

ROMEO & JULIET

OCT 31 – NOV 19

by William Shakespeare
directed by Mark Lamos

STUDY GUIDE

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Theater Audience Etiquette

Speaking to your students about theater etiquette is important. Students should be aware that this is a LIVE performance and that they should not talk during the show. Students may respond to the strong emotions elicited by theater in different ways, and appropriate audience reactions are warmly encouraged. But please take the time to address and discuss proper behavior in the theater with your students. This will enhance their appreciation of the work and allow other audience members to enjoy the performance at the same time. We have provided the following guidelines:

- Please do not bring food or drink into the theater.
- Turn off all cellular phones and pagers or anything that makes noise or lights up.
- No texting, please.
- Please talk only before or after the performance or during intermission.
- Remember that this is a live performance, and that in addition to being disruptive to your neighbors, unruly behavior can be heard by the actors on stage.
- Act with maturity during romantic, violent or other challenging scenes.
- Open your eyes, ears and mind to the world on stage. Theater has the power to transport us to another place; open your heart to that experience.
- Thank you for your help, and we hope that you enjoy the show!

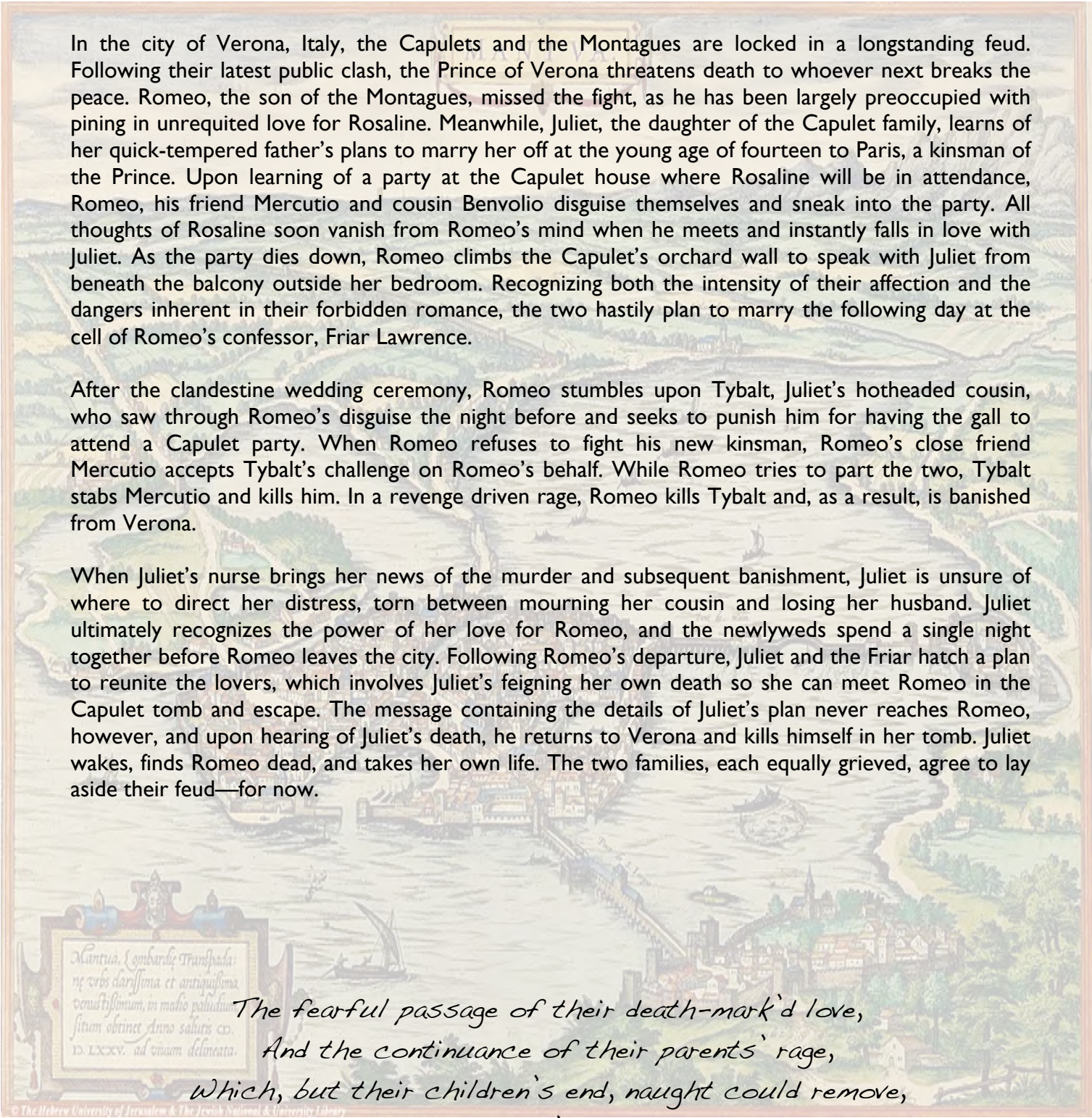


The Plot

In the city of Verona, Italy, the Capulets and the Montagues are locked in a longstanding feud. Following their latest public clash, the Prince of Verona threatens death to whoever next breaks the peace. Romeo, the son of the Montagues, missed the fight, as he has been largely preoccupied with pining in unrequited love for Rosaline. Meanwhile, Juliet, the daughter of the Capulet family, learns of her quick-tempered father's plans to marry her off at the young age of fourteen to Paris, a kinsman of the Prince. Upon learning of a party at the Capulet house where Rosaline will be in attendance, Romeo, his friend Mercutio and cousin Benvolio disguise themselves and sneak into the party. All thoughts of Rosaline soon vanish from Romeo's mind when he meets and instantly falls in love with Juliet. As the party dies down, Romeo climbs the Capulet's orchard wall to speak with Juliet from beneath the balcony outside her bedroom. Recognizing both the intensity of their affection and the dangers inherent in their forbidden romance, the two hastily plan to marry the following day at the cell of Romeo's confessor, Friar Lawrence.

After the clandestine wedding ceremony, Romeo stumbles upon Tybalt, Juliet's hotheaded cousin, who saw through Romeo's disguise the night before and seeks to punish him for having the gall to attend a Capulet party. When Romeo refuses to fight his new kinsman, Romeo's close friend Mercutio accepts Tybalt's challenge on Romeo's behalf. While Romeo tries to part the two, Tybalt stabs Mercutio and kills him. In a revenge driven rage, Romeo kills Tybalt and, as a result, is banished from Verona.

