

# -ROMEO AND JULIET-

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## Writing:

Write down what you already know about Romeo and Juliet. Share with others.

P.6 – 8

## Discussion:

What do you think Ben Jonson means when he says that Shakespeare's plays would prove to be "not of an age, but for all time"?

Think of a movie to fit each of the different genres mentioned:

- thriller
- comedy
- love story
- fantasy
- romantic comedy
- horror

Name any movies or books you can think of which have similar themes to Romeo and Juliet:

- family relationships
- loyalty
- hate
- love
- life
- death

Discussion:



What is a prologue?

Why do you think Shakespeare thought it was necessary to have one?

Do you prefer to know the final outcome before reading a book or watching a film? Explain why/why not?

'*Star-crossed lovers*' is how Romeo and Juliet are referred to in the Prologue. How do you interpret these words?

Where do I stand?

True/false: *our fate is predetermined.*

Make a line with string along the floor. Those who think we have no power over what happens to us stand to the right side, those who think that we determine our own fate by the choices we make, stand to the left. If you are unsure, stand at a point between the two that best reflects your opinion.

Discuss your viewpoints and re-evaluate your position if necessary, explaining why you have altered your opinion.

## Reading:

Practise reading the Prologue aloud. Try using different types of voices for dramatic effect.

### Prologue

*Two households, both alike in dignity,  
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,  
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.  
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life;  
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows  
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.  
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,  
And the continuance of their parents' rage,  
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,  
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;  
The which if you with patient ears attend,  
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.*

Compare the Prologue with the authors' summary. Are all the relevant facts in the summary? Who does the artist depict speaking the words? Why do you think the authors directed that this figure should appear in the illustration? As you read the tale, count how many times the figure appears.

P.14 – 15



Why do you think people start fights?

Why do they start fighting in this particular scenario?

Blame game: who is largely to blame for this altercation? Give reasons for your opinion.

**P:16**

What does the dialogue between Lord Capulet and his wife, and Lord Montague and his wife suggest to you?

**Writing:**

Create thought bubbles for the two ladies.

**P:17**

**Discussion:**

Why do you think Lord Escalus decides to see the two warring lords separately?

True/False: some crimes warrant a death penalty. Support your opinion with reasons and examples.

**P:18 – 20**



Word power: collect words and phrases that sum up Romeo's character and behaviour when he is first introduced to us. Create a thirty-word summary.

What foreshadowing techniques does the artist use?

## P.21

### Discussion:

What impression do you form of Lord Capulet's relationship with his daughter?

True/false: support your opinions with reasons.

- Juliet is too young to fall in love.
- Families should be involved in making decisions about marriage.

## P.22 – 23

### Discussion:

What can you infer about the Capulet master/servant relationship?

Why is it important to be able to read?

What important aspects of the modern world require literacy?

### Writing:

Create a diary entry for Benvolio, showing his thoughts about Romeo's behaviour.

### Drama:

Decision Alley: should Romeo attend the party?

Select someone to play Romeo. Divide in to two lines, facing each other. One side is going to advocate attending the party, giving reasons, the other side is going to give reasons for not attending. When he comes to the end of the line, Romeo must announce his decision and the reasons he has for reaching this.

## P.24 – 25

### Discussion:

What can you infer from this scene about the characters and relationships between the three women and their attitudes to marriage?

What are the different attitudes to marriage in our society? Consider how different cultures regard marriage.

## P.26

### Discussion:

What dramatic purpose do Benvolio's doubts serve?

## Drama:

In small groups freeze frame the moment when Romeo first sees Juliet and Tybalt recognises Romeo. Thought tap to find out the workings of their minds at this point.



## Discussion:

Why do you think Tybalt is so enraged, yet Lord Capulet is willing to overlook Romeo's presence?

## P.28 – 29

Why do you think Romeo and Juliet use religious imagery at their first meeting?

## Writing:

Create a thought bubble for Juliet's nurse at this point in the scene.

Create rhyming couplets to capture Romeo's feelings for Juliet. You could focus on her different features and use similes or metaphors. Think about the rhythm.

## P.30

## Reading:

An **oxymoron** is a figure of speech that combines two contradictory terms. Find examples of this. Try to create some of your own: e.g. '*friendly fire*.'

## P.32

Read Romeo's famous words aloud several times, using different tones and varying the volume. What imagery does Romeo use to show his feelings for Juliet? Compare these lines with the words in the graphic representation. Do the authors succeed in summarising Romeo's thoughts succinctly?

Act 2 Scene 2

ROMEO

(JULIET appears above at a window)

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,  
Who is already sick and pale with grief,  
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:  
Be not her maid, since she is envious;  
Her vestal livery is but sick and green  
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.  
It is my lady, O, it is my love!  
O, that she knew she were!

