Romeo and Juliet in Urban Slang

School Edition
Adapted by Tonia Lee

New York
Acknowledgement: I first give thanks to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for His daily guidance and inspiration in my life. I thank every family member and friend that has encouraged me along the way in this endeavor, particularly my husband, Bernard Charles Lee, Jr. and my son, David Jeremiab Lee.
Introduction

Romeo & Juliet in Urban Slang condenses and modernizes Shakespeare’s original Romeo and Juliet using contemporary urban slang. It promises to be a sensational read for any teen, preteen, or person young at heart that either identifies with American urban pop culture or is curious about it. The book comes in two versions: Romeo & Juliet in Urban Slang and Romeo & Juliet in Urban Slang School Edition.

This book would be ideal for:

- an urban classroom
- a classroom library
- reader’s theatre lesson
- a literary circle
- an after school program
- a book club for youth
- a drama club or class
- a gift
- a parent to use to enrich his or her child’s education
- a summer reading program
- a person who is interested in reading a unique version of Romeo and Juliet

Young, urban, everyday members of the working class were some of Shakespeare’s biggest fans. Many of the words in Shakespeare’s plays were considered slang for its time. Therefore, a translation of Romeo and Juliet into urban street slang upholds the true spirit of Shakespeare’s plays as it reaches out to the same audience that it did over 500 years ago: the young, the urban, and the hip.
Key Features of Romeo and Juliet in Urban Slang School Edition

Old “Sckool” Shakespeare
Even though this is an urban slang version of Shakespeare’s play, exposure to Shakespeare’s works in its original language is encouraged. Included at the end of each act is either a key scene from the original play or a Shakespearean sonnet left in the poetic beauty of the Elizabethan text.

Enlarging Your Vocabulary
Sprinkled in the play are words designed to build the vocabulary of its readers.

Reading Comprehension Questions
Two layers of reading comprehension questions are included in the reader’s response section titled “Reviewing the Details” and “Grasping a Deeper Understanding”. The questions in “Reviewing the Details” allow readers to recall key details from the story for a basic understanding. The “Grasping a Deeper Understanding” questions promote high order critical thinking skills such as making inferences and synthesizing.

Examining Author’s Craft: Literary Elements
This text presents its readers with an introduction to twelve literary elements including: characterization, character foil, metaphor, comic relief, setting, climax, irony, simile, personification, conflict, foreshadowing, and theme in the reader’s response section. An understanding of how the author uses these literary elements in the play further builds the reading comprehension level of its readers.

Creative Expression Activities
Included in the reader's response section are writing assignments, art projects, and poetry writing activities related to the play that enhance the readers’ comprehension and connection to the play.
Discussion Prompts

Questions that promote healthy discussions and debates about various issues raised in the play are included in the reader’s response section. Structured talking experiences help to strengthen communication skills, build community, and deepen understanding for its participants.
Cast of Characters

The Capulet Household
Juliet
Capulet - Juliet’s father
Lady Capulet - Juliet’s mother
Tybalt - Juliet’s cousin
Nurse - Juliet’s nanny
Peter - the Nurse’s servant
Sampson - servant of the Capulet family
Gregory - servant of the Capulet family
Potpan - main cook of the Capulet family
First Server - kitchen worker of the Capulet family
Second Server - kitchen worker of the Capulet family
Anthony - kitchen worker of the Capulet family

The Montague Household
Romeo
Montague - Romeo’s father
Lady Montague - Romeo’s mother
Benvolio - Romeo’s cousin
Balthasar - Romeo’s personal servant
Abram - servant of the Montague family

Verona Townspeople
Prince Escalus - political leader of Verona
Mercutio - Romeo’s best friend and relative of the Prince
Paris - relative of the Prince
Friar Lawrence - the priest in Verona
Friar John - Friar Lawrence’s friend who is also a priest
A woman at the party
Citizens
Officers
Romeo and Juliet in Urban Slang Act 1

Act One

Scene 1

Sampson: If I see those Montague men, I’m going to give them a beat down!

Gregory: Chill, Sampson, ya wildin’ out.

Sampson: If they make me mad, I have something for them. (He grips his gun to show he is ready to shoot.)

Gregory: Yo, don’t be a freak with that gun! Trying to act hard may cost you your life!

Sampson: You know that people are scared of me once I get tight.

Gregory: You are rarely like this. Are you all right, B?

Sampson: I’m good. It is just that those Montagues always get me going. I can’t stand them, yo!

Gregory: Yeah, you will get going by running away.

Sampson: Oh, you got jokes. No Montague will ever make me run.

Gregory: Yeah right, you’re mad soft, man.

Sampson: You’re lying. I’ll push Montague men into the street and smack their women against the wall.

Gregory: Sampson, the beef is only between our masters and us servants. There’s no reason to get the ladies involved.

Sampson: It’s all the same to me. I’ll kick the men’s butts and chop off their ladies’ heads.

Gregory: Chop off their heads?
Sampson: Yeah, man -- that’s what I said.

Gregory: If you have any sense at all, you’ll realize how stupid you just sounded.

Sampson: They’ll sense that I have a lot of sense especially when it comes to using my gun.

Gregory: (He sees two Montague men across the street.) You may have your chance soon. I see two of Montague’s servants across the street.

Narrator: Abram enters with a fellow servant, Balthasar.

Sampson: My gun is ready! Get them! I’ve got your back!

Gregory: I should turn my back and run.

Sampson: Don’t be scared!

Gregory: Not of you.

Sampson: Yo, let them make the first move.

Gregory: Okay, I’ll give them an evil eye when they pass, that should get things rollin’.

Sampson: Or even better, I’ll give them the finger. They’ll be mad stupid if they take that.

Narrator: Sampson gives Abram the finger.

Abram: Did you stick your finger at us?

Sampson: I did stick my finger.

Abram: But, did you stick it at us?

Sampson: I stuck my finger, but that doesn’t mean I stuck it at you.
Gregory: Yo, you’re trying to start with us, man?

Abram: Don’t start trouble; won’t be trouble.

Sampson: If you want trouble, I’m ready for you.

Abram: You think you are all that -- don’t you?

Narrator: Benvolio, a Montague, comes into full view. Tybalt, a Capulet, is close behind him.

Gregory: (whispering) Say “Yeah” -- there’s one of our master’s close relatives.

Sampson: Yeah, I am all that and more.

Abram: And your Mamma looks like a whore.

Sampson: Game over!

Narrator: Sampson takes his gun and swings it in the air. Benvolio rushes in with his gun.

Benvolio: Break it up you fools! You don’t know what you are doing!

Tybalt: Yo, what’s wrong with you, man! Why are you trying to stop a fight between our servants! (pushing a gun into Benvolio’s back)

Benvolio: Chill, I’m only trying to squash the beef. You should help me bring some peace back to the streets.

Tybalt: What -- you are trying to talk to me about peace when you have your gun out, too? I hate the word peace, as I hate hell, hate all Montagues, as well as you! (Tybalt pushes his gun further into Benvolio’s back.) Turn around so I can snuff you out of my sight.

Narrator: Everyone starts fighting. Some of the people that were watching join them.
Officers: Beat’em down! They are always starting violence on our streets!

Citizens: Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!

Narrator: Old Capulet comes in his nightgown with Lady Capulet his wife.

Capulet: What’s all that noise? (calling his servants) Get my gun!

Lady Capulet: (picking at his advanced age) Oh, stop frontin’. You should be asking for a crutch. A crutch is more like it! What are you going to do with a gun!

Narrator: Old Montague enters with Lady Montague.

Capulet: My gun, I say! Old Montague is coming, waving his gun to provoke me! I’m not scared of him.

Montague: Capulet! (Lady Montague tries to restrain him.) Don’t hold me back! Let me go!

Narrator: Prince Escalus of Verona and his men appear on the scene.

Prince: Thugs, peace breakers, (his voice is lost in the cacophony of shouts and gunfire), neighbor-killers!

Narrator: The Montagues and Capulets keep fighting and ignore the Prince.

Prince: Are they deaf? (raising his voice) Hello? Drop those malicious, misused weapons and listen to the verdict of your angry Prince!

Narrator: Everyone stops shooting.

Prince: This is the third time you have caused violence in our streets. If ever you disturb the peace again, your lives will pay the price. Everyone go home.
Narrator: Everyone leaves except for Montague, Lady Montague, and Benvolio.

Montague: Who started all of this drama? (to Benvolio) Tell us nephew, were you here when it began?

Benvolio: Your enemy’s servants were fighting and started shooting before I came. I took my gun to try to stop them. That’s when Tybalt arrived and stuck his gun in my back. After that, everyone started beastin’ on one another.

Lady Montague: Where’s my boy, Romeo? Have you seen him today? I’m glad that he wasn’t involved in today’s incident.

Montague: Something has been depressing him. For the past few days, he has kept to himself.

Benvolio: Do you know what’s the matter with him?

Montague: No

Benvolio: Have you asked him any questions?

Montague: Yes, and so have his friends, but Romeo is a hard person to understand.

Narrator: Romeo walks by.

Lady Montague: Look here he comes!

Montague: Maybe Romeo will tell Benvolio what has been bothering him if we leave him alone with his cousin. Come on, honey, let’s go.

Benvolio: What’s poppin’?

Romeo: What’s up, dog? Do you have the time?

Benvolio: Yeah, it’s a little after nine.
Romeo: (sighing deeply) Time drags when you’re down. Was that my Moms and Pops that just left?

Benvolio: It was. Yo, what’s been troubling you, Cuz?

Romeo: A girl.

Benvolio: In love?

Romeo: Out.

Benvolio: Of love?

Romeo: She dumped me, yo. I’ve been played. (He looks at Benvolio.) Are you laughing at me?

Benvolio: No Cuz, I feel for you man. Who’s this girl?

Romeo: Rosaline, she doesn’t want to date me anymore because she never wants to get married.

Benvolio: What! That’s messed up! Forget her!

Romeo: How am I suppose to forget someone as blazin’ as Rosaline?

Benvolio: By finding a girl that blazes even more.

Romeo: There’s not another girl like Rosaline. I’m wasted.

