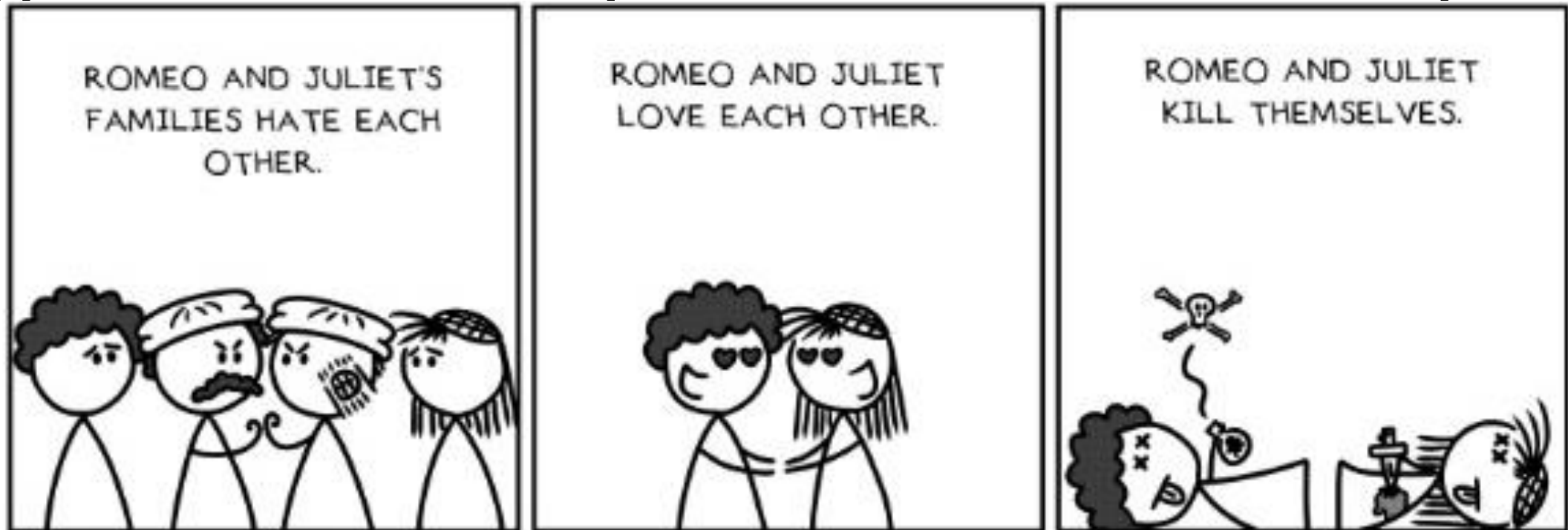


# 'Romeo and Juliet'

## English Literature Paper 1 Section A – Shakespeare



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_

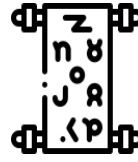
YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

# THE PROLOGUE--

an introductory section to a piece of literature or music



Two households, both **alike** in dignity



In fair **Verona**, where we lay our scene,

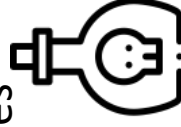
From **ancient grudge** break to new mutiny,



Where civil **blood** makes **civil hands** unclean.



From forth the fatal loins of these two foes



A pair of **star-cross'd** lovers **take their life**;

Whose misadventured piteous overthrows

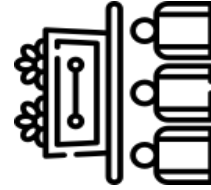


Do with **their death bury** their parents' strife.

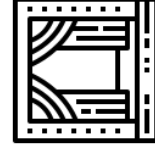
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd **love**,



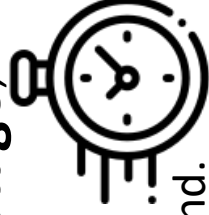
And the continuance of their parents' **rage**,



Which, but their **children's end**, nought could remove,



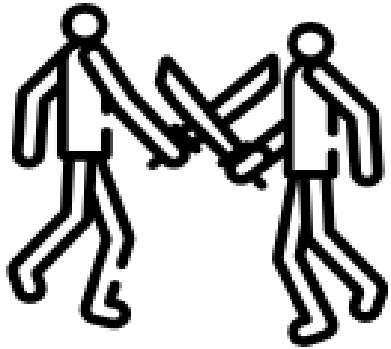
Is now the **two** hours' traffic of our **stage**;



The which if you with patient ears attend,

What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

# Act 1 – The exposition and inciting incident



The Montagues and the Capulets fight on the streets of Verona. Even Lord Capulet and Lord Montague join in the brawl. The Prince intervenes and threatens the families with a death sentence.



