

**ROMEO
AND
JULIET**



**MADE SUPER
SUPER EASY**

EVELYN SAMUEL

Romeo and Juliet
Made Super Super Easy
First Edition Published by Evelyn Samuel
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**DEDICATED TO
RAVI MOODLEY**

No words I write could ever say
How sad and empty I feel today.
The angels came for you
Much sooner than I planned.
I'll brave the bitter grief that comes,
And I'll try my best to understand.
Why did you have to go away?
Why wasn't it right for you to stay?
In my heart you will always be.
I love you dearly and I know you'll watch over me.

PREFACE

To all students reading my study guide **Romeo and Juliet made super super easy**, I do hope that my wealth of information will assist you to achieve the highest possible grades. I have formulated a unique structure where detailed explanation is next to text to make it super super easy for you to connect and understand the book, and to revise without the need to resort to more than one book.

Each scene in each Act is defined by a detailed explanation next to Shakespeare's text. The detailed explanation is evidenced and highlighted with relevant important quotes. It identifies connotative meaning, imagery, symbolism, and linguistic devices.

Each scene in each Act is summarised to aid in the understanding of the Shakespearean storyline.

A detailed explanation of each main character in the book is provided so that the fabric of their relationships can be better understood.

The themes of fate and love are analysed to reveal the true nature of star-crossed lovers as perceived by society in Shakespeare's era.

Typical exam questions are included to give some idea of the scope sought by the Exam Boards. Further details can be found in the Specification published by the Exam Boards on their websites.

Good Luck with your studies and your exam results on *Romeo and Juliet*.

FOREWARD

What a super super easy way to study and understand Shakespeare's tragedy, 'Romeo and Juliet'. No need to match text with explanation when both are next to each other - with important quotes highlighted.

I really enjoyed looking left at the text and then right at the explanation. The structure and content of this fantastic book is a solid base to get to grips with Shakespeare's tragedy about two young star-crossed lovers whose self-imposed deaths through misunderstanding, ultimately reconciles the feud between their respective families, the Montagues for Romeo and the Capulets for Juliet.

I can, without hesitation, recommend this study guide to all students, and hope they gain as much insight as I did into Shakespeare's tragedy, 'Romeo and Juliet'.

Research Professor of English

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Historical Context and Setting

- William Shakespeare, one of the greatest playwrights of the Elizabethan era, wrote '*Romeo and Juliet*' sometime between 1591 and 1596 during the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1 of England.
- The plot stems from an Italian tale translated into verse as '*The Tragical History of Romeo and Juliet*' by Arthur Brooke in 1562 and retold in prose in '*Palace of Pleasure*' by William Painter in 1567.
- The play is set in Verona, Italy during the Renaissance, the era of rebirth of Ancient Greek and Roman learning, when rivalry between different groups in society, promoted conflict to attain wealth and power.
- During his lifetime, and today, '*Romeo and Juliet*', is still one of Shakespeare's most popular plays only matched by '*Hamlet*', a tragedy of a different kind written by Shakespeare circa 1602 and set in Denmark.

Tragic Lovers

- Throughout history there have been many events of star-crossed lovers meeting a tragic end: *Cleopatra* and *Mark Anthony* in 30 BC; or the Celtic tale of *Tristan* and *Isolde* (circa prior to 1200 AD) - both a precursor to *Romeo and Juliet*, and both pairs of lovers suffering a similar fate to *Romeo* the Montague and *Juliet* the Capulet.
- The tragedy occurs because *Romeo* mistakenly thinks that *Juliet* has killed herself and wishing to join her in death, takes poison and dies. But, in fact, *Juliet* had taken a sleeping drug as a ruse to evade marriage to *Paris* simply because *Friar Laurence* had secretly married her to *Romeo* before he was exiled. On awakening, distraught, she refuses to leave the tomb and stabs herself to join *Romeo* in the afterlife.
- The mantra for true lovers is that they will never be parted in life or death.

