

American Players Theatre
Presents



William Shakespeare's

ROMEO *and* JULIET

2014 Study Guide



American Players Theatre / PO Box 819 / Sprng Green, WI 53588
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ROMEO AND JULIET BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

2014 STUDY GUIDE

Cover Photo: Melisa Pereyra and Christopher Sheard.

All photos by Carissa Dixon.

MANY THANKS!

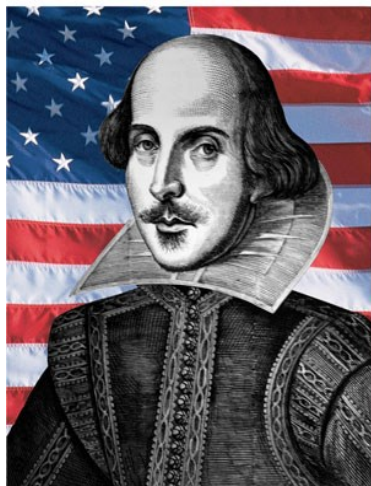
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If you have any questions or comments regarding the exercises or the information within this study guide, please contact Emily Beck, Education Coordinator, at 608-588-9207, or ebeck@americanplayers.org.

Who's Who in Romeo and Juliet

Descriptions from The Essential Shakespeare Handbook



Juliet (Melisa Pereyra)
Youngest of the Capulet family, she is uninterested in marriage until she sets eyes on Romeo at her family's ball.

Romeo (Christopher Sheard)
Youngest of the Montague family, a young man of extreme passion (though he is mocked for it by his friends). He loves Juliet more than his kinsmen hate her family.



Escalus (James Pickering)
Prince of Verona, he forbids the Montagues and Capulets from brawling on the street on pain of death.



Mercutio (Nate Burger)
Kinsman to the prince and friend to Romeo, he wields words more deftly than weapons.

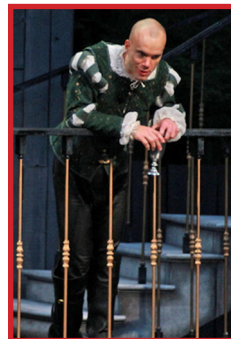


Lady Capulet (Tracy Michelle Arnold)
Wife to Capulet, she finds it difficult to communicate with her teenage daughter.

Capulet (James Ridge)
Head of the Capulet household, he loves his daughter and believes his plans are in her best interest.



Juliet's Nurse (Colleen Madden)
Adored and trusted by Juliet, she counsels the couple and helps arrange their wedding.



Tybalt (Eric Parks)
Beloved nephew of the Capulets, his hatred of the Montagues runs deep. He's mockingly called the "King of Cats" after a character of the same name in the folktale "Reynard the Fox".

Who's Who in Romeo and Juliet



Paris (Matt Schwader)
A young nobleman, kinsman to the Prince, he expects to marry Juliet.

Benvolio (Jeb Burris)
Nephew to Montague and friend to Romeo, Benvolio is usually the guy trying to keep the peace.



Montague (John Taylor Phillips)
Head of the Montague household.



Lady Montague
(Anne E. Thompson)
Romeo's mother, she grieves heavily when her son is banished by Escalus.



Friar Laurence (John Pribyl)
A Franciscan monk, he marries Romeo and Juliet and helps them hatch their ill-fated plans.

An Apothecary (Abbey Siegworth)
Down on her luck, she reluctantly sells Romeo poison.



Peter (Marco Lama)
Servant to Juliet's nurse.



ABOUT THE PLAY

On the streets of Verona, a brawl breaks out between Montague and Capulet servants who, like their masters, are sworn enemies. To stop the bloodshed in this long-standing vendetta between the families, Prince Escalus breaks up the fight and declares that further breach of the peace will be punishable by death. In the Capulet household, talks are underway for the County Paris to marry Capulet's daughter Juliet, but he asks Paris to wait another two years due to his daughter's youth. Lady Capulet and Juliet's nurse try to persuade Juliet to accept Paris' courtship, while Juliet doesn't really feel much like getting **MARRIED**, and says that she's never really considered it.

MARRIED: It's generally believed that people married very young in Elizabethan times, that's not quite true. The average age was 23 for brides and 25-26 for grooms, slightly younger among the nobility.

MERCUTIO: The name Mercutio is similar to the word "mercurial," an adjective meaning "subject to sudden or unpredictable changes of mood or mind"—an apt description for Shakespeare's character.

Meanwhile, Benvolio talks with his cousin Romeo (of the Montagues) about Romeo's recent depression. It turns out he has a crush on a girl named Rosaline who doesn't seem interested in him. Persuaded by Benvolio, Romeo attends the ball at the Capulet house in hopes of meeting Rosaline. Once there, though, he gets cold feet due to an ominous dream he'd had. His friend **MERCUTIO** tells him he has been visited by **QUEEN MAB**, talks him out of his superstitious beliefs and the group heads in to the ball.

Instead of Rosaline, Romeo sees Juliet and is completely captivated by her, saying "O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright." When he approaches her, the feeling is mutual and the two fall immediately in love.

QUEEN MAB: According to Mercutio, she is the cute little bringer of dreams. But he may be suggesting that dreams (especially Romeo's) are silly and insignificant to make fun of his friend for being a mope.

