



NEW ORLEANS
SHAKESPEARE
FESTIVAL AT TULANE



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THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Study Guide: Shakespeare Festival at Tulane

DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

Prince Escalus, prince of Verona
Paris, a young nobleman who is kinsman to the Prince, hopes to marry Juliet
Montague, Romeo's father, head of warring households
Capulet, Juliet's father, head of warring households
Romeo, son to Montague
Mercutio, kinsman to the prince, and friend to Romeo
Benvolio, nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo
Tybalt, nephew to Lady Capulet, cousin to Juliet
Friar Laurence, Romeo's confessor
Friar John, A brother of the Franciscan order
Balthasar, servant to Romeo
Sampson, servants to Capulet
Gregory, servants to Capulet
An Apothecary
Page
Lady Montague, wife to Montague, mother to Romeo
Lady Capulet, wife to Capulet, mother to Juliet
Juliet, daughter to Capulet, 14 years old
Nurse, nursemaid to Juliet

SETTING:

The play takes place in Verona (Northern Italy). Mid-July 1302-1303, over the course of 5 days.

KEY FACTS:

Time and Place Written: Probably 1594, London

Date of First Publication: 1597 (in the First Quarto, which was likely an unauthorized incomplete edition); 1599 (in the Second Quarto, which was authorized)

Primary Source of Play: Arthur Brooke's Romeus and Juliet.

PRE-ACTION:

Shakespeare's Chorus describes an "ancient grudge" in medieval Verona between two rival families, the Montagues and the Capulets. We learn later (at I.i.91) that twice in the past, this feud has erupted into bloody street violence. However, Montague's young son,

Romeo, is interested less in the feud than in romance. He has fallen in love with a niece of the Capulet's named Rosaline.

PLOT:

In a prologue to Act I, an actor called "the chorus" recites a sonnet in which he describes the bitter hatred separating the Montagues and Capulets (residents of Verona, a city in northern Italy about sixty-five miles west of Venice and the Adriatic coast) and identifies Romeo and Juliet as lovers who had the misfortune to be born into warring families: "From forth the fatal loins of these two foes [the Montagues and the Capulets] / A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life" (5-6). Take their life appears to have a double-meaning: first, that they come into existence; second, in a foreshadowing of events to come, that they go out of existence by taking their own lives. So it is that, from the very beginning of their existence as human beings within the wombs of their mothers, Romeo and Juliet are doomed by Fate as children of hatred.

So deep is the enmity between the two families that the friends of the Montagues and the friends of the Capulets are also enemies. In the first scene of Act I, two servants of the Capulets, Sampson and Gregory, encounter two servants of the Montagues, Abraham and Balthasar, on a street. Sampson places his thumb between his teeth, then flicks it forward at the Montague servants. This insulting gesture carries the same meaning as an upturned middle finger in modern America. Verbal insults follow and swords cross. Tybalt, a belligerent Capulet ally, lashes out at Benvolio, a friend of Romeo Montague, for attempting to make peace, saying: ". . . Peace! I hate the word, / As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee" (1.1.52-53). The ruckus attracts citizens, peace officers, supporters of the Montagues and Capulets, and eventually Lord and Lady Capulet and Lord and Lady Montague. A brawl ensues. The Prince of Verona, Escalus, intervenes and ends the fray with these stern words: "If ever you disturb our streets again, / Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace" (1.1.82-83)

Romeo is not among the street brawlers, for he has been off brooding in a sycamore grove and nearby woods over a young lady who is his heart's delight, a young lady who denies him her affections. But her name is Rosaline, not Juliet. Rosaline, Lord Capulet's niece, is so fair, Romeo says, that when she dies, all that is beautiful in the world will die with her. However, Rosaline vows to live a life of chastity. She will not yield to love. Nor will she "bide the encounter of assailing eyes, / Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold" (1.1.205-206).

When Lord Capulet holds a dinner party attended by everyone who is anyone in Verona—including the city's most winsome young ladies, Rosaline among them—Romeo attends to see Rosaline and measure her against the other comely maidens. Surely she will outshine them all. Because of the hatred dividing the Capulets and the Montagues, Romeo wears a mask. His friends Benvolio and Mercutio also attend, likewise disguised. Lord Capulet welcomes all the gentlemen attending the party, including the masqueraders, and invites them to dance, saying, "Ladies that have their toes / Unplagu'd with corns will have a bout

with you" (1.5.11-12). And then Romeo notices Juliet. She is flawlessly exquisite; she is stunning, gorgeous, ravishing; she is beyond compare. All thoughts of Rosaline vanish. There is only Juliet. Unable to contain himself, Romeo declares:

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's¹ ear;
 Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear! (1.5.41-44)

Tybalt, Lord Capulet's nephew, recognizes Romeo's voice and threatens violence, asking a boy to bring him his rapier. But Lord Capulet, not wishing to ruin the party, steps in to keep the peace, noting that Romeo is behaving in a gentlemanly manner. Juliet, meanwhile, has noticed Romeo—and fallen deeply in love. She and Romeo exchange beautiful words that seal their love.

ROMEO 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'² kiss. (1.5.93-100)

Later that night, Romeo climbs the wall behind the Capulet house and enters an orchard on the Capulet property. Benvolio and Mercutio, following behind, call out for him, but Romeo does not respond. Mercutio, sensing that Romeo's sudden obsession with Juliet will go amiss, says: "If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark" (2. 1. 38). His words foreshadow the tragic events that follow. When Juliet appears alone at a window overlooking the Capulet orchard, Romeo, observing her from below, 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. (2.2.4-8)

Juliet then unburdens the weight of her thoughts:

O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?

