



The
SHAKESPEARE
Theatre of
New Jersey

Shakespeare LIVE! 2013
presents

Romeo & Juliet

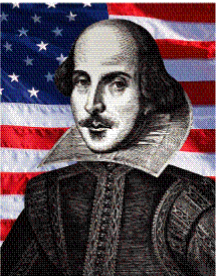
By William Shakespeare

Student-Teacher Study Guide

compiled and arranged by
the Education Department of
The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
PRESENTS



SHAKESPEARE
IN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

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COVER: Erica Knight (Juliet) and Cameron Berner (Romeo) in ROMEO AND JULIET.

THIS SPREAD: Anthony Martinez (Tybalt) and Brandon Pierce (Mercutio) in ROMEO AND JULIET.

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CLASSROOM

FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

What we hear most from educators is that there is a great deal of anxiety when it comes to Shakespeare; seeing it, reading it and especially teaching it. One of the principal goals of The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's education programs is to demystify Shakespeare, take him "off the shelf" and re-energize his work for students and teachers alike. Toward these goals, this Study Guide provides educators with tools to both allay their own concerns and to expand the theatre-going experience for their students beyond simply seeing a *Shakespeare LIVE* performance.

The information included in this guide will help you expand your students' understanding of Shakespeare in performance, as well as help you meet many of the Common Core Curriculum Standards. We encourage you to impart as much of the information included in this Study Guide to your students as is possible. The following are some **suggestions from teachers** on how you can utilize elements of the guide given limited classroom time.

- Many teachers have found that distributing or reading the Short Synopsis and Who's Who pages has greatly increased students' understanding and enjoyment of the production. It provides the students with a general understanding of what they will be seeing and what they can expect. Some teachers have simply taken the last five minutes of a class period to do this with very positive results.
- When more class time is available prior to our visit, we recommend incorporating the background information on William Shakespeare and the play itself. One teacher divided her class into groups and assigned each group research topics based on the divisions found in the study guide. Using a copy of the corresponding study guide page as a launch pad, the students had one week to research the topics. The students then presented their information to the class in three- to five-minute oral reports. Including the questions that evolved from the presentations, the entire project took only one class period. I am told that the reading of Old English and Middle English texts was "quite entertaining and very informative."
- Using the questions found in the "TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION," many teachers will opt to take a class period after *Shakespeare LIVE!* has visited the school to discuss the play with their students. The questions help keep the comments focused on the production, while incorporating various thematic and social issues that are found in the play.
- One school spent two days working through performance-based activities (a few of which are suggested in the "FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES" section) with a particularly "difficult and rowdy" class. They were astounded with the results. Their students took the opportunity to "ham it up," and discovered a great joy and understanding from performing Shakespeare.

"What's My Line?" Promoting Active Listening

Teacher-tested, student-approved! Try this exercise with your students:

Before attending the production, give each student one line from the play to listen for. Discuss the meaning of the line and encourage their input in deciphering what Shakespeare meant by the line. How would the student perform the line? Why is the line important to the play? Does it advance the plot, or give the audience particular insight into a character or relationship?

Following the production, discuss the line again. Did the actor present the line in the way your student expected? If not, how was it different?

Again, we hope you will incorporate as many portions of this study guide as you are able into your classroom experience. If you have any suggestions for activities or topics not already found in the Study Guide, please contact our education department. We are always interested in hearing new ways to excite young people (and teachers) about Shakespeare and live theatre.

Happy Teaching,



Brian B. Crowe,
Director of Education



The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's
Main Stage

ACTIVITIES

Shakespeare: Helpful Tips For Exploring & Seeing His Works

“Just plunge right in

(to Shakespeare). See a play, read it aloud, rent a video, listen to a tape. It’s up to you. When you look at Shakespeare close up, he’s not as intimidating as when he’s seen from afar.”

Norrie Epstein
The Friendly Shakespeare

Tragedy can have humor, and
great comedy always has
elements of the tragic.

18th-century critics complained that Shakespeare’s tragedies weren’t consistently serious enough. According to the classic rules, tragedy should be uniformly somber. Shakespeare’s use of humor in his tragedies prevents us from becoming washed away in a dense fog of emotion. Rather, it forces us out of the “tragic” long enough to appreciate the level to which the play’s passions have taken us.

“Some of the plays have taken on mythic proportions. By myths, I mean we grow up knowing certain things about [Shakespeare’s] characters but we don’t know how we know them.

There are lots of
SHAKESPEAREAN MICROCHIPS
lodged in our brains.”

Charles Marowitz, director

“IT WAS OLIVIER’S *HENRY V*
THAT MADE ME REALIZE THAT
SHAKESPEARE
IS ABOUT REAL
PEOPLE

AND THAT HIS LANGUAGE WASN’T
SIMPLY BEAUTIFUL POETRY.”
ROBERT BRUSTEIN, DIRECTOR

Don’t be afraid to
LISTEN,
WATCH
AND REACT;
laugh, cry, and be moved.
Shakespeare wrote for
a live and active audience.
Both audience and actor
must be involved to create
a truly winning performance.

“My advice to anyone seeing Shakespeare:

Don’t worry so
much!

Just make sure your ears are clean and your eyes are sharp. Listen and look and watch.

Look at the distance people stand from each other; look at the relationships being developed.

Stay with it.

Don’t negate the move that Shakespeare will make toward your gut, toward your soul—

because he will touch you there,
if you allow yourself to be touched.”

-David Suchet, actor

“There are some parts of the plays you’ll never understand. But excuse me, I thought that’s what great art was supposed to be about.

**DON’T
FREAK
OUT
OVER
IT!”**

Peter Sellars,
Director

About the Playwright

William Shakespeare, widely recognized as the greatest English dramatist, was born on April 23, 1564. He was the third of eight children born to John Shakespeare and Mary Arden of Stratford-on-Avon in Warwickshire, England. Shakespeare's father was a prominent local merchant, and Shakespeare's childhood, though little is known about it for certain, appears to have been quite normal. In fact, it seems that the young Shakespeare was allowed considerable leisure time because his writing contains extensive knowledge of hunting and hawking. In 1582 he married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a farmer. She was eight years his senior, and the match was considered unconventional.

It is believed that Shakespeare left Stratford-on-Avon and went to London around 1588. By 1592 he was a successful actor and playwright. He wrote approximately 38 plays, two epic poems, and over 150 sonnets. His work was immensely popular, appealing to members of all social spheres including Queen Elizabeth I and King James I. While they were well-liked, Shakespeare's plays were not considered by his educated contemporaries to be exceptional. By 1608, Shakespeare's

involvement with theatre began to dwindle, and he spent more time at his country home in Stratford. He died in 1616.

Most of Shakespeare's plays found their first major publication in 1623, seven years after Shakespeare's death, when two of his fellow actors put the plays together in the *First Folio*. Other early printings of Shakespeare's plays were called *quartos*, a printer's term referring to the format in which the publication was laid out. These quartos and the *First Folio* texts are the sources of all modern printings of Shakespeare's plays.



A MAN OF MANY WORDS

Shakespeare used over **20,000 different words** in his plays and poems. Of these, 8.5% (1,700 words) had never been seen in print before Shakespeare used them.

To give you a sense of just how extraordinary this is, consider that the King James Bible uses only 8,000 different words. Homer is credited with using approximately 9,000 different words in his works. Milton is estimated at using 10,000 different words in his works.

THE SONNETS

You might have thought that Shakespeare wrote the sonnets earlier in his career, as a type of "stepping stone" to his plays. However, Shakespeare actually penned most of his sonnets during the various outbreaks of the plague in London, when the theatres were closed.