Juliet's cousin Tybalt isn't feeling the love - he is enraged that a Montague snuck into the ball, and is only stopped from killing Romeo by Juliet's father, who doesn't want bloodshed during his party. Tybalt agrees not to cause problems, but tells Juliet that Romeo is a Montague, and therefore her sworn enemy.

After the ball Romeo once more sneaks back to the Capulet house. Beneath Juliet's balcony, he overhears her at her window vowing her love to him in spite of her family's hatred of the Montagues. Romeo makes himself known to her, professes his love and the two decide to marry. With the help of Friar Laurence, who hopes to reconcile the two warring families through their children's union, they are secretly married the next day.

DUEL: The swords that the men fight with are likely rapiers, which are lighter and faster to use than bigger blades. These are similar to the swords used in fencing today.

Tybalt, meanwhile, still furious that Romeo had crashed the Capulet ball, challenges him to a **DUEL**. Romeo, now considering Tybalt to be his kinsman, refuses to fight. Mercutio is offended by Tybalt's insolence, as well as Romeo's "vile submission," and accepts the duel on Romeo's behalf. Mercutio is fatally wounded when Romeo attempts to break up the fight. Grief-stricken and wracked with guilt, Romeo confronts and slays Tybalt.

On Benvolio's advice, Romeo flees the scene.

Montague argues that Romeo has justly executed Tybalt for the murder of Mercutio. The Prince, now having lost a kinsman (Mercutio) in the warring families' ongoing battles, banishes Romeo from Verona forever under penalty of death. Having assumed the Prince was going to order that Romeo be executed, this seems like a fair punishment to everyone except Romeo, who considers it a sentence worse than death.

BANISHMENT, like the kind facing Romeo, was used for crimes that weren't serious enough for the death penalty, although in reality banishments were very rare.

Juliet learns from her Nurse that not only is her beloved cousin Tybalt dead, her new husband is the one who killed him. She is justifiably conflicted. Juliet is just as upset with Romeo's **BANISHMENT**, and wonders if death will visit her before her husband does. But with the help of Juliet's nurse, Romeo is ushered to Juliet's room and the two spend the night together, even as her

father is agreeing to marry her off to Paris.

When her parents approach her with her impending marriage, Juliet tries to refuse, unable to tell them that she's already married. Her father threatens to disown her and storms away. When she then pleads for the marriage to be delayed, her mother also rejects her.

Juliet visits **FRIAR LAURENCE** for help, and he offers her a drug that will put her into a deathlike coma for "two and forty hours." The Friar promises to send a messenger to inform Romeo of the plan, so that he can join her when she wakes up. On the night before the wedding, she takes the drug and, when discovered apparently dead, her bereaved family places her in the family crypt.

FRIAR LAURENCE: In Elizabethan time, a doctor's care was quite expensive, so clergymen (like Friar Laurence) often learned about plants and herbs so they could provide medicinal treatment for the poor.

The **PLAGUE** that prevents the messenger from delivering his letter is likely the bubonic plague, which claimed over 100 thousand lives in London alone - including that of William Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet.

Friar Laurence's messenger, however, is quarantined due to an outbreak of the **PLAGUE**, and does not reach Romeo with the news of the plan. Instead, Romeo hears that Juliet is dead, and, heartbroken, he buys poison from an apothecary and goes to the Capulet crypt.

Romeo encounters Paris, who has come to mourn Juliet privately. Believing Romeo to be a vandal, Paris confronts him and, after trying to discourage Paris from fighting, Romeo reluctantly kills him. Still believing Juliet to be dead, Romeo drinks his poison. Juliet then awakens and, finding Romeo dead, stabs herself with his dagger.

The feuding families and the Prince meet at the tomb and are shocked to find the bodies. Friar Laurence tells them the whole story, and takes responsibility for his role in their deaths. The Prince begs them again to stop fighting, saying "The heavens find means to kill your joys with love." He then sends everyone home, postponing pardons and punishment, and mourning all that was lost.

MORE ABOUT ROMEO AND JULIET

Though framed by violence, *Romeo and Juliet* is one of Shakespeare's most lyrical plays. The language is 88% poetry - some of the most beautiful in the English language. This play is full of images about light, sun, moon, and stars. For example: "star-crossed lovers," "she doth teach the torches to burn bright," "arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon," and "when he shall die, cut him out into little stars." It obviously speaks to people. There is a house in Verona, Italy with a beautiful balcony that's called *Casa di Giulietta*, or "Juliet's house." Though she never actually lived there, visitors stick love notes to the house's walls, in the hopes that they will stay with their lover forever.

American Players Theatre's *Romeo and Juliet*



Melisa Pereyra and Christopher Sheard in the famous "Balcony Scene"

William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is widely considered the greatest love story of all times. It provided us with the term "star-crossed lovers", the universal phrase for love that is simply not meant to be. The plight of these two young lovers is so affecting that back in Elizabethan times, theater groups regularly changed the ending to a happy one. The story is so embedded in our consciousness and culture that remakes pop up all the time (whether you realize it or not). Examples include *Romeo + Juliet* starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes, and, less obviously, the musical *West Side Story*, ABC Family's 2005 TV movie *Pizza My Heart* and even Isaac Marion's zombie film *Warm Bodies*.

everybody's actually trying to do their best. Even Capulet and Tybalt – some of the characters that usually seem unsympathetic or evil," says Jim. "And that's the tragedy of it, the irony of it: well-intentioned mothers and fathers and friars trying to help these two kids and it does not work out. So I think my vision as a director was just trying to stay out of the way, and to have the actors look for the hope and happiness in this play, rather than the tragedy."