The Feud

- Dominance and position in society seem to be the driving force that sets the Montagues and Capulets against each other and any relinquishing of rights or possessions must be denied with the consequence that conflicts are resolved by force of arms not diplomacy.
- *Juliet* cannot be allowed to marry a Montague because that would violate the feud as would that of *Romeo* were to marry a Capulet.
- The feud is ended by their tragic deaths.

CHARACTERS

[House of Montague]

ROMEO	son and heir of Lord and Lady Montague
LORD MONTAGUE	father of Romeo and the patriarch of the family
LADY MONTAGUE	mother of Romeo
BENVOLIO	nephew of Lord Montague, cousin of Romeo
BALTHASAR	dedicated servant of Romeo
ABRAHAM	servant of the House of Montague

[House of Capulet]

JULIET	daughter of Lord and Lady Capulet
LORD CAPULET	father of Juliet and the patriarch of the family
LADY CAPULET	mother of Juliet
NURSE	cared for Juliet her entire life
TYBALT	cousin of Juliet on her mother's side
SAMPSON	servant of the House of Capulet
GREGORY	another servant of the House of Capulet
PETER	servant of the House of Capulet
MUSICIANS	group of 3 musical players

[Franciscans]

FRIAR LAURENCE	friend to both Romeo and Juliet
FRIAR JOHN	colleague of Friar Laurence

[Others]

PRINCE ESCALUS	Prince of Verona
MERCUTIO	kinsman to the Prince and friend of Romeo
PARIS	kinsman to the Prince and the suitor of Juliet
THE APOTHECARY	chemist in Mantua who sales poison and potions
ROSALINE	woman whom Romeo is infatuated with
THE CHORUS	single narrator commenting on plots and themes

ENTRANCES

A list of when each CHARACTER in the play makes their ENTRANCES

ACT	1					2						3					4					5				
SCENE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3		
LOVERS																										
Romeo	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■		■		■										
Juliet			■		■		■			■	■		■			■	■	■	■				■			
STATE																										
Escalus	■											■													■	
Paris		■													■		■					■				■
Mercutio				■		■			■			■														
Page																										■
Watchmen	■																									■
CHURCH																										
Friar Laurence									■						■		■					■			■	■
Friar John																									■	
MONTAGUE																										
Lord	■											■														■
Lady	■																									
Benvolio	■	■		■	■	■			■			■														
Balthasar																								■		■
Abraham	■																									
CAPULET																										
Lord	■	■		■											■	■	■	■		■	■				■	
Lady	■		■									■			■	■	■	■	■	■	■				■	
Nurse			■		■		■		■	■		■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■					
Tybalt												■														
Peter		■							■													■				
Sampson	■																									
Gregory	■																									
Servants					■																	■				
Musicians																						■				
OTHERS																										
Apothecry																								■		
Rosaline																										
SCENE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3		
ACT	1					2						3					4					5				

TIMELINE

Events in the play take place over **FOUR** days.

Day	ACT	scene	Event
Sunday	Act 1	scene 1	Capulets & Montagues Street brawl stopped by Prince
		scene 2	Paris seeks Juliet's hand in marriage
		scene 3	Juliet arrives home and agrees to consider marriage
		scene 4	Romeo, Mercutio & Montagues go to Capulet's feast
		scene 5	At the feast, Romeo & Juliet meet and fall in love
Monday	Act 2	scene 1	Benvolio & Mercutio look for Romeo
		scene 2	Romeo below Juliet's window both declaring their love
		scene 3	Friar Laurence agrees to marry Romeo & Juliet
		scene 4	Benvolio tells Mercutio - Tybalt will challenge Romeo
		scene 5	Nurse tells Juliet about the wedding arrangements
		scene 6	Romeo and Juliet are married by Friar Laurence
	Act 3	scene 1	Tybalt kills Mercutio, Romeo kills Tybalt and then flees
		scene 2	Nurse tells Juliet - Romeo is banished for killing Tybalt
		scene 3	Romeo stays with Juliet the night then goes to Mantua
		scene 4	Paris to wed Juliet in 3 days with Capulet's blessing
Tuesday	Act 4	scene 5	Capulet tells Juliet - she is to marry Paris
		scene 1	Juliet rebuffs Paris, Friar tells Juliet to fake her death
		scene 2	Juliet agrees marriage, wedding brought forward
		scene 3	Juliet takes sleeping potion
		scene 4	Capulets make final wedding preparations
Wednesday	Act 5	scene 5	Nurse finds Juliet dead, wedding turns to funeral
scene 1		Balthasar tells Romeo of Juliet's death, who then visits Apothecary in Mantua to get poison, then returns to Verona	
		scene 2	Friar John returns letter Friar Laurence wrote to Romeo
Thursday		scene 3	Romeo kills Paris at Juliet's Tomb, then kills himself on discovering Juliet's lifeless body. Juliet awakes and on finding Romeo dead, kills herself. Capulets & Montagues reunite in grief