When Juliet's nurse brings her news of the murder and subsequent banishment, Juliet is unsure of where to direct her distress, torn between mourning her cousin and losing her husband. Juliet ultimately recognizes the power of her love for Romeo, and the newlyweds spend a single night together before Romeo leaves the city. Following Romeo's departure, Juliet and the Friar hatch a plan to reunite the lovers, which involves Juliet's feigning her own death so she can meet Romeo in the Capulet tomb and escape. The message containing the details of Juliet's plan never reaches Romeo, however, and upon hearing of Juliet's death, he returns to Verona and kills himself in her tomb. Juliet wakes, finds Romeo dead, and takes her own life. The two families, each equally grieved, agree to lay aside their feud—for now.



*The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, naught 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*
-- Chorus, I.i, 9-12

The Origins of *Romeo and Juliet*

While *Romeo and Juliet* remains one of the best-known stories of star-crossed lovers in Western literature, the story behind the play existed long before Shakespeare was born. The first mention of the feuding families of Verona came in Dante Alighieri's epic poem *Divine Comedy* in 1320, where he writes about the Montecchis and Capellettis. While tragedies about lovers engaged in forbidden romance has been popular in dramatic poetry for ages (one of the earliest being Ovid's *Pyramus and Thisbe*, which gets a shout-out in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*), the earliest recognizable version of the *Romeo and Juliet* story we know today is Masuccio Salernitano's tragedy of Mariotto and Gianozza published in 1476. Salernitano writes of a secret marriage facilitated by a friar, a fake poison, and a lost message. The names Romeo and Juliet (or Giulietta), however, don't appear in written text until Luigi da Porto's *Historia Novellamente Ritrovata di Due Nobili Amanti* in 1531. Da Porto's book was also the first story to include Marcuccio (Mercutio), Theobaldo (Thybalt), Friar Lorenzo (Friar Lawrence), and Giulietta's Nurse. But, since the sources for Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* were originally written in Italian which he probably did not speak, how did he find them?

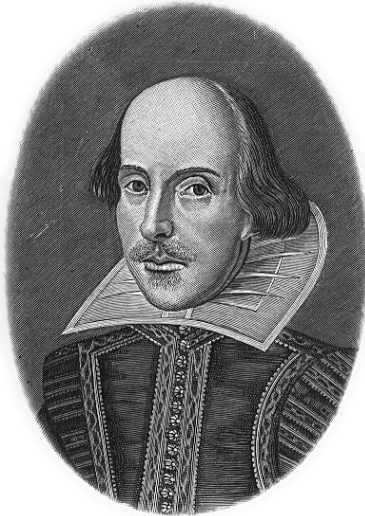
In 1554, an Italian writer named Matteo Bandello published a volume of stories, which included the story *Giulietta e Romeo*. This short story was then translated by the French writer Pierre Boaistuau in 1559, and that French story was translated into English by Arthur Brooke in 1562. Brooke's translation, *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, was the first English version of the story and where, we think, Shakespeare got most of the material for his play. *Romeo and Juliet* stays surprisingly true to Brooke's epic poem; the two are almost the exact same length, and Shakespeare borrows key phrases and images from Brooke's translation (including the "holy palmers" exchange between the lovers at the Capulet party). Yet, Shakespeare also made some important changes to the play. Brooke's Juliet was sixteen years old—a relatively appropriate age to be married by Elizabethan standards. Shakespeare changed Juliet's age to thirteen, making it so that her arranged marriage to Paris would have shocked the audience. While Brooke's tragedy takes place over the course of nine months, Shakespeare's story is a whirlwind; the lovers meet, marry, and die in three consecutive days.