** (NOTE: WHEREFORE MEANS WHY. SHE IS ASKING "WHY ARE YOU ROMEO". IT IS NOT, AS SOME BELIEVE, ASKING "WHERE ARE YOU 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. (2.2.37-40)

After Romeo announces himself to her, they vow undying love. Romeo visits a priest, Friar Laurence, the next day to tell him of his love for Juliet, and the good Franciscan approves of the relationship, believing it will be the key to ending the Montague-Capulet feud. Later, Juliet sends her nurse to Romeo to sound him out on his intentions, and he tells her that Juliet should come to Friar Laurence's cell to confess her sins, then marry Romeo. After the nurse reports back to Juliet, all goes according to plan, and Romeo and Juliet become husband and wife, although they make no public announcement of their marriage.

On his way back from the wedding, Romeo encounters his friend Mercutio quarreling with Tybalt. Romeo tries to pacify them, to no avail, and Tybalt mortally wounds Mercutio. Mercutio—who understands the stupidity and folly of the Montague-Capulet feud—curses the two families, saying, "A plague o' [on] both your houses!" (3.1.61). He repeats these words three times before dying. Romeo, in turn, kills Tybalt. The fighting has attracted citizens of Verona, including the prince; he banishes Romeo.

When Juliet asks her nurse for news of Romeo, the nurse says, "Ah, well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead!" (3.2.41). She is referring to Tybalt, her good friend; Juliet thinks she is speaking of Romeo and wonders whether he has killed himself. The nurse then recounts the events of the violent encounter: Romeo killed Tybalt, Juliet's kin. At first, Juliet criticizes Romeo for committing such a deed but moments later scolds herself for speaking harsh words about her beloved husband.

Before leaving the city, Romeo returns to Juliet and spends the night with her. At dawn, as the lovers gaze out the window, Romeo tells Juliet to:

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.(3.5.9-13)

Juliet replies:

Yon light is not daylight, I know it,
 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. (3.5.14-18)

Romeo tarries awhile longer, then flees to Mantua, a city in Italy's Lombardy region to the west. Meanwhile, Juliet's mother announces that her daughter must marry Paris, a nobleman. Desperate for help, Juliet asks Friar Laurence for advice. He tells her to consent to the wedding, then drink a potion that will make her appear dead. After the Capulets lay her to rest in the family burial vault, the friar tells her, he and Romeo will rescue her. Juliet agrees to the plan, and Friar Laurence sends Friar John to deliver a message to Romeo that will inform him of the scheme. But, by accident, the message goes undelivered.

In her bedchamber, Juliet takes out the vial containing the potion. She is fearful that it may not work. Overcoming that fear, she then worries that the potion may actually be a poison that Friar Laurence had prepared for her so that he will not have to be dishonored by marrying her to Paris while she is already married to Romeo. However, she overcomes this fear as well, then takes the drug and collapses onto the bed. When wedding preparations are under way in the Capulet household, Lord Capulet tells the nurse to awaken Juliet. But the nurse discovers her lying lifeless and stiff. Lord Capulet observes that, "Death lies on her like an untimely frost" (4.5.34).

When news of Juliet's "death" reaches Romeo, he purchases a potion of his own—a deadly one—from an apothecary and returns to Verona to die alongside Juliet. At the burial vault, he encounters Paris and his page. Paris is there to lay flowers at Juliet's grave. The adversaries quarrel, exchanging insults, then fight. While the page runs out for help, Romeo slays Paris, then takes a last, longing look at Juliet, saying:

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. (5.3.94-99)

Romeo then swallows the poison and dies. After Juliet awakens and discovers the bodies, grief overwhelms her and she kills herself, using Romeo's dagger. When the page returns with three watchmen, they discover the bloody scene and one of the watchmen fetches the Montague and Capulet families and the Prince of Verona. Others come running to the scene. Lord Montague arrives alone, telling the prince that his wife died during the night of grief brought on by Romeo's exile. When everyone sees the bodies, the prince calls for quiet and calm while he inquires about the cause of the deaths. Friar Laurence comes forth and explains in detail the plot he conceived to feign Juliet's death.

Next, Romeo's servant, Balthasar, says he conveyed news of Juliet's apparent demise to Romeo, who then returned from Mantua. Finally, the page of Paris recounts what he saw at the tomb. The prince reproaches the Montagues and the Capulets, saying, "See what a scourge is laid upon your hate, / That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love" (5.3.313-314). The feuding families then reconcile, and the prince observes:

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. (5.3.327-332)

SOURCES for PRE-ACTION and PLOT:

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Podewell, Bruce. Shakespeare's Watch. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2009.

RECOMMENDED EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS:

DVD:

The Folger Series. Shakespeare Set Free: Teaching Hamlet and Henry IV, Part I.

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Shakespeare, William. Romeo and Juliet. London: Arden Shakespeare, 1998.

Burson, Linda. Play With Shakespeare. Virginia: New Plays Books, 1992.

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE BIOGRAPHY

William Shakespeare, often called the English national poet, is widely considered the greatest dramatist of all time. Though little is known about William Shakespeare's personal life, his works such as "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," and "King Lear," have influenced literature and theater for over 400 years.

William Shakespeare was baptized on April 26, 1564, in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. From roughly 1594 onward he was an important member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men company of theatrical players. Written records give little indication of the way in which Shakespeare's professional life molded his artistry. All that can be deduced is that over the course of 20 years, Shakespeare wrote plays that capture the complete range of human emotion and conflict.