SYNOPSIS

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Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is the story of two young people who fall in love but find themselves on opposite sides of a feud between their two families. The Capulets expect their daughter Juliet to marry her suitor, Paris. However, Juliet cannot bear to marry anyone but Romeo of the House of Montague, so they get married in secret with the help of Juliet's Nurse and Friar Laurence.

Unfortunately, because of the ongoing feud, Tybalt of the House of Capulet challenges Romeo to a fight. Instead, Mercutio, a close friend of Romeo, enraged at Romeo's refusal to fight accepts the challenge and is accidentally killed by Tybalt when Romeo intervenes to stop the fight.

Romeo reacts by seeking revenge, fights Tybalt and kills him. In judgement, Prince Escalus banishes Romeo from Verona. Romeo is distraught, as he cannot be now with Juliet, his newlywed wife.

In a desperate attempt to reunite with Romeo, Juliet seeks help from Friar Laurence who persuades her to fake her own death as a ruse to escape her next-day, would-be bigamous marriage to her suitor Paris, chosen by her parents Lord and Lady Capulet. Tragically, Romeo is not aware of the ruse, as a letter sent by Friar Laurence explaining the ruse, fails to reach him in time.

Romeo arrives to find Juliet dead, or so he thinks. Distraught, he drinks poison and dies next to the drugged Juliet. When Juliet awakes, she is devastated to discover Romeo's dead body beside her. Consequently, she stabs herself, so that, as in life, she would be with her true love Romeo in death.

In remorse, at such a loss of two star-crossed lovers, the House of Capulets and the House of Montague end their feud.

SETTING

Shakespeare's play '*Romeo and Juliet*' is set mostly in the city of Verona and to a less extent in the town of Mantua. Both places are in the north of Italy, during the latter period of the Renaissance sweeping Europe in the 16th Century.

Although, regarded as an affluent and romantic country, Italy was also regarded as a country where murderous feuds and passionate love affairs took place. However, customs and attitudes in the play are not dissimilar to those exhibited by families in Elizabethan England. The audience at the Globe Theatre in the East End of London on the north bank of the river Thames, would have easily identified with the characters and uncomplicated plots in the play.

The Verona locations used in the story are:

HOUSE of Capulet

HOUSE of Montague
STREETS in Verona
CELL of Friar Laurence
TOMB Capulet Family

The Mantua locations used in the story are:

STREET in Mantua

SHOP of the Apothecary

FORM

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* takes the form of a play made up entirely of dialogue where the audience discover through words delivered by actors, the type of characters, their motives, their relationships together with the storyline.

Shakespeare's aim was to educate and entertain ordinary people in an age when few people could read - to draw out the emotions in people. In this case, to elicit empathy and understanding for two young lovers caught up in a world of two feuding families, each young lover belonging to a different opposing feuding family. Such is the tragedy in the play '*Romeo and Juliet*', when true love is destroyed by the uncontrollable event of the feud between the House of Capulet and the House of Montague, with the consequence that although the feud is ended, both lovers have died by their own hand.