Shakespeare almost never invented entire plots for his plays; most of his stories come from poetry, literature, existing plays, or even historical events. But at the end of the day, we don't love Shakespeare's plays for their creative plots or unexpected endings. Rather, the plays are unique in their complicated and developed characters—especially women—who make their own choices and have complicated personalities. This was very rare for works of literature in his time period. Much of Shakespeare's skill was in the language he used to make these characters come to life. As renowned theater director Peter Brook writes:

"What passed through this man called Shakespeare and came into existence on sheets of paper is something quite different from any other author's work. It's not Shakespeare's view of the world, it's something which actually resembles reality. An artist may try to capture and reflect your action, but actually he interprets it – so that a naturalistic painting, a Picasso painting, a photograph, are all interpretations. But what Shakespeare wrote is not interpretations: it is the thing itself."

Shakespeare: The Man, The Myth, The Legend

While his work has remained a critical part of Western literature for centuries, the man William Shakespeare remains somewhat of a mystery. We know that Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in England in 1564 to John and Mary Arden Shakespeare. Church records tell us that Shakespeare was baptized on April 26th, which historians take to mean he was probably born on April 23rd, as baptisms traditionally took place three days after the child's birth. As a young man in Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare likely attended the Stratford grammar school, where he would have studied English, Latin, and Greek. We also know that, at the age of 18, Shakespeare married a woman named Anne Hathaway, with whom he had three children: Susanna, Hamnet, and Judith.

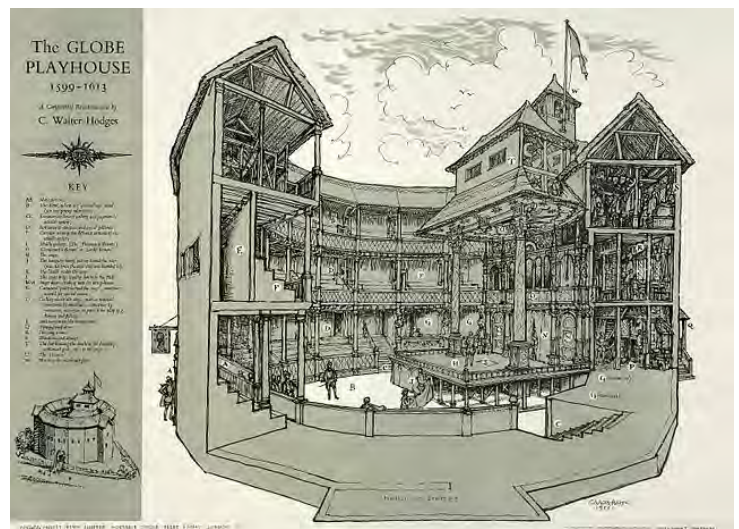


Most of the information we have today on Shakespeare comes from official court documents and references to his written work from his lifetime, including wills, legal records, and written testimonies by other poets. No written references to Shakespeare exist from the time his twins were born in 1585 until he appears in London in 1592. The London years launched Shakespeare's career as a poet and playwright, and the first known printed reference to Shakespeare came in 1598, when the poet Richard Barnfield praised Shakespeare's early poems.

During his twenty years in London, Shakespeare became a shareholder of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, the troupe for which he wrote and acted during Queen Elizabeth's reign. The troupe performed at the Blackfriars Theatre and the Globe Theatre. In order to be an actor at the time, you had to work for a nobleman who could give a company a license to act—to act without a license was a crime, punishable by a prison sentence. Since women were not allowed to perform in England during this time, young men with higher voices played the female parts. Shakespeare himself was an actor, and some scholars believe he might have played King Duncan in *Macbeth*, King Henry in *Henry IV*, Adam in *As You Like It*, and the Ghost of Hamlet's Father in *Hamlet*. Nicholas Rowe, Shakespeare's first biographer, mentioned that Shakespeare's role as "the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*" was "the top of his performance."

When James I became King in 1603, he adopted Shakespeare's company and it became known as The King's Men. By this time, The King's Men were one of the most popular theater troupes in London.

Shakespeare returned to Stratford-upon-Avon before his death in 1616. Seven years later, two of Shakespeare's friends (and former actors) John Heminge and Henry Condell published Shakespeare's complete works in the First Folio. His body of work includes 37 plays, two long poems, and 154 sonnets.



Exploring **Language** in *Romeo and Juliet*

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, 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 on stage.

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 say just what they mean. When reading a play, ask yourself: *why* do the characters use these words, images, or rhymes to express themselves? Try reading a portion of the text out loud to see if it sounds different than you expect when reading to yourself.