Director Jim DeVita approached his version of *Romeo and Juliet* a little differently. He believes strongly that all of the characters are good people, who might be a little misguided. "In this production,

Romeo and Juliet is a story framed by violence, but the central issue is love – of all sorts, but particularly first love. Christopher Sheard, who plays Romeo says of the play: "It is the first time for these people that they are experiencing these feelings. I think that we all can kind of remember that first time you had these feelings and what that is like. Our director, Jim DeVita, has staged it in a way that you can't help but feel that. There's this beautiful music playing the first time we actually catch eyes with each other, and when we approach one another for the very first time, it just sort of sets that up. As actors, we create characters whose minds are going a mile a minute, because that's what's great about first love: your mind and your body and your soul are going a mile a minute. You don't stop to think. It's just happening right in front of you."

Fate is a major theme in this play, a fact stated at the end with heartbreaking plainness by the Prince, who says "heaven finds means to kill your joys with love." Melisa Pereyra, who plays Juliet, agrees that fate has a heavy hand here, but believes the families' vendetta is feeding that. "At the core of this play, what's at stake are not just the lives of these people but the fact that none of it had to happen. None of it. There's a generational disconnect. The play starts and the parents say, 'I think we can keep the peace.' But when you've spent your whole life teaching your children to hate, and finally they're old enough and wise enough to say, 'okay, let's stop this,' the damage is done. Over time, it becomes big and uncontrollable. That's how we end up fighting for things we don't even understand. That's what happens in this play and I think that's what makes it so vivid and so real and so relevant. That none of it had to happen, and you hope that love and these two kids were enough to make it stop. But it isn't."

The idea of a generation gap is particularly relevant to *Romeo and Juliet*, since it's a story that means different things as you experience it at different points in your life. If you're in school, you probably identify most with the title characters.



Director Jim DeVita and Production Stage Manager Evelyn Matten, at *Romeo and Juliet* rehearsal.



Tracy Michelle Arnold and James Ridge play Juliet's parents.

But when parents see it, they're seeing it from a different angle. This is an idea that director Jim DeVita kept close when he was preparing to direct this production. "I think *Romeo and Juliet*, like any great piece of literature, if you visit it every five years of your life it's going to mean something different to you," says Jim. "Now that I have children, some of those scenes at the end are almost unbearable. So the 10 year old and the 15 year old that come to see this play should hear it differently than the 60 year old. And that's the beauty of great literature: it doesn't just speak to one generation. It speaks across the board. Life experience changes the way you hear literature. "

The characters at the center of this story are teenagers, with typical (and not so typical) teenage problems, like testing their parents' boundaries. Jim says "That's why kids connect with this story. It's not just the romance, it's also the relationship with their parents. Romeo and Juliet encounter all the traps of being at home and trying to be themselves; being at that age when they feel mature but aren't quite mature enough to make all their own decisions - or at least their parents see it that way. Those tensions are part of growing up."

The idea of family – how families interact amongst themselves and with others and what it means to be a family – is central to the story of *Romeo and Juliet*. The families' vendetta is all-consuming to the younger generation of characters, even if they don't know why they're fighting. The Montague and Capulet families told their children who their enemies are, and nobody stopped to question it until Romeo and Juliet met and fell in love.

An interesting perspective on the subject of family and how it forms comes from Colleen Madden, who plays Juliet's nurse in this production. According to Colleen, the nurse is "about three hearts deep. What I mean by that is that she's got these circles around her – so Juliet, Lord and Lady Capulet, and then maybe the wider Capulet circle, that's where she exists. When the Nurse meets Romeo, he is now in that "three-heart-deep circle". So he doesn't live for me as a Montague, he lives for me as Romeo, Juliet's love. When I meet Mercutio for the first time, he's just part of this clack of men, the Montagues. And there's a bit of distance and there's some formality and there are even some insults. But once that blows over, I don't think she sees them as Montagues anymore. She sees them as boys. She understands that there's this simmering, near-boil happening in Verona, but I don't think it affects her much until these people get pulled into it. She abides by the rules until some of those hearts in the "three-heart-deep circle" are involved. Then she breaks the rules. She responds to the heart right in front of her."

The Nurse's relationship with Juliet may be simpler than Juliet's relationship with her parents. The Capulets have been trained by history to hate her husband, and they obviously don't understand her reluctance to marry Paris.

"The relationship that Juliet has with adults is complicated at best," says Melisa. "I feel like Juliet's relationship with the Nurse is the easiest in many ways. At first, the Nurse is helping Juliet get to Romeo. But when that stops, things go awry and get complicated. And that happens in our lives. When you're 15 and don't get something from your mom, you go to somebody who you can talk to who will understand you. I think that that's the Nurse for Juliet. The Nurse always knows what to say. She knows how to tease her, but she also knows how to comfort her. She knows when she's pushed her too far. So it's a relationship that is incredibly strong at the beginning and, because of that, when you see it fall apart in the second act it's so heartbreaking."



