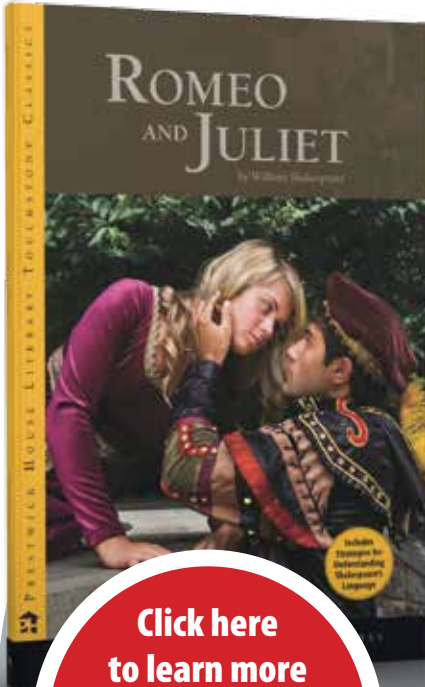




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A Student Response Journal for...

Romeo and Juliet

by William Shakespeare

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Item No. 200286

Romeo and Juliet

Act I, Scene I

1. Sampson describes women as being “the weaker vessels.” Consider the role that women play in society today. Do you feel that the Women’s Liberation Movement made a positive or negative effect on women’s role in society? Explain your answer.
2. Gregory chastises Sampson for having poor manners and a crude tongue. Write a paragraph about a character from a book, movie, or real life that you consider rude. Why do you consider this character’s behavior impolite?
3. Prince Escalus is tired of the warring between the Capulets and Montagues. In order to curb the violence, the prince threatens death to anyone caught fighting. Compose a diary entry in which you give your opinion of the death penalty. When, if ever, do you feel the death penalty is justified?
4. The Capulets and Montagues are involved in an age-old conflict. Write an article for your school newspaper about a quarrel or feud that exists between two groups today. Be sure to include how the conflict began and if it seems likely for the two sides to be at peace with each other.
5. Romeo’s family and friends are concerned about his moodiness. He remains aloof by taking long walks and avoiding company. Describe whether you ever felt the need to be alone for any reason. What did you do when you felt this way?

Act I, Scene II

6. Capulet is unsure about Juliet marrying at a young age but Paris assures him, “Younger than she are happy mothers made.” Write a newspaper editorial about young teenage girls who become pregnant.

7. Teenage pregnancy is a problem in the United States. What suggestions can you give to help stop this problem? Make a list.

8. Capulet gives his servant a list of names to invite to his dinner party. The servant, however, can't read the list because he is illiterate. Compose a letter to the President of the United States concerning the quality of education in this country. Do you feel it is adequate? If not, how might conditions be improved?

9. Benvolio tells Romeo, “One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish. Write a paragraph discussing why you think some people feel better after hearing another person's problem.

Romeo and Juliet

Act I, Scene III

10. Juliet's mother and nurse expect her to get married when she turns fourteen. Write a letter to Juliet discussing what you feel is a good age to get married, and give your reasons. What are the advantages and disadvantages of getting married at a young age?
11. The nurse fondly tells a funny story about Juliet's childhood. Describe a funny story from either your childhood or someone you know.
12. Juliet's parents want Juliet to marry Paris, and they begin to setup the union. Write a paragraph in which you give your opinion of arranged marriages. What advantages and disadvantages do you see in them? If you find them positive, write to Lord Montague. If negative, write to Lord Capulet.

Act I, Scene IV

13. Mercutio is worried about Romeo's moodiness, and he tries to cheer his friend up by teasing him. Describe a scenario from a book, movie, or real life in which someone tries to cheer up a depressed friend. What method was used to cheer up the friend, and did it work?
14. Mercutio refers to dreams as "the children of an idle brain, begot of nothing but vain fantasy." Create a journal entry about how seriously you take your dreams.

Response Journal

15. Relate a dream you had recently.

16. Romeo has a premonition that something is about to begin which will lead to his death. Some people believe in extrasensory perception (ESP). Have you or someone you know ever experienced an occurrence of ESP? Explain this in a letter to a psychic.

Act I, Scene V

17. Romeo's frame of mind quickly changes when he sees Juliet. He immediately forgets about Rosaline, and Juliet becomes the center of his attention. Write a gossip column for a newspaper in which you discuss Romeo's fickle behavior. Direct the letter to Romeo. You might begin like this:

Dear Romeo,

You claim to love Rosaline totally and completely, yet...