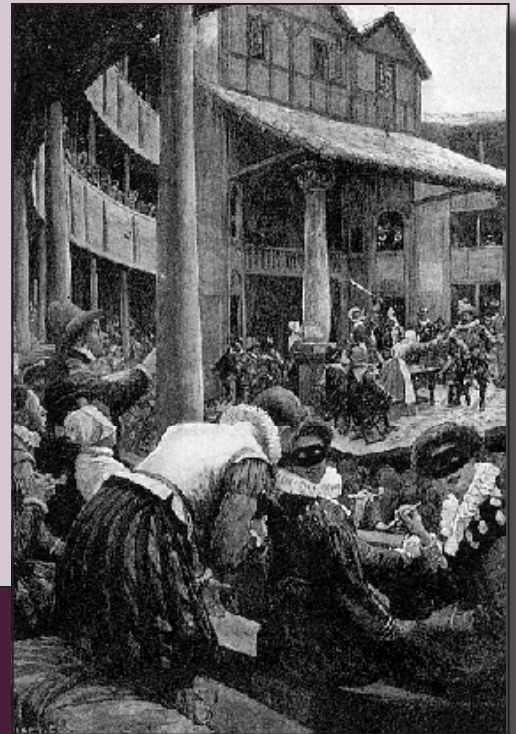
Shakespeare's London

London, in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, was a bustling urban center filled with a wide variety of people and cultures. Although most life centered around making a living or going to church, the main source of diversion for Londoners was the theatre. It was a form of entertainment accessible to people of all classes. The rich and the poor, the aristocrats and the beggars all met at the theatre. Though often appeasing the church or the monarchy, theatre at this time did experience a freedom that was unknown in previous generations. Evidence of this can be found in the numerous bawdy and pagan references found in Shakespeare's plays. This relative artistic license and freedom of expression made theatre extremely unpopular among certain members of society, and it was later banned entirely by the Puritans. Not until the reign of Charles II (1660-1685) was the theatre restored to the status it held in Shakespeare's day.

The Globe Theatre, the resident playhouse for Shakespeare's company of actors, was easily accessible to Londoners and an active social center. Actors and performers were also regularly brought to court or to private homes to entertain. Despite their social popularity, actors maintained a relatively low status, sometimes no better than a common beggar or rogue. Most performers were forced to earn a living doing trade work. The aristocracy's desire for entertainment, however, did spur the development of numerous new theatre pieces. Often a nobleman would become a patron to an artist or company of actors, providing for their financial needs and sheltering them

to some degree from official sanctions. In return, the company would adopt the name of the patron. Shakespeare's acting company was originally named "Lord Chamberlain's Men" after their patron, Henry Carey, Lord Chamberlain. Later, under the patronage of King James I, they were known as "The King's Men," an unprecedented honor at the time.

Despite the flourishing of the arts at this time, London was sometimes a desolate place. Outbreaks of the Black Plague (the bubonic plague) frequently erupted, killing thousands of citizens. Theatres, shops, and the government were all shut down during these times in hopes of preventing the spread of the disease. Elizabethans were unaware that the disease was being spread by the flea and rat populations, which well outnumbered the human population of London at that time.



HEARING A PLAY

The Elizabethans were an audience of listeners. They would say, "I'm going to hear a play," not "I'm going to see a play." The Elizabethan audience would pick up on words and their various meanings that we wouldn't.

Marjorie Garber

Speaking in rhyme is not natural to us, but it was to the Elizabethans, so we have to understand what language meant to them, and what language does not mean to us today. If I were an Elizabethan and I wanted to impress you as a lover, I wouldn't send you flowers. I would come and woo you at your feet and recite to you a sonnet I had written just for you— no matter how bad it was. Elizabethan England was a world where people sang, talked and breathed language.

Shakespeare's Verse

Shakespeare's plays are written predominantly in "blank verse," a poetic form preferred by English dramatists in the 16th and early 17th centuries. It is a very flexible medium, which, like the human speech pattern, is capable of a wide range of tones and inflections. The lines, which are usually unrhymed, are divided into five "feet," each of which is a two-syllable unit known as an "iamb." Each iamb is made up of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. Blank verse is technically defined as unrhymed iambic pentameter.

Here is a selection of blank verse from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with the stressed syllables in bold type:

Theseus: To you, your father should be as a god;
 One that compos'd your beauties, yea, and one
 To whom you are but as a form in wax
 By him imprinted, and within his pow'r
 To leave the figure, or disfigure it.
 Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Hermia: So is Lysander.

Theseus: In himself he is;
 But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
 The other must be held the worthier.

In this short selection, you can see a variety of speech tones indicated by the verse. The regularity of the rhythmic pattern and the use of full lines to complete his thoughts give Theseus a sense of calm and authority. Hermia's brief response, which breaks the iambic pattern, is only a fraction of a line, suggesting that she is impassioned and saying only a portion of what she is thinking. Theseus, however, completes her line and restores the iambic pattern, indicating his authority and the fact that he is, at this point in the play, literally overbearing her will.

Notice that while the blank verse pattern is generally iambic, even in this short passage there are instances where the pattern of stress is broken. The play would quickly become monotonous if the characters truly spoke in nothing but perfect iambic pentameter—fortunately for audiences, Shakespeare's

rhythms often become jagged and jarring to reflect the tension and conflict among his characters. Trying to determine where the rhythm of a line is regular or irregular provides important clues for the actor trying to understand what the character is thinking or feeling. As in real life, choosing to change the stress-bearing syllable may radically alter the meaning of what is being said.

Other clues are provided by word order and punctuation. There were few established rules for either in Shakespeare's time, so he was free to experiment with unusual syntax. As in our daily speech, the sentence structure (as indicated by both word order and punctuation) helps the reader or listener understand both the literal meaning of the sentence and the emphasis. A comma may indicate a new portion of the same idea, while a dash breaks into the sentence to insert a new idea, and a period suggests the completion of one idea and the start of another. Editors of Shakespeare over the years have quarreled bitterly about what punctuation the Bard "meant" to use or "should" have used. As an actor or reader of Shakespeare, it is up to you to decide if a comma, dash, or period makes the meaning of the line most clear.

THE HEART OF THE POETRY

The alternating unstressed-stressed pattern of blank verse has often been compared to the rhythm of the human heartbeat. When a character in Shakespeare is agitated, confused or upset, the rhythm of their verse often alters, much in the same way a heartbeat alters under similar conditions.

BOY, OH BOY

In Shakespeare's England, it was against the law for women to perform on the public stage. For this reason, the female roles in plays were always performed by males, usually teenage boys who were of slighter build than the other actors, had higher voices and no facial hair.

In *Macbeth*, however, the unique appearance of the witches ("you should be women, yet your beards forbid me to interpret that you are so") probably indicates that they, at least, were played by adult actors in the company.

Are You SURE This Is English?

Contrary to popular belief, Shakespeare and his contemporaries did not write in Old English, or even Middle English. **PLAYWRIGHTS OF THE 16TH AND EARLY 17TH CENTURIES WROTE IN MODERN ENGLISH.** Shakespeare spoke (and wrote in) the same language which we speak today. It is possible to be thrown a bit by grammatical “carry-overs” from earlier English [“thee” and “thou” instead of “you”] and the poetic liberties that Shakespeare took, but there is no doubt that the words and syntax used in his plays can be understood today without any “translation.” To help clarify this point, here are some examples of Old, Middle and Modern English.

