

STUDY GUIDE

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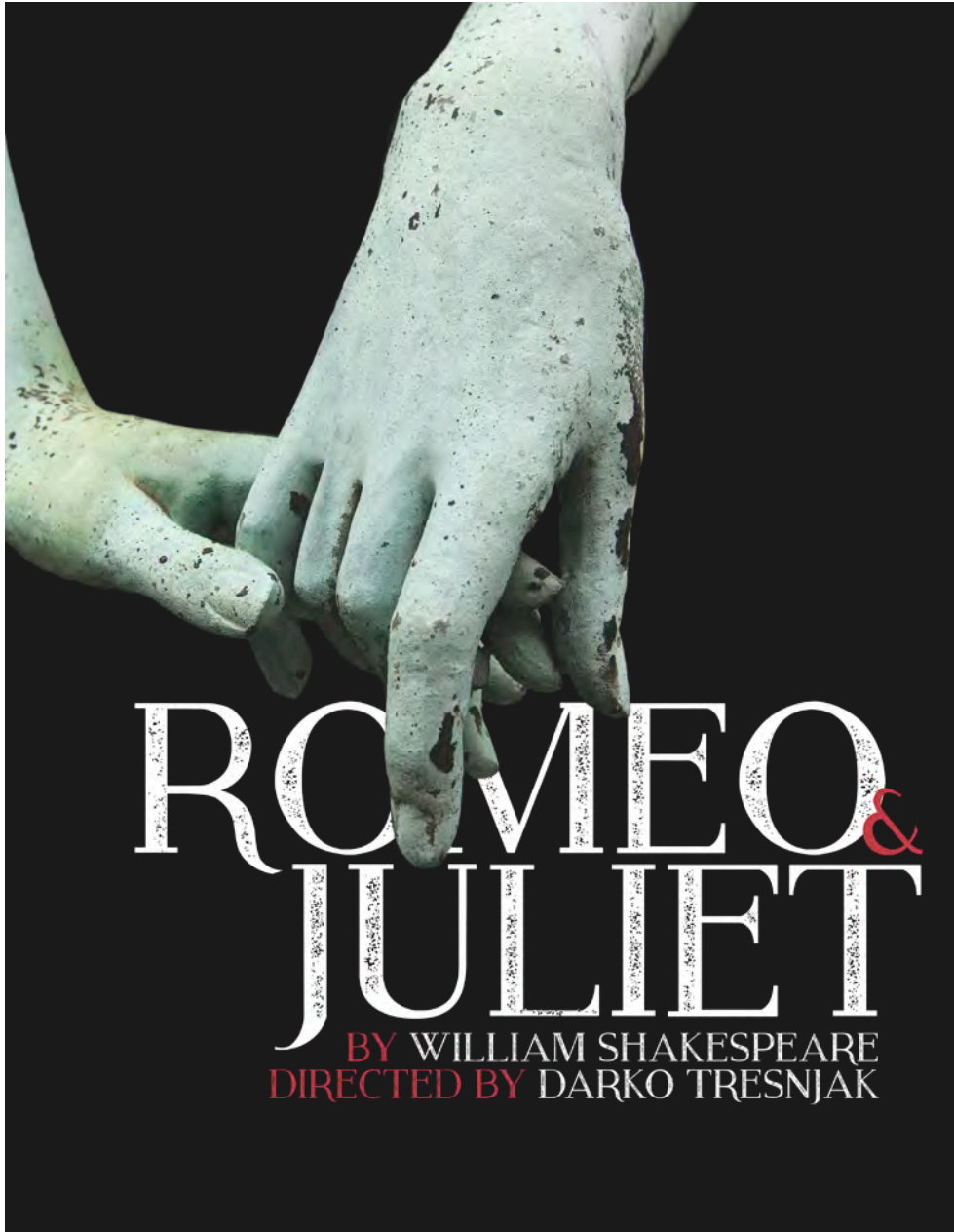
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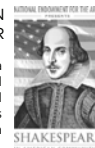
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STUDY GUIDE OBJECTIVES

This study guide serves as a classroom tool for teachers and students, and addresses the following Common Core Standards and Connecticut State Arts Standards:

Reading Literature: *Key Ideas and Details*

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (Grades 9-10).
- Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text (Grades 9-10).
- Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme (Grades 9-10).

Reading Literature: *Craft and Structure*

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors) (Grades 11-12).
- Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement) (Grades 11-12).

Reading Literature: *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare) (Grades 9-10).
- Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist) (Grades 11-12).

Theatre

- *5: Researching and Interpreting.* Students will research, evaluate, and apply cultural and historical information to make artistic choices.
- *6: Connections.* Students will make connections between theatre, other disciplines, and daily life.
- *7: Analysis, Criticism, and Meaning.* Students will analyze, critique, and construct meanings from works of theatre.

GUIDELINES FOR ATTENDING THE THEATRE

Attending live theatre is a unique experience with many valuable educational and social benefits. To ensure that all audience members are able to enjoy the performance, please take a few minutes to discuss the following audience etiquette topics with your students before you come to Hartford Stage.

- How is attending the theatre similar to and different from going to the movies? What behaviors are and are not appropriate when seeing a play? Why?
 - › Remind students that because the performance is live, the audience can affect what kind of performance the actors give. No two audiences are exactly the same and no two performances are exactly the same—this is part of what makes theatre so special! Students' behavior should reflect the level of performance they wish to see.
- Theatre should be an enjoyable experience for the audience. Audience members are more than welcome to applaud when appropriate and laugh at the funny moments. Talking and calling out during the performance, however, are not allowed. Why might this be?
 - › Be sure to mention that not only would the people seated around them be able to hear their conversation, but the actors on stage could hear them, too. Theatres are constructed to carry sound efficiently!
- Any noise or light can be a distraction, so please remind students to make sure their cell phones are turned off (or better yet, left at home or at school!). Texting, photography, and video recording are prohibited. Food and gum should not be taken into the theatre.
- Students should sit with their group as seated by the Front of House staff and should not leave their seats once the performance has begun. If possible, restrooms should be used only during intermission.

THE TWO HOURS TRAFFIC OF OUR STAGE

A Synopsis of *Romeo and Juliet*

By Krista DeVellis

In the town of Verona, Italy, there are two rival households: the Capulets and the Montagues. They have been fighting for years and the Prince is displeased by their quarrels. The play opens with a scuffle between members of both families, after which the Prince declares that anyone found fighting will be sentenced to death. Once this subsides, Lord and Lady Montague question Benvolio about why their son, Romeo, has been so moody lately. Benvolio, being a good friend, offers to find out why. He speaks with Romeo, who says that he is in love with a girl named Rosaline, who does not love him back.

At the Capulet house, Paris asks Capulet's permission to marry his daughter, Juliet. Lord Capulet likes Paris, but says Juliet is too young and tells him to wait to propose marriage. He offers that Paris should attend a party at the Capulet house that evening. Soon after, Lady Capulet and the Nurse encourage Juliet to consider Paris at the party.

Romeo and his friend Benvolio run into one of Capulet's servants and hear about the party. Benvolio says that they should crash the party in disguises, and that Romeo will see many other girls that are just as good as Rosaline. Romeo is unconvinced, but he goes nonetheless. At the party, Lord Capulet's nephew, Tybalt, recognizes them as Montagues and is enraged that they came uninvited. Capulet restrains Tybalt from breaking out a fight in his home, and tells him to ignore it. Romeo and Juliet meet at this party and fall head-over-heels in love. Romeo finds out that she is the daughter of Lord Capulet, and Juliet discovers that he is the son of Lord Montague.

After the party, Romeo slips away from his friends, climbs over a wall and finds himself under Juliet's balcony. The two confess their love and decide that despite their families' rivalry, they are going to marry in secret. The next day, Juliet enlists the help of her Nurse, who brings back word from Romeo that he's arranged everything with Friar Laurence for them to wed. Friar Laurence hopes that their union will eventually end the feud, and they are soon married.

The next day, Benvolio and Mercutio run into Tybalt, who is still mad at Romeo for crashing the Capulets' party. Romeo appears and Tybalt tries to fight him. Romeo claims that he will not fight Tybalt, and says that he loves Tybalt as family (though he does not mention his marriage to Juliet). This makes Tybalt even madder, and Mercutio ends up fighting him. Romeo tries to stop them both, which results in Tybalt killing Mercutio. Out of grief for his lost friend, Romeo slays Tybalt and flees. The Prince enters and declares that Romeo is banished from Verona, and if he is found in the city he will be killed.