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

ANCIENT GRUDGE BREAK TO NEW MUTINY

It's a familiar concept: productions of *Romeo and Juliet* staged in areas of conflict around the world, where the Montagues and the Capulets represent two tribes or cultures in a violent clash: *Romeo and Juliet* in South Africa, *Romeo and Juliet* in Northern Ireland, *Romeo and Juliet* in the segregated south. For what seems like forever, Shakespeare's tale of star-crossed lovers has acted as a vessel for theaters and audiences to engage in dialogue around various socio-political conflicts. The tragic love story and ultimate reconciliation of the families has been used as a mechanism to show audiences the ability for the human spirit to transgress the boundaries of fear, to love across borders, to bloom despite suffocation, and, at the end of the day, to forgive.

While the theme of breaching cultural chasms may seem inherent to the play as we know it, this phenomenon is actually relatively new in the life of *Romeo and Juliet*. It is only since the Second World War that the play has turned from one about passionate love to one about hate—and, ultimately, about reconciliation. In the last sixty years, *Romeo and Juliet* have represented everything from warring white and Puerto Rican street gangs in New York to Serbians and Muslims fleeing Sarajevo; from Palestinians and Israelis in Gaza to Communists and Capitalists in the Soviet Union. After the utter devastation of World War II, and the global confrontation of the capacity for violence in the name of ethnic superiority, theaters seem to find comfort in an interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* as a story of love across seemingly impossible difference. As Renaissance scholar Janette Dillon comments, "The deaths of Romeo and Juliet bring about a new peaceable order, and their love is seen to have had value, indeed power, to change the world."



George Chakiris as Bernardo in the 1961 film of *West Side Story*



The Reconciliation of the Montagues and Capulets over the Dead Bodies of Romeo and Juliet by Frederic Leighton, 1855

When we return to the text itself, however, the perceived divide between the Montagues and the Capulets isn't nearly as cataclysmic as centuries of slavery, colonization, or civil war. The Montagues and Capulets are described as "both alike in dignity," meaning that both families belong to the same social class and hold similar status within Verona. No cultural distinctions are drawn between the families—both are multi-generational citizens of Verona who practice the same religion and speak the same language. Most importantly, there is no traceable source for their centuries long feud. Unlike the socio-political conflicts represented in contemporary productions, the hate between the Capulets and Montagues is merely inherited; the feud is so "ancient" that no one remembers how it started. Given that the play was written about a feud that is, at its core, baseless, it follows that its resolution ought

to be an uncomplicated one; the two families merely need to agree to peace, which they seem to do upon Romeo and Juliet's deaths. What does it do to the resolution of the play to stage the feud in a conflict with a context of colonization, slavery, or other specific power hierarchies? Are *these* feuds so quickly forgiven?

Marriage is Serious Business

From today's perspective, it is hard to believe that Juliet was still a teenager when she secretly married Romeo. But actually, her age would have equally shocked Shakespeare's audience. Women got married around the age of twenty in Elizabethan times—much older than the adolescent Juliet. Her father, although later eager to see his young daughter wed, initially hesitates when Paris approaches him. He asks the eager suitor to wait “two more summers” for Juliet to mature.

Yet Capulet and Paris discuss the wedding without ever asking Juliet what she thinks about him or even if she is interested in marriage. In this way, love and marriage for the Elizabethans completely differed from what they are today. The idea of marrying someone out of love was virtually unheard of. Rather, society regarded marriage as generally a practical matter between two families in the interest of wealth and social status. The bride's family often paid a dowry to the groom's as compensation for the financial responsibility of taking her into his household. Sometimes, parents drew up contracts of betrothal while their children were still young. Marriages were brokered through business negotiation and never a matter of personal choice. The fate of a family could rest on whom the daughter married. Even the kindly Friar Lawrence thinks of marriage in practical terms; he agrees to wed Romeo and Juliet because he thinks it might stop the families' feud.

Londoners may have regarded Romeo and Juliet's intense love as romantic folly, something that could only happen in a faraway country and would inevitably end tragically. In real life, marriage was an important matter that couldn't be decided on feelings alone. Many foreign kings and princes wooed Queen Elizabeth, who regarded her marriage strictly as a matter of national diplomacy. (She remained single throughout her life, guaranteeing England's independence within European politics.) Under such circumstances it is easy to see why obedience to one's father was enforced on children, especially daughters, during this time.

But Shakespeare played with the fantasy of marrying for love and created many female characters who actively take marriage into their own hands. Aside from our daring Juliet, characters such as Jessica in *The Merchant of Venice* and Desdemona in *Othello* secretly elope with men they love against their father's plans. And though these fathers—Capulet, Shylock, and Brabantio—rage and storm with righteous anger, Shakespeare clearly wants us to root for the young lovers. The literature of this period abounded with youths falling deeply in love and defying their parents. Love counted among the most common themes in literature, heavily influenced by the passionate poems and lustful stories of Italian writers such as Petrarch and Boccaccio which many Englishmen read. Shakespeare must have brought to life something that every spectator who had to succumb to reality secretly dreamt of—that might be why his plays were so popular.



