Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *Romeo and Juliet* Unit

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Act I, Scene i

*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 5 A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life; Whose misadventured piteous overthrows Do with their death bury their parents' strife. The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love, And the continuance of their parents' rage, 10 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*] |  |

* Role of Chorus (narrator):
* Language in the play
  + **Antithesis**: the opposition of words or phrases against each other
    - Ex: “More light and light, more dark and dark our woes” (3.5.36)
    - Intensifies sense of conflict in the play (Smith 215)
  + Examples in Prologue (sonnet):
  + Kind of antithesis=**oxymoron:** contradicting words placed next to each other
    - * Ex: Romeo (1.1.167-72)
      * Ex: “brawling” against “love”, and “loving” against “hate”

Servant’s banter (Capulet’s servants: Gregory and Sampson)

* **Puns**: words that sound the same but have different meanings
  + Ex**:**
* Why did Shakespeare start his play with this kind of dramatic episode?

Stagecraft (Set the Scene)

* P. 220: *Romeo and Juliet* in performance
* How does Shakespeare let the audience know in language public vs. private locations?
* Stage fighting: Which approach has the greatest impact in the theatre? (realistic or symbolic)

Theme

* Love vs. Hate: Why did Shakespeare decide to begin the play with a scene of hatred and anger, rather than love?

Benvolio vs. Tybalt: Contrast their reactions to the fight.

* Benvolio:
* Tybalt:

Language in the play: The all-powerful Prince

* Compare his language style with the way the servants speak. What differences do you notice?
  + Prince:
  + Servants:

Characters: Focus on Benvolio

* Name means “well-wishing”
* Character traits:

Characters: Focus on Lady Montague

* Only speaks two lines in entire play
* Suggest powerlessness of women in Verona

Characters: Focus on Romeo

* Romeo’s introduction is delayed
* Contrast: violent opening vs. first impression of Romeo:

Language in the play: Imagery: “bit with an envious worm”

* **Imagery**: vivid words and phrases conjure up emotionally charged mental pictures or associations in the imagination(214-15); word pictures
* Imagery Ex: #1: Lines 142-4: “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” (1.1.142-4).
  + Montague compares Romeo to a bud that is destroyed by a malicious (‘envious’) worm before it can fully flower.
  + Effectiveness:
* Imagery Ex. #2: Lines 162-3: “Alas that Love, whose view is muffled still,/Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!” (1.1.162-3).
  + Romeo says that although Love is blind (‘muffled’) it can still impose its will on lovers.
  + Effectiveness:

Language in the play: The contradictions of love

* Romeo’s language in lines 167-72:
* “O loving hate” (167); “O heavy lightness” (169)
* Additional examples of **oxymorons**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Is Romeo really in love?

* Does elaborate language by Romeo make his emotions ‘artificial’?
* Do you think his love is artificial or genuine?

Act I, Scene ii

* Stagecraft
  + Capulet’s mansion: action moves from outside to interior
  + How do you know the setting changed?
  + Capulet and Paris enter talking
* Marrying off Juliet
  + Juliet’s entrance delayed (like Romeo’s); Juliet’s age: \_\_\_\_\_
  + Lines 7-19: Father’s view on Juliet getting married
  + Lord Capulet: reasonable / thoughtful father?
* Benvolio’s advice (lines 44-9)
  + Cure: look at other girls
  + Says idea five different ways (repetition)
* Theme: Chance versus choice
  + Servant sets all in motion (can’t read guest list)
  + Romeo discovers his “beloved” will attend party: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
  + Consider:
    - Are characters in control of their own destinies?
    - How far are characters the victims of apparently random workings of fate?
* Characters: What does Romeo think about love?
  + His love will never change
  + Will crash Capulet party to revel in the beauty of his “beloved”

Act I, Scene iii

* The Nurse-first impressions
  + Comic potential (lines often rude and funny)
  + What is the relationship among the three women: nurse, Lady Capulet and Juliet?
* Characters: Focus on Juliet
  + First impression of Juliet (young and vulnerable)
  + 7 lines spoken here; suggest she’s submissive to two older women
  + Mother’s plan for Juliet to marry?
  + Respectful/defers to elders OR independent/self-confident?
* Lady Capulet’s admiration
  + Lines 82-95 praise Paris; like a sonnet
  + What qualities make up Lady Capulet’s perfect man?
* Scenes 1 and 2 vs. Scene 3
  + Scenes 1 and 2: male-dominated behavior
  + Scene 3: Three major female characters in intimate domestic setting

Act I, Scene iv

* Character: Focus on Mercutio
  + Seeks excitement, loves needling and verbal sparing
  + Use of puns
    - Benvolio, Romeo and Mercutio
    - “soles”/ “soul”; “soar” / “sore”; “visor” / “visor”; “heavy” (also means sad)
  + What (actions, people, etc.) inspires his wordplay?
* Lifting Romeo’s spirits
  + Romeo is unhappy and won’t dance at party
  + Mercutio tries to cheer him up with jokes about sex
* Mercutio and “Queen Mab”
  + Queen Mab = Queen of the Fairies
  + Story: Tells of dreams Queen Mab creates in minds of different sleepers
  + Speech: Self-indulgent or serve a serious purpose?
  + What does it reveal about how Mercutio’s mind works?
* Romeo listens…and interrupts
  + He listens, but interrupts at line 95; Why then?
  + Benvolio’s observations of their actions?
* What did Romeo dream?
  + Has a premonition of death
  + Tone is ominous, foreboding (words of fear and loss)
  + Uses legal language
* Themes: “Some consequence yet hanging in the stars”
  + Romeo’s language echoes the Prologue
  + Sense of random workings of fate and destiny in his dream

Act I, Scene v

* Language in the play
  + **Hyperbole**: extravagant and exaggerated language
  + Language contrasts light and dark:
    - Ex: “cheek/jewel”; “snowy dove/crows”
    - Why does Romeo think of light/dark images at this point?
* Revealing character: Tybalt and Capulet
  + How do each react to Romeo’s presence at the party?

Tybalt: Capulet:

* + What do the reactions reveal about each character?

Tybalt: Capulet:

* First meeting of Romeo and Juliet
  + Lines 92-105: The lover’s meeting begins in sonnet format
    - Sonnet writing popular and highly esteemed activity at Queen Elizabeth’s court
    - Romeo compares Juliet to a shrine or a saint (religious imagery in conversation)
      * Ex: “profane”; “holy shrine”; “sin”; “pilgrims”; “wrong”; “devotion”; “palmers”; “faith”; “despair”; “purged”; “trespass”
      * How is his language different than before?
      * Is he now genuinely in love?
* Language in the play
  + Juliet: “My grave is like to be my wedding bed” (1.5.134).
    - * First time she speaks in a somber mood
      * Example of personification: imagines Death as her husband
      * **Personification**: Gives non-living things human feelings or attributes
  + Juliet speaks in **antithesis** in lines 137-140 (see lines below)
  + Why did Shakespeare give her so many antitheses at this point in the play?

Juliet (lines 137-140:

“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 **loathed** enemy” (1.5.137-40).