Known throughout the world, the works of William Shakespeare have been performed in countless hamlets, villages, cities and metropolises for more than 400 years. And yet, the personal history of William Shakespeare is somewhat a mystery. There are two primary sources that provide historians with a basic outline of his life. One source is his work—the plays, poems and sonnets—and the other is official documentation such as church and court records. However, these only provide brief sketches of specific events in his life and provide little on the person who experienced those events.

Though no birth records exist, church records indicate that a William Shakespeare was baptized at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon on April 26, 1564. From this, it is believed he was born on or near April 23, 1564, and this is the date scholars acknowledge as William Shakespeare's birthday.

Located 103 miles west of London, during Shakespeare's time Stratford-upon-Avon was a market town bisected with a country road and the River Avon. William was the third child of John Shakespeare, a leather merchant, and Mary Arden, a local landed heiress. William had two older sisters, Joan and Judith, and three younger brothers, Gilbert, Richard and Edmund. Before William's birth, his father became a successful merchant and held official positions as alderman and bailiff, an office resembling a mayor. However, records indicate John's fortunes declined sometime in the late 1570s.

Scant records exist of William's childhood, and virtually none regarding his education. Scholars have surmised that he most likely attended the King's New School, in Stratford, which taught reading, writing and the classics. Being a public official's child,

William would have undoubtedly qualified for free tuition. But this uncertainty regarding his education has led some to raise questions about the authorship of his work and even about whether or not William Shakespeare ever existed.

William Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582, in Worcester, in Canterbury Province. Hathaway was from Shottery, a small village a mile west of Stratford. William was 18 and Anne was 26, and, as it turns out, pregnant. Their first child, a daughter they named Susanna, was born on May 26, 1583. Two years later, on February 2, 1585, twins Hamnet and Judith were born. Hamnet later died of unknown causes at age 11.

After the birth of the twins, there are seven years of William Shakespeare's life where no records exist. Scholars call this period the "lost years," and there is wide speculation on what he was doing during this period. One theory is that he might have gone into hiding for poaching game from the local landlord, Sir Thomas Lucy. Another possibility is that he might have been working as an assistant schoolmaster in Lancashire. It is generally believed he arrived in London in the mid- to late 1580s and may have found work as a horse attendant at some of London's finer theaters, a scenario updated centuries later by the countless aspiring actors and playwrights in Hollywood and Broadway.

By 1592, there is evidence William Shakespeare earned a living as an actor and a playwright in London and possibly had several plays produced. The September 20, 1592 edition of the Stationers' Register (a guild publication) includes an article by London playwright Robert Greene that takes a few jabs at William Shakespeare: "...There is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his Tiger's heart wrapped in a Player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute Johannes factotum, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country," Greene wrote of Shakespeare. Scholars differ on the interpretation of this criticism, but most agree that it was Greene's way of saying Shakespeare was reaching above his rank, trying to match better known and educated playwrights like Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Nashe or Greene himself.

By the early 1590s, documents show William Shakespeare was a managing partner in the Lord Chamberlain's Men, an acting company in London. After the crowning of King James I, in 1603, the company changed its name to the King's Men. From all accounts, the King's Men company was very popular, and records show that Shakespeare had works

published and sold as popular literature. The theater culture in 16th century England was not highly admired by people of high rank. However, many of the nobility were good patrons of the performing arts and friends of the actors. Early in his career, Shakespeare was able to attract the attention of Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton, to whom he dedicated his first- and second-published poems: "Venus and Adonis" (1593) and "The Rape of Lucrece" (1594).

By 1597, 15 of the 37 plays written by William Shakespeare were published. Civil records show that at this time he purchased the second largest house in Stratford, called New House, for his family. It was a four-day ride by horse from Stratford to London, so it is believed that Shakespeare spent most of his time in the city writing and acting and came home once a year during the 40-day Lenten period, when the theaters were closed.

By 1599, William Shakespeare and his business partners built their own theater on the south bank of the Thames River, which they called the Globe. In 1605, Shakespeare purchased leases of real estate near Stratford for 440 pounds, which doubled in value and earned him 60 pounds a year. This made him an entrepreneur as well as an artist, and scholars believe these investments gave him the time to write his plays uninterrupted.

William Shakespeare's early plays were written in the conventional style of the day, with elaborate metaphors and rhetorical phrases that didn't always align naturally with the story's plot or characters. However, Shakespeare was very innovative, adapting the traditional style to his own purposes and creating a freer flow of words. With only small degrees of variation, Shakespeare primarily used a metrical pattern consisting of lines of unrhymed iambic pentameter, or blank verse, to compose his plays. At the same time, there are passages in all the plays that deviate from this and use forms of poetry or simple prose.

With the exception of Romeo and Juliet, William Shakespeare's first plays were mostly histories written in the early 1590s. Richard II, Henry VI (parts 1, 2 and 3) and Henry V dramatize the destructive results of weak or corrupt rulers, and have been interpreted by drama historians as Shakespeare's way of justifying the origins of the Tudor Dynasty.

Shakespeare also wrote several comedies during his early period: the witty romance *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the romantic *Merchant of Venice*, the wit and wordplay of *Much Ado About Nothing*, the charming *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*.

Other plays, possibly written before 1600, include *Titus Andronicus*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

It was in William Shakespeare's later period, after 1600, that he wrote the tragedies *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Othello* and *Macbeth*. In these, Shakespeare's characters present vivid impressions of human temperament that are timeless and universal. Possibly the best known of these plays is *Hamlet*, which explores betrayal, retribution, incest and moral failure. These moral failures often drive the twists and turns of Shakespeare's plots, destroying the hero and those he loves.