Juliet's complicated family including her Nurse (Colleen Madden).



Romeo and his pals in the good times.

While the Capulets are a pretty major presence throughout the play, you don't see as much of the Montagues, a strategy that Chris says helps develop Romeo as a character. "I kind of love that Shakespeare doesn't give us a lot of time with Romeo and his family, because it sort of tells us who this guy might be. You don't see his family because he doesn't communicate with them much. We're doing something a little different with the families than I've done (I've been in the play several times, though I've never played Romeo). Capulet is usually the harsh patriarch and Montague is more of the caring, loving dad. In this, we've swapped it a little bit. Capulet is desperately trying to keep his daughter safe and do the right thing for her, get her married to someone who may bring her out of this feud. And Montague starts the play off demanding 'Where is my son? He should be working.

He should be spending time with his family. Instead he's been

out in the woods reading books and reading poetry.' I think the reason Shakespeare doesn't give Romeo a big family life onstage is so we can see that Romeo is searching for something outside of his family and outside of the ties that he has, and that he is looking for a different kind of love."

The lack of parental supervision gives us more time with Romeo's friend Mercutio, who wants to make his friend happy, but quickly loses patience with him when he doesn't go along with his plans; and Benvolio, the peacekeeper who can't quite seem to keep the peace. Along with Friar Laurence, these are the people who counsel him on love, cheer him up when he's sad. Friar Laurence in particular sees Romeo and Juliet's successful marriage as a way to end the feud between the families, so he goes against what might be seen as his better judgement to help these two personally, because he loves them, and also because he believes that it will contribute to the greater good of Verona.

Romeo and Juliet is just as much about hope as it is about heartbreak, and how the decisions people make, regardless of how good the intentions, or how wise the decision makers might be, can lead to tragic ends. Director Jim DeVita says "Rather than this tragic story, I actually think the play is full of hope and possibility, even when things start going wrong. It's not three hours of a tragedy. It's three hours of 'this is not going to be a tragedy'. And of course, we as the audience have the irony of knowing it's not going to work out, sorry guys."



While the plays start with the director's vision, design has a huge impact on how we see the plays. Sets and sound and costume tell their own stories about how the characters operate within the world of the play.



Romeo and Friar Laurence in the bad times.

Long-time APT scenic designer Takeshi Kata designed the set for *Romeo and Juliet*. Obviously the balcony for the famous "balcony scene" was central to his design ideas, but there's more to this play than that one scene. "I think there were a few central things that were important in this design process for me. One is where the balcony is, so that you have a strong relationship between Romeo and Juliet when they're having that famous balcony scene. But the other thing that's really interesting about *Romeo and Juliet* is that it doesn't happen in a vacuum. There's a great sense of public, the world around them, that opposes this relationship. All the characters go through what they want to do in private and what they have to do in public. Even in the first fight scene, I think the young kids posture and fight because they're in public. And if they're not in public, the fight probably won't happen. Similarly, Tybalt gets humiliated right in the middle of the party because he thinks kicking Romeo out is the right thing to do. But this is a very important party for Capulet, and he doesn't want



A model of the *Romeo and Juliet* set, designed by Takeshi Kata.

a fuss. So Tybalt gets humiliated, which then leads to him feeling like he needs to beat up Romeo later. So the public sphere is important, and one of the things we talked about at length is how to create that sense of community in the world surrounding all of these characters.”

Of course designing this play is different at APT because of the outdoor stage. This presents both opportunities and challenges to APT’s design teams. “It is, in a way, minimalist,” continues Tak, “because APT has a beautiful built-in barn board space, it’s very difficult to work in that space if you try to impose something upon it. Over the 13 years I’ve tried many different configurations, many different ideas, but what seems to work well is to really think about an aesthetic that seems like it’s coming out of the structure that exists already. Trying to alter it a little bit, but not really trying to impose a different aesthetic on top of it.”

Costume design is just as important to the story. What the characters wear tell you things about their lives, class and even personality. Rachel Anne Healy, another veteran designer at APT, designed the sumptuous costumes for *Romeo and Juliet*.

Rachel says “I think that the costumes should look like clothes. So I was trying very hard for the clothes to reflect the character first - what the internal character was telling me, and then how the characters relate to each other. So, for example, the Montagues even though not all of them are Montagues are more of a laboring class. Color of sand and oatmeal and tans. Colors of the earth, because they’re people that work with their hands. And then the Capulets, who are more of the merchant class, they have more opulent clothes, with more jewel tones.”



The set in real life.



Rachel’s costume rendering of Romeo and Juliet at the ball.

Producing a play is always a group effort. Everyone from actors to designers to the production assistants who changeover the sets (sometimes in less than an hour!) play a part in what you see. Student matinees are particularly fun for the people who work on the plays.

“I try to tell the story to the best of my ability, as clearly and as vividly as I can” says Jim. “Of course I want it to be interesting and all that, but not much changes depending on the audience, which is great. But it’s great for the actors, to get a thousand teenagers out there.”

Romeo and Juliet Photo Summary



What, drawn,
and talk of
peace! I hate
the word, as
I hate hell, all
Montagues
and thee. Have
at thee,
coward!