Romeo is introduced – he is deeply in love with Rosaline, but she doesn't love him back. She wants to be chaste.



Paris speaks of his desire to marry Juliet. Lord Capulet wants Paris to woo Juliet and so invites him to a ball.



Juliet finds out from the nurse and from Lady Capulet that Paris wishes to marry her. Juliet agrees to meet Paris and to then decide to see if she likes him.



Romeo and Juliet meet at the ball. Tybalt spots Romeo at the ball and is stopped by Capulet from fighting. Tybalt is enraged by this.

## KEY QUOTES

**The Prince to the families:** 'Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace', (S1)

**Romeo, to Benvolio:**  
'sad hours seem long'  
(S1)

**Lord Capulet, to Paris:**  
'let two more summers  
wither in their pride' (S2)

**Lady Capulet, to Juliet:**  
' I was your mother much  
upon these years/ That you  
are now a maid' (S3)

**Romeo, about Juliet:**  
'she doth teach the torches to  
burn bright' (S5)

# Act 2 – The Rising Action

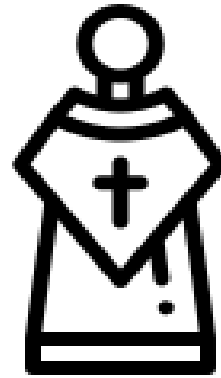
## PLOT



Romeo spies on Juliet as she speaks of her love for him.



Romeo and Juliet profess their love for each other and decide to marry.



Romeo tells the Friar of his love for Juliet and the Friar agrees to marry them.



The Nurse meets with Romeo to arrange the marriage.



Romeo and Juliet marry.

## KEY QUOTES

**Romeo, hiding under Juliet's balcony:** 'Oh, that I were a glove upon that hand/ That I might touch that cheek!' (S2)

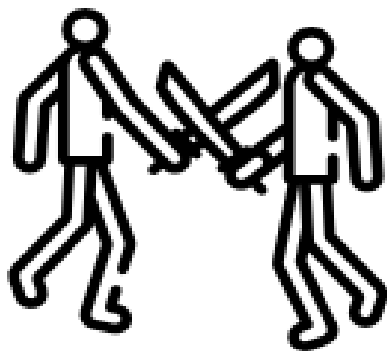
**Romeo, to Juliet:** 'Th'exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.'(S2)

**Friar Lawrence:** 'This alliance may so happy prove to turn your household rancour to pure love' (S3)

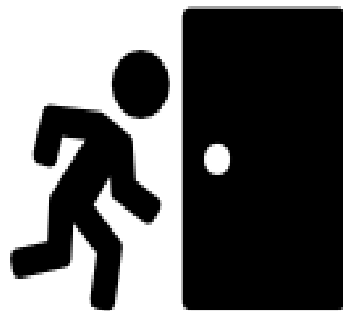
**Nurse, to Romeo:** 'Oh, there is a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard' (S4)

**Friar Lawrence:** 'These violent delights have violent ends' (S6)

# Act 3 – Climax



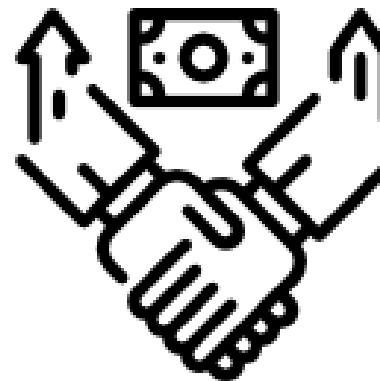
The day is hot and Mercutio and Benvolio speak about fighting. Tybalt is angry at Romeo's trespass at the ball and seeks him for a fight.



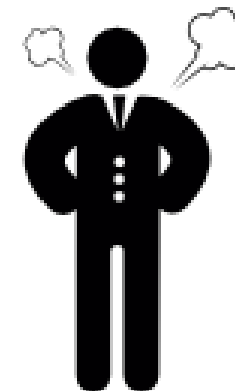
Romeo refuses to fight, and his best friend Mercutio is killed by Tybalt. Romeo kills Tybalt, the Prince exiles Romeo to Mantua.