Old English (500 - 1150 CE)

When Julius Caesar invaded Britain in BCE 55-4, the Celtic (pronounced KEL-tic) tribes lived in the British Isles. Their languages survive today in the forms of Gaelic (Scotland and Ireland), Welsh (Wales) and Manx (Isle of Man). The Romans brought Latin to Britain. However, early English developed primarily from the language of tribes which invaded and settled England from what is now Germany. This language, known as Old English, was also influenced by the Latin spoken by Catholic missionaries from Rome as well as the Scandinavian dialects of Viking raiders and settlers. **[LISTEN TO THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE AT: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4L7VTH8ii_8]**

selection from *Beowulf*

author unknown, ca 800 CE

Oft Scyld Scëfing sceaðena prëstum,
monegum mægðum meodo-setla oftëah,
egsode eorlas. Syððan ærert wearð
fëasceaft funden, hë þæs frofre gebàd,
wëox under wolcnum, weorð-myndum þàh,
oð-þæt him aeghwylc ymb-sittendra
ofer hron-ràde hýran scolde,
gomban gylðan. þæt wæs god cyning!

IN MODERN ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

*Often Scyld the Scefing from squadroned foes,
from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore,
awing the earls. Since first he lay
friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him:
for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throve,
till before him the folk, both far and near,
who lived by the whale-path, heard his mandate,
gave him gift: a good king he!*

WHAT DID SHAKESPEARE SOUND LIKE?

While we may associate Shakespeare with the “refined” British accent of an Ian McKellen or Judi Dench, linguistic scholars suggest that the closest approximation to the London accent of Shakespeare’s day is the accent heard nowadays in the Appalachian region of the United States.

Middle English (1150 - 1450 CE)

The conquest of England by the Norman army in 1066 brought great changes to English life and the English language. The Old French spoken by the Normans became for many years the language of the Royal Court and of English literature. Over time, the spoken English still used by the lower classes borrowed about 10,000 words from French, as well as certain grammatical structures. By the time English reappeared as a written, literary language in the 14th century, it only distantly resembled Old English. This German-French hybrid language is known as Middle English. **[LISTEN TO THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE AT: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QE0MtENfOMU>]**

selection from *The Canterbury Tales*
by Geoffrey Chaucer, ca 1390 CE

Whan that aprill with his shoures soote
The droghte of march hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
Tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the ram his halve cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open ye
(so priketh hem nature in hir corages);
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages...
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,
To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;

IN MODERN ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

*When April with his showers sweet with fruit
The drought of March has pierced unto the root
And bathed each vein with liquor that has power
To generate therein and sire the flower;
When Zephyr also has, with his sweet breath,
Quickened again, in every holt and heath,
The tender shoots and buds, and the young sun
Into the Ram one half his course has run,
And many little birds make melody
That sleep through all the night with open eye
(So Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage)-
Then do folk long to go on pilgrimage...*

Modern English (1450 - present day)

With the invention of the printing press in the 15th century, the English language began to develop and mutate at an unprecedented rate. Books, previously a precious and expensive commodity, were now widely available to anyone with basic literacy. Works in Latin, Italian, Spanish, French and Portuguese were being translated by the hundreds, and the translators found it necessary to borrow and invent thousands of new words. English trade and exploration fueled even more cultural and linguistic exchange. The early Modern English of Shakespeare and his contemporaries has been referred to as “English in its adolescence”: daring, experimental, innovative and irreverent.

selection from *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare, ca 1595 CE

Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not how to choose a man: Romeo! No, not he; though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body, though they be not to be talked on, yet they are past compare...

Romeo and Juliet: An Introduction

Romeo and Juliet contains all the elements of a great modern movie: suspense, action, romance, comedy and dysfunctional families! Written sometime around 1595, it tells the story of two young lovers separated by their quarreling families in a world where peril and passion abound. The play opens abruptly with a street fight, and shortly afterwards finds a young couple falling desperately in love. This leads to a secret marriage, which is spoiled by another street fight and eventually the demise of two young men. Ultimately, the play ends in the disturbing double suicide of its teenage protagonists. The action of the play all takes place over the brief course of a few days.

Like many of today's television and film writers, Shakespeare wrote for the masses and for all social levels. His job was to write plays that people would pay to see. This is how he made his living, fed his children, and contributed to society. One of Shakespeare's greatest assets was his power to observe. Unlike many other successful writers of the period, he did not write only from his own life, but also from the vast world he saw around him. In *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, he wrote about the exuberant, transformative energy of young love from both a male and female perspective – one based probably on his own remembrance of first love and one based on observation.

Also, unlike other plays of the period that were popular with the mass audience, Shakespeare's work was of a superior artistic level. Many consider him the greatest poet and dramatist that ever lived. A strong example of his skill in *Romeo and Juliet* is found in his isolation of the ill-fated lovers from the other characters. He achieves this through the use of light and dark images. Predominantly, we see Romeo and Juliet together only at night. The other characters in the play are seen almost exclusively in the daylight. The use of night imagery places us in the private world of the young lovers, far from the public scrutiny of society and social responsibility. The only time Romeo and Juliet are seen together in the daylight is when they are secretly married; a hopeful attempt to have their love recognized by the very society that is forcing them apart. Night also invokes images of both romantic love and death. These themes of love and death are intertwined until they are, in the end, indistinguishable.

Young love is a central theme of the play. Romeo is at most eighteen years old, and Juliet is not quite fourteen. Their lack of experience allows them to love each other without reservation or pre-judgment. They approach love and sexuality with purity and innocence. Romeo instantly forgets his obsessive infatuation for a girl named Rosaline when he first sees Juliet. Juliet prepares to marry Romeo the same night she meets him. Their love is romantic and idealistic.

Their "dreamy" relationship is grounded by the Nurse and Mercutio, who share their more worldly knowledge of love and sexuality with the young lovers. Shakespeare uses these secondary characters to counter-balance the sexual and romantic

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

Though *Romeo and Juliet* are the most famous "star-crossed" characters in Shakespeare, references to astrology abound in the Bard's plays.

When the Duke of Suffolk is about to be murdered aboard a ship in *Henry VI, Part II*, he says that "a cunning man did calculate my birth / And told me that by water I should die."

Julia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* puts all her faith in the stars.

In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Benedict, having difficulty writing a love poem, finds comfort in his knowledge that he "was not born under a rhyming planet."

Cassius reminds Brutus, pondering the rise of Julius Caesar, that the fault is "is not in our stars, / But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

inexperience of the protagonists.

Shakespeare does not bring the fateful lovers together until the end of Act I. This allows the audience to see how their union matures and deepens them as individuals. A love-sick Romeo enters at the beginning of the play pining for Rosaline, yet Shakespeare leads us to believe that his love for her is no more than the love of "being in love." The poetry that he uses to speak of her is generic and simple, easily transferred to another young woman. Juliet is vibrant and girlish, obeying her parents without question. Despite this, even early in the play, she shows signs of the maturing woman within her. She challenges her parents and is later forced to make difficult decisions on her own. Love awakens character traits in these adolescents that are only suggested in earlier scenes. These traits become more fully realized as the play unfolds.

The full title of *Romeo and Juliet* is *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*, but many critics argue that it is not truly a tragedy, at least by Aristotle's standards, because its characters do not fall from greatness due to a "tragic flaw." *Romeo and Juliet* can be simultaneously perceived as innocent victims of their own passions, their parents' feud, the violent society around them, and fate. References to omens and astrology abound, and a sense of doom hangs over the play from the Chorus's opening lines of the Prologue.

Whether a true tragedy or not, *Romeo and Juliet* is one of the most popular of Shakespeare's plays. It has been interpreted, adapted and presented in a thousands of ways. From the classic Renaissance setting to World War II Europe, from tropical islands to the gang-ridden ghettos of New York, this classic tale has entertained and moved audiences for over four hundred years.

Romeo and Juliet: A Short Synopsis

Shakespeare begins the play with a brawl between the members of the Capulet and Montague households, who have been feuding since time immemorial. The Prince breaks up the fight; incensed by the continual strife. He threatens the Capulets and Montagues with death if they or their men disturb the peace of Verona's streets again. We are then introduced to young Romeo, the teenage son and heir of the Montagues, bemoaning his unrequited love for a young woman named Rosaline.

