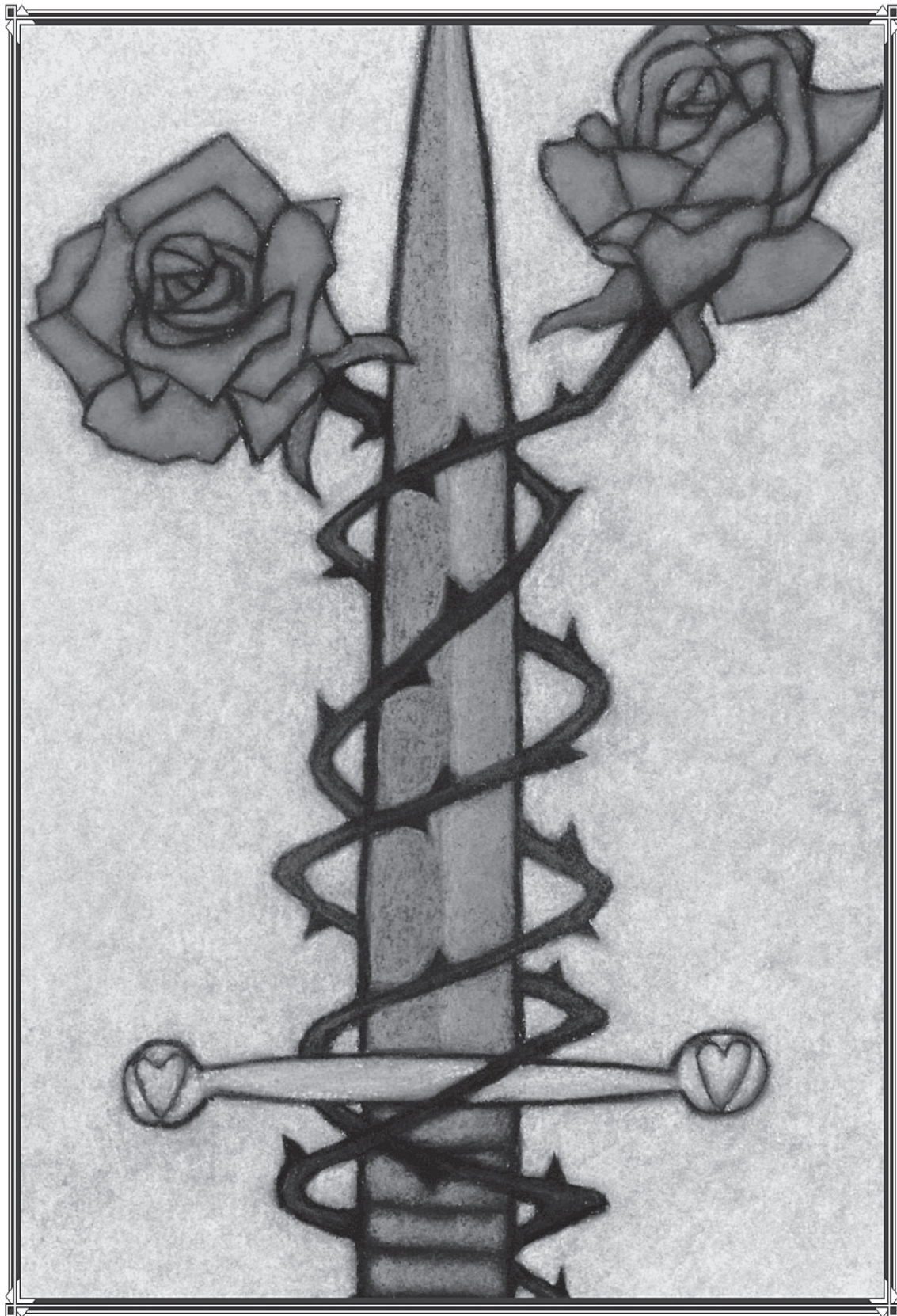


# *Romeo and Juliet*



# Romeo and Juliet

## Study Guide

### Packet One

#### **Act I – Prologue**

Vocabulary

mutiny – strife, rivalry

piteous – full of pity, empathy, or compassion

1. In the prologue, Shakespeare tells his audience what they are to expect in the play. Why do you suppose Shakespeare chooses to use this technique?

2. Where is the play set?

3. Put the following lines into your own words:

“From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
A pair of star-cross’d lovers take their life;”

4. What does the term “star-cross’d lovers” suggest?

5. Put these lines into your own words:

“Whose misadventur’d piteous overthrows  
Doth, with their death bury their parents’ strife.”

6. Do you think this prologue is necessary or unnecessary?

## **Act I, Scene I – Verona. A public place.**

### Vocabulary

adversary – enemy, nemesis

augmenting – increasing

beseeming – becoming

colliers – people who dig or sell coals

covert – thicket

drave – drove

ere – before

fray – brawl

1. What are Sampson and Gregory discussing in the first eleven lines of this scene?
2. Sampson and Gregory are bragging, vulgar-mouthed men who engage in word games. What bawdy comment does Sampson make? What kind of ‘love’ is this an example of?
3. Which two Montagues do Gregory and Sampson meet on their way? The Capulets draw their weapons, but what indicates that they are not as brave as they say they are?
4. Why do you suppose biting a thumb is offensive to the Capulets?
5. Who is Benvolio and what does he attempt to do?
6. How does Tybalt, a Capulet, misinterpret Benvolio’s action? What does Tybalt say to him?