A portrait of Queen Elizabeth I, engraved by Francis Delaram in the 1620s

Searching for Gold: Language & Money in *Romeo and Juliet*

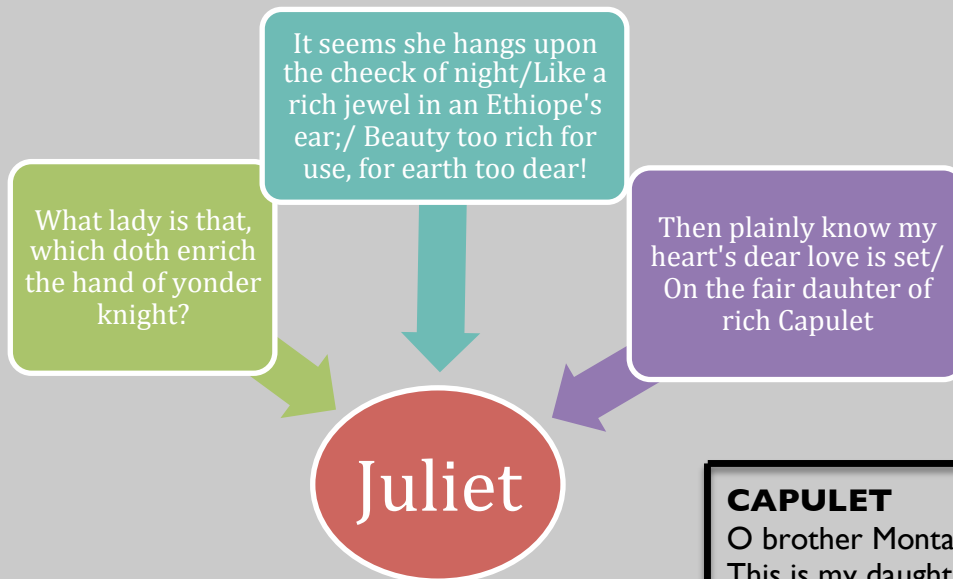


Shakespeare used a lot of imagery to illustrate the themes of his plays, dropping them in like clues for the audience. Many scholars comment on the importance of light and dark in the play, as the lovers describe their love in terms of brightness and sunlight up until Act III, scene 5. Following their exchange about the lark and the nightingale, the central image of their love becomes darkness—culminating in the darkness of the Capulet tomb.

Despite *Romeo and Juliet*'s thematic focus on a profound love between two people of the same high socio-economic class, the play also includes a lot of references to money, possessions, and wealth—particularly in reference to Juliet. What might Shakespeare be saying?

FOR EXAMPLE...

In Act I, scene v, Romeo uses the word “rich” three times to refer to **Juliet**



CAPULET

O brother Montague, give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.

MONTAGUE

But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;
That while Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate be set
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

CAPULET

As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie;

Even at the end of the play, the grieving Capulet and Montague parents can't help but compete with who will build the more opulent statue to honor the lovers.

As you read, keep an eye out for repeated images, and think about what they're telling you about the scene or the characters!

The Major Role of Minor Characters

Shakespeare's "star-crossed lovers" are literature's best known couple; their names synonymous with romantic passion. Yet, from a friendly friar to their feuding families, it's the minor characters of the play who shape *Romeo and Juliet*'s tragic destiny. They raise the stakes, lighten the mood, and choose when—and when not—to intervene. Filling many dramatic functions, these supporting characters are both vivid and vital.

BLOCKING FIGURES

A blocking figure is a character who impedes the union of a play's central couple. While Shakespeare wasn't the first to use this dramatic device (which dates back to ancient Greek comedy), he created memorable blocking figures in *Romeo and Juliet*: the county Paris, and Lord and Lady Capulet. Lady Capulet may praise the nobly born Paris as a "precious book of love" (1.3.87), but Juliet would rather die than marry anyone other than Romeo. Enraged at his daughter's defiance, crying "Out, you baggage!" (3.5.156), Lord Capulet regrets his unyielding strictness too late.



CONFIDANTES AND MESSENGERS

Trusted with the secret of Romeo and Juliet's love, sage Friar Lawrence and the prattling Nurse serve as a matching pair of confidantes. As Juliet pleads, after Romeo kills Tybalt, "Hast thou not a word of joy?/Some comfort, Nurse!" (3.5.211-212). The confidante can also take a more active role as a messenger or go-between. After the Nurse helps arrange for Romeo and Juliet to marry, Friar Lawrence conducts the secret wedding ceremony. Ironically, it's a messenger who ultimately dooms the lovers. Delayed by an ill-timed quarantine, Friar John fails to tell Romeo that his beloved is merely dozing in the Capulet tomb.

FOILS

Using dramatic contrast, playwrights often define one character through a foil, or opposite personality type. Although Romeo and Mercutio are close friends, Romeo's idealistic nature is worlds apart from his pal's mercurial mockeries. While Romeo yearns for Juliet, Mercutio scorns love as a lustful delusion, born of the "fairies' midwife" Queen Mab. She "gallops night by night/Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love" (1.4.70-71). Similarly, Shakespeare uses Rosaline as Juliet's foil. Rosaline's beauty may be "starved with her severity" (1.1.217), but Juliet is a warmly impetuous young woman, confessing to Romeo on her balcony that she is already "too fond" (2.2.98).