Benvolio: Stop OD’in’. Just step up your game; there’s more fish in the sea.

Narrator: Romeo and Benvolio walk off.

**Scene 2**

Capulet: You’re right, Paris. Montague and I have hated each other for a long time. Men our age shouldn’t be so pugnacious.
Paris: You both get mad respect in the neighborhood. It’s a shame that you two cannot get along. (changing the subject) But now, have you thought about my previous request to marry your daughter?

Capulet: As I said before, my daughter is young; she isn’t even fourteen yet. Let’s think about marriage in a couple of years.

Paris: Girls younger than she have made happy mothers.

Capulet: All my other children are dead. Juliet is the world to me. Date her first. Once you win her heart, I will allow her to marry you.

Narrator: Capulet and Paris leave. A clown comes and hands Capulet a sheet of paper.

Capulet: By the way, I am having a costume party tonight at my house, and I am inviting you. Paris, there will be a lot of fine girls there including my daughter, Juliet.

Narrator: Capulet and Paris leave. The clown is walking down the street trying to read a sheet of paper that Capulet has given him when he sees Romeo and Benvolio.

Clown: Good afternoon. Do you know where this address is?

Benvolio: Yeah, make a right at the corner and walk up.

Clown: Thanks

Benvolio: Yo, did you see that sheet of paper the clown had? It was a guest list to Capulet’s costume party. Guess who is invited to come?

Romeo: Don’t know and don’t care.

Benvolio: I bet you will care if I told you that your darling boo, Rosaline, was on the list. That means tonight she will be chillin’ in Capulet’s crib. Too bad it is Capulet’s party, you know, since your families be hatin’ on each other and all that.
Romeo and Juliet in Urban Slang 

Act 1

Romeo: What? My baby Rosaline is going to be there! Forget Capulet, I’m crashing his party tonight.

Scene 3

Lady Capulet: Nurse, where’s my daughter, Juliet? Call her for me.

Nurse: Juliet! Juliet! Where are you?

Juliet: What’s the matter? Who is calling?

Nurse: Your mother is. Go see what she wants.

Juliet: What Ma?

Lady Capulet: Nurse could you leave us for a moment? I need to talk to Juliet alone. (changing her mind) On second thought, maybe you should stay and hear this conversation.

Nurse: Okay.

Lady Capulet: Juliet, you know that you will always be my little girl.

Nurse: Mine too. I remember when I was nursing you. You were the prettiest baby I ever nursed. Now you are already thirteen. How time flies. If I could see you grown and married then I will have my wish.

Lady Capulet: That’s what I came to talk to you about. Juliet, how do you feel about getting married?

Juliet: It seems like a nice thing to do, but I don’t think about it much.

Lady Capulet: You should start thinking about it. There are many nice girls in the neighborhood younger than you that are already married and have children. I was your age when I first had you. To make a long story short, Paris, a relative of the Prince of Verona himself, wants you as his bride.
Nurse: A relative of the Prince wants to marry you. Juliet, girl, he sounds like a great catch.

Lady Capulet: Juliet, dear, how do you feel about marrying Paris?

Juliet: I don’t know.

Servant: (running into the room) Madam, the guests have arrived for the party. They are waiting for you and Juliet. I must go and start serving the meal at once.

Narrator: The women and the servant leave the room.

Scene 4

First server: Where’s that lazy butt, Potpan? He should be helping us with the dishes.

Second server: It’s a shame when you get stuck with all the work.

First server: Pack everything away! Check the silverware! Save a piece of that chicken and smoked turkey for me; you know that we have some greedy people around here. And do me a favor, tell the doorman to let the guests in.

Narrator: The second servant leaves.

First server: Anthony and Potpan get your butts in here!

Anthony: Yo, calm down. We’re coming.

First Server: One of you should be in here washing dishes and the other one serving food.

Potpan: Chill, we can’t be everywhere at once. Take it easy.

Capulet: (greeting his guest at the costume party) Welcome, I’ve hired the hottest DJ in town and everyone is just sitting around. All of the ladies must have some serious corns on their feet.
A woman at the party: Why are you snappin’ on us? It’s not the women. The men here are not asking us to dance.

Capulet: (chuckling) In my day, I would whisper sweet nothings in a pretty girl’s ear. But not now, my time for that has gone. However, you young men need to ask these beautiful ladies for a dance.

Narrator: The guests start to dance. Romeo can be seen sneaking into the party with his costume and mask covering his face.

Romeo: (to a servant) Yo, who’s that girl over there?

Balthasar: I don’t know, sir.

Romeo: (talking to himself still covered by his mask) Yo, she’s bangin’! I’ve got to ask her for a dance!

Tybalt: (standing near Romeo and overhears what he says) He sounds like a Montague. How dare one of those creeps crash our party!

Capulet: (walking by and noticing Tybalt’s anger) Hello, Nephew. What’s bothering you?

Tybalt: Uncle, I’m mad tight! A Montague has crashed our party!

Capulet: Oh, you mean Romeo. I saw him, too.

Tybalt: Uncle, do you need me to jack him up for you?

Capulet: Calm yourself, boy. He’s not bothering anybody. Just ignore him. This is a party; go have some fun.

Tybalt: I can’t have fun when a Montague is here disrespecting our family. I’ve got to get him!

Capulet: He will be tolerated! I’m in charge here; you need to watch your temper!

Tybalt: Uncle, it’s a shame!
Capulet: What is a shame is all this unnecessary fighting. It needs to stop between the Montagues and our family. Either shut up or leave. If not, I'll find a way to shut you up. (Capulet walks away.)

Tybalt: It’s time for me to bounce. My uncle’s acting mad grimy. This Montague surprise visit may be welcomed now, but later something will go wrong.

Narrator: Tybalt leaves. Meanwhile, Romeo walks to Juliet and takes her hand.

Romeo: My bad, for taking your hand. If I have offended you, I would like to make amends with a tender kiss. Would you mind?

Juliet: Your sudden touch didn’t bother me. Even the statues of saints are touched by those who worship them. Sometimes a touch can be like a gentle kiss.

Romeo: True, but worshippers have lips, too.

Juliet: Yes, lips that they use to pray.

Romeo: Well then, can I let lips do what hands do?

Juliet: Yes, but the statues of saints don’t move.

Romeo: Then stay still while my prayer is answered.

Narrator: Romeo kisses Juliet, but Juliet doesn’t move.

Romeo: Wow, the sin of my lips is cleaned by your lips.

Juliet: So my lips must have the sin taken from your lips.

Romeo: If your lips have taken my sin, then I must have offended you again. Let me make up for that with another kiss to take my sin back from your lips.

Narrator: Romeo and Juliet kiss for a second time.
Juliet: You are a good kisser.

Nurse: Juliet, your mother would like to have a word with you.

Narrator: Juliet leaves.

Romeo: Who’s that girl?

Nurse: Her name is Juliet. She is the daughter of Lady Capulet, one of the hosts of the party.

Romeo: (talking to himself) Oh, that’s messed up. She’s a Capulet. She is supposed to be my enemy.

Benvolio: (catching Romeo by the arm) Yo, we out, man. This party was crazy fun.

Romeo: (still stunned by the Nurse’s revelation) It’s too bad that I couldn’t have the best of the party.

Narrator: Romeo and Benvolio leave together.

Juliet: Nurse, who is that boy over there that is leaving?

Nurse: I don’t know.

Juliet: Could you please ask him his name? (The Nurse leaves.)

Nurse: (returning) His name is Romeo, and he is a Montague. He’s the only son of your great enemy.

Juliet: (talking to herself) The one I love is the son of the one I hate! When I first saw him, I didn’t recognize him. Now -- it’s too late. Why does my first love have to also be my hated enemy?

Nurse (overhearing) -- What’s this? What’s this?

Juliet: Oh um -- it’s just a part of a new rap song that I heard.
Narrator: Juliet’s mother calls her.

Nurse: Coming! Coming! Let’s be off. The guests are leaving.
Old “Sckool” Shakespeare

Shall I compare Thee to a Summer Day?

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer’s lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature’s changing course untrimmed;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;  
Nor shall Death brag thou wander’st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow’st:  
    So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
    So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare
Act Two

Scene 1

Narrator: Benvolio, Mercutio, and Romeo are walking home from the party at Capulet’s house.

Romeo: (thinking to himself) Yo, I’ve got to see her again.

Narrator: Romeo sneaks away from Benvolio and Mercutio. He climbs over Capulet’s fence. With a furtive glance backwards, he enters Juliet’s backyard.

Benvolio: Where did lover boy go?

Mercutio: He probably went home.

Benvolio: Romeo, where are you, man?

Mercutio: Forget him.

Benvolio: All right, bet.

Scene 2

Narrator: Romeo climbs near Juliet’s bedroom window. He waits to see if he can catch a glimpse of Juliet.

Romeo: Benvolio is always crackin’ on me about being a lover boy. He’s just hatin’ because he doesn’t have the skills with the girls like I do.

Narrator: Romeo sees Juliet in the balcony window of her room.

Romeo: (talking to himself) There’s a light in the window. I see her.

Juliet: (stretching by her balcony window) I can’t stop thinking about Romeo.

Romeo: She speaks. Please speak again my precious Boo.
Juliet: (talking to herself) Oh Romeo, Romeo. Where are you? For you, I will forget my family and no longer be a Capulet.

Romeo: (eavesdropping in the tree) I wonder if I should let her know that I am here.

Juliet: It’s only your name that is my enemy not you. What’s a Montague? It’s not a hand, or foot, or face or any other part that belongs to you.

Romeo: (saying to himself) Word!

Narrator: Juliet continues to talk to herself in her balcony window not realizing that Romeo is hiding in the tree eavesdropping.

Juliet: What’s a name anyway? It’s just a word. A rose still smells sweet no matter what it is called, just like I still want to be with Romeo despite his name. If Romeo dropped his name, he could have all of me.

Romeo: (speaking aloud to Juliet) I feel you, baby! I finished with being Romeo Montague!

Juliet: (startled) Yo, who’s there!

