If you are familiar with the works of John Florio, his translation of Montaigne's essays for example, it is hard to resist the notion that he and Shakespeare must have been close friends because his style, ideas and language leap from the pages of Shakespeare's early plays in multitude. Literary evidence aside, I aim to show here that the historical record and contemporary writings confirm this relationship. Florio is the flamboyant Italian character 'Gullio' of the famous comedy sketch produced by Cambridge students in the early 1600s, "The News from Parnassus, Part Two" in which he cries "sweet Mr. Shakespeare, I will have his picture in my study at Court".

John Florio Was he Shakespeares first and most important collaborator (543.23 kB)