

Identifying and Understanding Oxymorons In Shakespeare's Play Romeo and Juliet

An *oxymoron* is a figure of speech that joins contradictory terms, such as in

FREEZING **Fire**

It serves to emphasize an idea/concept, or project an image. An *oxymoron* describes when two juxtaposed words have opposing or very diverse meanings.

Example: In the following quotation, Juliet has just learned that Romeo murdered her cousin, Tybalt, and she vents her feelings of anger at her lover for hurting her family.

Juliet--"Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!" (Act 3 Scene 2 Line 75)

"When Juliet refers to Romeo as a "beautiful tyrant," she is expressing an oxymoron because the acts of a tyrant are rarely referred to as beautiful. Juliet uses two *oxymora* (plural for *oxymoron*) to describe her conflicting feelings toward Romeo. He murdered her cousin, Tybalt, but is her husband and she loves him.

Assignment: On a separate piece of paper, identify any 5 of the oxymora that follow and explain what you think the character is trying to express with the conflicting words/images. Look back at these lines in the play to remember the context.

"Why then, O brawling love, O loving hate,
O anything, from nothing first create,
O heavy lightness! Serious vanity!
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms,
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health,
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.

Act 1 Scene 1 Lines 175-182

Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,

Act 2 Scene 2 Line 184

"Dove-feather'd raven! wolfish-ravens lamb!

Act 3 Scene 2 Line 76

A damned saint, an honourable villain!

Act 3 Scene 2 Line 79

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Read the Constitution!

How fortunate for governments that people do not think. ~ Adolf Hitler



If a Nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.... If we are to guard against ignorance and remain free, it is the responsibility of every American to be informed.

~ Thomas Jefferson, principal author of the Declaration of Independence, third President of the United States

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Amendments

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There have been 17 amendments to the Constitution since it was ratified in 1787. Read them! And read the *Bill of Rights* in its entirety!

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56 men signed, pledging their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to the cause of liberty. What happened to them?

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12 Homes were ransacked and burned

2 Lost sons serving in Revolutionary Army

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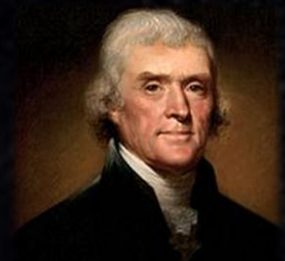
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RAISE YOUR

VOICE

WHO

All students are welcome!

WHAT

Spoken Word Poetry Club

- Bring your poetry to life by performing aloud for an audience!
- Compete for prizes at the *Poetry Slam* in May!

WHEN

Thursdays, 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

- Peer tutoring
- Advisor feedback
- Performing
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WHERE

Room 12

Mrs. Chamberlain's Creative Writing Class

WHY

- Express yourself!
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- Compete for prizes at the *Poetry Slam* in May!

WHEN

Thursdays, 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

- Peer tutoring
- Advisor feedback
- Performing
- Event planning

WHERE

Mrs. Chamberlain's Creative Writing Class, Room 12

It's fun!

WHY??

Hang with your friends!



Express yourself!