



ROMEO AND JULIET



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Introduction

This *Romeo and Juliet* is part of the **Cambridge School Shakespeare** series. Like every other play in the series, it has been specially prepared to help all students in schools and colleges.

The **Cambridge School Shakespeare** *Romeo and Juliet* aims to be different. It invites you to lift the words from the page and to bring the play to life in your classroom, hall or drama studio. Through enjoyable and focused activities, you will increase your understanding of the play. Actors have created their different interpretations of the play over the centuries. Similarly, you are invited to make up your own mind about *Romeo and Juliet*, rather than having someone else's interpretation handed down to you.

Cambridge School Shakespeare does not offer you a cut-down or simplified version of the play. This is Shakespeare's language, filled with imaginative possibilities. You will find on every left-hand page: a summary of the action, an explanation of unfamiliar words, and a choice of activities on Shakespeare's stagecraft, characters, themes and language.

Between each act, and in the pages at the end of the play, you will find notes, illustrations and activities. These will help to encourage reflection after every act and give you insights into the background and context of the play as a whole.

This edition will be of value to you whether you are studying for an examination, reading for pleasure or thinking of putting on the play to entertain others. You can work on the activities on your own or in groups. Many of the activities suggest a particular group size, but don't be afraid to make up larger or smaller groups to suit your own purposes. Please don't think you have to do every activity: choose those that will help you most.

Although you are invited to treat *Romeo and Juliet* as a play, you don't need special dramatic or theatrical skills to do the activities. By choosing your activities, and by exploring and experimenting, you can make your own interpretations of Shakespeare's language, characters and stories.

Whatever you do, remember that Shakespeare wrote his plays to be acted, watched and enjoyed.

Rex Gibson

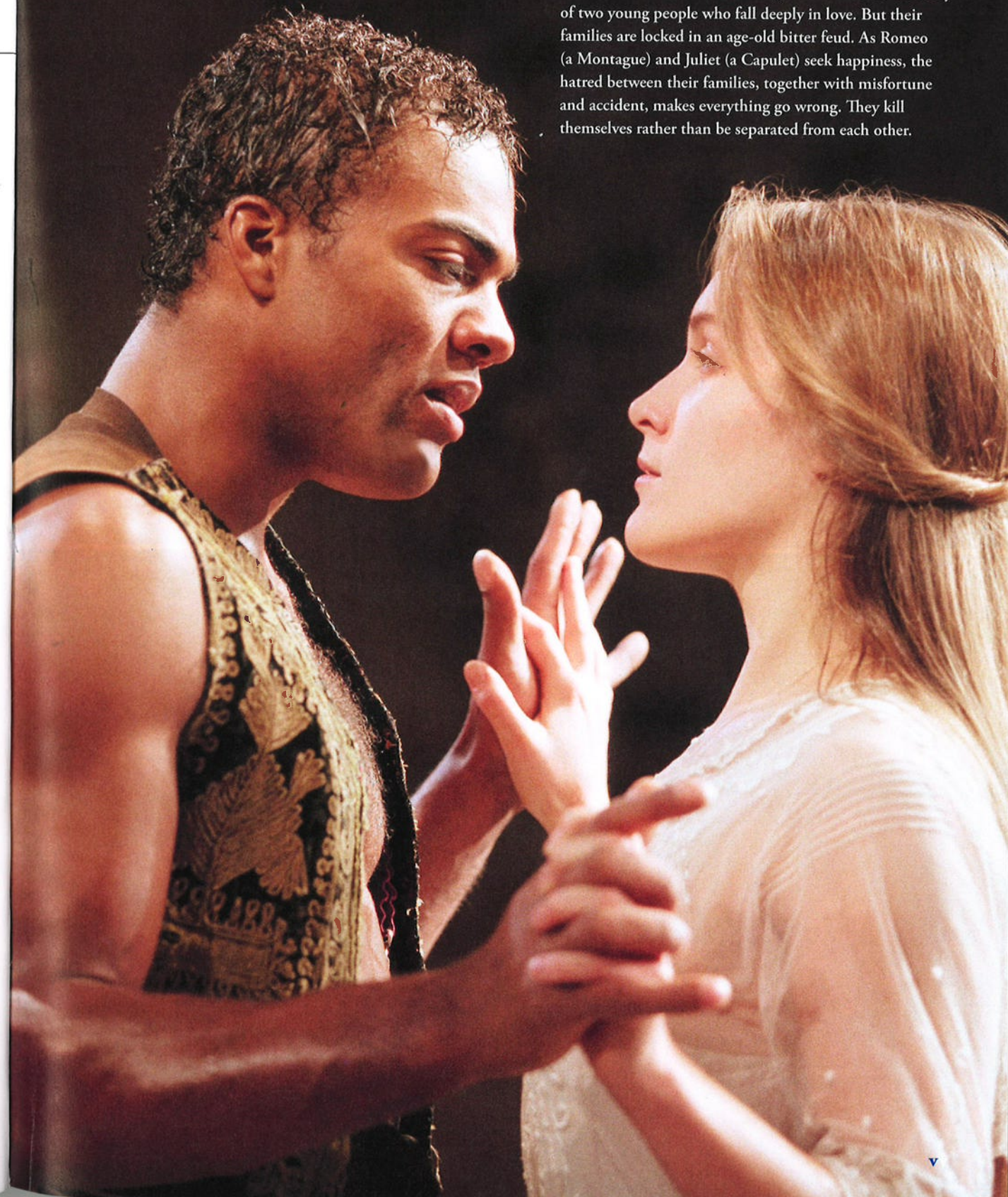
Founding editor

This new edition contains more photographs, more diversity and more supporting material than previous editions, whilst remaining true to Rex's original vision. Specifically, it contains more activities and commentary on stagecraft and writing about Shakespeare, to reflect contemporary interest. The glossary has been enlarged, too. Finally, this edition aims to reflect the best teaching and learning possible, and to represent not only Shakespeare through the ages, but also the relevance and excitement of Shakespeare today.

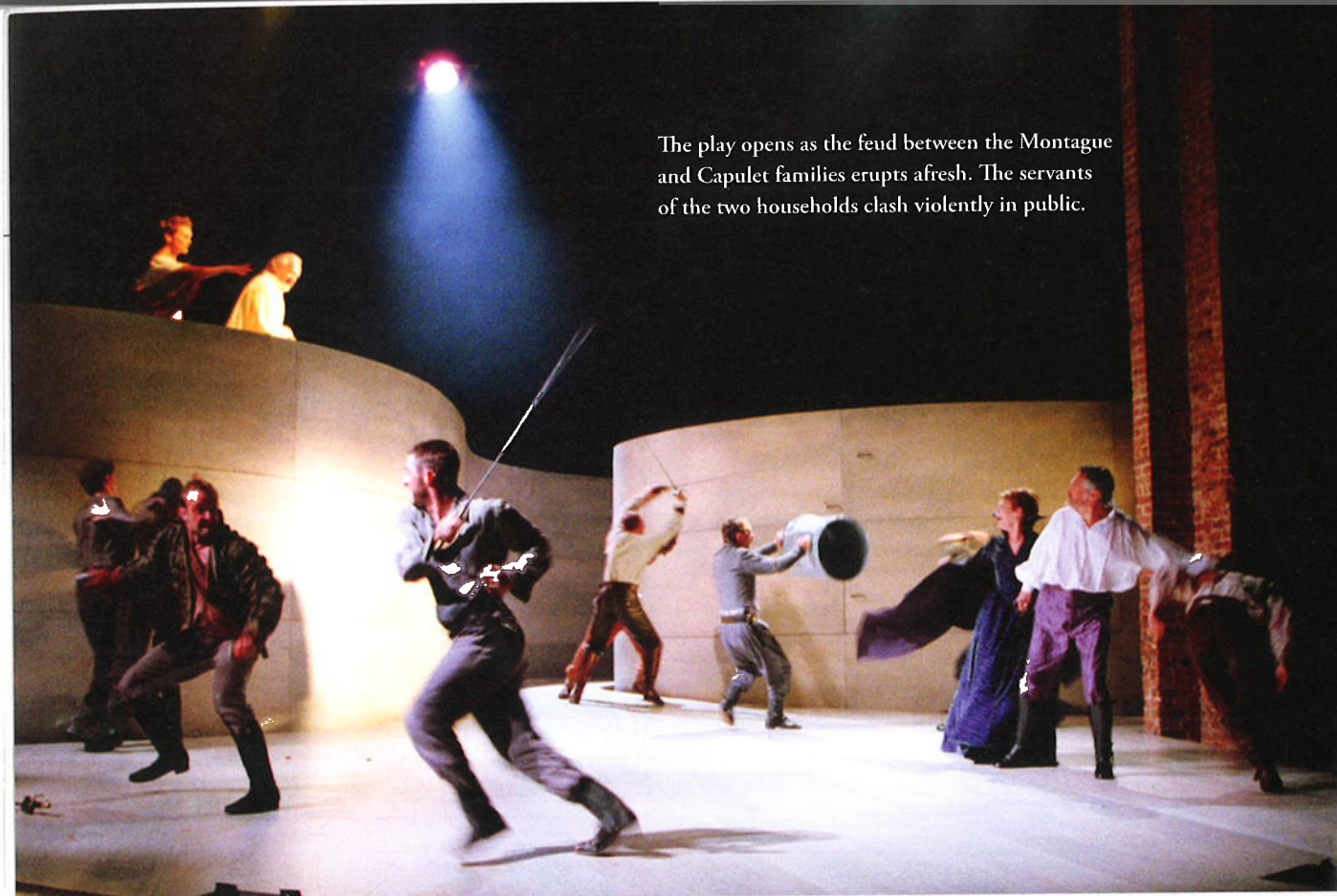
Richard Andrews and Vicki Wienand

Series editors

This edition of *Romeo and Juliet* uses the text of the play established by G. Blakemore Evans in **The New Cambridge Shakespeare**.



'Star-crossed lovers'. *Romeo and Juliet* dramatises the story of two young people who fall deeply in love. But their families are locked in an age-old bitter feud. As Romeo (a Montague) and Juliet (a Capulet) seek happiness, the hatred between their families, together with misfortune and accident, makes everything go wrong. They kill themselves rather than be separated from each other.



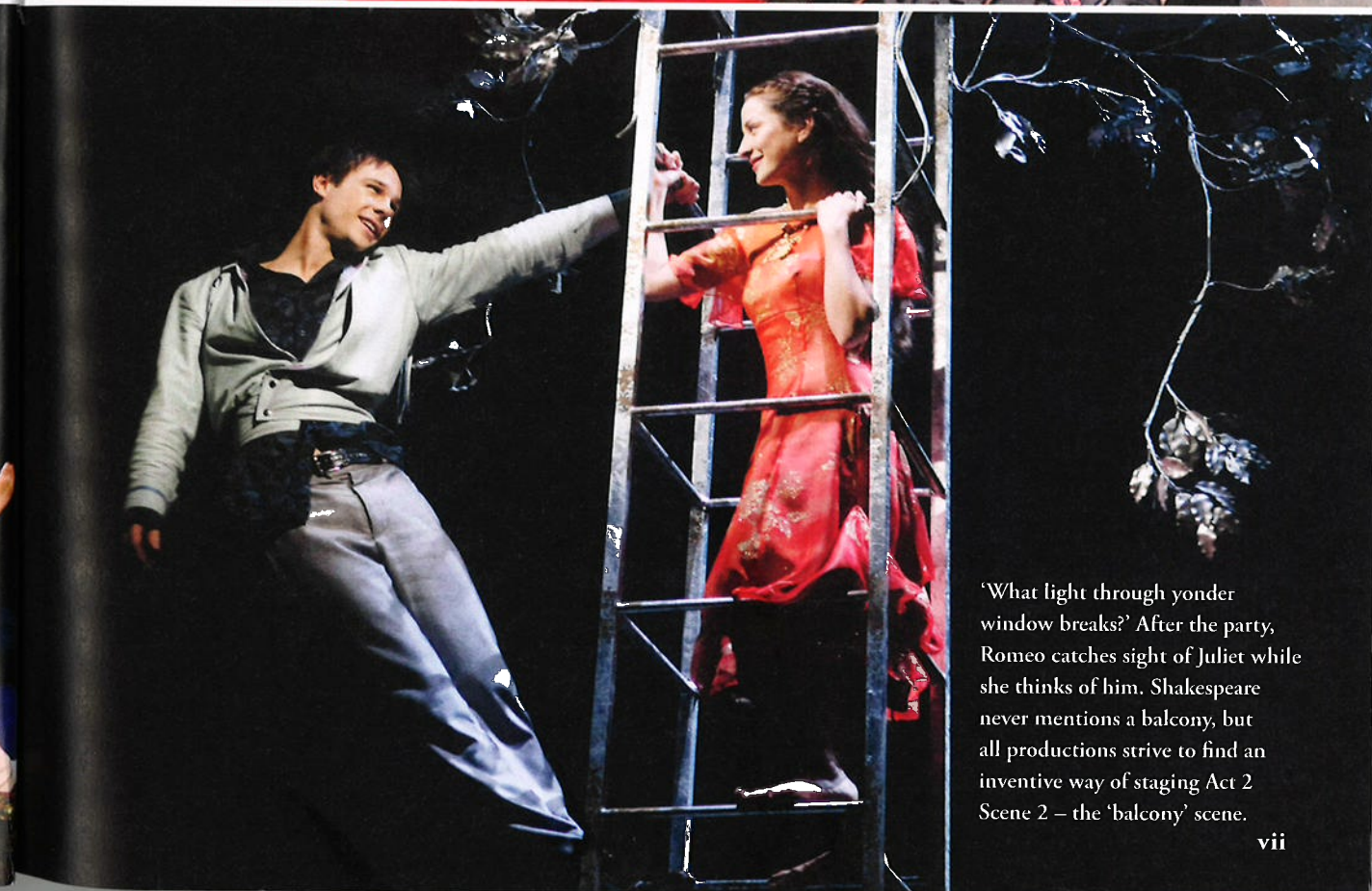
The play opens as the feud between the Montague and Capulet families erupts afresh. The servants of the two households clash violently in public.