-Tybalt,
Act I scene 1.

At the top of the play, we learn the longstanding feud between the Montague and Capulet families boils over quickly and often. Though Benvolio (of the Montagues) tries to keep the peace, an incident between family servants turns violent.

If ever you disturb our streets again,
your lives shall pay the forfeit of the
peace.

- Prince Escalus, Act I scene 1.



Lady Capulet:
Tell me, daughter
Juliet, how stands
your disposition
to be married?
Juliet: It is an
honor that I
dream not of.
- Act I scene 3.



At the Capulet household, Juliet's father has agreed for her to marry Paris. Her nurse and mother sing his praises, but Juliet is uninterested.

The Prince is forced to step in and threaten everyone's life if they don't stop fighting.

If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire of this sir-reverence
love, wherein thou stick'st up to the ears.
Come, we burn daylight, ho!
- Mercutio, Act I scene 4.



Romeo, youngest of the Montagues, is not interested in fighting, as he's busy pining for a girl named Rosaline. His friends try to convince him to get over it by crashing a Capulet ball.

Juliet: For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands
do touch, and palm to palm is holy palmer's kiss.
Romeo: Have not saints lips,
and holy palmer's too?
Juliet: Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must
use in prayer.
Romeo: O, then, dear saint,
let lips do what hands do.
- Act I scene 5



Instead of Rosaline, Romeo meets Juliet, and the two fall hopelessly in love.



Patience perforce with wilful choler
meeting makes my flesh tremble in their
different greeting. I will withdraw: but this
intrusion shall now seeming over convert
to bitter gall.
- Tybalt, Act I scene 5

Angry that Montagues have invaded the Capulet ball, Tybalt means to kill Romeo, but Capulet tells him he won't allow bloodshed at the party. Tybalt relents, but swears revenge.



Romeo returns to the Capulet's orchard, overwhelmed by his feelings for Juliet. She sees him outside, and the two profess their love and decide to get married.

❖ If that thy bent of love be honourable, thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow, by one that I'll procure to come to thee, where and what time thou wilt perform the rite; and all my fortunues at they foot I'll lay and follow thee my lord throughout the world.
- Juliet, Act II scene 2

Romeo: O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.
Friar Laurence: Wisely and slow, they stumble that run fast.
Act II scene 3



Romeo visits his mentor, Friar Laurence, and asks him to secretly marry the young couple. The Friar agrees, seeing it as a way to fix the feud between the families, but he tells Romeo to be cautious.

Bid her devise some means to come to shrift this afternoon; and there she shall at Friar Laurence' cell be shrived and married.
- Romeo, Act II scene 4



Juliet sends her nurse to meet Romeo, but she's greeted first by Romeo's friends, who are wondering what she's doing there. When Romeo is finally able to shake off their questions and talk to the nurse privately, he tells her to ask Juliet to meet him at Friar Laurence's that afternoon so they can be married.



Come, come with me, and we will make short work; for,
by your leaves, you shall not stay alone
till holy church incorporate two in one.
- Friar Laurence, Act II scene 6



Romeo and Juliet are married by Friar Laurence, though Romeo gives up some foreshadowing when he says “Do thou but close our hands with holy words, then love-devouring death can do what he dare.”

Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives;
that I mean to make bold withal, and as you shall use me
hereafter, drybeat the rest of your eight.
- Mercutio, Act III scene 1



Tybalt has challenged Romeo to a duel for the earlier party crashing. When Romeo arrives on the scene, he refuses to fight, saying he now loves Tybalt as a kinsman. Mercutio offers to take him on instead, and when Romeo tries to break up the fight, Tybalt kills Mercutio and flees. But then he returns, and Romeo kills Tybalt in a fit of grief and rage.

I will be deaf to pleading and excuses; nor tears nor prayers shall
purchase out abuses: Therefore use none: let Romeo hence in haste,
else when he's found, that hour is his last.
- Prince Escalus, Act III scene 1



The Capulets and Montagues arrive on the scene, along with the Prince, and Benvolio tells them what happened. Though the Capulets want revenge for Tybalt's death, the Prince says no, saying that he's also lost a kinsman, and orders that Romeo be banished rather than executed.

What storm is this that blows so contrary?
Is Romeo slaughter'd, and is Tybalt dead?
My dear-loved cousin, and my dearer lord?
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general
doom! For who is living if those two are
gone?

- Juliet, Act III scene 2



Juliet finds out that Romeo killed Tybalt and is conflicted about how she should feel.



Go hence; good night;
and here stands all your
state: either be gone
before the watch be set,
or by the break of day
disguised from hence:
Sojourn in Mantua.
- Friar Laurence,
Act III scene 3

Romeo is devastated by his punishment because it means he can't see Juliet. The Friar and Nurse tell him to get over it, and arrange for him to see Juliet before his departure.



But that a joy past joy calls out
on me, it were a grief, so brief
to part with thee.
- Romeo Act III scene 3

Romeo arrives at Juliet's chamber not knowing how she'll feel about him, but she accepts him and they spend the night together.



O' Thursday, tell her, she shall be married to this noble earl. Will you be ready? Do you like this haste? We'll keep no great ado, a friend or two; for, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late it may be thought we held him carelessly.