The dialogue is in three different forms: mainly blank verse, prose and rhyming verse. Each line of blank verse, is made up of roughly ten syllables, organised into five groups of two, where an unstressed syllable is followed by a stressed syllable. This creates an air of authority and identifies higher status characters such as Lord Capulet from lower characters such as servants who speak in ordinary prose. To illustrate this, in Act 4 scene 2:

CAPULET	(to Second Serviceman) Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.	[blank verse]
Second Serviceman	You shall have none ill, sir, for I'll try if they can lick their fingers	[ordinary prose]

Rhyming verse is used by Shakespeare to end lines in a memorable way so that the audience recall it in later scenes; to make characters complete each other's rhymes to emphasise unity in thought, action, ideas and moods between them. To illustrate this,

Act 1 scene 3 LADY CAPULET

Verona's summer hath not such a **flower**

Nurse

Nay, he is a **flower**. In faith, a very **flower**

Act 3 scene 1 PRINCE

Benvolio, who began this bloody **fray?**

BENVOLIO

Tybalt here slain; whom Romeo's hand did **slay**.

STRUCTURE

The play '*Romeo and Juliet*' is edited into five Acts, each containing several scenes. The storyline is straightforward based on the classical five-part structure:

- an initial incident - termed **Exposition**
- a growth in tension - termed **Rising Action**
- a climax to the drama - termed **Climax**
- an unravelling of the plot - termed **Falling Action**
- a resolution to the drama - termed **Denouement**

There are no subplots and therefore the play conforms to the structure of place, action and time. The action moves apace from the opening fight scene to the closing tragic deaths of the young lovers. The short time frame of a few days secures the interest of the audience as events move swift-on leaving no time for the audience to anticipate the next event.

The Prologue is a structure used by Shakespeare to alert the audience to the forthcoming storyline.

The Soliloquy is a structure used by Shakespeare to present a deeper insight into the characters. To illustrate this, in Act 5 scene 1, Romeo speaks directly to the audience as if thinking aloud, revealing his inner thoughts, feeling and intentions about his love for Juliet.

Language Device - Tragedy and Comedy

Shakespeare uses different language devices to create tragedy and comedy in the play. To illustrate this,

Act 1 scene 1 LORD CAPULET

What noise is this?
Give me my long sword, ho!

LADY CAPULET

A crutch, a crutch!
Why call you for a sword?

The juxtaposition of tragedy and comedy reveals the turmoil in Veronese society. Shakespeare exploits the class difference present in Veronese society by using the low characters to parody the actions of the higher characters in the play.

This was a typical Elizabethan literary device to promote laughter within the audience. To illustrate this,

Act 1 scene 3 LADY CAPULET

Verona's summer hath not such a **flower**.

Nurse

Nay, he is a **flower**. In faith, a very **flower**.

Shakespeare uses wit to rationalise the irony of tragic events as illustrated in Act 3 scene 1 where Mercutio remarks to Romeo just before he dies, killed by Tybalt:

Act 3 scene 1 MERCUTIO

Ask for me tomorrow,
and you shall find me a grave man.

Language Device - The Chorus

The Chorus is equivalent to the third-person narrative voice in a novel. Shakespeare makes use of the Chorus to prime the audience as to the forthcoming events in the play.

The Prologue spoken by the Chorus prior to an Act is written in sonnet form made up of three quatrains (set of four lines). Each quatrain informs the audience of one aspect of the story. At the end of the three quatrains is a rhyming couplet to remind the audience of their duty.

The Prologue is a literary device used in ancient times by the Greek, to build anticipation within the audience for what is to come.

The Prologue in Act 1 informs the audience of two feuding households, both alike in dignity, whose feud is ended by the tragic deaths of a pair of star-crossed lovers. The Prologue ends with a rhyming couplet.