In William Shakespeare's final period, he wrote several tragicomedies. Among these are *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. Though graver in tone than the comedies, they are not the dark tragedies of *King Lear* or *Macbeth* because they end with reconciliation and forgiveness.

Tradition has it that William Shakespeare died on his birthday, April 23, 1616, though many scholars believe this is a myth. Church records show he was interred at Trinity Church on April 5, 1616.

About 150 years after his death, questions arose about the authorship of William Shakespeare's plays. Scholars and literary critics began to float names like Christopher Marlowe, Edward de Vere and Francis Bacon—men of more known backgrounds, literary accreditation, or inspiration—as the true authors of the plays. Much of this stemmed from the sketchy details of Shakespeare's life and the dearth of contemporary primary sources. Official records from the Holy Trinity Church and the Stratford government record the existence of a William Shakespeare, but none of these attest to him being an actor or playwright.

Skeptics also questioned how anyone of such modest education could write with the intellectual perceptiveness and poetic power that is displayed in Shakespeare's works. Over the centuries, several groups have emerged that question the authorship of Shakespeare's plays. The most serious and intense skepticism began in the 19th century when adoration for Shakespeare was at its highest. The detractors believed that the only hard evidence surrounding William Shakespeare from Stratford-upon-Avon described a man from modest beginnings who married young and became successful in real estate. Members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society (founded in 1957) put forth arguments that English aristocrat Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, was the true author of the

poems and plays of "William Shakespeare." The Oxfordians cite de Vere's extensive knowledge of aristocratic society, his education, and the structural similarities between his poetry and that found in the works attributed to Shakespeare. They contend that William Shakespeare had neither the education nor the literary training to write such eloquent prose and create such rich characters.

However, the vast majority of Shakespearean scholars contend that William Shakespeare wrote all his own plays. They point out that other playwrights of the time also had sketchy histories and came from modest backgrounds. They contend that Stratford's New Grammar School curriculum of Latin and the classics could have provided a good foundation for literary writers. Supporters of Shakespeare's authorship argue that the lack of evidence about Shakespeare's life doesn't mean his life didn't exist. They point to evidence that displays his name on the title pages of published poems and plays. Examples exist of authors and critics of the time acknowledging William Shakespeare as author of plays such as *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Comedy of Errors* and *King John*. Royal records from 1601 show that William Shakespeare was recognized as a member of the King's Men theater company (formally known as the Chamberlain's Men) and a Groom of the Chamber by the court of King James I, where the company performed seven of Shakespeare's plays. There is also strong circumstantial evidence of personal relationships by contemporaries who interacted with Shakespeare as an actor and a playwright.

What seems to be true is that William Shakespeare was a respected man of the dramatic arts who wrote plays and acted in some in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. But his reputation as a dramatic genius wasn't recognized until the 19th century. Beginning with the Romantic period of the early 1800s and continuing through the Victorian period, acclaim and reverence for William Shakespeare and his work reached its height. In the 20th century, new movements in scholarship and performance have rediscovered and adopted his works.

Today, his plays are highly popular and constantly studied and reinterpreted in performances with diverse cultural and political contexts. The genius of Shakespeare's characters and plots are that they present real human beings in a wide range of emotions and conflicts that transcend their origins in Elizabethan England.

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Podewell, Bruce. *Shakespeare's Watch*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2009.

LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY:

NOTE: This information will correspond to exercise #1, in the classroom exercise section.

William Shakespeare and the English Language

The vocabulary of the average American is approximately 10,000 words. The vocabulary of an intelligent, present-day individual contains an estimated 17,000 words. American Journalists are said to have vocabularies of up to 20,000 words. The King James Bible, written in 1611, contains approximately 8,000 different words.

The 37 plays of William Shakespeare contain approximately 34,000 different words. There are 1,700 words for which the Oxford English Dictionary can trace no usage prior to Shakespeare's plays including such diverse words as

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| • amazement | • majestic |
| • addiction | • misquote |
| • anchovy | • moonbeam |
| • birthplace | • obscene |
| • cheap | • ode |
| • cold-blooded | • outgrow |
| • countless | • overpower |
| • critical | • pious |
| • dawn | • priceless |
| • day's work | • puke!!! |
| • defeat | • puppy-dog |
| • downstairs | • on purpose |
| • employer | • retirement |
| • epileptic | • schoolboy |
| • eventful | • shipwrecked |
| • eyeball | • shooting star |
| • farmhouse | • skim milk |
| • fashionable | • successful |
| • fortune-teller | • undress |
| • frugal | • unreal |
| • hostile | • upstairs |
| • hunchbacked | • watchdog |
| • laughable | • well-educated |
| • love letter | • yelping |

SCANNING SHAKESPEARE

NOTE: This information will correspond to exercise #2, in the classroom exercise section.

FACT: Shakespeare wrote primarily in IAMBIC PENTAMETER.

What is iambic pentameter?

iambic pentameter is a line of poetry that is made up of 5 feet of iambs:

weak STRONG / weak STRONG / weak STRONG / weak STRONG / weak STRONG

Ex: but SOFT/ what LIGHT /through YON / der WIN / dow BREAKS

iambic Pentameter is the natural way to say this line of Romeo's. You would never say, for example, yon-DER, or win-DOW. Shakespeare is using natural speech to aid his poetry.

What is an iamb?