18. Capulet keeps the peace when he prevents a quarrel from starting at his party. Think about someone from history whom you consider a peace-keeper, and compose an epitaph for this person's tombstone.

19. Write a paragraph explaining your thoughts about love at first sight.

Romeo and Juliet

Act II, Scene I

20. Benvolio thinks his cousin, Romeo, is still in love with Rosaline. He is unaware that Romeo has fallen in love with Juliet, an enemy of the Montague family. Imagine you have a relative who falls in love with a family enemy. Write a letter to your relative giving your advice about the relationship. What advantages and disadvantages can you foresee?

21. While discussing Romeo's lovesickness, Mercutio and Benvolio mention the notion that love is blind. Write a paragraph about your opinion of the phrase "love is blind," as if you were talking to your child. What does this phrase mean to you, and do you believe it is true?

Act II, Scene II

22. Romeo woos Juliet with poetry and compliments. Suppose you are in love with someone as passionately as Romeo is with Juliet. Compose a poem for this person in which you declare your love.

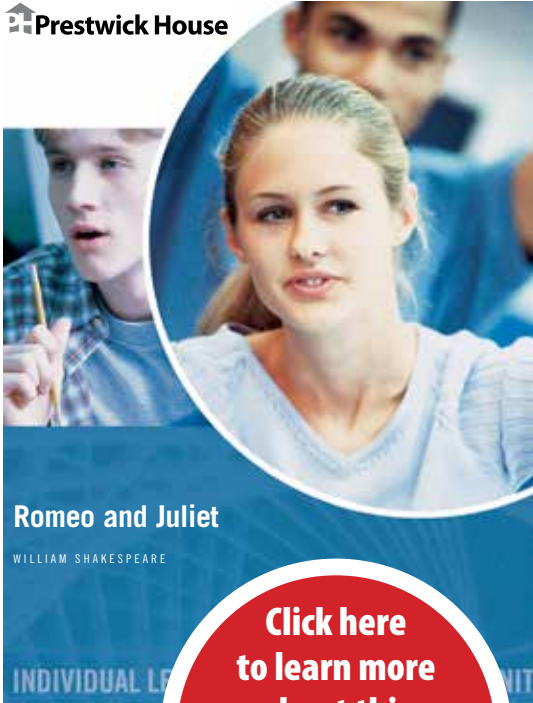
23. Juliet struggles between loving and hating Romeo. She pleads with him, "Deny thy father and refuse thy name; / Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love, / And I'll no longer be a Capulet." Compose a letter to Juliet about whether you think she should choose to be with her family or with Romeo. In your opinion, where does her loyalty belong? Explain the reasoning behind your response.



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Teaching Unit

Romeo and Juliet

by William Shakespeare

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Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to

1. define “courtly love” and “true love” and indicate what role each plays in this drama.
2. understand and explain the term “star-crossed lover” and its significance in this play.
3. explain how Romeo and Juliet’s love is different from both courtly love and vulgar love.
4. write a character sketch of Romeo illustrating how he grows and matures throughout the play.
5. explain how both the Nurse and the Friar function as confidantes.
6. identify major themes that are developed throughout the play.
7. comment on the role Fate plays in this drama.
8. define “comic relief” and identify specific examples.
9. identify those features that characterize the language of the common people in a Shakespearean play.
10. identify couplets and their use throughout the play.
11. interpret major lines with ease and appreciation.
12. correctly identify Shakespeare’s prose style.
13. understand and explain the function of the prologue