Act 1 Prologue The which, if you with patient ears **attend**,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to **mend**

The Prologue prior to Act 2 is again in sonnet form made up of three quatrains, but this time informs the audience about Romeo and Juliet's requited love. The Prologue ends with a rhyming couplet

Act 2 Prologue But passion lends them power, time means, to **meet**
Tempering extremities with extreme **sweet**

Language Device - Verse and Prose

Shakespeare makes use of poetry (verse) and prose (speech) to distinguish between characters of high rank in society and those of low rank - a ploy used in theatrical conventions at the time.

Characters higher in rank speak in verse. For example, Prince Escalus, the Lords and their Ladies, Friar Laurence, Romeo and Juliet. Consequently, this makes their pronouncements sound important and intelligent, as evident in

Act 2 scene 3 - Friar Laurence speaks in verse (poetry)

However, when danger in, verse (poetry) changes to speech (prose), as evident in

Act 2 scene 4 - Mercutio speaks in prose stressing his disturbed state of mind

Act 3 scene 1 - Mercutio fights with Tybalt conveying his agitation

Characters lower in rank speak in prose (prose). For example, the servants, the musicians, and Peter, as evident in

Act 1 scene 1 - Sampson and Gregory speak in prose (speech) about chores **Act 1 scene 5** - the serving men speak in prose about chores

Act 4 scene 5 - the musicians speak in prose to Peter

Language Device - Imagery

Shakespeare makes use of words to create a visual picture of an object or event to enhance its impact.

The 'death' imagery is ever present throughout the play as the feud ensures that death is always present. This is evident in The Prologue in Act 1,

The fearful passage of their death-marked love

Verona is a dangerous place, where the young accept death as a way of life.

Act 1 scene 5 - Romeo senses 'untimely death'

Act 2 scene 6 - Romeo muses 'then love-devouring death' **Act 3 scene 2** - Juliet muses 'than the death-darting eye'

Act 4 scene 5 - Capulet states, 'She was a flower, but death deflowered her' **Act 5 scene 3** - Romeo muses 'that unsubstantial death is amorous'

The 'disease' imagery is used as a negative undertone. This is evident in

Act 1 scene 1 - Romeo feels 'a choking gall, and a preserving sweet'

Act 1 scene 2 - Benvolio states 'take thou some new infection to thy eye'

Juxtaposed to disease is Juliet's beauty:

Act 2 scene 2 - Romeo said:

'Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon, Who is already sick
and pale with grief'

The 'religious' imagery is used to elevate the purity of their love:

Act 1 scene 5 - Romeo muses to Juliet 'Your hand is like a holy place' **Act 4 scene 2** - Juliet says 'God joined my heart and Romeo's'

The 'light and dark' imagery is used to contrast opposites:

Act 2 scene 2 - Romeo says:

'The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars'

Act 3 scene 5 - Romeo says:

'More light and light, more dark and dark our woes!'

Act 5 scene 3 - Romeo says:

'her beauty makes This vault a feasting presence full of light'

Language Device - Symbolism

Shakespeare makes use of symbolism to express ideas and emotions in the play. The symbolism of birds is used to great effect by Shakespeare to:

- forecast the future
- herald the death of former lovers
- herald the nesting of new lovers
- herald the separations of lovers

In Shakespeare's era, birds were seen as important auguries (forecasters) of fate, reflecting the superstitious nature of society in Elizabethan times. Benvolio attempts to alleviate Romeo's torment for Rosaline by making him think that she is not a swan but a crow, a bird thought to foreshadow death.

Benvolio in

Act 1 scene 2 - "And I will make thee think thy swan is a crow"

The irony is that it is Romeo's love for Juliet, his new swan, that leads to his death and not his love for Rosaline, his former swan.

Shakespeare continues the idea of bird symbolism by using the practice of Falconry, popular in Elizabethan times, to convey the idea of a lover hunting his prey. Besotted by his new love, Romeo hunts Juliet down to her nest where they exchange messages of undying love. Juliet appears aloft at the window, Romeo is below. She utters the immortal phrase:

Act 2 scene 2 - O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?