Paris, a wealthy young nobleman, presses Lord Capulet for an answer to his request to marry Capulet's only daughter, Juliet. Capulet invites Paris to a party that he is throwing that evening to allow the nobleman to meet and court his daughter. Romeo inadvertently discovers that Rosaline is included on the Capulet guest list, and with the encouragement of his cousin Benvolio, agrees to crash the party in order to see her. In the Capulet household, we meet Juliet and her Nurse. Lady Capulet tells Juliet that Paris wishes to marry her. Juliet's Nurse is far more excited than Juliet, who responds to Paris' intentions with indifference.

Romeo and his entourage arrive at the Capulet party masked in order to conceal their identity. As the guests dance, Romeo sees Juliet and falls in love at first sight. Tybalt, nephew to Lady Capulet, recognizes Romeo and storms forward to confront him. Lord Capulet, furious that Tybalt would create a scene at

this festive occasion, berates him. When Romeo introduces himself to Juliet, she is immediately attracted to him as well. Only after their "love at first sight" encounter do each of them realize they have fallen in love with their "enemy." Later that night, Romeo risks his life to climb back into the Capulets' garden and see Juliet at her window. The young lovers profess their undying love for one another and their desire for immediate marriage. Juliet sends Romeo away and awaits confirmation of the marriage arrangements the following day.

Early the following morning, Romeo informs Friar Laurence

that he is no longer in love with Rosaline. His love is now set on Juliet. Friar Laurence chides Romeo for his fickle passions. Romeo insists that he and Juliet must be married immediately. Though reluctant at first, Friar Laurence begins to see the marriage as a means by which the long-standing feud between the two powerful families might be ended, and agrees to marry them.

Leaving their wedding ceremony, Romeo encounters Tybalt on the street, but refuses to accept his challenge for a duel, trying to maintain peace with the family of his secret bride. Mercutio, disgusted by Romeo's passivity, fights Tybalt. Attempting to break up the fight, Romeo comes between the two, and Mercutio is fatally wounded. Tybalt escapes as Mercutio dies. Enraged by his friend's death, Romeo kills Tybalt. The Prince enters, finds the dead young men, and banishes Romeo from Verona. Despite the violent bloodshed, Juliet swears her love for Romeo, and they spend one forbidden night together before Romeo flees to the neighboring town of Mantua until they can be reunited.

Capulet arranges a hasty marriage between Paris and Juliet to occur in three days. Juliet begs her parents to delay the arrangement. Capulet tells Juliet that she will be disowned if she does not do as he wishes. Under the guise of seeking absolution, she goes to Friar Laurence to seek his advice. The Friar devises a plan to prevent Juliet's marriage to Paris. She is to go home and pretend to agree to the marriage. On the night before the wedding, she is to take a drug that will make her appear dead the next morning. The Friar will inform Romeo of this plan. Romeo will then rescue her from the family crypt, and Friar Laurence will help them escape. Juliet returns home, takes the potion and falls into a deep sleep.

The Nurse discovers Juliet "dead" when she goes to wake her for the wedding, and Friar Laurence quickly begins the arrangements for Juliet's funeral. Unaware of Friar Laurence's plan, Benvolio rushes to Mantua and informs Romeo of Juliet's death. Romeo sends Benvolio away and goes to buy poison from an apothecary so that he may kill himself and lie with Juliet forever in her tomb. Friar Laurence discovers that his secret letter to Romeo was not delivered and races off to Juliet's tomb in hopes of preventing a disaster.

Romeo enters the Capulet tomb and, seeing Juliet's "dead" body, kills himself with poison. Juliet awakens to find Romeo dead as the Friar enters too late to save him. Friar Laurence attempts to remove Juliet from the tomb, but she refuses to leave Romeo. Once alone, she kills herself with Romeo's dagger. The Prince and the parents of both households enter. They discover the truth of their children's demise in Romeo's suicide note. Out of grief, Montague and Capulet make their peace with one another.

THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE

The lines that Romeo and Juliet speak to one another upon their first meeting form a sonnet, a 14-line poem with a specific, fixed rhyme scheme. The Elizabethan audience would have quickly heard this distinctive rhyme pattern. Why do you think Shakespeare chose to heighten the language at this particular moment in the play, making it even more formal and musical?

There are two other sonnets embedded in the play. Can you find them?

Who's Who in *Romeo and Juliet*

THE HOUSE OF MONTAGUE

ROMEO – the young heir of the Montague family, Romeo falls head over heels in love with Juliet after a brief but intense infatuation with Rosaline. Their love is ill-fated, however Juliet is a Capulet, a family that harbors an age-old feud with the Montagues. Despite the seemingly insurmountable barrier between the two young lovers, Romeo's romantic, passionate, and idealistic nature make him determined to woo and wed Juliet, however furtive or dangerous the means.

LORD MONTAGUE – Romeo's father and head of the Montague family. At the beginning of the play, he is concerned about Romeo's melancholic behavior.

LADY MONTAGUE – Romeo's mother; she dies of grief after her son is exiled.

BENVOLIO – a cousin and friend of Romeo's, Benvolio often acts as mediator, trying to defuse his friends' tempers and he attempts to get Romeo's mind off Rosaline.

THE HOUSE OF CAPULET

JULIET – the thirteen-year-old Juliet is the daughter of Lord and Lady Capulet. Juliet seems dutifully resigned to an arranged marriage until she sees Romeo and falls in love at first sight.

LORD CAPULET – the head of the powerful Capulet family, and Juliet's father. He arranges what he thinks to be a good marriage between her and Paris. He becomes violent when Juliet defies him.

LADY CAPULET – Juliet's mother. Like Juliet, Lady Capulet married young, but she lacks sympathy for her daughter when Juliet refuses to wed Paris.

TYBALT – Juliet's cousin, and a Capulet. He is aggressive and eager to protect the honor of his house against the Montagues. Tybalt's fight with Mercutio is a turning point in the play.

NURSE – the nurse has cared for Juliet her whole life, from wet-nurse to personal servant. While her earthiness provides comic relief, she is also Juliet's loyal confidante.

PETER – an illiterate servant of the Capulets who invites guests to the Capulets' feast and, like the Nurse, provides comic relief.

OTHER CITIZENS OF VERONA

MERCUTIO – a close friend of Romeo's, and a relative of the Prince, Mercutio is a great wit. He teases Romeo and others, but is also hot-headed and eager for a fight, which leads to trouble with Tybalt.

PRINCE – the Prince of Verona. He is tasked with keeping the peace, and therefore appears after fights and public disturbances to deliver justice.

PARIS – Juliet's handsome, wealthy suitor. Despite Juliet's extreme youth, Lord Capulet encourages Paris to woo his daughter, and later pledges her hand in marriage to Paris. Juliet's subsequent predicament precipitates the great tragedy of the play.

FRIAR LAURENCE – a Franciscan friar who sympathizes with Romeo and Juliet and sees their marriage as a way to end the aggression between their families. He secretly weds them, and then devises a plan to reunite them after Romeo's exile.

FRIAR JOHN – a Franciscan friar tasked with delivering news of Juliet's false death to the exiled Romeo. He is held in quarantine and because of the plague never reaches Romeo.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

"Volio" is a Latin root word meaning a person's "will" or personality. The prefix "ben-" means "good" or "well." This leads us to believe that Shakespeare may have intended us to see Benvolio as a good-natured, good-willed person; a peacekeeper.

"Romeo" comes from the same Italian root that we see in "roam." Literally translated, Romeo is a wanderer or pilgrim.