Romeo: If my name is your enemy, then I don’t want to tell you.

Juliet: Yo, this must be love! I’ve only talked to you once, but I recognize your voice! You are Romeo Montague!

Romeo: That’s not my name if you don’t want it to be.

Juliet: How did you get here? If any of my relatives see you here, you’re wasted!

Romeo: I’m good. It’s mad dark out here. No one will see me.

Juliet: Who told you to look for me?

Romeo: Love did, baby.
Juliet: Are you saying you love me?

Romeo: Girl, I swear by the blessed moon that tips with sliver these tree tops --

Juliet: (interrupting) Don’t play me! Answer my question either yes or no! Do you love me?

Romeo: I’m getting to that if you would just chill and finish listening to my rap.

Nurse: (calling) Juliet! Hey Juliet!

Juliet: She’s calling me. When can I see you again?

Romeo: Oh, you are just going to leave me hanging like that -- that’s messed up.

Juliet: What am I supposed to do?

Romeo: Marry me.

Juliet: I would have married you the first night we met.

Nurse: Juliet! Juliet! I know that you can hear me calling you!

Juliet: Coming, Nurse! (talking to Romeo) But are you serious? Romeo, do you really want to marry me?

Romeo: I want that more than life itself.

Nurse: Juliet! What are you doing! Don’t let me have to come in there and get you!

Romeo: I’ll holla at you tomorrow.

Juliet: What time?

Romeo: By nine.
Juliet: Okay, see you then. I better go so that we don’t get busted. Good night.

Narrator: Juliet leaves her window, and Romeo climbs out of the tree and slowly walks home.

**Scene 3**

Friar Lawrence: (talking to himself as he is watering the plants in his office) Each plant that God has created has a special purpose. It’s sad that many people fail to recognize a plant’s use.

Narrator: Romeo walks into the office but doesn’t make his presence known yet.

Friar Lawrence: (continuing to himself) Plants can be used for oils and dyes; some plants can even heal cuts and diseases. Plants can do a lot to alleviate suffering in this world.

Romeo: Good morning, Friar.

Friar Lawrence: Hello. God bless. My son, to be up so early must mean that something is troubling you. You must have had a restless night. How did you sleep?

Romeo: I didn’t. I enjoyed something better than sleep.

Friar Lawrence: Oh no! Have you been with Rosaline?

Romeo: With Rosaline -- no. I’ve forgotten about her.

Friar Lawrence: (relieved) That’s good, son. It’s best to wait until you get married, you know. If you weren’t with Rosaline, where have you been?

Romeo: I was at Capulet’s party last night, and now I am in trouble. I need your help.
Friar Lawrence: What? Don’t you know that if your family fights the Capulet family again then whoever is fighting will face the death penalty? What’s the matter with you, boy? What business did you have at the Capulet’s party, anyway?

Romeo: I didn’t get in trouble with my fists but with my heart. I fell in love with Capulet’s daughter and now I want you to marry us.

Friar Lawrence: Wait a minute. Just the other day all you were thinking about was Rosaline; now you are telling me that you love Juliet and are ready to marry her? Did I hear you correctly?

Romeo: Yes, sir.

Friar Lawrence: Boy, did your mother fall and damage your head when she was pregnant with you? What you are saying doesn’t make sense.

Romeo: Didn’t you tell me that I should bury my love for Rosaline?

Friar Lawrence: Yes, but that doesn’t mean that you put one in the grave only to take another one out. Young men love too much with their eyes and not with their hearts.

Romeo: Please don’t preach to me. Juliet loves me back while Rosaline didn’t.

Friar Lawrence: There’s only one good reason why I will help you. This marriage could be God’s way of changing the hate between the Montague and Capulet families into a loving friendship.

Romeo: Oh, let’s go! The sooner the better!

Friar Lawrence: Wisely and slowly those who run, trip.

Narrator: Romeo and Friar Lawrence leave.
Scene 4

Mercutio: Where in the world is Romeo? Didn’t he come home from the party last night?

Benvolio: According to his servant, he never came home.

Mercutio: Romeo is mad soft, man. He hasn’t gotten over Rosaline yet. What’s up with that?

Benvolio: Maybe it isn’t Rosaline. Tybalt, Capulet’s nephew, sent a letter to Romeo’s pops.

Mercutio: Tybalt thinks he’s gangsta. When I see him, I will show him who’s real.

Benvolio: I know that Romeo is your main boy and all that, but you should let Romeo handle his business if you know what I mean.

Mercutio: I don’t care whose business it is. Somebody needs to let Tybalt know the deal. Isn’t he the one that stuck his gun in your back when you tried to break that fight between the servants on the street the other day?

Benvolio: Yeah.

Mercutio: Man, are you goin’ to take that?

Benvolio: Someone needs to start showing some love in the hood.

Mercutio: Yo, man what’s your problem. Don’t give me that!

Benvolio: Why are you screamin’ on me like that? All I am saying is that if Tybalt has beef with Romeo, then Romeo has to stand up to Tybalt and show that he is not sweatin’ him.

Mercutio: Romeo is not in any shape to be fighting right now. Rosaline is all that he is thinking about.
Benvolio: Tybalt ain’t nobody. Romeo could bust Tybalt no matter if he’s heartbroken over a girl or not. I’ve seen my cousin smoke someone when it was necessary.

Mercutio: I’ve heard that Tybalt is real. Maybe that’s where Romeo is at now. Maybe I should try to find him and see if he needs help.

Benvolio: Forget it. Here comes Romeo now.

Romeo: What’s good?

Mercutio: Where have you been? Yo, you ditched us right after Capulet’s party and didn’t even tell us you were breakin’ out.

Romeo: Oh, my bad. I had a little something to take care of.

Mercutio: With Tybalt?

Romeo: No. I was with Friar Lawrence.

Narrator: The Nurse comes in with her servant, Peter. (note: The Capulet and Montague families were so wealthy that even some of their servants had servants.)

Mercutio: Check her out, B. She’s so fat that when she has an upset stomach she has to take six pills, one for each stomach.

Benvolio: Mercutio, yo you need to learn some better snaps. That last one was wack.

Mercutio: (pretending that he is a ship) Don’t crash!

Nurse: Peter!

Peter: Coming!

Nurse: Where’s my fan?

Mercutio: She needs a fan to cover her ugly face.
Benvolio: Yo, she’s coming over here.

Narrator: The Nurse walks over to where Benvolio, Mercutio, and Romeo are standing.

Nurse: Good morning young men.

Mercutio: Good afternoon to you, Miss.

Nurse: Is it afternoon already?

Mercutio: It is. Can’t you see the hand of the clock sticking straight up? (He makes an indecent gesture to demonstrate.)

Nurse: What sort of young fellow are you?

Mercutio: Don’t pay any attention to him. Can we help you with something?

Nurse: Yes, I looking for someone named Romeo. Can you tell me where I may find him?

Romeo: That’s me.

Nurse: Oh, I would like to speak to you alone, please.

Benvolio: Move over Rosaline, lover boy has found him a new woman now.

Romeo: I’ll follow you.

Narrator: Romeo and the Nurse walk away from Benvolio and Mercutio.

Mercutio: (playing) She’s a slide!

Nurse: Tell me, who is that smart aleck making all of those rude comments! His mother needs to whip his behind good!

Romeo: He likes to hear himself talk, that’s all. Please excuse him.
Nurse: I would like to give him plenty to talk about. (talking to Peter) And you just stood there and didn’t say a word.

Peter: Oh, if he would have touched you, I would have wasted him.

Nurse: Anyway. (to Romeo) My young lady, Juliet, asked me to find out where you were. What she told me to tell you, I promised to keep it a secret. Let me warn you, however, if you are just playing with Juliet’s feelings you will have me to answer to. You understand me! (shaking her finger in Romeo’s face)

Romeo: Tell Juliet that I have made arrangements for us to get married in Friar Lawrence’s chapel this afternoon.

Narrator: Romeo takes some money and offers it to the Nurse.

Nurse: No honestly -- not a penny.

Romeo: I insist.

Narrator: The Nurse takes the money from Romeo.

Nurse: See you this afternoon.

Romeo: Nurse, in an hour I will send someone to meet you to give you a rope ladder. I will need that ladder tonight to reach Juliet’s room so that we can spend our wedding night together.

Nurse: Okay.

Romeo: Take care. Thanks for keeping this wedding between Juliet and me on the down low. I will always owe you.

Nurse: But listen, Romeo. Can the man bringing the ladder be trusted? Did you ever hear the saying: “Two can keep a secret if one doesn’t know?”

Romeo: Trust me; my man can keep a secret.
Narrator: Romeo and the Nurse say goodbye. Peter follows behind the Nurse.

**Scene 5**

Friar Lawrence: May heaven smile upon this wedding, and may sorrow never punish us for it in the days to come.

Romeo: Amen. But whatever sadness comes, can never outweigh the happiness that I feel right now.

Friar Lawrence: Violent passions can have violent ends and die at their peak – like fire and gunpowder -- once they meet they destroy themselves. Love in moderation is always the type that last and endures. Here comes Juliet now.

Narrator: Juliet rushes into Friar Lawrence’s cell.

Juliet: Good afternoon, Reverend.

Romeo: Juliet! I am so happy to see you!

Narrator: Romeo and Juliet kiss.

Friar Lawrence: Come with me, and we’ll get down to business. You two can’t be sharing all of this affection until you have been declared man and wife.

Narrator: Romeo and Juliet are secretly married in Friar Lawrence’s chapel that afternoon.
Old “Sckool” Shakespeare

The Balcony Scene

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.

'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. O, be some other name Belonging to a man. 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 called, 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.

William Shakespeare
Act Three

Scene 1

Narrator: Romeo and Juliet are secretly married in Friar Lawrence’s cell. Meanwhile, Benvolio and Mercutio are hanging out when Benvolio spots the Capulets on the other side of the street.

Benvolio: Mercutio, let’s break out of here, man. I see the Capulets standing on the other side of the street. They may try to start with us. It’s mad hot out here and people act stupid when it’s hot.

Mercutio: Stop frontin’. You know you love to see a fight.

