

William Shakespeare's
Romeo and Juliet:
A Discussion Guide

David Bruce

DEDICATED TO MOM AND DAD

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Preface

The purpose of this book is educational. I have read, studied and taught William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and I wish to pass on what I have learned to other people who are interested in studying William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. In particular, I think that the readers of this short introduction to William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* will be bright high school seniors and college first-year students, as well as intelligent adults who simply wish to study *Romeo and Juliet* despite not being literature majors.

This book uses a question-and-answer format. This book goes through the play scene by scene.

Teachers may find this book useful as a discussion guide for the tragedy. Teachers can have students read a section of the play, then teachers can ask students selected questions from this study guide.

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Very Important Note: The page numbers refer to the Signet Classic edition of *Romeo and Juliet*. However, the text is that of an online edition of *Romeo and Juliet* available at <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/romeo_juliet/full.html>. This means that mostly minor variations in the text will occur. The short quotations (quotations not in block format) are from the Signet Classic edition. The long quotations (quotations in block format) are from the online edition. Also, I am not using the MLA format, although you may require your students to use it.

Introduction to *Romeo and Juliet*

- *Romeo and Juliet* was written in 1594, 1595, or 1596, at around the same time as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Richard II*.
- The time of action is anywhere from the 1200s to the 1500s. The setting is Verona, Italy.
- At around the time that Shakespeare wrote and his company produced *Romeo and Juliet*, he bought his father a coat of arms. This means that Shakespeare was a successful playwright and was making money.
- The story of Romeo and Juliet was not invented by Shakespeare, but he did almost wholly invent the character of Mercutio.
- Shakespeare made Juliet almost 14 years old. In other, earlier versions of *Romeo and Juliet* by other authors, Juliet had been 18 and 16.
- Shakespeare also compressed the time it takes for the actions of the play to unfold — 4 or 5 days.
- *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy of chance or accident. Several times, things happen by chance or accident, leading to the tragedy at the end of *Romeo and Juliet*. For example, Romeo and Juliet meet by chance. An illiterate Capulet servant asks Romeo to read the Capulet invitations to him. Romeo finds out that his beloved, Rosaline (who does not love him), is invited to the Capulets' party, and he decides to crash it. There he meets Juliet and falls in love with her.
- *Romeo and Juliet* is also a tragedy of character. If Romeo and Juliet were not so young and impulsive, they would probably tell their parents that they are married instead of resorting to outlandish actions to avoid telling them. If

Romeo and Juliet had told their parents that they were married, the play might have had a happy ending.

- When the two lovers are alone, they are happy. However, the atmosphere of the city they live in is one of violence. A fight between the Montagues and the Capulets can break out at any time.
- One thing that cannot be doubted (or is very difficult to doubt) is that Romeo and Juliet, young as they are, love each other. *Romeo and Juliet* is a play about passionate love.
- In this play, we see that the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets has tragic consequences. Prince Escalus orders the Montagues and the Capulets to stop fighting, but they continue to fight. If the two families were at peace with each other, the play would be very different.
- Some sonnets appear in *Romeo and Juliet*. For example, Romeo and Juliet speak a sonnet together as part of their conversation when they first meet.
- This play has a number of characters who are foils for each other; for example, Tybalt and Benvolio are foils. Here are two definitions of *foil*:

A foil is a character who serves by contrast to highlight or emphasize opposing traits in another character. For instance, in the film *Chasing Amy*, the character Silent Bob is a foil for his partner, [Jay], who is loquacious and foul-mouthed. In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Laertes the man of action is a foil to the reluctant Hamlet. The angry hothead Hotspur in *Henry IV, Part I*, is the foil to the cool and calculating Prince Hal.

Source:

http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/wheeler/lit_term_s_F.html.

A foil is a character whose personality and attitude is opposite the personality and attitude of another character. Because these characters contrast, each makes the personality of the other stand out. In Sophocles' *Antigone*, Ismene is a foil for Antigone. Where Antigone is aware of the world, Ismene denies knowledge and hides from it. Where Antigone stands up to authority, Ismene withers before it. Antigone is active and Ismene is passive. Ismene's presence in the play highlights the qualities Antigone will display in her conflict with Creon[,] making her an excellent foil.

Source:

<http://masconomet.org/teachers/trevenen/litterms.htm#F>.

Romeo and Juliet

Prologue

- **The Prologue is written in the form of a sonnet. Explain the content of the sonnet.**

This is the sonnet:

PROLOGUE

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whole misadventured piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could
remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

Content of Sonnet

The sonnet tells us the subject and ending of the play.

The play is about two families in Verona, each of equal rank, who have long quarreled, and whose quarrel breaks out afresh in new violence, disrupting the city.

The two families each have a child, whose deaths end the quarrel and the violence. We are told that only the deaths of these children can end the violence.

This, Shakespeare says, will be the subject of this two hours' long play.

What has been left out of the Prologue will be told in the play.

• If you feel like doing research, explain the characteristics of a Shakespearean sonnet.

These are the characteristics of the Shakespearean sonnet:

- It is a lyric poem of 14 lines. It has three quatrains and a final couplet that makes a fitting climax to the sonnet.
- It is usually written in iambic pentameter.
- Iambic means a group of two syllables; this group is known as a foot. The first syllable is stressed lightly; the second syllable is stressed heavily.
- Pentameter means having five feet.
- Example of Iambic Pentameter:

“The cúrfew tólls the knéll of pártíng dáy,”

From Thomas Gray, “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard.”

- It has rhymes that occur in a certain pattern: abab, cdcd, efef, gg. Each section of the sonnet is rhymed differently.
- It usually expresses a single, complete idea or thought.

Chapter 1: Act 1

Act 1, Scene 1

- **The Verona of *Romeo and Juliet* is a city where violence can break out at any time. What evidence in Act 1, scene 1, supports this statement?**

We know that the statement is true because we see violence break out in this scene.

It is an ordinary day, but Samson and Gregory, who are two servants of Capulet, are looking for trouble, and they find it.

Shakespeare starts with a scene of great action that definitely shows the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues. Like a good storyteller, Shakespeare arouses the audience's interest quickly.

Act 1, Scene 1

- **What do Samson and Gregory talk about?**

The conversation of the two Capulet servants is violent and bawdy.

They say what they want to do to the Montague men and to the Montague women.

Basically, they want to kill the Montague men, and they want to screw the Montague women. They want to get the Montague women's backs against a wall and then nail their asses to the wall. Their language is vulgar.

Many of the words they use have a bawdy sense. Those words appear in bold below.

GREGORY

That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

SAMPSON

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.

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 cruel with the maids, and cut off their heads.

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 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 two of the house of the Montagues.

SAMPSON

My **naked** weapon is out: quarrel, I will back thee.

These definitions are from *The American Heritage Dictionary*:

Maidenhead:

- 1) The condition or quality of being a maiden; virginity
- 2) The hymen

Hymen:

A tissue that partly or completely occludes [obstructs] the external vaginal orifice

Act 1, Scene 1

• How does the quarrel between the Montagues and the Capulets start?

Some servants of the House of Capulet — Samson and Gregory — start a fight with some servants of the House of Montague — Abram and Balthasar.

This shows us that the violence and hatred between the two families extend even to the servants.

Before meeting the Montague servants, the Capulet servants make clear that they hate the Montagues. They wish to kill the Montague men and to rape the Montague women. The way in which they talk about sexually abusing the Montague

women forms a contrast to the more innocent, though passionate, love that Romeo and Juliet will have for each other.

The Capulet servants are aware of the law against violence in Verona, and they wish to pick a fight yet have the other side blamed for the fight. Therefore, Sampson bites his thumb at the Montague servants — this is a grave insult.

The servants argue for a while, then Gregory sees Tybalt (one of his master's kinsmen) coming, and he advises Sampson to increase the quarrelsomeness by saying that his master is better than the Montague servants' master. Sampson ends up drawing his sword, and the fight starts.

Act 1, Scene 1

• Compare and contrast the characters of Tybalt and Benvolio in this scene.

Tybalt is violent, while Benvolio is nonviolent.

Benvolio's name reveals his character. "*Bene volio*" is Latin for "I wish well."

Tybalt is a nephew to Lady Capulet, while Benvolio is a nephew of Montague and a friend of Romeo.

Benvolio draws his sword to keep peace between the servants of both houses. Tybalt draws his sword because he sees Benvolio's sword out and because he hates all Montagues.

On p. 7, we read:

Enter TYBALT

TYBALT

What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?

Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

BENVOLIO

I do but keep the peace: put up thy sword,

Or manage it to part these men with me.

TYBALT

What, drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word,

As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:

Have at thee, coward!

Tybalt is a good fighter, as we will see, and as he says here, he hates all Montagues, including the easy-to-like Benvolio.

Two similarities: Both are nephews, and both are loyal to their houses.

Act 1, Scene 1

• What do we learn about Capulet and Lady Capulet and about Montague and Lady Montague in this scene?

We will learn that Lady Capulet is much younger than her husband. Here she mocks his age. This need not be a bad thing. She may simply be trying to keep him from being killed.

When Capulet becomes aware of the public violence, he calls for his long sword because he wishes to join the violence and fight. However, his wife says that it is more appropriate for him to call for a crutch than a sword.

Lady Montague is also a peacekeeper. Her husband, who is old, wishes to fight, but she holds him back and will not let him fight.

I should point out that the Capulets and the Montagues are not royalty. The word “Lady” is misleading, and Shakespeare did not use it. The Capulet and Montague families are very wealthy, and they know the Prince, but they are wealthy through trade and business.

On p. 7, we read:

Enter CAPULET in his gown, and 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 MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE

MONTAGUE

Thou villain Capulet, — Hold me not, let me go.

LADY MONTAGUE

Thou shalt not stir a foot to seek a foe.

Act 1, Scene 1

• Write a character analysis of Prince Escalus as he appears in this scene. What does the Prince say is the

cause of the quarrel between the Capulets and the Montagues?

Character Analysis

Prince Escalus is the ruler of Verona, but unfortunately for Prince Escalus, Verona is a city where violence can break out at any time, as we have just seen.

Prince Escalus wants his city, Verona, to be peaceful, but that is a difficult task, as we will see.

The Cause of the Quarrel Between the Capulets and the Montagues

Apparently, an “airy word” (1.1.92) — someone said something wrong at one time in the past — is the cause of their quarrel.

On p. 8, we read the words of Prince Escalus:

Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets,

The Prince is serious about getting peace. He tells the fighters to stop fighting, or they shall be tortured. He also tells both Capulet and Montague that if violence occurs again, they shall be killed. He then has Capulet go with him and orders Montague to see him later that day. Apparently, the Prince will talk to each of them about the violence and will try to uphold the peace.

Obviously, the Prince is respected — he is quickly obeyed.

On p. 8, the Prince says:

Enter PRINCE, with Attendants

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 mistemper'd weapons to the ground,
 And hear the sentence of your moved prince.
 Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
 By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
 Have thrice disturb'd 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,
 Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd 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 further pleasure in this case,
 To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.

Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

Act 1, Scene 1

• **If you feel like doing research, define “oxymoron” and identify a few of the oxymora that Romeo uses when he finds out that a fight recently occurred.**

Here is a definition of “oxymoron”:

OXYMORON (plural oxymora, also called paradox): Using contradiction in a manner that oddly makes sense. Examples include such oxymora as jumbo shrimp, sophisticated rednecks, and military intelligence. The best oxymora seem to reveal a deeper truth through their contradictions. These oxymora are called paradoxes. For instance, “without laws, we can have no freedom.” Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar also makes use of a famous oxymoron: “Cowards die many times before their deaths” (2.2.32). Richard Rolle uses an almost continuous string of oxymora in his Middle English work, “Love is Love That Lasts For Aye.”

Source:

http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/wheeler/lit_term_s_O.html

Date Downloaded: 21 December 2003

On p. 11, we read (some oxymora are in bold; emphasis added):

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!

O **heavy lightness!** **serious vanity!**

Mis-shapen 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?

Act 1, Scene 1

• What do we learn about Romeo in this scene?

1. Romeo and Benvolio are friends. Benvolio is able to talk to Romeo and find out what is on his mind.
2. Romeo dislikes violence. He sees blood on the street and knows that violence has occurred there.
3. The main thing is that Romeo thinks he is in love with Rosaline, but his love is unrequited. Romeo loves Rosaline, but Rosaline does not love Romeo.
4. Romeo does all the things that lovers do when the loved one does not return their love. He sighs, he pines, he wants to be alone, he stands away from his friends, he thinks about his loved one and regrets that she does not love him.
5. Rosaline wants nothing to do with men. To win heavenly bliss, she intends to remain a virgin on Earth.

6. Benvolio wants Romeo to forget about Rosaline and to think about other women.

On p. 11, Romeo says about Rosaline that he is

Out of her favour, where I am in love.

On pp. 12-13, we read:

ROMEO

Bid a sick man in sadness make his will:

Ah, word ill urged to one that is so ill!

In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

BENVOLIO

I aim'd 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 arm'd,

From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.

She will not stay the siege of loving terms,

Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,

Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold:

O, she is rich in beauty, only poor,
That when she dies with beauty dies her store.

BENVOLIO

Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste?

ROMEO

She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste,
For beauty starved with her severity

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.

Act 1, Scene 2

• In this scene, Paris expresses his desire to marry Juliet. How old is she? Based on evidence in the play, in this society and at this time, is hers a usual age for being married? What were the relative ages of Capulet and Lady Capulet when they married?

How old is Juliet?

Juliet is not quite fourteen. She is very young indeed.

On p. 14, we read:

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,
 Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

Based on evidence in the play, in this society and at this time, is hers a usual age for being married?

A fourteen-year-old bride is unusual, but not unheard of. Her father wishes Paris to wait two more years, then court her. If Juliet is 16, her father does not mind her being married.

PARIS

Younger than she are happy mothers made.

CAPULET

And too soon marr'd are those so early made.

What were the ages of Capulet and Lady Capulet when they married?

Lady Capulet was much younger than Capulet.

Therefore, when Capulet says to Paris, “And too soon marred are those so early made” (1.2.13), he may be speaking from experience. His marriage to Lady Capulet may not be entirely happy — because she was so young when they married.

Act 1, Scene 2

• Write character analyses of Paris and of Capulet as they appear in this scene.

Paris

1. Paris seems to be honorable. He wants to marry Juliet, who is very young, but he goes about it in the right way — by asking her father for her hand.

2. Paris is Count (or County) Paris, a member of the upper classes. He is a kinsman to Prince Escalus. A marriage between Juliet and Count Paris would be a good alliance for the Capulet family.

Capulet

1. Capulet cares for his daughter, Juliet.
2. He realizes that she is the only child he has left. His other children have died — death (especially in childbirth and of the very young) was common at that time.
3. Capulet prefers that Juliet be 16 when she is married, but it's OK with him if she wishes to marry Paris when she is 14. At this time, Juliet's preference for Paris will play a role in her marriage, it seems.
4. Capulet is concerned about politics. That is what he is talking about at the beginning of the scene.

On p. 14, we read:

Enter CAPULET, PARIS, and Servant

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.

5. Capulet does have a plan. Instead of his simply telling Juliet to marry Paris, he is going to invite Paris to a customary feast that his family holds. That way, Paris can court Juliet and get her to like him enough to marry him.

Act 1, Scene 2

• How does Romeo find out about the Capulet feast? What is Romeo's reaction to the list of people invited to

the Capulet feast? Write a short character analysis of the Servant.

How Romeo Comes to Know of the Capulet Feast

Capulet gives the Servant a list of names of people to invite to the Capulet feast. Unfortunately, the Servant cannot read, and therefore he asks Romeo to read the list of names to him.

The List of Guests

Romeo's reaction to the names on the list is "A fair assembly" (1.2.74). Romeo's reaction is a positive one. He does not hate the Montagues. We can imagine what Tybalt's reaction to a list of people invited to a Montague feast would be. Tybalt would hate them all. (Tybalt has, by the way, been invited to the Capulet feast.)

We also note that Rosaline has been invited to the feast (a fact that Romeo will be interested in) and that Mercutio has been invited.

The Servant

1. The Servant is illiterate. In the day and age of the play's setting, this would be normal.
2. Capulet does not know that the Servant cannot read. Is the Servant new? Or does Capulet not take much interest in household affairs?
3. The Servant does not recognize Romeo and does not know that he is a Montague. The Servant also does not recognize Benvolio, who is with Romeo. This is unusual. Perhaps the Servant is new.
4. The Servant invites Romeo to the Capulet feast, if he be not a Montague. The Servant is aware of the feud between the families. The Servant also takes what I would regard as a liberty. Apparently the Servant is aware that lots of people

will be at the feast, so one or two more won't hurt. Probably, lots of party-crashing goes on. Perhaps the Servant is very young, rather than new.

Note: Many people work together to put on plays. Actors can interpret a role in more than one way without doing violence to the play.

Act 1, Scene 2

• **Why does Benvolio — someone who wishes to avoid violence — want Romeo to attend the feast of the Capulets, sworn enemies to the Montagues? Why does Romeo agree to go to the Capulet feast?**

I find it interesting that Benvolio wants Romeo and himself to crash the party. (Of course, they have been invited, but only by the servant.) Benvolio wants, of course, for Romeo to see beautiful women besides Rosaline, but Benvolio should know that trouble could arise because of their party-crashing. However, they will be wearing masks, and so apparently Benvolio believes that they will not be recognized and so no trouble will occur.

Romeo agrees to go to the party because he wants to see Rosaline, whom he loves but who does not love him back.

On p. 17, we read:

BENVOLIO

At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
 Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so lovest,
 With all the admired beauties of Verona:
 Go thither; and, with unattainted eye,
 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 drown'd could never die,
 Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!
 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:
 But in that crystal scales let there be weigh'd
 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 shows best.

ROMEO

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

Act 1, Scene 3

• In this scene, the Nurse tells a bawdy anecdote at Juliet's expense. ("Bawdy" means humorously indecent or vulgar.) What is the anecdote? If Juliet is like most

girls of her age, would she be embarrassed by the anecdote?

The Nurse tells of a time when Juliet was a little girl — a toddler. She fell forward and hit her head and raised a large bump. The Nurse says (pp. 19-20):

For then she could stand alone; nay, by the 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:
 '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 holidame,
 The pretty wretch left crying and said 'Ay.'
 To see, now, how a jest shall come about!
 I warrant, an 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.'

The joke is in the falling. Juliet as a three-year-old fell forward, but when she is older she will fall backward. She will be lying on her back, her legs in the air, and her legs parted — in the missionary position for sex.

Juliet's Reaction

Juliet could have two reactions here — perhaps both at the same time, or one following the other.

1. Juliet can be embarrassed by the anecdote.
2. Juliet can think that the anecdote is funny.

Act 1, Scene 3

• **Write a character analysis of the Nurse based on what you learn in this scene.**

1. *The Nurse can be vulgar. She refers to her maidenhead.*

These definitions are from *The American Heritage Dictionary*:

Maidenhead:

- 1) The condition or quality of being a maiden; virginity
- 2) The hymen

Hymen:

A tissue that partly or completely occludes [obstructs] the external vaginal orifice

On p. 18, we read:

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!

2. *The Nurse tells bawdy jokes.*

A. We have already seen the joke about Juliet falling backwards.

B. When Lady Capulet says that Juliet will become no less by having Paris, The Nurse points out that

women grow bigger by men — that is, they become pregnant.

On p. 21, we read (Lady Capulet speaks first):

So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less.

Nurse

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

C. The Nurse wants Juliet to have happy nights to go with her happy days. The nights will be happy once Juliet is married because Juliet will be having sex with her husband.

On p. 22, we read:

Nurse

Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

3. *The Nurse is a nursery nurse rather than a doctor's nurse.*

4. *The Nurse is a wet nurse.*

We find that out because the Nurse talks of weaning Juliet when Juliet was three years old. She weaned Juliet by putting wormwood — a bitter herb — on her nipple so that it tasted bitter and Juliet would not want to nurse any longer.

On p. 19, we read:

For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall;
My lord and you were then at Mantua: —
Nay, I do bear a brain: — but, as I said,
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 the dug!
 Shake quoth the dove-house: 'twas no need, I trow,
 To bid me trudge:

5. *The Nurse is apparently a widow.*

We know that she was married because her husband made a bawdy joke at Juliet's expense. However, the husband is hereafter no longer referred to in the play.

6. *The Nurse had a daughter named Susan, who was the same age as Juliet, but who died, apparently in infancy.*

The Nurse's breasts being full of milk, she was able to breastfeed Juliet, thus freeing Lady Capulet from that task.

On p. 19, we read:

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,

7. *Obviously, the Nurse has known Juliet since Juliet's infancy.*

This means that the Nurse knows much about Juliet, including her age. It turns out that Juliet is two weeks shy of her 14th birthday.

On pp. 18-19, we read:

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 teeth [should be “teen,” which means sorrow] be it spoken, I have but four —

She is not fourteen. How long is it now

To Lammas-tide?

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.

Definition: Lammastide is the season of Lammas. Lammas is August 1, and it celebrates the miraculous delivery of St. Peter from prison.

8. The Nurse has only four teeth left.

On p. 18, we read:

Nurse

I'll lay fourteen of my teeth, —

And yet, to my teeth [should be “teen,” which means sorrow] be it spoken, I have but four —

Act 1, Scene 3

• Write a character analysis of Lady Capulet based on what you learn in this scene.

1. Lady Capulet is not a Lady.

We can't actually tell this from the reading, but Shakespeare used phrases such as "Wife Capulet" for this character. The phrase "Lady Capulet" is a later change.

Lady Capulet is rich — she has a rich husband — but she is NOT a member of royalty.

2. Lady Capulet may be flighty.

When she enters the room to talk to Juliet, she first orders the Nurse to leave, then changes her mind and asks her to stay.

On p. 18, we read:

JULIET

Madam, I am here.

What is your will?

LADY CAPULET

This is the matter: — Nurse, give leave awhile,

We must talk in secret: — nurse, come back again;

I have remember'd me, thou's hear our counsel.

Thou know'st my daughter's of a pretty age.

3. Lady Capulet asks the Nurse to stop talking, but the Nurse keeps on talking — until Juliet asks her to be quiet.

On p. 20, we read:

LADY CAPULET

Enough of this; I pray thee, hold thy peace.

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 its brow
 A bump as big as a young cockerel’s stone;
 A parlous 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.’

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:
 An I might live to see thee married once,
 I have my wish.

4. *Lady Capulet did not breast-feed Juliet — the Nurse did.*
5. *Lady Capulet bears the news to Juliet that Paris is interested in marrying her.*

Lady Capulet argues in favor of the marriage.

6. *Lady Capulet was a mother when she was Juliet’s age.*

On p. 20, we read:

LADY CAPULET

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

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

7. Lady Capulet does not seem willing to force Juliet to marry Paris — at least not now.

Instead, she asks Juliet if she can be favorable to Paris' love.

On p. 21, we read:

LADY CAPULET

Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

Act 1, Scene 3

• What do we learn about Juliet in this scene?

1. *We learn that Juliet is not quite 14 years old.*
2. *We learn that Juliet was breastfed by the Nurse.*
3. *We learn that Juliet has a bawdy Nurse and a more refined mother.*
4. *Juliet appears to be a dutiful daughter in this scene.*

A. When she is called, Juliet quickly appears

B. When Juliet is asked if she can approve of Paris' love, she says that she will try.

On p. 21, we read:

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.

Act 1, Scene 4

• If you feel life doing research, look up the Roman god Mercury (his Greek name was Hermes) and explain the characteristics that Mercutio and Mercury share.