Though not derived from the same root word, we hear the word "jewel" in Juliet's name. She is the jewel of her family, and later the jewel of Romeo's love. He, in fact, compares her to "a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear."

"Mercutio" is named for his mercurial nature — the changeable temperament and quick mood swings we see in him throughout the play.

Sources and History of the Play

The plot of *Romeo and Juliet* derives primarily from several tales preserved in collections of Renaissance Italian stories. The tradition of the young Veronese lovers was a popular one in Italy, and it spawned a number of poems, short stories, ballads and plays. While the tradition held that the historical Romeo and Juliet lived in Verona around 1300, their story is very close to even older stories from classical Greece and Rome, particularly the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe. Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* (1554) included a Romeo and Juliet story which was translated by William Painter in his collection *The Palace of Pleasure*. Arthur Brooke also translated the tale into English in the form of a long narrative poem entitled *The Tragical History of Romeo and Juliet*. It was this poem in particular that served as the basis from which Shakespeare created one of the most famous plays in history.

Interestingly, Brooke's version of the story was a cautionary tale, alerting young people to the consequences of disobeying their parents and elders. Shakespeare refocuses the story and makes the two lovers the victims of society and circumstances. In his version, it is the parents who must take responsibility for the fate of their children.

Luigi da Porta was the first to insist that the lovers were actual historical figures; a conviction that still persists to this day, albeit with little real evidence. Visitors to contemporary Verona can see the Capulets' house and stand on the "actual" balcony where these lovers are believed to have first confessed their love.

Though the first fully documented performance of *Romeo and Juliet* in England does not appear until 1662, we know the play was very popular in Shakespeare's time. The 1597 First Quarto, the earliest printing of the play, stated it "hath been often (with great applause) plaid publicquely."

There have also been many modern adaptations of *Romeo and Juliet*. In 1935, Sir Laurence Olivier and John Gielgud revived a popular production of the play. In 1947, Peter Brook directed his production in Stratford; and Franco Zeffirelli brought his new version to London in 1960. Zeffirelli also directed a controversial film version in 1968 that is now considered a classic, and is shown in classrooms throughout the country. In 1996, audiences were introduced to Baz Luhrman's vision of these feuding families in a film starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes. In 2000, Jet Li and Aaliyah starred in a flashy, fast-paced reinvention of the classic in *Romeo Must Die*.

Over 30 modern operatic versions of *Romeo and Juliet* have been produced, the most famous musical adaptation being Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*. Other modern adaptations of the ever-popular classic love story have included ballets and television productions.

THE BEST OF THE BARD

The following phrases and sayings have their origin in *Romeo & Juliet*:

"A pair of star-crossed lovers"

"Sad hours seem long."

"You kiss by the book."

"O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?"

"What's in a name?"

"That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

"Good night, good night. Parting is such sweet sorrow."

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

ELIZABETHAN PARTY CRASHERS

It was a fairly common practice of Shakespeare's time for small groups of people to attend major social events and parties uninvited. These "crashers" most often wore masks to hide their true identities, even if the party they were attending was not a masquerade.

Commentary & Criticism

DEFINING R&J: “There has been a recent fashion in the theatre to define a certain kind of play as ‘black comedy.’ I would define *Romeo and Juliet* as a ‘golden tragedy.’”

Dame Peggy Ashcroft

WHERE IS THE “WHY?”: “One of the most quoted lines in the play is also the most misunderstood in all Shakespeare. ‘Wherefore art thou Romeo?’ is often assumed to mean ‘Where are you, Romeo?’ since Juliet usually utters these lines while leaning over the famous balcony, as if looking for her lover. Actually, what Juliet says is ‘Why are you Romeo?’, that is, ‘Why must you be Romeo, a Montague, the enemy of my family?’”

Norrie Epstein
The Friendly Shakespeare

NO SPEED LIMIT: “*Romeo and Juliet* is a drama in which speed is the medium of fate, though at first it appears that fate is only a function of speed. In the close, the awesome silent tableau



PHOTO: Christy Richardson (Nurse), Cameron Berner (Romeo), and Craig Bazan (The Friar) in *ROMEO AND JULIET*.

CRITIC'S CORNER

“*[Romeo and Juliet]* offered a completely novel experience, one disturbingly capable of challenging traditional authority. *Romeo and Juliet* was one of the hits of the decade (the 1590s), at least in part because it argued in favour of marrying for love against marriage by parental choice.”

Andrew Gurr

prompts the audience to the recognition that the unique quality of this tragic experience is created by the impetuous rashness of youth. The myth is essentially dramatic.”

Brian Gibbons
The Arden Shakespeare: Romeo & Juliet

WE KISS IN A SHADOW: “Night is the interior world of *Romeo and Juliet*, a middle world of transformation and dream sharply contrasted to the harsh daylight world of law, civil war, and banishment... This is all the more striking when we recall that *Romeo and Juliet* was performed in full daylight, in the middle of the afternoon. The sense of forboding night and pervasive blackness is conjured up entirely by and through language.”

Marjorie Garber
Shakespeare After All

TENDER LOVE IN A VIOLENT WORLD: “*Romeo and Juliet* is a picture of love and its pitiable fate, in a world whose atmosphere is too sharp for this, the tenderest blossom of human life.”

August Schlegel

THE BAWDY BARD: “Directors and teachers do *Romeo and Juliet* a disservice by making the play too ethereal and refined. Mercutio is one of Shakespeare’s most obscene characters, and Juliet one of his most passionate. Make sure your edition is fully annotated, with all the bawdy puns explained. Double entendres allowed Shakespeare to be sexual and romantic at once.”

Norrie Epstein
The Friendly Shakespeare

Shakespeare's Common Tongue

alack — expression of dismay or shock
anon — soon, right away
ought — nothing
avaunt — go away
ere — before
hath — has
hence — away (from here)
henceforth — from now on
hither — here
lest — or else
naught — nothing
oft — often
perchance — by chance, perhaps, maybe
sirrah — [pronounced SEER-uh] “hey, you” as to someone of lower status
thee — you
thence — away, over there
thine — yours
thither — there
thou — you
thy — your
whence — where
wherefore — why [literally: “where is the ‘for’ or ‘reason?’”]
whither — where

... and the “thys” have it

Often Shakespeare will alternate his usage of “thou” for “you”, or “thy” for “your”, or “thine” for “yours”. Though the words are synonymous, there is a great deal of information that can be obtained by looking closely at these choices.

The different uses of these pronouns have to do with status, relationship, degrees of intimacy and shifting attitudes. “You” is used in formal situations and conveys respect from the speaker. It is used when addressing royalty and parents. “Thou,” used in more informal settings, also can suggest contempt or aggression from the speaker. The use of “thou” places the speaker above the status of the person to whom s/he is speaking. Children are addressed using “thou,” “thee” or “thy.” In a conversation between two people of equal status, the use of “you” suggests that everything is going along smoothly, whereas “thou” would suggest that there is some kind of upset or unrest in the relationship.

Terms and Phrases Found in *Romeo and Juliet*

PROLOGUE

civil blood makes civil hands unclean— citizens soil their hands with each other's blood
star-cross'd— born under unlucky stars

ACT I

mistemper'd— angry
bred of an airy word— started because of something someone said
God gi'go-den— God give you a good evening
Lammastide— August 1, a harvest holiday
man of wax— a model (as if made by a sculptor), thus: a perfect man
ambuscadoes— soldiers participating in an ambush

ACT II

demesnes— estates, lands, domain
wherefore art thou Romeo?— why are you named Romeo?
doff— remove
wanton— an undisciplined or lewd person
shrift— to confess a sin and receive absolution
pricksongs— a countermelody to a simple tune
pox— a disease marked by skin lesions (smallpox, chickenpox, e.g.)
bawd— a brothel-keeper or prostitute

flirt-gills— flirtly or loose women

skains-mates— cutthroats or rogues (the skain was a long Irish knife)

jaunce— a long walk, a journey

ACT III

zounds— God's wounds (an oath or exclamation)

Phaeton— in Greek myth, the son of the god Apollo. His rash decision to drive his father's sun-chariot resulted in his death.

choplogic— chopped logic, mixed-up or unreasonable thought

fettle— prepare

puling— whining

ACT IV

no pulse shall keep his native progress— your pulse will stop

surcease— completion, ending

environed— surrounded

ACT V

Capel's monument— the Capulet family tomb

restorative— power of transference (i.e. “restore me to you.”)

scourge— literally, a whip; metaphorically, a severe and painful punishment

What Did They Say?

