecil** | * Quiet, thrifty * Hunchback * Head of Secret Service |
| **Sir Joseph Williams** | * One of the Queen’s counselors * Comes from Cumberland |
| **Sir David Vicars** | * The yellow gentleman * In on the plot of treason |
| **Sir Francis Bacon** | * Works for the Secret Service * Deciphers the code |
| **Tom Boyd** | * Spy with the Secret Service * Went back to Cumberland with Peter and Kit to check out the theory of Peel Tower |
| **Mr. Desmond** | * Kind, and well-respected * Touring company director * Takes in Peter and Kit, helps them start their acting careers |