COMIC RELIEF

In his tragedies, Shakespeare uses minor characters for pacing, tonal variety, and comic relief: think of *Hamlet's* gravedigger and the drunken Porter in *Macbeth*. In *Romeo and Juliet*, Peter, an illiterate Capulet servant, is another tragic clown. Charged with delivering invitations for Capulet's ball, Peter asks Romeo, "God, gi' good e'en; I pray, sir, can you read?" (1.2.57), unleashing a chain of verbal blunders. Peter is also a figure of comic irony; his ignorance unwittingly enlightens Romeo. As Romeo reads the guest list aloud to Peter, he discovers that Rosaline will be among the "fair assembly" (1.2.73) of Capulet's party. Despite being "of the house of Montague" (1.2.81-82), Romeo decides momentarily to attend the ball, where he will find a love better than Rosaline.

Using minor characters, Shakespeare builds *Romeo and Juliet* into a world of thematic contrasts. The rich and the poor, the young and the old, lovers and clowns, dreamers and fighters: all mingle colorfully in Shakespeare's dramatic medley.



Sketches by Fabian Fidel Aguilar, costume designer for Westport Country Playhouse's *Romeo and Juliet*

Before Seeing *Romeo and Juliet*

I. Questions to Consider: Going to the Theater

- What are the differences between live theater and cinema? What is the responsibility of an audience when watching a play? What is the responsibility of an audience when watching a Shakespeare play?
- When you get into the theater, look around. What do you see? Observe the lighting instruments around the room and on the ceiling. Look at the set. Does it look realistic or abstract? Try to guess how the set will be used during the show.
- Discuss the elements that go into producing a live performance: The lights, set, props, costumes, and stage direction. All the people involved in the “behind the scenes” elements of the theater are working backstage as the play unfolds before the students’ eyes. Tell them to be aware of this as they watch the show. Observe the lighting cues. How do special effects work? How do the actors change costumes so fast?
- Pay attention to when you’re excited about something on stage. What excited you? Pay attention to when you’re bored. Why were you bored? What would you have done differently to make the play more interesting? Actors in a live performance are very attuned to the audience and are interested in the students’ reactions to the play. Ask the students to write letters to the actors about the characters they played and to ask questions of the actors.



2. Questions to Consider: The Play

- Research Fortune as the Elizabethans understood it. Make the case that life is governed by fortune or fate. Define free will. Make the case that life is governed by free will. In what way can life be governed by both free will *and* fortune? This and other website provide information:
<http://ise.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/drama/medievaltragedy.html>
- What is a feud or a vendetta? What are some of the reasons feuds develop? What keeps feuds going for generations? Why is it difficult to end feuds peacefully? How common were feuds in Renaissance Italy? In Elizabethan England? When did feuds become illegal? Give examples of feuds from books, films, and/or contemporary news.
- What is honor? What does it mean to defend someone’s honor? To defend your own honor? The honor of your family? What were the recognized means of defending and preserving honor during the Renaissance? For men? For women? How far were people willing to go for the sake of honor? What role did duels play in defending honor during the Renaissance? These and other websites provide information:
<http://elizabethan.org/compendium/26.html>

After Seeing *Romeo and Juliet*

1. Love:

- a. In *Romeo and Juliet*, love is a violent, ecstatic, and overpowering force that supersedes all other values, loyalties, and emotions. What is positive about this kind of passion? What is negative about it? How can love overwhelm a person the way it overwhelms Romeo and Juliet? In what way does romantic love overshadow other forms of love in this play? In what way does it not?