This is an opportunity to test your comprehension of Shakespeare's language. Below you will find passages from *Romeo and Juliet*. Answer the questions for each passage as specifically as possible.

PRINCE ESCALUS

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 mistempered 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 disturbed the quiet of our streets...
 If ever you disturb our streets again,
 Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.

1. To whom is the Prince speaking?
2. What are the circumstances that led up to this speech? Based on the language the Prince uses, what is happening while he speaks?
3. What are "neighbour-stained steel" and "mistempered weapons"?
4. What are "civil brawls bred by an airy word"?
5. What does the Prince mean when he says "Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace."?

JULIET

The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse;
 In half an hour she promised to return.
 Perchance she cannot meet him. That's not so.
 O, she is lame! Love's heralds should be thoughts,
 Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams...
 Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
 Of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve
 Is three long hours; yet she is not come.
 Had she affections and warm youthful blood,
 She would be as swift in motion as a ball...
 But old folks, many feign as they were dead—
 Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

1. To whom is Juliet speaking?
2. What are the circumstances that have led up to this speech?
3. How long has Juliet been waiting? What is she waiting for? Based on her language, is she waiting patiently or impatiently?
4. What time of day is it?
5. Juliet compares the speeds of young people and elderly people in this speech. Which specific lines address this comparison?
6. What does she mean when she says that "old folks...feign as they were dead"?

Who Said That?

Match the spoken line to the character who speaks it. Two characters have two quotes each, one has three and five characters have none of the quotes listed below.

- | | | |
|----|---|----------------|
| A. | "Ay me! Sad hours seem long." | BENVOLIO |
| B. | "Too soon marred are those so early made." | PRINCE ESCALUS |
| C. | "I will make thee think thy swan a crow." | FRIAR LAURENCE |
| D. | "Well, think of marriage now. Younger than you,
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem
Are made already mothers." | JULIET |
| E. | "I talk of dreams;
Which are the children of an idle brain." | LORD CAPULET |
| F. | "O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!" | LADY CAPULET |
| G. | "I will withdraw; but this intrusion shall,
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitterest gall." | MERCUTIO |
| H. | "'Tis but thy name that is my enemy." | LORD MONTAGUE |
| I. | "Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast." | NURSE |
| J. | "Men's eyes were made to look and let them gaze.
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I." | PARIS |
| K. | "There is no world without Verona walls,
But purgatory, torture, hell itself." | PETER |
| L. | "Would none but I might venge my cousin's death!" | ROMEO |
| | | TYBALT |

Topics for Discussion

ABOUT THE PLAY

1. Romeo and Juliet's world is, to some extent, defined and constricted by their families. How is each of them affected by his/her family? Compare and contrast their family environments. In what way does each of them construct an "alternate family" that makes up for the shortcomings of their biological families, and who do they choose to form these families?

2. Several significant obstacles prevent a happy ending to this story. What are they? Could any of them be prevented? Some scholars contend that Romeo and Juliet had to die young, because such love is too perfect to last. Imagine them as a middle-aged couple with two kids and a dog. Do you think this marriage would have been happy and successful? Why or why not? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

3. At the end of the play, Capulet and Montague vow to reconcile their differences and end their long-standing feud. Does this mean that *Romeo and Juliet* also has a positive ending? Can a play have both a happy *and* a tragic ending? Do you believe that the peace between them will last?

4. Romeo is an only child, as is Juliet. How are the families additionally affected by this fact? Have they wiped themselves out by their hatred and violence?

5. The Prologue reveals, from the opening moments of the play, that the two main characters will die in the end. Why does Shakespeare give away the plot? Can you think of contemporary plays, movies or television shows in which you already know the end of the story when it begins?

ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION

1. The scenery for this production is clearly not a literal depiction of medieval Verona. With only a lush curtain backdrop, eight golden chairs and a handful of other pieces, the world of the play is created. How do these elements transform throughout the show to depict different locations? Why do you think these choices were made by the director and scenic designer? How does this approach to the show engage the audience, and encourage them to use their imagination?

2. How are costumes used to help tell the story? How does the design use color and tone to suggest family allegiance and status? Though the costumes have a very "olde world period" feel, they also include elements that are more contemporary. How does the use of costumes help to give the play a timeless feel?

3. The violence in this play might have struck you as different from the violence that is portrayed in movies and on television. Without the benefit of spurting "blood" and camera cut-aways, combat directors for the live theatre must use different techniques to depict violence. How realistic and effective did you find the violence to be in this production?

4. How does this production compare and contrast with what you visualized when reading the play? Were any characters different than you pictured? How so? Was there a part of the story you found confusing when reading the play, but that was much clearer seeing it performed? If so, what, and how was it clearer?



Christy Richardson (Nurse), Adam Kee (Lord Capulet), Erica Knight (Juliet) and Blythe Coons (Lady Capulet) in *ROMEO AND JULIET*.

“Test Your Understanding” Quiz

- Shakespeare wrote in what language?
 - Old English
 - Middle English
 - early modern English
 - Latin
- Mercutio is killed by _____.
 - Tybalt
 - Lord Capulet
 - poison
 - Romeo
- When we first meet Romeo, he is pining for _____.
 - an invitation to the party
 - Rosaline
 - Juliet
 - an opportunity to fight
- “Romeo, Romeo. Wherefore art thou Romeo?” means:
 - “Romeo, where are you?”
 - “Why is your name ‘Romeo?’”
 - “Romeo, what does your name mean?”
 - “Why do you create art, Romeo?”
- Which of these characters does not die in the course of the play?
 - Juliet
 - Romeo
 - Benvolio
 - Tybalt
- Which character asks Capulet for Juliet’s hand in marriage?
 - Paris
 - Tybalt
 - Romeo
 - Benvolio
- Mercutio refers to the Fairy Queen who sneaks into people’s dreams. What is her name?
 - Rosaline
 - Titania
 - Hecate
 - Mab
- The name “Benvolio” literally means _____.
 - “one who is a woman”
 - “good will”
 - “player of the violin”
 - “born of violence”
- When he is banished, Romeo flees to what city?
 - Verona
 - Padua
 - Illyria
 - Mantua
- A sonnet is _____.
 - any short poem by Shakespeare
 - a 14-line poem with a fixed rhyme scheme
 - a short sword for fencing
 - a bouquet of flowers
- Friar Laurence agrees to marry Romeo and Juliet because _____.
 - he has been bribed by their parents
 - he realizes they are truly in love
 - he believes it will bring peace between their families
 - Romeo has threatened him
- Romeo purchases poison from _____.
 - Friar Laurence
 - Friar John
 - an apothecary
 - Mercutio
- The feuding families in this play are:
 - the Hatfields and the McCoys
 - the Veronas and the Mantuas
 - the Capulets and the Montagues
 - the Montagues and the Parises
- Romeo says “The love I bear thee doth much excuse the appertaining rage to such a greeting” to whom?
 - Tybalt, who calls him a villain
 - Mercutio, who mocks him for being in love
 - Juliet, who is angry at the death of Tybalt
 - his father, who chides him for falling in love with a Capulet
- Shakespeare’s plays are most often written in _____.
 - rhyming couplets
 - Old English
 - blank verse
 - prose

Follow-up Activities

1. **“Critics’ Corner”** Write a review of this production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Be sure to include specific information and your own reactions to both the acting and the design elements (set, costumes and sound). Explain what you liked and disliked, and support your opinions. Then submit your review to The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey’s Education Department, or see if it can be published in your school newspaper.