An iamb is one of the "weak STRONG" units used to build a line of iambic pentameter. "Penta" means five (as in "the Pentagon," a building which happens to have five sides) and iambic pentameter is a line of verse that has 5 iambs (or 5 feet). One iamb is considered a foot.

What is a foot?

A foot is one of the repeating segments that is used to build a line of poetry. In the case of iambic pentameter, one iamb = one foot.

What is meter?

Meter is the pattern of a line of verse (for example, iambic pentameter).

HOW TO SCAN SHAKESPEARE'S TEXT:

1. The first step in scanning Shakespeare is: understanding the text.
2. The second step in scanning is: reading the text out loud.

(If these two steps are achieved correctly, 80% of your scansion work is done.)

3. Count the syllables in each line (with the goal of finding no more than 10 syllables in each, 5 stressed and 5 unstressed).
4. Look for the perfect iambic line. If the line is not simply iambic pentameter, then look for the other type of "feet" that Shakespeare used.

The Variety of Feet

- 1) Pyrrhic: x x (see note)
- 2) Iamb: x / (a-lone, de-spair, to walk)
- 3) Trochee: / x (stu-dy, back-ward, talk to)
- 4) Anapest: x x / (in-ter-dict, to per-mit)
- 5) Dactyl: / x x (ten-der-ly, af-ter the)

6) Spondee: // (stone deaf, broad-browed)

Note: Because two unstressed syllables create no drive, a pyrrhic foot is OFTEN paired together with a spondee foot. "Pyrrhic-Spondees" are feet found together such as: he is SO GROSS!

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR ONCE YOU HAVE SCANNED

FEMININE ENDING

A "feminine ending" is line of verse (11 syllables long) that ends with an unstressed syllable. The first four lines of Hamlet's "To be or not to be that is the question" speech all have feminine endings. Likewise, if you look at lines 2, 5, 25, or 34 of our scansion classroom exercise (Mark Anthony's funeral speech) they too all end with feminine endings.

TROCHAIC STARTS

Is the movie called Pirates of the CARE-a-BEE-an or cah-RI-bee-AN? One sounds rough and violent, the other sounds like a vacationing spot. The difference of the two is whether you make it 2 trochaic feet (CAR-i-BBE-an) or an iamb (ca-RI-bbe-AN). Shakespeare will often use trochees to start lines in order to create a jarring effect.

TOO MANY (OR NOT ENOUGH) SYLLABLES

Do you have more or less than ten syllables? What will you do? Names are notoriously variable in Shakespeare. Is it ROM-eo, or ROME-e-o? You will find that Shakespeare scans them differently, depending on the syllables he needs in a line. Thus, you should follow suit and pronounce them differently in different uses.

Shakespeare often found extra syllables in "ed" endings. For example we would say be-LOVED. Shakespeare, if needing an extra syllable would stretch it out to be-LOVE-ed. Therefore if you count more (or less) than 10 syllables in a line, you know you must elongate or truncate some words.

CHECKLIST

1. Is the line regular iambic pentameter?
2. If not, is there a surprisingly strong start, or start to the phrase just after the pause, or both? (trochaic)
3. Is there an extra syllable at the end of the line, at the end of the phrase? (feminine ending)
4. Are there contractions, elisions, eliminated 'v's'? (If the line is too long, and the extra syllable occurs in midline rather than at the pause, there is probably an elision needed.)
5. If the line is too short, look for word endings that need expansion ('ed', or 'ion', or 'ious').

CLASSROOM EXERCISES:

1. Knowing that Shakespeare invented a lot of new words by putting two well-known words together (love-letter, moonbeam, hunchbacked) can you create 10 news words of your own in 15 minutes?

2. Knowing what you learned about iambic pentameter, translate the speech to modern English. Once that is done scan Juliet's speech (Act II.2.85-106) and see what meter find.

Thou knowest the mask of night is on my face;	1
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek	
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.	
Fain would I dwell on form -- fain, fain deny	
What I have spoke; but farewell compliment!	5
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay';	
And I will take thy word. Yet, if thou swear'st,	
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries,	
They say Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,	
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully.	10
Or if thou thinkest I am too quickly won,	
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,	
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.	
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,	
And therefore thou mayst think my havior light;	15
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true	
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.	
I should have been more strange, I must confess,	
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,	
My true-love passion. Therefore pardon me,	20
And not impute this yielding to light love,	
Which the dark night hath so discovered.	

Answer Key

All lines are full iambic pentameter lines except for the following:

Feminine Endings: Line 7
 Voiced "ED": Line 22 (dis-COV-er-ED)
 Trochee start: Lines 2, 4, 6

Variety of feet: Line 6 trochi|trochi|iam|iam|iam
 Line 9 Romeo is 3 syllables
 Line 10 trochi|trochi|iam|iam|iam (or plain iambic line)
 Line 13 iam|iam|iam|trochi|iam (or plain iambic line)
 Line 15 iam|pyrric|spondee|iam|iam
 Line 21 iam|iam|iam|pyrric|spondee
 Line 22 pyrric|spondee|iam|iam|iam

Please note: Knowest, mayest, swearest, thinkest- are all 1-syllable words, not 2.

Contemporary Translation of Juliet's Monologue:

You know the shadows and dark of night are covering my face, or else you'd see how much I was blushing since you just heard me talk about how much I like you. Gladly I'd like to keep up good manners and deny the things I said. But forget about good manners. Do you love me? I know you'll say yes, and I'll believe you0 but if you swear you may be lying. At lovers lies they say Jove (Jupiter) laughs! Oh gentle Romeo if you do love, say it honestly. Or if you think I've been too easy to win over, I'll pout and play hard to get so you will chase after me. But I'd rather not. To be honest, I'm too crazy about you and therefore you may think my behavior is just puppy love- but trust me sweet man, I'll turn out to be more serious than those that are smart enough to play hard to get. I should have played hard to get, I admit. But! You overheard me talking to myself before I knew you were there! So excuse me, and do not assume that because you made me love you so easily my love isn't serious.