2. Time:

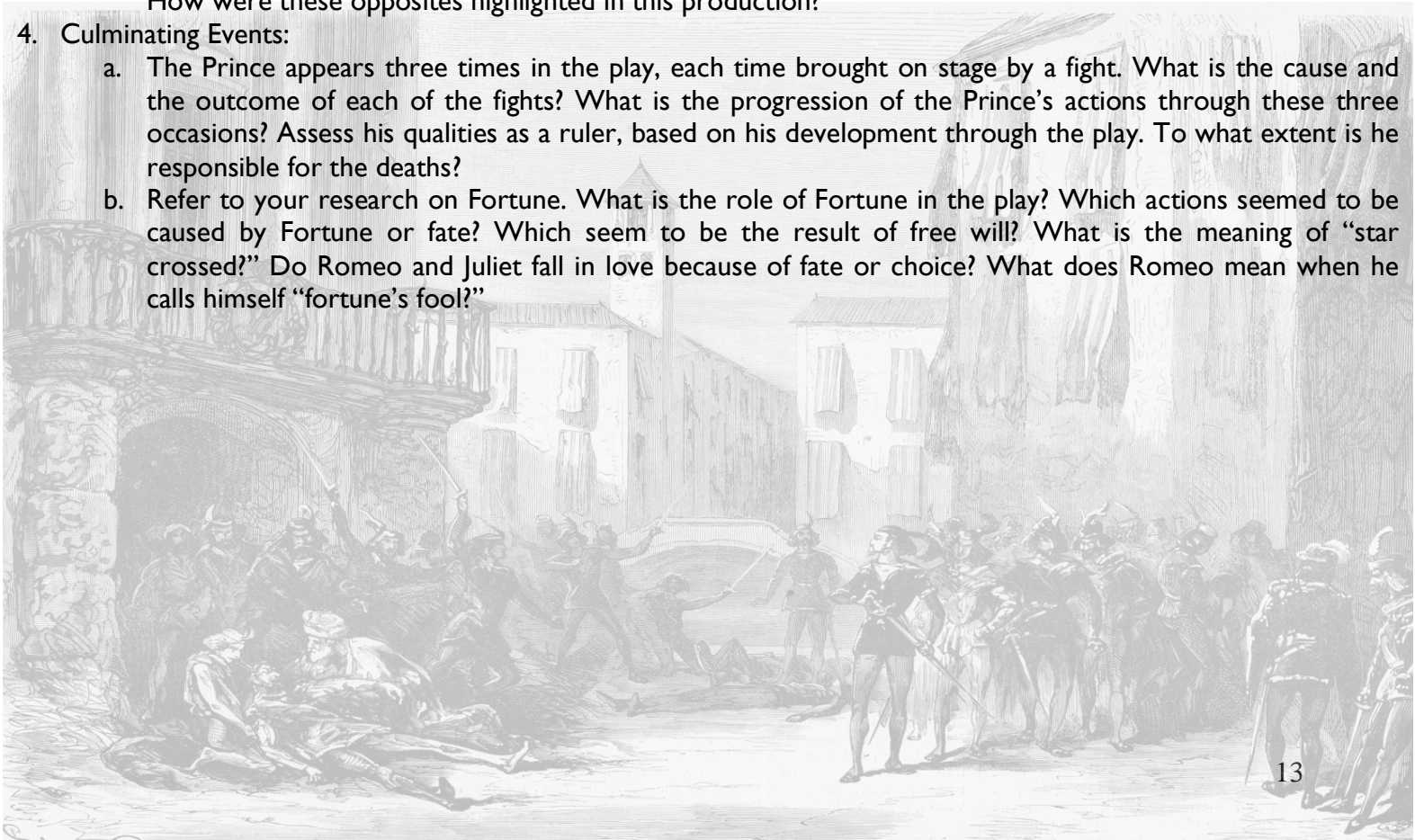
- a. Citing passages from the text, make a precise schedule of the play's events: day of the week, time of day, occurrence. What is the role of time in the unfolding of events? What is the effect of having such monumental events happen in such a short time? How does this impact the quick decisions characters make in the world of the play? What effect do these decisions have on the course of events? Which decisions, had they been different, might have changed the fate of *Romeo and Juliet*?

3. Language:

- a. At their first meeting (Act I, scene v, lines 92-109), Romeo and Juliet create an extended image together. Describe it. What does it foreshadow about their future relationship?
- b. In the book *Shakespeare's Imagery*, Caroline F.E. Spurgeon notes that in *Romeo and Juliet*, "The dominating image is light, every form and manifestation of it: the sun, moon, stars, fire, lightening, the flash of gunpowder, the reflected light of beauty and love; while by contrast we have night, darkness, clouds, rain, mist, and smoke." Find examples in the text where Shakespeare uses imagery of light and contrasts it with darkness or night. What does light—and darkness—represent for the lovers? Why does Shakespeare use these images? What effect do these images have on you?
- c. *Romeo and Juliet* is a play filled with opposites: comedy/tragedy, old/young, fast/slow, rapture/despair, love/hate, life/death, celebrating/mourning, tenderness/violence, freedom/limitations. Find examples in the text of these opposites. What effect do these contrasting images have on you as an audience member? How were these opposites highlighted in this production?

4. Culminating Events:

- a. The Prince appears three times in the play, each time brought on stage by a fight. What is the cause and the outcome of each of the fights? What is the progression of the Prince's actions through these three occasions? Assess his qualities as a ruler, based on his development through the play. To what extent is he responsible for the deaths?
- b. Refer to your research on Fortune. What is the role of Fortune in the play? Which actions seemed to be caused by Fortune or fate? Which seem to be the result of free will? What is the meaning of "star crossed?" Do Romeo and Juliet fall in love because of fate or choice? What does Romeo mean when he calls himself "fortune's fool?"



Further **Reading** and **Resources**

BOOKS

Gurr, Andrew & Ichikawa, Mariko. *Staging in Shakespeare's Theatres*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Kermonde, Frank. *Shakespeare's Language*. Penguin Press, 2000.

Loehlin, James N. ed. *Shakespeare in Production: Romeo and Juliet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

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Porter, Joseph A., *Shakespeare's Mercutio: His History and Drama*, University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Crystal, David and Ben Crystal, *Shakespeare's Words: A Glossary and Language Companion*, New York: Penguin Books, 2002.

Garber, Marjorie, *Shakespeare After All*, Pantheon, 2004.

Greenblatt, Stephen, *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*, New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2004.