NJ CORE STANDARD: Visual & Performing Arts 1.4

2. **“Alert the media!”** If Verona had a cable news network, it would have featured 24-hour coverage of the events in this play: riots in the streets lead to murders, the government issues a proclamation of death, a rich family plans the wedding of the year, the city’s most eligible bachelor is exiled, and an heiress apparently dies under mysterious circumstances. Assign these and other big events of the play to members of the class and create appropriate television or newspaper coverage.

NJ CORE STANDARD: Visual & Performing Arts 1.3

3. **“I learn by this letter...”** Write a letter or diary entry from the point of view of one of the characters, discussing an event or situation in the play. For example, love letters between Romeo and Juliet, a letter from Rosaline to Romeo explaining why she can’t return his affection, a letter from Romeo to the Prince asking for pardon, or a letter from Juliet to Romeo before she drinks the sleeping potion. Alternatively, write a sonnet or other love poem.

COMMON CORE STANDARD: Language Arts Literacy 3.1

4. **“15-minute Shakespeare”** Divide into five groups, and have each group take one act of the play. Your task is to create a three-minute version of your act, using only Shakespeare’s words. Choose carefully the lines from your act that carry the most important information and advance the story. When each group is done, you will have a 15-minute version of *Romeo and Juliet* which you can perform for one another. Afterwards, discuss both the process of adaptation and how your “abridgement” compared to the more modest cuts which the director made for this touring production.

COMMON CORE STANDARD: Language Arts Literacy 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

5. **“A Director Prepares”** *Romeo and Juliet* has long captured the imaginations of directors and designers for stage and screen. Individually or in small groups, come up with your own scenic or costume designs for the play. Find a line or image expressed in the play as your “launch pad.” You can

use drawings and collage as well as writing to explain and justify your design to the class.

NJ CORE STANDARD: Visual & Performing Arts 1.1

6. **“Speak the Speech...”** In small groups, work to present a small piece of the text (the opening prologue works well) to the class. Each group should come up with its own unique presentation: different rhythms, echoing or underscoring key words or phrases, simple props, movement, etc. After each group has presented its interpretation of the text, discuss what was successful about each one. From this, you can develop a rubric for what makes a good performance.

COMMON CORE STANDARD: Language Arts Literacy 3.3

NJ CORE STANDARD: Visual & Performing Arts 1.1, 1.3

7. **“Girl Power!/Boy Power!”** Choose one of the scenes from the play that has both male and female characters and act it out in class three times: once with an all-male cast, once with an all-female cast, and once with the roles assigned according to gender. How does it affect the scene? Discuss this in light of the fact that, in Shakespeare’s time, Juliet, the Nurse and Lady Capulet would have been played by boys.

NJ CORE STANDARD: Visual & Performing Arts 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

8. **“Play/Pause/Rewind”** Available versions of *Romeo and Juliet* on video include the 1968 Franco Zeffirelli film, and Baz Lurhmann’s *Romeo + Juliet*, as well as the 1954 film. Choose two versions of the same scene, such as the street-fight between Mercutio, Tybalt and Romeo, and show each to the students, asking them to observe how the actors in each production speak, interpret and move to the language. Make liberal use of the pause button to stop and ask specific questions, then rewind and let them watch the entire scene through uninterrupted. Teachers may consider (based on the age of the students) looking at films inspired by *Romeo and Juliet*, such as *West Side Story*, *Gnomeo and Juliet*, or even *Underworld* or *Private Romeo* for this project.

NJ CORE STANDARD: Visual & Performing Arts 1.4

Teachers:

Do you have activities or exercises to suggest for this play? We are always looking for new ideas to inspire students (and teachers). Send your suggestions to info@ShakespeareNJ.org and we will share them with other teachers, and maybe even include them in future study guides.

Sources for this Study Guide

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 SHAKING HANDS WITH SHAKESPEARE by Alison Wedell Schumacher

"How do you remember all those lines?" or "Words, Words, Words!"

Hamlet is the largest role in Shakespeare's canon, and one of the most prized among actors. As a reference, here is a list of major Shakespearean characters and the number of lines (and words) they speak in the Folio editions of the plays.

Hamlet (HAMLET)	1,507 (11,563)	Duke (MEASURE)	858 (6,536)
Richard (RICHARD III)	1,145 (8,826)	Lear (KING LEAR)	753 (5,592)
Iago (OTHELLO)	1,094 (8,434)	Macbeth (MACBETH)	705 (5,291)
Henry (HENRY V)	1,036 (8,338)	Prospero (TEMPEST)	643 (4,700)
Othello (OTHELLO)	879 (6,237)	ROMEO (R&J)	616 (4,677)
Rosalind (AYLI)	721 (5,698)	Desdemona (OTHELLO)	388 (2,752)
Cleopatra (A&C)	670 (4,686)	Beatrice (MUCH ADO)	298 (2,359)
JULIET (R&J)	541 (4,271)	Katherina (SHREW)	219 (1,759)

Source: A COMPLETE AND SYSTEMATIC CONCORDANCE TO THE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE; Marvin Spevack

"Test Your Understanding" Quiz Answer Guide

1. c 2. a 3. b 4. b 5. c
 6. a 7. d 8. b 9. d 10. b
 11. c 12. c 13. c 14. a 15. c

Who Said That? Answer Guide

A. Romeo G. Tybalt
 B. Lord Capulet H. Juliet
 C. Benvolio I. Friar Laurence
 D. Lady Capulet J. Mercutio
 E. Mercutio K. Romeo
 F. Romeo L. Juliet

Meeting the NJ Curriculum & Common Core Standards

In 1996, the New Jersey State Board of Education adopted Common Core Standards that set out to clearly define what every New Jersey student should know and be able to do at the end of his/her schooling. The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is committed to supporting teachers by ensuring that our educational programs are relevant to standards-based teaching and learning.

Viewing a performance by The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey and participating in the post-performance discussion can serve as a powerful springboard for discussion, writing, and other outlets for higher-order thinking. Below are just some of the Standards that can be addressed by seeing a performance at The Shakespeare Theatre or at your school, and by applying the activities found in this study guide.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY STANDARDS

As a theatre dedicated to the classics, we are continually engaged in exploring some of the world's greatest literature, and the relationship between the written text and performance. Our philosophy and practice follow the four underlying assumptions of the Language Arts Literacy Common Core Standards: that "language is an *active process* for constructing meaning," that "language develops in a *social context*," that language ability increases as learners "engage in texts that are *rich in ideas and increasingly complex in language*," and that learners achieve mastery not by practicing isolated skills but by "*using and exploring language* in its many dimensions." In the practice of theatre, we merge all areas of the language arts, as the standards suggest, "in an integrated act of rehearsal, reflection, and learning." Below, you will find just a few of the possibilities for aligning your study of our productions to each of these standards.

STANDARD 3.1:

All students will apply the knowledge of sounds, letters and words in written English to become independent and fluent readers, and will read a variety of materials and texts with fluency and comprehension.

Read a scene from the play as a class and use context clues to interpret new words and expand vocabulary (3.1.C/F); demonstrate understanding by performing a scene from the play (3.1.G); compare and contrast literary elements in the play with another text being studied (3.1.H).