3. Have students perform a scene from the play allowing them to adapt it in their own way. The setting, costumes, and manner of speech can change, so long as the words remain true to the text, and show they understand the meaning of the scene. The student should

complete the project with a detailed composition explaining why they chose the adaptation.

4. You are asked to direct the all-new production of *Romeo and Juliet*. You are in charge of casting (I hear Timothée Chalamet is available), sets, lights, costume, and sound. What is your director's concept (a central idea that unifies all elements of the production to make it unique)? How does your idea help bring *Romeo and Juliet* to an audience in 2023? Examples: *Romeo and Juliet* are two different races, which is the reason the two families are at war.

5. Write a journal entry as a character in the play or write the headlines of the news stories in Verona. What problems is the Prince solving? What fights are breaking out? How is trade? What makes the daily news in this town?

6. Create a TikTok or Instagram profile for 3 of the characters in *Romeo and Juliet*. What are their likes? Status Updates? Who are their friends? What does their social media footprint look like?

7. Create a persona and full character for you to act out at Capulet's party. What are you dressed as? What do you do for a living? What does your mask look like? Have the student's create the party and mingle discussing the feud between the two families.

8. *Romeo and Juliet* is a story full of parental strife. Do you ever feel like your parents/guardian doesn't understand you? Interview an older family member about how they were supposed to act when they were children and teenagers. Sample questions could be:

What did your parents expect from you in terms of marriage or a career? Did you have to fight them to get your own way or did you agree? How was a child supposed to act at a grown-up party? Were children expected to work or go to school? What did you study? What were the clothes like? How were teenagers supposed to go about dating? What was dating like? What did your parents expect of you? What did they do when you disobeyed or ignored them? When you were my age, what gave people high status? What is the biggest change you have seen in your lifetime? What is the worst thing about getting older? What is the best thing about getting older? What advice would you give to a young person?

See what similarities you discover, as well as differences. Write a compare and contrast paper.

9. Break up into groups. Adapt the story into a different genre. What changes in the story if you turn it into a Comedy? SciFi? FNAF Horror?

10. Write a ten-minute play using Romeo and Juliet and four other people from history as the cast. Where are they? Is it set in medieval Verona or modern day? What are they doing together? What is the conflict, rising and falling action? Use your imagination.

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ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. The Capulets have ordered Juliet to marry Paris, a young nobleman. In an expository (informative) essay, explain the marriage customs in Europe in the Sixteenth Century, paying particular attention to arranged marriages. Discuss the customs of the lower classes as well as the upper classes. Include a section on wedding ceremonies and the activities surrounding them.

2. Imagine that Romeo and Juliet had run off after their marriage—perhaps to France, Greece or Spain—and lived the life of an ordinary married couple. Write an essay that

describes them in their late forties, when their hair grays, their waists expand, and their own children fall in love.

3. Friar Laurence, who sympathizes with Romeo and Juliet and marries them, is a Franciscan priest of the Roman Catholic Church. Write an expository essay about the Franciscans, beginning with their founding by Francis of Assisi (1181-1226), who renounced his comfortable life to wear rags, beg for food, and help the poor.

4. Romeo and Juliet fall in love at first sight. Do you believe in love at first sight?

5. How would you react if your parents opposed your marriage to someone they did not like?

6. Why didn't Romeo and Juliet simply run away?

7. What is the most important lesson you learned from Romeo and Juliet?

8. In Act I, Scene V, the partygoers at the Capulet residence engage in a dance called the measure. It is a slow dance with dignified movements. Is this dance in any way symbolic of what happens in the play? If you were presenting a modern version of Romeo and Juliet, what dance would you choose for the Capulet party? Why did Puritans so vigorously oppose dancing in Shakespeare's time?

9. How does the suicidal impulse that both Romeo and Juliet exhibit relate to the overall theme of young love? Does Shakespeare seem to consider a self-destructive tendency inextricably connected with love, or is it a separate issue? Why do you think so?

10. Discuss the relationships between parents and children in Romeo and Juliet. How do Romeo and Juliet interact with their parents? Are they rebellious, in the modern sense? How do their parents feel about them?

11. Apart from clashing with Tybalt, what role does Mercutio play in the story? Is he merely a colorful supporting character and brilliant source of comic relief, or does he serve a more serious purpose?

12. How does Shakespeare treat death in Romeo and Juliet? Frame your answer in terms of legal, moral, familial, and personal issues. Bearing these issues in mind, compare the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, Romeo and Mercutio, and Mercutio and Tybalt.

SOURCES FOR ESSAY QUESTIONS

Cummings, Michael J. "Romeo and Juliet: a Study Guide." Shake Sphere: a Guide to the Complete Works of William Shakespeare. N.p., 2013. Web. 25 Oct. 2013.
<<http://www.shakespearestudyguide.com/RomeoJu.html>>.

Notes Editors. "SpaNote on Romeo and Juliet." SNotes.com. SpaNotes LLC. 2007. Web. 30 Oct. 2013.

RECOMMENDED MOVIES of ROMEO AND JULIET

Romeo and Juliet (1936) Director: George Cukor Writer: Talbot Jennings (adaptation) William Shakespeare (play) Famous adult stage actors of the time play a traditional Romeo and Juliet.

