Romeo and Juliet

Revision Pack
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The Plot

- We start off with a little action: a duel between the servants of two enemy families of Verona: the Montagues and the Capulets. Verona's Prince shows up to say that the next person who fights is going to get killed, and he *means* it this time.

- Along comes Romeo Montague, talking about a girl called Rosaline. Meanwhile, Juliet Capulet, age thirteen, has just heard that Verona's most eligible bachelor Paris has his eye on her. They're going to check each other out that night at a masquerade ball at the Capulets' house. Romeo and his friends have decided to crash the Capulet ball—in costume—because Rosaline is on the guest list.

- Things take a turn when Romeo meets Juliet. They fall instantly in love, obviously, but then they find out they're from rival families. It's all very dire, but, being two crazy kids in love, they have a secret meeting and decide to get married.

- Romeo meets with Friar Laurence to arrange the marriage, and Juliet gets her nurse to be a go-between. The Nurse meets Romeo and his friend Mercutio (who thinks the whole situation is hilarious), and they arrange to get Juliet to Friar Laurence.

- Get ready for some more names: Benvolio, another member of the Montague family, runs into Tybalt Capulet, who is angry about the Montagues crashing his family party. Romeo, freshly married, strolls into the middle of a tense situation—which gets way tense when Tybalt kills Mercutio and Romeo promptly kills Tybalt in return. Romeo runs away, but the Prince still shows up to banish him.

- Juliet hears from the Nurse that her new husband has murdered her cousin, which is a major bummer—but not enough of a bummer to keep her from being super stoked about her wedding night. The Nurse finds Romeo hiding at Friar Laurence's, and the Friar hatches a plan. Romeo can spend his wedding night with Juliet, but then he has to leave town while the Friar finds some way to get the Prince of Verona to pardon Romeo.

- Meanwhile, back at the Capulet house, Lord Capulet decides a wedding (to Paris) is just the thing to distract Juliet from her grief. Oops. After Juliet's romantic wedding night, she finds out that she's supposed to marry Paris in two days. Even her nurse thinks she should marry Paris, since Romeo is "as good as dead" to her.
Juliet runs over to Friar Laurence's, where she has a weird kiss with Paris and then threatens to kill herself. The Friar comes up with a plan that he thinks is going to work: giving her an herbal concoction that will make her appear to be dead for 42 hours. Yes, exactly 42. So, she runs home, agrees to marry Paris, and takes the poison so she can be taken to the Capulet tomb where Romeo can find her and everyone can live happily ever after.

Sadly, Romeo is a little out of the loop off in Mantua, and the news of Juliet's "death" makes it to Romeo before word of the Friar's plan. He buys some poison so he can go to Juliet's grave and kill himself. But first, he murders Paris and then spends some time with Juliet's "dead" body.

He drinks the poison and dies just in time for Juliet to wake up and find him dead: she kills herself with a dagger. Just then, literally everyone shows up to the tomb at the same time and finds the dead lovers. The rival houses are moved by their dead children's love story and agree to end the feud.

**Bullet point 2 revision tip!**

Write down a list of themes for the play. For each theme, write down a list of key plot points that you think would match!
### Context

#### Courtly Love
Courtly love refers to the idea that love should be approached in a gentlemanly way. Gentlemen should romance women with grand gestures and poetic speeches. Love should not be declared in a direct or crude way but instead the process of romancing a woman should be a gradual one. This type of love was not sexually driven. The woman should not ‘satisfy’ her male suitor and instead should hold off his advances until she is married.

#### The Catholic Church
‘Romeo and Juliet’ is packed with religious symbolism, characters and language. Romeo and Juliet use religious language to declare their feelings of love when they first meet at the Capulet’s household and the famous balcony scene. However, the pair’s relationship would have likely been regarded as sinful at the time; their tragic downfall is sometimes seen as punishment for this.

#### Patriarchal society
The play was set in what was known as a patriarchal society. This meant that men were firmly at the top of all of society. Women had to obey their husbands, and girls had to obey their fathers. This is seen particularly in the relationship between Lord Capulet and Juliet. At first Capulet is presented as a progressive father who respects his daughter’s right to have a say in her future. However, later on in the play, he falls in line with the patriarchal model of society by threatening to make his daughter homeless if she doesn’t marry Paris (i.e. obey his instructions).

#### Women and marriage
With men at the top of society, the role of women was reduced to mostly being a mother. There was enormous pressure on women in Elizabethan society to have children. In the Elizabethan era, girls from high society were married at a young age and expected to bear children. Marriage was not an arrangement based on love in this time period and, instead, based more on economic and social benefits. Parents had a great deal of say in the marriage of their children and consent should be gained from a woman’s father before asking the woman herself. Romeo and Juliet’s marriage based on passion is arguably what leads to their downfall in the play.