Benvolio: Nah, man. It’s not like that.

Mercutio: Yeah right. You would bust somebody just for looking at you wrong.

Benvolio: What?

Mercutio: Didn’t you fight a man for waking your dog because he coughed? What about the time you fought a servant for wearing his new suit before Easter Sunday? You’ve got some nerve trying to keep me from fighting.

Benvolio: Stop lying, man. You get into more fights than both of us put together.

Mercutio: Man, you’re talking trash.

Narrator: Tybalt spots Benvolio and Mercutio and starts to cross the street.

Benvolio: By heaven, here comes the Capulets.

Mercutio: By hell, I am not sweatin’ it.
Tybalt: (to the other Capulets behind him) Stick with me. I’ll do the talking. (to Benvolio and Mercutio) Can I have a word with one of you?

Mercutio: You probably mean a word and a hit.

Tybalt: Give me an excuse to fight and I will.

Mercutio: Nah, make up your own excuses.

Tybalt: Are you one of Romeo’s boys?

Mercutio Yeah, that my peeps. Do you have a problem with that?

Benvolio: Can’t we all just get along? We are in the middle of the street, and everyone including the police might start looking at us.

Mercutio: Men’s eyes were made for looking, so let them look. I’m not going to back down.

Narrator: Romeo comes down the street and walks toward the scene.

Tybalt: Well, speak of the devil. Here comes my man.

Mercutio: Romeo, don’t sweat him, man. I got your back.

Tybalt: Romeo, you little punk, I’m gonna to kill you!

Romeo: Chill, Tybalt, you don’t even know me. I’ve got better things to do than fight. (Romeo turns to walk away.)

Tybalt: I should blow the rest of your brains out. (pulling out his pistol)

Romeo: Yo, calm down. I haven’t done anything to you. Tybalt, you don’t realize it, but we are like family, man. (remembering that Tybalt is one of his new in-laws)

Mercutio: Romeo, why are you being so soft? You scared of him or something? (Mercutio lifts his gun and sticks it in Tybalt’s face.)
Tybalt: Why are you in my face?

Mercutio: Yo, if Romeo won’t whip you, then I will!

Tybalt: Come on with it.

Narrator: Tybalt and Mercutio start shooting each other while Romeo and Benvolio try to stop them. Tybalt puts the gun through Romeo’s arm and shoots Mercutio in the chest. After shooting Mercutio, Tybalt runs away followed by the rest of his men.

Mercutio: (holding his chest) I’m shot! Get me to a doctor!

Benvolio: Yo, he shot you!

Mercutio: Yeah, he got me! (Mercutio’s servant sees his shot master and runs to him.) Go you fool! You see me bleeding! Don’t just stand there! Find me a doctor fast!

Romeo: Mercutio!

Mercutio: I’m done for, and Tybalt has escaped! You messed me up by getting between me and that no-good thug! He got me under your arm, yo!

Romeo: I was trying to help.

Narrator: A doctor arrives to assist Mercutio.

Mercutio: Please, help me before I pass out. Forget the Capulets and Montagues. (looking at Romeo) Y’all made worms’ meat out of me! I’ve had it.

Narrator: Benvolio helps the doctor bandage Mercutio’s wounds.

Romeo: (talking to himself) I let my boy, Mercutio, get shot by Tybalt! Juliet, girl, your beauty has made me soft.

Narrator: Benvolio comes rushing toward Romeo.
Benvolio: Oh Romeo, Romeo! Mercutio died!

Romeo: My life is doomed!

Narrator: Tybalt returns with a gun still in his hand.

Benvolio: Look, Tybalt is coming back!

Romeo: You killed Mercutio! His soul is probably floating over our heads as we speak! When I finish, one of us will join him!

Tybalt: I’ll send you to the grave with Mercutio right now!

Narrator: Romeo and Tybalt start fighting. Romeo manages to get his gun to Tybalt’s head and shoots him. Tybalt falls dead; Romeo stands shocked.

Benvolio: Romeo, you better make a run for it. People are coming! Tybalt’s dead! Prince Escalus will kill you if you get caught! Get going! Scat!

Narrator: Romeo filled with trepidation starts running.

Citizen: Where’s Tybalt, that cold-blooded murderer of the Prince’s relative, Mercutio?

Benvolio: There he is. (pointing to his dead body)

Citizen: Get up, Tybalt and come with me. (not realizing that Tybalt is dead)

Narrator: The Prince comes, followed by Montague, Capulet, their wives, and other observers.

Prince: Who is responsible for this?

Benvolio: Honorable, Prince. Let me tell you what happened. (pointing to Tybalt’s dead body) There lays the man -- killed by Romeo -- who killed Mercutio, your relative.
Lady Capulet: (on her knees sobbing beside Tybalt’s body) My nephew, Tybalt! My brother’s son! Oh, Prince! Oh husband! The blood of one of my family members has been spilled! (on her knees begging the Prince) Oh Prince, please be just. For Tybalt’s death, a Montague must die! (weeping over the body) Oh nephew, nephew!

Prince: Benvolio, who started this violence?

Benvolio: It was Tybalt. Romeo tried to walk away, but Tybalt wouldn’t back down.

Lady Capulet: He’s lying! That’s Romeo’s cousin, and he’s trying to cover for him! Romeo killed Tybalt, so Romeo must die!

Prince: Romeo did kill Tybalt. But Tybalt killed Mercutio. Who pays the price of Mercutio’s death?

Montague: Not Romeo, Prince. Mercutio’s was Romeo’s best friend. He only did what the law would have done which would be to take Tybalt’s life.

Prince: And for that offense, I will banish him immediately. A relative of mine is dead because you two families cannot get along. For that, I will fine you so heavily that you all will feel my pain. (The Montagues and Capulets protest.) I won’t listen to your sorry excuses. As soon as Romeo is found, he must leave Verona immediately. If he ever returns to Verona, that hour will be his last.

Narrator: Everyone leaves.

**Scene 2**

Narrator: Juliet is looking out of her balcony window waiting for Romeo to come.

Juliet: I can’t wait to see Romeo. Tonight is the night that Romeo and I will share our love as man and wife. (The nurse comes in wringing her hands.) Do you have news for me from my darling, Romeo?
Nurse: He’s dead! He’s dead! He’s killed!

Juliet: What!

Nurse: Why did Romeo do such a thing?

Juliet: What! Has Romeo killed himself?

Nurse: (sobbing) I saw him dead! What a pitiful sight!

Juliet: I’ll kill myself! I’ll join Romeo in the grave!

Nurse: (not realizing that Juliet is misunderstanding her) Oh Tybalt! Dear Tybalt! He was such as nice young man! It’s a shame that you are dead!

Juliet: The end of the world must be coming! Are you trying to tell me that both Tybalt and Romeo are dead?

Nurse: Tybalt is dead, and Romeo is banished. Romeo who killed him is banished.

Juliet: What? Did Romeo kill Tybalt?

Nurse: He did! He did!

Juliet: Oh, his good looks and charming words hid the monster inside of him!

Nurse: You can’t trust men. They’re dogs. Where’s Peter? I need something cold to drink to calm my nerves. Shame on that lousy Romeo!

Juliet: Hold up! Don’t disrespect my husband! I was wrong for speaking against him.

Nurse: Why do you want to speak nice about the person who killed your cousin?
Juliet: Shouldn’t I speak well of the man who is my husband? This is terrible. My cousin is dead, and my husband is banished. (She starts to weep.) Where are my parents?

Nurse: Weeping and wailing over Tybalt’s body. Do you want to join them? Shall I take you there?

Juliet: I have more to cry about than them. When their eyes have dried from Tybalt’s death, mine will still be wet from Romeo’s banishment. Death will take my virginity not Romeo.

Nurse: Go to your room. I’ll find Romeo to comfort you. I know exactly where he is. Listen, your Romeo will be here, tonight. He’s hiding in Friar Lawrence’s cell.

Juliet: Please find him. (She slips a ring from her finger.) Give this ring to him, and ask him to say goodbye to me before he leaves.

Narrator: The Nurse leaves and Juliet goes to her bedroom.

Scene 3

Narrator: Friar Lawrence’s cell.

Friar Lawrence: Romeo, come out. Take a deep breath and calm down.

Narrator: Romeo comes out of his hiding place.

Romeo: Does the Prince want me dead?

Friar Lawrence: You didn’t get the death penalty, but he banished you from Verona.

Romeo: Oh, that is just like sending me to hell. The only place from me is Verona.

Friar Lawrence: How ungrateful you are that your life was spared!
Romeo: Heaven, for me, is where Juliet lives. Every cat, dog, and even a rat will be able to look at Juliet and be near her but me. Those worthless creatures are free, but I am banished. Have you got a razor blade, poison, or a quick way to die?

Friar Lawrence: You foolish boy! Listen to me for a moment.

Romeo: I don’t want to hear anymore about banishment!

Narrator: A knock is heard on the door.

Friar Lawrence: Someone is knocking. Quick, Romeo hide! Who’s there?

Romeo: I’m too heartbroken to move.

Narrator: The knocking gets louder.

Friar Lawrence: Get up boy! (pulling Romeo up) You’ll get caught and killed! Go run to my study!

Nurse: Let me come in. Lady Juliet has sent me.

Friar Lawrence: Come in. (opening the door)

Nurse: Oh, holy Friar. Where’s my lady’s Romeo?

Friar Lawrence: On the ground being silly. (He points to Romeo who is crying on the floor.)

Nurse: Juliet’s acting the same way.

Romeo: Nurse, did you say something about Juliet? How is she?

Nurse: Oh she is very distraught and just weeps and weeps. One minute she falls on her bed, then gets up and calls out Tybalt’s name and then the next minute she is screaming Romeo’s name.

Romeo: I can’t take anymore! (He reaches for a gun to shoot himself.)
Friar Lawrence: Get a grip on yourself! Think before you act for a change. Be a man. Go with the Nurse to comfort Juliet.

Romeo: (looking at the Nurse) Tell my sweet Boo that I’m on my way.

Nurse: (handing Romeo the ring) She wants me to give this to you. Hurry up! It’s getting late!