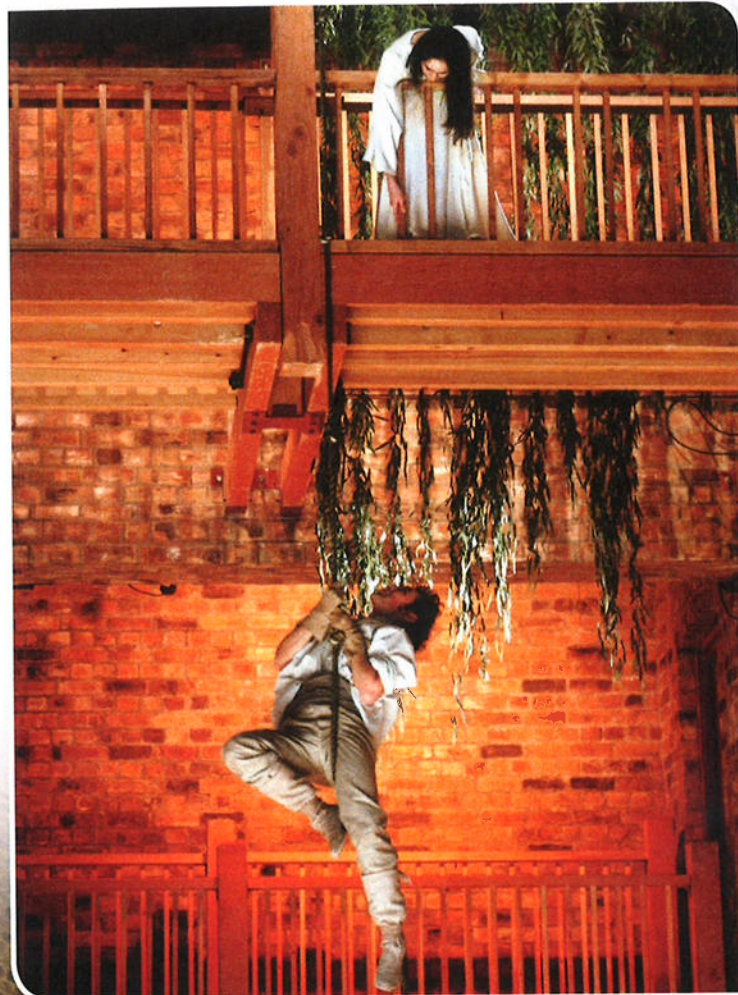
A forlorn Romeo has riskily gatecrashed Capulet's party. Disguised behind a mask, and at first unrecognised, he falls in love with Juliet, not yet knowing that she is the daughter of Lord Capulet. They kiss for the first time.



Later, after order has been restored, Lord Capulet arranges a lavish party. His guests dance in celebration.



'What light through yonder window breaks?' After the party, Romeo catches sight of Juliet while she thinks of him. Shakespeare never mentions a balcony, but all productions strive to find an inventive way of staging Act 2 Scene 2 – the 'balcony' scene.



◀ 'Parting is such sweet sorrow'. Juliet agrees to marry Romeo the following day and bids him a reluctant farewell.

▼ 'Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?' Mercutio (right), Romeo's close friend, is disgusted by Romeo's refusal to fight Tybalt (a Capulet). Mercutio challenges Tybalt to a duel.



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▲ Romeo tries to stop the duel, but Tybalt fatally wounds Mercutio (centre). Romeo, furious about Mercutio's death, kills Tybalt in revenge and is banished from Verona.

▼ Friar Lawrence has secretly married Romeo and Juliet. Juliet refuses to marry Paris, her father's choice. She seeks advice from the troubled Friar about what she can do. Paris continues to promote his own qualities as Juliet's husband-to-be. Friar Lawrence proposes a hazardous plan, in which Juliet will drink a potion that will send her into a death-like sleep.



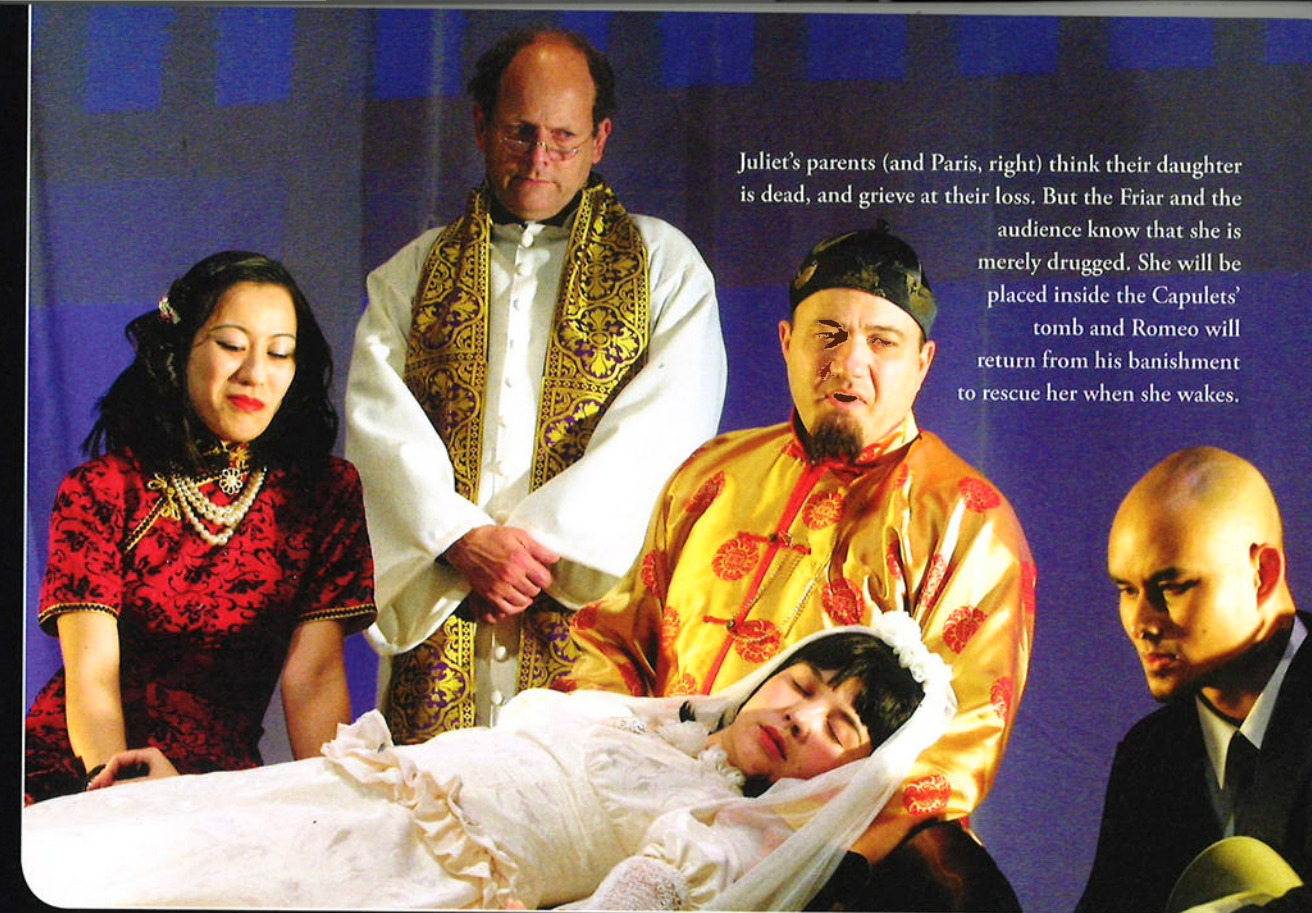
ix

'What if this mixture do not work at all?' Juliet fears that the Friar's 'poison' may not act, and she will have to obey her father's commands and marry Paris. But in spite of her misgivings, and her dread of the horrors that may await her in the Capulets' tomb, she finally drinks the potion.

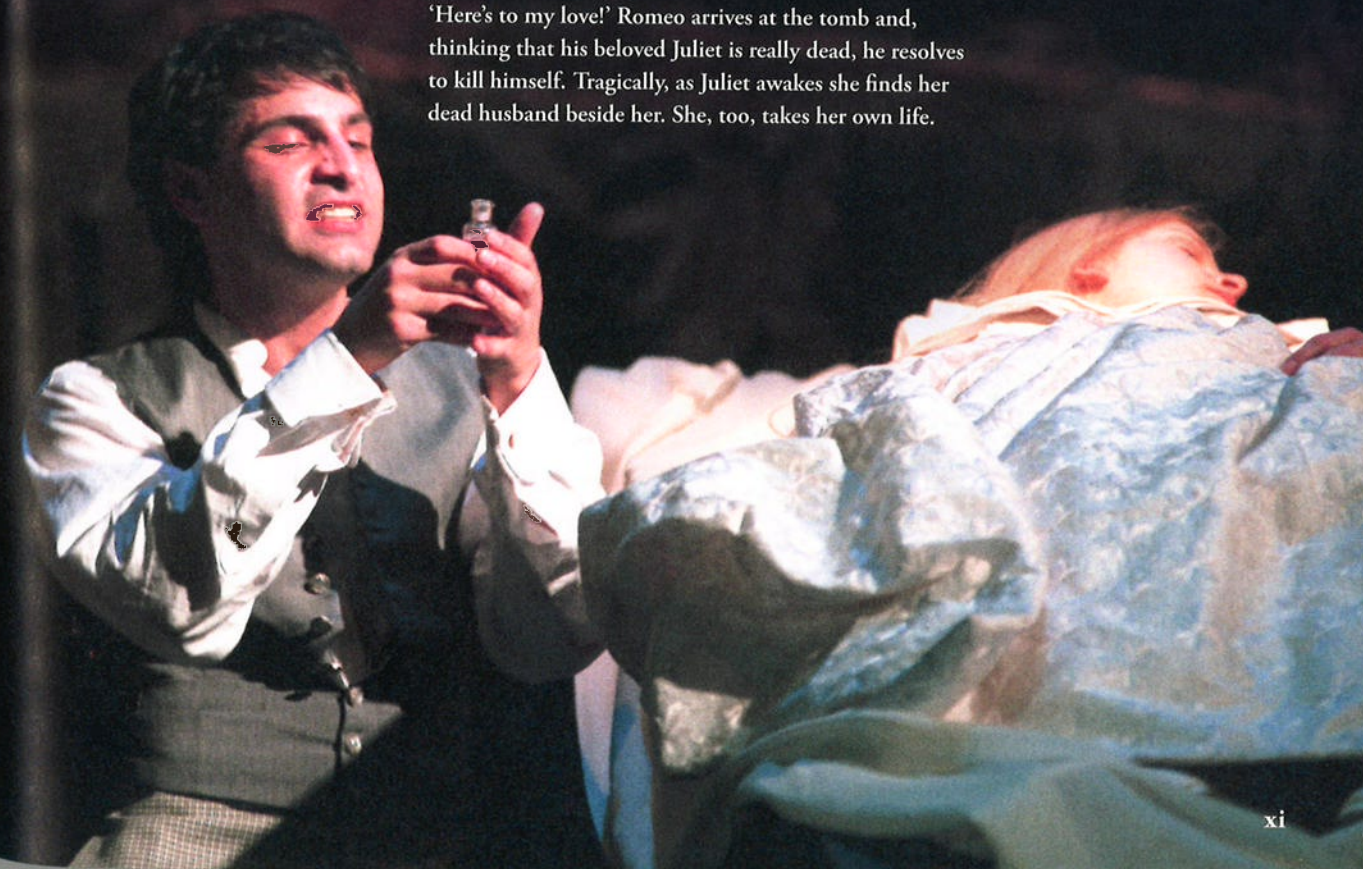


x

Juliet's parents (and Paris, right) think their daughter is dead, and grieve at their loss. But the Friar and the audience know that she is merely drugged. She will be placed inside the Capulets' tomb and Romeo will return from his banishment to rescue her when she wakes.



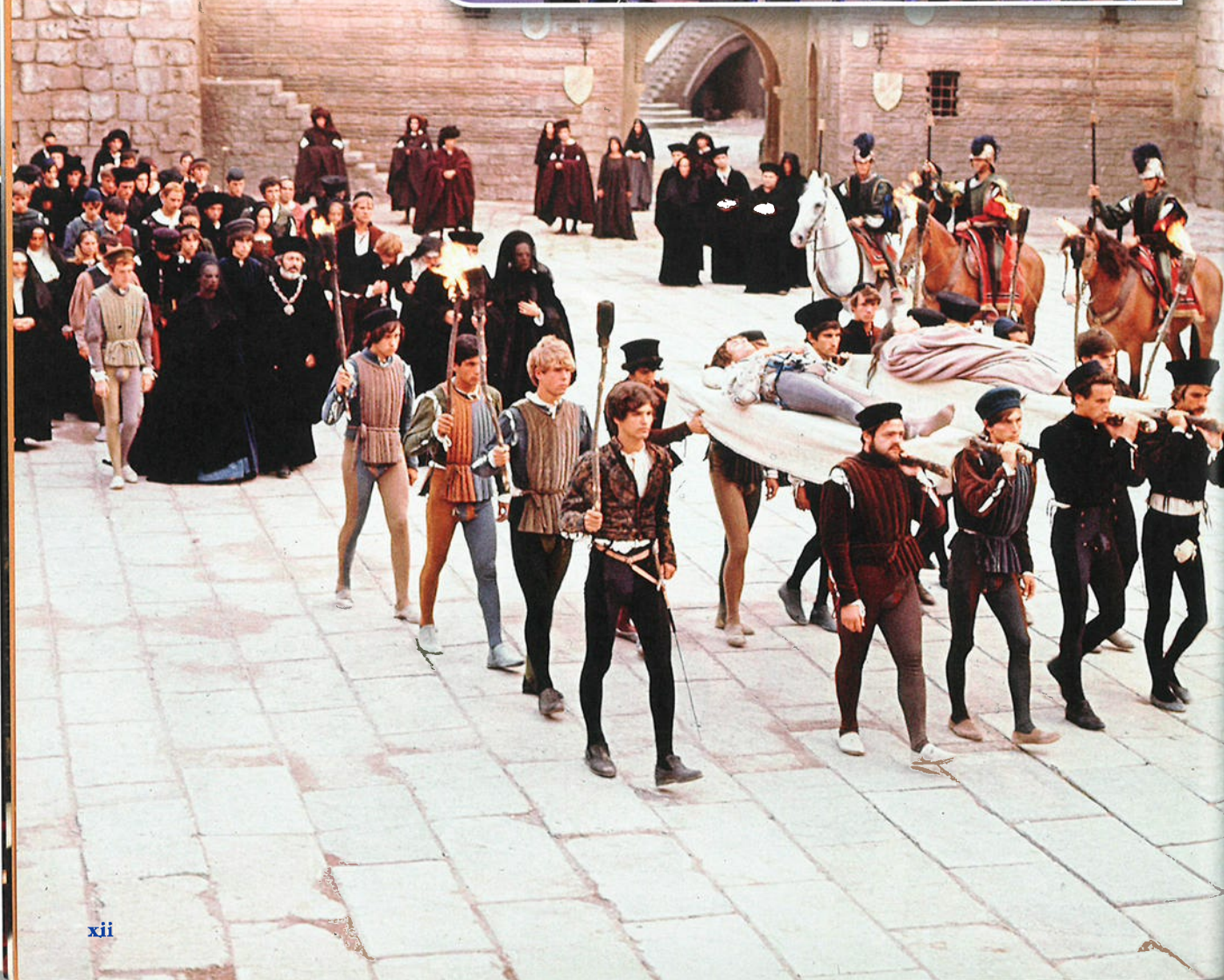
'Here's to my love!' Romeo arrives at the tomb and, thinking that his beloved Juliet is really dead, he resolves to kill himself. Tragically, as Juliet awakes she finds her dead husband beside her. She, too, takes her own life.



xi

► Lords Montague and Capulet are reconciled in their grief as they mourn Romeo and Juliet.