West Side Story (1961) Directors: Jerome Robbins, Robert Wise Writer: Jerome Robbins (conception), Arthur Laurents (play) Story updated to the world of New York gang rivalry; adapted from a famous Broadway musical.

Romanoff and Juliet (1961) Writer: Peter Ustinov Director: Peter Ustinov Cold-war stage parody.

Romeo and Juliet (1968) Director: Franco Zeffirelli Writers: Franco Brusati, Masolino D'Amico, Franco Zeffirelli (screenplay) William Shakespeare (play) Set in the Renaissance with young actors in lead roles.

Romeo + Juliet (1996) Director: Baz Luhrmann Writers: Craig Pearce, Baz Luhrmann (screenplay) William Shakespeare (play) Fast-paced, contemporary, violent, and romantic.

ROMEO AND JULIET QUIZ:

1. To which city does Romeo go after being exiled from Verona?

- (A) Padua
- (B) Rome
- (C) Venice
- (D) Mantua

2. Why is Romeo exiled?

- (A) For killing Tybalt
- (B) For marrying Juliet against her father's will
- (C) For killing Mercutio
- (D) For publicly admitting his atheism

3. Who performs Romeo and Juliet's marriage?

- (A) Friar John
- (B) Friar Lawrence
- (C) Father Vincentio
- (D) Mercutio

4. Who is the fairy that Mercutio says visits Romeo in dreams?
(A) Puck
(B) Queen Mab
(C) Beelzebub
(D) Jack o' the Clover
5. What does the Nurse advise Juliet to do after Romeo is exiled?
(A) Follow her husband to Mantua
(B) Wait for Romeo in Verona
(C) Act as if Romeo is dead and marry Paris
(D) Commit suicide
6. Where do Romeo and Juliet meet?
(A) At Capulet's feast
(B) At Friar Lawrence's cell
(C) At Montague's feast
(D) At the pier from which Malvolio is departing for Spain
7. Who kills Mercutio?
(A) Benvolio
(B) Sampson
(C) Romeo
(D) Tybalt
8. Which character first persuades Romeo to attend the feast?
(A) Mercutio
(B) Benvolio
(C) Lady Montague
(D) Juliet
9. What, at first, does Juliet claim that Romeo hears the morning after their wedding night?
(A) The owl
(B) The dove
(C) The nightingale
(D) The lark
10. To what does Romeo first compare Juliet during the balcony scene?
(A) The moon
(B) The stars
(C) A summer's day
(D) The morning sun
11. Who discovers Juliet after she takes Friar Lawrence's potion?

- (A) Lady Capulet
- (B) Capulet
- (C) Paris
- (D) The Nurse

12. Who proposes that a gold statue of Juliet be built in Verona?

- (A) Montague
- (B) Lady Capulet
- (C) Paris
- (D) Romeo

13. To which powerful figure is Paris related?

- (A) Capulet
- (B) Montague
- (C) Prince Escalus
- (D) King Vardamo

14. How and where does Romeo commit suicide?

- (A) With a dagger in the orchard
- (B) With a rope in the public square
- (C) With a sword in Juliet's bedchamber
- (D) With poison in Juliet's tomb

15. Who is the last person to see Juliet before she stabs herself dead?

- (A) Paris
- (B) Friar Lawrence
- (C) Tybalt
- (D) Romeo

16. Why is Friar John unable to deliver Friar Lawrence's message to Romeo in Mantua?

- (A) He is killed by a Capulet servant.
- (B) He is attacked by bandits on the road.
- (C) He is held inside a quarantined house, and is unable to leave.
- (D) Romeo is stopped in Padua and never makes it to Mantua.

17. Why does the Apothecary agree to sell Romeo poison?

- (A) He is poor, and needs the money.
- (B) He can see that Romeo is passionate.
- (C) He is afraid that Romeo will hurt him if he refuses.
- (D) He is a friend of Friar Lawrence.

18. On what day do Romeo and Juliet meet?

- (A) Saturday

- (B) Tuesday
- (C) Sunday
- (D) Wednesday

19. With whom is Romeo madly in love for the first two scenes of the play?

- (A) Himself
- (B) Mercutio
- (C) Juliet
- (D) Rosaline

20. In what decade was Romeo and Juliet written?

- (A) 1570s
- (B) 1600s
- (C) 1610s
- (D) 1590s

21. Whom does Mercutio curse as he lies dying after a duel?

- (A) The Montagues and Capulets
- (B) Romeo
- (C) Tybalt
- (D) Romeo and Tybalt

22. In what area is Friar Lawrence an expert?

- (A) Roman history
- (B) Languages
- (C) Plants and herbs
- (D) Swordfighting

23. What term does the Chorus use to describe the lovers?

- (A) ill-fated
- (B) death-doom'd
- (C) demon-haunted
- (D) star-crossed

24. Why does Tybalt first challenge Romeo to a duel?

- (A) He is offended that Romeo loves his cousin.
- (B) He is offended that Romeo shows up at the Capulet ball.
- (C) He is offended that Romeo bites his thumb at him.
- (D) Tybalt does not challenge Romeo to a duel; he challenges Mercutio.