Romeo: I feel much better now.

Friar Lawrence: Get going.

Narrator: Romeo leaves.

**Scene 4**


Capulet: Sorry, Paris. Our family has been having a rough time since Tybalt’s murder. There hasn’t been much time for us to talk about Juliet marrying you. Juliet has gone to bed early because she is so upset about everything.

Paris: I understand. This is not the best time to date. Tell Juliet that I said hello, and I hope that she will be all right.

Lady Capulet: Thanks, Paris. I’ll give her your message. Early tomorrow morning I’ll have a talk with Juliet about marrying you.

Narrator: Paris starts to leave, but Capulet calls him back.

Capulet: Hey, Paris. Don’t worry about if Juliet will marry you. She will marry you because I say so. I’m her father, and I know what is best for her. How about if we set the date for next Wednesday --- hold up – what day is it?

Paris: Monday.
Capulet: Oh, Wednesday is way too soon. Make it Thursday. We will not make a big fuss over the wedding ceremony. We’ll invite just a few guests. With Tybalt’s recent murder, we don’t want to appear tacky with a wedding so soon.

Paris: If only tomorrow was Thursday. I can’t wait to marry your daughter.

Capulet: Thursday will soon be here. (speaking to his wife) Honey, why don’t you have a talk with Juliet about marrying Paris before you check in tonight? (speaking to his servant) I need you to get my room ready. I’m ready to turn in.

Narrator: Everyone leaves.

**Scene 5**

Narrator: Juliet’s bedroom. Romeo and Juliet are in the window.

Juliet: (speaking to Romeo) Why must you leave so soon, my sweet Boo? It’s not yet morning.

Romeo: I’m sorry. If I get busted, I’ll die by the Prince’s order. I must go.

Juliet: Can’t you stay just a little while longer? Just for me, please?

Romeo: For you my sweet Boo, I’ll jump in front of a speeding car. Forget the Prince. Let him kill me if he wants. I’ll stay a little longer. Let’s go back into your room.

Juliet: (panicking) On second thought, you should leave. I can’t bear the thought of you dying if you get caught. It’s getting lighter outside.

Romeo: Much lighter our light, much darker our sorrow.

Juliet: You sound so romantic when you talk. You would make a good poet.
Narrator: The Nurse rushes in.

Nurse: Juliet!

Juliet: Yes?

Nurse: Your mother is coming to your room. Get Romeo out of here, pronto!

Narrator: The Nurse hurries away.

Juliet: (speaking to Romeo) Hurry, get to the window!

Romeo: Peace out my love. One kiss and I’ll climb down.

Narrator: They kiss and Romeo descends.

Juliet: (calling outside to Romeo) Do you think we will ever meet again?

Romeo: Sure, baby. One day we’ll look back at this time and laugh.

Juliet: I hope this isn’t a sign of what is to come. I seem to see you -- now that you are down below -- as if you are at the bottom of a tomb. You look dead!

Romeo: In my eyes so do you. Don’t worry. We’re just sad because we must leave each other for now.

Narrator: Romeo leaves.

Lady Capulet: (outside Juliet’s bedroom) Juliet, are you up?

Juliet: What does she want with me? (She hides her face in her pillow.)

Narrator: Lady Capulet enters Juliet’s room.

Lady Capulet: What’s the matter, Juliet?

Juliet: Nothing. I’m not feeling well that’s all.
Lady Capulet: You must be upset over your cousin’s death. Darling, losing a loved one is a hard thing to face, but you must go on with life. Stop crying. Grief in moderation is a sign of love, but too much of it is foolishness.

Juliet: I should be able to cry if I need to.

Lady Capulet: Well, I bet you are crying so much not for Tybalt’s death but rather that his murderer is still allowed to live. The Prince was so unfair for not giving our enemy the death penalty.

Juliet: What enemy, Mamma?

Lady Capulet: That good-for-nothing gangster, Romeo, that’s who.

Juliet: Romeo makes me sick to my stomach.

Lady Capulet: That’s because that worm is allowed to live. He should have his behind fried for what he did.

Juliet: You’re right Mother. I wish I could revenge my cousin’s death.

Lady Capulet: Oh, I’m getting my revenge that’s for sure. I’ll hire someone to find where that snake is living and have him bumped off. Perhaps, I’ll have Romeo served such a bizarre drink that he’ll soon be keeping Tybalt company.

Juliet: I’ll never be happy until I see Romeo dead. Mamma, you don’t need to hire a hit man. Give me the poison. I’d mix it so that Romeo would soon be no more.

Lady Capulet: You find the means, and I’ll find the man. But now I’ve got good news for you, my girl.

Juliet: I need some good news, what’s up?

Lady Capulet: Well, you have such a caring father, one who has arranged an unexpected day of joy for you, that even surprised me, to lift your spirits.
Juliet: What kind of day?

Lady Capulet: Well, my child, early next Thursday morning the handsome, young, and honorable Paris will marry you at Friar Lawrence’s chapel.

Juliet: What? Why is my father rushing me to marry a man that I haven’t even dated? Paris will not make me a happy bride. I’d rather marry Romeo -- who you know I hate -- than Paris. Tell my father to forget it. (She starts to cry.)

Lady Capulet: Here comes your father now. Tell him yourself.

Narrator: Capulet and the Nurse enter the room and see Juliet in tears.

Capulet: What’s the matter my little princess? Are you still upset about your cousin? (looking at Lady Capulet) Honey, have you told Juliet about my decision?

Lady Capulet: Yes, dear. She thanks you but she doesn’t want any part of it. I wish the silly child was married to the grave.

Capulet: I’m not with you honey. How do you mean -- she’ll have none of it? Doesn’t she thank us? Isn’t she proud? Doesn’t she realize how lucky she is to have the chance to marry a fine man like Paris, the Prince’s relative?

Juliet: I thank you Daddy for trying to look out for me, but I don’t want to marry Paris.

Capulet: Girl, you need your butt whipped! Don’t get smart with me with your “thanks” but “no thanks”! Just get yourself ready next Thursday to go with Paris to Friar Lawrence’s chapel, or I’ll whip your behind all the way there myself!

Lady Capulet: Oh really dear, have you lost your senses? Chill, for a bit.

Juliet: (falling before him) Dear father, I beg you on my knees -- have patience while I say one word.
Capulet: Girl, you better be glad that I have enough patience not to slap you. You don’t appreciate anything that I have done for you. Don’t say a word to me!

Nurse: Why don’t you check yourself and stop screamin’ on her like that!

Capulet: Shut up, Ms. Know-it-all and go and gossip with your cronies!

Nurse: I’m not trying to disrespect you or anything but . . .

Capulet: Bye.

Nurse: Can’t a body speak!

Capulet: No! Save your sermons for your old ladies’ sewing circles! We can do without that here!

Lady Capulet: You are too hyped, dear. Relax.

Capulet: I have worked hard to provide Juliet with everything she needs to be happy. But, the only response I get from her is “thanks” but “no thanks”. There are many girls in Verona who would kill to have a chance to marry Paris, a relative of the Prince. (looking at Juliet) Thursday is close. Think hard about what you want. If you are a daughter of mine, you’ll change your mind about Paris. If you don’t marry Paris, I will cut you out of my will and my life. You can be sure of that.

Narrator: Capulet storms out the room.

Juliet: Mother, postpone the marriage for a month or even a week. If you don’t, prepare a bridal party in the tomb where Tybalt lies.

Lady Capulet: Don’t talk to me. I’m not saying a word. Do as you wish. I’m finished with you.

Narrator: Lady Capulet leaves in a mighty huff.
Romeo and Juliet in Urban Slang Act 3

Juliet: Nurse, this must be stopped! I’m already married to Romeo. I can’t be married to two men at the same time. It’s illegal! What would you do if you were me?

Nurse: I would go ahead and marry Paris. He’s a pretty good catch. Romeo is banished and you will probably never see him again. No one knows that you have married Romeo except for Friar Lawrence and me. I think your secret is safe with us.

Juliet: You really think I should marry Paris?

Nurse: Yes.

Juliet: Thanks, Nurse. You’ve been a real help. What would I do without you around? Go and tell my parents that I am sorry for upsetting them and have gone to Friar Lawrence to confess my sins.

Nurse: Indeed, I will. You’ve made a wise decision, my dear.

Narrator: The Nurse leaves.

Juliet: Forget her. I’m not breaking my marriage vows to Romeo for nobody. I’ll go to Friar Lawrence and see what he says. If he can’t help me, then I’ll just kill myself.
Sonnet 30

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And the old woes’ new wail my dear times waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death’s dateless night,
And weep afresh love’s long since cancelled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o’er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I knew pay as if not paid before.
But if while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

William Shakespeare
Act Four

Scene 1

Friar Lawrence: What? You want to marry Juliet on Thursday? Why so soon?

Paris: That’s the way my future father-in-law wants it. Who am I to slow him down?

Friar Lawrence: So, you don’t know what Juliet wants. Don’t you think that is a bit strange?

Paris: I know that Juliet is stressed about Tybalt’s death and because of this I haven’t had a chance to put my moves on her. You know, get my game going. (rethinking) On second thought, you probably don’t know since you are a priest and y’all can’t have any. (slightly laughing to himself)

Friar Lawrence: Watch you mouth, boy!

Paris: Sorry, no disrespect or anything. You know that I honor y’all priests. But anyway, about Juliet, her father thinks her grief over Tybalt’s death is too much for her. He says that she cries 24-7 and alienates herself from the family. He thinks some company will lift Juliet’s spirits. That’s why Capulet wants us to marry right away.

Friar Lawrence: Maybe the wedding should be postponed a week or so. (Juliet is heard coming into the Friar’s cell.) Here she comes now.

Paris: What’s up baby? We were just talking about you my lady, my wifey.

Juliet: A lady I am, but your wifey I’m not, so you need to check yourself, okay!

Paris: Chill, baby. (whispering into her ear) It’s just one of them days isn’t it?
Juliet: (rolling her eyes) I wish that you would get out my face!

Paris: Have you come to make a confession to the priest?