Juliet despairs at the news of her cousin's death and husband's exile. She is torn by her duties to her family and her husband. She chooses Romeo. The Nurse and Friar arrange for them to have one night together first.



Capulet meets with Paris to bring the wedding forward. He thinks the marriage will make Juliet feel better about Tybalt's death.



Juliet finds out she's to marry Paris and when she refuses, Capulet threatens to disown her.

## KEY QUOTES

**Tybalt, to Romeo:** 'thou art a villain' (S1)

**Mercutio:** 'a plague o' both your houses' (S1)

**Romeo:** 'O, I am fortune's fool' (S1)

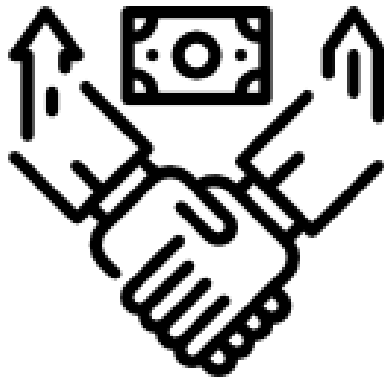
**Juliet about Romeo:** 'Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?' (S2)

**Lord Capulet to Paris:** 'Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender/ Of my child's love: I think she will be ruled/ In all respects by me' (S4)

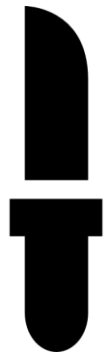
**Romeo, about Juliet:** 'My fingers itch. Wife, we scarce thought us blest/ That God had lent us but this only child' (S5)

# Act 4 – Falling action

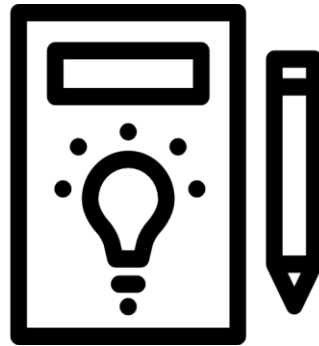
## PLOT



Juliet goes to visit the Friar and Paris speaks to her, sharing his excitement about their wedding.



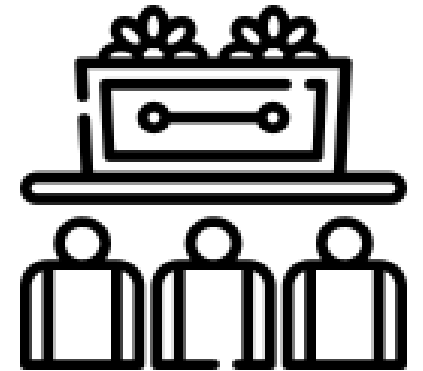
Juliet threatens to kill herself rather than marry Paris.



Friar Laurence offers the sleeping potion plan. The plan is that Juliet will fake her death and that Romeo will come to get her. Juliet returns home.



Juliet feels torn about drinking the potion. She drinks the potion and is suspected to be dead by her family.



They make funeral arrangements.

## KEY QUOTES

**Paris to Juliet:** 'Do not deny to him that you love me' (S1)

**Juliet, to Friar Lawrence:** 'I long to die if what thou speak'st speak not of remedy' (S1)

**Juliet to Lord Capulet:** 'I have learned to repent the sin of obedient opposition to you' (S2)

**Juliet to herself:** 'Romeo, Romeo. Romeo! Here's drink. I drink to thee.' (S3)

**Lord Capulet, about Juliet:** 'Death is my son-in-law, Death is my heir' (S5)

# Act 5 – The Resolution

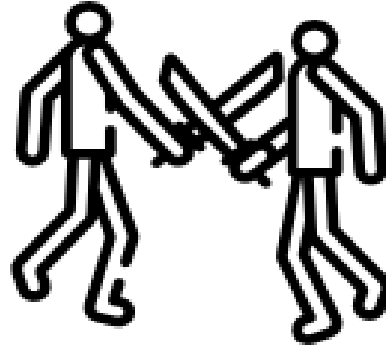
## PLOT



Balthasar tells Romeo Juliet is dead. Romeo decides to return to Verona and purchases poison.



The Friar finds out Romeo never received the letter and rushes to Juliet's tomb.



Paris is mourning for Juliet and sees Romeo. He fights Romeo and dies.



Romeo sees Juliet, takes the poison and dies. The Friar appears and Juliet awakes. The Friar leaves. Juliet kills herself with Romeo's dagger.