STANDARD 3.2:

All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

Write a new ending for the play in blank verse or in modern prose (3.2.D), write a critique of the play which will be workshopped and published in a classroom setting (3.2.A/B/D).

STANDARD 3.3:

All students will speak in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

Participate in a post-show discussion (3.3.A/B), memorize and perform a monologue or scene from the play (3.3.D).

STANDARD 3.4:

All students will listen actively to information from a variety of sources in a variety of situations.

Select one speech or line from the play and compare how it was performed in the stage and film version (3.4.A/B).

STANDARD 3.5:

All students will access, view, evaluate and respond to print, nonprint, and electronic texts and resources.

Discuss how the play expresses cultural values of the playwright's time (3.5.A); compare and contrast the printed text with its staged version (3.5.B).

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS STANDARDS

According to both No Child Left Behind and the New Jersey CCCS, the arts (including theatre) are a core subject and "experience with and knowledge of the arts is a vital part of a complete education." In the area of performing arts, performances, workshops and study guide exercises developed by The Shakespeare Theatre address all four state standards. Below, you will find just a few of the possibilities for aligning your study of our productions to each of these standards.

STANDARD 1.1: THE CREATIVE PROCESS

All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

Engage in a discussion of the technical elements of our production (1.1.2.C.4); work to identify and explore the elements of narrative structure as they occurred in the play (1.1.5.C.1); discuss the differences and similarities between the traditions and values expressed in the play with those currently expressed in our society (1.1.8.C.1); discuss how the play or the playwright might have had an impact on human history or culture (1.1.12.C.1).

STANDARD 1.2: HISTORY OF THE ARTS AND CULTURE

All students will understand the role, development, and influence of the arts throughout history and across cultures.

Identify and explore the ways in which the playwright has contributed to our culture (1.2.5.A.3); have the students research how some of the cultural mores and personal aesthetics presented in the production differ from our own. (1.2.8.A.3); discuss how exposure to the arts and study of this piece of art in particular might have a positive impact on an individual's lifelong learning, personal expression and contributions to their communities (1.2.12.A.2).

STANDARD 1.3: PERFORMANCE

All students will synthesize those skills, media, methods, and technologies appropriate to creating, performing, and/or presenting works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

Retell their favorite portions of the story by acting them out in their own words (1.3.2.C.2, 1.3.2.C.3); have your students memorize and present a monologue from the play (1.3.2.C.2 & 1.3.2.C.3); Prepare, rehearse and present a scene from the play as a group (1.3.5.C.2); challenge them to identify what might be motivating certain characters or what a character's intention may be (1.3.8.C.1); have them explore how different physical, or vocal choices can enhance the clarity of their motivations, intentions and actions (1.3.12.C.2).

STANDARD 1.4: AESTHETIC RESPONSES & CRITIQUE METHODOLOGIES

All students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of arts philosophies, judgment, and analysis to works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

Write a review of our production using the appropriate terminology; develop a class rubric for effective theatrical presentations; compare and contrast the play with work by other artists or other arts disciplines (1.4.2.A.1); compare and contrast this production with other productions they have seen or heard of (1.4.5.A.3); discuss the use of metaphor in both the text and the design of the production (1.4.8.A.5).

Additional Opportunities for Students and Teachers

NEW FOR 2013



THE SHAKESPEARE THEATRE ACADEMY

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is proud to announce the launch of The Shakespeare Theatre Academy. Beginning in March of 2013, the Theatre will offer youth and adult classes in a wide range of disciplines connected with classic theatre. Each series of classes meets once a week in one of the Theatre's beautiful facilities, and gives participants the opportunity to work under the instruction of The Shakespeare Theatre's renowned artistic and educational staff as well as guest teaching artists. **Spring and Fall Classes Available.**



THE STUDENT MATINEE SERIES

Student Matinee performances of the productions in our Main Stage season provide students and teachers with an opportunity to view theatre classics brought to life by some of the nation's most skilled professional actors in the intimate setting of the F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre. Each includes a comprehensive study guide and a lively talkback with the cast.



SHAKESPEARE LIVE! TOURS AND WORKSHOPS

This acclaimed touring program brings dynamic and visually engaging one-hour productions of Shakespeare's classics directly into the schools. Each performance includes a comprehensive study guide and a post-performance discussion with the actors. Fun and interactive workshops give students a chance to explore the actor's approach to bringing Shakespeare's language to life.



PAGES TO PLAYERS: IN-SCHOOL RESIDENCIES

Residencies provide an opportunity for classroom English teachers in grades 5-8 to partner with the Theatre's skilled teaching artists to explore Shakespeare's text in-depth in an exciting, performance-based way that evokes collaboration, self-confidence and creativity while reinforcing language arts skills.



SHAKESPERIENCE: NJ STUDENT SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

This annual spring festival, developed in partnership with the Folger Shakespeare Library and Rider University, gives middle and high school classes the opportunity to spend a day at the Theatre experiencing Shakespeare as both actors and audience. The *Shakespeare: NJ* Festival celebrates the power of performance as a teaching tool on a statewide scale.



THE JUNIOR AND SENIOR SHAKESPEARE CORPS

Young actors are given the opportunity to participate in the excitement of the Theatre's summer season through this program, which offers classes, a final presentation, as well as behind-the-scenes and front-of-house experience. Geared for students in grades 6 through 12, admission to this program is through an audition and/or an interview.

For more information on these and other opportunities,

please visit

www.ShakespeareNJ.org

and press the "Education" button

About The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey

The acclaimed Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is one of the leading Shakespeare theatres in the nation. Serving approximately 100,000 adults and young people annually, it is New Jersey's largest professional theatre company dedicated to Shakespeare's canon and other classic masterworks. With its distinguished productions and education programs, the company strives to illuminate the universal and lasting relevance of the classics for contemporary audiences. The longest-running Shakespeare theatre on the East Coast and the seventh largest in the nation, The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2012, and is proud to be launching into its second half-century with a brand new support facility housing all its administrative and technical shops, as well as a new rehearsal hall, classroom spaces, and extensive costume, property and scenic inventory.



The company's 2013 Main Stage Season will feature six productions presented in its 308-seat F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre from June through December. In the summer, an Outdoor Stage production is also presented at the Greek Theatre, an open-air amphitheatre nestled in a hillside on the campus of the College of Saint Elizabeth in nearby Morristown.

In addition to being a celebrated producer of classic plays and operating *Shakespeare LIVE!* (one of the largest educational Shakespeare touring programs in the New York/New Jersey region), The Shakespeare Theatre is also deeply committed to nurturing new talent for the American stage. By providing an outstanding training ground for students of the theatre, and cultivating audiences for the future by providing extensive outreach opportunities for students across New Jersey and beyond, The Shakespeare Theatre is a leader in arts education. For additional information, visit our web site at www.ShakespeareNJ.org.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is one of 23 professional theatres in the state of New Jersey. The company's dedication to the classics and commitment to excellence sets critical standards for the field. Nationwide, the Theatre has emerged as one of the nation's most exciting theatres under the leadership of Artistic Director, Bonnie J. Monte since 1990. It is one of only a handful of Shakespeare Theatres on the east coast, and in recent years has drawn larger and larger audiences and unprecedented critical acclaim. The opening of the intimate, 308-seat F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre in 1998, provided the Theatre with a state-of-the-art venue with excellent sightlines, and increased access for patrons and artists with disabilities.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is a member of ArtPride, The Shakespeare Theatre Association, and is a founding member of the New Jersey Theatre Alliance.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's programs are made possible, in part, by funding from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional major support is received from The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the F.M. Kirby Foundation, The Edward T. Cone Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, The CTW Foundation, The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation and Drew University, as well as contributions from numerous corporations, foundations, government agencies and individuals. The Shakespeare Theatre is an independent, professional theatre company located on the Drew University campus.