### P.33

#### Discussion:

What's in a name?

Are names important?

Can names be dangerous?

What does Juliet mean by '*Lose your name, Romeo, and I'll be yours!*'?

#### Reading:

Read Juliet's famous words aloud several times, using different tones and varying the volume. What imagery does Juliet use to show her feelings for Romeo? Compare these lines with the words in the graphic representation. Do the authors succeed in summarising Juliet's thoughts succinctly?

Act 2 Scene 22

JULIET

O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father and refuse thy name;

Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,

And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROMEO [Aside]

Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

JULIET

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;

Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.

What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,

Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part

Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!  
What's in a name? that which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet;  
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes  
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,  
And for that name which is no part of thee  
Take all myself.

### Writing:

*What's in a name?*

Create a word bank of words relating to naming.

E.g.: *recognition, identity, culture, family, history, power, judgement, community, position, assumption, categorisation, prejudice, pride, connections, favour, prestige, belief, snobbery, acceptance*

Brainstorm some ideas and write a piece of poetry or prose, titled *What's in a name?* It could relate to people, plants, animals, countries, sects, products, organisations, alliances. Think about the message you want to convey and how to end with a strong final line.

P.36 – 37



### Discussion:

True/false: there is no such thing as *love at first sight*.

Find the oxymoron used by Juliet. What does she mean?

### P.38 – 39

#### **Writing:**

Create a word shower of adjectives and phrases that could be used to describe Romeo and then write a short description of him: #Romeo.

#### **Discussion:**

What is your opinion of Father Lawrence's reasoning?

Why do you think the artist chose to depict Romeo stumbling over?

### P.40 – 41

#### **Discussion:**

Why would Romeo accept a challenge to a duel, if he knows that Tybalt is the superior swordsman?

Mercutio envisions Romeo's death. How does this propel the plot?

### P.42 – 44

#### **Writing:**

Create a word shower of adjectives and phrases to describe Juliet's nurse? Write a short description of the nurse.

#### **Discussion:**

What do the attitudes of the men towards the nurse reveal about their characters?

Why do you think Shakespeare chose to include this comic interlude?

#### **Drama:**

In small groups, allocate the parts of the nurse, Peter, and the young men. Replay the scene as it is. Then think about how the balance could be changed with different responses from the characters and try acting this out. Is the effect still comic?

### P.44 – 45

#### **Discussion:**

How do you think Romeo feels at the news of another prospective suitor for Juliet?

Think about how age and youth have been portrayed through the different characters so far. How has this been presented to the audience?

P.46 – 47

**Drama:**

In pairs, act out the scene between Juliet and her nurse. Think about tone, speed and volume of delivery.

**Discussion:**

What turning points can you think of in a person's life when they '*meet their future*'?

**ACT 3**

**Discussion:**

What signs of foreshadowing are there at the beginning of this act?

Do you think temperature has an effect on temper?

**Writing:**

Find synonyms for temper, anger, heat. Create a descriptive piece of poetry or prose on '*Heat*,' using it as a metaphor for temper.

P.48 – 49

**Discussion:**

What further signs of foreshadowing are there in the scene with Father Lawrence?

P.52 – 53

**Discussion:**

True/false: '*Backing down is not good.*'



**Reasoning:**

Look at the following factors leading to the fight, add any more you can think of, and place in order of most impact:

- ancient quarrel
- prejudice
- inability to compromise
- youthful over-confidence
- arrogance
- pride
- carrying arms
- tribalism
- high temperatures
- vengeance
- inability to empathise
- sense of status
- lack of respect

**Discussion:**

Is Mercutio's curse fair?

What is *dark humour*? Can you find an example of it?

**P.54 – 55****Discussion:**

True/false: love can make you weak.

**P.56 – 57****Discussion:**

What do you think of Prince Escalus's decision regarding the fate of Romeo?

What problems may arise when trying to judge who is to blame in a given situation?

**P.58 – 60****Writing:**

Create a diagram to show how Juliet's understanding of what has occurred evolves and how she responds.

### Drama:

In pairs, hotseat the nurse, preparing your possible questions/ answers thoroughly beforehand.

### P.61 – 63

What do you think of Romeo's response to Father Lawrence's offer of help?

Why do you think Father Lawrence uses repetition when talking to Romeo?

Find out the distance between Mantua and Verona. What is your opinion of Father Lawrence's plan?

### P.64 – 65

What is your opinion of Lord Capulet's marriage arrangement for Juliet? How and why has his attitude changed?