A few characteristics that belong to the Roman god Mercury include

- Active
- Sprightly
- Eloquence
- Shrewdness
- Thievousness
- Swiftiness
- Capable of Sudden and Unpredictable Change
- Volatility (Changeable in Temperament)

Mercury is the god's Roman name; his Greek name is Hermes.

Mercury/Hermes is a messenger-god. In Homer's *Odyssey*, when Zeus wishes to send word to the nymph Calypso to let Odysseus go free, he sends Hermes to give Calypso the message.

In Homer's *Iliad*, when King Priam of Troy goes to Achilles' camp to ransom the corpse of his son Hector so that he can

give it a fitting burial, Zeus sends Hermes to be Priam's guide.

In ancient mythology, Hermes guides the souls of the dead to the Underworld.

Act 1, Scene 4

• In this scene, Mercutio makes his famous “Queen Mab” speech. Read the speech and explain its content. If you wish, translate the speech from Elizabethan English to modern-day English. (Elizabethan English is the English spoken in the time of Queen Elizabeth I of England. She reigned during the time of Shakespeare and the other Elizabethan playwrights.)

Romeo tells Mercutio that he has had a dream, and immediately the two begin punning.

Mercutio says that dreamers often lie, and Romeo replies that they often lie in bed, where they dream true things.

Mercutio then tells about Queen Mab.

We notice that Mercutio's mood changes during the Queen Mab speech. At first, the speech is light and would be amusing to a child, but then it grows dark. This is consistent with Mercutio's mercurial nature.

Light

At first, a child could delight in what Mercutio says. Queen Mab is a Fairy Queen, and she is very tiny.

- Her carriage is a hollowed-out hazelnut.
- Her steeds pulling the chariot are insects.
- The wagon spokes are made from the legs of spiders.

- Her traces are made of spiders' web.
- The collars of the insects pulling her carriage are made of moonbeams.
- Her whip handle is made of the bone of a cricket.
- The lash of the whip is made from a fine filament.
- Her wagoner is a gray-coated gnat.

Trace: "One of two side straps connecting a harnessed draft animal to a vehicle." — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

Collar: "A restraining or identifying band around the neck of an animal." — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

Middle — Becoming Darker

Queen Mab brings dreams to sleepers:

- Lovers dream of love.
- Courtiers dream of curtsies.
- Lawyers dream of fees.

Courtier: "An attendant at a sovereign's court." — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

Dark (Emphasis Added)

- Ladies dream of kisses, which sounds innocent enough, but the angry Queen Mab blisters the ladies' lips because the ladies' breath smells of sweetmeats.
- A courtier dreams of smelling out a suit (a petitioner).
- A parson dreams of another benefice.

• **A soldier dreams of cutting the throats of foreigners, of breaches in walls and lines of soldiers, of ambushes, of Spanish sword blades, of 30-foot-long drinks, and of drums in his ear.**

• Queen Mab braids the manes of horses and tangles up hairs.

• **Queen Mab — now called a “hag” (1.4.92), teaches maids to lie on their backs and engage in sex.**

Sweetmeats: “A sweet delicacy, as a piece of candy or a candied fruit.” — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

After the Queen Mab Speech

It is up to Romeo to calm Mercutio, who says that he is talking of dreams that come from an idle mind. However, his mind is far from idle. He is a very witty character.

On pp. 24-26, we read:

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 fore-finger of an alderman,

Drawn with a team of little atomies

Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;

Her wagon-spokes made of long spiders' legs,

The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,

The traces of the smallest spider's web,

The collars of the moonshine's watery beams,
 Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,
 Her wagoner a small grey-coated gnat,
 Not so big as a round little worm
 Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid;
 Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut
 Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
 Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
 And in this state she gallops night by night
 Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
 O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'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,
 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,
 Then dreams, he 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
 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 elflocks in foul sluttish hairs,
 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!
 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 wooes
 Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
 And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,

Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.

Act 1, Scene 4

• What is Romeo's premonition about the masked ball?

Romeo is afraid that he and the maskers will arrive too early at the ball, by which he means that it may be better not to go to the ball at all, for he has a bad feeling about it. He thinks that on this night a series of events may begin that lead to an untimely death.

On p. 26, we read:

BENVOLIO

This wind, you talk of, blows us from ourselves;
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

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.

Exeunt

Act 1, Scene 5

• What do we learn about Capulet from the way that he greets his guests to the masked ball?

Capulet's sense of humor is corny — literally.

He jokes with the ladies that if they do not dance, then everyone will know that they have corns on their feet.

Corn: "A horny thickening of the skin, usu. on or near a toe, resulting from pressure or friction." — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

The corns will make dancing painful, so of course the ladies who have corns will not dance.

Capulet is not upper class, although he is very rich. We see that he is not upper class in his low sense of humor.

On pp. 27-28, we read:

Enter CAPULET, with JULIET and others of his house, meeting the Guests and Maskers

CAPULET

Welcome, gentlemen! ladies that have their toes

Unplagued with corns will have a bout with you.

Ah ha, 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.

A hall, a hall! give room! and foot it, girls.

Music plays, 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 unlook'd-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?

Act 1, Scene 5

• How does Romeo react when he first sees Juliet?

Major violence exists in Verona, but when Romeo and Juliet are together, a different feeling exists. We can say that a different world exists. Shakespeare creates this different feeling and world through poetry — specifically, through lyric poetry. Lyric poetry expresses personal feelings and can take the form of a song.

Romeo says this when he first sees Juliet (p. 29):

ROMEO

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!

It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night

Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope'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.

Romeo is talking in rhymed couplets.

Previously, we read the conversation of the servants (prose) and the conversation of Capulet (blank verse). Now we have rhymed couplets.

In his speech, Romeo talks about light:

- Juliet teaches “the torches to burn bright!” (1.5.46).
- Juliet is [l]ike a rich jewel in an Ethiop’s ear” (1.5.48). An Ethiop is an Ethiopian. Imagine a glittering diamond earring in the earlob of an African with very black skin.
- Juliet is like a white dove in the midst of a flock of black crows.

Romeo then uses religious imagery: Juliet can bless him if only he can touch her hand.

Act 1, Scene 5

• What kind of love does Romeo feel for Juliet?

Romeo’s love is a love at first sight. Romeo is impressed by Juliet’s beauty.

Romeo’s initial love for Juliet is not based on a meeting of minds. Romeo falls in love with Juliet before he has even

spoken to her. He does not know whether her personality meshes with his.

The love that Romeo and Juliet feel for each other is passionate love.

Act 1, Scene 5

• Are Romeo and Juliet capable of feeling true love?

This is a difficult question. There is no doubt that Romeo and Juliet are capable of feeling passionate love. They love each other strongly enough to be willing to die for each other.

Romeo

We need to keep in mind that Romeo has thought that he was in love with Rosaline, yet he immediately falls in love with Juliet and out of love with Rosaline the moment he sees Juliet.

Juliet

We need to keep in mind that Juliet is only 14 years old. Most girls of 14 years think that they know what true love is, but if you ask them at age 18 or 19 if they really knew what true love is at age 14, most would say that what they felt was puppy love.

We should keep in mind that Shakespeare deliberately made Juliet 14 years old. In his source, Juliet was 16 years old.

Romeo and Juliet

Romeo and Juliet are very young. Juliet is 14 years old. Has there ever been a 14-year-old girl who did not think that she was feeling true love?

Both Romeo and Juliet have raging hormones coursing through their body.

Elizabethan England

In Elizabethan England, most people married in their early to mid-twenties. A girl of 14 years was considered way too young to be married.

In Elizabethan England, young girls were supposed to obey their parents. Certainly, Juliet does not do this — nor does Romeo.

At all times, we are supposed to put God first. However, both Romeo and Juliet seem to put the other before God.

For example, in Act 2, scene 2, Juliet says (p. 39):

JULIET

Do not swear at all;

Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,

Which is the god of my idolatry,

And I'll believe thee.

Arguments in Favor of True Love

1. The beauty of the poetry Romeo and Juliet speak.
2. The fact that they risk so much to get married.
3. The fact that they admit that their love is idolatrous, yet engage in it anyway. (They do get married.)
4. The fact that they are willing to die rather than to live without the other.
5. The dialogue that Romeo and Juliet exchange with each other in Act 1, Scene 5, reveals their view of love. Their view of love is that love ought to be true. For other characters, love is a joke or a political alliance. Romeo and Juliet know what love ought to be. They are very young, yes, but perhaps

because they are very young they have not grown cynical about love.

Act 1, Scene 5

• **Compare Capulet and Tybalt in this scene. How do they treat (or want to treat) Romeo?**

Tybalt

Tybalt wants to fight Romeo. He thinks that Romeo has come to jeer at the party and to insult the Montagues.

Tybalt, being Tybalt, is insulted by Romeo's crashing the party. He wishes to fight Romeo.

Capulet

Capulet treats Romeo well (Capulet may wish to keep the peace, or perhaps he really does like Romeo):

1. He says nice things about Romeo.
2. He keeps Tybalt from fighting Romeo. (We should remember that the Prince has threatened to execute both Montague and Capulet if the peace is broken.)
3. He invites Romeo and his friends to stay longer.

On pp. 29-30, we read:

TYBALT

This, by his voice, should be a Montague.

Fetch me my rapier, boy. What dares the slave

Come hither, cover'd with an antic face,

To flear 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?

TYBALT

'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

CAPULET

Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone;
He bears him like a portly gentleman;
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him
To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth:
I would not for the wealth of all the 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,
And ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

On pp. 31-32, we read:

BENVOLIO

Away, begone; 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.

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.

Act 1, Scene 5

• How do Romeo and Juliet view love. How do Mercutio, the Nurse, Capulet, and Friar Lawrence (later) view love?

The dialogue that Romeo and Juliet exchange with each other in this scene reveals that they believe that love ought to be true and romantic. Their view of love is much different from that of other people:

- Mercutio regards love as sex and as a joke.
- The Nurse regards love as a biological function of a woman. She talks about Juliet falling backwards into the missionary position for sex — this is something that the Nurse's late husband joked about. She speaks about women growing bigger by men —

which of course they do because they grow bigger when they are pregnant.

- For Capulet, love is a political marriage made for securing a political alliance.
- For Friar Lawrence, love is an opportunity for promoting peace between two rival families. He hopes that the marriage of Romeo and Juliet will lead to peace between the Montague and the Capulet families.

Romeo and Juliet do believe in what we would call true love. Their last names do not matter to them. They do not marry for a political alliance or to bring peace between their families. They are very interested in having sex with each other.

Note: In some editions, “Lawrence” is spelled “Laurence.” The Signet Classic edition uses “Lawrence,” but the online version I am using for long quotations uses “Laurence.”

Act 1, Scene 5

• Explain the dialogue that Romeo and Juliet exchange with each other in this scene. Note the religious imagery.

When Romeo and Juliet first speak to each other at the ball, their dialogue is a rhymed sonnet:

- Romeo speaks the first four lines.
- Juliet speaks the second four lines.
- Romeo and Juliet each speak two of the next four lines.
- Romeo and Juliet each speak one of the lines of the closing couplet.

Romeo and Juliet are physically attracted to each other, but the ability to make poetry together also indicates a meeting of like minds.

Today, we can use music in a movie or a play of *Romeo and Juliet*. The background music can subtly or not so subtly influence how an audience views a scene. Shakespeare accomplishes the same thing by using poetry. The servants speak in prose. Capulet speaks in blank verse. Romeo and Juliet, in their first conversation, speak in a rhymed sonnet.

Romeo and Juliet belong together, I think we can say. How can we know that? We know that because they rhyme together (pp. 30-31):

ROMEO

[To JULIET] If I profane with my unworhiest hand

This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this:

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand

To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

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 palmers' kiss.

ROMEO

Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

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.

After they speak the final rhyming couplet (group of two lines), they kiss.

Much religious imagery occurs in the sonnet:

- Romeo refers to Juliet as a “holy shrine” (1.5.96) in the first quatrain (group of four lines) in the sonnet. He touches Juliet’s hand and likens that to touching a holy image.
- Romeo talks of pilgrims visiting a holy place. By the way, the name “Romeo” means “pilgrim.”
- Juliet also uses religious language when she answers Romeo. She refers to “palmers” (1.5.102), which is another term for pilgrims. She wants to hold hands — palm to palm — not kiss.
- Romeo continues to use religious imagery to ask for a kiss, and eventually Juliet allows him to kiss her.

Act 1, Scene 5

• How does Juliet find out who Romeo is without letting the Nurse know that she is especially interested in him?

Juliet is very clever. She wants to know who the young man who kissed her is, but she doesn’t want to let the Nurse to

know that she is especially interested in him. Therefore, she asks the Nurse about a couple of people whom she is not interested in, before asking about Romeo. (When Juliet says, “if he be married, / My grave is like to be my wedding bed” (1.5.136-137), the Nurse has already left to enquire about Romeo.)

On p. 32, we read:

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 Petrucio.

JULIET

What’s he that follows there, 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.

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 loathed enemy.

Chapter 2: Act 2

Act 2, Prologue

• **The Prologue is another sonnet. Explain its content.**

1. Romeo has forgotten Rosaline; Juliet has taken her place.
2. Romeo and Juliet are “alike bewitched” (line 6) — that is, they are in love with each other.
3. Since their families are enemies, courtship will be difficult — especially for Juliet.
4. Love will find a way — they will meet each other again.

On p. 33, we read:

Chorus

Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie,
 And young affection gapes to be his heir;
 That fair for which love groan'd for and would die,
 With tender Juliet match'd, is now not fair.
 Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,
 Alike betwitched by the charm of looks,
 But to his foe supposed he must complain,
 And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks:
 Being held a foe, he may not have access
 To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear;
 And she as much in love, her means much less
 To meet her new-beloved any where:
 But passion lends them power, time means, to meet

Tempering extremities with extreme sweet.

Act 2, Scene 1

• **Why doesn't Romeo want to be with his friends just now?**

1. Romeo is in love, and he wants to be away from everyone but Juliet right now.
2. Mercutio's view of love is basically his view of sex. Mercutio can be very bawdy. Perhaps Romeo does not want to around a bawdy person right now.
3. Mercutio thinks that Romeo is still in love with Rosaline. Perhaps Romeo does not want to hear about Rosaline right now.

Act 2, Scene 1

• **Mercutio is known for his bawdiness. (Bawdy: "Humorously indecent; risqué. 2. Vulgar; lewd." — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.) In what ways is he bawdy in this brief scene?**

1. Mercutio refers to Rosaline's sex organs.

On pp. 34-35, Mercutio says:

MERCUTIO

I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
 By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
 By her fine foot, straight leg and quivering thigh
 And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
 That in thy likeness thou appear to us!

Demesnes: Domain — in this context, Rosaline's crotch.

2. Mercutio makes a number of puns about sex.

On p. 35, Mercutio says (puns or references to sex or sexual organs are in **bold**; emphasis added):

MERCUTIO

This cannot anger him: 'twould anger him
 To **raise** a spirit in his mistress' **circle**
 Of some strange nature, letting it there **stand**
 Till she had **laid** it and conjured it **down**;
 That were some spite: my invocation
 Is fair and honest, and in his mistress' name
 I conjure only but to **raise** up him.

And also on p. 35, Mercutio says:

MERCUTIO

If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
 Now will he sit under a medlar tree,
 And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit
 As maids call **medlars**, when they laugh alone.
 Romeo, that she were, O, that she were
 An open et caetera, thou a **poperin** pear!
 Romeo, good night: I'll to my truckle-bed;
 This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep:
 Come, shall we go?

The words “medlar” and “poperin” were often used to refer to sex organs. Medlars were a fruit.

Act 2, Scene 2

• What does Romeo mean when he says, “He jests at scars that never felt a wound” (2.2.1)?

Romeo is referring to Mercutio, who has been jesting about love in terms of sex.

Romeo says that Mercutio is able to jest only because he has never been in love.

If Mercutio had ever been in love, he would not be able to jest so hardily.

Act 2, Scene 2

• Explain what Romeo says when he sees Juliet in the balcony scene (p. 36, beginning, “But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?”).

1. Romeo sees a light in a window (a balcony is not necessarily in this scene, although the scene is usually staged with a balcony). Romeo says that Juliet is the Sun, and the Window is the East. Juliet is always associated with light by Romeo. (Page 29: “O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!”)

2. Romeo does not want Juliet to be a virgin much longer. He says that Juliet is more beautiful than the moon. (The moon is Diana, the protector of virgins.) He says that he does not want Juliet to be the maid of the moon — a virgin attendant of the moon — any longer. He does not say this, but we know it is true: He wishes for Juliet to lose her virginity to him.

3. Romeo says that he wishes that Juliet knew that he loves her.

4. Romeo says that her eyes are brighter than the stars. Two stars, Romeo says, have asked Juliet’s eyes to take their

place in the sky for a while. Romeo says that if her eyes did take their place, then the Earth would be bright at night, and the birds would sing because they would think that it is daylight.

5. When Juliet lays her hand on her cheek, Romeo says that he would love to be a glove on her hand so that he could touch her cheek.

On p. 36, Romeo sees Juliet at the window and says:

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou her maid art far more fair than she:

Be not her maid, since she is envious;

Her vestal livery is but sick and green

And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.

It is my lady, O, it is my love!

O, that she knew she were!

She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?

Her eye discourses; I will answer it.

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
 As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
 Would through the airy region stream so bright
 That birds would sing and think it were not night.
 See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
 O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
 That I might touch that cheek!

Act 2, Scene 2

• Juliet asks, “O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?” (2.2.33). She is not asking, “Where are you, Romeo?” Instead, she is asking, “Why are you named Romeo?” She also says that she is willing to give up her name if it will help her be close to Romeo. Why are their names — especially their last names — so important to Romeo and Juliet?

This question is easy to answer.

It is their names that make them members of families that are feuding. It is their names that make them enemies.

If Romeo were not a Montague, he would be able to marry Juliet with much less trouble than now.

If Juliet were not a Capulet, she would be able to marry Romeo with much less trouble than now.

On p. 37, we read:

JULIET

O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father and refuse thy name;

Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
 And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROMEO

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

JULIET

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

Note: Juliet could smile when she mentions “any other part / Belonging to a man.” Juliet is sexually interested in Romeo. Many of the great writers, including Shakespeare, did not shy away from sex, and why should they?

Act 2, Scene 2

• **How does Juliet know that it is Romeo in the orchard? What risk is Romeo taking by coming to the Capulet orchard?**

Romeo speaks to her, and Juliet quickly recognizes his voice, although she has heard him speak fewer than 100 words.

If Romeo is found in the Capulet orchard, he could be killed because he is a Montague.

On pp. 37-38, we read:

ROMEO

I take thee at thy word:

Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;

Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET

What man art thou that thus bescreen'd in night

So stumblest on my counsel?

ROMEO

By a name

I know not how to tell thee who I am:

My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,

Because it is an enemy to thee;

Had I it written, I would tear the word.

JULIET

My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words

Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound:

Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

ROMEO

Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

JULIET

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?

The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,

And the place death, considering who thou art,

If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO

With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;

For stony limits cannot hold love out,

And what love can do that dares love attempt;

Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

JULIET

If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

Act 2, Scene 2

• Why doesn't Juliet want Romeo to swear by the moon? What does she prefer that he swear by, if he has to swear by something?

Juliet says that she doesn't want Romeo to swear by the moon, because the moon is constantly changing — the moon goes through phases as it changes from new moon to full moon. Juliet doesn't want to think of Romeo as changing the object of his love from her to someone else.

If Romeo must swear, Juliet wants him to swear by himself, which she calls the god of her idolatry.

On p. 39, we read:

ROMEO

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops —

JULIET

O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO

What shall I swear by?

JULIET

Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

Act 2, Scene 2

• Why does Juliet say that she has “no joy of this contract to-night” (2.2.113)?

Juliet is afraid that the attraction that they feel for each other may not last. It may be like the lightning, which disappears quickly after being seen — even before you can say aloud that you saw it.

On pp. 39-40, we read:

JULIET

Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,
 I have no joy of this contract to-night:
 It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;
 Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
 Ere one can say 'It lightens.' Sweet, good night!
 This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
 May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
 Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
 Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

Act 2, Scene 2

• **When Juliet asks, “What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?” (2.2.126), what does Romeo answer? What could he have answered instead?**

Romeo answers that he wants to hear that she loves him as he loves her. Juliet points out that she has already said that.

However, previously, Juliet had said it when she thought she was alone. Now, Romeo wants her to say it to him.

Romeo could have answered, “I know a great way for you to show that you love me.” (Sex.)

Act 2, Scene 2

• **At the party, when they first meet, Juliet lets Romeo kiss her, then she kisses him. Now, after the party is over, Juliet mentions marriage to Romeo. Is Juliet behaving wisely? What are some adjectives to describe how she is**

acting? Does the love Romeo and Juliet feel for each other justify their actions?

Is Juliet behaving wisely?

I think not. She has not known Romeo even 24 hours. The party was in the evening, and now it is night. I think that it is way too early to be thinking of marriage. (One reason Juliet is thinking of marriage is that she is a Catholic living in a Catholic country.)

What are some adjectives to describe how she is acting?

Foolhardy. Passionately in love.

Juliet may not be thinking clearly. She calls Romeo back to ask when she should send to him for news, but after asking him this and getting an answer, she says that she has forgotten why she called him back.

Certainly we note that Juliet does not want to say good night to Romeo.

Does the love Romeo and Juliet feel for each other justify their actions?

I would say no, but I have not felt that kind of love — unfortunately.

Because of the poetry that Romeo and Juliet are speaking, we have to say that they are truly in love.

On pp. 40-41, we read:

JULIET

Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.

If that thy bent of love be honourable,

Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,

By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
 Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;
 And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay
 And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

On pp. 41-42, we read:

JULIET

Romeo!

ROMEO

My dear?

JULIET

At what o'clock to-morrow

Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO

At the hour of nine.

JULIET

I will not fail: 'tis twenty years till then.

I have forgot why I did call thee back.

ROMEO

Let me stand here till thou remember it.

JULIET

I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,

Remembering how I love thy company.

Act 2, Scene 3

• **Write a character analysis of Friar Lawrence based on what you learn in this scene.**

We learn a number of things from Friar Lawrence's soliloquy before Romeo speaks.

1. Friar Lawrence knows much about plants.
2. Friar Lawrence knows of a plant that will stop all the senses.

Apparently, this is the plant a potion of which Juliet takes in order to appear dead later in the play.

3. Friar Lawrence is aware that some plants are beneficial, and some plants are harmful (poisonous).

However, how we use them is important. A beneficial plant may be used evilly, while a harmful plant may be used wisely.

On pp. 43-44, we read:

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE, with a basket

FRIAR LAURENCE

The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,
 Chequering the eastern clouds with streaks of light,
 And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels
 From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels:
 Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,
 The day to cheer and night's dank dew to dry,
 I must up-fill this osier cage of ours
 With baleful weeds and precious-juiced flowers.

The earth that's nature's mother is her tomb;
 What is her burying grave that is her womb,
 And from her womb children of divers kind
 We sucking on her natural bosom find,
 Many for many virtues excellent,
 None but for some and yet all different.
 O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
 In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
 For nought so vile that on the earth doth live
 But to the earth some special good doth give,
 Nor aught so good but strain'd from that fair use
 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
 Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;
 And vice sometimes by action dignified.
 Within the infant rind of this small flower
 Poison hath residence and medicine power:
 For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;
 Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
 Two such opposed kings encamp them still
 In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will;
 And where the worser is predominant,
 Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

Act 2, Scene 3

• **Friar Lawrence is skeptical that Romeo loves Juliet because Romeo so recently loved Rosaline. Why then does he agree to marry Romeo and Juliet?**

Friar Lawrence knows that Romeo was in love with Rosaline; in fact, he thinks that Romeo may have been up all night because he was sinning with Rosaline — he thinks that Romeo and Rosaline may have been in bed together.