The Nurse tells Juliet all of this, and Juliet is distraught to hear that her new husband is banished. Her parents think she is only upset about her cousin Tybalt's death, and arrange to have her marry Paris that very week to try to make her happy. When she declines the marriage, Lord Capulet is offended, and thinking it is the best thing for her, demands that she marry Paris. Juliet then seeks the advice of her Nurse, who encourages her to give up on Romeo and marry Paris. Juliet is appalled at her Nurse's suggestion that she pretend her marriage to Romeo never happened, and instead goes to Friar Laurence. They devise a plan to get Juliet to escape with Romeo. Juliet is to drink a sleeping potion that will make it look like she is dead. Friar Laurence writes to Romeo so that he can arrive at the Capulet's tomb just in time for Juliet to wake up, and they can escape together and start a new life. Juliet returns to her house, pretends that the wedding with Paris will go on the next day, and takes the potion that night. The Capulets awake to find that their daughter is dead, and use all of the flowers and food from the wedding for her funeral.



Not all goes according to plan, though, as Romeo never receives the letter from Friar Laurence explaining the plan. Romeo hears that Juliet has died, purchases a vial of poison for himself, and goes to her tomb. He and Paris both arrive at the same time to grieve, and they fight. Romeo kills Paris, then goes into the crypt to find Juliet, seemingly dead. He drinks the poison and lays down to die by her side. Juliet awakens to find Romeo dead, takes his dagger, and kills herself. Soon the watchman appears claiming to have heard a commotion. He is followed by the Prince, the Capulets, Lord Montague, Friar Laurence, and Benvolio. The truth of Romeo and Juliet's secret marriage is discovered, and upon seeing their children dead, side-by-side, Montague and Capulet agree to end the feud.

Monument for *Sonia Kaliensky*, who committed suicide in Venice in 1907, by artist Enrico Butti, in the orthodox section of the San Michele cemetery, Venice. Photo by Giovanni Dall'Orto.



Facsimile of the title page of *Romeo and Juliet* in the First Folio — the first Shakespeare play anthology, compiled by John Heminges and Henry Condell, 1623.

WHAT'S IN A NAME? Dramatis Personae

HOUSE OF ESCALUS

- **Prince Escalus:** Prince of Verona
- **Count Paris:** Cousin of Escalus
- **Mercutio:** Cousin of Escalus, close friend to Romeo
- **Page to Paris**

HOUSE OF CAPULET

- **Capulet:** Head of The House of Capulet
- **Lady Capulet:** Married to Capulet
- **Juliet:** Daughter of Capulet and Lady Capulet
- **Tybalt:** Cousin of Juliet
- **Nurse:** Juliet's nurse
- **Peter:** Servant to The House of Capulet
- **Gregory:** Servant to The House of Capulet
- **Sampson:** Servant to The House of Capulet
- **Anthony:** Servant to The House of Capulet
- **Potpan:** Servant to The House of Capulet during the feast



Lord Capulet. Costume design by Ilona Somogyi

HOUSE OF MONTAGUE

- **Montague:** Head of The House of Montague
- **Lady Montague:** Married to Montague
- **Romeo:** Son of Montague and Lady Montague
- **Benvolio:** Cousin of Romeo
- **Balthasar:** Romeo's servant
- **Abraham:** Servant to The House of Montague



Lord Montague. Costume design by Ilona Somogyi

THE PEOPLE OF VERONA

- **Friar Laurence:** a Franciscan friar or priest
- **Friar John:** another Franciscan friar of Laurence's order
- **Watchmen:** Guards of the churchyard cemetery
- **Citizens of Verona**

THE PEOPLE OF MANTUA

- **An Apothecary**

WHERE WE LAY OUR SCENE...



The island of San Michele, Venice, Italy. Photo by Tony Hisgett.

William Shakespeare set *Romeo and Juliet* in Verona, a city in northern Italy (see “The (True?) Story of Romeo and Juliet” on page 22). This Hartford Stage production draws influences from the Isola di San Michele, an island off the coast of Venice and about 70 miles west of Verona. The island has served as the cemetery for Venice since the early 1800s, when Napoleon chose to bury the dead outside of the city for sanitary reasons. There is a Catholic section, a Greek Orthodox section, and a Protestant section on the island. While some areas are well organized, such as those in columbariums—walls dedicated to holding the cremated remains of the dead—other areas are eerily decayed graveyards.

The dead are transported by water hearse or funeral gondola and the living visit the island to pay their respects, sometimes carrying colorful chrysanthemum flowers. The dead are only interred for 12 years, after which their skeletons are moved to ossuaries, or mass tombs, so room can be made for the newly dead. This setting begs the question, how do the living face life and find romance in a dead world?



A columbarium on the island of San Michele, Venice, Italy. Photo by Anton Nossik.

THE FEUD: A PLAGUE O' BOTH YOUR HOUSES

The feud between the Capulet and Montague families has been going on for so long, no one remembers how it started, yet everyone in Verona is affected by it. Here's what characters on all sides of the feud are saying about it. Can you put these quotes into your own words? For example:

TYBALT

What, drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word,
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:
Have at thee, coward!
(Act 1, scene 1)

Becomes...

"What? You draw your sword and then tell me about "peace"?!
I hate that word, "peace," as much as I hate hell, everyone who
is a Montague, and you! Let's go, you coward!

A **FEUD** is "a state of perpetual hostility between two families, tribes, or individuals, marked by murderous assaults in revenge for some previous insult or injury."

—Oxford English Dictionary

CHORUS

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-cross'd lovers take their life;
(Act 1, Prologue)

PRINCE

Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets
(Act 1, scene 1)

PARIS

Of honourable reckoning are you both;
And pity 'tis you lived at odds so long.
(Act 1, scene 2)

NURSE

His name is Romeo, and a Montague;
The only son of your great enemy.
(Act 1, scene 5)

JULIET

My only love sprung from my only hate!
(Act 1, scene 5)

FRIAR LAURENCE

For this alliance may so happy prove,
To turn your households' rancor to pure love.
(Act 2, scene 3)

BENVOLIO

The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,
And, if we meet, we shall not scape a brawl;
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.
(Act 3, scene 1)

TYBALT

Romeo, the hate I bear thee can afford
No better term than this,—thou art a villain.
(Act 3, scene 1)

PARIS

Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague!
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.
(Act 5, scene 3)

PRINCE

Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love.
And I for winking at your discords too
Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punish'd.
(Act 5, scene 3)

1400s-1600s

The Italian Renaissance brings an explosion of art, culture, and science to Europe. Artists of this time include Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, and Botticelli. Humanism, perspective in paintings, and Galileo's theory that the planets orbit the sun are all developed.

1494-1559

The Italian Wars are fought over the control of Italian states.

APRIL 23, 1564

William Shakespeare is born in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire.

WHO WAS WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE?

Biography by Aurelia Clunie

William Shakespeare was baptized on April 26, 1564, about three days after his birth. Born to John Shakespeare, a glovemaker, and Mary Arden Shakespeare, the daughter of a wealthy farmer, Shakespeare was the third of eight children. He was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon, a small town 100 miles northwest of London. Shakespeare's family was neither noble nor wealthy, so Shakespeare did not go to university, but many believe he received a foundation of Latin, some Greek, Greek mythology, history, and rhetoric at King's New School, the local grammar school. In 1582, at 18 years old, he married 26-year-old Anne Hathaway, who was pregnant with his child. They had their first child, Susanna, in 1583. In 1585, the couple had twins, Hamnet and Judith. In 1596, Hamnet, Shakespeare's only son, died at age 11.

Much of Shakespeare's life following his marriage and the birth of his children is unknown. Some call the next seven years the "lost years" (Shakespeare in American Communities). It was not until seven years later that evidence appears of Shakespeare's life in London. In a pamphlet entitled the "Groatsworth of Wit," university-educated poet Robert Greene attacked Shakespeare, calling him an "upstart crow" for his audacious writing style.

By 1592, Shakespeare was acting on and writing for London stages. His earliest plays, including *The Comedy of Errors* and *Henry VI*, had been produced. In 1593, he wrote two narrative poems: *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. It was likely during this period that he also began writing his 154 sonnets that survive to this day.

In 1594, Shakespeare joined and became a part owner of the acting company The Lord Chamberlain's Men, with whom he would act throughout his career. The Lord Chamberlain's Men was a popular company in London and would often play privately for Queen Elizabeth I's court, as well as for the masses in the public theatres. The Lord Chamberlain's Men performed at The Theatre, originally built in 1576 by James Burbage. When the lease was lost on the site, Shakespeare became part owner in the Globe, which was completed in 1599.