- Capulet, Act III scene 4

In light of the recent violence, Capulet decides to allow Paris to marry Juliet right away.

Juliet: O think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

Romeo: I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve for sweet discourses in our time to come.

- Act III scene 5



Juliet wants Romeo to stay with her, but after it sinks in that he'll really be executed if he's caught, agrees to let him go. They say goodbye.



Hang thee, young baggage! Disobedient wretch! I tell thee what: get thee to church o' Thursday, or never after look me in the face.

- Capulet, Act III scene 5

Juliet's parents come to tell her the "good" news about Paris, and when she refuses to marry him, they renounce her.



If, in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,
do thou but call my resolution wise, and
with this knife I'll help it presently.
- Juliet, Act IV scene 1

Desperate to see her husband, Juliet visits Friar Laurence, and the two of them come up with a plan. Juliet will take a drug that makes it seem like she's dead. The Friar will send word of the plan to Romeo, who will then return and the two will leave together.

Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day! Most
miserable hour that e'er time saw in lasting labor
of his pilgrimage! But one, poor one, one poor and
loving child, but one thing to rejoice and solace in,
and cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight!

Lady Capulet, Act IV scene 5

Juliet takes the drug, leaving her heartbroken parents to believe she's dead. They move her "body" to the Capulet vault.





The plan unravels when the messenger Friar Laurence sent to Romeo is quarantined in an outbreak of the plague. He never delivers the message. Instead, Romeo is told that Juliet is dead, and, deciding he can't go on without her, he buys poison from an Apothecary and heads to the Capulet vault to die with his wife.

The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark! Here's to my love.
O true apothecary! Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.
- Romeo, Act V scene 3



O happy dagger! This is thy sheath;
there rust and let me die.
- Juliet, Act V scene 3

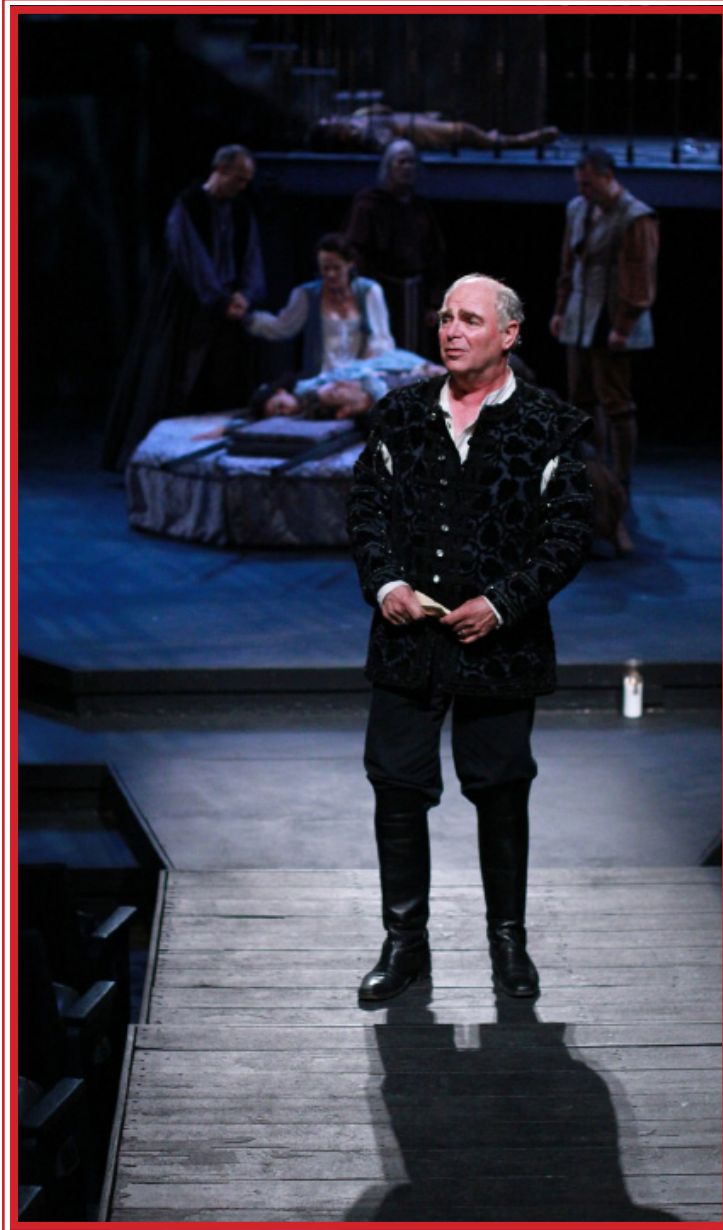


Romeo runs into Paris mourning at the vault. Paris challenges him, the two fight, and Romeo kills him. Entering the vault, he sees Juliet, and believing her dead, he says goodbye to her and drinks the poison.

Juliet then awakes, and seeing Romeo dead beside her, takes his dagger and stabs herself.



A glooming peace this morning with it brings; the sun, for sorrow, will not show his head: Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things; Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished: For never was a story of more woe than this of Juliet and her Romeo.
- Prince Escalus, Act V scene 3



The families and Prince arrive and find the bodies of Paris, Romeo and Juliet. Friar Laurence returns and explains what happened, taking responsibility for his role in the events. The Prince leaves punishment for another day, and sends everyone home to mourn.