However, when he finds out that Romeo is now in love with Juliet, he decides to marry them although Romeo has so lately been in love with Rosaline. Why? Because he thinks that a marriage between Romeo and Juliet is just the thing to stop the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets.

On p. 44, we read:

FRIAR LAURENCE

God pardon sin! wast thou with Rosaline?

On p. 45, we read:

FRIAR LAURENCE

Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!

Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,

So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies

Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.

On p. 46, we read:

FRIAR LAURENCE

O, she knew well

Thy love did read by rote and could not spell.

But come, young waverer, come, go with me,
 In one respect I'll thy assistant be;
 For this alliance may so happy prove,
 To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

ROMEO

O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.

FRIAR LAURENCE

Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast.

Act 2, Scene 4

• What do we learn about Tybalt at the beginning of this scene?

1. Tybalt has sent a letter to Romeo challenging him to a duel.

Benvolio and Mercutio are certain that Romeo shall answer the challenge.

2. Mercutio both praises and criticizes Tybalt.

Perhaps we should not be surprised by the criticism. I get the feeling that Mercutio criticizes everybody.

Mercutio says that Tybalt knows a lot about dueling, and that Tybalt strictly observes the formalities of dueling.

Mercutio says that Tybalt is a fop.

Fop: "A man preoccupied with clothes and manners; dandy."
 — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

Tybalt is a very tall (tall = brave) man.

Apparently, Tybalt likes to throw around fancy foreign phrases — or at least he hangs around with a crowd that does that.

On pp. 47-48, we read:

BENVOLIO

Why, what is Tybalt?

MERCUTIO

More than prince of cats, I can tell you. O, he is the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button, a duellist, a duellist; a gentleman of the very first house, of the first and second cause: ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso! the hai!

BENVOLIO

The what?

MERCUTIO

The pox of such antic, lispng, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents! ‘By Jesu, a very good blade! a very tall man! a very good whore!’ Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should be thus afflicted with

these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these perdonami's, who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot at ease on the old bench? O, their bones, their bones!

Act 2, Scene 4

• In this scene, we see Romeo with his friends. He and Mercutio engage in a friendly duel of wits. Explain some of their puns and wordplay. What does Mercutio think of Romeo's wordplay?

Mercutio is happy that Romeo is punning again, for it means that Romeo is his old self again, instead of being lovesick (or so Mercutio supposes).

On p. 50, we read:

MERCUTIO

Why, is not this better now than groaning for love?
 now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art
 thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature:
 for this drivelling love is like a great natural,
 that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a
 hole.

Mercutio's "hide his bauble in a hole" is a joke — we can certainly think of the bauble and the hole that he means.

The wordplay between Romeo and Mercutio is often bawdy. They speak of a "goose," which has as one of its meanings "prostitute."

Romeo sees the Nurse (whom he does not know and so does not recognize) coming. She is wearing a huge hat that is

lifted by the wind, so Romeo calls out, “A sail, a sail!” (p. 51).

Act 2, Scene 4

• **Mercutio insults the Nurse. Explain some of the ways in which he insults her.**

1. Mercutio calls the Nurse ugly.

On p. 51, we read:

Nurse

My fan, Peter.

MERCUTIO

Good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan’s the fairer face.

2. Mercutio uses bawdy language around the Nurse. (The Nurse, by the way, understands the bawdy language — and may even be amused by it.)

On p. 52, we read:

MERCUTIO

’Tis no less, I tell you, for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

Nurse

Out upon you! what a man are you!

3. Mercutio pretty clearly calls the Nurse a prostitute — he may even believe it.

On p. 52, we read:

MERCUTIO

A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! so ho!

ROMEO

What hast thou found?

MERCUTIO

No hare, sir; unless a hare, sir, in a lenten pie,
that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent.

Sings

An old hare hoar,
And an old hare hoar,
Is very good meat in lent
But a hare that is hoar
Is too much for a score,
When it hoars ere it be spent.
Romeo, will you come to your father's? we'll
to dinner, thither.

Act 2, Scene 4**• Mercutio insults the Nurse. Is the Nurse upset by what he says?**

Apparently, yes. Much depends upon the interpretation of the actress playing the Nurse. For example, the Nurse may be amused by some of his saucy comments — although she may try to hide her amusement because she is a respectable woman.

On p. 52, we read:

Nurse

Marry, farewell! I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery?

ROMEO

A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

Nurse

An a' speak any thing against me, I'll take him down, an a' were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills; I am none of his skains-mates. And thou must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

PETER

I saw no man use you [at his] pleasure; if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you: I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.

Act 2, Scene 4

• What does the Nurse say to Romeo, and what tasks does Romeo give the Nurse?

The Nurse tells Romeo to treat Juliet well, and not to lead her to a Fool's Paradise. In other words, the Nurse tells Romeo to be honorable and not seduce, then leave Juliet.

Romeo tells the Nurse two things:

1. This afternoon, Juliet should go to Friar Lawrence to confess; there, they shall be married.
2. Within the hour, behind the abbey wall, one of Romeo's servants will give her a rope ladder. Romeo will use the rope ladder to climb to Juliet's apartment for their wedding night.

Act 2, Scene 5

• Why is this a comic scene?

This scene is comic because Juliet desperately wants news of what happened between the Nurse and Romeo. Juliet wants to know whether she will be married that day.

However, the Nurse does not immediately give Juliet the information she wants. Instead, it takes much time for the Nurse to tell Juliet the news she wants to hear.

Why does the Nurse take so long to tell Juliet the news she wants to hear? There are two possible reasons:

- 1) The Nurse is teasing Juliet.
- 2) The Nurse is scatter-brained.

I lean toward the second reason because we have a similar, but more serious scene later, when the Nurse is unable to

quickly tell Juliet who has died. The Nurse would certainly not be teasing in that scene.

- At 9 a.m. Juliet sent the Nurse to Romeo. The Nurse promised to return within 30 minutes.
- It is now noon, and the Nurse has not yet returned. (Of course, she had to wait to get the rope ladder.)
- The Nurse complains about how tired and out of breath she is.

Here are some comic lines on p. 56:

Nurse

Jesu, what haste? can you not stay awhile?

Do you not see that I am out of breath?

JULIET

How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath

To say to me that thou art out of breath?

The excuse that thou dost make in this delay

Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.

Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;

Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:

Let me be satisfied, is't good or bad?

Juliet first wants to know if the Nurse's news is good or bad, then she will wait for the details.

Here are some comic lines on p. 57:

Nurse

Your love says, like an honest gentleman, and a

courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I
warrant, a virtuous, — Where is your mother?

JULIET

Where is my mother! why, she is within;
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!
‘Your love says, like an honest gentleman,
Where is your mother?’

The Nurse almost tells Juliet what she wants to hear, then becomes distracted and asks instead, “Where is your mother?”

Finally, the Nurse gives Juliet the good news on p. 57:

Nurse

Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence’ cell;
There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They’ll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird’s nest soon when it is dark:
I am the drudge and toil in your delight,
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go; I’ll to dinner: hie you to the cell.

Act 2, Scene 6

• **When Friar Lawrence tells Romeo, “These violent delights have violent ends” (2.6.9), Shakespeare engages in foreshadowing. If you feel like doing research, explain what foreshadowing is and why Friar Lawrence’s comment is an example of foreshadowing.**

Here are two definitions of foreshadowing:

Foreshadowing is the use of hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in literature.

Source:

http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/lit_terms/foreshadowing.html

Date Downloaded: 20 December 2003

FORESHADOWING: Suggesting, hinting, indicating, or showing what will occur later in a narrative. Foreshadowing often provides hints about what will happen next. For instance, a movie director might show a clip in which two parents discuss their son’s leukemia. The camera briefly changes shots to do an extended close-up of a dying plant in the garden outside, or one of the parents might mention that another relative died on the same date. The perceptive audience sees the dying plant, or hears the reference to the date of death, and realizes this detail foreshadows the child’s death later in the movie. Often this foreshadowing takes the form of a noteworthy coincidence or appears in a verbal echo of dialogue. Other examples of foreshadowing include the conversation and action of the three witches in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, or the various prophecies that Oedipus hears during *Oedipus Rex*.

Source:

http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/wheeler/lit_term_s_F.html

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Romeo and Juliet certainly have the violent delights of passionate love, and they will have a violent end — they will both die.

Act 2, Scene 6

• Why doesn't Friar Lawrence want to leave Romeo and Juliet alone before they are married?

Basically, Romeo and Juliet are too horny to leave alone together before they are married. They are too likely to have the honeymoon before they have the marriage ceremony. (This comes through very clearly in Franco Zeffereilli's movie.)

Chapter 3: Act 3

Act 3, Scene 1

- **Shakespeare tells us the weather at the beginning of this scene. Why?**

The day is very hot. It is summer, and Italy is a Mediterranean country. The day is so hot that it puts people in a bad mood, and so tempers are short, and quarrels very easily break out. Verona is a city where violence can break out at any time, and this is a very likely day for violence to break out.

On p. 60, we read:

Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, Page, and Servants

BENVOLIO

I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire:

The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,

And, if we meet, we shall not scape a brawl;

For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

Act 3, Scene 1

- **At the beginning of this scene, Mercutio talks about how hotheaded Benvolio is. What does Mercutio say?**

Mercutio says that Benvolio is a fellow who goes into a bar, says that he hopes to have no need of his sword there, but with the second drink draws his sword on the waiter.

Mercutio says that Benvolio will pick a fight with a man because he has one hair more — or one hair less — in his beard than he has.

Mercutio says that Benvolio will pick a fight with a man who is cracking nuts.

Mercutio says that Benvolio has picked a fight with a man who coughed in the street and woke up Benvolio's sleeping dog.

Mercutio says that Benvolio has picked a fight with a tailor who wore a new jacket before Easter.

Mercutio says that Benvolio has picked a fight with a man who tied his new shoes with old ribbons.

Notes:

- All of these images are violent.
- All of these quarrels have no good reason. Similarly, the quarrel between the Montagues and the Capulets has no good reason apparently — at least not one that would justify the loss of life on both sides.
- What is the cause of the quarrel between the Capulets and the Montagues? Apparently, an “airy word” (p. 8) — someone said something wrong at one time in the past.

On p. 8, we read the words of Prince Escalus:

Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
 By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
 Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets,

Act 3, Scene 1

• Should we believe Mercutio when talks about how hotheaded Benvolio is?

We should not believe Mercutio. Benvolio is a well wisher, and Mercutio is not describing him truly. Instead, what we have is another sample of Mercutio's jokes.

On pp. 60-61, we read:

MERCUTIO

Thou art like one of those fellows that when he enters the confines of a tavern claps me his sword upon the table and says 'God send me no need of thee!' and by the operation of the second cup draws it on the drawer, when indeed there is no need.

BENVOLIO

Am I like such a fellow?

MERCUTIO

Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy, and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.

BENVOLIO

And what to?

MERCUTIO

Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why,

thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more,
 or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast: thou
 wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no
 other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes: what
 eye but such an eye would spy out such a quarrel?
 Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of
 meat, and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as
 an egg for quarrelling: thou hast quarrelled with a
 man for coughing in the street, because he hath
 wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun:
 didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing
 his new doublet before Easter? with another, for
 tying his new shoes with old riband? and yet thou
 wilt tutor me from quarrelling!

Act 3, Scene 1

• Benvolio replies to Mercutio's teasing with a very apt statement: "An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and a quarter" (3.1.32-34). What does this statement mean, and why is it apt?

Benvolio says that Mercutio loves to quarrel, and he says that if he were as apt to quarrel as Mercutio is, his life expectancy would be only an hour and a quarter.

As a matter of fact, Mercutio dies within an hour and a quarter.

“Fee simple” can be defined as “absolute possession.” Usually, it is applied to land, but here Benvolio says that his life — if he were as quarrelsome as Mercutio — could be bought for 75 minutes. In other words, Mercutio’s life is worth only 75 minutes. And in yet other words, because of his quarrelsomeness Mercutio will live only another 75 minutes.

On p. 61, Benvolio says:

An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man
should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and
a quarter.

Here are some definitions of “fee simple”:

Definition #1

1. An estate in land of which the inheritor has unqualified ownership and power of disposition. 2. Private ownership of real estate in which the owner has the right to control, use, and transfer the property at will.

Source: *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fourth Edition. Copyright © 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Published by the Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

Definition #2

Socage tenure eventually developed many varieties, commonly called fees. (The word fee stems directly from fief and ultimately from feud, both terms of feudal law.) Fees are divided into freehold and nonfreehold. The freehold fees are fee simple, fee tail, and life fee.

A fee simple is essentially absolute ownership of land; it includes, therefore, complete freedom of alienation and (since 1540) of devising (bestowing by will). An estate in fee tail was one bestowed as a gift to the donee and to his issue (children) or a class (male or female) of his issue. Read literally, the terms of the grant prevented alienation of the land out of the prescribed line of succession. A life fee or a life estate was one that would endure for the lifetime of the grantee and after his death would go to some other person. The life tenant had no power of alienation.

Source:

http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/section/tenure2_feudaltenureanditsevolution.asp

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Act 3, Scene 1

• Why does Romeo react the way he does to Tybalt's taunts? Why doesn't Romeo fight Tybalt?

Romeo reacts with gentleness to Tybalt's taunts. Tybalt wants to fight Romeo, but Romeo does not want to fight Tybalt.

Why not?

Romeo is married to Juliet. Juliet and Tybalt are both Capulets. Therefore, Romeo is related to Tybalt.

However, Romeo is unable to tell Tybalt this because the marriage is still secret. The marriage has not been consummated yet, meaning that Capulet can have it annulled if he finds out about it.

Act 3, Scene 1

Why does Mercutio fight Tybalt?

Mercutio is embarrassed by what he sees as Romeo's vile submission. Romeo is not acting like a man when he refuses to fight Tybalt. The Code of Honor demands that Romeo fight when challenged. After all, Tybalt has called him two bad names: Villain (a low fellow) and Boy.

If Romeo will not fight to defend his honor, Mercutio, his friend, will fight in his behalf.

On pp. 62-63, we read:

TYBALT

Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.

ROMEO

I do protest, I never injured thee,
But love thee better than thou canst devise,
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love:
And so, good Capulet, — which name I tender
As dearly as my own, — be satisfied.

MERCUTIO

O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
Alla stoccata carries it away.

Act 3, Scene 1

• **When Mercutio knows that he is mortally wounded (that is, will die because of his wounds), how does he react?**

Even when Mercutio is dying, he still makes jokes — in fact, he makes his best pun in the play on p. 64 (emphasis added):

ROMEO

Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO

No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me **a grave man**.

Mercutio says that his injury is enough to kill him — as it does.

In part, Mercutio blames Romeo for his injury (p. 64):

Why the devil came you between us? I
was hurt under your arm.

ROMEO

I thought all for the best.

Romeo will blame himself for Mercutio's death. Romeo attempted to break up the fight between Tybalt and Mercutio, and Tybalt was able to stab Mercutio and mortally wound him under Romeo's arm. In other words, Mercutio did not see Tybalt's sword because it was hidden by Romeo's arm. If Romeo had not tried to break up the fight, perhaps Tybalt would have been killed, or perhaps no one would have been killed.

One of the things that Mercutio does to curse both the Capulets and the Montagues (p. 64):

A plague o' both your houses!

In Shakespeare's day, the plague was very real and killed many, many people.

Act 3, Scene 1

• Why does Romeo kill Tybalt?

Romeo blames himself for Mercutio's death, and so he gets revenge by killing Tybalt. Romeo also thinks that being in love may have caused him to become effeminate.

On p. 64, we read:

ROMEO

This gentleman, the prince's near ally,
 My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt
 In my behalf; my reputation stain'd
 With Tybalt's slander, — Tybalt, that an hour
 Hath been my kinsman! O sweet Juliet,
 Thy beauty hath made me effeminate
 And in my temper soften'd valour's steel!

Act 3, Scene 1

• How do these people react to the death of Tybalt: Benvolio, Lady Capulet, the Prince? Is the Prince's banishment of Romeo just?

Benvolio

Benvolio wants Romeo to flee to save his life. He knows that if caught Romeo could be sentenced to die.

Lady Capulet

Lady Capulet wants revenge. Tybalt's blood has spilled; therefore, Romeo's blood should spill.

On p. 66, we read:

LADY CAPULET

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

When Benvolio says what happened, telling the truth, which puts Romeo in a favorable light, Lady Capulet says that Benvolio is a Montague and is lying. She says that 20 men set on Tybalt and killed him.

On p. 67, we read:

LADY CAPULET

He is a kinsman to the Montague;
 Affection makes him false; he speaks not true:
 Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
 And all those twenty could but kill one life.
 I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give;
 Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.
 Of course, Lady Capulet is wrong.

Montague

I think we have a typo in the Signet Classic edition. Montague's lines are given to Capulet. Indeed, the online version gives these lines to Montague (p. 67):

MONTAGUE

Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's friend;
His fault concludes but what the law should end,
The life of Tybalt.

Montague says that Tybalt killed Mercutio, and therefore Tybalt should die. Romeo has killed Tybalt, and therefore he has done what the law would say should be done.

The Prince

The Prince banishes Romeo. If he is found in Verona, he shall be killed. If he stays away from Verona, he can live.

Chances are, this is a fair penalty. It is the mean between extremes. Lady Capulet wants Romeo killed; Montague wants his son to go free. The Prince's punishment is in the middle. Romeo shall be banished, but not killed (so long as he stays away from Verona).

The Prince is good, and he is just. He wants peace in Verona. Of course, Verona does not have a democracy. The Prince has absolute power in Verona.

In Act 1, scene 1, the prince has said that anyone caught fighting will be given the death penalty. He is being merciful when he banishes Romeo.

On p. 67, we read:

PRINCE

And for that offence

Immediately we do exile him hence:
 I have an interest in your hate's proceeding,
 My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding;
 But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine
 That you shall all repent the loss of mine:
 I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;
 Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses:
 Therefore use none: let Romeo hence in haste,
 Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.
 Bear hence this body and attend our will:
 Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

Act 3, Scene 2

• Juliet refers to Phaëthon in her monologue at the beginning of this scene. Who is Phaëthon, and why is the reference to Phaëthon apt?

Phaëthon was the god Apollo's son, but he was born to a mortal woman, and so he was a mortal. One day, he journeyed to see his father, who wanted to give him a gift — a gift of anything he wanted. Phaëthon decided that he wanted to drive his father's chariot. Apollo was the Sun-god, and he drove the chariot that warmed and lit the Earth. However, Apollo knew that only a god could handle the horses that drove the chariot, and he begged his son to choose another gift. However, Phaëthon was determined to drive the chariot. Since Apollo had sworn an inviolable oath by the River Styx, he had to let Phaëthon drive the chariot.

As Apollo had foreknown, Phaëthon could not control the horses, and the chariot drove wildly over the sky, coming too

close to Earth sometimes and being too far away sometimes. In fact (that is, the “fact” of mythology), at one point he came so close to the Earth that he turned the people in Africa black. Eventually, he came so close to the Earth that the Earth was about to catch fire. Fortunately for the people living on the Earth, Zeus killed Phaëthon with a thunderbolt and Apollo was able to drive the chariot again, and so everything went back to normal.

Sometimes readers find Shakespeare difficult because of all the allusions to mythology. It is important to know mythological stories because literature is rich in allusions to them. Here in Shakespeare at this point we see a reference to a mythological story about Phaëthon. If the reader does not know who Phaëthon is, the allusion falls flat. However, if you know who Phaëthon is, the allusion will be meaningful. You will understand two things:

1) Juliet is so eager for Romeo to come to her on their wedding night that she does not care if the world is destroyed. She wants Romeo as soon as possible. In addition, of course, we know that Romeo and Juliet’s world will be destroyed.

2) Phaëthon is a doomed, impetuous youth, and he reminds us of Juliet, who, like Phaëthon, is doomed, impetuous, and young. Of course, Romeo is also doomed, impetuous, and young.

By the way, “Phoebus” is another name for Apollo. “Phoebus” means shining or bright, two appropriate words to use to describe a Sun-god.

Act 3, Scene 2

• What do we learn about Juliet from her opening monologue in this scene?

1. Juliet is very eager for night to arrive.

2. Juliet is very eager for Romeo to arrive.
3. Lovers are able to see well enough in the dark to do what they want — that is, to go to bed together.
4. Juliet is very eager to lose her virginity.
5. Juliet frequently uses the word “Come.” This is a pun.
6. Juliet refers to dying; this is Elizabethan slang for having a sexual orgasm.
7. We see light being associated with Romeo. Juliet says that when she dies, she wants Romeo to be cut up into small pieces and placed in the sky, when the pieces will shine like stars.
8. Juliet says that she has been bought but not enjoyed. That is, she has been married, but the marriage has not yet been consummated.
9. Juliet is as eager for her wedding night as a child is to wear new clothing.

On pp. 66-67, we read:

JULIET

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
 Towards Phoebus' lodging: such a wagoner
 As Phaethon would whip you to the west,
 And bring in cloudy night immediately.
 Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,
 That runaway's eyes may wink and Romeo
 Leap to these arms, untalk'd of and unseen.
 Lovers can see to do their amorous rites

By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,
 It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,
 Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
 And learn me how to lose a winning match,
 Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:
 Hood my unmann'd blood, bating in my cheeks,
 With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold,
 Think true love acted simple modesty.
 Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;
 For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
 Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.
 Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd
 night,
 Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
 Take him and cut him out in little stars,
 And he will make the face of heaven so fine
 That all the world will be in love with night
 And pay no worship to the garish sun.
 O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
 But not possess'd it, and, though I am sold,
 Not yet enjoy'd: so tedious is this day
 As is the night before some festival
 To an impatient child that hath new robes

And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,
 And she brings news; and every tongue that speaks
 But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence.

Act 3, Scene 2

• **Why does the Nurse take so long to give Juliet the news that Tybalt is dead and Romeo has been banished? Why does Juliet at first misunderstand the message?**

We have already seen a scene like this where the Nurse did not quickly tell Juliet the news she wanted to hear about her upcoming marriage with Romeo. That was a comic scene, but this is a serious scene. In both, I think that the Nurse is addled-headed.

At first, Juliet thinks that Romeo has been killed, not Tybalt. Then she thinks that both have been killed. The Nurse's muddled-headedness is responsible for the confusion.

On pp. 68-69, read:

Enter Nurse, with cords

Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there? the
 cords

That Romeo bid thee fetch?

Nurse

Ay, ay, the cords.

Throws them down

JULIET

Ay me! what news? why dost thou wring thy hands?

Nurse

Ah, well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead!

We are undone, lady, we are undone!

Alack the day! he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead!

Scene 3, Act 2

• **What is Juliet's reaction when she learns that Romeo has killed Tybalt? If you feel like doing research, define "oxymoron" and identify a few of the oxymora that Juliet uses to describe Romeo immediately after discovering that he killed Tybalt. Why does she use these oxymora to describe Romeo?**

At first, she thinks that Romeo is like a wolf in sheep's clothing, that Romeo seems to be good but is really evil. That comes through in a series of oxymora.