▼ 'For never was a story of more woe / Than this of Juliet and her Romeo'. Franco Zeffirelli's 1968 movie set the play in Renaissance Italy and used outdoor locations in Tuscany and Umbria (but not in Verona). The film ended with the funeral procession of Romeo and Juliet.



List of characters

CHORUS

The house of Capulet

JULIET
CAPULET her father
LADY CAPULET her mother
TYBALT her cousin
NURSE to Juliet
PETER the Nurse's servant
COUSIN CAPULET Juliet's kinsman
SAMPSON servant to Capulet
GREGORY servant to Capulet
CLOWN servant to Capulet
PETRUCHIO Tybalt's friend

The house of Montague

ROMEO
MONTAGUE his father
LADY MONTAGUE his mother
BENVOLIO his friend
BALTHASAR his servant
ABRAM Montague's servant

The Court

ESCALES Prince of Verona
MERCUTIO his kinsman, Romeo's friend
PARIS his kinsman, suitor to Juliet
PAGE to Paris

The Church

FRIAR LAWRENCE Franciscan priest
FRIAR JOHN Franciscan priest

The City

Musicians, Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, Maskers, Torch-bearers,
Citizens and Officers of the Watch, Captain of the Watch

Mantua

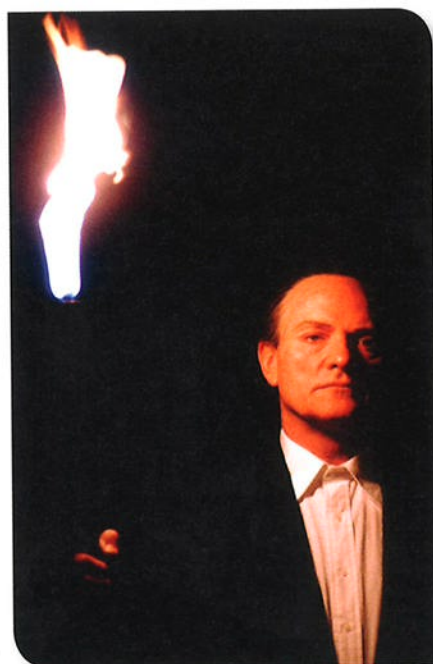
An apothecary

The Play is set in Verona and Mantua

Chorus (a narrator) gives a preview of the play: the bitter quarrels of the Montagues and Capulets are ended only by the death of their children, Romeo and Juliet.

1 Chorus speaks the Prologue (in threes)

The role of the Chorus originated in classical Greek drama over two thousand years ago. Back then, the Chorus was a group of characters who took no actual part in the play, but who introduced it and commented on the action as it developed. Deciding how to play the Chorus can be a challenge for directors of *Romeo and Juliet*, as the main elements and outcomes of the plot are clearly explained before the play even begins.



In the production pictured here, the actor playing Prince Escalus delivered the Chorus's lines, giving him the first and last words in the play. In another production, the Prologue was delivered collaboratively by the whole cast.

- In groups of three, talk about how well you think these ideas would work and then come up with some other ideas for staging the Prologue. After the discussion, offer your most unusual suggestion to the class.

Language in the play

Antithesis (in pairs)

The Prologue is written in the form of a fourteen-line **sonnet** (see p. 216). A key feature of such poems – and of this play – is the use of **antithesis** (see p. 215), or oppositions, especially in the type of language Shakespeare uses. Here, Montagues are set against Capulets ('Two households'), and in line 3 'ancient' is set against 'new'. The remaining eleven lines contain several other antitheses.

- Take turns reading aloud lines 1–14. As one person reads, the other listens out for examples of antithesis and writes them down. Swap roles and compare notes.
- Start a Language file and give one of the sections the heading 'Antithesis'. Collect examples and add to this list as you read on.

The tragedy of Romeo and Juliet

The Prologue

Enter 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 parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-marked 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.

[Exit]

alike in dignity equal in high status

ancient grudge

long-standing quarrel or dispute

civil blood ... unclean

the blood of the people dirties the hands of their fellows

From forth ... foes conceived by deadly enemies

star-crossed ill-fated

take their life are born

misadventured ... overthrows unlucky tragic accidents

fearful passage tragic unfolding

nought nothing

traffic business, performance

shall miss is missed out

toil efforts

mend make up for

Capulet's servants, Sampson and Gregory, joke together and boast that they are superior to the Montagues. Suddenly two of Montague's servants appear. Sampson urges Gregory to pick a quarrel with them.

1 Servants' banter (in pairs)

The play begins with Capulet's servants, Gregory and Sampson, joking about sex and women.

- a Read lines 1–36 aloud together several times, changing roles. Try to emphasise all Sampson's and Gregory's wordplay – their **puns** (words that sound the same but have different meanings, see p. 218) and double meanings. For example, in lines 3–4 Sampson's 'we be in choler, we'll draw' means 'being angry, we'll draw our swords'. But Gregory's reply, 'draw your neck out of collar', turns the meaning into 'pull your head out of the hangman's noose' ('choler' = anger; 'collar' = noose). In addition, 'stand', 'thrust', 'maidenheads', 'tool' and 'weapon' all have crude double meanings.
- b Talk together about why you think Shakespeare chose to begin the play with this kind of dramatic episode. Write a paragraph each, summarising your thoughts. Afterwards, swap your writing with another pair to read and comment on.

Stagecraft

Set the scene

At the beginning of each scene, a location is given (here it is 'Verona A public place'). But in Shakespeare's theatre the action took place on a bare stage, with little or no scenery.

- a Look at the illustration in the 'Romeo and Juliet in performance' section on page 220, showing the interior of Shakespeare's Globe. Suggest two or three simple ways in which you could convey to the audience that the scene in the script opposite takes place in the open air in Verona. Then think about where you might set this scene in a modern production. For example, Baz Luhrmann's movie version places the action in Verona Beach, a mythical modern Hispanic-American city. One modern theatre production was set on a volcanic fault line that constantly generated fire and steam 'to represent the ever-present threat of violence'.
- b As you read on, look out for and make notes on the way in which Shakespeare alternates scenes that are played out in public arenas and those that have intimate domestic settings.

bucklers small round shields

carry coals suffer insults, do dirty work

colliers coal-carriers (or a term of abuse)

and if

take the wall not be near the gutter

thrust to the wall cowardly, dominated

The quarrel ... men the dispute is just between men (no women are involved)

fish woman or prostitute (slang)

poor-John dried hake, cheap food that Elizabethans linked with lack of sex-drive

two other SERVINGMEN Abram and, probably, Balthasar

naked weapon sword

Act 1 Scene 1

Verona A public place

Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY, with swords and bucklers.

- SAMPSON Gregory, on my word, we'll not carry coals.
- GREGORY No, for then we should be colliers.
- SAMPSON I mean, and we be in choler, we'll draw.
- GREGORY Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of collar.
- SAMPSON I strike quickly, being moved. 5
- GREGORY But thou art not quickly moved to strike.
- SAMPSON A dog of the house of Montague moves me.
- GREGORY To move is to stir, and to be valiant is to stand: therefore if thou art moved thou runn'st away.
- SAMPSON A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's. 10
- GREGORY That shows thee a weak slave, for the weakest goes to the wall.
- SAMPSON 'Tis true, and therefore women being the weaker vessels are ever thrust to the wall: therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall. 15
- GREGORY The quarrel is between our masters, and us their men.
- SAMPSON 'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be civil with the maids; I will cut off their heads. 20
- GREGORY The heads of the maids?
- SAMPSON Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads, take it in what sense thou wilt.
- GREGORY They must take it in sense that feel it.
- SAMPSON Me they shall feel while I am able to stand, and 'tis known 25 I am a pretty piece of flesh.
- GREGORY 'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor-John. Draw thy tool, here comes of the house of Montagues.

Enter two other SERVINGMEN, [one being ABRAM].

- SAMPSON My naked weapon is out. Quarrel, I will back thee.
- GREGORY How, turn thy back and run? 30

Sampson and Gregory begin a quarrel with the Montagues. Benvolio (a Montague) tries to make peace, but Tybalt (a Capulet) adds flames to the fire, seizing the opportunity to fight.

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT I SCENE I



Stagecraft

Stage fight (in pairs)

Would you make the street fight ritualised and symbolic (as above) or brutally realistic (for example, one production had a servant's bloodied head smashed against a wall of the set; it remained evident throughout the performance)? Weigh up the merits of both approaches. Which do you think would have the greater impact in the theatre? Why? In your pairs, come up with some alternative ways of staging this fight.

Themes

Love versus hate (in small groups)

Shakespeare's plays contain many themes (key ideas or concepts that run throughout the script). Often these are presented in the form of tensions or oppositions, one set against another. *Romeo and Juliet* is famous for being a great love story, but in this first scene the Montague and Capulet servants engage in a violent fight.

- Suggest two or three reasons why Shakespeare might have decided to begin the play with a scene of hatred and anger rather than love.

1 Benvolio versus Tybalt (in pairs)

Benvolio's first words in the play ('Part, fools!') are an attempt to halt the riot that has developed between the Montagues and the Capulets. Tybalt seeks only to inflame it (his second line threatens death to Benvolio).

- Take parts as the two men and read aloud lines 54–63, emphasising their contrasting attitudes. Then perform the parts, adding actions that fit the language. Afterwards, in role as Benvolio and Tybalt, write down your thoughts about each other's behaviour.

Fear me not don't worry about my support

marry indeed (a mild oath based on a corruption of 'Virgin Mary')

as they list as they wish

bite my thumb a rude gesture in Elizabethan times

sir (repeatedly spoken contemptuously)

kinsmen relatives

washing slashing

hinds young female deer; Tybalt is punning on 'heart' (hart = a male deer), mocking Benvolio for fighting with servants (see p. 218)

manage handle

Have at thee here I come

SAMPSON Fear me not.

GREGORY No, marry, I fear thee!

SAMPSON Let us take the law of our sides, let them begin.

GREGORY I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list.

SAMPSON Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them, which is disgrace to them if they bear it. 35

ABRAM Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAM Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON [*Aside to Gregory*] Is the law of our side if I say ay? 40

GREGORY [*Aside to Sampson*] No.

SAMPSON No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir, but I bite my thumb, sir.

GREGORY Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAM Quarrel, sir? No, sir. 45

SAMPSON But if you do, sir, I am for you. I serve as good a man as you.

ABRAM No better.

SAMPSON Well, sir.

Enter BENVOLIO.

GREGORY [*Aside to Sampson*] Say 'better', here comes one of my master's kinsmen. 50

SAMPSON Yes, better, sir.

ABRAM You lie.

SAMPSON Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy washing blow. *They fight.*

BENVOLIO Part, fools!
Put up your swords, you know not what you do. 55
[*Beats down their swords.*]

Enter TYBALT.

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

BENVOLIO I do but keep the peace. Put up thy sword,
Or manage it to part these men with me. 60

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

[*They fight.*]

A furious riot develops. Capulet and Montague join in. Prince Escalus, angry and exasperated, stops the fight. He rebukes Montague and Capulet, and threatens death if they fight in public again.

1 A snapshot at the height of the riot (in large groups)

Each group member takes a part. There are at least eleven speaking characters so far. You can add as many other servants and officers as you wish. Use the hall or drama studio if you can, but this activity will work just as well in the classroom if you clear some space.

- Each group prepares and presents a tableau (a 'human sculpture', like a still photograph) showing the height of the riot at line 72, 'Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace'. Your tableau should show precisely what each character is doing at that moment. This means thinking carefully about what your character has said so far; then 'freezing' as that person at this moment in the riot. Remember, each character is doing something in relation to other characters, so try to show those relationships. For example, both Lady Capulet and Lady Montague seem to rebuke and mock their husbands. It will take time to think out, experiment with and then present the most dramatic picture.
- Hold your tableau for at least sixty seconds – with no movement at all. The other groups spend that time working out exactly who is who.