Classroom Activities

Star-Crossed Scramble

From Folger Shakespeare, by Holly Rodgers, ESL teacher at White Oaks Elementary School in Fairfax County, VA.

Plays/Scenes Covered

Romeo and Juliet, Prologue and 2.2

What's On for Today and Why

Students will explore the idea of star-crossed lovers and create their own unique combinations of star-crossed pairs to enhance their understanding of *Romeo and Juliet*. This activity will allow students to better understand the nature of the relationship between the Montagues and the Capulets while exploring the roles of Romeo and Juliet in an assortment of interpretations.

The objective of the lesson is for students to contemplate and explore the plight of star-crossed lovers in a meaningful context while retaining the language from Shakespeare's text. Since the complexity and nature of Romeo and Juliet's feelings for one another may be difficult for some elementary students to understand, this activity allows them to comprehend the overall themes of the play. While this activity was designed for elementary students, it could be adapted and used in the secondary classroom. This lesson has intrinsic value for use in working with English language learners (ELLs) of any age. This activity reduces the linguistic demands and complexity of Shakespeare's language while scaffolding instruction by providing visual aids and graphic support. Students will be engaged in a performance-based study of *Romeo and Juliet* through this activity while also having the opportunity to add their own inventive words to Shakespeare's text and explore improvisatory acting skills.

This lesson will take one 90-minute class period, or may be divided up into several shorter sessions.

What You Need

Folger edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, copies of the Prologue and 2.2

Available in Folger print edition and Folger Digital Texts

Documents (included):

In Character Chart

In Character Dialogue

What To Do

1. Distribute a copy of the Prologue and 2.2 from *Romeo and Juliet* to all students.
2. Read the Prologue as a class and engage students in a discussion about the meaning of star-crossed lovers. Encourage students to come up with ideas of natural enemies today that would make interesting star-crossed pairs. (See In Character Chart for suggestions-fox and chicken, cat and mouse etc).
3. Read 2.2 as a class or divide students into pairs. (To reduce linguistic demands or to accommodate time constraints, teachers may wish to select portions of text from this scene)
4. Once students understand the context and setting of the balcony scene, encourage students to think of natural settings for the star-crossed pairs (as in step 2) to create their own dialogue (e.g if a fox and a chicken were star-crossed lovers, they might meet in a chicken coop instead of on a balcony).
5. Divide students into pairs, with each student playing either Romeo or Juliet.
6. Distribute a copy of the “In Character” and “In Character 2.2” Dialogue handouts. These handouts may also be pre-cut into strips and placed in a container for random selection by the students. Teachers and students may also create their own pairings as an extension to create even further variations.
7. From the chart, have students select a pair of star-crossed lovers they would like to perform. Once students have made their selection(s), give them time to get into character by pantomiming or discussing how their characters would act as Romeo and Juliet.
8. Once students have a firm grasp on their selected characters, encourage them to choose appropriate words specific to their context to insert into the scene. Teachers may provide suggestions or specifications regarding rhyme scheme, parts of speech, etc.
9. Allow students time to practice their dialogue in pairs.
10. Have pairs perform their scene in front of the class. Encourage movement and fun.

How Did It Go?

Did students thoroughly understand the concept of star-crossed lovers? Were they able to make connections between the characters of Romeo and Juliet and the star-crossed pairs they selected? Did students reflect upon the natural constraints that act upon their star-crossed pairs as the Montagues and the Capulets do in *Romeo and Juliet*?



In Character Chart

	A Crow		A Cow
	A Goldfish		A Great White Shark
	A Sports Car		A Van
	A Rabbit		A Hound Dog
	A Vampire		A Werewolf
	A Snowman		The Sun
	A Frog		A Dragonfly
	A Fox		A Chicken



An Apple



A Worm

To Love, Honor and Obey (One's Parents!)

From Folger Shakespeare, by Susan O'Connell middle school language arts teacher at Blessed Sacrament School in Washington, District of Columbia. This lesson takes one to two class periods.

What's On for Today and Why

This lesson will encourage students to think about parent-child tensions regarding obedience and communication, in order to understand the conflicts in the opening scene of *Romeo and Juliet*.

What You Need

Folger edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, Available in Folger print edition and Folger Digital Texts

Documents (included):

Copies of the Primary Source Handout, A Work Worth Reading

What To Do

1. Divide students into pairs and give them the following questions to answer and discuss: Do you ever tell your parents what you know they want to hear? Ask students to jot down examples. Have you ever gotten in trouble for telling the truth to your parents? Again, jot down examples.
2. In pairs or as a whole class, have students imagine how parent-child relations might have been different in Shakespeare's day.
3. Give students copies of the handout, an excerpt from Charles Gibbon's 1591 book *A Work Worth the Reading*. These pages will give students an idea of the deportment expected of children over four hundred years ago.
4. In pairs or as a whole class, discuss ways in which expectations for children's obedience were different in Shakespeare's day.
5. Read Act 3 scene 5, starting at Lady Capulet's entrance. Prompt discussion about whether Capulet's reaction to Juliet's reluctance to marry seems fair.
6. Ask students to write a note of consolation to Juliet. If they need writing prompts, try: "Dear Juliet, I know how you feel. One time I (or my parents)..." or "Dear Juliet, This is what I think you should do."
7. As a possible homework assignment, have students bring in a contemporary song that expresses some aspect of Juliet's plight.