Here is a definition of oxymoron:

OXYMORON (plural oxymora, also called paradox): Using contradiction in a manner that oddly makes sense. Examples include such oxymora as jumbo shrimp, sophisticated rednecks, and military intelligence. The best oxymora seem to reveal a deeper truth through their contradictions. These oxymora are called paradoxes. For instance, "without laws, we can have no freedom." Shakespeare's Julius Caesar also makes use of a famous oxymoron: "Cowards die many times before their deaths" (2.2.32). Richard Rolle uses an almost continuous string of oxymora in his Middle English work, "Love is Love That Lasts For Aye."

Source:

http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/wheeler/lit_term_s_O.html

Date Downloaded: 21 December 2003

On pp. 70-71, we read (emphasis added for the oxymora):

JULIET

O God! did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

Nurse

It did, it did; alas the day, it did!

JULIET

O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!

Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?

Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!

Dove-feather'd raven! wolvish-ravening lamb!

Despised substance of divinest show!

Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,

A damned saint, an honourable villain!

O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell,

When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend

In moral paradise of such sweet flesh?

Was ever book containing such vile matter

So fairly bound? O that deceit should dwell

In such a gorgeous palace!

Then, after the Nurse criticizes Romeo, Juliet defends him. She mourns for Tybalt, but stays true to her husband.

On pp. 70-72, we read:

Nurse

There's no trust,

No faith, no honesty in men; all perjured,

All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.

Ah, where's my man? give me some aqua vitae:

These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.

Shame come to Romeo!

JULIET

Blister'd be thy tongue

For such a wish! he was not born to shame:

Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit;

For 'tis a throne where honour may be crown'd

Sole monarch of the universal earth.

O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

Nurse

Will you speak well of him that kill'd your cousin?

JULIET

Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?

Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,

When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?

But, wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?

That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:

Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;
 Your tributary drops belong to woe,
 Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.
 My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
 And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my
 husband:
 All this is comfort; wherefore weep I then?
 Some word there was, worsers than Tybalt's death,
 That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;
 But, O, it presses to my memory,
 Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds:
 'Tybalt is dead, and Romeo — banished;'
 That 'banished,' that one word 'banished,'
 Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death
 Was woe enough, if it had ended there:
 Or, if sour woe delights in fellowship
 And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,
 Why follow'd not, when she said 'Tybalt's dead,'
 Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
 Which modern lamentations might have moved?
 But with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
 'Romeo is banished,' to speak that word,
 Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,

All slain, all dead. 'Romeo is banished!'

There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,

In that word's death; no words can that woe sound.

Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?

The Nurse knows where Romeo is — hiding in Friar Lawrence's cell. Juliet sends the Nurse to him with a ring and a message: come to her tonight.

Act 3, Scene 3

**• How does Romeo behave in Friar Lawrence's cell?
Does he act like a mature man?**

Romeo is distraught. He is not acting like a mature man. He says that he prefers death to banishment because banishment means that he will have to live without Juliet.

It takes Friar Lawrence and the Nurse to make Romeo behave like a man. Friar Lawrence criticizes him and points out in which ways he is fortunate. The Nurse helps by telling Romeo that Juliet wants for Romeo to come to her that night.

Romeo shows immaturity by not hiding when the Nurse knocks on Friar Lawrence's door — he does not yet realize that it is the Nurse knocking. Romeo is willing to be captured and put to death because banishment means that he will be separated from Juliet.

Romeo even draws his sword and threatens to kill himself.

On p. 73, we read:

FRIAR LAURENCE

A gentler judgment vanish'd from his lips,

Not body's death, but body's banishment.

ROMEO

Ha, banishment! be merciful, say 'death';
 For exile hath more terror in his look,
 Much more than death: do not say 'banishment.'

On p. 75, we read:

Knocking within

FRIAR LAURENCE

Arise; one knocks; good Romeo, hide thyself.

ROMEO

Not I; unless the breath of heartsick groans,
 Mist-like, infold me from the search of eyes.

Knocking

FRIAR LAURENCE

Hark, how they knock! Who's there? Romeo, arise;
 Thou wilt be taken. Stay awhile! Stand up;

Knocking

Run to my study. By and by! God's will,
 What simpleness is this! I come, I come!

Knocking

Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's
 your will?

Nurse

[Within] Let me come in, and you shall know

my errand;

I come from Lady Juliet.

FRIAR LAURENCE

Welcome, then.

Act 3, Scene 3

• Why is the Nurse's scene with Romeo a comic scene?

The Nurse makes a speech to Romeo telling to rise and be a man. The speech is capable of two interpretations: 1) a straightforward one, and 2) one with bawdy meanings.

These words can be used with bawdy meanings:

my mistress's case (my mistress' vagina)

stand (erection)

rise (erection)

O (vagina)

On pp. 75-76, we read:

Nurse

O, he is even **in my mistress' case**,

Just in her case! O woful sympathy!

Piteous predicament! Even so lies she,

Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering.

Stand up, **stand** up; **stand**, and you be a man:

For Juliet's sake, for her sake, **rise** and **stand**;

Why should you fall into **so deep an O?**

Act 3, Scene 3

• **What do we learn about Friar Lawrence's character in this scene? How does he comfort Romeo?**

1. *Friar Lawrence criticizes Romeo.*

Friar Lawrence tells Romeo that he is not acting like a man.

On pp. 76-77, we read:

[Romeo] *Drawing his sword*

FRIAR LAURENCE

Hold thy desperate hand:

Art thou a man? thy form cries out thou art:

Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote

The unreasonable fury of a beast:

Unseemly woman in a seeming man!

Or ill-beseeming beast in seeming both!

Thou hast amazed me: by my holy order,

I thought thy disposition better temper'd.

Indecorous: "Lacking propriety or good taste." — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

2. *Friar Lawrence tells Romeo in which ways he is happy (fortunate).*

A. Juliet is alive.

B. Tybalt wished to kill Romeo, but Romeo killed Tybalt instead.

C. The Prince could have sentenced Romeo to death, but instead merely banished him.

3. *Friar Lawrence tells Romeo to visit Juliet.*

Romeo and Juliet can enjoy their wedding night before Romeo leaves for Mantua.

On p. 78, we read:

Nurse

Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir:

Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

Exit

ROMEO

How well my comfort is revived by this!

FRIAR LAURENCE

Go hence; good night; and here stands all your state:

Either be gone before the watch be set,

Or by the break of day disguised from hence:

Sojourn in Mantua; I'll find out your man,

And he shall signify from time to time

Every good hap to you that chances here:

Give me thy hand; 'tis late: farewell; good night.

Act 3, Scene 4

• **What do we learn about Count Paris' character in this scene?**

Count Paris is not evil. He is eager to marry Juliet, but that does not make him evil.

Count Paris recognizes that now is not a good time to court Juliet. Tybalt, her kinsman, died recently, and Juliet is in mourning for him (I think she also mourns Tybalt although she is also happy that Romeo was not killed).

Count Paris lives in a society in which men have power. When Juliet's father says that Juliet will marry Count Paris, Count Paris does not ask how Juliet feels about it. He accepts that Juliet will be ruled by her father's wishes.

Count Paris says that he wishes that Thursday (the day fixed for the wedding) were tomorrow.

Act 3, Scene 4

• What do we learn about Capulet's character in this scene?

Capulet is called "old Capulet" in the stage direction.

Capulet is the head of his family; he is the decision maker.

Capulet thinks that Juliet will be a dutiful daughter. When she is told that her father wishes for her to marry Count Paris, Capulet thinks that she will obey.

Act 3, Scene 4

• What are the advantages and the disadvantages of a marriage between Juliet and Count Paris?

Advantages

- Count Paris is a most eligible bachelor. He is of the royalty, he is a relative of the Prince, and he is rich.
- Because Count Paris is a relative of the Prince, he brings important political advantages to the Capulets if he is married to Juliet. Considering the troubles between the Montagues and the Capulets, it would be a good thing to be related by marriage to the Prince

of Verona. (Remember, recently Mercutio and Tybalt were killed.)

Disadvantages

- The huge disadvantage is that Juliet is already married to Romeo. If Juliet marries Count Paris, she will be committing bigamy.
- Juliet loves Romeo; she does not love Paris.

Act 3, Scene 5

• A bird sings at the beginning of this scene. Why is it important whether the bird is a nightingale or a morning lark? How does Romeo convince Juliet to let him leave?

Romeo must leave in the morning to go into exile in Mantua. If he is found in Verona, he will be killed by order of the Prince.

If the bird is a nightingale, it is still night, and Romeo can stay longer with Juliet.

If the bird is a morning lark, Romeo must leave to go into exile in Mantua.

Juliet desperately wants for the bird to be a nightingale, although she knows that it is not.

When Romeo says that he is willing to stay with Juliet longer even if it means that he will be killed, Juliet pleads for him to leave because she does not want him to be killed.

Changes in culture occur. Today, most of us are unlikely to know as much about nature as people of old times did. Our culture is most likely to be a town or an urban culture.

On pp. 80-81, we read:

Enter ROMEO and JULIET above, at the window

JULIET

Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:
 It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
 That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;
 Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate-tree:
 Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

ROMEO

It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
 No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
 Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
 Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
 Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
 I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JULIET

Yon light is not day-light, I know it, I:
 It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
 To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
 And light thee on thy way to Mantua:
 Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.

ROMEO

Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
 I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
 I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,

'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
 Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
 The vaulty heaven so high above our heads:
 I have more care to stay than will to go:
 Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.
 How is't, my soul? let's talk; it is not day.

JULIET

It is, it is: hie hence, be gone, away!
 It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
 Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.
 Some say the lark makes sweet division;
 This doth not so, for she divideth us:
 Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes,
 O, now I would they had changed voices too!
 Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
 Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up to the day,
 O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

ROMEO

More light and light; more dark and dark our woes!

Act 3, Scene 5

• **When Lady Capulet tells Juliet that she is to marry Count Paris and that Lady Capulet wants to poison Romeo, Juliet replies with words that have double meanings. Lady Capulet believes that Juliet is saying that**

she hates Romeo, but Juliet is actually saying that she loves Romeo. Explain how Juliet's speech can be interpreted in two ways.

Pauses in speaking and punctuation in writing are importance in conveying meaning.

What Juliet Means

JULIET

Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
 With Romeo, till I behold him —
 dead is my poor heart for a kinsman vex'd.
 Madam, if you could find out but a man
 To bear a poison, I would temper [weaken] it;
 That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
 Soon sleep in quiet [take a nap]. O, how my heart
 abhors
 To hear him named, and cannot come to him
 To wreak [give expression to] the love I bore my
 cousin
 Upon his body that slaughtered him!

What Lady Capulet Hears

JULIET

Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
 With Romeo, till I behold him dead — dead
 Is my poor heart for a kinsman vex'd.
 Madam, if you could find out but a man

To bear a poison, I would temper [mix] it;
 That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
 Soon sleep in quiet [die]. O, how my heart abhors
 To hear him named, and cannot come to him
 To wreak [avenge] the love I bore my cousin
 Upon his body that slaughtered him!

Act 3, Scene 5

• How is Juliet abandoned by her mother, her father, and her Nurse? What is the Nurse's reaction to the news that Juliet is to marry Count Paris?

Mother

When Juliet says that she doesn't want to marry Count Paris, Lady Capulet first tells her to tell her father himself (although Lady Capulet does tell him).

Then Lady Capulet says that she wishes that Juliet — whom she calls a fool — were married to her grave.

On p. 85, we read:

LADY CAPULET

Here comes your father; tell him so yourself,
 And see how he will take it at your hands.

On p. 85, we read:

LADY CAPULET

Ay, sir; but she will none, she gives you thanks.
 I would the fool were married to her grave!

Of course, after Juliet dies, remembering this speech will cause Lady Capulet great grief.

Father

This can be a violent scene, depending on the director.

Basically, Capulet says that Juliet will marry Count Paris, or else.

Capulet threatens to do one of two things:

1) Take her to her marriage like a prisoner is taken to be punished.

On pp. 85-86, we read:

CAPULET

How now, how now, chop-logic! What is this?

‘Proud,’ and ‘I thank you,’ and ‘I thank you not;’

And yet ‘not proud,’ mistress minion, you,

Thank me no thankings, nor, proud me no prouds,

But fettle your fine joints ’gainst Thursday next,

To go with Paris to Saint Peter’s Church,

Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.

Out, you green-sickness carrion! out, you baggage!

You tallow-face!

2) Not acknowledge her as his daughter and leave her to starve in the streets.

On p. 87, Capulet says:

An you be mine, I’ll give you to my friend;

And you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in
 the streets,
 For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
 Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:
 Trust to't, bethink you; I'll not be forsworn.

Lady Capulet Again

On pp. 87-88, Lady Capulet says:

LADY CAPULET

Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word:
 Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.

Exit

Nurse

The Nurse advises Juliet to marry Count Paris. The Nurse has no problem with Juliet's becoming a bigamist. The Nurse says that Romeo is a dishcloth compared to Count Paris.

On p. 88, the Nurse says to Juliet, who has asked for words of comfort:

Nurse

Faith, here it is.
 Romeo is banish'd; and all the world to nothing,
 That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you;
 Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
 Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,

I think it best you married with the county.
 O, he's a lovely gentleman!
 Romeo's a dishclout to him: an eagle, madam,
 Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye
 As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
 I think you are happy in this second match,
 For it excels your first: or if it did not,
 Your first is dead; or 'twere as good he were,
 As living here and you no use of him.

Act 3, Scene 5

• How does Juliet respond to this abandonment?

Juliet goes to Friar Lawrence for advice. She says that if nothing else, she always has the power to commit suicide.

Juliet also rejects the Nurse as a confidant.

On p. 89, we read:

JULIET

Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend!
 Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,
 Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
 Which she hath praised him with above compare
 So many thousand times? Go, counsellor;
 Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.
 I'll to the friar, to know his remedy:

If all else fail, myself have power to die.

Exit

Chapter 4: Act 4

Act 4, Scene 1

- **What are Paris' feelings toward Juliet? Is he an "evil" or a "good" character?**

I don't see Paris as evil. Basically, he is a good man.

We can fault him for a few things:

He should know Juliet better before marrying her.

He should let Juliet know him better before having her marry him.

He should apply to Juliet for permission to marry her rather than simply asking her father.

He should let time pass after Tybalt's death before marrying Juliet.

However, in his behalf, we need to point out that Paris does love Juliet. We will see that in the final act. We also need to point out that Paris lives in a patriarchal society. Juliet's father has much more power than Juliet, and so Paris arranges to marry Juliet by going to her father. Also, Paris is told this: Juliet's family is worried about her excessive grieving for Tybalt, and therefore they had set the wedding date early to cheer her up.

Act 4, Scene 1

- **According to Paris, why is the wedding between him and Juliet taking place so soon after Tybalt's death?**

Paris says that Juliet's family is worried about her excessive grieving for Tybalt, and therefore they have set the wedding date early to cheer her up.

On p. 90, Paris tells Friar Lawrence:

PARIS

Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,
 And therefore have I little talk'd of love;
 For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
 Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous
 That she doth give her sorrow so much sway,
 And in his wisdom hastes our marriage,
 To stop the inundation of her tears;
 Which, too much minded by herself alone,
 May be put from her by society:
 Now do you know the reason of this haste.

Act 4, Scene 1

• **Friar Lawrence devises a complicated plan to help Romeo and Juliet. What is that plan?**

Friar Lawrence wants Juliet to take a drug that will make her appear to be dead.

The Capulets will place her body in the Capulet tomb.

Friar Lawrence will send a letter (a friar will deliver the letter) to Romeo, telling him what the plan is.

Romeo will be at the tomb when Juliet awakes. He will take her to live in Mantua.

Act 4, Scene 1

• **Wouldn't it be simpler and better to tell the Capulets and the Montagues that Romeo and Juliet are married? Why do you suppose that Friar Lawrence does not do**

this? Why do you suppose that Juliet does not tell her father and mother that she is married to Romeo?

Tell the Capulets and the Montagues

I think that it would be simpler to tell the Capulets and the Montagues that Romeo and Juliet are married.

There would be a big blowup at first, but that is to be expected. It may actually be a good thing. It's better to blow up and get it over with than to repress your feelings. Healthy families, in my opinion, do this. They blow up, express their feelings, then get over it quickly. Unhealthy families smile and pretend that everything is all right. However, we need a mean between extremes. Blowing up all the time is bad. Keeping all your anger repressed is bad.

Haste may be a reason why no one tells these families that Romeo and Juliet are married. Everything happens too rapidly in the play. No one has time to breathe and calm down.

Friar Lawrence

Friar Lawrence could be in a lot of trouble for marrying Romeo and Juliet, so he does not want to reveal what he has done.

Juliet

The last scene I think shows why Juliet does not tell her parents that she is married to Romeo. Juliet feels rejected — with good reason — by her parents and by the Nurse. Juliet does not want to tell her parents.

However, if she did, the results may be better than she would expect.

I doubt very much that her father would force her to commit bigamy.

If her father did cast her out of the house, no problem — except emotionally. Friar Lawrence would either escort her to Romeo in Mantua or have another friar do the honors.

Act 4, Scene 2

• What does Juliet tell her father? How does he respond?

Basically, Juliet tells her father that she will be obedient and marry Count Paris, as he wants her to. This makes her father happy.

We should note that her father is already preparing for the wedding. He is determined that it will go forth no matter what Juliet says. We should also note that he is asking for 20 cooks, although he has previously said that only a few people shall be invited — because of the recent death of Tybalt.

Capulet is so happy that he decides to advance the date of the wedding by a day. Juliet shall be married the very next day.

On p. 95, we read:

Enter JULIET

CAPULET

How now, my headstrong! where have you been gadding?

JULIET

Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin

Of disobedient opposition

To you and your behests, and am enjoin'd

By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,

And beg your pardon: pardon, I beseech you!

Henceforward I am ever ruled by you.

CAPULET

Send for the county; go tell him of this:

I'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

On p. 96, Capulet says:

[...] my heart is wondrous light,

Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd.

Act 4, Scene 3

• Juliet decides to drink the potion even though she describes some worries she has and some reasons why she should not drink the potion. What are those worries and reasons?

Juliet is alone, having sent away the Nurse to go to her mother.

Juliet has many worries:

1. The potion may not work and then she shall be forced to marry Count Paris.

2. Perhaps Friar Lawrence is afraid that Romeo and Juliet's marriage — and his role in it — will be made public, and so he has mixed a poison instead of a sleeping potion.

However, she points out that the friar has always been an honest man.

3. What happens if she wakes up before Romeo arrives? Won't she suffocate in the tomb?

4. Or perhaps she shall go mad in the tomb.

5. Or perhaps she shall see ghosts in the tomb.

Act 4, Scene 4

• Capulet prepares to be a host in this scene. What do the preparations reveal about his character?

1. Capulet wants to be a good host. He is busy with preparations.
2. Capulet says on p. 99, “Spare not for cost” (4.4.6).
3. The Nurse says that he is doing the work of a woman and that he will be sick because of having been up all night getting ready the preparations.
4. Capulet is merry and makes puns. The Second Fellow talks about logs, and Capulet calls him a loggerhead (blockhead).
5. Capulet is eagerly awaiting Count Paris, who has said that he will bring music when he comes.
6. When Capulet hears the music of Count Paris, he sends the Nurse to wake up Juliet.

Act 4, Scene 5

• Juliet’s parents mourn for her. Is their sorrow real? Did they love her?

I think that we have to say that Juliet’s parents love her, although they treated her badly when she said that she did not want to marry Count Paris.

That they have treated her badly probably makes Juliet’s death even worse for her parents. They would feel bad that she died and for what they had previously said to her.

We should keep in mind that Juliet was the last child the Capulets had alive. All of their other children had died. Back then, many wives died in childbirth and many children died in infancy.

The Nurse and Count Paris also mourn for Juliet.

On p. 102, we read:

LADY CAPULET

Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!
 Most miserable hour that e'er time saw
 In lasting labour of his pilgrimage!
 But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,
 But one thing to rejoice and solace in,
 And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight!

Nurse

O woe! O woful, woful, woful day!
 Most lamentable day, most woful day,
 That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
 O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!
 Never was seen so black a day as this:
 O woful day, O woful day!

PARIS

Beguiled, divorced, wronged, spited, slain!
 Most detestable death, by thee beguil'd,
 By cruel cruel thee quite overthrown!
 O love! O life! not life, but love in death!

CAPULET

Despised, distressed, hated, martyr'd, kill'd!

Uncomfortable time, why camest thou now
 To murder, murder our solemnity?
 O child! O child! my soul, and not my child!
 Dead art thou! Alack! my child is dead;
 And with my child my joys are buried.

Act 4, Scene 5

• What does Friar Lawrence say to Juliet's parents about Juliet's death?

He tells them that Juliet is in Heaven, and for that they should be happy.

On pp. 102-103, we read:

FRIAR LAURENCE

Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure lives not
 In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
 Had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all,
 And all the better is it for the maid:
 Your part in her you could not keep from death,
 But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
 The most you sought was her promotion;
 For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced:
 And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced
 Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
 O, in this love, you love your child so ill,
 That you run mad, seeing that she is well:

She's not well married that lives married long;
 But she's best married that dies married young.
 Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
 On this fair corse; and, as the custom is,
 In all her best array bear her to church:
 For though fond nature bids us an lament,
 Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

Act 4, Scene 5

• What is the purpose of the comic scene with the servants at the end of the scene? Why is some of Shakespeare's comedy unfunny today?

One purpose may be to show that life goes on.

One purpose may be to show that the lives of the lower class are separate from the lives of the upper class.

Some of the Shakespeare's jokes aren't funny today because the language has changed. Some of Shakespeare's jokes are puns, and when the language changes, what was a pun in Shakespeare's time is not a pun today.

We can puzzle out the meaning of a "dead" pun, but that is unlikely to make it funny to us. However, if you go to the theater, often you will hear people laughing at unfunny puns and unfunny jokes. Often the audience knows that there is a joke there and by God they are going to laugh to show other people that they know that there is a laugh there. (And sometimes they laugh to support the actors on stage.)

Let me say in Shakespeare's defense that many of his comic situations and jokes are funny. I think that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is hilarious.

An advantage of live productions and movies is that the directors can cut Shakespeare. One thing to cut is jokes that don't work anymore. Often, this scene is cut from live performances and from movie versions of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Of course, one reason for the cutting is that many of Shakespeare's plays are long by modern standards.

By the way, British professional comedian Ricky Gervais says that he is not a fan of Shakespeare for one reason. Of course, as a professional comedian, he may be joking when he says that he is not a fan of Shakespeare; however, he does have a point when he says why he is not a fan of Shakespeare:

Not anything to do with the structure, his themes — fantastic. The pun. I can't stand the pun. It just reminds me of a bloke in a beard and a pipe at a party doing puns, you know. It's things in Shakespeare like, you know, "Oh take their maidenheads", and you have to look at your Brodie's Notes to go, OK, cut off their heads and take their virginity, oh brilliant. You can't explain a joke in retrospect — you don't laugh if you then have it explained to you.

Source: 'Art is just something for your eyes to look at.' *The Guardian*. 18 February 2009 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2009/feb/18/ric-ky-gervais-guardian-podcast>>.

Chapter 5: Act 5**Act 5, Scene 1**

- **What mood is Romeo in at the beginning of this scene? What news does Balthasar bring to him?**

Romeo is actually in a good mood. He has had a dream that has caused him to feel good because he thinks he will receive good news.

He dreamt that he was dead, but that Juliet revived him with a kiss and made him live again and he became an emperor.

Although Romeo thinks of this as a good dream, we probably think of it as a bad dream.

Juliet will find Romeo dead, and she will kiss him, but she will kiss him in an attempt to find poison on his lips in an attempt to kill herself.