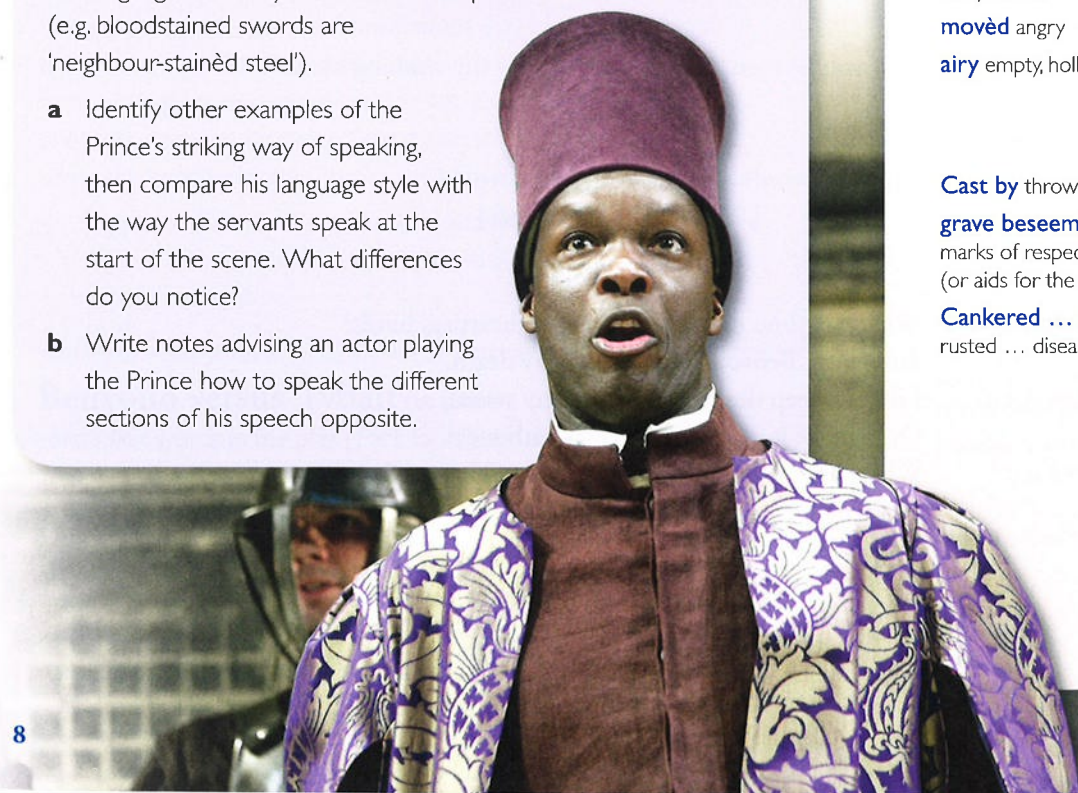
Language in the play

The all-powerful Prince (in fours)

The Prince is a figure of absolute power and authority. His language is suitably elaborate and impressive (e.g. bloodstained swords are 'neighbour-stained steel').

- Identify other examples of the Prince's striking way of speaking, then compare his language style with the way the servants speak at the start of the scene. What differences do you notice?
- Write notes advising an actor playing the Prince how to speak the different sections of his speech opposite.

8



Clubs, bills, and partisans

weapons: bills are long-handled pikes, partisans are long, broad-headed spears

in his gown in his dressing-gown (i.e. he's just been woken up)

in spite of me in order to spite me

train attendants to the Prince

Profaners abusers (because they stain their swords with their neighbours' blood)

pernicious wicked

mistemperd disorderly or badly made

movèd angry

airy empty, hollow

Cast by throw aside

grave beseeming ornaments marks of respect, staffs of office (or aids for the elderly)

Cankered ... cankered rusted ... diseased

Enter [several of both houses, who join the fray, and] three or four Citizens [as OFFICERS of the Watch,] with clubs or partisans.

OFFICERS Clubs, bills, and partisans! Strike! Beat them down!
Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!

65

Enter old CAPULET in his gown, and his wife [LADY CAPULET].

CAPULET What noise is this? Give me my long sword, ho!

LADY CAPULET A crutch, a crutch! why call you for a sword?

CAPULET My sword, I say! old Montague is come,
And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

Enter old MONTAGUE and his wife [LADY MONTAGUE].

MONTAGUE Thou villain Capulet! – Hold me not, let me go.

70

LADY MONTAGUE Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

Enter PRINCE ESCALUS with his train.

PRINCE Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel –
Will they not hear? – What ho, you men, you beasts!
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins:
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
Throw your mistemperd weapons to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your movèd prince.
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets,
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments
To wield old partisans, in hands as old,
Cankered with peace, to part your cankered hate;
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
For this time all the rest depart away:
You, Capulet, shall go along with me,
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our farther pleasure in this case,
To old Free-town, our common judgement-place.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

75

80

85

90

Exeunt [all but Montague, Lady Montague, and Benvolio]

9

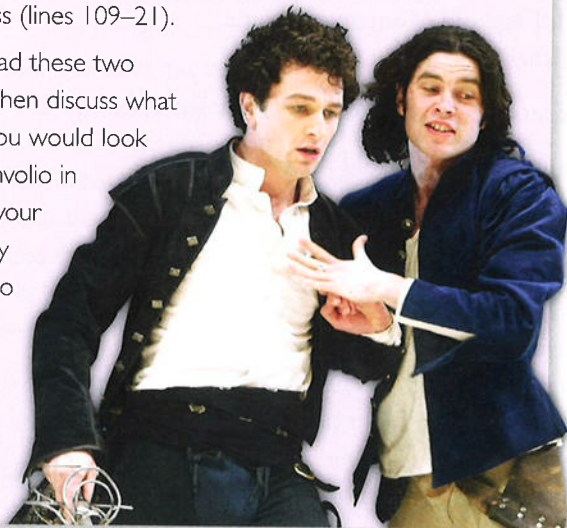
Benvolio recounts the story of the riot. He tells Lady Montague how Romeo has avoided meeting him. Lord Montague confirms that Romeo has been keeping to himself, preferring night to day.

Characters

Focus on Benvolio (in pairs)

Benvolio's name means 'well-wishing' (the opposite of Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, whose name means 'ill-wishing'). Benvolio seems to be a peacekeeper. He has already tried to stop the street brawling. Now he recounts to the parents of his good friend Romeo how the riot unfolded (lines 97–106) and describes Romeo's current dejectedness (lines 109–21).

- Take turns to read these two groups of lines, then discuss what characteristics you would look for in casting Benvolio in a production of your own. How closely does this Benvolio (on the right in the picture) match your own ideas for this character?



Write about it

Lord and Lady Montague (in pairs)

In pairs, take one of the following activities each.

- Lady Montague speaks only two lines, then is silent. The fact that she never speaks again in the play suggests the powerlessness of women in Verona. Step into role as Lady Montague and break her silence by writing a **monologue**, in which she expresses her previously unspoken thoughts about Romeo, her husband, the feud with the Capulets and the fight she has just witnessed.
- Lord Montague describes Romeo's current perplexing behaviour (lines 122–33 and 137–46). Write an additional monologue for Lord Montague, in which he voices his thoughts about his son and considers Romeo's reluctance to talk to him.

Read aloud your monologues to each other in ways that bring out Lord and Lady Montague's contrasting attitudes and perspectives.

abroach open and flowing like a wine-barrel

adversary enemy

ere before

drew drew my sword

nothing hurt withal
not hurt in the slightest

fray affray, riot

abroad outside

sycamore tree associated with melancholy lovers

ware wary, aware

covert concealment

shunned avoided

augmenting adding to

Aurora Roman goddess of dawn

heavy sad, melancholy

pens shuts

portentous ominous

humour mood

- MONTAGUE Who set this ancient quarrel new abroad? 95
Speak, nephew, were you by when it began?
- BENVOLIO Here were the servants of your adversary,
And yours, close fighting ere I did approach:
I drew to part them; in the instant came
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared, 100
Which, as he breathed defiance to my ears,
He swung about his head and cut the winds,
Who, nothing hurt withal, hissed him in scorn;
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,
Came more and more, and fought on part and part, 105
Till the Prince came, who parted either part.
- LADY MONTAGUE O where is Romeo? saw you him today?
Right, glad I am he was not at this fray.
- BENVOLIO Madam, an hour before the worshipped sun
Peered forth the golden window of the east, 110
A troubled mind drive me to walk abroad,
Where underneath the grove of sycamore,
That westward rooteth from this city side,
So early walking did I see your son;
Towards him I made, but he was ware of me, 115
And stole into the covert of the wood;
I, measuring his affections by my own,
Which then most sought where most might not be found,
Being one too many by my weary self,
Pursued my humour, not pursuing his, 120
And gladly shunned who gladly fled from me.
- MONTAGUE Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs,
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun 125
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,
And private in his chamber pens himself,
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out, 130
And makes himself an artificial night:
Black and portentous must this humour prove,
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

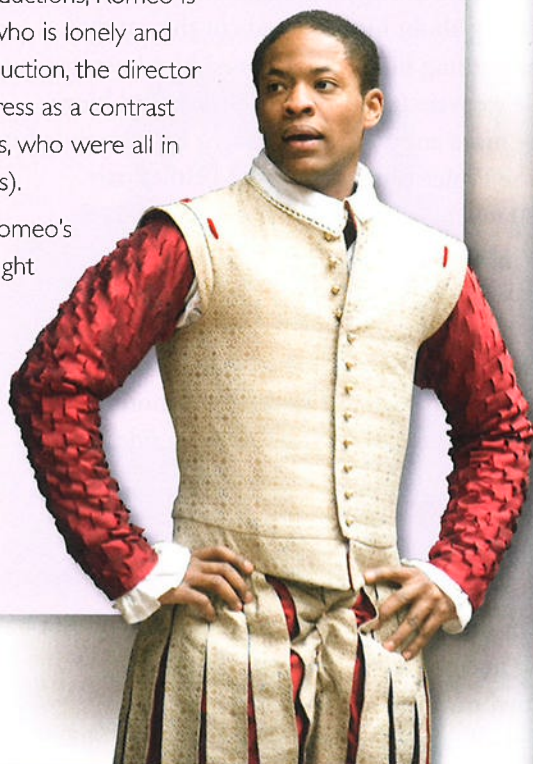
Benvolio promises to find out the cause of Romeo's sadness. Romeo says it is because his love for Rosaline (whom he doesn't name) is not returned. He suddenly notices the signs of the riot.

Characters

Focus on Romeo (in small groups)

Shakespeare holds back Romeo's introduction to the play. After the seething violence of the opening, Romeo cuts a forlorn figure. His first words express weariness and melancholy: his 'love' is unrequited (not returned). In some productions, Romeo is presented as a young man who is lonely and isolated (in one recent production, the director costumed him in modern dress as a contrast to the other male characters, who were all in traditional Elizabethan outfits).

- How would you stage Romeo's first appearance to highlight his state of mind at the start of the play? How might you mark him out as being at odds with the world around him? Produce an annotated drawing showing your ideas.



► What are your initial impressions of this Romeo?

Language in the play

Imagery: 'bit with an envious worm'

In lines 142–4, Montague compares Romeo to a bud that is destroyed by a malicious ('envious') worm before it can fully flower. In lines 162–3, Romeo says that although Love is blind ('muffled') it can still impose its will on lovers. Both these examples are vivid and striking images typical of the **imagery** to be found throughout the play.

- Look ahead to the information on imagery in the 'Language' section on pages 214–15. Use the guidance there to help you explore these two images. Then write a couple of sentences about the effectiveness and impact of each one.

importuned questioned

sounding investigating (fathoming, an image from measuring the depth of the sea)

whence where

shrift confession (by Romeo)

hence away

so gentle ... proof so seemingly kind, is so harsh in experience

muffled still always blindfolded

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT I SCENE I

BENVOLIO	My noble uncle, do you know the cause?	
MONTAGUE	I neither know it, nor can learn of him.	135
BENVOLIO	Have you importuned him by any means?	
MONTAGUE	Both by myself and many other friends, But he, his own affections' counsellor, Is to himself (I will not say how true) But to himself so secret and so close, So far from sounding and discovery, As is the bud bit with an envious worm Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air, Or dedicate his beauty to the sun. Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow, We would as willingly give cure as know.	140 145
	<i>Enter ROMEO.</i>	
BENVOLIO	See where he comes. So please you step aside, I'll know his grievance or be much denied.	
MONTAGUE	I would thou wert so happy by thy stay To hear true shrift. Come, madam, let's away.	150
	<i>Exeunt [Montague and Lady Montague]</i>	
BENVOLIO	Good morrow, cousin.	
ROMEO	Is the day so young?	
BENVOLIO	But new struck nine.	
ROMEO	Ay me, sad hours seem long. Was that my father that went hence so fast?	
BENVOLIO	It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?	
ROMEO	Not having that, which, having, makes them short.	155
BENVOLIO	In love?	
ROMEO	Out –	
BENVOLIO	Of love?	
ROMEO	Out of her favour where I am in love.	
BENVOLIO	Alas that Love, so gentle in his view, Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!	160
ROMEO	Alas that Love, whose view is muffled still, Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will! Where shall we dine? O me! what fray was here? Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all: Here's much to do with hate, but more with love: Why then, O brawling love, O loving hate, O any thing of nothing first create!	165

Romeo, melancholy because he loves a girl (Rosaline) who does not love him, plays with words to express how love confuses and mixes up all kinds of things, turning order into chaos.

Language in the play

The contradictions of love (in pairs)

Take a closer look at Romeo's language. Here is a different way of setting out parts of lines 167–72:

- 'loving' v. 'hate'
- 'heavy' v. 'lightness'
- 'serious' v. 'vanity'
- 'Misshapen chaos' v. 'well-seeming forms'
- 'Feather' v. 'lead'
- 'bright' v. 'smoke'
- 'cold' v. 'fire'
- 'sick' v. 'health'
- 'Still-waking' v. 'sleep'

The love poetry of Shakespeare's time put together contradictory words in this way to express the turmoil that love causes. Phrases like this, composed of 'opposite' words placed directly next to each other, are called **oxymorons** (see p. 215). You can think of them as very condensed antitheses (see p. 2).

- a** With your partner, choose one pair of words from the list above and prepare three tableaux. The first two tableaux should show the two separate words (e.g. 'loving' and 'hate'). The third should show the oxymoron ('loving hate'). The class guesses which oxymoron each pair has chosen.
- b** As you read through to the end of Scene 1, write a couple of paragraphs about how the oxymorons and antitheses have helped shape the characters and themes being explored at the start of the play.