How Did It Go?

Did the students sympathize with Juliet's plight? Were they surprised about the ways parents were expected to control their children in the late sixteenth century? Did the themes of the play strike a chord with the students?



Excerpt from Charles Gibbon's 1591 *A Work Worth the Reading*

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as appeare in *Exod. 21.7. If a man sell his daughter to be a seruant &c. Laban* did little better than make a benefite of his daughters before he bestowed them: For by *Iacobs* seruitude it appeareth he made a sale of them, and so they could say themselues afterward. *Gen. 31. 15.* Therefore if Parents had this great priuiledge then (which is almost importable) why should they bee barred of this benefite now, not in selling but in bestowing them (which is so reasonable) you alleadge it is good reason they should make their own bargaine, because they must abide it; as though parents would seeke the preiudice of their owne children, but what libertie of liking had *Leah* to *Iaakob*, who instead of her sifter *Rahel* was brought to his bed, *Gen. 29. 23.* This argueth that parents would dispose their children at their pleasure.

Phi. I perceiue by your speech you so much preferre the parents, that you altogether enioyne their children to an inconueniencē; that is, not to match to their own liking but as their parents list, as though they ought not to shew aswell a fatherly affection, as they looke for filiall obedience.

Tich. You mistake both the matter and my meaning, for albeit parents ought to yeeld their consent to their childrens choyce, yet they haue no power to prouoke them to marry, if necessitie vrgeth not, hereof sayth *Paul. He that standeth firme in his heart that he hath no neede, but hath power ouer his owne will, and hath so decreed in his heart that hee will keepe his Virgin he doth well. 1. Cor. 7. 37.* neither may they deprine them of that remedie if they cannot liue continent,

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for it is better to marry than burne. *ibid. vers 9* nay more then that, the parents must presently prouide for them as a duetie enioyned to them, which the same Apostle proueth in these wordes, *Let them be married 1. Cor. 7. 36.* neither may they inforce thē to any match, if their children mislike; we haue example thereof in *Rebecca*, for when the seruant (who should haue her) whome *Abraham* sent was requested that he might remaine ten dayes before their departure, his expedition was such that he had rather goe away without her, than tarry to take her: wherupon her parents called her, to aske her consent, and to know whether shee would goe with that man or no, her answer was, shee would: *Gen. 24. 27. &c.* this argueth that parents must not vse any coaction, where their children haue no disposition to the partie.

Phi. Yet all this is to no purpose to the question I propose, for the maid neither meaneth to liue single as a Virgin, yet she cannot bee suffered to match to her minde, as she would doe: nowe in this case whether may the peruersitie of the parents hinder the choyce of the childe?

Tich. It is needelesse to adde a double answere to a single question, or to demanda a reason where there is no doubt, your word peruersitie, is so termed of the wilfull, but it is taken for prudencie amongst the wise; for they know that it is the propertie of parents, not to deale frowardly but fatherly with their children, and to bestow them not as they desire, without discrecion; but as is most expedient with circumspection: but admit, that Parents

C

rents

Mixing it up with Romeo and Juliet

From Folger Shakespeare, by Tanya Smith, Liberty High School, Brentwood, California.

What's On for Today and Why

Having students create a soundtrack for the play, by picking one song to represent each scene, can help them make personal connections to the plot as well as get them motivated to more fully understand the language.

This lesson may be used as a review at the end of reading the play, or students may work on the soundtrack as they read. You can allow variable amounts of time at the end of the unit for students to present their work.

What You Need

Soundtrack Pre-planning Worksheet (included). Students may wish to consult online sources such as www.anysonglyrics.com to search song lyrics by word or theme.

What To Do

1. If students have seen a film version of Romeo and Juliet, you may want to begin by drawing attention to the type of music used in the film. Otherwise, explain to students that their next assignment will be to create a soundtrack for a new production of the play. For each scene, they will need to select a song that matches its mood and/or action.
2. Hand out copies of the "Soundtrack Pre-planning Worksheet," which will allow students to gather information to help them with the assignment. For each scene, they should gather three key quotes that help explain the main ideas of the scene, and specific lyrics from a song that match the quotes they have found.
3. For each scene, ask students to write a paragraph that explains how the song they have chosen represents the scene from the play. Be sure to require that students cite the text of the play for full credit.
4. Other possible related assignments include creating a CD wrapper with which to present the soundtrack, burning a CD with the songs on it, and/or creating a PowerPoint presentation to help present the students' choices to the class. Be sure to warn students doing the CD assignment to use only music purchased legally.
5. Complete the assignment with a presentation to the class in which students present a few of the choices they have made, along with their reasons for doing so. Conclude with a discussion: which choices seemed most appropriate, and why?

How Did It Go?

Were students able to identify three key quotes without difficulty? Were they able to link these quotes with themes in songs that they know? Did they find the assignment interesting? Were the final presentations interesting and useful in advancing the discussion about the play?



Soundtrack Pre-Planning Worksheet

Scene number and brief summary of scene	Three Key Quotes that stand out, <u>including who said them</u>	Song and specific lyrics that match
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
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