Balthasar arrives with bad news. Juliet is dead and is lying in the Capulets' tomb. Of course, Balthasar is wrong, although he did witness Juliet's funeral. We know that Juliet took a potion given to her by Friar Lawrence — a potion that made her seem dead for a while.

On p. 106, we read:

Enter ROMEO

ROMEO

If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,

My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:

My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne;

And all this day an unaccustom'd spirit

Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.

I dreamt my lady came and found me dead —
 Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave
 to think! —

And breathed such life with kisses in my lips,
 That I revived, and was an emperor.

Ah me! how sweet is love itself possess'd,
 When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

Enter BALTHASAR, booted

News from Verona! — How now, Balthasar!
 Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
 How doth my lady? Is my father well?
 How fares my Juliet? that I ask again;
 For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

Act 5, Scene 1

• Describe the Apothecary and his shop.

The Apothecary

The Apothecary wears rags.

The Apothecary is skin and bones. He is starving due to lack of money to buy food.

The Apothecary gathers medicinal herbs — he does have specialized knowledge.

The Apothecary's Shop

In his shop, which is poor, is a tortoise, a stuffed alligator, and skins of ill-shaped fishes. In addition, there are “empty

boxes, / Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds” (5.1.45-46), pieces of packthread, and rose petals that have been pressed to make perfume.

Romeo saw the Apothecary and his shop, and immediately he thought that if he ever needed to buy poison this is the place to go. (Apparently, Romeo has been thinking that suicide is a possibility in his future.)

It is a holiday, and the shop is shut, but Romeo calls the Apothecary to come, and he does.

On pp. 107-108, we read:

Exit BALTHASAR

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.

Let's see for means: O mischief, thou art swift

To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!

I do remember an apothecary, —

And hereabouts he dwells, — which late I noted

In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,

Culling of simples; meagre were his looks,

Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:

And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,

An alligator stuff'd, and other skins

Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves

A beggarly account of empty boxes,

Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,

Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,

Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.
 Noting this penury, to myself I said
 'An if a man did need a poison now,
 Whose sale is present death in Mantua,
 Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.'
 O, this same thought did but forerun my need;
 And this same needy man must sell it me.
 As I remember, this should be the house.
 Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.
 What, ho! apothecary!

Act 5, Scene 1

• Selling poison to Romeo is against the law and is punishable by death, but the Apothecary does it. Why?

Hearing that Juliet is dead, Romeo decides to kill himself. He thinks about how best to kill himself, and he remembers a poor apothecary (or pharmacist). He can buy poison from the apothecary and kill himself.

Selling poison is against the law in Mantua (and the penalty for doing so is death), but the apothecary is so poor that he is willing to risk death for the money — 40 ducats, a large amount — that Romeo is willing to pay for the poison.

The apothecary says that because of his poverty, he will sell the poison, but that if he could avoid it, he would not sell the poison.

Romeo is able to reassure the apothecary. Romeo says that money is a worse poison than the poison that the apothecary

is selling him. He also tells the apothecary to buy food and get himself in flesh — meaning to buy food and gain weight.

On pp. 108-109, we read:

ROMEO

Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor:
 Hold, there is forty ducats: let me have
 A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear
 As will disperse itself through all the veins
 That the life-weary taker may fall dead
 And that the trunk may be discharged of breath
 As violently as hasty powder fired
 Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

Apothecary

Such mortal drugs I have; but Mantua's law
 Is death to any he that utters them.

ROMEO

Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,
 And fear'st to die? famine is in thy cheeks,
 Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes,
 Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back;
 The world is not thy friend nor the world's law;
 The world affords no law to make thee rich;
 Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

Apothecary

My poverty, but not my will, consents.

ROMEO

I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

Apothecary

Put this in any liquid thing you will,
 And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
 Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

ROMEO

There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,
 Doing more murders in this loathsome world,
 Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell.
 I sell thee poison; thou hast sold me none.
 Farewell: buy food, and get thyself in flesh.
 Come, cordial and not poison, go with me
 To Juliet's grave; for there must I use thee.

Act 5, Scene 2

• Why didn't Romeo get the letter that Friar John was supposed to deliver to him? What is the content of that letter? What does Friar Lawrence decide to do because the letter was not delivered?

Friar Lawrence gives a letter to Friar John to deliver to Romeo.

Friar John looked for another friar to accompany him on his journey to Mantua. The other friar was in a sickhouse. While

the two friars were there, the health officers of Verona came, suspected that plague was in that house, and shut up the occupants in it, thus quarantining them.

Because of fear of the plague, no one took Friar Lawrence's letter to Mantua, and therefore Friar John brings it back to Friar Lawrence.

In the letter, Friar Lawrence told Romeo about the plot: Juliet would drink a potion to make it appear that she is dead, but she would be living still. Romeo would go to the tomb to release her and take her to Mantua where they can live as the husband and wife they are.

Because Friar Lawrence does not think that Romeo will go to the tomb — Friar Lawrence has no way of knowing that Romeo has heard of Juliet's death — Friar Lawrence asks Friar John to get him a crowbar. Friar Lawrence is going to have to go to the tomb to release Juliet.

On p. 109 we read:

FRIAR JOHN

Going to find a bare-foot brother out
 One of our order, to associate me,
 Here in this city visiting the sick,
 And finding him, the searchers of the town,
 Suspecting that we both were in a house
 Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
 Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth;
 So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

FRIAR LAURENCE

Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

FRIAR JOHN

I could not send it, — here it is again, —

Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,

So fearful were they of infection.

Act 5, Scene 3**• Does Paris love Juliet?**

Paris does love Juliet. He appears at the tomb to place flowers there and to pour perfumed water to honor Juliet. Paris is mourning Juliet's death. He is not doing this for show because no one is there to witness his actions except for his servant. Paris says that he plans to continue doing this.

On p. 111, we read:

PARIS

Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew, —

O woe! thy canopy is dust and stones; —

Which with sweet water nightly I will dew,

Or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans:

The obsequies that I for thee will keep

Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.

Act 5, Scene 3

• **What does Romeo tell Balthasar to keep him from being suspicious of what Romeo is going to do? Why does Balthasar decide not to leave, but instead to hide?**

Romeo says that he is going into the tomb to look at Juliet and to get a ring that he needs from her finger.

Romeo tells Balthasar to leave and gives him a letter to give Friar Lawrence (and he gives Balthasar a tip), but Balthasar is worried because Romeo seems wild, so he hides instead of leaving.

On pp. 111-112, we read:

Enter ROMEO and BALTHASAR, with a torch, mattock, & c

ROMEO

Give me that mattock and the wrenching iron.

Hold, take this letter; early in the morning

See thou deliver it to my lord and father.

Give me the light: upon thy life, I charge thee,

Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,

And do not interrupt me in my course.

Why I descend into this bed of death,

Is partly to behold my lady's face;

But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger

A precious ring, a ring that I must use

In dear employment: therefore hence, be gone:

But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry

In what I further shall intend to do,
 By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint
 And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs:
 The time and my intents are savage-wild,
 More fierce and more inexorable far
 Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.

BALTHASAR

I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

ROMEO

So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou that:
 Live, and be prosperous: and farewell, good fellow.

BALTHASAR

[Aside] For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout:

His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.

Retires

Mattock: "A digging tool with a flat blade set at right angles to the handle." — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

Act 5, Scene 3

• Of what do Paris and the Capulets think that Juliet died? What does Paris think Romeo is doing at the tomb? Why does Romeo kill Paris? What does Paris' page do as a result of the fighting?

Paris and the Capulets think that Juliet died of grief for Tybalt, whom Romeo killed. Thus, Paris thinks that Romeo caused the death of Juliet.

Paris thinks that Romeo has come to the Capulets' tomb to do mischief of some sort to the bodies of Tybalt and of Juliet. Of course, Paris is aware that Romeo is a Montague, while Tybalt and Juliet are Capulets.

Paris tries to arrest Romeo, Romeo pleads with Paris to leave him alone, but they fight, and Romeo kills Paris because he (Romeo) wants to get in the tomb.

Romeo does not recognize Paris until after he has killed him.

During the fighting, Paris' page runs away to call the watch (the police).

On p. 112, we read:

[Romeo] Opens the tomb

PARIS

This is that banish'd haughty Montague,
That murder'd my love's cousin, with which grief,
It is supposed, the fair creature died;
And here is come to do some villanous shame
To the dead bodies: I will apprehend him.

Comes forward

Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague!
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

Act 5, Scene 3**• What is Paris' dying wish? Does Romeo respect it?**

Paris' dying wish is to be laid to rest near Juliet.

Romeo does respect the wish. He carries Paris' body into the tomb.

Of course, Romeo's own resting place is right beside Juliet.

On p. 113, we read:

PARIS

O, I am slain!

Falls

If thou be merciful,

Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

Dies

ROMEO

In faith, I will. Let me peruse this face.

Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris!

What said my man, when my betossed soul

Did not attend him as we rode? I think

He told me Paris should have married Juliet:

Said he not so? or did I dream it so?

Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,

To think it was so? O, give me thy hand,

One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!

I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave;
 A grave? O no! a lantern, slaughter'd youth,
 For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
 This vault a feasting presence full of light.
 Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.

Laying PARIS in the tomb

Act 5, Scene 3

• **A tomb is normally a dark place. Does Romeo see Juliet's tomb as being dark?**

Romeo sees Juliet's tomb as being full of light.

Why? Because Juliet is there, and Juliet's beauty is bright.

On p. 29, Romeo said:

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!

On p. 113, we read what Romeo says as he lays Paris in Juliet's tomb:

I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave;
 A grave? O no! a lantern, slaughter'd youth,
 For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
 This vault a feasting presence full of light.
 Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.

Act 5, Scene 3

• **Why does Romeo kill himself? What are his last words?**

Romeo, of course, kills himself because he thinks that Juliet is dead and he does not want to live without her.

This is the content of Romeo's last words:

1. Romeo is aware that condemned men are often merry before they die.
2. Romeo is amazed that his wife, Juliet, is beautiful although she is dead — of course, we know that she is not dead.
3. Romeo asks Tybalt for forgiveness.
4. Again Romeo wonders why Juliet is so beautiful although she is dead.
5. Romeo says that he will lie beside Juliet, both being dead.
6. Romeo realizes that the poison is very effective, and praises the apothecary for being honest.

Romeo embraces Juliet, drinks the poison, feels its effects immediately, praises the apothecary, kisses Juliet, and dies.

On pp. 113-114, we read:

Laying PARIS in the tomb

How oft when men are at the point of death
 Have they been merry! which their keepers call
 A lightning before death: O, how may I
 Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife!
 Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,
 Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:
 Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet
 Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
 And death's pale flag is not advanced there.

Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
O, what more favour can I do to thee,
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain
To sunder his that was thine enemy?
Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet,
Why art thou yet so fair? shall I believe
That unsubstantial death is amorous,
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
For fear of that, I still will stay with thee;
And never from this palace of dim night
Depart again: here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chamber-maids; O, here
Will I set up my everlasting rest,
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last!
Arms, take your last embrace! and, lips, O you
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
A dateless bargain to engrossing death!
Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide!
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!
Here's to my love!

Drinks

O true apothecary!

Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

Dies

Act 5, Scene 3

• What plan does Friar Lawrence have for Juliet? Why doesn't he stay in the tomb with her?

Friar Lawrence arrives on the scene, sees that Romeo and Paris are dead, and plans to put Juliet in a convent.

However, Friar Lawrence runs away, leaving Juliet alone, because the Watch (the Police) is coming. Friar Lawrence is afraid of being arrested. This is understandable, in my opinion. He is in a tomb, two bodies have been found (one is that of one of the Prince's kinsman), it is night, and quite simply, Friar Lawrence panics. This is the more understandable because it is his own plan that has gone so badly wrong.

On pp. 115-116, we read:

Noise within

FRIAR LAURENCE

I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest

Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep:

A greater power than we can contradict

Hath thwarted our intents. Come, come away.

Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;

And Paris too. Come, I'll dispose of thee

Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:
 Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;
 Come, go, good Juliet,
Noise again
 I dare no longer stay.

JULIET

Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.

Exit FRIAR LAURENCE

Act 5, Scene 3

• Why does Juliet kill herself? What are her last words?

Juliet, of course, kills herself because she does not want to live without Romeo.

There is a true — and passionate — love, as shown by their willingness to kill themselves for each other.

Juliet's last speech is shorter than Romeo's.

She sees that Romeo has killed himself with poison, and that he has drunk all the poison. She kisses him in hopes that enough poison will be left on his lips to kiss her (and she kisses him to say goodbye). There isn't enough poison left to kill her, so she kills herself with a dagger.

Juliet's death is more violent, in my opinion, than Romeo's. Romeo kills himself with poison, but Juliet kills herself with a dagger.

On p. 116, we read:

What's here? a cup, closed in my true love's hand?

Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end:

O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop
 To help me after? I will kiss thy lips;
 Haply some poison yet doth hang on them,
 To make me die with a restorative.

Kisses him

Thy lips are warm.

First Watchman

[Within] Lead, boy: which way?

JULIET

Yea, noise? then I'll be brief. O happy dagger!

Snatching ROMEO's dagger

This is thy sheath;

Stabs herself

there rust, and let me die.

Falls on ROMEO's body, and dies

Act 5, Scene 3

• What does the Prince do after discovering all these deaths?

The Prince hears more bad news: The Watch and Prince Escalus arrive, then the Capulets and Montague, who announces that Lady Montague has died over grief of Romeo's banishment

The Prince does what a good Prince should do. He hears all the evidence. Much of the rest of the play is exposition, explaining what has occurred and who knew what or didn't know what.

The Prince hears from various actors in the last scene of the tragedy. The most important piece of evidence is the letter that Romeo gave to Balthasar to give to Friar Lawrence. The letter supports Friar Lawrence's account of events, and in the letter Romeo tells what he intended to do after hearing that Juliet was dead — to buy poison from a poor apothecary and kill himself.

Act 5, Scene 3

• Does the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues come to an end?

The feud does come to an end.

We know this because we heard it in the Prologue of the play.

Capulet and Montague join hands.

Montague says that he will set up a statue of pure gold in Juliet Capulet's image, and Capulet says that he will set up a statue of pure gold in Romeo Montague's image.

Modern productions of the play sometimes imply that the feud will continue, that this is nothing more than a publicity stunt by Montague and Capulet, but nothing in the play suggests that. Our age simply prefers bad endings or ambiguous endings.

On p. 120, we read:

PRINCE

This letter doth make good the friar's words,
 Their course of love, the tidings of her death:
 And here he writes that he did buy a poison
 Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal

Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet.
Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love.
And I for winking at your discords too
Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punish'd.

CAPULET

O brother Montague, give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.

MONTAGUE

But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;
That while Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate be set
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

CAPULET

As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

Act 5, Scene 3

• Explain the final words spoken by the Prince.

1. The Prince says that the day is cloudy, which is in keeping with the sad events of the previous night.

2. The Prince says that he and the others shall speak of what has happened.
3. The Prince says that justice shall be done. Some actors in the events shall be pardoned, while other actors in the events shall be punished.
4. The Prince says that the deaths of Romeo and Juliet have been a tragedy.

On p. 221, we read:

PRINCE

A glooming peace this morning with it brings;
The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head:
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;
Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished:
For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

Exeunt

Appendix A: Bibliography

The American Heritage College Dictionary. 4th Edition. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*. New York: Signet Classic, 1998. Edited by J. A. Bryant, Jr.

Appendix B: Paper Topics

The American Heritage College Dictionary. 4th Edition. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*. New York: Signet Classic, 1998. Edited by J. A. Bryant, Jr.

- Write a character analysis of Juliet.
- Write a character analysis of Romeo.
- Compare and contrast Romeo and Juliet.
- Compare and contrast Mercutio and the Nurse.
- Compare and contrast Benvolio and Tybalt.
- Compare and contrast Romeo's parents with Juliet's parents.
- In general, compare and contrast two or more important characters.
- Men are dominant in *Romeo and Juliet*. Give a few examples and discuss.
- *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy of chance and character. Discuss.
- Compare how some important characters regard love in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Appendix C: Paper Hints

- **Write a character analysis of Juliet.**
- Very young — not quite 14.
- Falls in love — passionately — with Romeo at first sight.
- Seems obedient to her parents at first.
- Close relationship with parents and the Nurse at first.
- Amused/embarrassed by the Nurse's anecdote?
- Breaks with parents and the Nurse.
- Willing to die if she cannot be with Romeo.
- Speaks well — able to speak a speech that can be interpreted in two contradictory ways.
- Beautiful — as we see from what Romeo says about her.
- Defies father and mother.
- Courageous in taking the sleeping potion.
- Loved sincerely by two men.
- Not entirely mature?
- **Write a character analysis of Romeo.**
- Romeo is not afraid of death.
- Romeo is in love and feels passionate love.
- Romeo makes sexual puns with Mercutio.
- Romeo convinces the apothecary to sell him poison.
- Romeo was in puppy love with Rosaline.
- Romeo speaks very good poetry with Juliet.

- Romeo has Friar Lawrence as a confidant.
- Romeo is religious.
- Romeo prefers to be non-violent — he kills Tybalt only after Tybalt kills Mercutio. He kills Paris after Paris confronts him.
- **Compare and contrast Romeo and Juliet.**
 - Both are young.
 - Both may be immature, but both may be mature. This is a matter of interpretation.
 - Both know passionate love.
 - Romeo is romantic, while Juliet is practical.
 - Romeo thought he was in love before, while Juliet has not been in love before.
 - Both Romeo and Juliet speak beautiful poetry. We know they belong together because they rhyme together.
 - Both have confidants at first to confide in: Friar Lawrence and the Nurse.
 - Big difference: their families.
- **Compare and contrast Romeo and Mercutio.**
 - Both are well educated.
 - Both make sexual puns.
 - Mercutio views love as sex; Romeo does not.
 - Romeo is against the feud and does not fight Tybalt until after Tybalt kills Mercutio.
- **Compare and contrast Mercutio and the Nurse.**
 - Both are humorous characters.

- Mercutio is more intelligent than the Nurse.
- Mercutio is a deliberate punner; the Nurse uses bawdy language sometimes without even knowing it.
- The Nurse advocates love; Mercutio sabotages it.
- Both view love in terms of sex.
- Mercutio is a member of the upper class, while the Nurse is a member of the lower class.
- **Compare and contrast Benvolio and Tybalt.**
- Their names mean different things. Benvolio means “I wish well”: in Latin, the phrase is *bene volio*. Tybalt is a name given to the cat in Reynard the Fox stories. See footnote on page 47 of the Signet Classic edition.
- Both have important relationships to Romeo. Benvolio is Romeo’s friend; Tybalt is Romeo’s enemy.
- Benvolio is a peacemaker, while Tybalt is an aggressive warmonger.
- Benvolio lives, while Tybalt dies.
- Benvolio is a nephew to Montague, while Tybalt is a nephew to Lady Capulet.
- These characters are foils to each other.
- Both are loyal to their own houses.
- Both are pretty much out of the play after Act 3.
- Benvolio helps the Montagues (by helping Romeo), while Tybalt almost gets Capulet killed (by wanting to fight with Romeo at the party although the Prince has forbid fighting under penalty of death).

- Both want the feud to end, but Tybalt wants to win the feud, while Benvolio wants peace between the two families.
- When they first talk, they rhyme.
- They differ in their relationships with Mercutio.
- **Compare and contrast Romeo’s parents with Juliet’s parents.**
- **Compare and contrast the Nurse and Friar Lawrence.**
- **In general, compare and contrast two or more important characters.**
- **Men are dominant in *Romeo and Juliet*. Give a few examples and discuss.**
- Capulet has much power over Juliet.
- Girls marry too young and become mothers too young.
- Capulet seems to have power over Lady Capulet.
- Prince Escalus is powerful.
- The planner in this play is Friar Lawrence.
- Respectable women get married and have children.
- Juliet needs permission to go to confession, yet Romeo can go all over Verona without permission.
- ***Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy of chance and character. Discuss.**

Fate

If you will write about fate, define it. (“Fate” is a word whose meanings vary; identify the definition of “fate” that you will use in your paper.)

Chance

- Romeo finds out about the Capulet masked ball by chance.
- If Rosaline had not been invited to the masked ball, Romeo would not have gone and seen Juliet there.
- Capulet advances the day of the wedding.
- Friar Lawrence's letter does not reach Romeo.
- Romeo takes poison just a little before Friar Lawrence arrives and Juliet awakens.

Character

- Romeo and Juliet are very young.
- Romeo and Juliet are passionately in love.
- **Compare how some important characters regard love in *Romeo and Juliet*.**

Mercutio: It's a joke.

Nurse: Biological functions of women.

Romeo and Juliet: Passionate.

Friar Lawrence: A way to make peace between the two families.

Capulet: A way to make a political alliance.

Appendix D: *Romeo and Juliet* Anecdotes

- While preparing a wall for his stage production of *Romeo and Juliet*, realist director Franco Zeffirelli flicked a brush soaked with dirty and watery paint about 18 inches from the bottom of the wall, explaining, “This is where the dogs pee.” He then flicked the brush higher on the wall, adding, “and this is where the men pee.”
- Bronislava Nijinska once choreographed a modern version of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. At the end of the ballet, instead of dying, Romeo and Juliet decide instead to elope and fly away in an airplane.
- The early 19th-century actor Robert Coates was so bad that he was forced to give up playing his favorite role of Romeo — no actress was willing to appear as Juliet with him.
- Robin de la Condamine was the real name of the professional actor Robert Farquharson. When John Gielgud was 19 years old, he gave a performance of Romeo that he later called “extremely immature.” However, Mr. Farquharson came backstage and told him, “You have taught me something about the part of Romeo I never knew before!” Mr. Gielgud took this as a compliment and was flattered, but later a mutual friend told him, “Robin said it was the first time he had ever realized that Romeo could be played as Juliet.”
- While playing Juliet in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, Constance Benson once stood on a rather shakily constructed balcony. She was warned not to move around too much, but in the emotion of acting, she forgot her instructions. The balcony collapsed, and she tumbled right into Romeo’s arms.
- In 1750-1751, London was treated to the Battle of the Theatres. *Romeo and Juliet* opened on the same day — Sept. 28 — at two theatres. At Drury Lane, David Garrick played Romeo, while at Covent Garden, Spranger Barry played

Romeo. A woman who saw both actors gave her opinion of their merits: “Had I been Juliet to Garrick’s Romeo, so ardent and impassioned was he, I should have expected that he would come up to me in the balcony; but had I been Juliet to Barry’s Romeo, so tender, so eloquent, and so seductive was he, I should certainly have gone down to him!”

- At Stratford, Connecticut, the American Shakespeare Festival participants decided to give previews to high school students. Unfortunately, its staging of *Romeo and Juliet* still had a few kinks to be worked out. For example, when Romeo poisoned himself in Act 5, he was standing over Juliet, who was lying on a narrow raised bier, and so when Romeo died, he fell over directly on top of Juliet because there was nowhere else to fall. Of course, the audience laughed when Juliet woke up and asked, “Where is my Romeo?”

- Actress Judi Dench frequently played Juliet in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. During the balcony scene, as Romeo stood hidden beneath Juliet’s balcony, she recited, “O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?”(2.2.33). An audience member called out, “Down there, Ducks, underneath yer balcony.” At another performance that was attended by her parents, when Ms. Dench came to the scene in which the Nurse tells her that Tybalt is dead, she recited, “Where is my father and my mother, nurse?” (3.2.127). From the audience came the answer, “Here we are, darling. Row H.”