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Fate is involved in the play over and over again. How does fate bring about the death of the lovers? Mention and discuss at least four incidents.
2. Some critics believe that Romeo and Juliet change and mature over the course of the play. Do you agree or disagree? Use specific examples in the play to support your opinion.
3. What view of love do both Mercutio and the Nurse represent? What view of love does Romeo's love for Rosaline represent? What view of love do Romeo and Juliet share? Provide support for each answer.
4. What does the Prince represent, and why must he bear some of the responsibility for the tragic deaths?
5. Point out the ways in which this play presents a clash of generations.
6. What role does Paris play in the drama, and why is his persona important for the action in the play?
7. While the Nurse is Juliet's confidante, the Friar is Romeo's. Compare and contrast these two as counselors.
8. Write a character sketch of Romeo pointing out how he is similar to and different from Mercutio and Benvolio.
9. Point out the language patterns of the common people and identify at least three instances where these characters function as comic relief.
10. Some see fate and Divine Providence as the same thing—a power or outside force determines the course of our lives. While Divine Providence assumes that God is the higher power, the force or power behind fate is left undefined. Write a paper in which you state your thoughts on this topic. Do you think that some invisible force or power governs the unfolding of our lives, or do our lives just unfold randomly? If you believe our lives are guided, do you believe it is God or some other force that is directing them?
11. Write a paragraph explaining your opinion on whether it is right or wrong for fourteen-year-old girls to get married during the historical time in which this play takes place.
12. Given the time, place, and circumstances in this play, do you think Friar Laurence is wrong in marrying Romeo and Juliet without first informing their parents?
13. By referring to comments and incidents in the play, support or refute the following statement: "One theme in this play is the need for strong authority figures to take necessary actions to prevent feuds and disorder from creating disturbances in society."
14. Discuss the role of the apothecary including your opinion of his decision.

Romeo and Juliet

The Prologue

VOCABULARY

mutiny – strife, rivalry
piteous – passionate

1. In the prologue, Shakespeare tells his audience what they are to expect in the play. Why do you suppose Shakespeare chooses to use this technique?

2. Where is the play set?

3. Put the following lines into your own words:

“From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross’d lovers take their life;”

Act I, Scene III – A room in Capulet's house.

VOCABULARY

dug – nipple, breast
endart – take flight and puncture like an arrow
lineament – aspect, characteristic
margent – the margin
perilous – dangerous, hazardous
rood – a crucifix
tetchy – touchy, oversensitive, irritable
trow – say

1. Juliet will turn 14 on Lammas–eve. What is the Lammas–tide the women speak of?

2. The Nurse quotes the vulgar remark that her husband made to young Juliet, and then, repeats it. What do the Nurse's indecent remarks in front of the family indicate about their relationship?

3. What does Lady Capulet tell Juliet? What is Juliet's response?

Act II, Scene IV – A street.

VOCABULARY

apace – swiftly, rapidly
bawd – a prostitute
cleft – split
convoy – a carriage; transportation
dowdy – a prostitute
ell – a measurement of forty-five inches
fantasticoes – cavaliers, suitors
fishified – changed to a fish
hams – knees
lenten – pie made during Lent
lieve – rather, “just as soon”
mar – hurt
prating – gossiping, babbling
roe – fish eggs
shrived – forgiven, pardoned
troth – loyalty, devotion
vexed – disturbed, troubled

1. Once again, Mercutio yammers on and on at the beginning of this scene. Both Mercutio and Benvolio believe that Romeo is still pining over Rosaline. Once Romeo enters, Mercutio, in one passage, makes several allusions. List the allusions then, do a little research to explain what the allusions mean and how they fit in the context of this scene.

2. “Without his roe, like a dried herring: O flesh, flesh, how are thou fishified!” What is the pun Mercutio is making here? What type of pun is this?

3. As Romeo enters, Mercutio and Benvolio are discussing Romeo’s longing for Rosaline and Tybalt’s challenge to Romeo. What change in Romeo’s behavior does Mercutio comment on? What is the essence of the dialogue until Pete and the Nurse enter?

4. Why is the Friar unable, according to Romeo, to truly understand Romeo's feelings about Juliet and being banished?

5. The Nurse arrives and informs the Friar and Romeo that Juliet, too, is crying just as Romeo is. Hearing of Juliet's unhappiness and the hatred he supposes she feels toward him, he draws his knife to kill himself. What does the Friar accuse him of?

6. For what things does the Friar say Romeo should be happy about?

7. What does the Friar then tell him to do? What instructions does the Friar give Romeo?

Act IV, Scene IV – Hall in Capulet's house.