Between 1594 and 1595, Shakespeare wrote some of his most famous plays, including *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. By 1599, he had written *Julius Caesar*, *Henry V*, and *As You Like It*. In 1603, when King James succeeded Queen Elizabeth I, he gave the Lord Chamberlain's Men a "royal license" and they became the King's Men. Following this appointment, Shakespeare wrote *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. Shakespeare's sonnets were published either in 1609 or 1611.

By 1616, Shakespeare's health was failing and he had revised his will. He left most of his estate to his daughters, Susanna and Judith. Some money and items were also left for his sister, friends, theatre partners, and "the poor of Stratford" (Shakespeare in American Communities). However, his will states that he only left his "second best bed" to Anne, his wife. Shakespeare died on his birthday, April 23, in 1616. Although many of his plays had been published in small books called quartos during his lifetime, it was not until 1623 that two of Shakespeare's friends from the theatre, John Heminges and Henry Condell, gathered what remained of his plays and published the first book of his complete works, now called the First Folio. Shakespeare's contemporary, Ben Johnson, said of him in a poem of homage, "He was not of an age, but for all time!"

"Yes, trust them not, for there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his Tygers heart wrapt in a Players' hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you..."

—Robert Greene

1576

London creates its first permanent theatre, The Theatre, which forms a new appreciation for theatre in the city.

1582

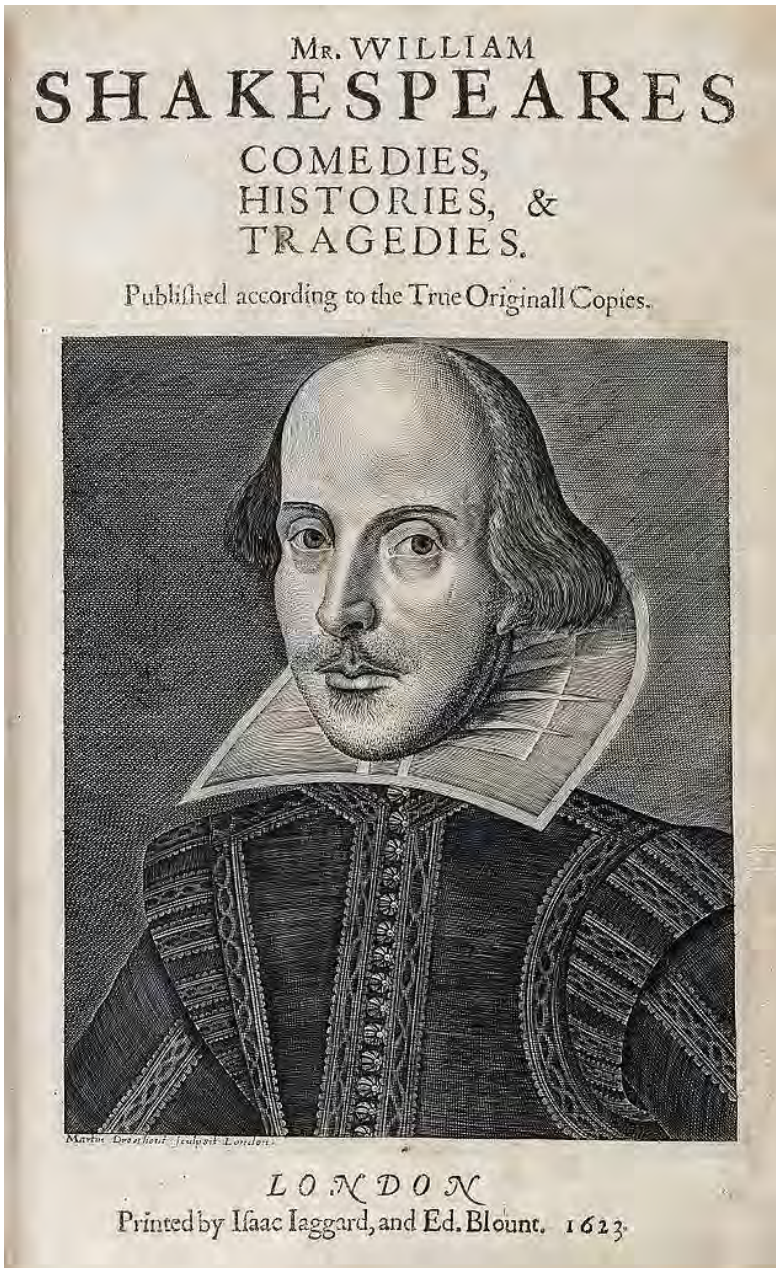
William Shakespeare, at 18 years old, marries 26-year-old Anne Hathaway in Warwickshire.

1589-1594

Shakespeare writes many of his early plays, including *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Henry VI Parts I and 3*, *King John*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Titus Andronicus*.

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

Because Shakespeare lived and wrote so long ago, scholars have had to piece together the story of this life from very old primary sources, such as court records and other publications. There is uncertainty about details and the "lost years" of his biography. What kinds of sources do biographers use today to write a life story? If someone was writing your life story hundreds of years from now, what sources of information would they use?



April 23 is "Talk Like Shakespeare Day"
 This year the day commemorates the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death (and the 452nd anniversary of his birth). Practice some of the quotes in this study guide or visit <http://www.talklikeshakespeare.org/> for more ideas on ways to celebrate!

Cover page of the 1623 First Folio, the first anthology of Shakespeare's plays. Engraved portrait of William Shakespeare. Engraving, Martin Droeshout.

1593

Shakespeare writes the poem *Venus and Adonis*, as well as the play *Richard III*.

1594

Shakespeare establishes himself as both an actor and playwright for the newly created acting company, The Lord Chamberlain's Men.

1594

Shakespeare writes *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love's Labour's Lost*.

1595

Shakespeare writes *Richard II* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

Fate Versus Action in *Romeo and Juliet*

By Schirin Schenkermayr

From the very beginning of *Romeo and Juliet*, we know that the two young lovers will meet a tragic end. Shakespeare tells us at the start that they are “ill-fated.”

In order to understand Shakespeare’s concept of fate and how it plays out in his work, we have to examine the philosophies and theories surrounding fate and fortune during Elizabethan England. Shakespeare was heavily influenced by the Renaissance ideas of the “wheel of fortune” (Mabillard), the belief that fate was at the will of goddess Fortuna. Another influence was the interpretation of God’s predetermination for mankind taught by the Catholic and Anglican Churches. Even though Romeo and Juliet’s fate is revealed at the beginning of the play, Shakespeare captures the imagination of the audience by creating a constant tension between the certainty of the lovers’ fate and their agency to act to prevent the tragic outcome.

Romeo and Juliet are born into two powerful families in Verona who stand in animosity to each other. By telling the audience at the start, “two households [which] from ancient grudge break to new mutiny” — that hatred sowed in the past shall be revived at the hands of the “star-cross’d lovers” Romeo and Juliet — Shakespeare makes the audience an omniscient observer (1.1). But does Shakespeare imply that simply because we know the outcome, the two lovers cannot be held accountable for their predetermined actions?

Of course Romeo and Juliet are not aware of the tragedy awaiting them. However, they are well aware of the odds against which their love will have to fight. Upon seeing Juliet for the first time and finding out her name, Romeo exclaims: “O dear account! My life is my foe’s debt,” meaning he knows that he is indebted to his enemies for loving Juliet (1.5). Romeo naïvely tries to improve the relationship between his and Juliet’s family — even when Tybalt and Mercutio start to fight, he tries to calm the situation down:

I never injured thee,
But love thee better than thou canst devise,
And so, good Capulet,— which name I tender
As dearly as my own,— be satisfied (3.1).

He is unsuccessful and after his friend Mercutio is killed by Tybalt, he kills Tybalt in his rage. Romeo understands the gravity of his revenge and calls himself “fortune’s fool.” This bloodshed could have been prevented had not revenge informed Romeo’s action. Bill Buckhurst, who directed *Romeo and Juliet* at The Globe Theatre in 2009, understands Romeo as someone who “leaves his fate with the stars.” When he does take responsibility for his own actions, Romeo commits suicide (Globe, 122).

Juliet appears to be much more calculated. She is first introduced as an independent young girl, who, to her mother’s disappointment, turns her suitor, Paris, down because she does not feel ready to marry. However, when she sees Romeo, Juliet’s love disarms her calculated mind: “Too early seen unknown, and known too late! / Prodigious birth of love it is to me, / that I must love a loathed enemy” (1.5).



Juliet. Costume design by Ilona Somogyi.

1596

Shakespeare writes *The Merchant of Venice* and *Henry IV, Part I*.

1597

Shakespeare completes *Henry IV, Part 2*.

1598

Shakespeare completes the play *Much Ado About Nothing*.

1599

Shakespeare writes *As You Like It*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Henry V*.