25. In what year did Shakespeare die?

- (A) 1610

- (B) 1594
- (C) 1601
- (D) 1616

LOUISIANA STATE COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM CORRESPONDENCE

Each classroom exercise meets the state of Louisiana’s educational standards. In order to correctly identify how it meets these standards, the following formula will be employed:

If the class associated with the exercise is English Language Arts (ELA)
 It is followed by the phrase Comprehensive Curriculum (CC)
 That is followed by the grade number (6-8, I, II, IV)
 That is followed by the unit number (U1, for example)
 Lastly, the Grade Level Expectation number (1a, for example)

Therefore a senior English class, Unit 6, with 3 corresponding GLEs will read:
 ELA CC, IV U6. GLE: 1a, 11, 25b.

Due to the fact that there are no GLEs associated with Drama (and therefore no unit number) the following formula will be employed:

If the class associated with the exercise is Drama (D)
 It is followed by the phrase Comprehensive Curriculum (CC)
 That is followed by the grade number (6-8)
 That is followed by the title of the exercise (Forms of Drama)
 That is followed by the HP (HP1, for example)
 Therefore an 8th grade drama exercise will read:

D CC, 8: Forms of Drama (HP1)

CLASSROOM EXERCISES

1. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 01a, 01c, 01d, 03.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 01a.
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 01a, 01b.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 01d.
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 01a, 01b.
 D CC, 6: Becoming Familiar with Shakespeare’s Phrases (HP6)

2. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 11g, 19a, 19b, 31.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 04a, 09b, 09g, 28, 32.
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 09g, 14b, 17b.

- ELA CC, I U4. GLE: 11a, 11c, 17a.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 03a, 03b, 09b.
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 01c, 03b, 07c.
 D CC, 6: Becoming Familiar with Shakespeare's Phrases (HP6)
 D CC, 8: Elizabethan Theatre (HP2)
3. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 04d, 09, 11a-f, 19d, 20f, 38b.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 04c, 10, 15e, 17b.
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 02b, 15a, 17a, 28, 32.
 ELA CC, I U4. GLE: 04c, 11f, 17a, 19, 31a, 35a.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 02a-d, 03a, 03b, 03g.
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 09a, 09d, 13c, 20a.
 D CC, 6: Incorporating Theme into a New Story (HP4)
 D CC, 8: Forms of Drama (HP1)
4. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 04d, 09, 11a-f, 19d, 20f, 38b.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 04c, 10, 15e, 17b.
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 02b, 15a, 17a, 28, 32.
 ELA CC, I U4. GLE: 04c, 11f, 17a, 19, 31a, 35a.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 02a-d, 03a, 03b, 03g.
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 09a, 09d, 13c, 20a.
 D CC, 6: Incorporating Theme into a New Story (HP4)
 D CC, 7: Types of Theatrical Performance (HP1)
 D CC, 8: Forms of Drama (HP1)
5. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 11c, 16c, 19d.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 09e, 10, 33, 35.
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 10, 14c, 29, 30.
 ELA CC, I U4. GLE: 11a, 11e, 12a, 12b, 14b, 31a, 32c.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 11e, 12a, 15a, 20, 32c, 34a,
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 09c, 09f, 09g, 13a.
 D CC, 8: Build a Character (HP6)
6. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 11b, 16c, 17a, 24b, 39a,b,d,f.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 11, 17b, 40c.
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 15c, 15d, 17b, 29, 40a-c.
 ELA CC, I U4. GLE: 36b, 38, 39c.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 17c, 31a, 40b.
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 10b, 19c, 31b, 34b, 35b, 37c.
 D CC, 6: The Art of Cinema, TV (HP1)
 D CC, 6: Incorporating Theme into a New Story (HP4)

7. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 17d, 19c, 20a, 21, 25b, 26.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 17b, 18f, 23a, 24b.
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 17b, 19, 23, 24a.
 ELA CC, I U4. GLE: 15b, 22b, 22c, 25.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 11a, 13, 15a, 15c, 17c, 25a-28.
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 03b, 05, 13a, 19c, 19d.
 D CC, 6: Incorporating Theme into a New Story (HP4)
 D CC, 8: Build a Character (HP6)
8. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 11b, 17a, 17c.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 15e
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 15a, 15d-f, 23.
 ELA CC, I U4. GLE: 11a, 15b, 17a, 19, 22a-c, 23c,g, 25.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 03i, 04c, 11a, 11f, 17a,b, 17d.
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 03b, 09a,c.
 D CC, 6: Becoming Familiar with Shakespeare's Phrases (HP6)
9. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 11b, 17a, 19c, 24c.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 04c, 14c, 15d, 17c, 35.
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 14c, 15d, 23, 28.
 ELA CC, I U4. GLE: 11a, 11e, 12a, 31b.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 11a, 11f, 17a, 34a.
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 04, 12, 13d, 13f, 19c, 30b.
 D CC, 6: Incorporating Theme into a New Story (HP4)
 D CC, 7: The Art of the Poster (HP5)
 D CC, 8: Build a Character (HP6)
10. ELA CC, 6 U6. GLE: 08, 09, 10d, 17a.
 ELA CC, 7 U6. GLE: 07, 17c.
 ELA CC, 8 U7. GLE: 19, 23.
 ELA CC, I U4. GLE: 02a, 14b, 15b, 17c.
 ELA CC, II U4. GLE: 02a-d, 3a-h, 15a.
 ELA CC, IV U3. GLE: 12, 13b, 19c, 20a.
 D CC, 6: Incorporating Theme into a New Story (HP4)
 D CC, 6: Becoming Familiar with Shakespeare's Phrases (HP6)
 D CC, 7: Types of Theatrical Performance (HP1)
 D CC, 8: Forms of Drama (HP1)
 D CC, 8: Acting Styles Through the Ages (HP5)
 D CC, 8: Build a Character (HP6)