Juliet: I need to confess your ill-smelling breath! Why don’t you find yourself a breath mint? (waving his breath from her and making a face)

Paris: Oh, girl, don’t play me. You know that I am all love and that you should be down with me.

Juliet: What I can admit is that you are getting on my last nerve.

Paris: You are mine. Your father said so.

Juliet: (raising her hand to Paris’ face) Yo, talk to the hand. I didn’t come here looking for you but to speak with Friar Lawrence about something personal. (speaking to Friar Lawrence) Maybe I should come back at evening mass.

Friar Lawrence: No, I need to speak with you now. (speaking to Paris) Sorry, I am going to have to ask you to leave.

Paris: See you on Thursday, baby.

Narrator: Paris gives Juliet a kiss and then leaves.

Juliet: Oh, please save me from marrying him, Friar. He’s so trifling!

Friar Lawrence: I heard that your father insists that you marry him by Thursday.

Juliet: You’ve got to stop this! If you can’t help me, I will just kill myself! (She reaches for a knife on the table.)

Friar Lawrence: Hold up, that’s not necessary. I’ve got a plan. I have some fake poison that will make your body seem dead for about forty hours. You can drink it and everyone will think that you are dead. Afterwards, you will be placed into your family’s tomb where Romeo will be able to find you and secretly take you away with him.
Juliet: Holy Friar, I know you that you are a sagacious man, but this is crazy! Do you think that I want to be stuck in my family’s tomb with dead bodies everywhere? Tybalt just died a few days ago, and it will be disgusting to see him.

Friar Lawrence: If you have enough heart to kill yourself rather than marry Paris, then you can do this. It’s the only way that I can help you.

Juliet: Okay, for Romeo I’ll do anything.

Friar Lawrence: Here, take this bottle. It has the stuff you need to look dead for about forty-two hours. Tomorrow is Wednesday. Tomorrow night take this before going to bed. Don’t let the Nurse catch you.


Narrator: Juliet leaves.

Scene 2

Capulet: (to a servant) Invite the guests on this list. (handing a paper to Potpan) Go and hire me twenty first class cooks.

Potpan: You’ll have no bad cooks, sir because I’ll test whether they can lick their fingers correctly.

Capulet: What sort of test are you talking about?

Potpan: Sir, it’s a lousy cook who won’t lick his fingers. So anyone who doesn’t won’t get the job!

Capulet: (laughing) Potpan, you’re a trip. Get going. (Potpan leaves.) Getting ready for a wedding is so much work. Has Juliet gone to Friar Lawrence?

Nurse: Yes sir.
Capulet: I hope he talks some sense into that good-for-nothing child of mine.

Narrator: Juliet walks in.

Nurse: Look how happy she looks after confessing at Friar Lawrence’s cell.

Capulet: Hello, my stubborn child. Where have you been?

Juliet: I’ve been to repent for being disrespectful to you. The holy father told me to fall at your feet and beg for your forgiveness. (She kneels.) Please accept my apology.

Capulet: Get Paris. Tell him that we will have the ceremony tomorrow morning.

Juliet: I already saw Paris at Friar Lawrence’s cell, and I let him know that I was interested in him.

Capulet: I’m elated! This is great! Stand up! (Capulet helps Juliet to stand.) This is the way it should be!

Juliet: Nurse, help me to get ready for my wedding tomorrow.

Capulet: Go with the Nurse.

Narrator: Juliet and the Nurse leave.

**Scene 3**

Narrator: The Nurse, Juliet, and Lady Capulet enter Juliet’s room.

Juliet: This outfit is cool.

Lady Capulet: Need any help, sweetheart?
Juliet: (talking to Lady Capulet) No, Mamma, I have everything under control. (talking to the Nurse) Nurse, it’s just one of them days when a girl like me wants to be left alone. Could you please move your bed into another room tonight?

Nurse: That’s no problem.

Lady Capulet: Good night. Go to bed and rest. You will need it.

Narrator: Lady Capulet and the Nurse leave.

Juliet: (thinking aloud) Goodbye, family. God knows when I will see you again. Hopefully, in heaven. Maybe, I should call them back and speak to them one last time. (She calls) Nurse! (there’s no answer) Oh, forget it. She is not much help to me now, anyhow.

Juliet: (picking up the bottle of fake-poison that Friar Lawrence gave her) Yo, what if this poison is real? Maybe Friar Lawrence is trying to kill me on the down low so he doesn’t have to break the law by marrying me to Paris, tomorrow. Nah, the Friar is cool. But what if this stuff doesn’t work? Will that mean I will have to marry that wack Paris tomorrow morning? What if I wake up before Romeo comes to get me? I will be in that spooky tomb with all of those dead bodies and bad odors by myself. What if Tybalt’s ghost is in there and tries to get me for running off with Romeo? I think I see his ghost now. Yo, I am starting to spaz out! I better drink this now before I worry myself into a real death. (She drinks the bottle and falls on her bed.)

**Scene 4**

Narrator: It is early Thursday morning, the day Juliet is suppose to marry Paris. The Nurse comes in to wake Juliet.

Nurse: Juliet, wake up you lazy bones.

Narrator: Juliet doesn’t move.
Nurse: I guess you better rest now because tonight Paris won’t let you get a wink of sleep.

Narrator: The Nurse starts to chuckle to herself but realizes that Juliet is not sleeping naturally.

Nurse: Oh, my God! Oh, God! Juliet looks dead. (She checks for a heartbeat.)

Narrator: Lady Capulet rushes into Juliet’s room.

Lady Capulet: What’s wrong!

Nurse: I think Juliet is dead!

Lady Capulet: What? (She rushes to touch Juliet to feel for a pulse.) Oh God! My baby, Mama’s only baby! Please wake up or I will die with you! Help! Somebody please help us! (Lady Capulet and the Nurse start to yell and cry.)

Narrator: Capulet comes into Juliet’s bedroom.

Capulet: What are you two crying about? Get Juliet up! Paris has arrived to marry her.

Nurse: She’s dead! Dead and gone! She’s dead, dead, oh Lord please have mercy on us!

Capulet: Say what? Let me see her. (He touches Juliet.) She’s cold! Oh no! Her limbs are stiff! She must have been dead for while! This is not supposed to happen to her; she’s so young! I can’t say anymore! (He starts to cry.)

Narrator: Friar Lawrence and Paris enter.

Friar Lawrence: Is the bride ready to go to church? (trying to act as if he doesn’t know what is going on)
Capulet: Ready to go but never to return. (to Paris) Death has married my daughter and slept with your wife.

Paris: What? Juliet’s dead! It’s not fair! I have been looking forward to marrying her for so long! (He starts to cry.)

Lady Capulet: The preparations that we have made for her wedding will be for her funeral. What a tragedy!

Narrator: Everyone starts crying. Friar Lawrence tries to comfort them. They leave to prepare for Juliet’s funeral.
Old “Sckool” Shakespeare

The Poison Drinking Scene

What if it be a poison which the friar
Subtly hath minist’red to have me dead,
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonored
Because he married me before to Romeo?
I fear it is; and yet methinks it should not,
For he hath still been tried a holy man.
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? There’s a fearful point!
Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
And there die strangulated ere my Romeo comes?
Or, if I live, is it not very like
The horrible conceit of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place –
As in a vault, and ancient receptacle
Where for this many hundred years the bones
Of all my buried ancestors are packed:
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in the earth,
Lies fest’ring in his shroud; where, as they say,
At some hours in the night spirits resort –
Alack, alack, is it not like that I,
So early waking – what with loathsome smells,
And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth,
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad –
O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
Environed with all these hideous fears,
And madly play with my forefathers’ joints,
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud,
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman’s bone
As with a club dash out my desp’rate brains?
O, look! Methinks I see my cousin’s ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
Upon a rapier’s point. Stay, Tybalt, stay!
Romeo, Romeo, Romeo, I drink to thee.

-- William Shakespeare
Act Five

Scene 1

Narrator: Romeo is walking down a desolate street. He has been banished from Verona by the Prince after killing Tybalt and can no longer return. Balthasar, Romeo’s servant, comes to Romeo with news about what is happening in Verona.

Romeo: What’s good Balthasar? What’s been happening in Verona since I’ve gotten the boot? How’s my family? How’s the Friar? What’s down with my man, Benvolio? How’s my sweet Juliet doing?

Balthasar: Oh, man, you are not going to believe what I have to tell you!

Romeo: I hope it is not bad news. Things can’t get any worse for me than they are now.

Balthasar: I hate to tell you this, but this morning Juliet was discovered dead!

Romeo: What! Balthasar you are wrong for saying a thing like that!

Balthasar: I’m serious, man. I saw Juliet’s family putting her in the tomb.

Romeo: Not my sweet Juliet, my wife! Why is my world being ripped to pieces? I must see her for myself! I have to go back to Verona to see if she is really dead!

Balthasar: You can’t go back. If you get busted, the Prince will kill you.

Romeo: I don’t care, man. If Juliet is dead, I might as well be dead, also.

Balthasar: But . . .

Romeo: Don’t but me. Get ready to return to Verona with me.

Narrator: Balthasar leaves, and Romeo slips a bottle of poison into his bag.
Scene 2

Friar John: Hello, brother.

Friar Lawrence: Hello, is that you Friar John. (Friar Lawrence walks out from his inner study.) Did you see Romeo and give him the letter that I sent?

Friar John: No, I’m sorry, but I couldn’t find him.

Friar Lawrence: Did you give the letter to someone who can deliver it to Romeo? It is very urgent!

Friar John: I couldn’t find anyone who could give it to him.

Friar Lawrence: It is important that Romeo gets that letter! It’s a matter of life and death!

Friar John: Here’s the letter. Maybe you can find a way for him to get it.

Friar Lawrence: Thanks.

Friar John: No problem. (He walks off.)

Friar Lawrence: (thinking to himself) I must get to Capulet’s tomb. In three hours, Juliet will wake up expecting to see Romeo. I have to wait with Juliet and find a way for Romeo to get my letter.