When she meets Romeo for the second time at her balcony, Juliet has decided to trust her feelings and take on the age-long animosity between the families by putting her full trust in Romeo: “And all my fortunes at thy foot I’ll lay” (2.1). While Juliet’s and Romeo’s lives are lost, their sacrifice ultimately unites the two families when Capulet says: “O brother Montague, give me thy hand: / This is my daughter’s jointure, for no more / Can I demand” (5.3).

Romeo and Juliet is an exploration of the tensions between predetermined fate and the characters’ agency. Romeo and Juliet are both led by love in their attempts to transform the hatred between the Montagues and Capulets into friendship, which is ultimately achieved through their deaths.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Do you believe in fate? Do you believe that our destinies are determined by our actions? Why or why not?
- The Chorus summarizes the whole story in the first moments of the play. If the audience already knows what happens, why do you think this play has stood the test of time? What is it about Romeo’s and Juliet’s journeys that has kept this play alive for audiences for hundreds of years?
- Watch the Hartford Stage production. What production elements (set, costumes, lighting, sound, staging, etc.) highlight the tension between predetermined fate and the characters’ ability to choose their actions?



A young woman’s gravestone on the island of San Michele. Photo by Giovanni Dall’Orto.

Love, Duality, and the Line in *Romeo and Juliet*

By Andy Germuga

The sixth line of *Romeo and Juliet* is “A pair of star-cross’d lovers take their life.” The ninth is “The fearful passage of their death-mark’d love” (1.P). From the very beginning of the prologue, Shakespeare links love and death, and also the idea of duality. Love is almost always followed closely behind by an opposite, be it death, hatred, or indifference. This is suitable for a play centered on young, passionate love, a force that is shown to be tremendously powerful and also tremendously dangerous. When the characters speak of love, they often seem aware of this, or at least have a deeper understanding that they cannot articulate. They worry, complain, and grow frustrated because of love and its effects on their lives, and, of course, love is at the root of what makes the outcome of *Romeo and Juliet* so tragic. The characters are ruled by this outside power, and make little progress in efforts to control it with language.

Romeo starts the play in a state of unrequited love, pining for Rosaline. “Out of her favor, where I am in love” he complains to Benvolio, who tries to encourage Romeo to “forget to think of her” and move on from this childish obsession (1.2). But Romeo is unconvinced: “thou canst not teach me to forget,”



Romeo.
Costume design
by Ilona Somogyi.

1600-1603

In three years, Shakespeare completes the following plays: *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, and *Othello*.

1604-1605

Shakespeare completes the play *Measure for Measure*.

1604-1606

Shakespeare writes *Timon of Athens* and *King Lear*.

1606-1608

Throughout two years, Shakespeare creates *Macbeth*, *Pericles*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus*.

he ultimately responds, and claims that none could ever compare with Rosaline (1.2). But it is clear from Romeo's description that his is not a healthy love: "She will not stay the siege of loving terms, / Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes, / Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold" (1.2). He argues that her promise to "live chaste" is a waste of her beauty. She clearly has no interest in Romeo. He pines endlessly and complains to his friends about his unfair station in life.

It isn't until later when he falls for Juliet that he realizes how naïve he had been. He immediately renounces his previous feelings: "Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight! / For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night" (1.5).

He later actually meets Juliet and finds many of his feelings reciprocated. She is with him as they speak loving words to each other, but does not speak of love until after he leaves and she learns his identity. "My only love sprung from my only hate" (1.5), she worries, as the Nurse confirms him to be a Montague. Shakespeare brings back the duality associated with the idea of love when Juliet first plainly states her feelings.

In general, Juliet treats love with a greater suspicion, with a greater fear of what the consequences of it may be, and knowledge of how it may be fickle. She begs of Romeo, "If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully: / Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won, / I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay," worried that Romeo will change his mind because she falls too quickly in step with his feelings (2.2). She later chides him "O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon, / That monthly changes in her circled orb, / Lest that thy love prove likewise variable" (2.2). She is aware that it is delicate, and easily used in words that do not match with the feelings of the speaker. However, once she submits fully to her feelings and embraces her new state of being, she completely gives into the idea of love, proclaiming towards the end of the balcony scene: "My bounty is as boundless as the sea, / My love as deep; the more I give to thee, / The more I have, for both are infinite" (2.2).

The duality continues through the play. Juliet, while waiting for news of Romeo, articulates how at odds their love is with the rest of the world: "O, I have bought the mansion of a love, / But not possess'd it, and, though I am sold, / Not yet enjoy'd..." (3.2). She is living in a world that will not let her be with her love, a love that changes the very fabric of the community she lives in, as she makes clear just a few lines earlier, calling for Romeo to come with her and create the "day in night" where "the world will be in love with night / And pay no worship to the garish sun" (3.2). What she sees in Romeo has, she believes, the power to change the world's perspective on what is normally coded as the negative side of the night/day duality. She is mistaken, though only in part. Love has the power to transform, but unfortunately it requires an additional sacrifice. Romeo and Juliet must fully embrace and present the love/death duality before the rest of the world can see a new way forward. After their bodies have been found, the Prince articulates the connection: "Heaven finds means to kill your joys with love" (5.2). Love is strong and powerful, and for Romeo and Juliet, it is deadly.



Red leaves surround a cross in a Venice cemetery. Photo by Giovanni Dall'Orto.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Which character's articulation of love most resonates with you?
- Do you think the act of falling in love in the world of this play makes the tragic ending inevitable?
- Compare and contrast Romeo's manner of expressing his two loves. Do you believe in love at first sight?

1609

Shakespeare writes *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale* in one year.

1610-1611

Shakespeare completes *The Tempest*.

1616

William Shakespeare dies due to old age and illness.

1623

The First Folio of Shakespeare's work is published by his fellow actors John Heminges and Henry Condell.

Adult Guardians in *Romeo and Juliet*

By Krista DeVellis

It is a common theme throughout the ages that teenagers do not have the closest relationship with their parents. This was true even in Shakespeare's time. Children of high status families were taught from a young age to obey their parents' will. The father was the head of the household and would make decisions for the rest of the family. Their wives and children were expected to follow. While they may have had their children's well-being in mind, strict rules could often get in the way of an open, honest relationship between parents and their children. In the play *Romeo and Juliet*, both Romeo and Juliet seek help from secondary guardians, rather than their parents. Despite these various guardians' efforts, the play still ends in tragedy.

At the start of the show, Romeo is depressed and moping around. While we never see Romeo speak with his parents onstage, the Montagues claim to have tried asking him why he is behaving so, but were unable to get him to say. The only way they can find out what is going on with their son is if they find out from someone Romeo does trust. Montague knows that his son trusts Benvolio, Romeo's close friend and cousin, so Montague asks Benvolio to talk to Romeo and find out the cause of his mood:

BENVOLIO

My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

MONTAGUE

I neither know it nor can learn of him.

BENVOLIO

Have you importuned him by any means?

MONTAGUE

Both by myself and many other friends...
...Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow.
We would as willingly give cure as know. (1.1)



Benvolio (left) and Rosaline (right).
Costume designs by Ilona Somogyi.

When Benvolio asks about it, Romeo is quick to let him in on his unrequited crush on Rosaline. Rather than being a reliable confidant, Benvolio mocks and laughs with Mercutio about Romeo's infatuation. After Benvolio and Mercutio ridicule him about his love life, he loses his trust in them, claiming, "He jests at scars that never felt a wound" (2.2). From then on, Romeo seeks help from the only other person he can trust: Friar Laurence. Friar Laurence is not involved in the House rivalry, and supports Romeo's love for Juliet in the hopes of ending the feud. "Come, go with me," he says to Romeo. "In one respect I'll thy assistant be; / For this alliance may so happy prove, / To turn your households' rancour to pure love" (2.3). It is only at the end of the play that we get a glimpse of how the Montagues are distressed by their son's plight. Montague enters with the news that Lady Montague could not stand Romeo's banishment and died of heartbreak. "Alas, my liege, my wife is dead tonight," he explains. "Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath" (5.3).

In contrast to the lack of interaction between Romeo and the Montagues, we witness several conversations between Juliet and her parents throughout the play. Despite being confined to the Capulet house, she is alienated from her parents. At the start of the story, Juliet is the dutiful daughter that she is expected to be. She obeys her parents, but does not tell them much about her own thoughts. Instead, she talks openly with the Nurse who raised her. When Lady Capulet goes to have a mother-daughter talk with Juliet, she first asks the Nurse to leave them alone, but then realizes that the Nurse knows more about Juliet than she does, and asks her to stay: "—nurse, come back again; / I have remember'd me, thou's hear our counsel" (1.3). Juliet trusts the Nurse enough to ask for her help in secretly marrying Romeo. The Nurse carries messages between the lovers without revealing anything to Juliet's parents.