1 Cupid and Diana (in pairs)

Take parts as Romeo and Benvolio and read aloud lines 195–202, which contain several references to two classical figures:

- Cupid, who was famed for his ability to inspire love and desire in anyone hit by an arrow fired from his bow
- Diana, the goddess of hunting and chastity.

As each person reads their lines, the other listens out for and echoes any words connected with either Cupid or Diana. Afterwards, research these classical figures further; then talk together about why Shakespeare might have included these particular references at this point in the play.

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT I SCENE I

Still-waking always awake

coz cousin

transgression excessiveness

propagate increase

fume breath

purged cleaned

vexed frustrated

gall bitter poison

sadness seriousness (notice
Romeo's wordplay in lines 193–5)

mark-man marksman: an archer
who hits the target (mark)

Dian Diana, goddess of hunting and
chastity; she avoided Cupid's arrows

proof armour

uncharmed untouched

O heavy lightness, serious vanity,
Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms,
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health,
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?

170

BENVOLIO No, coz, I rather weep.

ROMEO Good heart, at what?

BENVOLIO At thy good heart's oppression.

175

ROMEO Why, such is love's transgression:
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,
Which thou wilt propagate to have it pressed
With more of thine; this love that thou hast shown
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs,
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes,
Being vexed, a sea nourished with loving tears.
What is it else? a madness most discreet,
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.
Farewell, my coz.

180

185

BENVOLIO Soft, I will go along;
And if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

ROMEO Tut, I have lost myself, I am not here,
This is not Romeo, he's some other where.

BENVOLIO Tell me in sadness, who is that you love?
What, shall I groan and tell thee?

190

BENVOLIO Groan? why, no;

ROMEO But sadly tell me, who?
Bid a sick man in sadness make his will –
A word ill urged to one that is so ill:
In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

195

BENVOLIO I aimed so near, when I supposed you loved.
ROMEO A right good mark-man! and she's fair I love.
BENVOLIO A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.

ROMEO Well, in that hit you miss: she'll not be hit
With Cupid's arrow, she hath Dian's wit;
And in strong proof of chastity well armed,
From Love's weak childish bow she lives uncharmed.

200

Romeo complains that because she refuses to marry, the woman he loves will leave no children. Her beauty will die with her. Benvolio advises him to look at other girls – that will cure him! Romeo isn't convinced.

1 Is Romeo really in love? (in small groups)

Romeo uses the language of classical poetry, and many people today think that because he speaks in this elaborate way, his emotions are 'artificial', not genuine and sincere. But what do you think? Does this manner of speaking (for example, using extravagant imagery, wordplay, antitheses and rhyming couplets) show that he is really in love, as he claims to be, or just infatuated?

- Focus on Romeo's language in the script opposite. With your group, identify which words and phrases sound heartfelt and which sound forced and contrived. One person draws a pair of scales, with one side labelled 'genuine' and the other 'false'. Discuss which extracts of text should go on either side, and see what kind of balance results.
- Individually, rewrite Romeo's twenty-three lines opposite in simple modern English. In your groups, compare your versions, then look again at Shakespeare's original script. Discuss the different effects created by the two types of writing.

2 A link with Shakespeare's sonnets?

Romeo's lines 206–7 pick up an idea that frequently appears in Shakespeare's sonnets: to die childless is a waste of one's earthly beauty, as there will be no legacy for future generations.

- Why do you think Shakespeare included such an image at this point in the play? What does it add to your understanding of the theme of love?

Write about it

The conflict of love, the conflict of hate

Act I Scene I includes several key episodes that dramatise the conflicting effects of love and hate. For example, it begins with crude jokes, simmers with tension, then explodes into violent action. Benvolio is immediately cast as a peacekeeper and Tybalt as an uncompromising aggressor. Romeo is clearly torn apart by feelings of love.

- Re-read the scene, then write a review exploring how it addresses the theme of conflict. Focus on the different characters' attitudes to one another, on the specific types of language they use and on how Shakespeare structures the scene to create a dramatic interplay of contrasting viewpoints and attitudes.

stay the siege submit to the assault (notice Romeo's military metaphor)

bide th'encounter endure the battle

assailing assaulting

ope her lap to sell her chastity for

still forever

posterity descendants, children

forsworn to love taken an oath not to fall in love

strucken struck

passing exceedingly

pay that doctrine teach that lesson

She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
Nor bide th'encounter of assailing eyes,
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold. 205
O, she is rich in beauty, only poor
That when she dies, with beauty dies her store.
Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste?
She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste;
For beauty starved with her severity 210
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.
She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,
To merit bliss by making me despair.
She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow
Do I live dead, that live to tell it now. 215
Be ruled by me, forget to think of her.
O teach me how I should forget to think.
By giving liberty unto thine eyes,
Examine other beauties.
ROMEO 'Tis the way
To call hers (exquisite) in question more: 220
These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows,
Being black, puts us in mind they hide the fair;
He that is strucken blind cannot forget
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost;
Show me a mistress that is passing fair, 225
What doth her beauty serve but as a note
Where I may read who passed that passing fair?
Farewell, thou canst not teach me to forget.
BENVOLIO I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.

Exeunt

Paris wishes to marry Juliet. Capulet says his daughter is still only thirteen, but he will agree if Juliet consents. He invites Paris to a party that night, where there will be many beautiful women.

Stagecraft

Capulet's mansion

The action moves swiftly from an outdoor space to the interior of Lord Capulet's grand house. After a brief exchange between Capulet and Paris, the scene switches again to the street outside.

- Sketch a set design that you think could work well for this, and then compare your ideas with the images in the section on 'Romeo and Juliet in performance' on pages 220–7. Refine your original design in light of your reflections on other stagings.

1 What were Capulet and Paris talking about?

(in pairs)

- Capulet and Paris enter in the middle of a conversation. In your pairs, make a list of some of the topics they might have been talking about before they entered. Remember, Capulet has already been involved in the action of Scene 1; Paris has not been involved.
- Improvise their conversation so that it leads naturally to the opening line: 'But Montague is bound as well as I' (the Prince has ordered both me and Montague to keep the peace). First try it in modern English, then challenge yourselves by scripting it in Shakespearean language and fitting it to the rhythm of **iambic pentameter** (see p. 216).

2 Marrying off Juliet (in pairs)

Shakespeare continues to hold back Juliet's first appearance in the play. But he uses part of the dialogue between Capulet and Paris to give some background information about Juliet and particularly about her father's attitude to her becoming a wife. Capulet explains that, amongst other things, Juliet is only thirteen and is therefore too young to be married. He also informs Paris that the 'Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she' (all my other children have died).

- Focus on lines 6–19. Read them together and then jot down your own thoughts about Capulet's views. Do you think that he comes across as a reasonable and thoughtful father? Why, or why not? Identify quotations from the script opposite that back up your opinion of Capulet.

Clown (servant) in most modern productions this is usually Peter; the Nurse's servant

bound ordered

In penalty alike both subject to the same punishment

reckoning reputation

at odds as enemies

suit request to marry

saying o'er repeating

She hath not ... years
she's not yet fourteen

marred spoilt

within ... choice according to what she chooses

old accustomed
regular, traditional

Earth-treading stars lovely ladies

well-apparelled well-dressed

fennel buds fennel (a herb) was thought to provoke passion; here it implies 'young women'

Inherit receive, welcome

Which on more view ... none
when you see the other girls at my party, my daughter may or may not be the one you'll like most

Act 1 Scene 2

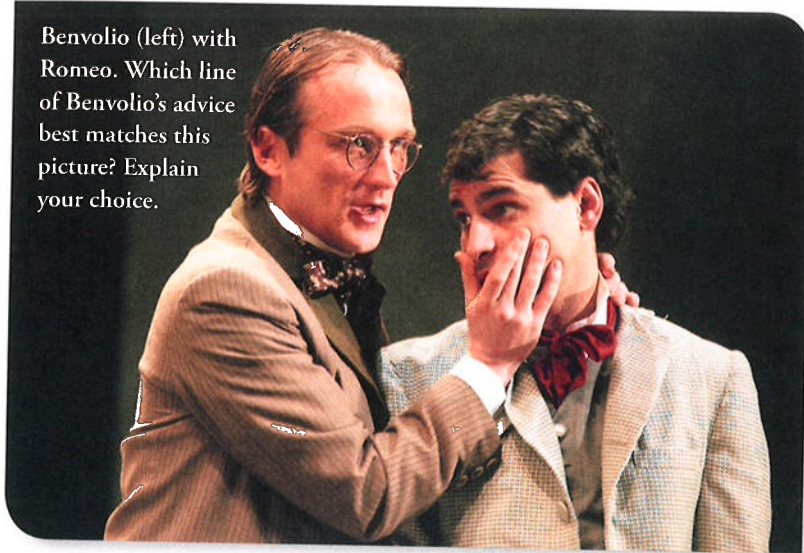
Capulet's mansion

Enter CAPULET, COUNTY PARIS, and the Clown [SERVANT to CAPULET].

- CAPULET But Montague is bound as well as I,
In penalty alike, and 'tis not hard, I think,
For men so old as we to keep the peace.
- PARIS Of honourable reckoning are you both,
And pity 'tis, you lived at odds so long. 5
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?
- CAPULET But saying o'er what I have said before:
My child is yet a stranger in the world,
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years;
Let two more summers wither in their pride, 10
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.
- PARIS Younger than she are happy mothers made.
- CAPULET And too soon marred are those so early made.
Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she;
She's the hopeful lady of my earth. 15
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part;
And she agreed, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
This night I hold an old accustomed feast, 20
Whereto I have invited many a guest,
Such as I love, and you among the store,
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
At my poor house look to behold this night
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light. 25
Such comfort as do lusty young men feel
When well-apparelled April on the heel
Of limping winter treads, even such delight
Among fresh fennel buds shall you this night
Inherit at my house; hear all, all see; 30
And like her most whose merit most shall be;
Which on more view of many, mine, being one,
May stand in number, though in reck'ning none.

Capulet orders his servant to deliver party invitations. But the servant can't read! Benvolio again urges Romeo to look at other women to cure his love-sickness. The servant asks Romeo to read the letter.

Benvolio (left) with Romeo. Which line of Benvolio's advice best matches this picture? Explain your choice.



1 Make Benvolio's advice active (in fours)

Benvolio's advice to Romeo (lines 44–9) is that the cure for love is to look at other girls, because then new love will replace old love. Here, he says the same thing in five different ways.

- Work out how you can show, without words, each part of the advice. It is probably easiest to begin with 'pain' (line 45 – new pain makes you forget earlier suffering), then 'giddy', then 'grief', then 'infection'. Finally, see if you can make up a mime for 'fire'. Show your actions to the class.

Themes

Chance versus choice

Unwittingly, the Servant sets the plot moving towards its tragic conclusion. Unable to read the names of the guests invited to the Capulet party, he looks for someone to read the list to him and, by chance, comes across Romeo in the street. This is how Romeo discovers his 'beloved' Rosaline will be present at the ball which, in turn, encourages him to make the decision to gatecrash the Capulet celebrations.

- Start to complete an Evidence Grid. Head up a piece of paper with two columns: 'Chance' and 'Choice'. Review the action of the play so far and begin to fill up the columns as appropriate. How far do the characters seem in control of their own destinies? How far are they victims of the apparently random workings of fate? Add further details as the play unfolds.

on their pleasure stay
wait for their decision

yard a tailor's measuring rod
last a shoemaker's device to hold a shoe

help helped

rank foul-smelling
plantain leaf a leaf used to heal cuts and grazes

God-den good evening
gi' give you

without book off by heart

rest you merry farewell

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT 1 SCENE 2

Come go with me. [*To Servant*] Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona, find those persons out
Whose names are written there [*Gives a paper.*], and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

35

Exit [with Paris]

SERVANT Find them out whose names are written here! It is written
that the shoemaker should meddle with his yard and the tailor with
his last, the fisher with his pencil and the painter with his nets;
but I am sent to find those persons whose names are here writ, and
can never find what names the writing person hath here writ. I must
to the learnèd. In good time!

40

Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO.

BENVOLIO Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning,
One pain is lessened by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be help by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish:
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.

45

ROMEO Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.

50

BENVOLIO For what, I pray thee?

ROMEO For your broken shin.

BENVOLIO Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

ROMEO Not mad, but bound more than a madman is:
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipt and tormented, and – God-den, good fellow.

55

SERVANT God gi' god-den. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

SERVANT Perhaps you have learned it without book; but I pray, can
you read any thing you see?

ROMEO Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

60

SERVANT Ye say honestly, rest you merry.

ROMEO Stay, fellow, I can read.

He reads the letter.

'Signior Martino and his wife and daughters,
County Anselme and his beauteous sisters,
The lady widow of Vitruvio,
Signior Placentio and his lovely nieces,
Mercutio and his brother Valentine,

65

Romeo discovers that Rosaline has been invited to Capulet's party. Benvolio urges Romeo to go. There he will see women more beautiful than Rosaline. Romeo refuses to believe Benvolio's claim.

1 Make a grand entrance! (in large groups)

The names on the list of guests (lines 63–71) roll off the tongue.

- One person acts as Master of Ceremonies. He or she will announce the guests, line by line. Everyone else chooses a part and decides how their character will make their grand entrance to Capulet's party. At least twenty-three people are listed, so double up parts and make two entrances!

2 Advice to the Servant

The Servant only has a small part in this scene (some 16 lines), but he can still create a dramatic impact. Read through all the Servant's lines, from line 58 onwards. (Notice that in lines 39–40, he muddles up workers and their tools: a shoemaker uses a last, a tailor a yard, a fisherman a net and a painter a pencil.)

- Imagine you are directing a production of the play. The actor playing the Servant asks you how he should perform his part. Begin a Director's Journal, in which you will write notes to guide the actors playing various parts. To begin with, make notes for the Servant. For example, do you think he is dull-witted or clever? How comic would you make his interplay with Romeo? Add to your notes for various characters as opportunities arise throughout the rest of the play.