### P.66

### Reading:

In pairs, read through the passage from Shakespeare, underlining any words or phrases which you find difficult. Re-read and try to work out what they might mean. Then read the same scene in the graphic classic and discuss the choices the authors have made in what they have included in their retelling:

*Act 3:5*

*Enter ROMEO and JULIET above, at the window*

*JULIET*

*Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:*

*It was the nightingale, and not the lark,*

*That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;*

*Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree:*

*Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.*

*ROMEO*

*It was the lark, the herald of the morn,*

*No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks*

*Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:*

*Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day*

*Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.*

*I must be gone and live, or stay and die.*

JULIET

*Yon light is not day-light, I know it, I:  
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,  
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,  
And light thee on thy way to Mantua:  
Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.*

P.67 – 69



**Discussion:**

What can you infer about Lady Capulet from what she says to Juliet? Does the artist's interpretation influence your opinion?

**Drama:**

Freeze frame the scene between the three women and thought tap the different characters to get an insight into how they are feeling.

**Writing:**

Note down the nurse's opinions regarding Juliet and her relationships from the beginning of the play. What do you think motivates her?

## **ACT 4**

P.70 – 73

### **Discussion:**

What opinion have you formed of Paris?

What has the artist done throughout this scene and what effect does it have on your reading of the tale?

Create thought bubbles for Father Lawrence throughout this scene.

Useful to have these cells with thought bubbles added, if possible.

### **Drama:**

Decision Alley

Select someone to play Juliet. Divide in to two lines, facing each other. One side is going to advocate taking the poison, giving reasons, the other side is going to give reasons for not taking it. When she comes to the end of the line, Juliet must announce her decision and the reasons she has for reaching this.

P.75

### **Discussion:**

Brave or foolish: what is your opinion of Juliet?

P.76 – 77

### **Writing:**

Death of a loved one can cause you to re-evaluate what is important in life.

List the characters affected by Juliet's 'death'. Who do you think will suffer the most and why?

## **ACT 5**

P.78 – 80

### **Discussion:**

How have Father Lawrence's plans gone awry?

### **Reading and writing:**

Romeo is convinced the apothecary (chemist) will sell him poison, although it is against the law.

Closely read the following description from Shakespeare, and note the details in the description:

Act 5:1

ROMEO

*I do remember an apothecary,  
-- And hereabouts he dwells,--which late I noted  
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,  
Culling of simples; meagre were his looks,  
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:  
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,  
An alligator stuff'd, and other skins  
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves  
A beggarly account of empty boxes,  
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,  
Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,  
Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.  
Noting this penury, to myself I said  
'An if a man did need a poison now,  
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,  
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.'*

I remember ...

Appearance of person:  
features and clothes.

Descriptive list of contents  
of the setting, with careful  
use of adjectives.

Use different sentence  
starters.

Your reaction/assessment of  
the person.

Think of a person and setting - they could be real or imaginary - and write a description to convey a sense of the person and place. Remember that building up vivid detail will have more impact on the reader. You could use the suggestions above to structure your writing.

P.82 – 83

Discussion:

What might have averted the fight of Romeo and Paris at this point in the play?



P.84 – 85

**Discussion:**

Which words are ironic, given all that we know of the situation?

P.86 – 87

**Writing:**

List the names of the people whose lives Father Lawrence has affected.

What effect has Father Lawrence's 'help' had?

P.88 – 89

Romeo and Juliet die by different methods. Which do you think required the greater courage, and why?

P.91 – 95

**Discussion:**

What is notable about Lady Capulet's response on finding Juliet dead for a second time?

Do you think people can die of a broken heart?

**Drama:**

Trial by jury

Select different people to play Father Lawrence, the nurse, Balthasar, Lord and Lady Capulet and Lord and Lady Montague and the remaining people can form judge and jury.

Interrogate the different characters and consider their degree of guilt or innocence.

Consider whether 'intent' is relevant in coming to a conclusion about how/if they should be punished?

P.96 – 97

**Writing:**

Write the letter from Romeo to his father, explaining his actions.

What makes the tale of Romeo and Juliet so poignant?

**Postscript:**

Diamante poem.

Choose abstract and opposite nouns, such as *youth* and *age*, *hatred* and *love* relating to the themes in the play and follow the instructions to create your own poem.

Because a diamante poem is diamond-like in form, it must begin and end with single words that form the top and bottom.