VOCABULARY

quinces – fruits
trim – decorate, beautify, adorn

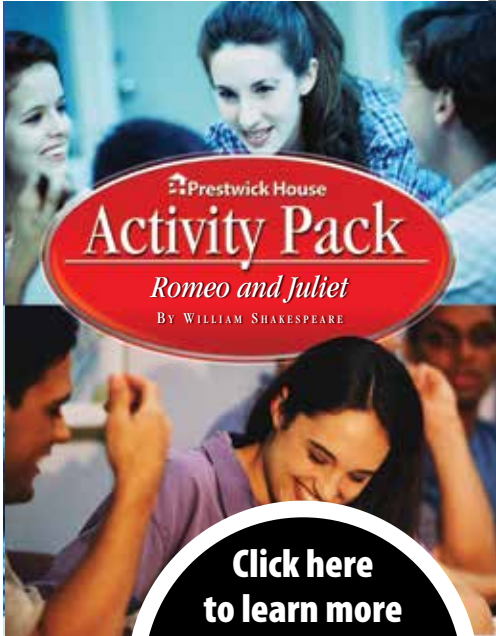
1. During the interchange between the Nurse, Lord Capulet, and Lady Capulet, what has his wife accused him of?

2. What does all the action in the house indicate?



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ROMEO AND JULIET

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



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Item No. 200536

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Research I****Objective:** Researching the author**Activity**

Research the life of William Shakespeare and write a short biography of him. Explain why most scholars consider him to be the greatest playwright who ever wrote in English. Write at least four paragraphs.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act I**Characterization****Objective:** Recognizing character traits**Activity**

Reading a play like *Romeo and Juliet* is exciting, but, unfortunately, one element is missing: physical descriptions of the characters. Drama is designed to be watched—not read. Viewers may see for themselves the physical details of characters in a play, so the printed form need not contain descriptions common to standard literature.

When reading drama, one must pay close attention in order to mentally complete the character details. Much of the detail is secondary; we read what one character says or thinks about another character. We also gain character information by observing the actions of characters.

Complete the **Character Chart** to reveal your assessment of the characters in the first Act. When you are finished with the chart, review the characters that you designated as “major characters.” Select the two most similar characters and write one paragraph comparing them. Next, select the two least similar characters and write another paragraph, this time contrasting them.

You may not yet have the information to fill in some of the blocks. When this occurs, write “NI” in the appropriate space.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act II

Outlining

Objective: Writing an outline

Activity

Imagine that you are a Hollywood screenwriter who must convert the theatrical *Romeo and Juliet* to movie format. Each scene will be filmed separately, and the actors and crew will need help remembering the details of each scene. Outline each act by scenes and assign a title to each one. Give a brief description of the events in each scene. The title should reflect the content of the respective act or scene.

When you finish the outline, think of three alternate titles for *Romeo and Juliet: the Movie*.

Example:

- I. Act I: The feuding families
 - A. Scene I: The first fight
 1. Capulet servants fight with Montague servants
 2. Prince of Verona scolds the fighting parties
 3. Romeo revealed to be lovesick
 - B. Scene II: Capulet plans a feast
 1. Paris asks to marry Juliet
 2. Romeo mistakenly invited to the party
 - C. Scene III: Lady Capulet reveals the marriage plan
 - D. Scene IV: Toward the Capulet masquerade
 1. Mercutio explains the source of dreams
 2. Romeo reveals uneasiness for the future
 - E. Scene V: At the masque
 1. Tybalt identifies Romeo as a Montague
 2. Capulet demands that Romeo be treated well
 3. Romeo meets Juliet
 4. They are revealed as enemies of each other's family

II. Act II:

Continue the outline as you complete each Act.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act II**Simile****Objective:** Recognizing a simile**Activity**

Shakespeare's drama often includes the use of simile; however, we might not easily recognize the objects that he uses for comparison due to the evolution of language. In Act III, Scene One, Mercutio asserts that Benvolio's head "hath been beaten as addle as an egg." Today, in an equivalent simile, we would probably say that Benvolio's head "has been scrambled like an egg."

In Act II, identify six instances of simile. List them on the **Simile Chart** that follows and then interpret them. For each interpretation, try to include a modern simile that carries the same message as the original.

The first example, from Act I, has been completed for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act III**Alliteration****Objective:** Recognizing alliteration**Activity**

Alliteration may occur in numerous words in succession; however, many cases of alliteration in poetry involve only two successive words, and sometimes there may be a word separating the two alliterative words.

Alliteration is one of the several poetic devices that Shakespeare includes in his drama. In the prologue we find "From forth the fatal loins of these two foes."

Read through Act III carefully and identify as many instances of alliteration as you can (at least ten). List each instance and cite the scene in which it appears. When you finish, write ten of your own alliterative phrases.