Characters

What does Romeo think about love? (in pairs)

Romeo continues to protest that his love for Rosaline will never change. He even says that if he did see someone more beautiful than Rosaline, his eyes would burn out because they would be liars, unfaithful to the 'devout religion' they serve – his adoring belief in Rosaline's beauty (lines 88–91). Romeo's words seem to be inspired by the practice of burning heretics (people who did not believe in a Christian God) at the stake.

- Based on your reading of this scene and Scene 1, come up with five questions that you would like to ask Romeo about his attitude towards Rosaline, and what he thinks and feels about being in love.
- In pairs, take turns in the role of Romeo and answer your partner's questions. Compare your answers and then talk about your views of Romeo as a young man in love.

whither ... come? where are they going?

crush drink

unattainted unbiased

devout religion adoring belief

Transparent heretics
obvious disbelievers

poised balanced, weighed
crystal scales (Romeo's eyes)

scant scarcely

mine own (Rosaline's beauty)

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT I SCENE 2

Mine uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters,
My fair niece Rosaline, and Livia,
Signior Valentio and his cousin Tybalt,
Lucio and the lively Helena.'

70

A fair assembly: whither should they come?

SERVANT Up.

ROMEO Whither? to supper?

SERVANT To our house.

75

ROMEO Whose house?

SERVANT My master's.

ROMEO Indeed I should have asked thee that before.

SERVANT Now I'll tell you without asking. My master is the great rich
Capulet, and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray come
and crush a cup of wine. Rest you merry. *[Exit]*

80

BENVOLIO At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Supps the fair Rosaline whom thou so loves,

With all the admirèd beauties of Verona:
Go thither, and with unattainted eye

85

Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

ROMEO When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires;

And these who, often drowned, could never die,
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars.

90

One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

BENVOLIO Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself poised with herself in either eye;

95

But in that crystal scales let there be weighed
Your lady's love against some other maid

That I will show you shining at this feast,
And she shall scant show well that now seems best.

ROMEO I'll go along no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendour of mine own.

100

[Exeunt]

Lady Capulet and the Nurse discuss Juliet's age. She is not yet fourteen. The Nurse remembers her own daughter, Susan, now dead. She recalls that Juliet was weaned eleven years ago.

1 The Nurse – first impressions (in small groups)

This is the first appearance of Juliet's Nurse (a 'wet nurse' who acted as a surrogate mother to a young child, and a person to whom Juliet is naturally very close). Many productions exploit the Nurse's role for its comic potential. Her distinctive character dominates this scene, and her lines are often rude and very funny!

- Speak aloud all the Nurse says in lines 2–63. Each person reads a small **sense unit** (a portion of script that makes sense on its own – sometimes a sentence, sometimes a phrase), then hands the speech on to the next group member. Speak your own short extracts as you think the Nurse would say them. Refer to the glossary on the right if you are unsure about the meaning of any terms.
- In your groups, write down a list of words or phrases you think best describe the Nurse. Match them to quotations from the script where possible. Then compare your list with those of other groups. Add to your list as you learn more about the Nurse in later scenes.



▲ What does this photograph suggest about the kind of relationship the three women share? What are your impressions of this Nurse (left)?

Stagecraft

Where are they? (in pairs)

Many productions set this scene in Juliet's bedroom. Talk together about why you think this is such a popular choice for directors. What alternatives can you suggest that might be similarly effective?

maidenhead virginity

give leave leave us alone

thou s' hear you shall hear

counsel private talk

teen sorrow

Lammas-tide 1 August (Lady Mass); Juliet will be fourteen on Lammas-eve (31 July)

aleven eleven

laid wormwood to my dug
rubbed a bitter-tasting plant on my nipple (to wean Juliet)

bear a brain have a good memory

Act 1 Scene 3

A room in Capulet's mansion

Enter CAPULET'S WIFE and NURSE.

LADY CAPULET Nurse, where's my daughter? call her forth to me.

NURSE Now by my maidenhead at twelve year old,
I bade her come. What, lamb! What, ladybird!
God forbid, where's this girl? What, Juliet!

Enter JULIET.

JULIET How now, who calls? 5

NURSE Your mother.

JULIET Madam, I am here, what is your will?

LADY CAPULET This is the matter. Nurse, give leave a while,
We must talk in secret. Nurse, come back again,
I have remembered me, thou s' hear our counsel. 10
Thou knowest my daughter's of a pretty age.

NURSE Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

LADY CAPULET She's not fourteen.

NURSE I'll lay fourteen of my teeth –
And yet to my teen be it spoken, I have but four –
She's not fourteen. How long is it now
To Lammas-tide? 15

LADY CAPULET A fortnight and odd days.

NURSE Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she – God rest all Christian souls! –
Were of an age. Well, Susan is with God,
She was too good for me. But as I said,
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen,
That shall she, marry, I remember it well. 20

'Tis since the earthquake now aleven years,
And she was weaned – I never shall forget it –
Of all the days of the year, upon that day;
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall. 25

My lord and you were then at Mantua –
Nay, I do bear a brain – but as I said, 30

The Nurse reminisces about Juliet's childhood and tells how her husband joked about Juliet's sexuality.
Lady Capulet begins to talk to Juliet about marriage.

► This production was set in a care home for the elderly. By ageing the characters in this way, what might the director have been saying about the theme of love?



Characters

Focus on Juliet (in pairs)

The opening of Scene 3, our first glimpse of Juliet, creates the impression of just how young and vulnerable she is. Shakespeare gives her only seven lines to speak and, at first sight, most of them seem to suggest that she is submissive to the two older women. Even though Juliet is still only thirteen, Lady Capulet plans that she shall soon marry. One production made Juliet seem almost childlike. She entered eating chocolates, then sat cross-legged on the floor ignoring all that the Nurse and her mother said. She continued to eat, and her face became more and more smeared with chocolate. In another production, Juliet played with a doll during this scene.

- Imagine that you are playing Juliet in a modern production. How would you enter this scene? What would you want the audience's first impression of her (and her age) to be? In rehearsal for this scene, test out your ideas with a partner.
- Take each of Juliet's lines in turn and decide whether she should speak them with respect and deference, or whether they should signal her independence and self-confidence. Write down your ideas in readiness for a discussion with your director.

tetchy irritable

Shake! get moving!
(shake a leg!)

quoth said

I trow I'm sure

trudge go away

high-lone unaided

th'rood Christ's cross

broke her brow cut her forehead

'A he

fall backward lie under a man

holidam 'holiness', or Virgin Mary
(holy dame)

stinted stopped (crying)

cock'rel's stone cockerel's testicle

perilous knock terrible lump

dispositions inclinations

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT I SCENE 3

When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug, and felt it bitter, pretty fool,
To see it tetchy and fall out with'dug!
'Shake!' quoth the dove-house; 'twas no need, I trow,
To bid me trudge.

35

And since that time it is alevn years,
For then she could stand high-lone; nay, by th'rood,
She could have run and waddled all about;
For even the day before, she broke her brow,
And then my husband – God be with his soul,
'A was a merry man – took up the child.

40

'Yea', quoth he, 'dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit,
Wilt thou not, Jule?' And by my holidam,
The pretty wretch left crying, and said 'Ay'.

45

'To see now how a jest shall come about!
I warrant, and I should live a thousand years,
I never should forget it: 'Wilt thou not, Jule?' quoth he,
And, pretty fool, it stinted, and said 'Ay'.

LADY CAPULET Enough of this, I pray thee hold thy peace.

50

NURSE Yes, madam, yet I cannot choose but laugh,
To think it should leave crying, and say 'Ay':
And yet I warrant it had upon it brow
A bump as big as a young cock'rel's stone,
A perilous knock, and it cried bitterly.
'Yea', quoth my husband, 'fall'st upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest to age,
Wilt thou not, Jule?' It stinted, and said 'Ay'.

55

JULIET And stint thou too, I pray thee, Nurse, say I.

NURSE Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace,
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed.
And I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish.

60

LADY CAPULET Marry, that 'marry' is the very theme
I came to talk of. Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your dispositions to be married?

65

JULIET It is an honour that I dream not of.

NURSE An honour! were not I thine only nurse,
I would say thou hadst sucked wisdom from thy teat.

 Lady Capulet gives her reasons why Juliet should think of marriage. She tells her daughter of Paris's love, praising him in elaborate style. A servant tells them the party guests have arrived.

1 Juliet confides (by yourself)

Juliet says very little in this scene, but her young mind will certainly be working overtime. Just what are her thoughts after listening to her mother and the Nurse? What does she make of her father's plans for her and for the Capulet ball?

- Imagine you are Juliet. Write a diary entry explaining your thoughts and feelings at this point in the play.

2 Lady Capulet's admiration (in pairs)

Lady Capulet's lines 82–95 praising Paris are rather like a sonnet: there are fourteen lines, although the pattern of the rhymes is different from the usual sonnet form (see p. 216). Lady Capulet elaborately compares Paris to an attractive book. To explore her language more closely, try the following activities.

- Sit facing each other and read the lines aloud, each person taking just one line at a time. As you read your line, try to perform an action with the book you have in your hand. You'll find some lines quite easy to accompany with an action. Others are more difficult, especially lines 90–1, 'The fish lives in the sea ... / ... the fair within to hide'. This seems to mean that just as fish are at home in the sea, so good books deserve good covers, and handsome men deserve beautiful wives.
- Make a list of the qualities that appear to make up Lady Capulet's perfect man. Find a suitable picture from a magazine and annotate it to show the qualities of the man in the picture. How closely do those characteristics match your idea of a *modern* 'ideal' man?

Write about it

Three women

Scenes 1 and 2 focus strongly on male-dominated behaviour. In contrast, Scene 3 shows the play's three major female characters in an intimate domestic setting. The three women all have strikingly different personalities.

- Re-read the scene between the women and then write a paragraph about each character's specific personality.
- Then write a fourth paragraph exploring the relationships between them. Who do you think really controls what is happening in this scene? Why?

valiant brave

man of wax perfect man
(like a sculptor's wax model)

married lineament
harmonious feature

one another lends content
each complements the other

margent margin

fair without
handsome appearance

bigger women ... men
pregnancy makes women larger

endart pierce like a dart
(or Cupid's arrow)

extremity crisis

wait serve

straight at once, immediately

the County stays Count Paris
is waiting

LADY CAPULET Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,

70

Are made already mothers. By my count,
I was your mother much upon these years
That you are now a maid. Thus then in brief:
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

75

NURSE A man, young lady! lady, such a man
As all the world – Why, he's a man of wax.

LADY CAPULET Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

NURSE Nay, he's a flower, in faith, a very flower.

LADY CAPULET What say you, can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast;

80

Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every married lineament,

And see how one another lends content;
And what obscured in this fair volume lies
Find written in the margent of his eyes.

85

This precious book of love, this unbound lover,
To beautify him, only lacks a cover.

The fish lives in the sea, and 'tis much pride
For fair without the fair within to hide;

90

That book in many's eyes doth share the glory:
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story:
So shall you share all that he doth possess,

By having him, making yourself no less.

95

NURSE No less! nay, bigger women grow by men.

LADY CAPULET Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

JULIET I'll look to like, if looking liking move;

But no more deep will I endart mine eye

Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

100

Enter SERVINGMAN.

SERVINGMAN Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you
called, my young lady asked for, the Nurse cursed in the pantry,
and every thing in extremity. I must hence to wait, I beseech you
follow straight. *[Exit]*

LADY CAPULET We follow thee. Juliet, the County stays.

105

NURSE Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

Exeunt

Romeo and his friends, carrying masks and torches, prepare for their visit to Capulet's party. Romeo declares his unhappiness and says he will not dance. Mercutio tries to laugh Romeo out of his sadness.

Characters

Mercutio, the language trickster

In contrast to Benvolio, Mercutio is never bothered about getting into trouble. He seeks excitement and loves needling and verbally sparring with other characters. His language reflects his edginess and, like Shakespeare's contemporaries, he relishes wordplay and puns. In fact, all three young men use puns in the script opposite: for example, 'soles'/'soul', 'soar'/'sore', 'pricks'/'prick', 'visor'/'visor'; and in Shakespeare's time 'heavy' (line 22) also meant 'sad'.

- Begin a Character file for Mercutio, in which you note down examples of his clever and inventive language. In each case, explain what makes it so effective.
- Add to these notes as you read through the rest of the play and look to see if any patterns emerge. For example, are there particular occasions or subjects that seem to inspire his wicked wordplay?

1 Lifting Romeo's spirits (in pairs)

Romeo continues to show his unhappiness, even as the young men approach the Capulet party. For example, in line 12, Romeo declares he is 'heavy' (sad) and only fit to carry one of their torches. Mercutio is intent on cheering him up, particularly by joking about sex.

- Take parts and read aloud lines 11–32. Mercutio should try hard to lift Romeo's spirits with every line. How does your Romeo respond? Afterwards, identify two or three ways in which Mercutio's attitude and choice of language remind you of the Nurse's language in the previous scene.

- Compare this image with the ones on pages 10 and 20. Can you find any similarities between the presentation of Romeo's relationship with each of his young male friends?



What ... our excuse?

shall we excuse ourselves with a prepared speech?

The date ... prolixity

such speeches are old-fashioned

hoodwinked

blindfolded

Tartar's painted bow of lath

an oriental bow (shaped like an upper lip); here, made of thin wood and held by Cupid

crow-keeper

scarecrow

without-book

learnt by heart

measure

(line 9) judge

measure

(line 10) (1) perform

(2) dance

ambling

dancing

stakes

fastens

bound

(line 18) limit

bound

(line 20) tied up

bound

(line 21) leap

pitch

height

case

mask

A visor for a visor!

a mask for an ugly face!

cote

notice

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT I SCENE 4

Act 1 Scene 4 A street outside Capulet's mansion

Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, with five or six other MASKERS,
TORCH-BEARERS.