Scene 3

Narrator: At the Capulet’s family tomb. Paris and one of his servants come to the tomb with flowers.

Paris: Give me your flashlight, boy. (The servant gives it to him.) Now go outside and wait under a tree, somewhere out of sight. I don’t want anyone to know that I was here. (The servant hands Paris the flowers.)
Narrator: Paris walks over to where Juliet’s body is and starts to speak to her supposedly dead body.

Paris: Oh, Juliet you know that I’ll miss you, baby, even though we never had a chance to hook up. (He starts to weep.)

Narrator: Paris’ servant warns him that someone is coming to the tomb.

Paris: Oh snap, someone is coming! (Paris hides in the tomb.)

Romeo: Give me a pick and a crowbar. Wait! Take this letter. You must give it to my pops early tomorrow morning. While I’m here, you must not come in or I’ll tear you apart from limb to limb. I want to get a ring off Juliet’s finger.

Balthasar: All right. You want hear a peep out of me.

Romeo: Why don’t you hide by that tree out there? (giving him money) Take that. Peace out. Bye.

Balthasar: Hey, thanks for the ends, man.

Narrator: Balthasar goes and hides in the tree by the tomb near the same spot that Paris’s servant is hiding.

Romeo: (cursing the tomb as if it was human) You belly of death! I am forcing open your rotten jaws to feed you with more food!

Narrator: Romeo walks into the room.

Paris: (thinking to himself when he sees Romeo) What? Why is that fool here. He’s supposed to be banished for killing my would be cousin-in-law Tybalt!

Narrator: Romeo walks to where Juliet is lying.

Paris: You better bounce or I’ll report you to the Prince. He will have you killed.
Romeo: Get out my face! (Romeo pulls out his gun.)

Paris: You are so stoop-id. (Paris pulls out his gun.)

Narrator: Romeo and Paris start to fight. Romeo’s gun reaches Paris’ head, and Romeo shoots. Paris’ servant hears the gunshot and peeks inside the tomb. He rushes to get the officers.

Paris: (falling to the ground) I’m shot in the head! I’m going to die! Romeo, please man, do at least one good thing in your life! I beg you, man, please lay my dead body beside Juliet!

Narrator: Paris falls dead.

Romeo: Who is this guy anyway? (He takes a closer look at Paris’s body.) Paris! What did my servant say on the way over here? Something about Paris was going to marry Juliet the morning she died. Maybe I’m just buggin’ out.

Narrator: Romeo picks up Paris’ dead body and places it beside Juliet. Romeo starts speaking to Juliet’s supposedly dead body.

Romeo: Oh, my love, my wife. Death may have taken your breath but not your beauty. You are as pretty as you were when you were alive.

Narrator: Romeo turns his head and sees Tybalt’s dead body and starts talking to it.

Romeo: Whew! Death has certainly gotten the best of you. You look uglier now than you did when you were living. Don’t worry, brother. The same hand that cut your life short will take mine as well. I hope that you have forgiven me.

Narrator: Romeo looks back at Juliet’s dead body.

Romeo: Yo, you don’t even look like you are dead but like you are just sleeping. I’m joining you, baby. If we can’t be together on earth, then I’ll be with you in eternity. (He takes the bottle of poison from his bag and drinks.) With a kiss, I die. (He falls on top of Juliet.)
Narrator: Romeo dies. Friar Lawrence and Balthasar walk into the tomb with flashlights.

Friar Lawrence: What’s all this! Why are my feet stumbling over some many things? Are these dead bodies lying on the ground? (He scans the ground with his flashlight.)

Balthasar: I bet it’s Romeo. He was acting mad strange before he got here, like he was planning to kill himself.

Friar Lawrence: Something’s wrong. I have a feeling that something very egregious has happened.

Balthasar: Romeo made me hide under a tree to wait for him. I fell asleep and thought that I heard a gunshot. I started dreaming about Romeo fighting another man and that he shot him.

Friar Lawrence: (His flashlight hits Romeo’s dead face.) Oh, no! No! It’s Romeo! Why did you! Oh, he’s stiff! (He sees another body covered with fresh blood.) Who’s this? What? Paris, too!

Narrator: Juliet starts to wake up.

Juliet: Oh Friar, where’s my husband, Romeo?

Narrator: Voices can be heard coming to the tomb.

Friar Lawrence: I hear noises. God has intervened. Juliet, we have to get out of here. We must leave this place of death and destruction. Your husband lies dead in your arms, and Paris is dead, too. Come, I will arrange for you to live as a Nun. Don’t argue with me. I hear the officers coming.

Juliet: Go, I am staying here.

Narrator: Friar Lawrence rushes off.

Juliet: Noise, then I’ll be quick! (She takes Romeo’s gun that is lying near her and shoots herself falling on top of Romeo.)
Narrator: Paris’s servant and the officers enter Capulet’s tomb.

Head Officer: What’s that noise? It sounds like a gunshot! Quick we must quickly go inside the tomb and arrest anyone we find!

Narrator: The officers search the tomb and find the dead bodies of Paris, Romeo, and Juliet.

Head Officer: Oh, it’s a bloodbath in here and all young people with so much of their lives ahead of them. (to some of the other officers) Quick, notify the families, the Capulets, the Montagues, and the Prince. (to another officer) Search for any witnesses that can tell what happened here to cause all of these senseless deaths.

Officer: Yes, we have found Romeo’s servant. And here’s the Friar trembling, sighing, and weeping. We took his pickaxe and spade from him as he was coming from the side of the churchyard.

Narrator: The Prince, Capulets, and Montagues come rushing into the tomb.

Lady Capulet: What’s going on here? People are rushing into our family’s tomb yelling Juliet’s, Romeo’s, and Paris’ names.

Capulet: All of these officers running in and out of our family’s tomb is disrespectful to our deceased family members.

Prince: What’s upsetting this town?

Montague: My wife died last night. She was so heartbroken over Romeo’s banishment. What could be happening now?

Capulet: Look how our daughter is bleeding! Where did all of that blood come from?

Friar Lawrence: I can explain everything. (He explains the entire story while everyone is listening.) Here’s the letter that Romeo was suppose to get. (handing the letter to Romeo’s father)
Prince: Where are the two enemies, the Capulets and Montagues? (They look at him.) See how you have been punished for hating each other, and as result your children are dead. And I have lost two relatives, Mercutio and Paris, because you could not stop the violence. We are all being punished. We should confess our wrongs and start getting along.

Capulet: (reaching out to take Montague’s hand) Montague, my brother, let’s shake hands. This is my daughter’s wedding gift from you. I can ask no more.

Montague: (taking Capulet’s hand) Our children are the tragic victims of our hate. What else do we need to happen to know that hate and violence come back to hurt ourselves.

Prince: It’s now morning and time for a new day between the Capulets, Montagues, and the town of Verona. Go now and talk no more about these tragic events. Some should be pardoned while others punished. There can be never a more tragic story than Romeo and Juliet.
Old “Sckool” Shakespeare

The Prologue

Chorus: 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-crossed lovers take their life;
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Doth with their death bury their parent’s strife.
The fearful passage of their death-marked love,
And the continuance of their parent’s rage,
Which, but their children’s end, naught could remove,
Is now the two hours’ traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
Where here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

William Shakespeare
Reader’s Response
Responding to Act One

Enlarging your Vocabulary
Define the following words using a dictionary or by using the context in which the word was used in Act 1:

1. cacophony

2. malicious

3. pugnacious

Reviewing the Details
1. What does the Prince of Verona say will happen to a Capulet or a Montague if he gets into another fight?

2. Why does Romeo want to go to Capulet’s party even though he is not invited?

3. What do Juliet’s mother and the Nurse think about the idea of Juliet marrying Paris? What does Juliet think about the idea?

4. Why does Tybalt leave Capulet’s party?

5. How do Romeo and Juliet discover each other’s identity? What are their reactions to this information?
Examining Author’s Craft: Literary Elements

**Characterization** - the way an author reveals the personality of a character. Writers reveal a lot about their characters’ personalities by describing their appearance, way of talking, thoughts, and actions. Readers can also learn about a character through what other characters say about him or her and their reactions to that character.

**Character Foil** – a character whose personality or behavior is the opposite of another character.

**Metaphor** – exists when two unlike things are compared and the words “like” or “as” are NOT used in the comparison.

**Grasping a Deeper Understanding**

1. Describe Tybalt’s characterization? What impact does Tybalt’s character have on the events that occurred in Act 1? Who in this act could be Tybalt’s character foil? Why?

2. What metaphor do Romeo and Juliet use before their first kiss? How does this metaphor give you a better understanding of Romeo and Juliet’s feelings for one another?

3. Describe the lifestyle of the Capulet family. What details from Act 1 help you to conclude this?

**Creative Expression**

A. Write a diary page from the point of view of Tybalt. Include his feelings about the events that happened to him in this act. Be sure that your diary page remains true to Tybalt’s characterization.

B. Consider various weather symbols (sun, rain, clouds, tornado, snow etc.) and draw a weather symbol that best represents the characterization of the main characters in Act 1. Be sure to explain how each weather symbol you drew is related to a character’s personality from Act 1 and forecast what behaviors you expect from that character later in the play based upon what you read in this act.
Discussion Prompts

1. The prince plans to use the death penalty to enforce peace on the streets of Verona. On a scale from 1 (terrible) and 10 (excellent) how good of an idea do you think this is? Does the death penalty help a society to enforce its laws?

2. Romeo and Juliet fall in love at first sight. Do you think it is possible for two people to fall in love at first sight? Why or why not? Explain.

3. During Romeo and Juliet’s time period, people married much younger than today. If a teenage friend wanted your advice about if he or she should get married to someone he or she fell in love with, what would you advise him or her to do and why?
Responding to Act Two

Enlarging your Vocabulary
Define the following words using a dictionary or by using the context in which the word was used in Act 2:

1. furtive

2. alleviate

3. moderation

Reviewing the Details
1. Where does Romeo go after Capulet’s party?

2. Why does Friar Lawrence decide to honor Romeo’s request to marry Juliet even though he feels that Romeo is getting married too soon?

