

<p>1. Context: Romeo & Juliet was written by William Shakespeare around 1594-96. It was first published in 1597. Shakespeare was born in 1564, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I; he died in 1616 during King James I's reign.</p>	<p>13. Characters: Romeo Montague - son of the Montague family, who are sworn enemies of the Capulets. No age is given but he is usually assumed to be slightly older than Juliet Capulet - daughter of the Capulet family - who is aged 13 when the play is set.</p>
<p>2. Context: Elizabethan society - maintaining family honour was seen as very important. If a man of the family was challenged to a duel and refused to fight, he and his family would be seen as cowardly - this would dishonour their status and power. This strong regard for honour could lead to violence and unrest.</p>	<p>14. Characters: Benvolio - his name means 'good will' - Romeo's cousin. Mercutio - Romeo's best friend, a relative of Prince Escalus. 'Mercury', in Roman mythology, was the messenger of the Greek gods - famed for his skill in speaking. 'Mercurial' suggests a person who is unpredictable and quick to change.</p>
<p>3. Context: Patriarchal society - men held much of the power in society. Women were seen as the weaker sex and were expected to be obedient to their families and husbands.</p>	<p>15. Characters: Lord Capulet - head of the Capulet family. Tybalt - Capulet's nephew, Juliet's cousin - a renowned swordsman.</p>
<p>4. Context: Arranged marriage - wealthy families often arranged marriages for their children, sometimes when they were very young. This was always about status, power and wealth - not about love.</p>	<p>16. Characters: Friar Lawrence - a Franciscan friar, representative of the Catholic church. The Nurse - a wet nurse for the Capulets, who raised Juliet from a baby.</p>
<p>5. Context: Religion - as the play is set in Italy, Catholicism was the main religion. Religious tensions existed in England between the Church of England and Catholicism - Catholics were sometimes seen as untrustworthy. To Catholics, marriage was sacred and could not be undone. Mortal sins such as murder and suicide were believed to lead to damnation.</p>	<p>17. Characters: Prince Escalus - the ruler of Verona, which was a 'city-state' - the Prince had absolute authority. Count Paris - a relative of the Prince; wants to marry Juliet.</p>
<p>6. Context: Family and children - Children were considered property of their parents. It was common for children of wealthy families to have a 'wet nurse' who raised them from a very young age, which could mean they may not have had close relationships with their parents.</p>	<p>18. Plot: Prologue to Act 1: A sonnet which tells us that two families have a long-standing feud that will only be ended by their children's deaths. This creates dramatic irony as we know they will die.</p>
<p>7. Context: Courtly love - Romance in the higher classes of Elizabethan society was all about behaviour and was supposed to be polite, restrained and courteous. Gifts were exchanged but there was little contact. The passion and emotion we associate with 'real love' were not encouraged.</p>	<p>19. Plot: Act 1 - Set in Verona (Italy), we meet two warring families - the Montagues and Capulets. The Capulets hold a feast at which Romeo and Juliet meet and fall in love</p>
<p>8. Dramatic Methods: Dramatic irony - the audience is told information that the characters on stage do not know. This can be used by the writer to create tension, atmosphere and humour.</p>	<p>20. Plot: Act 2: Romeo and Juliet meet in secret, at night. They make plans and secretly marry.</p>
<p>9. Dramatic Methods: Sonnets - some parts of the play are written as sonnets - a 14 line poem with a set number of syllables per line and rhyme scheme. Shakespeare wrote many sonnets, which were based on the</p>	<p>21. Plot: Act 3: Tybalt (Juliet's cousin) challenges Romeo, who refuses to fight. Mercutio (Romeo's friend) goads Tybalt into a fight and is killed by Tybalt when Romeo tries to stop them. Romeo then murders Tybalt in</p>

<p>Italian poet Petrarch's version from the 13th century.</p>	<p>anger and is banished.</p>
<p>10. Dramatic Methods: Bawdy humour - Shakespeare's plays feature a wide variety of moods and emotions, including humour. Bawdy language involves jokes that may be slightly rude, and involve innuendo.</p>	<p>22. Plot: Act 4: Juliet asks for help from Friar Lawrence. He gives her a sleeping potion that will make her appear dead so that she can avoid being married to Paris. She will be carried to the Capulet tomb, where Romeo will find and rescue her.</p>
<p>11. Dramatic Methods: Peripeteia - a sudden change or reversal in the protagonist's fortunes. Often a key plot feature in a tragedy such as <i>Romeo & Juliet</i>.</p>	<p>23. Plot: Act 5: Romeo doesn't receive the Friar's letter about the plan. He is told Juliet is dead and buys poison. Romeo enters the tomb and poisons himself. Juliet awakes and, realising what has happened, kills herself. The families reconcile in the wake of the tragedy.</p>
<p>12. Dramatic Methods: Imagery and language - Shakespeare uses a rich variety of imagery, such as oppositions - light/dark, day/night, simile, metaphor, and language features such as puns (a play on the meaning of words).</p>	<p>24. Key Themes: Love, Fate, Individuals vs Society, Violence and Conflict, Death, Power.</p>