Examples:

- Act I, Scene I "hartless hinds"
- Act II, Prologue "desire doth in his deathbed lie"
- Act II, Scene II "So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world"

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act IV**Communicating**

Objectives: Writing a speech
Speaking effectively

Activity

Not even the penalty of death halts the violent feud between the Montagues and the Capulets. In an effort to prevent fighting in the streets of Verona, all citizens, both young and old, must constantly monitor the feuding families and intervene as necessary. The Prince of Verona knows that the citizens, many of whom are elderly, are concerned about the recent brawls and killings.

Each group will act as the Prince's staff, including chief advisors and speechwriters. Consult the text and each other to come up with the topics that the Prince will need to address when he speaks to the people. Have one person list these topics. Using the list, each group should prepare a short speech for the Prince (no more than three minutes).

While compiling the speech, remember to address the major problems of Verona according to the play. Also, ensure that the speech reflects the Prince's personality.

When the speeches are complete, each group should have a volunteer stand up and read the speech to the class.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act V**Interviewing**

Objective: Interviewing a main character

Activity

Both Friar Laurence and the Nurse know about the secret marriage, but only Laurence knows the details of the plan of Juliet's false death. Laurence is, in effect, the leading witness to the ongoing tragedy. For the purpose of this exercise, assume that Friar Laurence is allowed to continue his career, unpunished for his involvement in the tragedy.

You are a news-radio host popular for your ability to extract the memories of witnesses to historic events. Your interviewing skill often helps your guests to reveal new details to popular events. You now have the chance to interview Friar Laurence (after the tragedy) on your talk-radio show. It will be an open mike show, and you will be taking calls from listeners.

Before the interview, you will want to research the story of Romeo and Juliet a little in order to know what types of questions you'll be able to ask.

Remember, you are a talk-radio host. It is your job to pry the most interesting information from your guest so that listeners will continue to support you. Do not be afraid to unearth debatable issues that will draw phone calls. The public is still shocked by what it knows about the tragedy, and it wants to know how and why it happened.

Each group will work together to produce a list of questions to ask Friar Laurence. The first question has been written for you.

- Why did you agree to wed Romeo to Juliet?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Acts I – V**Creative Writing and Drawing****Objective:** Identifying major themes and events in a drama**Activity**

The old adage, “don’t judge a book by its cover,” is excellent advice; unfortunately, in modern culture, it is often the cover that first attracts potential customers to a book. *Romeo and Juliet* was first published in the late sixteenth century, a time when books hardly required glossy, high-resolution graphics on the front and reviews from several major newspapers on the back in order to sell. Today, there are so many books on store shelves that flashy covers are necessary to seize attention long enough to capture readers’ curiosity.

Imagine that *Romeo and Juliet* has just been written and that you work for Shakespeare’s publisher. In order to catch the eye of consumers, the published play will need an effective jacket. It should command attention and at the same time truthfully portray the content of the play.

Within each group are two teams with the task of producing a new cover for *Romeo and Juliet*. The illustrators in the groups will draw or compile pictures for the front cover of the book. The cover art must include depictions of the story as well as the title and the author’s name. The writers in the groups will write a review for the back cover that addresses the following questions:

1. What is the most interesting incident in the story? (Be careful not to give the story away.)
2. What are the themes of the play?
3. What does the story teach?
4. Why do you recommend this drama to other students?
5. Why is this a good drama for the classroom?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Acts I – V**Acting**

Objective: Understanding drama through performance

Activity

Plays such as *Romeo and Juliet* are written for the stage. Reading a play without watching it sometimes omits elements that only a physical performance would introduce.

Each group should select a single scene from *Romeo and Juliet* to act out for the class. The groups should first discuss the chosen scenes and settle on the details that the scene will require (voice, stage positions, mood, volume, etc.).

Members of each group will assign themselves roles. The members of the group should divide the scene to accommodate everyone; for example, two people will act the first half of the scene, and the others will act the second half.

Groups may also choose soliloquies, but no one in the group should do the same soliloquy. In addition, the group should still discuss the dramatic details of the chosen material.

If scheduling permits, students should memorize the material to be performed. When the groups are ready, perform the scenes for the rest of the class. Conduct a brief discussion after each scene to determine whether the class feels that the scene was performed so that the meaning is apparent.