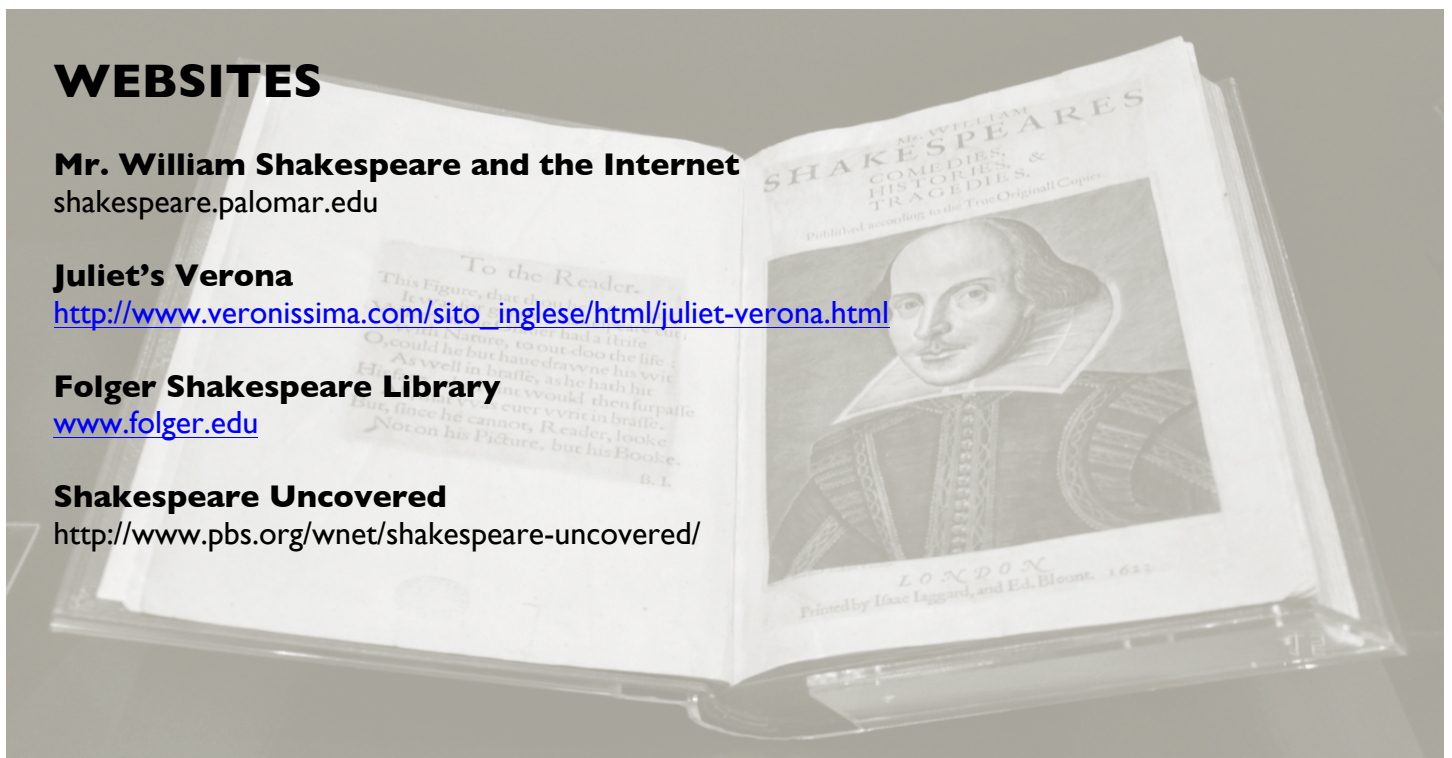
WEBSITES

Mr. William Shakespeare and the Internet
shakespeare.palomar.edu

Juliet's Verona
http://www.veronissima.com/sito_inglese/html/juliet-verona.html

Folger Shakespeare Library
www.folger.edu

Shakespeare Uncovered
<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/shakespeare-uncovered/>



About **Westport Country Playhouse**

Westport Country Playhouse is a nationally recognized, not-for-profit, professional theater under the artistic direction of Mark Lamos and management leadership of Michael Barker. The mission of Westport Country Playhouse is to enrich, enlighten, and engage our community through the power of professionally produced theater worth talking about and the welcoming experience of our Playhouse campus.

Originally built in 1835 as a tannery manufacturing hatters' leathers, it became a steam-powered cider mill in 1880, later to be abandoned in the 1920s. Splendidly transformed into a theater in 1931, it initially served as a try-out house for Broadway transfers, evolving into an established stop on the New England straw hat circuit of summer stock theaters through the end of the 20th century. Following a multi-million dollar renovation completed in 2005, the Playhouse became a state-of-the-art producing theater, preserving its original charm and character.

Today, the not-for-profit Westport Country Playhouse serves as a cultural nexus for patrons, artists and students and is a treasured resource for the State of Connecticut. There are no boundaries to the creative thinking for future seasons or the kinds of audiences and excitement for theater that Westport Country Playhouse can build.