After her cousin Tybalt is slain by Romeo, Juliet falls into a pit of despair. Her parents think it is over

1861

Italy proclaims itself a unified kingdom, combining several states of the Italian peninsula into a single country ruled by a monarchy.

1922

Benito Mussolini becomes Prime Minister of Italy.

1922-1929

Mussolini turns Italy into a Fascist Dictatorship.

1930

Economic depression hits Italy.

Tybal't's death, when it is really because Romeo has been banished. Thinking it will help her get over the loss and allow her to live comfortably, Capulet promises to have Paris marry Juliet. "Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender / of my child's love: I think she will be ruled / in all respects by me..." says Capulet (3.4). "Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed; / Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love; / and bid her...tell her, / She shall be married to this noble earl" (3.4). When Lady Capulet tells Juliet of this arrangement, Juliet rejects the marriage by telling her mother, "I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam, / I will not marry yet" (3.5). When Capulet hears of his daughter's dissent, he is greatly offended: "disobedient wretch! / I tell thee what: get thee to church o' Thursday, / Or never after look me in the face" (3.5). This proves to Juliet that she cannot tell her parents of her secret marriage.



Lady Capulet (above) and Friar Laurence (below). Costume designs by Ilona Somogyi.



It is only once Romeo is banished and Capulet sets the day for Juliet to marry Paris that the Nurse changes her mind about what she thinks is best for Juliet. "Romeo is banish'd; and all the world to nothing," she explains to Juliet. "...I think it best you married with the county. / O, he's a lovely gentleman!" (3.5). She wants to pretend that Juliet's forbidden marriage never happened and have Juliet marry Paris. It is because of this change of heart that Juliet no longer trusts the Nurse, and much like Romeo, goes to Friar Laurence. "Give me some present counsel," Juliet says to Friar Laurence asking for his assistance, "or, behold, / 'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife / shall play the umpire, arbitrating that / which the commission of thy years and art / could to no issue of true honour bring" (4.1). She explains that if he cannot help her, she is going to kill herself. Friar Laurence assures her that he has a plan that will help her flee from Verona with Romeo. Juliet fakes her own death as part of this plan, and when her parents think she has died, we hear their grief: "O child! O child! My soul, and not my child! / Dead art thou! Alack!" Capulet declares, "my child is dead; / and with my child my joys are buried" (4.5).

Though Romeo does not speak directly with the Montagues during the play, they are caring parents. As they reach out to Benvolio to help Romeo with his moodiness, and when Lady Montague cannot bear to live without Romeo in Verona, their concern for their son is clear. We see more dialogue between the Capulets and Juliet, but she is not honest with them. They try to help by marrying her to Paris, and we see their mourning after her mock-death. As for secondary guardians, Benvolio did not know how much joking would hurt Romeo, and the Nurse did not know just how much Juliet cared for Romeo. Their last hope, Friar Laurence, tried to piece together plans to help them. Amidst the lies and secret plans, messages were mixed. Despite all of their friends' and families' best intentions, the story of Romeo and Juliet is still, at the end, a tragedy.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Who do you go to when you have a problem? Your parents? An aunt or uncle? A good friend? A sibling?
- If a friend came to you with a big secret, how far would you go to help them keep it? Would you lie to your other friends?
- Has anyone ever done something to lose your trust in them? Were you able to trust them again afterwards?
- Would you rather break a promise to a friend, or do what you think is morally right?

OCTOBER 25, 1936

A coalition between Italy and Germany is formed, called the Rome-Berlin Axis.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1939

Germany invades Poland, initiating WWII for European countries.

SEPTEMBER 27, 1940

Germany, Italy, and Japan sign the Tripartite Pact in Berlin, solidifying the countries as allies.

1943

Mussolini loses his place as Prime Minister to Marshal Pietro Badoglio after several losses in the war.

EXPLORING LANGUAGE IN *ROMEO AND JULIET*

By Aurelia Clunie

For over four hundred years, the language of Shakespeare's plays has moved audiences, inspired actors, and baffled many. Shakespeare's language can be confusing at first, but can also be decoded and spoken by all. With a little work, everyone from third grade students to distinguished actor Patrick Stewart can perform Shakespeare's text with confidence.

Shakespeare did much of his writing in a form called iambic Pentameter, in which each line of text contains ten alternately stressed syllables (five pairs, or *feet*). There are five iambs in each line. A full line of iambic pentameter has the rhythm:

da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM

Or, for example:

but SOFT what LIGHT through YONder WINdow
BREAKS

(Romeo, Act 2, scene 2, *Romeo and Juliet*)

Some say this rhythm echoes the human heartbeat and is a naturally spoken rhythm in English. Actors generally do not speak it in a sing-song fashion, emphasizing the rhythm or meter, but are aware of it and allow it to influence which words are stressed in the context of a scene.

Shakespeare primarily wrote in blank verse for his tragedies and history plays. However, blank verse, like life, is not perfect. Sometimes Shakespeare's lines have extra syllables, or are short some syllables. Sometimes the emphasis changes. Many scholars and actors believe variation in blank verse offers insight into a character's state of mind, emotional state, or reaction to what is happening onstage.

Romeo and Juliet is filled with a variety of linguistic forms, including blank verse, rhyming verse, and prose. In this play, Shakespeare adds sonnets to his storytelling and characters speak in both heightened and direct language. Heightened language is the use of poetic techniques such as simile, metaphor, and imagery. Direct language is when characters literally say what they mean. When reading a play, always ask yourself, *why* does the character speak this way? Try reading a portion of the text out loud to see if it sounds different than you expect when reading to yourself. Examples of Shakespeare's linguistic techniques can be found below. Ask yourself, why do the characters use these words, images, or rhymes to express themselves?

Sonnet

A sonnet is a kind of poem. Both Italian and Shakespearean sonnets have fourteen lines, however they have different structures and rhyme schemes. In his lifetime, Shakespeare wrote 154 stand-alone sonnets. He also includes three in the narrative of *Romeo and Juliet*. Shakespeare introduces the play with a sonnet spoken by the chorus. The poem summarizes the whole story and prepares the audience for the action.

PROSE = text written in common language that resembles everyday speech; has irregular rhythm and lacks metrical structure

VERSE = text (song, poetry, or dramatic text) written in metrical lines; it may rhyme

BLANK VERSE = text (song, poetry, or dramatic text) written in iambic pentameter that does not rhyme

METER = the arrangement of a pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables to create rhythm in a verse

FOOT = the basic unit of meter

IAMB = a metrical foot consisting of one unstressed followed by one stressed syllable

TROCHEE = a metrical foot consisting of one stressed followed by one unstressed syllable

1943

The first film of the Neorealism movement premieres: *Ossessione* (*Obsession*), directed by Luchino Visconti.

1944-1945

Mussolini is restored as Hitler's puppet in northern Italy and drives Italy deeper into the tragedy of invasion, occupation, and civil war.

APRIL 28, 1945

Mussolini is killed by a firing squad.

AUGUST 15, 1945

Japan formally surrenders, officially ending WWII.

<p>CHORUS 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-cross'd 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. (Act 1, Prologue)</p>	A B A B C D C D E F E F G G
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When Romeo and Juliet first meet each other, the lines they speak back and forth are a shared sonnet. Sonnets have a very specific form. The first four lines set up a problem and have a rhyme scheme of ABAB, in which the first and third lines rhyme and the second and fourth lines rhyme. The next four lines develop the problem and have a rhyme scheme of CDCD. Often there is a shift or turn of events between this section and the third four lines (EFEF), which expresses the climax of events. The poem ends in two lines, called a rhyming couplet, which conclude the events.

ROMEO

If I profane with my unworhiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this:
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

JULIET

Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

ROMEO

Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

JULIET

Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

ROMEO

O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;
They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

JULIET

Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

ROMEO

Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.
(1.5)

1946

1945

Rossellini's film *Roma, città aperta* (*Rome, Open City*) premieres, gaining international interest.

De Sica's film *Sciuscà* (*Shoeshine*) premieres and is the first foreign film to win an award bestowed by the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

1948

Ladri di biciclette (*The Bicycle Thieves*) premieres and later wins an Oscar for Best Foreign Film.

1952

De Sica's classic film *Umberto D* premieres.

This perfect form demonstrates both control and passion. It ends in their first kiss. Few productions include the third sonnet, which is spoken by the chorus at the beginning of Act 2.

In addition to the various forms of the text, Shakespeare uses many literary devices in the characters' dialogue. Their thoughts and feelings are expressed in both poetic and direct ways. How do you think actors keep the action alive while using the text Shakespeare wrote?