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Remember, Romeo and Juliet was written in the Elizabethan era! (1558–1603)
Quotes for bullet point 2

- “From ancient grudge break to new mutiny, Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.” *(from the Prologue)*

- “If ever you disturb our streets again, Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.” *(The Prince to the Capulets – Act 1, Scene 1)*

- “But saying o’er what I have said before: My child is yet a stranger in the world; She hath not seen the change of fourteen years,” *(Lord Capulet to Paris– Act 1, Scene 2)*

- “She is the hopeful lady of my earth: But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart, My will to her consent is but a part;” *(Lord Capulet to Paris– Act 1, Scene 2)*

- “O! she doth teach the torches to burn bright” *(Romeo, Capulet’s party, Act 1, Scene 5)*

- “Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!/ For I ne’er saw true beauty till this night." *(Romeo, Capulet’s party, Act 1, Scene 5)*

- “It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night like a rich jewel in an Ethiope’s ear” *(Romeo, Capulet’s party, Act 1, Scene 5)*

- “If I profane with my unworthiest hand This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this: My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.” *(Romeo, Capulet’s party, Act 1, Scene 5)*

- “O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do; They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.” *(Romeo, Capulet’s party, Act 1, Scene 5)*

- "My only love sprung from my only hate!" *(Romeo, Capulet’s party, Act 1, Scene 5)*
• “What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet” *(Juliet, the Balcony Scene, Act 2, Scene 2)*

• "See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand! O that I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek!" *(Romeo, the Balcony Scene, Act 2, Scene 2)*

• "A plague o' both your houses!" *(Act 3, Scene 1 - Mercutio after being stabbed by Tybalt)*

• “Romeo, away, be gone! The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain” *(Act 3, Scene 1 - Benvolio – after Romeo stabs Tybalt)*

• “And for that offence Immediately we do exile him hence” *(Act 3, Scene 1 – The Prince talking about Romeo)*

• “An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend; And you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets, For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,” *(Act 3, Scene 5 – Capulet talking about his daughter’s refusal to marry Paris)*

• “O me, O me! My child, my only life,” *(Act 4, Scene 2 - Lady Capulet – having discovered Juliet, believing her dead)*

• “Death lies on her like an untimely Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.” *(Act 4, Scene 2 – Capulet talking about his daughter’s ‘death’)*

• “My love! my wife! Death, that hath suck’d the honey of thy breath, Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:” *(Act 5, Scene 3 – Romeo talking about Juliet having believed her to be dead)*
Starting with this extract, how is the theme of conflict presented in the play?

- How is conflict presented in this scene?
- How is conflict presented in the play as a whole?
GREGORY
Say 'better:' here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

SAMPSON
Yes, better, sir.

ABRAHAM
You lie.

SAMPSON
Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy swashing blow.

*Tey fight*

Enter BENVOLIO

BENVOLIO
Part, fools!
Put up your swords; you know not what you do.

*Beats down their swords*

Enter TYBALT

TYBALT
What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?
Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

BENVOLIO
I do but keep the peace: put up thy sword,
Or manage it to part these men with me.

TYBALT
What, drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word,
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:
Have at thee, coward!

Starting with this extract, how is the theme of conflict presented in the play?

- How is conflict presented in this scene?
- How is conflict presented in the play as a whole?
LADY CAPULET
Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,
Are made already mothers: by my count,
I was your mother much upon these years
That you are now a maid. Thus then in brief:
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.
Nurse
A man, young lady! lady, such a man
As all the world--why, he's a man of wax.
LADY CAPULET
Verona's summer hath not such a flower.
Nurse
Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.
LADY CAPULET
What say you? can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast;
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every married lineament,
And see how one another lends content
And what obscured in this fair volume lies
Find written in the margent of his eyes.
This precious book of love, this unbound lover,
To beautify him, only lacks a cover:
The fish lives in the sea, and 'tis much pride
For fair without the fair within to hide:
That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;
So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less.

Starting with this extract, how is marriage presented in the play?

- How is marriage presented in this scene?
- How is marriage presented in the play as a whole?
JULIET
O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROMEO
[Aside] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

JULIET
'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for that name which is no part of thee
Take all myself.

Starting with this extract, how is the idea of family portrayed in the play?

- How is the idea of family presented in this scene?
- How is the idea of family presented in the play as a whole?
MERCUTIO
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 the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pitcher by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

TYBALT
I am for you.

Drawing

ROMEO
Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MERCUTIO
Come, sir, your passado.

They fight

ROMEO
Draw, Benvolio; beat down their weapons. Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage! Tybalt, Mercutio, the prince expressly hath Forbidden bandying in Verona streets: Hold, Tybalt! good Mercutio!

TYBALT under ROMEO's arm stabs MERCUTIO, and flies with his followers

MERCUTIO
I am hurt. A plague o' both your houses! I am sped. Is he gone, and hath nothing?

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present conflict?

- How is conflict presented in this scene?
- How is conflict presented in the play as a whole?
BENVOLIO
O noble prince, I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl:
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

LADY CAPULET
Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother's child!
O prince! O cousin! husband! O, the blood is spilt
O my dear kinsman! Prince, as thou art true,
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.
O cousin, cousin!

PRINCE
Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

BENVOLIO
Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay;
Romeo that spoke him fair, bade him bethink
How nice the quarrel was, and urged withal
Your high displeasure: all this uttered
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bow'd,
Could not take truce with the unruly spleen
Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast,
Who all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside, and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity,
Retorts it: Romeo he cries aloud,
'Hold, friends! friends, part!' and, swifter than
his tongue,
His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled;
But by and by comes back to Romeo,
Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,
And to 't they go like lightning, for, ere I
Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain.
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly.
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.
Literary techniques glossary

Here are some examples of literary devices used in the play. You **MUST** comment on them to gain marks for Assessment Objective 2.

A metaphor – *a literary device where something is described as something it isn’t literally.*

*Eg. “Juliet is the sun”* (Romeo)

A simile – *a literary device where something is described as being like something (or compared using ‘as’).*

*Eg. "Love pricks like thorn."*(Romeo)

A symbol - when an object or action is used to mean something more than its literal meaning.

*Eg. The rose is a symbol for love, thorns are symbols for conflict.*

Foreshadowing – *a literary device where a warning is given of something bad to come.*

*Eg. The prologue foreshadows the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet.*