The truth is revealed to all. We also find out Lady Montague has died of a broken heart. The Prince is saddened. Montague and Capulet reconcile.

## KEY QUOTES

**Romeo:** 'Then I defy you, stars!' (S1)

**Friar Lawrence:** 'Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood, the letter was [...] full of charge' (S2)

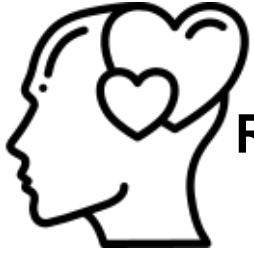
**Paris:** ' Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew' (S3)

**Romeo:** 'Thus with a kiss I die' (S3)

**Juliet:** 'O happy dagger,/This is thy sheath. There rust and let me die.' (S3)

**Prince:** 'all are punish'd' (S3)  
**Capulet:** 'O brother Montague, give me thy hand' (Sc. 3)

# CHARACTERS



## Romeo

The son and heir of Lord and Lady Montague. He falls in love with Juliet.

### Symbolic of...

A Petrarchan lover – a man who falls in love and is fully aware of his suffering and has given himself up to the power of the woman he loves.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Melancholic** – someone who is prone to moping and being depressed.
2. **Quixotic** – extremely idealistic: unrealistic and impractical.
3. **Ardent** – enthusiastic and passionate.



## Juliet

The daughter of Capulet and Lady Capulet. Juliet is a beautiful young girl who defies her family to marry Romeo.

### Symbolic of...

Romantic ideas of love. Through her character, Shakespeare explores expectations of women and young girls.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Idealistic** – someone who believes wholeheartedly in something, even if it is unrealistic.
2. **Ingenuous** – innocent, naïve and unworldly.
3. **Resolute** – someone who has made their mind up and whose opinion cannot be changed.



# CHARACTERS



## Tybalt

Cousin to Juliet. Defensive of his families' honour. Kills Mercutio in a duel, then is killed by Romeo in revenge for Mercutio.

### Symbolic of...

Aggressive masculinity.  
Toxic masculinity.  
Loyalty and duty.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Volatile** – someone who could explode at any moment.
2. **Tempestuous** – someone who is unpredictable.
3. **Righteous** – someone who believes what they are doing is morally justifiable.



## Mercutio

A kinsman to the prince and one of Romeo's closest friends. Tries to defend Romeo's honour and is killed by Tybalt.

### Symbolic of...

Aggressive masculinity.  
Toxic masculinity.  
Loyalty and friendship.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Anarchic** – unruly and chaotic.
2. **Impulsive** – someone who acts on a whim, without thinking.
3. **Precocious** – someone who 'shows off' their intelligence arrogantly.

# CHARACTERS



## Nurse

Juliet's wet nurse. She helps Juliet arrange her marriage to Romeo. Can be vulgar- a comedy figure.

### Symbolic of...

Lower classes and maternal qualities.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Maternal** – motherly.
2. **Submissive** – will bend to a dominant authority and 'do what they are told'
3. **Uncouth** – uncivilised and uncultured, potentially vulgar.



## Friar

Religious figure, performs Romeo and Juliet's marriage. Believes it will heal the families feud.

### Symbolic of...

Religion and paternal qualities.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Civic-minded** – a person whose actions are motivated by a concern for the good of a community.
2. **Trustworthy** – someone that can be relied on.
3. **Optimistic** – hopeful and confident about the future.

# CHARACTERS



## Prince Escalus

Verona's monarch. He has the power to create laws. He doesn't execute Romeo, but banishes instead.

### Symbolic of...

Autocratic authority/ monarchy.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Equitable** – fair and impartial.
2. **Autocratic** – a ruler that has absolute power.



## Lord Capulet

Juliet's father and patriarch of the Capulet family. At the start appears supportive of Juliet's options to marry, however by the end of the play he is forceful.

### Symbolic of...

Patriarchal power.

Traditional values and the older generation.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Stubborn** – a determination not to change a point of view.
2. **Commanding** – imposing authority.

# CHARACTERS



## Benvolio

Benvolio is Romeo's cousin. He tries to break up the fights in the play.

### Symbolic of...

Family/ a balanced character.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Appeasing**- someone who tries to pacify others.
2. **Sincere** - honest and genuine.
3. **Stalwart** – loyal and reliable.



## Paris

Paris wishes to marry Juliet. Paris mourns Juliet's death. He fights Romeo in Juliet's sepulchre; a man he thinks has come to upset Juliet's tomb.