Mention of Time

Characters mention the time of year, week, and day consistently in *Romeo and Juliet*. While the original form of this story takes place over a longer period of time, Shakespeare condenses the action into four days. He continually reminds the audience what time it is, which adds to a sense of racing toward the inevitable.

BENVOLIO

Madam, an **hour before** the worshipp'd sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,
A troubled mind drove me to walk abroad;
So early walking did I see your son:
(1.1)

NURSE

Even or odd, of all **days** in the **year**,
Come **Lammas-eve** at **night** shall she be **fourteen**...
That shall she, marry; I remember it well.
'Tis **since the earthquake** now **eleven years**;
(1.3)

CAPULET

God's bread! it makes me mad:
Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,
Alone, in company, still my care hath been
To have her match'd:
(3.4)

Imagery

Visually descriptive or figurative language.

MERCUTIO

O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you...
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;
Her wagon-spokes made of long spiders' legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
The traces of the smallest spider's web,
The collars of the moonshine's watery beams,
Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,
Her wagoner a small grey-coated gnat,
Not so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid;
(2.4)



Mercutio. Costume design by Ilona Somogyi.

CAPULET

How now! **a conduit, girl?** what, still in tears?
Evermore showering? In one little body
Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind;
For still **thy eyes, which I may call the sea,**
Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,
Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;
Who, raging with thy tears, and they with them,
Without a sudden calm, will overset
Thy **tempest-tossed body.**
(3.4)

Alliteration

The repetition of consonant sounds.

BENVOLIO

Why, what is Tybalt?

MERCUTIO

More than prince of **c**ats, I **c**an tell you. O, he is
the **c**ourageous **c**aptain of **c**ompliments.
(2.4)

Assonance

The repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds.

JULIET

O God, I have an ill-divining soul!
Methinks I **see thee, now thou** art below,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:
Either my **e**yesight **f**ails, or thou look'st **p**ale.
(3.4)



Tybalt. Costume design by Ilona Somogyi.

Allusion

An expression that calls something to mind without mentioning it explicitly; an indirect or passing reference, often to the Bible, mythology, or historical literature.

JULIET

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phoebus' lodging: such a wagoner
As **Phaethon*** would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately.
(3.2)

*In Greek mythology, Phaethon was the son of the sun-god, Helios (Roman god Apollo, or Phoebus). Helios would carry the sun across the sky in his magnificent horse-drawn chariot. When Phaethon wanted to prove to his friends that he was truly the son of Helios, Phaethon got Helios to promise to let him drive the chariot one day. Phaethon lost control of the horses and to stop the world from catching fire, Zeus killed Phaethon with a lightning bolt. Above, Juliet references this story to encourage the sun to move fast and recklessly across the sky, like Phaethon did, so night will come more quickly and she can see her love.

You try! Below are two literary devices Shakespeare uses in his writing. Highlight all the examples of these techniques in the passages below.

Antithesis

Placement of contrasting or opposing words, phrases, clauses, or sentences side by side. **Use two different colors to highlight all of the opposites you find on the next page.**

ROMEO

Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!
O any thing, of nothing first create!
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire,
 sick health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
(1.1)

JULIET

Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!
Dove-feather'd raven! wolvish-ravening lamb!
Despised substance of divinest show!
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,
A damned saint, an honourable villain!
(3.2)

Repetition

The repetition of sounds, words, or phrases within one character's line or throughout a segment of a scene. **Highlight each word that is repeated throughout the following scene.**

MERCUTIO

You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings,
And soar with them above a common bound.

ROMEO

I am too sore enpierced with his shaft
To soar with his light feathers, and so bound,
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

MERCUTIO

And, to sink in it, should you burden love;
Too great oppression for a tender thing.

ROMEO

Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.

MERCUTIO

If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.
(1.4)



Mercutio at the Capulets' party.
Costume design by Ilona Somogyi.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Read the Prologue to Act 2. Paraphrase, or write in your own words, this sonnet. What literary devices do you notice? Highlight or underline them.

CHORUS

Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir.
That fair for which love groaned for and would die
With tender Juliet matched, is now not fair.
Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,
Alike bewitchèd by the charm of looks,
But to his foe supposed he must complain,
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks.
Being held a foe, he may not have access
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear.

And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new beloved anywhere.
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,
Tempering extremities with extreme sweet.
(2.P)

- Read the balcony scene below (Act 2, scene 2). What literary devices from the above list do you notice? Highlight or underline the following in different colors.
 - Most important verb in each line
 - Clear images
 - Repetition of words or phrases
 - Alliteration
 - Assonance
 - Antithesis

Now read a section of the scene with a partner. How does emphasizing each of the above affect your reading? How does it affect what your character does in the scene?

- Work with a partner to choose a section of the balcony scene below. Paraphrase what Romeo and Juliet say to each other. Then perform the original text for the class. How does paraphrasing help you to perform Shakespeare's text as an actor?

ACT 2, SCENE 2. Capulet's orchard.

Enter ROMEO

ROMEO

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

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!

She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?

Her eye discourses; I will answer it.

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame
those stars,

As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not
night.

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!

O, that I were a glove upon that hand,

That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET

Ay me!

ROMEO

She speaks:

O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art

As glorious to this night, being o'er my head
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

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.

ROMEO

I take thee at thy word:

Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;

Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET

What man art thou that thus bescreen'd in night
So stumblest on my counsel?

ROMEO

By a name

I know not how to tell thee who I am:

My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,

Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

JULIET

My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound:
Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

ROMEO

Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

JULIET

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO

With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;
For stony limits cannot hold love out,
And what love can do that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

JULIET

If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

ROMEO

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.

JULIET

I would not for the world they saw thee here.

ROMEO

I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;
And but thou love me, let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

JULIET

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

ROMEO

By love, who first did prompt me to inquire;
He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

JULIET

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay,'
And I will take thy word: yet if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries
Then say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,
And therefore thou mayst think my 'havior light:
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true

Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

ROMEO

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops—

JULIET

O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO

What shall I swear by?

JULIET

Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

ROMEO

If my heart's dear love—

JULIET

Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say 'It lightens.' Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

ROMEO

O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET

What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

ROMEO

The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

JULIET

I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:
And yet I would it were to give again.

ROMEO

Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

JULIET

But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have:
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.

NURSE calls within

I hear some noise within; dear love, adieu!
Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again.

Exit, above

ROMEO

O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard.
 Being in night, all this is but a dream,
 Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

Re-enter JULIET, above

JULIET

Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
 If that thy bent of love be honourable,
 Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
 By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
 Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;
 And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay
 And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

NURSE

[Within] Madam!

JULIET

I come, anon.—But if thou mean'st not well,
 I do beseech thee—

NURSE

[Within] Madam!

JULIET

By and by, I come:—
 To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief:
 To-morrow will I send.

ROMEO

So thrive my soul—

JULIET

A thousand times good night!

Exit, above

ROMEO

A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.
 Love goes toward love, as schoolboys from
 their books,
 But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

Re-enter JULIET, above

JULIET

Hist! Romeo, hist! O, for a falconer's voice,
 To lure this tassel-gentle back again!
 Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
 Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
 And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,
 With repetition of my Romeo's name.

ROMEO

It is my soul that calls upon my name:
 How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
 Like softest music to attending ears!

JULIET

Romeo!

ROMEO

My dear?

JULIET

At what o'clock to-morrow
 Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO

At the hour of nine.

JULIET

I will not fail: 'tis twenty years till then.
 I have forgot why I did call thee back.

ROMEO

Let me stand here till thou remember it.

JULIET

I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
 Remembering how I love thy company.

ROMEO

And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
 Forgetting any other home but this.

JULIET

'Tis almost morning; I would have thee gone:
 And yet no further than a wanton's bird;
 Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
 Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
 And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
 So loving-jealous of his liberty.

ROMEO

I would I were thy bird.

JULIET

Sweet, so would I:
 Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
 Good night, good night! parting is such
 sweet sorrow,
 That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

Exit, above

ROMEO

Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!
 Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!
 Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,
 His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell.

Retiring.

FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

The History and Themes of Italian Neorealism

By Erin Frederick

Romeo and Juliet is the story of great love struggling against the bonds of great conflict. Shakespeare's "two households," the Montagues and Capulets, are engaged in a bitter feud that impacts the entire city of Verona and its people. The opening scene of the play depicts a brutal street fight between members of the two families. This skirmish is only ended by the intervention of the Prince of Verona, who struggles to maintain the peace in his own city. While the play was originally set in the Verona of the mid-1300s, the unstable atmosphere and desperate actions of the Italian people were very similar to the conditions of Italy in the years following World War II, which is the setting for the Hartford Stage production of the tale.