- ROMEO What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?
Or shall we on without apology?
- BENVOLIO The date is out of such prolixity:
We'll have no Cupid hoodwinked with a scarf,
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper,
Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke
After the prompter, for our entrance;
But let them measure us by what they will,
We'll measure them a measure and be gone.
- ROMEO Give me a torch, I am not for this ambling;
Being but heavy, I will bear the light.
- MERCUTIO Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.
- ROMEO Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes
With nimble soles, I have a soul of lead
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.
- MERCUTIO You are a lover, borrow Cupid's wings,
And soar with them above a common bound.
- ROMEO I am too sore enpierced with his shaft
To soar with his light feathers, and so bound
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.
- MERCUTIO And to sink in it should you burden love,
Too great oppression for a tender thing.
- ROMEO Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
Too rude, too boist'rous, and it pricks like thorn.
- MERCUTIO If love be rough with you, be rough with love:
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.
Give me a case to put my visage in, [*Puts on a mask.*]
A visor for a visor! what care I
What curious eye doth cote deformities?
Here are the beetle brows shall blush for me.

5

10

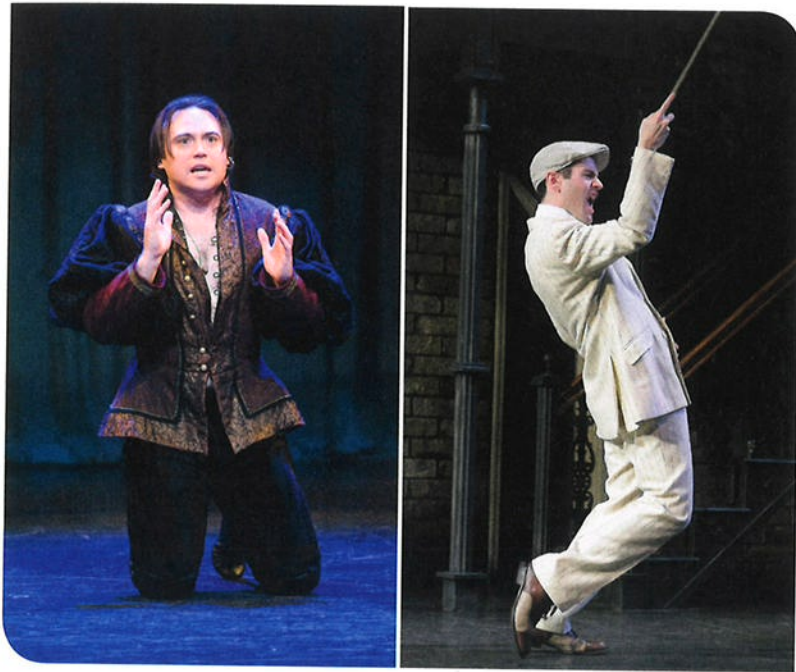
15

20

25

30

Romeo refuses to be cheered up, in spite of Mercutio's joking. He has no wish to join in the dance. Mercutio begins to tell of Queen Mab, Queen of the Fairies. He describes the intricate detail of her coach.



1 Mercutio and 'Queen Mab' (in pairs)

Mercutio's tale of Queen Mab, Queen of the Fairies, is world-famous. However, it presents a challenge in production because it can delay the developing pace of the action. Is this long speech merely a self-indulgent flight of fancy by Mercutio, full of dazzling imagery and conceits? Or does it have a more serious purpose?

- In pairs, one performs and the other directs an interpretation of the whole or part of Mercutio's speech (lines 53–94). Experiment with different ways of bringing it to life (for example, some actors have delivered the speech as if Mercutio is hallucinating or on the brink of madness).
- Afterwards, talk together about your experiences of working with the speech from the perspectives of actor and director. What have you learnt about the way Mercutio's mind works and his use of language? Which version did you think was most effective and why?
- Study the two photographs of Mercutio above. In the light of your own experiments and what you have seen of this character so far, which of these Mercutios comes closest to how you imagine him?

betake ... legs start dancing
wantons passionate free spirits
senseless rushes green rushes used to cover floors (try to work out why Romeo calls them 'senseless')
grandsire phrase old saying
dun mouse-coloured
Dun horse or 'stick in the mud'; an Elizabethan Christmas game was 'Dun-in-the-mire': partygoers pulled a log out of an imaginary marsh
burn daylight waste time

tonight last night

agate-stone precious stone
alderman magistrate
atomi small creatures

spinners spiders

film fine thread

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT I SCENE 4

BENVOLIO	Come knock and enter, and no sooner in, But every man betake him to his legs.	
ROMEO	A torch for me: let wantons light of heart Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels; For I am proverbial with a grandsire phrase, I'll be a candle-holder and look on: The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.	35
MERCUTIO	Tut, dun's the mouse, the constable's own word. If thou art Dun, we'll draw thee from the mire, Or (save your reverence) love, wherein thou stickest Up to the ears. Come, we burn daylight, ho!	40
ROMEO	Nay, that's not so.	
MERCUTIO	I mean, sir, in delay We waste our lights in vain, like lights by day. Take our good meaning, for our judgement sits Five times in that ere once in our five wits.	45
ROMEO	And we mean well in going to this mask, But 'tis no wit to go.	
MERCUTIO	Why, may one ask?	
ROMEO	I dreamt a dream tonight.	
MERCUTIO	And so did I.	50
ROMEO	Well, what was yours?	
MERCUTIO	That dreamers often lie.	
ROMEO	In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.	
MERCUTIO	O then I see Queen Mab hath been with you: She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes In shape no bigger than an agate-stone On the forefinger of an alderman, Drawn with a team of little atomi Over men's noses as they lie asleep. Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut, Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub, Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers: Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs, The cover of the wings of grasshoppers, Her traces of the smallest spider web, Her collars of the moonshine's wat'ry beams, Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film, Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat, Not half so big as a round little worm	55 60 65

 Mercutio continues his description of Queen Mab, telling of the dreams she creates in the minds of all kinds of sleepers. He dismisses dreams as nothing but idle fantasies.

1 Act out Queen Mab's trickery (in pairs)

In lines 70–94, Mercutio describes what Queen Mab does to different people: lovers, courtiers, lawyers, churchmen, soldiers and others.

- One person reads the speech a line at a time, the other mimes the actions described. Then change over reader and mimer. Afterwards, discuss which actions you think best fit each line. Show your final version to the class.

Write about it

A modern version of Queen Mab (in pairs)

- a Take lines 59–94 and write your own version of Queen Mab, turning the lines of poetry into modern prose and making it as simple and direct as possible. Notice that the speech is very structured. It has two main sections:

- the description of her carriage (lines 59–69)
- what she does to people (lines 70–94).

Passages within those sections begin with 'Her', 'O'er', 'Sometime', and 'This is'.

- b When you have completed your own prose writing, place it alongside Mercutio's original verse speech and compare the two versions. What opportunities to heighten the impact of this speech on the audience's imagination are presented by Mercutio's poetry, language and imagery? Are there opportunities missing in your contemporary reworking?

2 Romeo listens ... and interrupts (in threes)

Romeo listens silently for some time whilst Mercutio speaks. He finally interrupts at line 95. Why do you think he does so at this point?

- Individually, come up with two possible reasons and share them with the other group members. Which reason do you think is most plausible?

3 Benvolio listens ... and thinks

Benvolio is largely an observer in this scene. But what does he make of the way his two friends, Romeo and Mercutio, behave?

- Imagine that he later shares his thoughts with a close friend in a letter. Write Benvolio's account of what he has observed.

cur'sies curtsies, bowing and scraping

sweetmeats candied fruit

smelling out a suit gaining money by helping someone at court

tithe-pig pigs were sometimes given to clergymen as tithes (a tenth part of one's income)

benefice source of income, a paid position in a church

ambuscadoes ambushes

Spanish blades high-quality swords or fashionable young men

healths drinks (or toasts, as in 'cheers')

bakes matts together

elf-locks tangled, knotted hair

sluttish filthy

hag wicked fairy

ourselves our purpose

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT I SCENE 4

Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.
And in this state she gallops night by night 70
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love,
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on cur'sies straight,
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees,
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues, 75
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail
Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep, 80
Then he dreams of another benefice.
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon 85
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And being thus frightened, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plats the manes of horses in the night,
And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs, 90
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage.
This is she –
ROMEO Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace! 95
Thou talk'st of nothing.
MERCUTIO True, I talk of dreams,
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,
Which is as thin of substance as the air,
And more inconstant than the wind, who woos 100
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And being angered puffs away from thence,
Turning his side to the dew-dropping south.
Turning his side to the dew-dropping south.
This wind you talk of blows us from ourselves:
Supper is done, and we shall come too late. 105

In spite of his fearful misgivings, Romeo decides to go along with the others to Capulet's party. The following scene begins with Capulet's servants joking together as they prepare for the dancing.

1 What did Romeo dream? (in pairs)

Romeo looks uneasily into the future and has a premonition of death. His tone is ominous, filled with foreboding. He uses legal language prophesying that his premature ('untimely') death will result from what he begins tonight ('date') by going to Capulet's feast. His life will be the penalty ('forfeit') he must pay when the time is up ('expire the term'). Notice, too, that there are several words in lines 106–11 that describe fear or loss.

- Earlier (line 50), Romeo spoke of his dream. Explore lines 106–11 together and then imagine that Romeo goes to a fortune-teller or an expert on interpreting the significance of symbols in dreams. One of you gives an account of Romeo's dream (no one knows the details of this, so don't be afraid to use your imagination to fill them out). The other person takes the role of the expert and interprets the dream, explaining its significance.

Themes

'Some consequence yet hanging in the stars'

Romeo's language, directly echoing the Prologue's 'pair of star-crossed lovers', adds to the darkly ominous sense of the random workings of fate and destiny generated by Romeo's dream.

- Add the relevant details to the Evidence Grid on 'Chance versus Choice' that you began on page 20. Continue to look out for other references to stars and the heavens as you read on.

2 Change the scene swiftly

The stage direction at the end of Scene 4 suggests that Romeo and his friends do not actually leave the stage. But how is the scene change made from outside Capulet's house to inside?

- Step into role as director and write your ideas about how you would make the change so Scene 4 flows swiftly into Scene 5, without a long pause. First, try to make the most of the limited opportunities provided by Shakespeare's original stage (see 'Romeo and Juliet in performance', pp. 220–1). Then produce some further ideas showing what you could achieve in a modern theatre with no budgetary restrictions. Be as creative as you can with both scenarios.

expire the term complete the time allowed

He that ... my course
God, who guides my life

trencher wooden dish

join-stools wooden stools

court-cupboard sideboard

look to the plate clear away the silverware

marchpane marzipan

Susan Grindstone and Nell
girlfriends (or prostitutes) invited to the servants' party after the feast

longer liver person who lives longest

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT 1 SCENE 5

ROMEO I fear too early, for my mind misgives
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels, and expire the term
Of a despised life closed in my breast,
By some vile forfeit of untimely death.
But He that hath the steerage of my course
Direct my sail! On, lusty gentlemen.
BENVOLIO Strike, drum.
They march about the stage [and stand to one side].

110

Act 1 Scene 5

The Great Hall in Capulet's mansion

SERVINGMEN *come forth with napkins.*

FIRST SERVINGMAN Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away?
He shift a trencher? he scrape a trencher?

SECOND SERVINGMAN When good manners shall lie all in one or two
men's hands, and they unwashed too, 'tis a foul thing.

FIRST SERVINGMAN Away with the join-stools, remove the court-
cupboard, look to the plate. Good thou, save me a piece of
marchpane, and as thou loves me, let the porter let in Susan
Grindstone and Nell.

5

[Exit Second Servingman]

Anthony and Potpan!

[Enter two more SERVINGMEN.]

THIRD SERVINGMAN Ay, boy, ready.

FIRST SERVINGMAN You are looked for and called for, asked for and
sought for, in the great chamber.

10

FOURTH SERVINGMAN We cannot be here and there too. Cheerly,
boys, be brisk a while, and the longer liver take all.

[They retire behind]

Capulet welcomes the dancers. He reminisces with his cousin about past times. Their conversation suggests that Capulet is well into middle age. Romeo catches sight of Juliet for the first time.

1 The dancing begins (in small groups)

Many productions take the opportunity to accompany the energetic dancing at the Capulet ball with atmospheric music (for example, with pulsating beats and strong rhythms).

- Think about the mood you wish to create for this scene. Choose your style of music and then try making up a short dance routine that you feel would fit your Capulet party. You don't necessarily need instruments – you could use clapping and stamping sounds and movements. What other types of music and movement might be used instead of those you tried?



Stagecraft

Action within action (in pairs)

- Amidst the energy of the dance, Romeo becomes aware of Juliet (line 40). Talk together about how you would stage this critical moment in the play. Is Romeo's attention suddenly focused on Juliet or does he become aware of her more gradually? What about Juliet? When and how does she notice Romeo?
- Imagine that you are two actors rehearsing this scene. Based on your discussions, experiment with different ways of staging this moment. How will you show clearly to the audience what is happening between the two young people when there is so much other noise and action on stage? Be prepared to show or explain your solution to the class.

Maskers masked dancers

walk a bout dance

makes dainty is shy (and reluctant to dance)

Am I ... now? are you listening?

visor mask

turn the tables up
stack the tables

Berlady by our Lady
(the Virgin Mary)

nuptial wedding

Pentecost Whit Sunday, fifty days
after Easter

ward under twenty-one (and so
having a guardian)

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT 1 SCENE 5

Enter [CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, JULIET, TYBALT and his PAGE, NURSE, and] *all the GUESTS and GENTLEWOMEN to the Maskers.*

- CAPULET Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes
Unplagued with corns will walk a bout with you.
Ah, my mistresses, which of you all
Will now deny to dance? She that makes dainty,
She I'll swear hath corns. Am I come near ye now?
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day
That I have worn a visor and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
Such as would please; 'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone.
You are welcome, gentlemen. Come, musicians, play.
Music plays.
A hall, a hall, give room! and foot it, girls.
And they dance.
More light, you knaves, and turn the tables up;
And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.
Ah, sirrah, this unlooked-for sport comes well.
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good Cousin Capulet,
For you and I are past our dancing days.
How long is't now since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?
COUSIN CAPULET Berlady, thirty years.
CAPULET What, man, 'tis not so much, 'tis not so much:
'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,
Come Pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five and twenty years, and then we masked.
COUSIN CAPULET 'Tis more, 'tis more, his son is elder, sir;
His son is thirty.
CAPULET Will you tell me that?
His son was but a ward two years ago.
ROMEO [*To a Servingman*] What lady's that which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?
SERVINGMAN I know not, sir.

