

ROMEO AND JULIET KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER



KEY THEMES

Love- The love Romeo and Juliet share is beautiful and passionate. It is pure, exhilarating, and transformative, and they are willing to give everything to it. But it is also chaotic and destructive, bringing death to friends, family, and to themselves.

Fate- No matter what the lovers do, what plans they make, or how much they love each other, their struggles against fate only help fulfil it. But defeating or escaping fate is not the point. No one escapes fate. It is Romeo and Juliet's determination to struggle against fate in order to be together (whether in life or death), that shows the fiery passion of their love, and which makes that love eternal.

Individuals v society- Because of their forbidden love, Romeo and Juliet are forced into conflict with the social world around them: family, friends, political authority, and even religion.

THE MARK SCHEME

AO1

Read, understand and respond to texts.

Students should be able to:

- maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response
- use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.

AO2

Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.

AO3

Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

AO4

Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Violence and conflict – Conflict is one of the key driving forces in the play and it occurs between a range of characters – within families; within friendship groups; between warring households and between members of the communities. This conflict results in a huge amount of violence – violence opens the play in scene one and it also concludes the play with the deaths of the two lovers.

Family Relationships – Due to the patriarchal society in which the play is set, fathers are shown to have control over other member of their families. Romeo and Juliet are not shown have close relationships with their parents; instead they turn to Friar Lawrence and the Nurse for parental advice.

KEY MOTIFS

Light and Dark Imagery – Romeo uses light imagery to describe Juliet. Juliet also describes him as light that illuminates the darkness. It is symbolic that most of their relationship takes place at night, hidden by the 'darkness', but most of the violence takes place during the day.

Death Imagery – The play is full of *actual* death, but it is used in language throughout the play as a way of foreshadowing. Death is associated with marriage by Friar Lawrence, Juliet and Lady Capulet and Romeo dreams of his own death.

WHAT THE EXAM LOOKS LIKE

Read the following extract from Act 3 Scene 2 of *Romeo and Juliet* and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play Juliet is waiting for the Nurse to come back from meeting Romeo.

JULIET
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,
5 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.
10 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
15 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.

0 2

Starting with this speech, explore how Shakespeare presents attitudes towards love in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents attitudes towards love in this speech
- how Shakespeare presents attitudes towards love in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

SHAKESPEAREAN LANGUAGE

art Are
ere before
doth do
fain gladly
hark listen
hie hurry
hither here
ho! hey!
marry indeed
thee you
thou your
thine your
wilt will
wherefore why

KEY SPELLINGS

Romeo Scene
Montague Society
Juliet Prologue
Capulet Violence
Mercutio Metaphor
Benvolio Simile
Tybalt Foreshadowing
Verona Tragedy
Patriarchy Monologue
Duelling/duel Sonnet
Elizabethan Shakespeare
Character
Friar Lawrence
Benvolio

CONTEXT

Courtly Love: a medieval tradition of love between a knight and an unattainable noblewoman common in European literature of the time. The love of the knight for his lady was regarded as an overwhelming passion and the relationship was typically one sided.

Duelling and the concept of honour: Honour was hugely important at the time, and maintaining the honour of your family name was crucial. If you were challenged to a duel and you refused, you would be deemed a coward, thus damaging your honour and the status of your family.

The role of women in a patriarchal society: Elizabethan England was a society controlled by men. Women were seen as the weaker sex and were expected to be ruled over by men. Women needed to be meek and mild, and most importantly, obedient to their fathers and later their husbands.

Arranged marriages: Marriages amongst the wealthy were arranged by parents, and were not about love. Mostly the marriages were arranged for the purposes of status and power, and improving the social standings of families.

The Catholic setting of the play: The play is set in Italy which is a Catholic country. Religion was extremely important, and marriage vows were sacred – once made, they could not be broken.

The Globe Theatre: had different areas for those of all social backgrounds. The theatre was the main form of entertainment for all people. Plays were performed during the day (open air) and heckling was common.

SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERS

Romeo Montague: Intense, intelligent, quick witted, and loved by his friends.

Juliet Capulet: Naïve and sheltered at the beginning, develops into a woman with strength. Grounded.

Mercutio: Romeo's close friend. Wild, playful and sarcastic

Tybalt: Juliet's cousin. A hothead consumed by issues of family honour. Hates the Montagues.

Benvolio: Romeo's cousin, less quick witted than Romeo and Mercutio, tries to keep the peace.

Friar Lawrence: A Franciscan monk and a friend to both Romeo and Juliet.

Nurse: Juliet's best friend and confidante, and in many ways is more her mother than Lady Capulet is.

Prince Escalus: Leader of Verona, concerned with keeping order between the warring families.

Lord Capulet: Juliet's Father. Protective of Juliet and reluctant to fight at the beginning, but demonstrates his power later.

Lady Capulet: She is not very close to her daughter, but seems to want what's best for her. Sides with her husband against Juliet.

LITERARY/DRAMATIC TERMINOLGY

PROLOGUE: a separate introductory section of a literary, dramatic, or musical work. In Romeo and Juliet, the prologue summarises the events of the play, informing the audience that the protagonists (main characters) 'take their life' at the end. This then colours the audience's view from the start, as they know that the play is a tragedy.

FORESHADOWING: a warning or indication of a future event.

DRAMATIC IRONY: a literary technique, originally used in Greek tragedy, by which the full significance of a character's words or actions is clear to the audience or reader although unknown to the character. This is particularly apparent once the lovers are married as the majority of the characters have no idea that this has happened.

BAWDY HUMOUR: Bawdy describes humour that is off-colour: about sex or other vulgar topics.

MONOLOGUE: a long speech by one actor in a play, although there can be other characters present on stage.

SOLILOQUY: an act of speaking one's thoughts aloud when by oneself or regardless of any hearers, especially by a character in a play.

OXYMORON: a combination of words that have opposite or very different meanings

METAPHOR: a thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else.

SIMILE: a figure of speech that compares two things by using the words 'like' or 'as' something else. They are compared indirectly.

IMAGERY: to use figurative language (similes, metaphors and personification) to represent objects, actions and ideas in such a way that it appeals to our physical senses.

IAMBIC PENTAMETER: a line of verse with five metrical feet, each consisting of one short (or unstressed) syllable followed by one long (or stressed) syllable, for example Two households, both alike in dignity.

JUXTAPOSITION: the fact of two things being seen or placed close together with contrasting effect.

TRAGEDY: a play dealing with tragic events and having an unhappy ending, especially one concerning the downfall of the main character.

PROTAGONIST: the leading character or one of the major characters in a play, film, novel, etc

ANTAGONIST: a person who actively opposes or is hostile to someone or something; an adversary.

BLANK VERSE: verse without rhyme, especially that which uses iambic pentameters.

SONNET FORM: composed of three quatrains (4 line stanzas) and a final couplet in iambic pentameter with the rhyme pattern abab cdcd efef gg. Traditionally associated with romance and love poetry.