After the second World War, Italy struggled to find its new identity, free from the fascist regime of Benito Mussolini. The country was suffering from a wave of crime, political upheaval, economic instability and social unrest. According to Karen Arnone of the University of Pennsylvania, "this morose reality was recorded by the cameras of visionary film makers who found enough inspiration within their dismal atmosphere to create a new stylistic approach to film making: Neorealism."

During the war, Italian filmmakers had faced tremendous censorship within the fascist regime. Newly freed from these confines, directors were able to realistically explore and critique the problems that were affecting their country. They did so by casting off the cinematic conventions popular in the Hollywood studio films of the era. Instead, these films featured "non-professional actors, regional dialects, authentic locations, documentary aspects, and the use of the film as a social statement" (Arnone, 1996).

Many of these films chronicled the average lives of common people. In Luchino Visconti's film *Obsession*, the viewer experiences an Italy that includes "not only the picturesque and the beautiful, but also the tawdry, the ordinary, the insignificant" (Film Reference Archive, 2015). In the film's most famous sequence, the heroine Giovanna enters her squalid kitchen, takes a bowl of pasta, and begins to eat, reading the newspaper, but falls asleep from exhaustion. There is nothing showy or glamorous about the scene, but it showed a reality of everyday life that had not yet been seen in the cinema.



A scene from *Obsession*, by Luchino Visconti (1942).



Pina chases the truck that holds her abducted fiancé in *Rome, Open City* (Roberto Rossellini, 1945).

Another recurring theme in Italian Neorealism was death. "Almost all neorealists agreed that the 'happy ending' they associated with Hollywood was to be avoided at all costs," as it portrayed a fantasy world incongruent with the harsh reality in which they lived (Film Reference Archive, 2015). One of the major films of this movement, Roberto Rossellini's *Rome, Open City* (1945), expresses this theme clearly. Set in the final days of the Nazi Occupation of Italy and filmed only months after that period, the film tells the story of a small underground resistance movement against the Nazis. Many of the characters in the film were played by non-professional actors, who had likely lived through the oppression portrayed on screen, giving the film a documentary-style feel. This is particularly evident in the scene featuring the death of heroine Pina, shot down publicly by Nazi soldiers while trying to chase down the truck that holds her abducted fiancé.

That scene was inspired by the real life murder of Teresa Gullace, a woman killed while trying to find her husband, who was a German prisoner of war (Bignardi, 2010). The film became an international success, and it portrayed a theme that can be found throughout many films of the neorealism genre: the attempt to discover, through death, the reason for living (Arnone, 1996). This point was perhaps best articulated by

Pier Pasolini, another Neorealist director. Pasolini ironically became most famous for his own violent murder, but several years before he died, he eloquently explained the brutal outlook expressed in many Neorealist films: “It is only at the point of death that our life — to that point ambiguous, undecipherable, suspended — acquires a meaning” (Vulliamy, 2014).

QUESTIONS

- Italian Neorealism rose at the end of World War II. How do you think this postwar climate influenced the themes of realistically exploring the problems facing the country and death?
- What contemporary films would you describe as influenced by the ultra-realistic style of Italian Neorealism?
- Rossellini’s film *Rome, Open City* portrayed the popular Neorealist theme “the attempt to discover, through death, the reason for living.” In what ways is this theme present in *Romeo and Juliet*?

The (True?) Story of *Romeo and Juliet*

By Erin Frederick

Shakespeare set 13 of his 38 plays in Italy, and two of those — *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* — are set in the northern Italian city of Verona. The city, which began as an Ancient Roman town that was likely founded in the 2nd century BC (Cartwright, 2014), is famous today for its wealth of remaining Roman and Gothic architecture, which is often a distinct pink brick (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2007). Today, thousands of romantics visit the city each year to pay homage to Shakespeare’s tragic young hero and heroine. However, when Shakespeare was writing these plays in the late 1500s, Verona was not actually a very well-known city to English audiences. Verona was (and is) the home of some truly spectacular art and architecture, including original works by Pisanello and Titian. However, at that time, it largely fell in the shadow of Venice, its glamorous neighbor to the east, which was then the glittering hub of Renaissance period art, culture and fashion (Mosta, 2012). So why would Shakespeare choose a relatively unknown city as the setting for his star crossed lovers? The answer is fairly simple — Shakespeare wasn’t the first to tell their tale.

It is widely believed that the warring families of the Montagues and Capulets were based on two actual families — the Montecchis and Cappellettis — that feuded in the area during the early 14th century. The Montecchi family, who resided in Verona, were ardent supporters of the Ghibellines. The Ghibellines consisted primarily of wealthy agricultural families in the Northern Italian city states who supported the spread of Imperialism by the Holy Roman Emperor. The Cappelletti family were proud supporters of the Guelphs. The Guelphs consisted primarily of wealthy merchant families who supported the Pope (Machiavelli, 1532). These two factions had been at war with each other since the early 1100s. By the early 1300s, at the time the Montecchi and Cappelletti families were involved, there was such bitter hatred between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines that the two sides engaged in the infamous War of the Bucket in Bologna in 1325. The war began when Ghibelline soldiers from nearby Modena stole a bucket from the city well in Bologna. The Guelph residents of Bologna demanded the return of their bucket, but the Modenes refused. Thus began a war that lasted 12 years, until 1337 (Robinson, 2006). By 1334, Pope Benedict XII was so disgusted with the warring factions that he threatened excommunication to anyone who publicly identified himself as either a Guelph or Ghibelline (Machiavelli, 1532).

The poet Dante Aligheri was living in exile in Verona for a short time in 1302 (The Independent, 2011). Here, he likely saw some of the political turmoil between the Montecchi and Capelletti families in person. He references them by name in *The Divine Comedy*, in a section about the general degradation and bickering among the warring upper classes of Italy:

*Come and behold Montecchi and Cappelletti,
Monaldi and Fillippeschi, careless man!
Those sad already, and these doubt-
depressed!*
(Purgatorio VI, vv.106-108)



The Guelph and Ghibelline families at war, by Ottavio Baussano.

This is the first literary reference to the dueling families who were the inspiration for the Montagues and Capulets. The story of star-crossed lovers from the two families was apparently a widely-told tale in 14th century Italy, but the first known version of it appears as the story of Mariotto and Gianozza of Siena by Masuccio Salernitano in *Il Novellino* (Fischlin, 2007). Many of the elements of Shakespeare's tale originate in this version: the young lovers married in secret by a friar, the banishment of Mariotto after a duel, the sleeping potion that makes Gianozza appear dead. However, in this slightly more brutal version, when Mariotto appears at Gianozza's tomb, he is arrested and beheaded. Gianozza witnesses the execution and dies of a broken heart, clutching her lover's head to her breast (Fischlin, 2007).

A later version by Luigi da Porto, included in his 1530 *Istoria novellamente ritrovata di due Nobili Amanti*, makes a few important alterations. In this version, da Porto renames the lovers Romeo and Giulietta and makes specific reference to the feud between the Montecchi and Cappelletti. Da Porto also created the notable characters of Marcuccio (Mercutio), Theobaldo (Tybalt), Friar Lorenzo (Friar Laurence) and the Conti de Lodrone (Paris) (Fischlin, 2007). Da Porto, who was himself a tragic romantic figure after being terribly disfigured on the battlefield and retreating from the world, became quite famous in the Italian literary world at that time for his version of the tale.

Writer and soldier Matteo Bandello included his own adaptation of the tale in *Novelle*, his anthology of Italian stories that was published in 1554 (Mosta, 2012). In this version of the tale, we first see the character of the conspiratorial nurse. It was this version of the tale that was first translated into French and presented by Italian theatrical troupes, some of whom did perform in London during Shakespeare's time (Club di Giulietta, 2007). Thus, it is possible that Shakespeare could have first seen this version of the tale onstage during that time.