- Line one: Noun
- Line two: Two adjectives that describe the noun in line one
- Line three: Three verbs that end with “ing” and describe the noun in line one
- Line four: Four nouns—the first two must relate to the noun in line one and the second two will relate to the noun in line seven
- Line five: Three verbs that end with “ing” and describe the noun in line seven
- Line six: Two adjectives that describe the noun in line seven
- Line seven: Noun that is opposite in meaning to line one (antonym diamante) or the same in meaning (synonym diamante) as the noun in line one

### **Drama:**

In small groups, decide on key points in the story and retell the story in five tableau images for a social media platform.

### **Writing:**

Mini-saga challenge

Create a mini saga summarising the plot of *Romeo and Juliet*. The title can contain up to fifteen words and the body of the text has to be fifty words exactly.

Check your summary against the one by the authors on Page 98 and see if you have missed any important points.

### **Discussion:**

The big questions:

Is it ever acceptable to be dishonest?

Is holding a grudge justifiable?

### **Writing:**

Cause and Effect

Devise a backstory leading to the feud between the Montagues and Capulets.

### **Question setting:**

Divide into small groups using an allocated section at the end of the book:

- William Shakespeare – The thief!
- Themes in *Romeo and Juliet*

- Shakespeare's language
- Fun Facts
- Shakespeare's timeline

Re-read several times so that you can devise five thought-provoking questions that you quiz each other on.

### Discussion:

How do you think the authors, who were not the illustrators, conveyed their vision to the artist?

Look at an extract of their script alongside the finished pages. They use abbreviations: AW and C/U in their directions. What do you think these might stand for?

What do you notice when you compare the script with the finished book and the extract from Shakespeare when Juliet is about to drink from the vial of poison?

PAGE 75

SPREAD 32

### AW 75 -1

THOUGHT BUBBLE IMAGINING HERSELF LYING ON A MARBLE SLAB IN THE FAMILY VAULT... THE FIGURES OF DEATH AS A STATUE IS THERE OVERLOOKING THE TOMBS OF THE CAPULET FAMILY – TYBALT FRESHLY LAID OUT IS ALSO THERE...

### SPEECH BUBBLES

JULIET                      What if I wake up **before** Romeo gets to the **vault**?  
    There will be **ghosts** and **skeletons**!

### AW 75 -2

... AND NOW THE NIGHTMARE BEGINS... SKELETONS / GHOSTS SWIRL AROUND JULIET'S HEAD – SHOULD BE FRIGHTENING!

AND WE SEE TYBALT LOOKING TOWARDS JULIET WITH THE FIGURE OF DEATH STANDING BEHIND HIM...

### SPEECH BUBBLES

JULIET                      **Tybalt!** Looking for **Romeo!** Stay there, **ghost!**

AW 75 -3

JULIET HAS THE VIAL TO HER LIPS – A SMILING ROMEO IS IN HER THOUGHTS

THOUGHT BUBBLE

JULIET *Romeo! I drink to you!*

AW 75 -4

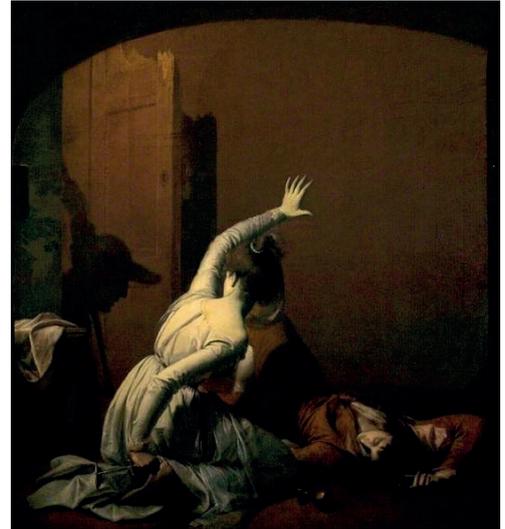
AND SHE LIES ON THE BED, SEEMINGLY DEAD, THE VIAL BY HER SIDE...

Act 4 Scene 1

JULIET

*O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,  
From off the battlements of yonder tower;  
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk  
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;  
Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,  
O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,  
With reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls;  
Or bid me go into a new-made grave  
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud;  
Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble;  
And I will do it without fear or doubt,  
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.*

## Discussion:



Look at the details in both balcony paintings. What similarities and differences are there? What is the mood in each painting?

Romeo and Juliet by Ford Madox Brown (1821-1893). The Whitworth, The University of Manchester edit: The Whitworth, The University of Manchester

Romeo and Juliet by Frank Bernard Dicksee (1858-1928). Southampton City Art Gallery

Romeo and Juliet by Joseph Wright of Derby (1734 – 1797). Derby Museums

Identify the scene in the play. How is this painting different from the others? What details do you notice? What is the mood of this painting?

## Discussion:

Why do you think Romeo and Juliet is one of Shakespeare's most popular plays?

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