3. Why is Mercutio worried about Romeo?

4. Which characters in the play are aware of Romeo and Juliet’s marriage in Act 2?

Examining Author’s Craft: Literary Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Comic Relief</strong></th>
<th>a humorous scene or set of events designed to relieve the emotional tension of a previously serious or tragic scene.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Setting</strong></td>
<td>the time or place a story or scene takes place</td>
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Grasping a Deeper Understanding
1. Explain how Romeo and Juliet are similar? Consider their conversation and behavior throughout Act 2

2. Do you think Romeo and Juliet’s problems would have been different if the play was set in current times? How important do you think the setting of this play is to the events that occur in this act?

3. Describe Mercutio’s treatment of the Nurse. What purpose do you think this scene serves in the play?

Creative Expression
A. Write a letter to Romeo and Juliet that explains your thoughts about if their marriage was a good idea or not. What advice would you give the couple about their future?

B. Write a poem or song that expresses how Romeo and Juliet feel about each other after their wedding.

Discussion Prompts
1. What possible outcomes positive and negative could happen as a result of Romeo and Juliet’s marriage?

2. Did Friar Lawrence and the Nurse do the right thing by keeping Romeo and Juliet’s wedding a secret from their families? Is there ever a time when keeping a secret is the right thing to do or justified?

3. Friar Lawrence says to Romeo: “Yong men love too much with their eyes and not their heart”. What did Friar Lawrence mean by this comment and how does it relate to Romeo? Do you think it is possible for a young man or woman to love someone that he or she does not find handsome or pretty? Explain.
Responding to Act Three

Enlarging your Vocabulary
Define the following words using a dictionary or by using the context in which the word was used in Act 3:

1. bizarre

2. distraught

3. trepidation

Reviewing the Details
1. Why is Romeo reluctant to fight Tybalt when Tybalt first challenges him? Why does Romeo eventually kill him?

2. What punishment does the Prince give Romeo because of his involvement in Tybalt’s murder? Why did he spare Romeo’s life?

3. How does Juliet react to the news of her Cousin Tybalt’s death at the hands of her new husband, Romeo?

4. What does Juliet’s father threaten to do if she refuses to marry Paris?

5. What advice does the Nurse give Juliet about marrying Paris? Does Juliet plan to follow her advice?

Examining Author’s Craft: Literary Elements

- **Climax** - the most dramatic moment or turning point in the story.
- **Irony** - when the opposite of what is expected happens.
- **Simile** - exists between two unlike things using the words “like” or “as”. For example, she is as pretty as a picture or riding on the unpaved road is like riding a roller coaster.
Grasping a Deeper Meaning

1. Name an event or comment a character said in this act that you found ironic or surprising? How did this event or comment add to the drama of the play?

2. Juliet uses the following simile when speaking to Romeo in the following line: “I seem to see you – now that you are down below – as if you are at the bottom of a tomb.” What comparison is Juliet making in this statement and what does it reveal about Juliet’s feelings at this moment in the play?

3. Which event in this act served as a climax or turning point in Romeo and Juliet’s life? How will this event drastically change their lives?

Creative Expression

A. The type of violence present in Romeo and Juliet still exists today. Write an editorial to your newspaper explaining what individuals need to do in your community to ensure that it is a safe place to live.

B. Write a letter to Friar Lawrence from the point of view of Capulet. Be sure that Capulet expresses his hopes, fears, and feelings about Juliet.

C. Create a simile that describes the relationship between two characters in this act. Afterwards, express your simile by turning it into an essay, a poem, or an illustration. To help get started, finish the statements below using an animal, object, or action that describes the two characters’ relationship.

Romeo and Juliet’s relationship is like . . . .
Juliet and Paris’ relationship is like . . . .
Juliet and the Nurse’s relationship is like . . .
Romeo and Tybalt’s relationship is like . . . .

Discussion Prompts

1. Select one person that you think is most responsible for the violence and bloodshed that occurred in Verona in this act. Why do you think this person is the most responsible for what happened? Do you believe the violence could have been avoided, and if so how?
2. Lady Capulet tells Juliet in regards to her crying so much about Tybalt’s death: “Stop crying. Grief in moderation is a sign of love, but too much of it is foolishness.” What did Lady Capulet mean when she said this and do you agree with her statement? Why or why not? Explain.

3. An arranged marriage is when the parents (usually the father) select a mate for their child. The practice of arranging marriages was common in the past and still is in many parts of the world today. What could be the advantages of an arranged marriage? What could be the disadvantages?
Responding to Act Four

Enlarging your Vocabulary
Define the following words using a dictionary or by using the context in which the word was used in Act 4:

1. alienate

2. elated

3. sagacious

Reviewing the Details
1. Why is Juliet’s father in a rush for Juliet and Paris to get married?

2. Describe Juliet’s reaction to Paris when she sees him at Friar Lawrence’s cell.

3. What does Juliet threaten to do if Friar Lawrence does not develop a plan that will prevent her from marrying Paris?

4. What plan does Friar Lawrence create to allow Juliet to spend the rest of her life with Romeo?

5. What are some of Juliet’s fears before she takes the fake poison that Friar Lawrence gives her?

Examining Author’s Craft: Literary Elements

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<th>Personification</th>
<th>– when a nonhuman thing behaves like a person.</th>
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| Conflict | – a struggle between two forces. A conflict can be inner or external. An inner conflict is a struggle inside the character; while an external conflict, is a struggle that takes place outside the character between one or more characters, society, nature, or fate. |
Grasping a Deeper Understanding
1. Describe at least one conflict that exists in this act. Explain how this conflict is significant to the play.

2. Describe Juliet’s relationship with her parents and the Nurse in this act. How does it contribute to her decision to take the fake poison?

3. How is death being personified in the following line from Act 4: “Death has slept with your wife and taken my daughter”? How does this quote relate the events that happened in this act?

Creative Expression
1. Write a news article that would appear in a newspaper after Juliet is discovered supposedly dead by the Capulets.

2. Write a dialogue between Capulet and Lady Capulet that would occur after they discovered Juliet’s supposedly dead body. Make sure all the events that have occurred earlier in the play are reflected in the dialogue.

3. Pick five characters from Romeo and Juliet. Create a report card that evaluates the behavior of these characters throughout the play and explain why you gave that person the grade you did. Grades can range from 0 to 100 or from A to F.

Discussion Prompt
1. Evaluate Friar Lawrence’s plan from 1 (terrible) to 10 (excellent) to prevent Juliet from marrying Paris. Explain your score.

2. Do you feel sorry for Juliet’s parents when they think that Juliet is dead? Why or why not? Explain.

Responding to Act Five

Enlarging your Vocabulary
Define the following words using a dictionary or by using the context in which the word was used in Act 5:

1. desolate

2. egregious

3. intervened

Reviewing the Details
1. Why does Romeo decide to return to Verona after he has been banished, even if it might result in him getting the death penalty from the Prince?

2. Why does Friar Lawrence go to Capulet’s tomb? What did he discover when he got there?

3. How does Juliet die?

4. Besides Romeo and Juliet, what other characters die in this act and how did they die?

5. What do the Montagues and Capulets plan to do from now on as a result of their children’s deaths?
Examining Author’s Craft: Literary Elements

**Foreshadowing** - are bits of information or clues such as a description, a character’s comment, or an event that hint to what might occur later in the story.

**Theme** – a central idea about a topic that a reader can determine based upon the events in the story.

Grasping a Deeper Meaning

1. Name at least two events or things a character said in this act or in the other acts in the play that foreshadowed Romeo and Juliet’s deaths.

2. Balthasar’s, Romeo servant, suspected that Romeo had planned to kill himself when he entered Capulet’s tomb. Why do you think he didn’t try to intervene and prevent Romeo from carrying out his plan?

3. List three words that you think best describes the events that occurred throughout *Romeo and Juliet*. Explain how each word relates to the play.

Creative Expression

A. Write a sermon that you think Friar Lawrence would give at his next chapel service after the tragic events that occurred in Act 5. Be sure to include in the sermon any reflections that you think the Friar may have and lessons that he and his congregation may learn from the tragedies.

B. Write a sentence or thematic statement that a reader may see as true from the events of *Romeo and Juliet* about the following topics. For example: love can bring families together or tear them apart.

   - Violence
   - Love
   - Revenge
   - Secrets

   Pick one of the statements above and create an essay, collage, song, or poem to illustrate your thematic statement.

C. Create an educational board game based on the themes and events in *Romeo and Juliet*. You may use poster board and markers. Answer the following questions to help you design your game:

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1. How many players will your game have?
2. How will the players move around the board (dice, spinner, etc)?
3. What will your players have to do to win?
4. What will you include in your board that will help your players to win?
5. What will be some obstacles you include in your board to help your players to lose?
6. Will your game require cards and what would be the cards’ purpose?
7. What will be the title of your game?

**Discussion Prompts**

1. During the Elizabethan era, the time period in which Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet*, there was a debate about whether one’s future was determined by fate or by one’s own actions. What percent do you think the deaths of *Romeo and Juliet* was a result of fate and what percent of human actions? Be sure to explain your percentages.

2. Explain your reaction to Romeo and Juliet’s suicide. Why do you think Shakespeare ended his play this way? Do you think their suicides revealed more courage or fear? What other actions could Romeo and Juliet have taken besides suicide? Explain.

3. Montague states at the end of the play: “What else do we need to happen to know that hate and violence doesn’t do anyone good?” Do you agree with his statement? Do you think there is ever a time when hate or violence is justified? Explain.

4. At the end of the Act 5, the Prince announces that some people will be pardoned while others punished for their role in the series of deaths that occurred in the act. Which characters do you think should be pardoned and which ones punished? Explain.
About the Author

Tonia Lee was born and raised in Greenville, South Carolina. She attended the University of South Carolina where she earned Bachelors of Art degree in English in 1993. In 1994, she received a Master’s Degree in the Teaching of English at Teacher’s College, Columbia University. She is an employee of the New York City Board of Education where she has taught English in a public school in Harlem for over ten years. Mrs. Lee currently resides in New York City with her husband Bernard Lee and son, David Lee.

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