However, the version of the story on which Shakespeare most likely based his work is Arthur Brooke's 3,020-line narrative poem, *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet*, first published in 1562 (McKittrick, 2006). Brooke's work was fairly well-known in England by the 1590s, but it was very dense and wordy, thus proving ripe material for a theatrical re-write. "Shakespeare made significant changes to the story's timeline and structure in order to enhance the dramatic momentum, give the lovers' plight a sense of urgency, and add suspense," says Ryan McKittrick, Associate Dramaturg at American Repertory Theatre. "Shakespeare's play gallops apace; Brooke's poem trots along at a slow and steady tempo" (McKittrick, 2006). The events of Shakespeare's play take place over a period of four days — from Sunday morning until Thursday morning — as opposed to several months, as expressed in Brooke's work (Fischlin, 2007). To emphasize the pressures of time, Shakespeare gives precise information about when scenes occur throughout the play. In his introduction for the New Cambridge University Press edition of the play, famed Shakespeare scholar G. Blake Evans notes that *Romeo and Juliet* is "unusually full, perhaps more so than any other Shakespearean play, of words like time, day, night, today, tomorrow, years, hours, minutes, and specific days of the week, giving us a sense of events moving steadily and inexorably in a tight temporal framework" (Evans, 2003). Shakespeare's version of the story also gives more emphasis and definition to the characters of Mercutio and the Nurse, introduces Tybalt as a threat much earlier in the tale, and fleshes out the role of Juliet's suitor, Paris (McKittrick, 2006).

By the time The Lord Chamberlain's Men first performed Shakespeare's version of the tale in London in 1597, the story of the two feuding families was nearly 300 years old. The Montechetti and Cappelletti families were long gone, as were any potential children who might have served as the inspiration for the story. However, Shakespeare's version of the tale was the first to truly inspire widespread adoration — not only for the young lovers themselves, but also to their home city of Verona. Today, Verona boasts a booming tourist economy and is listed as a World Heritage city (Cartwright, 2014). An old home (rather dubiously said to have once belonged to the Cappelletti family) has been renamed Casa di Giulietta, or Juliet's House. It boasts a stone balcony (added to the exterior in 1936) suitable to inspire fantasies of Romeo and Juliet's famous encounter (Mosta, 2012). The site hosts countless letters to Juliet from the lovelorn, stuck in the stone walls of the exterior, as well as a bronze statue of the doomed young heroine. And yes...they do hold weddings.

Shakespeare was not the first to tell the tale of the two doomed young lovers, but his version of the story brought Romeo and Juliet what no other author could: immortality.



Juliet's balcony at the Casa di Giulietta in Verona, Italy.

QUESTIONS

- Have you ever heard or read another adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*? Have you seen a film version? What details characters did they leave in or take out?
- Shakespeare likely saw or read a French translation of Matteo Bandello's novel. Bandello's original version of the novel includes a scene in which Juliet awakens before Romeo dies. The French translation may have left this out, and Shakespeare may have followed suit. Some directors include Juliet awaking and seeing Romeo alive (as Baz Luhrmann did in his 1996 film). Try writing a scene between Romeo and Juliet before he dies of the poison. What do they say to each other? What does Juliet do once her love dies?
- What contemporary feuds would make a strong basis for a modern day Romeo and Juliet story? Who are the Montechetti and Cappelletti families of today? What literature, poems, or plays might their feuds inspire? Consider feuds between families, clans, countries, etc. Try writing a story inspired by this real life feud.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Create a Movie Trailer

Read the prologue of *Romeo and Juliet* on page 14. Use this text to create a trailer for *Romeo and Juliet* in the style of Italian Neorealism. Or, create a Neorealist film poster using collage. Consider including the following techniques used in Italian Neorealism:

- Stark and somber images
- Music that underscores images and build suspense
- Architecture of found urban locations
- Cityscapes and everyday shots of life in the street
- Long held close-ups and medium shots
- Focused shots on a character's face and emotion
- Point of view shots through car windows

Need some examples? Watch these trailers and clips.

- Trailer for *Rome, Open City*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1PIJRSJT6Q>
- Film critic A.O. Scott's review of *Rome, Open City*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OeBleS8PzIE>

Write a Sonnet

- Read Shakespeare's Sonnet 18. Try writing a sonnet about any topic you choose. Start with a problem and try to solve it in fourteen lines.
- Take your favorite book or movie. Try writing a sonnet in the style of the Chorus' prologue from *Romeo and Juliet*. Write a poem to the reader or audience that peaks their interest and summarizes the action in fourteen lines. Remember to use the following rhyme scheme: ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, GG.

Stage a Brawl with Shakespearean Insults

In Act 1, scene 1, servants of the Capulet household meet Montagues in the street. One makes a lewd gesture at the Montagues and starts a fight. Often in Shakespeare's plays, characters trade insults.

Divide into two teams — Montagues and Capulets — and stand in two parallel lines facing each other. Imagine you are in the middle of an Italian street. Have one person (or the classroom teacher) step out and study the Prince's monologue below. Have each person on a team create an insult by choosing one word from each column and stringing them together. Start your insult with "Thou," which means "you" in Elizabethan English. For example, "Thou contagious, slimy, dolt!"

Without touching anyone else, but only using the power of your speech, hurl your insult at the enemy side, building vocal energy as you go. Once you've said your insult loudly and clearly, you can repeat it in a whisper and play with saying the words to the other side. Each person should get their own turn to shout their insult at the other side before repeating it softly. When the "insult-off" reaches its height, have the "Prince" step in and try to calm the chaos by speaking the monologue below. Prince, how do you use your words and vocal energy to squash this verbal brawl?

THOU...	sodden	monkey-faced	mountebank
	overweening	excellent	drudge
	lewd	incarnate	milksop
	naughty	sullen	minion
	puny	measureless	caterwaul
	pernicious	vile	blubber
	shallow	decayed	snake
	brazen	perfidious	goat
	stale	servile	churl
	impudent	blunt	flea
	surly	insolent	lout
	rough	foul	fiend
	scurvy	strange	leek
	palpable	vain	dolt
	tedious	saucy	mildew
	contagious	prodigal	punk
	creeping	gross	wretch
	crusty	unwholesome	sponge
	paltry	luxurious	weasel
	diminutive	contumelious	sot
	vaporous	spotted	lump
	shameful	loathsome	scab
	bawdy	vulgar	wench
	sour	thrasonical	coxcomb
	base	rank	varlet
	sanctimonious	fanatical	tyrant
	degenerate	slimy	louse
	counterfeit	irksome	artificer
	marvellous	swollen	minimus
	hyperbolic	pathetic	snipe
	greasy	ancient	rump
	preposterous	pestiferous	braggart
notorious	dull	knave	
monstrous	incarnadine	clotpoll	
wanton	malignant	strumpet	
sloven	peevish	tinker	

PRINCE

Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
 Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel,—
 Will they not hear? What, ho! you men, you beasts,
 On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
 Throw your mistemper'd weapons to the ground,
 And hear the sentence of your moved prince.
 Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
 By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
 Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets,
 If ever you disturb our streets again,
 Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
 Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.
 (1.1)

Draw Queen Mab

In Act 1, scene 4, Mercutio makes fun of Romeo for moping around. When Romeo says he had a dream, Mercutio describes the fantastical "Queen Mab" who visits sleepers and gives them their dreams. Read Mercutio's speech below and, based on the imagery he uses, create a drawing of Queen Mab.

MERCUTIO

O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.

She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
 In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
 On the fore-finger of an alderman,
 Drawn with a team of little atomies
 Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;
 Her wagon-spokes made of long spiders' legs,
 The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
 The traces of the smallest spider's web,
 The collars of the moonshine's watery beams,
 Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,
 Her wagoner a small grey-coated gnat,
 Not so big as a round little worm
 Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid;
 Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut
 Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
 Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
 And in this state she gallops night by night
 Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
 O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight,
 O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees,
 O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
 Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
 Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are:
 Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
 And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
 And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail
 Tickling a parson's nose as a' lies asleep,
 Then dreams, he of another benefice:
 Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
 And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
 Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
 Of healths five-fathom deep; and then anon
 Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
 And being thus frighted swears a prayer or two
 And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
 That plats the manes of horses in the night,
 And bakes the elflocks in foul sluttish hairs,
 Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes:
 This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
 That presses them and learns them first to bear,
 Making them women of good carriage:
 This is she—
 (1.4)



Romeo (above) and Juliet (below) first meet at Capulet's party. Costume designs by Ilona Somogyi.



Choreograph the Dance

In Act 1, scene 5, the Montagues crash the Capulets' party. This is a masquerade, or costume party, and there is a dance during the scene. A director must think about all the action going on onstage at once. Choreograph a dance for this scene. The partygoers may move in and out of the dance, but certain major actions must occur. This moment starts with Capulet calling people to dance. He says, "You are welcome, gentlemen! come, musicians, play. / A hall, a hall! give room! and foot it, girls," and ends with the Nurse's line, "Madam, your mother craves a word with you."

Be sure to include the following on your stage:

- Romeo and Juliet start on opposite sides of the stage
- Tybalt sees Romeo without Romeo seeing him
- Capulet stops Tybalt from starting a fight with Romeo
- Romeo and Juliet find each other
- The Nurse takes Juliet away

How do you tell this story through the actors' movement on the stage? What music do you use? Which characters dance and which do not? Why?

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