- Dancer Fred Astaire was not a reader. He once asked his son-in-law about the story of *Romeo and Juliet*. His son-in-law explained that it was like *West Side Story*.

- Actor Balliol Holloway was once asked why he didn’t accept an offer to perform in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. He replied, “I’m not quite sure what part to play — Mercutio, and get off early, or the Friar, and keep my trousers on.” (Mercutio would wear tights.)

- While playing the male lead role in *Romeo and Juliet* in Philadelphia, Charlotte Cushman was insulted when a man in the audience deliberately sneezed in a successful attempt to draw attention from the stage. Ms. Cushman stopped acting, led the actress playing Juliet to the side of the stage, then said, “Some man must put that person out, or I shall do it myself.” Ms. Cushman’s actions were cheered, and the man was escorted out by several other men.
- When the fortyish great actress Jane Cowl was criticized for appearing on stage as Shakespeare’s 14-year-old Juliet, she replied, “You have to be forty to understand the wonder of being fourteen.”

Appendix E: List of Major Characters

Romeo Montague

A very young man, he is well liked by all except Tybalt. At the beginning of the play, he is in love with Rosaline, but his love for Rosaline is a not-very-deep puppy love. He falls passionately in love with Juliet the first time he sees her.

Juliet Capulet

Not quite 14 years old, Juliet falls in love with Romeo — her first love. She meets him one evening; they marry the following afternoon.

The Nurse

A comic character, the Nurse is ignorant, likes sexual humor, and often says the wrong thing.

Friar Lawrence

A Catholic (of course), Friar Lawrence weds Romeo and Juliet in an effort to get the Montagues and the Capulets to stop feuding with each other. He has a deep knowledge of the properties of plants.

Benvolio

His name means well-wishing, and he does exactly that. He is against violence and would like the Montagues and the Capulets to stop their feud.

Mercutio

His name suggests “mercurial,” and he is exactly that. According to the *American Heritage College Dictionary*, ‘mercurial’ means “having the characteristics of eloquence, shrewdness, swiftness, and thievishness attributed to the god Mercury; quick and changeable in temperament, volatile.” Mercutio is witty — he especially likes sex jokes. He is

Romeo's friend. His Queen Mab speech shows that his emotions can go from light to dark very quickly.

Tybalt

Tybalt is a Capulet who hates all Montagues. As he is an expert swordsman and a trouble-maker, don't be surprised when Tybalt kills someone.

Paris

Paris falls in love with Juliet and asks her father for permission to marry her. He does not know that Romeo is his rival. Paris is related to Prince Escalus, so he is of the nobility. Capulet regards him as a great catch for Juliet.

Prince Escalus

The ruler of Verona, Prince Escalus wants peace in the city and is greatly annoyed by the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets.

Montague and Lady Montague (Romeo's parents)

Lady Montague is happy that her son was not involved in the fight that opens the play. She dies of grief when he is banished from Verona. Montague loves his son, Romeo, and seeing that Romeo is not well, asks Benvolio to find out what is wrong with him.

Capulet and Lady Capulet (Juliet's parents)

Lady Capulet married Capulet when she was very young. He is much older than she, and when he calls for a sword to fight the Montagues, she asks why he is asking for a sword when he should be asking for a crutch instead. Capulet likes to get his way, and he wants Juliet to obey his orders.

Note on “Lady”

Neither the Montagues nor the Capulets are of the nobility, although each family is very rich. “Lady” is a way of writing “Wife” or “Mother.” In fact, Shakespeare wrote “Wife” or “Mother”; “Lady” is a change by later editors. Therefore, no one should refer to the Montagues or the Capulets as being members of the nobility.

Friar John

A friend to Friar Lawrence, he is sent to deliver an important letter to Romeo.

Balthasar

Romeo’s servant.

Rosaline

At the beginning of *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo is in love with her, although she does not love him.

Samson and Gregory

Servants of the Capulets, Samson and Gregory provoke a fight with servants of the Montagues in the first scene of the play.

Abraham

A Montague servant, Abraham fights with Samson and Gregory.

The Apothecary

Impoverished, the Apothecary sells poison to Romeo even though if he is caught selling it, he will be sentenced to death.

The Chorus

The Chorus is one person who appears on stage to offer commentary at the beginnings of Act 1 and Act 2.

Appendix F: Frequently Asked Questions

Is Capulet “Lord” Capulet?

No, he is not of the nobility. He is very rich and his is one of the most prominent families in Verona, but he is not a Lord. Some evidence of this occurs in Act 1, scene 2, when the servant is boasting about his master, “the great rich Capulet” (1.2.82). Servants like to boast about their masters. If the servant had been able to say “the great rich Lord Capulet,” he would have done so.

In addition, Capulet’s humor is coarse. In Act 1, scene 5, he jokes that if the ladies do not dance, he will know that they have corns on their feet. In general, coarse humor such as this is not said by the nobility. Neither Prince Escalus nor Paris speak in that way.

No, Capulet is not a Lord. However, he is rich.

Why do so many people and books say that Capulet and Montague are Lords?

When writing his stage directions, Shakespeare wrote “Wife” or “Mother” when he wished to refer to Mrs. Capulet. Later editors changed the designation to Lady Capulet. Since Mrs. Capulet was described as Lady Capulet, readers figured that Capulet is Lord Capulet. The same thing is true of Lady Montague.

No papers you write should refer to Lord Capulet or to Lord Montague. It is OK to refer to Lady Capulet or Lady Montague since those designations appear in our edition of the play.

Is Lady Capulet younger than her husband?

Yes, in Act 1, scene 1, she mocks her husband’s age when he calls for a sword to fight the Montagues. She says, “A crutch! A crutch! Why call you for a sword?” (1.1.79).

In Act 1, scene 3, we discover that Lady Capulet was Juliet's mother by the time that she was Juliet's age.

Being married so young to an older man may not be a good thing. In Act 1, scene 2, when Paris tells Capulet that girls younger than Juliet are happy mothers, Capulet says, perhaps ruefully, "And too soon marred are those so early made" (1.2.13). He may be speaking from experience.

How old is Juliet?

She is a little shy — two weeks and a few days — of 14. The Nurse and Lady Capulet discuss Juliet's age in act 1, scene 3.

At what age did people usually get married at this time?

Usually, they were in their late teens or in their twenties, just like today. However, younger people could get married. Sometimes, members of the nobility were married at a very young age in order to cement an alliance between two countries or between two noble houses. These children were not allowed to have sex until they were older.

In the play, Juliet's age is young enough to cause comment, but she is not too young to get married.

Appendix G: Scene Summaries

Prologue

The Prologue tells the audience what will happen in the play. Romeo and Juliet will die, and the feud between their families will end.

Act 1

Scene 1

Servants of the Capulets, Samson and Gregory, arrive and start a fight with servants of the Montagues. Benvolio arrives and tries to stop the fighting. Tybalt arrives and challenges Benvolio to fight. Montague and Capulet arrive and are eager to fight. Prince Escalus arrives and stops the fighting. Benvolio talks to Romeo and discovers that he is in love with Rosaline, who does not love him.

Scene 2

Paris requests of Capulet permission to marry Juliet, who is not yet 14. Capulet asks him at first to wait two years to marry her, but then he says that if Juliet wants to marry him, so be it. He also asks Paris to begin wooing her right away — tonight, in fact, at a masked ball. Capulet sends the servant Peter to deliver the invitations to the ball, but Peter, being illiterate, wonders how he will be able to deliver them since he can't read the names of the people invited to the ball. Romeo and Benvolio read the list of names to him, and they notice that Rosaline has been invited to the masked ball. Romeo and Benvolio decide to crash the party.

Scene 3

Lady Capulet goes to tell Juliet about Paris' proposal, but first the Nurse tells a long sexual anecdote about Juliet as a toddler. Juliet agrees to try to like Paris.

Scene 4

Romeo and Benvolio, in company with Mercutio, head to the Capulets' masked ball. Mercutio delivers his famous "Queen Mab" speech. Romeo calms Mercutio and then, despite misgivings, Romeo goes to the ball.

Scene 5

Romeo sees Juliet and falls in love with her, forgetting about Juliet. Tybalt overhears Romeo and wants to fight him, but Capulet forces Tybalt to leave the ball. Romeo and Juliet speak to each other. Their conversation consists of a shared sonnet filled with religious imagery. They kiss — twice. They separate, and Romeo learns that Juliet is a Capulet, and Juliet learns that Romeo is a Montague.

Act 2**Scene 1**

Romeo hides from his friends and enters the Capulets' orchard.

Scene 2

Romeo sees Juliet at a window (this is the famous first balcony scene), Juliet confesses her love to Romeo, not knowing that he is present, and he reveals himself and confesses that he too loves her. Juliet arranges to send a messenger to him later to see when they can be married.

Scene 3

Romeo asks Friar Lawrence, who is wise in the properties of plants, to marry him and Juliet. Friar Lawrence is shocked that Romeo has forgotten Rosaline so quickly, but in hopes of ending the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues, he agrees to marry them.

Scene 4

Romeo joins his friends Mercutio and Benvolio in the street. The Nurse arrives, looking for Romeo, and Mercutio takes great glee in making fun of her. Romeo calms the Nurse down and gives her information about the time and the place of the wedding to give to Juliet.

Scene 5

Juliet has been waiting for the Nurse for three hours (the Nurse promised to return in 30 minutes). When the Nurse does return, she is too scatter-brained to give Juliet the news she wants right away. Instead, the Nurse spends much time complaining about her aches and pains before telling her the plans for the wedding.

Scene 6

Juliet meets Romeo in Friar Lawrence's cell, where they are married.

Act 3**Scene 1**

On a hot day ripe for violence, Mercutio and Benvolio are on a street. Benvolio wishes to leave before violence erupts, but Mercutio insists they stay. Tybalt arrives, looking for Romeo, whom he wishes to fight. When Romeo arrives, Tybalt tries to make him fight, but Romeo declines, saying that he has reason to love Tybalt (Tybalt is now Romeo's cousin by marriage). Mercutio is furious at Romeo's mild reaction to Tybalt's insults and fights Tybalt. Romeo tries to part the two men, but Tybalt mortally wounds Mercutio under Romeo's arm. Mercutio dies, and Romeo kills Tybalt in revenge. Knowing that the punishment for fighting in public is death, Romeo flees. Prince Escalus enters, listens to Benvolio's explanation of the deaths of Mercutio and

Tybalt, then banishes Romeo on pain of death. Unless Romeo leaves Verona quickly, he will be killed.

Scene 2

Juliet is alone when the Nurse enters. The Nurse, scatter-brained as always, makes Juliet think first that Romeo is dead, then that both Romeo and Tybalt are dead. Finally, Juliet learns the truth: Tybalt is dead, and Romeo has been banished from the city. Juliet criticizes Romeo, but takes back the criticism, resolving to continue to love him. She gives the Nurse a ring to take to Romeo.

Scene 3

Romeo, very upset, is in Friar Lawrence's cell, who tells him that he has been banished upon pain of death. Romeo threatens to kill himself, but Friar Lawrence calms him. The Nurse arrives with Juliet's ring, and they all plan for Romeo and Juliet to consummate their marriage, then to flee to Mantua.

Scene 4

Capulet determines that Juliet shall marry Paris on Thursday.

Scene 5

In the second Balcony Scene, Romeo and Juliet have consummated their marriage. Dawn is approaching, and Romeo must leave Verona or be killed. For a while, Juliet pretends that it is not yet dawn, but when she realizes the danger that Romeo is in, she insists that he leave. Lady Capulet tells Juliet about the arranged marriage to Paris, but Juliet says that she will not marry him. Capulet insists that she marry Paris or be thrown out of the house. Juliet turns to the Nurse for comfort and advice, but the Nurse advises her to marry Paris. Juliet resolves never to confide again in the Nurse.

Act 4

Scene 1

When Juliet arrives at Friar Lawrence's cell, she sees that Paris is already present, arranging their wedding. When Paris leaves, Juliet asks Friar Lawrence for help, saying that she would rather commit suicide than be unfaithful to Romeo. Friar Lawrence comes up with a plan. He will give her a potion that will make her appear to be dead. Romeo and he will rescue her from the tomb, and she and Romeo can then live happily in Mantua. Juliet agrees to the plan.

Scene 2

Preparations for the wedding are taking place when Juliet returns and apologizes to her father. Capulet is so happy that he advances the time of the wedding a day. Instead of taking place Thursday, it will take place Wednesday.

Scene 3

Juliet declines offers to help her prepare for her wedding from the Nurse and her mother, then — despite misgivings — she drinks the potion.

Scene 4

Juliet lies seemingly dead in her bedroom, but the Capulets are busy making preparations for her wedding. Capulet asks the Nurse to awaken Juliet.

Scene 5

The Nurse discovers that Juliet is “dead.” The Capulets and Paris mourn for her, and Friar Lawrence comforts them and advises them to prepare for the funeral. A comic scene with servants follows.

Act 5

Scene 1

Romeo has what he regards as a happy dream, but his servant, Balthasar, arrives and tells him that Juliet is dead. Romeo resolves to commit suicide in her tomb and buys poison from an impoverished and starving Apothecary who illegally sells it to him because he needs the money.

Scene 2

Friar Lawrence learns that his letter to Romeo was not delivered because its bearer, Friar John, was quarantined because of the plague. Friar Lawrence decides to go to the tomb to be present when Juliet awakens.

Scene 3

Paris brings flowers to Juliet's tomb. Romeo arrives, Paris thinks that he is going to desecrate the tomb, they fight, and Romeo kills Paris. Paris' servant runs to fetch the Watch. Romeo enters Juliet's tomb, drinks poison, and dies. Friar Lawrence enters the tomb. Juliet awakens and sees the dead Romeo. The sound of the Watch is heard, and Friar Lawrence, afraid, runs away. Juliet kills herself with a dagger. The Watch and Prince Escalus arrive, then the Capulets and Montague, who announces that Lady Montague has died over grief of Romeo's banishment. Prince Escalus investigates the cause of the deaths of Paris, Romeo, and Juliet; and Friar Lawrence, who has been arrested, tells his story. The Capulet and Montague families reconcile. Prince Escalus concludes the play by saying that there has never been "a story of more woe / Than this of Juliet and her Romeo" (5.3.309-310).

Appendix H: Notes on Acts and Scenes

Act 1, Prologue

- The Prologue is written in the form of a sonnet. It has 14 lines and a rhyme scheme.
- The Prologue tells us what will happen. Romeo and Juliet will commit suicide. Therefore, the audience knows what will happen even before seeing the play. Knowing what will happen beforehand directs the readers' attention: Romeo and Juliet will die, but why do they die?
- The Prologue makes us curious about what will happen. We know that Romeo and Juliet are ill-fated lovers, but why? What is their story?

Act 1, Scene 1

- We learn that the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets extends even to their servants.
- Samson and Gregory are servants of the Capulets, and they pick a quarrel with servants of the Montagues.
- This is a lively scene that illustrates that violence can happen in Verona at any time.
- On stage, directors will want to fill the stage with actors as the fight grows bigger and bigger.
- We are introduced to Benvolio, a Montague, whose name means "Well-Wisher." Benvolio lives up to his name; he wishes to stop the feud.
- We are introduced to Tybalt, a Capulet, who is the opposite of Benvolio. Tybalt hates peace and all Montagues.
- We never learn the reason for the feud other than Prince Escalus says that it was caused by "an airy word" (1.1.92).

- Capulet (Juliet's father) is old. He calls for a long sword so he can fight the Montagues (1.1.78), but his much younger wife tells him, "A crutch! A crutch! Why call you for a sword?" (1.1.79). Similarly, Lady Montague does not want her husband to fight.
- Prince Escalus stops the fighting and announces that he is sick of the feud — fighting has erupted in his city three times because of the feud. Therefore, he takes harsh measures to keep the peace. Anyone found fighting shall suffer the death penalty.
- Romeo does not fight in this scene; he is not present. After the fight, he is introduced as a love-sick teenager.
- Romeo's parents are worried about him; he has been acting moodily.
- Benvolio talks to Romeo and finds out that he is love with a woman who does not return his love. Later, we find out that the woman's name is Rosaline.
- At this point, Romeo's love is not deep. When he sees Juliet, he will speak beautiful poetry. Now, he spouts silly oxymora (examples of an oxymoron include a lead zeppelin or an iron butterfly — the words in each pair do not go together):

[...] 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 anything, of nothing first created!

O heavy lightness, serious vanity!

Mis-shapen 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? (1.1.176-186)

- Benvolio wants to find another girl for Romeo to love.

Act 1, Scene 2

- Count Paris asks Capulet for permission to marry Juliet. Paris is a proper gentleman, and he does the things he should, such as asking a father for permission to marry his daughter.
- Paris is a good catch for a young girl. He is rich and is related to Prince Escalus. He is high on the social scale.
- Capulet seems hesitant about allowing him to marry Juliet because she is so young — she is not yet 14 years old. At first, he asks Paris to wait two years, then he allows him to begin courting her.
- Paris points out that in Verona, many girls of 14 are already mothers.
- Juliet is attractive and the Capulets' only living child.
- Parents have a lot of influence over their daughters, as we will see later.
- Capulet sends Peter, an illiterate servant, to invite people to the masked dance. Because Peter is illiterate, he asks Benvolio and Romeo to read the invitation to him. Rosaline and Mercutio have been invited. Peter invites Benvolio and Romeo to the dance, provided they are Montagues. This is the first in a series of chance happenings that end with the double suicide of Romeo and Juliet.

Act 1, Scene 3

- This scene focuses on the women of the Capulet household. Finally, we are introduced to Juliet.
- Lady Capulet seems flighty. First, she asks the Nurse to leave, then she asks the Nurse to stay.
- The Nurse tells a long sexual anecdote about Juliet as a toddler. Juliet fell forwards, and the Nurse's husband joked that she would someday fall backwards (in the missionary position for having sex), and Juliet said, "Ay."
- The Nurse was Juliet's wet nurse; that is, she breastfed Juliet.
- The Nurse is vulgar and likes to make remarks about sex. She says things that she ought not to say. She repeats things (she tells the punchline of the sexual anecdote about Juliet as a toddler three times).
- The Nurse's husband and child have died.
- Lady Capulet tells Juliet that Count Paris wishes to marry her, and she asks Juliet if she can love him.
- Lady Capulet tells Juliet that she will share the Count's possessions, therefore "By having him making yourself no less" (1.3.94). The Nurse jokes, "No less? Nay, bigger! Women grow by men" (1.3.95). This joke points out that men make women pregnant.
- Juliet says that she has not thought of marriage, but that she will try to like Paris.
- The Nurse advises Juliet, "Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days" (1.3.106). The nights will be happy because they will include sex.

Act 1, Scene 4

- This scene introduces the mercurial Mercutio.
- Romeo is not in the mood for a party. He worries about whether he should make a speech when he enters the masked dance, and he says that he will not dance. Mercutio insists that he dance.
- Mercutio is a master punner. He is the life of the party. He is witty and sarcastic.
- Mercutio makes the famous “Queen Mab” speech. Queen Mab is the fairies’ midwife who brings dreams to sleeping people. She has a coach made of an empty hazelnut. Insects draw her coach. She brings dreams of love to lovers, dreams of curtseys to courtiers, dreams of fees to lawyers. As the speech continues, it grows darker. Queen Mab brings dreams of a soldier slitting the throats of foreigners. Queen Mab becomes a hag who teaches virgin girls how to have sex.
- In the Queen Mab speech, we see something seemingly innocent grow darker. Similarly, the innocent love of Romeo and Juliet ends in double suicide.
- As he continues the speech and it grows darker, Mercutio begins to lose control.
- Romeo is able to calm Mercutio, and they go to the masked ball.
- Romeo has had a dream of death and feels a foreboding.

Act 1, Scene 5

- Capulet appears to be a good host. He greets the ladies and jokes that if they do not dance, he will know that they have corns on their feet. Apparently, he was a bon vivant as a younger man.

- Romeo sees Juliet and they fall in love at first sight. At this point, Romeo begins to speak real love poetry.
- Romeo describes Juliet as breathtakingly beautiful.
- Tybalt overhears Romeo and wants to kill him, but Capulet, who praises Romeo, will not allow fighting in his house.
- The public Capulet and the way he really is in private may be different. The public image is of a gracious host, while the private Capulet demands to have things his way. (In part, this depends on the actor's interpretation of the role.) He does have a temper.
- Romeo and Juliet meet. He touches her hand.
- The first conversation of Romeo and Juliet takes the form of a sonnet. Romeo and Juliet belong together, and they rhyme together.
- The sonnet takes the form of an extended Christian metaphor.
- Romeo is a pilgrim who wishes to purge his sin by kissing her hand — the hand of a saint.
- Juliet tells Romeo that pilgrims are content to touch the hand of a saint, not kiss it.
- Romeo points out that pilgrims have lips, but Juliet points out that lips are used in prayer.
- Romeo kisses her.
- Following the sonnet, Romeo says that his sin is purged. Juliet takes the initiative and says that her lips now have the sin. Romeo takes the sin back by kissing her again.

- Juliet tells Romeo, “You kiss by th’ book” (1.5.112). This is most likely a compliment. Juliet can say the words wonderingly, as if Romeo is a good kisser.
- Romeo learns that Juliet is a Capulet, and Juliet learns that Romeo is a Montague.
- Juliet learns who Romeo is with a stratagem. She asks the Nurse who several people are, not just Romeo. That way, the Nurse doesn’t know that she has a special interest in Romeo.

Act 2, Prologue

- The Prologue restates what we have learned from Act 1. Romeo has forgotten Rosaline. He now loves Juliet, and Juliet loves him. Of course, their love faces difficulties because he is a Montague and she is a Capulet. However, the Prologue says that passion will find a way for the two lovers to come together.

Act 2, Scene 1

- Romeo is in love, and he is in no mood to talk with his friends. He hides from them and climbs over a wall and into the Capulets’ orchard.
- Mercutio mocks Romeo’s love for Rosaline in a bawdy speech — this is typical of Mercutio. Mercutio equates love with sex (so does the Nurse), but the love of Romeo and Juliet includes both a physical and a spiritual element. They do have sex on their wedding night, and their speech often includes religious imagery.

Act 2, Scene 2

- Romeo hears Mercutio’s taunting, and remarks, “He jests at scars that never felt a wound” (2.2.1). Mercutio has never been in love the way that Romeo is — Mercutio doesn’t know what he is talking about.

- This famous scene is known as the balcony scene because Juliet is often on a balcony in productions on stage and screen. However, the stage directions merely say that she is at a window.
- Juliet appears at a window (or on a balcony), and Romeo speaks magnificent poetry, comparing her to the sun, saying she outshines the moon, and comparing her eyes to stars (but her eyes are shinier than stars). The poetry that Romeo speaks about Juliet is much better than the poetry he spoke when he was in love with Rosaline.
- Juliet speaks, and she mourns that Romeo is a Montague. Because he is, it will be difficult for their love to be accepted by their families. If he will renounce his name, she will be his, but if he is unwilling to renounce his name, she is willing to renounce her name for him.
- Romeo speaks, and Juliet is shocked because she thought that she was alone. Once Romeo calls her “dear saint” (2.2.55), she recognizes him (because of the religious imagery, and because she recognizes his voice), but she is worried that she has revealed her love to him too soon.
- Juliet also wonders how Romeo came into the Capulets’ garden, and she is worried that if he is found there, he will be killed.
- Juliet declares her love for Romeo, and he begins to swear that he loves her, but she will not allow him to swear because inconstant lovers are very willing to swear that they love someone. Still, each knows the other loves.
- A little humor occurs when Romeo complains that Juliet will leave him unsatisfied, and Juliet asks, “What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?” (2.2.126). If Romeo were a different kind of man, he would say, “I know a great way for you to prove that you love me.” Instead, they make arrangements to be married. Romeo will find a priest to

marry them, and Juliet will send a messenger to him to find out the plans for the wedding.