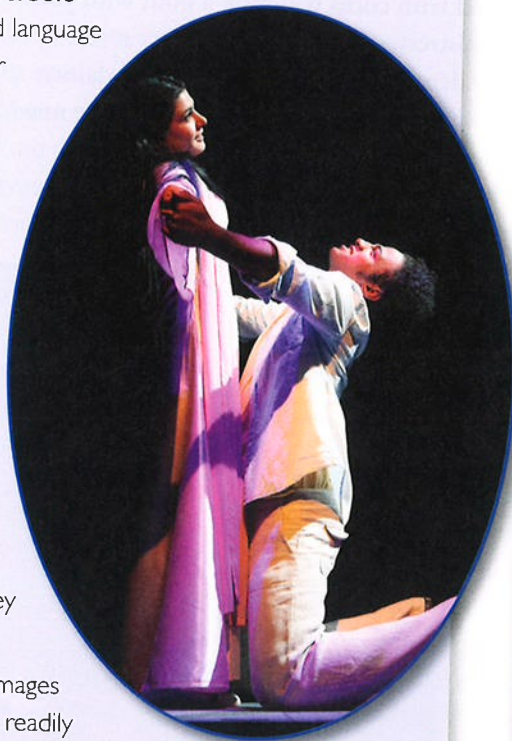
Romeo is entranced by Juliet's beauty. Tybalt, recognising Romeo's voice, is outraged that a Montague should dare gatecrash Capulet's party. Capulet scolds Tybalt for wanting to pick a fight.

Language in the play

'O she doth teach the torches to burn bright!'

Line 43 is an example of **hyperbole** – extravagant and exaggerated language ('hype'). Romeo makes other flamboyant comparisons ('cheek'/'jewel', 'snowy dove'/'crows'), all of which are contrasts of light versus dark.

- Turn to the 'Antithesis' page of the Language file that you began on page 2. Head up two columns 'Light' and 'Dark'. Make a note of the contrasts above. Continue to track similar language references as they feature in the play.
- Why do you think these images of light and dark spring so readily into Romeo's mind at this point?



Ethiop Elizabethans used this word for any black African

measure dance

rude rough

antic face fantastic mask

flee sneer

solemnity celebration

portly dignified

well-governed well-mannered

disparagement discourtesy

ill-beseeming inappropriate

semblance appearance, behaviour

goodman yeoman, not a gentleman (so 'goodman boy' would be a double insult to Tybalt)

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT I SCENE 5

ROMEO O she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear –
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear:
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
And touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

TYBALT This, by his voice, should be a Montague.
Fetch me my rapier, boy.

45

50

[Exit Page]

What dares the slave
Come hither, covered with an antic face,
To flee and scorn at our solemnity?
Now by the stock and honour of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

CAPULET Why, how now, kinsman, wherefore storm you so?
TYBALT Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe:
A villain that is hither come in spite,
To scorn at our solemnity this night.

CAPULET Young Romeo is it?

55

60

TYBALT 'Tis he, that villain Romeo.
CAPULET Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone,
'A bears him like a portly gentleman;
And to say truth, Verona brags of him
To be a virtuous and well-governed youth.
I would not for the wealth of all this town
Here in my house do him disparagement;
Therefore be patient, take no note of him;
It is my will, the which if thou respect,
Show a fair presence, and put off these frowns,
An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

TYBALT It fits when such a villain is a guest:
I'll not endure him.

70

CAPULET He shall be endured.
What, goodman boy, I say he shall, go to!
Am I the master here, or you? go to!
You'll not endure him? God shall mend my soul,

75

1 Revealing character: Tybalt and Capulet (in pairs)

Lines 53–91 dramatise an episode in which Capulet is increasingly angered by Tybalt's intention to pick a fight with Romeo. The incident reveals much about the characters of the two men.

- Take parts and speak the lines. Then repeat, but this time speak only one word from each line. Simply say whichever word strikes you as being the most important in the line – for any reason.
- Try the exercise another time, changing roles, then write down a list of the single words you have chosen. Do you think there are 'typical' Tybalt words and 'typical' Capulet words? If so, what do they suggest about the character of each man?

Tybalt, rebuked by Capulet, leaves the party. He threatens vengeance. Romeo and Juliet talk together for the first time. Romeo learns from the Nurse that Juliet is a Capulet.

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT 1 SCENE 5

1 First meeting of Romeo and Juliet (in pairs)

The first fourteen lines (92–105) of the lovers' meeting are written in sonnet form (the first twelve lines rhyme alternately; the last two lines are a rhyming couplet). It is helpful to know that:

- sonnet writing was a popular and highly esteemed activity at Queen Elizabeth's court (see p. 216)
- to show their faith, pilgrims made long journeys to the shrines of the Holy Land; they brought back palm leaves as proof of their visits, and so were known as 'palmer's'
- Romeo compares Juliet to a shrine or saint – religious imagery runs through their conversation ('profane', 'holy shrine', 'sin', 'pilgrims', 'wrong', 'devotion', 'palmer's', 'faith', 'despair', 'purged', 'trespass').

Take parts and sit facing each other. Speak your lines slowly, pointing at yourself or your partner (or to your own or your partner's hands or lips) on each appropriate mention. Use your imagination to perform actions you feel are appropriate to the words. Afterwards, talk together about this first meeting of Romeo and Juliet. For example, discuss:

- why you think Shakespeare gives Romeo this religious imagery
- how Romeo's language is different from that of earlier scenes
- whether you feel he is now genuinely in love
- how you think Juliet feels on this first meeting.

Stagecraft

The first kiss

Romeo first kisses Juliet after line 106. It is a very dramatic and iconic moment in the scene, but it can be played in a number of ways. Do the two lovers show hesitancy, embarrassment, carefree emotion, desire or other feelings? Is their second kiss (in line 109) the same as, or different to, their first? (Notice that Juliet's response to Romeo's kissing is ambiguous!)

- Based on your reading of the text, come up with some ideas for performing this episode and then explain them in a letter to a director who is working on a modern stage production.

set cock-a-hoop create a riot

scathe injure

contrary oppose

princox cocky youngster

hearts friends

choler anger

gall poison

profane desecrate, dishonour

mannerly proper

palmer's pilgrims (see Activity 1)

trespass sin

by th'book expertly (or without passion)

Marry by St Mary (a mild oath)

TYBALT	You'll make a mutiny among my guests!	
CAPULET	You will set cock-a-hoop! you'll be the man!	80
	Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.	
	Go to, go to,	
	You are a saucy boy. Is't so indeed?	
	This trick may chance to scathe you, I know what.	
	You must contrary me! Marry, 'tis time. –	
	Well said, my hearts! – You are a princox, go,	85
	Be quiet, or – More light, more light! – For shame,	
	I'll make you quiet, what! – Cheerly, my hearts!	
TYBALT	Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting	
	Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting:	
	I will withdraw, but this intrusion shall,	90
	Now seeming sweet, convert to bitt'rest gall.	<i>Exit</i>
ROMEO	[<i>To Juliet</i>] If I profane with my unworhiest hand	
	This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this,	
	My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand	
	To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.	95
JULIET	Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,	
	Which mannerly devotion shows in this,	
	For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,	
	And palm to palm is holy palmer's kiss.	
ROMEO	Have not saints lips, and holy palmer's too?	100
JULIET	Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.	
ROMEO	O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do:	
	They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.	
JULIET	Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.	
ROMEO	Then move not while my prayer's effect I take.	105
	Thus from my lips, by thine, my sin is purged.	
	[<i>Kissing her.</i>]	
JULIET	Then have my lips the sin that they have took.	
ROMEO	Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urged!	
	Give me my sin again.	
	[<i>Kissing her again.</i>]	
JULIET	You kiss by th'book.	
NURSE	Madam, your mother craves a word with you.	110
ROMEO	What is her mother?	
NURSE	Marry, bachelor,	
	Her mother is the lady of the house,	
	And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous.	



Romeo realises with dismay that Juliet is a Capulet. The party ends and Juliet feels similar foreboding on learning Romeo's name. She has fallen in love with one of her family's hated enemies.

1 Romeo's dismay (in small groups)

At lines 116–17, Romeo learns the dreadful truth: Juliet is a Capulet.

- Try speaking Romeo's two lines in several different ways until you feel they match what you think he feels at this moment. Share your version with others in your group.

Language in the play

a 'My grave is like to be my wedding bed'

Line 134 is the first time that Juliet speaks in such a sombre mood, imagining Death as her bridegroom. You'll find that this **personification** of Death marrying Juliet keeps appearing in the play (see Act 4 Scene 5, lines 35–40 and pp. 214–15).

- Start a new section in your Language file called 'Personification'. In this section, sketch an illustration of the line and caption it with the quotation.

b 'My only love sprung from my only hate!'

Line 137 echoes line 166 in Act 1 Scene 1 ('Here's much to do with hate, but more with love'). Juliet's lines 137–40 contain examples of the many antitheses that run through the play: 'love'/'hate', 'early'/'late', 'unknown'/'known', 'love'/'loathèd'.

- Add these to the relevant section of your Language file. Why do you think Shakespeare gives Juliet so many antitheses at this point in the play?

withal with

lay hold of grasp (marry)

the chinks money (rattle a handful of coins to hear why the Nurse says this)

dear account terrible reckoning

my life ... debt my life depends on my enemy

the sport ... best now's the time to leave

fay faith

waxes grows

Too early ... too late I fell in love with him before I knew who he was and now I can't turn back

Prodigious ominous, monstrous

Anon at once

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT 1 SCENE 5



- I nursed her daughter that you talked withal;
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks. 115
- ROMEO Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.
BENVOLIO Away, be gone, the sport is at the best.
ROMEO Ay, so I fear, the more is my unrest.
CAPULET Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone,
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards. 120
[*They whisper in his ear.*]
Is it e'en so? Why then I thank you all.
I thank you, honest gentlemen, good night.
More torches here, come on! then let's to bed.
Ah, sirrah, by my fay, it waxes late,
I'll to my rest. 125
- [*Exeunt all but Juliet and Nurse*]
JULIET Come hither, Nurse. What is yond gentleman?
NURSE The son and heir of old Tiberio.
JULIET What's he that now is going out of door?
NURSE Marry, that I think be young Petruchio. 130
JULIET What's he that follows here, that would not dance?
NURSE I know not.
JULIET Go ask his name. – If he be married,
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.
NURSE His name is Romeo, and a Montague,
The only son of your great enemy. 135
JULIET My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathèd enemy. 140
NURSE What's tis? what's tis?
JULIET A rhyme I learnt even now
Of one I danced withal.
[*One calls within, 'Juliet!'*]
NURSE Anon, anon!
Come let's away, the strangers all are gone.

Exeunt

Write about it

Thinking about structure

The moods created in this final scene of the first act switch back and forth dramatically.

- Break down the scene into specific episodes, then explore each one and assign it a particular mood. For example, you might think that the opening fourteen lines involving the servants are full of energy and bustle.
- Produce a 'mood map' of the scene, showing the atmosphere that Shakespeare creates in each episode. Annotate the map with your thoughts about how Shakespeare structures this scene to highlight contrasts.

Looking back at Act 1

Activities for groups or individuals

1 What is Tybalt like?

- a** Tybalt speaks only five lines in Act 1 Scene 1, and just seventeen more in Act 1 Scene 5. Yet each line helps create a strong impression of what he is like. Read through these lines again, then choose one key word from each line that you think clearly shows his character. Find a way of presenting these words strikingly on paper; then display them in class.
- b** Tybalt meets his friends as he leaves Capulet's party. Script the conversation he has with them, in modern English, telling his story of the party and his past experience of the Montagues.

2 Advising Romeo

Benvolio tells Romeo to cure his infatuation with Rosaline by looking at other girls ('Examine other beauties').

- Imagine you are an agony aunt for a magazine. Romeo writes to you with his problem. Using details from the script in Act 1 Scene 1, lines 154–227, write Romeo's letter and your advice in reply.

3 Rosaline's diary

Until he sees Juliet, Romeo believes he is in love with Rosaline. She never appears, so give her a voice.

- Write a few entries in Rosaline's diary. How does she feel about Romeo's infatuation? What did she say as she kept him at a distance (see Act 1 Scene 1, lines 199–215), refusing his advances? How does she feel when she hears he has fallen for Juliet? **Remember**, Rosaline is Juliet's cousin, so she's a Capulet too.

4 Report the party

Imagine you have been sent by a television station to report on Capulet's party (Scene 5). Your news editor says: 'Don't forget to interview the servants – they're

the ones who will really know. And "the lively Helena" is a real chatterbox! You'll be given a five-minute slot in tomorrow's news programme.'

- Work in groups to prepare and deliver your report.

5 Young love

Before the ball, Lady Capulet urged Juliet to marry. Later the same evening, Juliet will agree to marry Romeo the following day. In many countries today that would be seen as inappropriate behaviour for a thirteen-year-old girl.

- Carry out some further research into Elizabethan attitudes towards courtship and marriage. What might people at the time have thought about getting married at thirteen? What do you think? Discuss this in groups and suggest reasons why early marriage seems to be acceptable in Shakespeare's Verona. Have one person record your reasons as bullet points.

6 Parents and children

Several scenes in the first act explore the relationship between parents and children. For example, Montague tells of Romeo's strange behaviour in Scene 1; Capulet speaks of his daughter Juliet to Paris in Scene 2; Lady Capulet converses with Juliet and the Nurse in Scene 3.

- Remind yourself of each of these scenes, then write about how you think the parents are presented. Do they behave fairly and reasonably towards their children? Add to this essay as you read on.

7 The language of Act 1

Pick out two striking images from Shakespeare's language in Act 1. Explain clearly to a partner why you have chosen these particular images, why you think each one is effective and how it adds to the dramatic impact.



Compare how these two productions (film, above, and theatre, right) have staged the first meeting between Romeo and Juliet. What do you think the directors might have had in mind?