### Symbolic of...

Traditional values – marriage for status.  
Society's expectations.

### Critical Vocabulary

1. **Chivalrous** – well-mannered and gentlemanly, especially towards women.
2. **Gallant** – respectful and charmingly attentive to women.

## MINOR CHARACTERS

**Lady  
Capulet**



- Juliet's mother and wife to Lord Capulet.
- Representative of a traditional Elizabethan wife.

**Lady  
Montague**



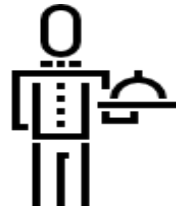
- Mother to Romeo. Dies of a broken heart.
- Cares for Romeo and is always worried about him.

**Lord  
Montague**



- Father to Romeo and patriarch of the Montague family.
- Represents masculinity and family based honour.

**Peter**



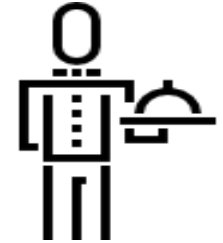
- Illiterate servant to the Capulets that invites Romeo and Benvolio to the ball.
- Like the other servants, through Peter Shakespeare suggests how those below are affected by the higher class.

**Sampson and  
Gregory**



- Retainers of the Capulet family.
- They establish Elizabethan attitudes towards women and the feud.

**Balthasar**



- Delivers the news of Juliet's 'death' to Romeo. He is Romeo's servant and friend.
- Romeo doesn't listen to his advice.

# THEMES

## Love



Love is an extremely overpowering force that supersedes all other values, emotions, and loyalties.

Through their love, Romeo and Juliet conspire to go against the forces of their entire social world.

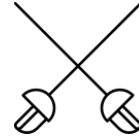
## Individual vs Society



Romeo and Juliet are forced to undermine the oppressive rules of society at the time.

For example, rules of the patriarchal family force Juliet to be subservient to her parents, rules of religion mean that they must marry in haste, and rules of masculinity force Romeo into conflict with Tybalt.

## Violence



Like love, violence is another powerful driving force in the play. The play starts with violence and ends with violence – the death of the lovers.

## Fate



In the first address to the audience, the Chorus states that Romeo and Juliet are 'star-cross'd' lovers, meaning that fate had intended for their paths to cross, and that fate controls their actions. Fate is presented as powerful and humans as weak.

## Religion



Religion is a powerful force in the play as characters have to live by moral rules set by the church.

Juliet can't marry Paris because she would be breaking the law of the church.

The Friar, as a religious figure, must protect Romeo and Juliet's marriage.

# CONTEXT

## Courtly Love:



A medieval tradition of love between a knight and an unattainable noblewoman common in European Literature. The love of the knight was depicted as overwhelming and deeply passionate.

## Arranged marriages:



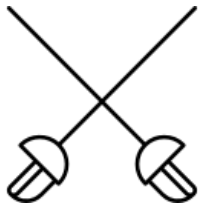
Marriages amongst the wealthy were arranged by parents and were not about love. Marriages were arranged for the purposes of status, power and improving the social standing of families.

## Patriarchal Society:



Elizabethan England was a society controlled by men. Women were seen as the 'weaker' sex and were expected to be ruled over by men.

## Duels and Honour:



Maintaining your family honour was crucial in Shakespeare's time. If you were challenged to a duel and you refused, you would be considered a coward damaging your honour and that of your family.

## Catholicism:



The play is set in Italy which is a Catholic country. Religion was extremely important and marriage vows were sacred – once made they couldn't be broken.

## Family:



Family structures were set and sons and daughters were expected to be respectful of their parents and uphold the honour of the family. Many people during Shakespeare's time experienced conflict between family duty and personal happiness (both Romeo and Juliet rebel against their families).

# SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF METHODS ...

**Prologue:** an introductory section to a piece of literature or music.

**Dramatic Irony:** the audience and reader are aware of events that are unknown to characters.

**Bawdy Humour:** humour related to sex and/ or other vulgar topics.

**Soliloquy:** a character speaking their thoughts aloud – other characters can be on stage but can't hear it.

**Monologue:** a long speech by one character – other characters can be on stage and hear it.

**Oxymoron:** two words together that have opposite or very different meaning.

**Iambic Pentameter:** a line with of verse with five metrical feet – unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable.