Act 2, Scene 3

- Romeo, who has been out all night, goes to Friar Lawrence to make plans for the wedding.
- Friar Lawrence is a Catholic priest, of course, and he has much knowledge of the properties of plants. He is aware that a seemingly evil plant can have good and useful properties and that a seemingly good and useful plant can have evil properties. It depends on how they are used. So it is with Humankind. We can be either good or evil, depending on how we act.
- Friar Lawrence sees that Romeo has not been asleep, and he thinks that perhaps Romeo has been in bed with Rosaline. When he learns that Romeo now loves Juliet and wants to marry her, he is shocked at how suddenly Romeo has changed the object of his love.
- Friar Lawrence does agree to marry Romeo and Juliet in hopes that their marriage will end the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets. He advises slowness, but there is nothing slow about this marriage.
- Friar Lawrence is a confessor to both the house of Montague and the house of Capulet, so both Romeo and Juliet can come to him without arousing suspicion.

Act 2, Scene 4

- In this scene, we see Romeo interacting with his friends Benvolio and Mercutio. We also see the Nurse coming to Romeo to ask for information about the wedding plans.
- From the conversation of Benvolio and Mercutio, we learn that they know that Romeo has not been home all night and that Tybalt has sent Romeo a letter challenging him to a duel.

- Mercutio describes Tybalt in unflattering terms. Tybalt is a master swordsman, but he is very concerned about his appearance. He is fashionable, something that Mercutio seems unlikely to care about.
- Mercutio is witty, well educated, and likes to make fun of people.
- Mercutio makes fun of Romeo and his love for Rosaline. He pretends to be Romeo and praises Rosaline hugely, saying that such luminaries as Cleopatra and Dido are nothing next to her. Romeo is in a good mood (because he is in love), and joins Mercutio's jesting. Mercutio is thrilled that Romeo is jesting again.
- The Nurse arrives, and Romeo and Mercutio both make fun of her. (Chances are, Romeo doesn't recognize her until she mentions his name.) The Nurse is wearing a notably large hat, and Romeo calls it, "A sail! A sail!" (2.4.108). The Nurse has affected manners, as shown when she asks the servant Peter for her fan. Mercutio likes to mock people with affected manners, and he jokes that she is a prostitute, which angers the Nurse. Romeo calms her after Mercutio and Benvolio leave.
- The Nurse is genuinely concerned about Juliet, and she warns Romeo not to double deal with her, something Romeo promises not to do. Romeo tells her the plans for the wedding, and he says that he will send a servant with a rope ladder to her. Romeo will climb later that night into Juliet's bedchamber to consummate the wedding.

Act 2, Scene 5

- This is a comic scene. The Nurse was supposed to return in 30 minutes, but she has taken three hours to find and talk to Romeo. When the Nurse returns, instead of telling the impatient Juliet immediately what she wants to know, she complains about her aches and pains instead.

- Some critics think that the Nurse is deliberately teasing Juliet here, by deliberately withholding information that Juliet desperately wants. I disagree. A later scene shows the Nurse mourning the death of an important character. Juliet is frantic, because she thinks that Romeo has died. However, the Nurse withholds the information from her and takes a long time to tell her the information she wants. Why? The Nurse is not especially intelligent. She is subject to the flow of her thoughts and unable to get straight to the point.

Act 2, Scene 6

- Friar Lawrence advises Romeo to be moderate in his passions — “these violent delights have violent ends” (2.6.9). However, if Romeo and Juliet were moderate in their passions, they would not be Romeo and Juliet and their love would not be the passionate love depicted in the play.

- Friar Lawrence knows that he must not let Romeo and Juliet be alone together — they are way too eager to consummate their marriage and may even consummate it before being married.

- Romeo and Juliet leave with Friar Lawrence and are wed.

Act 3, Scene 1

- The weather is important in this scene. It is a very hot summer day, the kind of day in which quarrels can easily break out. We have already learned that public violence can break out at any time in Verona, so we should not be surprised when public violence breaks out again.

- Benvolio is prudent. He looks ahead. He tells his friend Mercutio that they should leave the public street, as the Capulets may be abroad. Mercutio accuses Benvolio of being angry and quick-tempered. This is a joke, as Benvolio is nothing of the kind.

- Benvolio jokes that the life expectancy of a person as angry and quick-tempered as Mercutio is one hour and 15 minutes.
- Tybalt arrives, seeking Romeo, then Romeo arrives. The scene is set for fighting and dying.
- Tybalt is eager to fight Romeo, who has not responded to Tybalt's letter challenging him to fight a duel. The rules of dueling are well known. If you refuse to fight a duel when challenged, you lose honor. Tybalt challenges Romeo to a duel, and Romeo declines to fight him, even when Tybalt calls him the strong insult of "villain" (3.1.62). In declining to fight Tybalt, Romeo is making a huge sacrifice for Juliet. He even tells Tybalt that he has reason to love him (for they are related now by marriage, although Romeo cannot make that public knowledge yet), but to his friends, it seems as if Romeo is abasing himself before Tybalt.
- Mercutio calls Romeo's refusal to fight "vile submission" (3.1.74) and fights Tybalt in Romeo's place. Romeo tries to separate them, and Tybalt stabs Mercutio with a sword under Romeo's arm.
- The dying Mercutio retains his sense of humor and his wit. He says that when his friends look for him tomorrow, they will find him a "grave man" (3.1.99-100). Mercutio will be dead and in a grave. (Dead people were buried quickly because of the hot Italian sun.)
- When Mercutio dies, an enraged Romeo avenges Mercutio's death by killing Tybalt. Romeo also worries that being in love had made him effeminate. He cries, "O, I am fortune's fool" (3.1.138), and taking the advice of Benvolio, flees.
- Prince Escalus arrives, listens to Benvolio's account of the two deaths, and sentences Romeo to banishment or death. In doing so, Prince Escalus shows fairness. Lady Capulet wanted Romeo dead, arguing that Benvolio is a Montague

and is therefore lying about how a Capulet was killed. Prince Escalus has now been touched personally by the feud of the Montagues and the Capulets because Mercutio was a relative of his.

- The Elizabethans used the death penalty or banishment for many crimes simply because imprisonment is expensive.

Act 3, Scene 2

- This scene should be compared to Act 2, Scene 5. In both, the Nurse is scatter-brained and does not quickly tell Juliet what she knows. In this scene, the Nurse is not teasing Juliet, so I doubt if she teasing Juliet in the other scene.

- Waiting for the Nurse, Juliet thinks about losing her virginity.

- The Nurse says several times, “He is dead,” and Juliet thinks immediately that Romeo has committed suicide. Later, the Nurse says that Tybalt is dead, and Juliet thinks that both Romeo and Tybalt are dead. Finally, Juliet discovers the truth.

- At first, Juliet strongly criticizes Romeo (she must have loved her relative Tybalt), then she realizes that she must stand by Romeo (her husband) and defends him to the Nurse. The Nurse tells her that Romeo is hiding in Friar Lawrence’s cell, and Juliet gives the Nurse a ring to deliver to Romeo.

Act 3, Scene 3

- Romeo is acting his very young age in Friar Lawrence’s cell, weeping and panicking. He is afraid that Juliet thinks that he is a murderer, and he is very willing to kill himself. Friar Lawrence criticizes him and tries to comfort him.

- Even when the Nurse knocks on Friar Lawrence’s door, Romeo refuses to get up and hide. He prefers to be captured and killed, because he does not want to be banished and

forced to stay in a city away from Juliet. Romeo draws a dagger to kill himself, but the Nurse takes it away from him.

- Friar Lawrence tells Romeo that he is blessed in three ways: 1) Juliet is alive, 2) Tybalt wanted to kill Romeo, but instead Romeo killed Tybalt, and 3) Instead of being sentenced to death, Romeo is sentenced only to exile.

- Friar Lawrence has a good plan for Romeo: 1) Go to Juliet and have your wedding night, 2) Go into exile in Mantua (only 25 miles away) while Friar Lawrence attempts to have Prince Escalus revoke the sentence, 3) While in Mantua, wait for news that Friar Lawrence will send by way of Romeo's servant Balthazar. Friar Lawrence then tells the Nurse to await Romeo for his wedding night with Juliet.

Act 3, Scene 4

- Paris comes to the Capulets' house to see Juliet, but her parents say that she is mourning Tybalt. Paris understands. He starts to leave, but Capulet suddenly decides that Juliet and Paris shall be married Thursday in a small ceremony. What are Capulet's reasons for doing that? In later scenes, we hear that he arranges the marriage to keep Juliet from mourning Tybalt so much. However, he may have decided that he needs a political ally. Prince Escalus has just given both the Capulets and the Montagues a heavy fine, so Capulet may think it a good idea for Juliet to marry a relative of Prince Escalus.

- While the Capulets and Paris are arranging the wedding, Romeo and Juliet are upstairs enjoying their wedding night.

Act 3, Scene 5

- This is known as the second balcony scene. Romeo and Juliet appear at the balcony after having spent the night together. Dawn is near, but Juliet pretends that it is not, so that Romeo can stay longer with her. Juliet says that they

hear the nightingale and not the morning lark, and she says that the dawn is not dawn but a meteor that will light Romeo's way to Mantua. However, when Romeo says that he will stay even though it means his death, Juliet realizes the real danger that he is in and urges him to leave.

- The Nurse arrives and lets Juliet know that Lady Capulet is coming. Juliet tells Romeo that she must hear from him every hour in the day, and she wonders if they will ever see each other again. She also has a vision in which she thinks that Romeo looks dead.
- Lady Capulet first tells Juliet that she would like to poison Romeo. Juliet uses words of double meaning to convince her mother that she hates Romeo while also revealing her real feelings for him.
- When Lady Capulet tells Juliet of the arranged marriage with Paris, Juliet says that she will not marry Paris — indeed, she is more likely to marry Romeo.
- Capulet and Lady Capulet disown Juliet if she will not marry Paris. The Nurse also advises Juliet to marry Paris, saying that Romeo is but a dishcloth to him. The Nurse is advising Juliet to commit bigamy.
- Juliet breaks with the Nurse, telling herself that she will no longer confide in the Nurse. Juliet says that having made her father angry, she will go to Friar Lawrence and make confession. Of course, she also plans to ask Friar Lawrence for advice.
- If all else fails, Juliet tells herself, she still has the power to commit suicide. This, of course, is foreshadowing.

Act 4, Scene 1

- This scene takes place two days after Romeo and Juliet meet and two days before Juliet is supposed to marry Paris.

- Paris wishes to marry Juliet, and he goes to Friar Lawrence to arrange the wedding. There, he meets Juliet, who is, of course, cold to the wedding.
- Paris is not evil. He does not know that Romeo and Juliet are married. If he did, he would not be trying to marry her.
- Juliet tells Paris that her face is not her own. Of course, the audience knows that her face — and the rest of her — belongs to Romeo.
- Juliet is very willing to kill herself if Friar Lawrence cannot come up with a plan so that she does not have to marry Paris and commit bigamy. Juliet is determined to remain faithful to Romeo.
- Friar Lawrence thinks fast and comes up with a plan: 1) Juliet is to tell her parents that she has decided to marry Paris, 2) The night before the wedding, she is to drink a potion that will make her appear to be dead for 42 hours. 3) Her parents will think that she is dead on the morning of her wedding, 4) The Friar will send word to Romeo in Mantua about their plan, and 5) Romeo will be present in the tomb when Juliet awakens so that he can rescue her.
- This plan is based on Friar Lawrence's deep knowledge of plants.
- Juliet shows her strength of will and consents to Friar Lawrence's plan.
- Friar Lawrence is a good-hearted man, but he is certainly capable of scheming. He secretly marries Romeo and Juliet without their parents' knowledge, and he formulates this plan of a fake death instead of simply revealing that Romeo and Juliet are married.

Act 4, Scene 2

- Juliet's father is so pleased by Juliet's acceptance of the wedding that he moves it forward. It will now take place Wednesday instead of Thursday.
- Juliet is a remarkably good actress. She is able to convince the Nurse and her parents that she is in favor of the wedding with Paris.
- Capulet is a happy man when he gets his way.
- Why does Capulet move the wedding forward a day? Two possible reasons are 1) He is worried about Juliet's excessive mourning (he thinks that she is mourning because Tybalt has been killed, but she actually is mourning because Romeo has been banished from Verona), and 2) Capulet needs a political ally, and Paris, who is related to Prince Escalus, will make a wonderful political ally.
- Capulet may feel in need of a political ally because Prince Escalus recently heavily fined (after the deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt) both the families of Capulet and Montague.
- Lady Capulet objects to moving the wedding forward a day because, she says, there will not be enough food for all the guests. Apparently, the wedding has turned out to be larger than originally planned.

Act 4, Scene 3

- Juliet asks the Nurse and her mother to let her be alone for her wedding preparations. Juliet knows that she must act alone when she takes the potion. Previously, she broke with the Nurse, so now the Nurse is no longer her confidant.
- Juliet takes the potion despite having some very specific fears: 1) The potion may not work, and so she may be forced to marry Paris anyway. 2) The Friar has perhaps given her poison so that no one will find out that he secretly married

Romeo and Juliet without their parents' knowledge. 3) She may suffocate in the tomb before being rescued. 4) She may go insane in the tomb and dash her own brains out. 5) She may encounter Tybalt's ghost, which she imagines is searching for Romeo.

- Juliet overcomes her fears and drinks the potion. This shows strength on Juliet's part.
- We see foreshadowing in this scene. Juliet drinks the potion, just as Romeo will later drink the poison he gets from the impoverished, starving Apothecary.

Act 4, Scene 4

- This is a short comic scene. It is a comic interlude between two serious scenes: Juliet's drinking the potion and Juliet's being found "dead."
- Capulet is bustling around, interfering with the wedding preparations and getting on everyone's nerves.
- Capulet says, "Make haste, make haste" (4.4.16). Haste is certainly a defining characteristic of this play. Romeo and Juliet made haste to be married after falling in love. Romeo will make haste to kill himself after learning that Juliet is "dead."
- Music is heard — Paris is coming.
- Capulet sends the Nurse to wake up Juliet.

Act 4, Scene 5

- The Nurse, coarse as always, jokes that Juliet should get some sleep now because Paris won't let her sleep at night later.
- The Nurse does not at all mind that Juliet will be committing bigamy by marrying Paris.

- When Juliet is found “dead,” everyone mourns — Paris, the Nurse, Capulet, and Lady Capulet. Capulet seems to have loved Juliet, despite wanting her to marry his choice and threatening to throw her out of her home if she did not.
- Friar Lawrence comforts the family by saying that Juliet has gone to a better place. He then begins to make preparations for the funeral.
- At the end of this scene appears a short comic interlude. Peter, the illiterate Capulet servant, wants to hear the musicians play a song called “Heart’s Ease,” but they won’t play it because it is a happy song and unsuitable for the occasion.
- Peter and the musicians joke around, and the musicians decide to stay for a meal.
- The tragedy of Juliet’s death is not a tragedy for the musicians, who want pay for their services and a free meal.

Act 5, Scene 1

- Romeo has a dream that makes him happy. He dreamt that he was dead, but that Juliet kissed him and awakened him. Ironically, he will kiss Juliet and awaken her, but because of a quick-acting poison, he will be dead by the time she awakens.
- Romeo’s servant, Balthasar, worries about Romeo after Romeo learns that Juliet is dead because he looks so wild and distraught. Romeo is grieving greatly for Juliet.
- After Romeo’s servant, Balthasar, tells him that Juliet is dead, Romeo immediately seeks out a poor (impoverished) and starving apothecary. Earlier, Romeo had noticed that the apothecary was poor, and he had filed that fact away in his mind in case he ever needed to buy poison.

- Why does it matter if the apothecary is poor? In Mantua, it's against the law to sell poison; in fact, the penalty for selling poison is death. Only a very poor man with a great need for money would sell poison. Certainly, the apothecary is in great need of money. When Romeo gives the apothecary the money for the poison, he tells the apothecary to buy food so he can put on some weight.
- When Romeo hears of the "death" of Juliet, he cries out, "Then I defy you, stars!" (5.1.24). By that, he means that fate (chance or astrology or according to some, Providence) has conspired to separate Juliet and him, but that he will defy fate by killing himself and being reunited with Juliet in death.
- My own interpretation of fate is that it consists of chance and character. Chance happenings occur in the play, and the characters react to them.
- I don't regard Providence (God) as causing the deaths of Romeo and Juliet because I don't think that an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent God would cause their deaths in order to end the feud of the Montagues and Capulets.

Act 5, Scene 2

- In this scene, we find out that Friar John was unable to deliver Friar Lawrence's letter to Romeo because a Friar that he had asked to accompany him on the journey had been doing good deeds by ministering to people suffering from the plague, and so the two Friars had been quarantined.
- In this scene, we see again the role of chance in the play. The tragedy of Romeo and Juliet could have been averted had 1) Friar Lawrence asked someone else to deliver the letter, 2) Friar John had not asked this particular monk to accompany him, 3) the monk not been attending plague

victims, 4) the authorities not arrived as the two monks were leaving, and 5) the marriage not been moved ahead by a day.

- Juliet will wake up in three hours. Friar Lawrence does not think that Romeo will be there in the tomb when Juliet wakes up; therefore, Friar Lawrence will go to the tomb to be present when she awakens.

Act 5, Scene 3

- Three deaths occur in this scene: Paris, Romeo, and Juliet.
- Count Paris does love Juliet. He has gone to her tomb to scatter flowers and to sprinkle sweet (perfumed) water. He says that he will cry for her.
- Romeo lies to Balthasar, saying that he has come to take a ring from Juliet's hand. Of course, Romeo intends to kill himself. Romeo tells Balthasar to give him a crowbar (so Romeo can open the tomb), to deliver a letter to Montague (Romeo's father), and to go away and not disturb him.
- Balthasar stays because he is worried about Romeo.
- When Paris enters, Paris withdraws into the night, so that he can see what Romeo intends to do. When Paris recognizes Romeo, he thinks that Romeo has come to desecrate the body of either Tybalt or of Juliet or both. Therefore, Paris tries to arrest Romeo, but Romeo resists and kills Paris.
- Romeo did not recognize Paris, and he did not want to kill Paris (or any other man). Paris' dying request is to be buried in the tomb with Juliet, and Romeo complies with that dying request. This is generous of Romeo. Romeo also begs forgiveness from Tybalt.
- Romeo is amazed that Juliet is still beautiful and that she does not look dead. He takes poison.

- Friar Lawrence enters, alone (because Balthasar is afraid to accompany him), finds Paris and Romeo, and when Juliet awakens, tells her that he will put her in a nunnery. Cries from the Watch (Police) are heard, Friar Lawrence is afraid, and he exits, leaving Juliet alone in the tomb.
- Juliet kisses Romeo, hoping that enough poison remains on his lips to kill her, too. When that doesn't work, she uses Romeo's dagger to kill herself.
- The Watch arrives, Balthasar and Friar Lawrence are arrested, and Prince Escalus arrives and takes charge of the investigation. Friar Lawrence tells the truth, and his story is backed up by Romeo's letter to Montague (Romeo's father).
- Prince Escalus and other learn that Lady Montague has died of grief because Romeo had been banished.
- Prince Escalus points out that everyone has been punished. The Capulets have been punished by the deaths of Tybalt and of Juliet. The Montagues have been punished by the deaths of Lady Montague (who died of grief because Romeo had been banished) and of Romeo. Prince Escalus himself has been punished by the deaths of Mercutio and of Paris.
- Prince Escalus too harshly blames himself for these deaths, thinking that he has been too lenient in trying to stop the feud. (The death penalty for fighting in public does not sound lenient to me.)
- Finally, the Capulets and the Montagues end the feud. Montague says that he will raise up a gold statue of Juliet, and Capulet says that he will raise up a gold statue of Romeo.
- By dying, Romeo and Juliet have established a peace that would have allowed them to marry and to live.
- Some cynics may say that the peace will not last and the feud will be renewed, but I don't see why it should. Romeo,

the only son of the Montagues, is dead. Juliet, the last living child of the Capulets, is dead. The fathers are old; it is time to have peace between the families. Also, the Prologue told us that the feud will end with the deaths of Romeo and Juliet.

Appendix I: Shakespeare Checklist

Check to make sure that you are not making these common errors.

- Make sure that the titles of plays are underlined or italicized.

Macbeth

Hamlet

Romeo and Juliet

- Make sure that you use numbers to refer to acts and lines that you cite in your paper.

(5.14-15) = Act 5, lines 14-15

- Make sure that you use MLA style when quoting Shakespeare.
- Make sure that you use a dash — not a hyphen — when a dash is needed.

Dashes are longer than hyphens.

— is longer than -

- Make sure that you use a hyphen when a hyphen is needed (as when you put two words together to form an adjective that appears before the noun it modifies).

Epic poems are thought-provoking literature.

- Make sure that you use a comma after an introductory element.

Although Macbeth begins the play as a morally good hero, he ends the play as a morally evil tyrant.

- Make sure that you put commas and periods inside quotation marks — this is the American style.

“Hi,” said Sally. George replied, “Hello.”

- Make sure you proofread well. Make sure you spell words correctly (double-check difficult-to-spell names) and use apostrophes, commas, etc. correctly.
- Make sure you do a spelling check one final time before printing your paper. Often, a writer will misspell a word during revision.

Appendix J: How Should I Quote Poetry in Shakespeare?

Notes

- 1) For information about the MLA style of using quotations, see almost any English handbook.
- 2) Your major papers will be double-spaced.
- 3) Use a Works Cited list.

Identify the Act, Scene, and Line Number(s)

For example, 2.2.2-3 means Act 2, scene, lines 2-3.

For example, 3.1.64-70 means Act 3, scene 1, lines 64-70.

A Note on How to Tell Poetry from Prose in Shakespeare

Shakespeare uses both poetry and prose in his plays. A quick way to differentiate between the two is to look at capitalization. If each line of a passage begins with a capital letter, it is poetry; if it does not, it is prose. This is true of the Signet Classic edition.

How to Quote Short Passages of Poetry (Three Lines or Fewer)

- When quoting three or fewer lines of poetry, run them in with your text.
- Use a slash mark to separate the lines of poetry.
- Use a blank space before and after the slash mark.
- Quote poetry correctly, both in content and in style. (Quote every word accurately, and use the punctuation that appears in the original quotation.)
- Tell the reader where the passage is located. Use numbers to indicate act, scene, and lines of the passage.

- Use quotation marks.

For example:

When Romeo first sees Juliet in the Capulets' garden, he says, "But, soft! What light through yonder window breaks? / It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!" (2.2.2-3).

How to Quote Long Passages of Poetry (Four Lines or More)

- When quoting four or more lines of poetry, indent the lines a little more than you indent the paragraphs. (This is MLA style.)
- Do not center the lines of poetry.
- Do not use quotation marks unless they appear in the original lines of poetry.
- Be aware that some dialogue in plays by Shakespeare is poetry and must be quoted as poetry.
- Quote poetry correctly, both in content and in style. (Quote every word accurately, and use the punctuation that appears in the original quotation.)
- Tell the reader where the passage is located. Use numbers to indicate act, scene, and lines of the passage.