**Fatal flaw:** a weakness in the protagonist – this leads to their downfall.

**Foil:** A character that shows qualities that are in contrast with the qualities of another character.

**Recognition:** characters go through a change from ignorance to awareness.

**Foreshadowing:** a warning or indication of a future event.

## Structure:

The first half of the play is structured around the growing romance of Romeo and Juliet building towards the peak of their happiness – their marriage. The minor scenes at the start show violence contrasting with Romeo and Juliet's love.

## Settings:



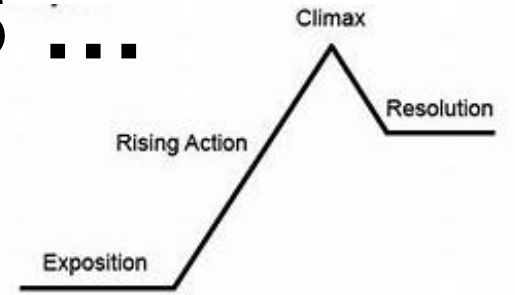
**Streets of Verona:** an Italian city. Shakespeare exploits Italian traditions of masks and revels (celebrations) that allowed for the concealment of identity.



**Capulet's home:** Lord Capulet's domain. Juliet never leaves the house and is under Lord Capulet's rule.



**Graveyard:** a gloomy and morbid setting for the tragic ending.



The second half of the play accelerates towards the tragedy as Romeo kills Tybalt. The play feels increasingly desperate and the audience is engage in the way they can see characters trying to escape their fate.



# SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF METHODS ...

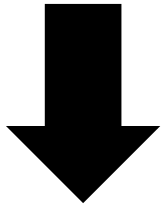
## Imagery

### Light vs Darkness:



Light is symbolic of the passion of Juliet and Romeo's love which is contrasted with the darkness of the feud.

Furthermore, only in darkness can the lovers show their love for each other.

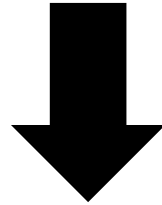


**Romeo:** It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night  
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear.  
(A1S5)

### Religious:



Romeo and Juliet use religious imagery to show their love is pure and innocent. However, it could be seen as out of control because they worship each other – this could be seen as sinful as you were only supposed to worship God.

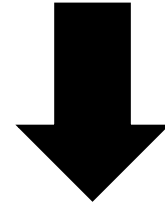


**Romeo:** holy shrine, the gentle sin is this:  
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand  
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.  
(A1S5)

### Sex and death:



Both lovers have intimations of coming death—Romeo before he even arrives at the Capulet's party, and Juliet when she sees Romeo climbing from her window on his way to exile in Mantua.



**Juliet:** Oh god, I have an ill-divining soul,  
methinks I see thee, now thou art so low,  
as one dead in the bottom of a tomb.  
(A3S5)

# A good literature response:

## Discuss the writer

Shakespeare explores how love can be a complicated and often confusing emotion. Through the character of Romeo, Shakespeare explores a unrealistic and idealistic love that defies society's expectation: his love for Rosaline is unrequited as she's aware of his lustful intentions and his love for Juliet if forbidden by the feud.



## Zoom in on key words

Shakespeare's use of the word 'feather' and 'bright' suggests that love can be comforting and pleasant. The use of the word 'bright' could suggest that love can offer hope and Romeo uses similar imagery later on in the play when describing Juliet. Through the words 'lead' and 'smoke', Shakespeare suggests that love is unpleasant and to some extent damaging.



## Include quotations/evidence

Romeo describes love as a 'feather of lead', a 'bright smoke' and a 'cold fire'.

## Engage with readers and context

The reader is left feeling sympathetic for Romeo as it is obvious that Romeo is suffering from his love for Rosaline. However, Shakespeare also could be suggesting that Romeo is a quixotic character whose unrealistic ideals of love are actually lustful as later in the play he quickly falls in love with Juliet. The reader may dislike Romeo for his fickleness, however at the same time forgive him because love does make us act impulsively.



## What's the writer used or done?

### Why?

... the use of the oxymoron shows how Romeo is confused by love as it can offer you both comfort but also cause you pain. Shakespeare here suggests that love is complex, and for Romeo in particular, perplexing because his love is unrequited.

## What lessons do we learn?

Through Romeo's opinions of love at the start of the play, Shakespeare teaches the audience to be weary of impulsive and lustful pursuits of love. This is because if you love lustfully and with no depth, you will feel lost and unable to function in society.