For example, the below quotation is correct. It is quoted as poetry — the lines break exactly where they break in the poem.

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Titania says,

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;
Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;
Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,

Some war with rere-mice for their leathern wings,
 To make my small elves coats, and some keep back
 The clamorous owl that nightly hoots and wonders
 At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
 Then to your offices and let me rest. (2.2.1-8)

Another correct quotation:

Macbeth says,

No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,
 For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;
 For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered;
 Put rancors in the vessel of my peace
 Only for them, and mine eternal jewel
 Given to the common enemy of man,
 To make them kings, the seeds of Banquo kings!
 (3.1.64-70)

- Be sure capitalization remains the same as in the original source. If the original source capitalizes the beginning of each line, your quotation should do the same.
- Note that no quotation marks are needed unless they appear in the original source. The indentation shows that the passage is a quotation.
- Look up the quotation to see that it is quoted correctly, with no words left out. Make sure that the poetry is quoted as poetry, not as prose. (Each line of the poem should be indented, as above.)

- Note: You may want to also tell the reader the page number of the quoted passage.

Appendix K: How Can I Identify Very Long Lines of Poetry as Being One Line?

Occasionally, a line of poetry is too long to be set as a single line in a copy of one of William Shakespeare's plays, so the last word or two is printed below the first, long line. However, you may still quote it as a single line.

For example, the Signet Classic edition of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has this:

Call you me fair? That fair again unsay.
 Demetrius loves your fair. O happy fair!
 Your eyes are lodestars, and your tongue's sweet
 air
 More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
 When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
 (1.1.181-185)

The word "air" is printed on a line of its own because the width of the page it is printed on is not long enough for the whole line. How do we know this? We can count the lines. Immediately preceding this quotation, Hermia says, "God speed fair Helena! Whither away?" That line is marked 180. If we count out the lines of Helena's speech, we discover that "Your eyes are lodestars, and your tongue's sweet air" is line 183. If "Your eyes are lodestars, and your tongue's sweet" was line 183, and if "air" was line 184, we would have too many lines. After all, "More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear" would have to be line 185, but the book clearly identifies "When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear" as line 185.

In your papers, you may quote it as a single line.

When Hermia calls Helena fair, Helena replies,

Call you me fair? That fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves your fair. O happy fair!
Your eyes are lodestars, and your tongue's sweet air
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
(1.1.181-185)

Appendix L: How Do I Quote Shakespeare's Prose?

Quote prose with line breaks the way you quote poetry in Shakespeare's plays. To make it easy for scholars to refer to passages in Shakespeare's plays, passages of prose have also been given lines. Therefore, use the line breaks that appear in the play and cite the passages of prose just like you do with poetry.

Here is an example of a short quoted passage of prose from the Signet Classic edition of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*:

When Mercutio has been fatally wounded by Tybalt, he makes a final joke: "Ask / for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave / man" (3.1.98-100).

Here is an example of a longer passage of quoted prose from the Signet Classic edition of *Romeo and Juliet*:

When Mercutio has been fatally wounded by Tybalt, he makes a final joke even as he calls down a plague on both the House of Capulet and the House of Montague:

No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide
 as a church door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve. Ask
 for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave
 man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A
 plague a both your houses! Zounds, a dog, a rat, a
 mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! A braggart,
 a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arith-
 metic! Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt
 under your arm. (3.1.97-105)

- Note: You may want to also tell the reader the page number of the quoted passage.

Appendix M: Short Reaction Memos

The questions in this short guide to William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* can be used in discussions; however, they can also be used for short reaction memos. For example, I do this at Ohio University. See below for the assignment and sample short reaction memos.

How Do I Complete the Reaction Memo Assignments?

During the quarter, you will have to write a series of short memos in which you write about the readings you have been assigned.

Each memo should be at least 250 words, not counting long quotations from the work of literature. Include a word count for each memo, although that is not normally part of the memo format.

Following the memo heading (To, From, Re, Date, Words), write the question you are answering and the part of the book that the question applies to.

You may answer one question or more than one question. I will supply you with a list of questions that you may answer

Note that a Works Cited list is needed if you use quotations.

For examples from my Great Books courses at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, see below.

To: David Bruce

From: Jane Student

Re: *Odyssey*, Book 12 Reaction Memo

Date: Put Today's Date Here

Words: 323

***Odyssey*, Book 12: Is Odysseus a bad leader?**

This is an important question in the *Odyssey*. After all, Odysseus leads 12 ships and many men to Troy, but the ships are all destroyed and all of his men die and he returns home to Ithaca alone. Who is responsible for the deaths of Odysseus' men? Is Odysseus responsible for their deaths, or do the men bear some responsibility for their own deaths? Many readers prefer Odysseus, the great individualist, to Aeneas, the man who founds the Roman people, but then they realize that all of Odysseus' men died, while Aeneas succeeded in bringing many Trojans to Italy. When readers think of that, they begin to have a greater respect for Aeneas.

From the beginning of the *Odyssey*, this has been an issue. The bard says that the men perished because of the "recklessness of their own ways" (1.8). However, we notice that Odysseus is asleep at odd times. In Book 10, Aeolus gives Odysseus a bag in which the contrary winds have been tied up. This allows Odysseus to sail to Ithaca safely. However, they reach the island and see smoke rising from the fires, Odysseus goes to sleep and his men open the bag, letting the contrary winds escape, and the ship is blown back to King Aeolus' island. Similarly, in Book 12, on the island of the Sun-god, Odysseus is asleep when his men sacrifice the Sun-god's cattle.

It does seem that Odysseus does not bear the blame for his men's death. In many cases, they do perish through their own

stupidity. In other cases, of course, they die during war or during adventures, but in those times, Odysseus was with them, and he could have died, too.

One other thing to think about is that Odysseus is telling his own story. Could he be lying? After all, some of the adventures he relates are pretty incredible. (Probably not. The gods vouch for some of what he says.)

Works Cited

Homer. *The Odyssey*. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin Books, 1996. Print.

To: David Bruce

From: Jane Student

Re: *Inferno*, Canto 1 Reaction Memo

Date: Put Today's Date Here

Words: 263

***Inferno*, Canto 1**

• What do you need to be a member of the Afterlife in Dante's *Inferno*?

To be a member of the afterlife in Hell, you must meet a number of criteria:

- 1) You must be dead.
- 2) You must be an unrepentant sinner.
- 3) You must be a dead, unrepentant sinner by 1300.

Of course, only dead people — with a few exceptions such as Dante the Pilgrim — can be found in the *Inferno*.

Only unrepentant sinners can be found in the *Inferno*. Everyone has sinned, but sinners who repented their sins are found in Purgatory or Paradise, not in the *Inferno*.

Dante set his *Divine Comedy* in 1300, so the characters who appear in it are dead in 1300.

***Inferno*, Canto 1**

• What does it mean to repent?

A sinner who repents regrets having committed the sin. The repentant sinner vows not to commit the sin again, and he or she does his or her best not to commit the sin again.

***Inferno*, Canto 1**

• What is the geography of Hell? In *The Divine Comedy*, where is Hell located?

Hell is located straight down. We will find out later that when Lucifer was thrown out of Paradise, he fell to the Earth, ending up at the center of the Earth. The center of the Earth is the lowest part of Hell. Lucifer created the Mountain of Purgatory when he hit the Earth.

To: David Bruce

From: Jane Student

Re: *Candide*, Ch. 26-30

Date: Today's Date

Words: 368

Ch. 30: Write a brief character analysis of the old man and his family.

When Candide and his friends meet the old man, the old man is “sitting in front of his door beneath an arbor of orange trees, enjoying the fresh air” (119). The old man basically ignores politics that he cannot influence. Some people have recently been killed in Constantinople, and the old man does not even know their names. However, the old man does enjoy some material things, including good food, and he enjoys hospitality.

The old man invites Candide and his friends to enjoy some refreshments inside his house. They are served with “several kinds of fruit-flavored drinks” and “boiled cream with pieces of candied citron in it, oranges, lemons, limes, pineapples, pistachio nuts, and mocha coffee” (119). The old man and his family have an abundance of food, but although Candide wonders if the old man has an enormous farm, the old man

tells him, “I have only twenty acres of land, which my children and I cultivate. Our work keeps us free of three great evils: boredom, vice, and poverty” (119).

From this brief encounter, we learn several things:

- The old man and his family are content — even happy.
- The old man and his family ignore the wars and murders and crimes that happen elsewhere.
- The old man and his family have enough. They work hard on their little farm, and they have plenty of food and good things to eat.
- The old man and his family have only 20 acres, but 20 acres are enough.

Candide and his friends decide to emulate the old man and his family. Each of them begins to work hard on their little farm. Cunegonde learns to make pastry, Paquette begins to embroider, and the old woman does the laundry and repairs the linen. Brother Giroflée becomes a carpenter, and Candide and the others grow “abundant crops” (120). At the end of the short novel, the group of friends seem to have come the closest they can to happiness in a world filled with evil, but it does take an effort on their part. As Candide says in the short novel’s last words, “... we must cultivate our garden” (120).

Works Cited

Voltaire. *Candide*. Trans. Lowell Bair. New York: Bantam Books, 1981. Print.

To: David Bruce

From: Jane Student

Re: *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, Ch. 1-4 Reaction Memo

Date: Put Today's Date Here

Words: 286

CH. 3: "KNIGHTS OF THE TABLE ROUND"

• What hints do we have of the relationship between Queen Guenever and Sir Launcelot?

Some hanky-panky is going on between Sir Launcelot and King Arthur's wife, Queen Guenever. Some six or eight prisoners address her, and they tell her that they have been captured by Sir Kay the Seneschal. Immediately, surprise and astonishment are felt by everybody present. The queen looks disappointed because she had hoped that the prisoners were captured by Sir Launcelot.

As it turns out, they were. Sir Launcelot first rescued Sir Kay from some attackers, then he took Sir Kay's armor and horse and captured more knights. All of these prisoners were actually captured by Sir Launcelot, not by Sir Kay at all.

Two passages let us know that something is going on between Sir Launcelot and Queen Guenever:

1. The first is subtle; she looks disappointed when Sir Kay says that he captured the knights: "Surprise and astonishment flashed from face to face all over the house; the queen's gratified smile faded out at the name of Sir Kay, and she looked disappointed ..." (503).
2. The other is much more overt and occurs after Guenever learns that the knight who really captured the prisoners was Sir Launcelot: "Well, it was touching to see the queen blush

and smile, and look embarrassed and happy, and fling furtive glances at Sir Launcelot that would have got him shot in Arkansas, to a dead certainty” (503).

Works Cited

Twain, Mark. *Four Complete Novels*. New York: Gramercy Books, 1982. Print.

Appendix N: About the Author

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy — me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine’s brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka “The Joker,” decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name — David — ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn’t been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don’t often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for “sounds like” and “two words,” then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn’t let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor’s degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a Master of Arts degree in English and a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy. Yes, I have my MAMA degree.

Currently, and for a long time to come (I eat fruits and veggies), I am spending my retirement writing books such as *Nadia Comaneci: Perfect 10*, *The Funniest People in Dance*, *Homer’s Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*, and *William Shakespeare’s Othello: A Retelling in Prose*.

By the way, my sister Brenda Kennedy writes romances such as *A New Beginning* and *Shattered Dreams*.

Appendix O: Some Books by David Bruce

Discussion Guides Series

Dante's Inferno: A Discussion Guide

Dante's Paradise: A Discussion Guide

Dante's Purgatory: A Discussion Guide

Forrest Carter's The Education of Little Tree: A Discussion Guide

Homer's Iliad: A Discussion Guide

Homer's Odyssey: A Discussion Guide

Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice: A Discussion Guide

Jerry Spinelli's Maniac Magee: A Discussion Guide

Jerry Spinelli's Stargirl: A Discussion Guide

Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal": A Discussion Guide

Lloyd Alexander's The Black Cauldron: A Discussion Guide

Lloyd Alexander's The Book of Three: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain's The Adventures of Tom Sawyer: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain's The Prince and the Pauper: A Discussion Guide

Nancy Garden's Annie on My Mind: A Discussion Guide

Nicholas Sparks' A Walk to Remember: A Discussion Guide

Virgil's Aeneid: A Discussion Guide

Virgil's "The Fall of Troy": A Discussion Guide

Voltaire's Candide: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Discussion Guide

William Sleator's Oddballs: A Discussion Guide

(*Oddballs* is an excellent source for teaching how to write autobiographical essays/personal narratives.)

Philosophy for the Masses Series

Philosophy for the Masses: Ethics

Philosophy for the Masses: Metaphysics and More

Philosophy for the Masses: Religion

Retellings of a Classic Work of Literature

Ben Jonson's The Alchemist: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Bartholomew Fair: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Case is Altered: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Catiline's Conspiracy: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Devil is an Ass: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Epicene: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Every Man in His Humor: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The New Inn: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Staple of News: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Volpone, or the Fox: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's Complete Plays: Retellings

Christopher Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: Retellings of the 1604 A-Text and of the 1616 B-Text

Christopher Marlowe's Edward II: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's The Massacre at Paris: A Retelling

- Christopher Marlowe's The Rich Jew of Malta: A Retelling*
- Christopher Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Parts 1 and 2: Retellings*
- Dante's Divine Comedy: A Retelling in Prose*
- Dante's Inferno: A Retelling in Prose*
- Dante's Purgatory: A Retelling in Prose*
- Dante's Paradise: A Retelling in Prose*
- The Famous Victories of Henry V: A Retelling*
- From the Iliad to the Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose of Quintus of Smyrna's Posthomerica*
- George Peele: Five Plays Retold in Modern English*
- George Peele's The Arraignment of Paris: A Retelling*
- George Peele's The Battle of Alcazar: A Retelling*
- George's Peele's David and Bathsheba, and the Tragedy of Absalom: A Retelling*
- George Peele's Edward I: A Retelling*
- George Peele's The Old Wives' Tale: A Retelling*
- George-A-Greene, The Pinner of Wakefield: A Retelling*
- The History of King Leir: A Retelling*
- Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*
- Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose*
- Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes' Argonautica*
- The Jests of George Peele: A Retelling*
- John Ford: Eight Plays Translated into Modern English*
- John Ford's The Broken Heart: A Retelling*
- John Ford's The Fancies, Chaste and Noble: A Retelling*
- John Ford's The Lady's Trial: A Retelling*

- John Ford's The Lover's Melancholy: A Retelling*
- John Ford's Love's Sacrifice: A Retelling*
- John Ford's Perkin Warbeck: A Retelling*
- John Ford's The Queen: A Retelling*
- John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore: A Retelling*
- John Webster's The White Devil: A Retelling*
- King Edward III: A Retelling*
- The Merry Devil of Edmonton: A Retelling*
- Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay: A Retelling*
- The Taming of a Shrew: A Retelling*
- Tarlton's Jests: A Retelling*
- The Trojan War and Its Aftermath: Four Ancient Epic Poems*
- Virgil's Aeneid: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 5 Late Romances: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 10 Histories: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 11 Tragedies: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 12 Comedies: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 38 Plays: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 2 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 1 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 3 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 3: A Retelling in Prose*

William Shakespeare's All's Well that Ends Well: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's As You Like It: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Coriolanus: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Cymbeline: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Henry V: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Henry VIII: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's King John: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's King Lear: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Love's Labor's Lost: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Othello: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Pericles, Prince of Tyre: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Richard II: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Richard III: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Tempest: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Timon of Athens: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Two Gentlemen of Verona: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Two Noble Kinsmen: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale: A Retelling in Prose

Children's Biography

Nadia Comaneci: Perfect Ten

Personal Finance

How to Manage Your Money: A Guide for the Non-Rich

Anecdote Collections

250 Anecdotes About Opera

250 Anecdotes About Religion

250 Anecdotes About Religion: Volume 2

250 Music Anecdotes

Be a Work of Art: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

Boredom is Anti-Life: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

The Coolest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in the Arts: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes

Create, Then Take a Break: 250 Anecdotes

Don't Fear the Reaper: 250 Anecdotes

- The Funniest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Books, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Books, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Dance: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 4: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 5: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Families, Volume 6: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Music: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Music, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Music, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Neighborhoods: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Relationships: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Sports, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People in Television and Radio: 250 Anecdotes*
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- The Funniest People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Funniest People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds, Volume 1: 250 Anecdotes*
- The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

Maximum Cool: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Politics and History: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Religion: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

Reality is Fabulous: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

Resist Psychic Death: 250 Anecdotes

Seize the Day: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

**Appendix P: Excerpt from *William Shakespeare's
Romeo and Juliet: A Retelling* by David Bruce**

The Capulets and the Montagues — two families, very much alike in most respects — in the beautiful city of Verona, Italy, battle each other because of a long-standing feud. Because of this feud, the hands of the citizens of Verona become dirty with the blood of other citizens of Verona. The two families have given birth to two children — a boy named Romeo and a girl named Juliet — who become ill-fated lovers and commit suicide. The burial of these lovers also buries the quarrel between their two families. These lovers' story is told in this book.

— 1.1 —

On a street of Verona, Sampson and Gregory, two servants of the Capulet family, walked and talked. They wore swords and carried small, round shields. Sampson was in a mood to boast about his masculinity, and both were in a mood to make jokes.

Sampson said, "Gregory, you and I are not the type to take insults lightly."

Gregory replied, "Neither of us is a lightweight."

"If anyone should make us angry and choleric, we would draw our swords."

"I definitely recommend that you not be collared by the city guards."

Sampson said, "When I am moved by anger, I strike quickly with my sword."

Gregory replied, "True, but it is best to not be quickly moved to strike."

“Any member of the family of Montague can quickly move me to anger.”

“To quickly move is to run. A courageous man will stand and face the enemy. Are you telling me that when you meet a Montague you will run away?”

Sampson said, “A male Montague will move me to anger and a female Montague will make a certain part of my body move to make a stand. If we meet a Montague man on the street, I will make the Montague man walk in the gutter while I walk next to this wall.”

Gregory replied, “Doesn’t that mean that you are weak? The weaker sex walks on the side away from the street while the stronger sex walks next to the street. Members of the weaker sex will walk next to this wall.”

“You talk truthfully. Women are weak and need to be specially treated. If we meet a Montague man, I will push him into the gutter. But if we meet a Montague woman, I will nail her ass to this wall.”

“This feud is between the heads of the Capulets and the Montagues. And yet, the feud extends between other members of the two families and even to servants, such as us.”

Sampson replied, “So be it. I will act like a tyrant. I will fight the Montague men, and then I will cruelly cut off the heads of the Montague maids.”

“The heads of the maids?” Gregory asked.

“Yes, the heads of the maids, or better, I will break their maidenheads. Take it either way, but while I am alive, let no Montague hymen be unbroken.”

“If the Montague maids take it, they will feel it inside them.”

Sampson said, “I will stand and deliver. Part of me will stand up, and I will deliver it to the Montague maids. What I will deliver to the Montague maids is a pretty piece of flesh.”

“It is good that you are flesh and not fish,” Gregory said. “If you were fish, you would be dried fish — dried and shriveled up.”

Gregory saw Abraham and Balthasar, two servants of the Montague family, and said to Samson, “Draw your sword. Here come two Montagues.”

“My naked sword is out of its scabbard, but if these two Montagues were Montague women and not Montague men, my sword is not the naked tool I would now be displaying. Pick a quarrel with these Montagues — I have your back.”

“In what way? Will you turn your back and run?”

“Don’t worry.”

“As long as I have *you* at my back, I worry.”

Sampson said, “Let’s not break the law. Let them start a quarrel.”

“I will frown as I pass by them,” Gregory said. “They can take it as they wish.”

“That’s not enough,” Samson said. “I will rub my nose with my middle finger. If they don’t start a fight, they will be thought to be cowardly.”

As Abraham and Balthasar neared them, Samson pulled his fingers into a fist, extended his middle finger, and rubbed the tip of his nose while staring at the Montague servants.

Abraham asked angrily, “Are you giving us the finger?”

“I am indeed giving the finger,” Samson replied.

“Yes, I can see that you are,” Abraham said, “but are you giving *us* the finger?”

Samson asked Gregory, “Is the law on our side, if I say yes?”

“No,” Gregory replied.

Samson said to the Montague servants, “No, I am not giving you the finger, but I am giving the finger.”

Gregory said to the Montague servants, “Are you picking a fight with us?”

“A fight?” Abraham said. “No.”

“If you want to fight, I will fight you,” Sampson said. “My boss is as good as yours.”

“He is no better,” Abraham said.

Gregory said, “Say that our boss is better than his boss. I see a reinforcement coming: Benvolio, a relative of our boss.”

“You are wrong,” Samson said to Abraham. “Our boss is better than your boss.”

“You lie!” Abraham shouted.

“Draw your swords if you are men,” Sampson said. “Gregory, get ready to fight — you know how to cut and slash with your sword.”

Benvolio, a peacemaker, drew his sword and tried to stop the fight. He shouted, “Part, fools! Put up your swords; you know not what you do!” He used his sword to beat down their swords.

Tybalt, a Montague, came running with his sword drawn and said to Benvolio, “You have drawn your sword among these stupid servants. Turn, and face a worthy opponent. Turn, and face your death.”

“I do but try to keep the peace,” Benvolio said. “Put up your sword, or use it to help me separate these quarreling men.”

“What! You have drawn your sword, and you are talking about being a peacekeeper!” Tybalt mocked. “I hate the word ‘peace’ as I hate Hell, all Montagues, and you. Let’s fight, coward!”

Tybalt and Benvolio fought.

News of the fight spread quickly, and soon several Capulets and Montagues came running and started to fight. Some guards — officers of the law — also arrived.

A guard shouted, “Beat down the weapons of both the Capulets and the Montagues! Stop this fight!”

Old Capulet, the head of the Capulet family, heard the commotion. Still in his nightgown, he ran out of his house and shouted, “What noise is this? Give me my long sword!”

His much younger wife, Mrs. Capulet, said to him, “Why are you asking for a sword? You can get much more use out of a crutch!”

Old Capulet repeated, “Bring me my sword, I say! Old Montague has come, and he has drawn his blade in defiance of me.”

Old Montague and his wife arrived on the scene. Old Montague shouted, “Old Capulet, you are a villain!”

His wife grabbed onto him. He shouted at her, “Hold me not! Let me go!”

She told him, “You shall not stir a foot to seek a foe.”

The Prince of Verona and his armed bodyguards rode into the street. Prince Escalus wanted a peaceful city, and he was determined to have one, even if he had to threaten to torture and kill some people to get peace.

The Prince shouted, “Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace, you who coat your steel swords with your neighbors’ blood, listen to me! Either throw your weapons to the ground or be sentenced to death by torture.”

They threw down their weapons. The Prince was the ruler of the city, and if he ordered his bodyguards to kill someone, his bodyguards would instantly obey him.

The Prince continued, “Three brawls in the street have disturbed the peace of our city. Three brawls that were caused by words that dissipated into the air — words spoken by you, Old Capulet, and by you, Old Montague. Your airy words have caused you two old men of Verona to put aside your dignified and appropriate behavior and caused you to wield old weapons in your old hands. You are putting weapons that are rusty with peace and disuse in your arthritic hands to serve your hatred of each other. Listen to what I decree: If ever you or your families fight in our streets again, you will pay for your crime with your lives: If you fight, you die!

“Old Capulet, come with me now. Old Montague, come to me this afternoon. Meet me in old Freetown, the court where I make judgments.

“All of you, I order you to leave here. Leave peacefully and immediately, or die.”

Everyone left. Old Montague, his wife, and Benvolio walked away slowly together.