7. Why is Tybalt considered hot-tempered?

8. What does Lady Capulet say about Lord Capulet's age and condition?

9. What do you suppose prompts Lady Montague to hold her husband back from the fight?

10. The Prince appears, and he is angry. Why is he angry, and what is the promise and threat he makes?

11. Lady Montague, glad that Romeo has missed the fight, asks Benvolio if he has seen Romeo. What is Benvolio's response?

12. Montague, when speaking of Romeo's recent depression, states:  
“...But all so soon as the all-cheering sun  
Should in the farthest east begin to draw  
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,  
Away from light steals home my heavy son,  
And private in his chamber pens himself, ...”

13. Romeo enters and tells Benvolio the problem. What is his problem?

14. Romeo's lines can be seen as presenting the paradox of love or simply as romantic nonsense. What indication is there that Romeo recognizes his sentiments could be viewed as romantic nonsense?

15. What is Benvolio's response?

16. What literary term is illustrated here?  
"Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;  
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lover's eyes;  
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:..."

17. Although Benvolio and Romeo are saddened by unrequited love, what joke are they able to make?

18. What is the nature of Romeo's desire toward Rosaline? According to the tradition of courtly love, how is Romeo expected to respond to her rejection?

19. What practical advice does Benvolio give Romeo?

20. What are these two lines an example of?  
"O, she is rich in beauty, only poor  
That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store."

## **Act I, Scene II – A street.**

Vocabulary

heretics – people whose opinions differ from the official faith (Christianity)

holp – helped

languish – persistent disease

merit – deserve

scant – barely, hardly

sirrah – sir

1. After speaking briefly, Paris gets to the point of his visit to the Capulets. What does he ask of Lord Capulet?

2. What is Capulet's response?

3. Paris responds that girls younger than she have been married. What is Capulet's response to this?

4. What suggestion and invitation does Capulet make to Paris?

5. Compare Capulet's speech at the beginning of this scene to Sampson and Gregory's conversation at the beginning of Act I, Scene I. How are the speeches different? Why do you think Shakespeare chose to write the speeches so differently?

6. In his conversation with Romeo, Benvolio says:

“Take thou some new infection to the eye,  
And the rank poison of the old will die.”

Interpret these lines.

7. What does the “poison” Benvolio mentions symbolize?

8. Romeo, lamenting his unrequited love, is approached by an illiterate servingman. In reading his list he finds that Rosaline, his love, is going to attend the Capulet party. What suggestion does Benvolio make?

9. When Romeo responds that Rosaline is the most beautiful woman since time began, what is Benvolio’s response?

### **Act I, Scene III – A room in Capulet’s house.**

Vocabulary

dug – teat, nipple

endart – take flight and puncture like an arrow

lineament – aspect, characteristic

margent – margin

perilous – dangerous, hazardous

rood – crucifix

tetchy – touchy, oversensitive, irritable

trow – say

1. Juliet will turn 14 on Lammas–eve. What is the Lammas–tide the women speak of?

2. The Nurse quotes the vulgar remark that her husband made to young Juliet and then, she likes it so much that she repeats it. What do the Nurse’s indecent remarks in front of the family indicate about their relationship?

## Act I, Scene IV – A street.

### Vocabulary

agate-stone – a stone with small figures cut into it  
alderman – city ruler  
ambuscadoes – traps  
anon – promptly, soon  
benefice – secular lifestyle  
burthen – burden  
gossamer – sheer, light filmy substance  
lath – wood

mire – mud  
prolixity – overly lengthy  
steerage – direction  
Tartar – a warrior  
traces – harnesses  
vile – wicked, heinous  
visage – face  
wantons – tomboys

1. Why does Romeo say he is unable to dance?
2. How do the Montagues expect to be able to enter a Capulet house?
3. Romeo is apprehensive about going to the masquerade because of the dream he had the night before. Romeo seems to believe (as did many in Shakespeare's day) that dreams have something to do with life. Perhaps Romeo believes dreams act as omens. What is Mercutio's opinion of dreams?
4. What does Mercutio's speech reveal about his character?
5. Choose 4 – 8 lines of Mercutio's dream and write a brief summary.
6. How does Benvolio end the conversation?



7. What is Romeo's misgiving, and what does the line "some consequence, yet hanging in the stars" have to do with his feeling of dread? Discuss the theme this quote illustrates.

## **Act I, Scene V – A hall in Capulet's house.**

Vocabulary

choler – fury, anger

disparagement – affliction, injury, harm

gall – detest, disgust

nuptial – wedding ceremony

perforce – is a requirement; is essential

princeps – a rude, impolite boy

prodigious – threatening, ominous

rapier – a small sword

scathe – hurt, injure

solemnity – festivities

ward – dependent

1. Lord Capulet and a relative stand, unmasked, on one side of the room. Romeo, masked, standing on the other side, asks a servingman who Juliet is. How does Romeo describe the girl, and what does he conclude?

2. What is Tybalt's reaction when he hears Romeo's voice?

3. What does Lord Capulet say to Tybalt in reference to Romeo's attendance at the party?

4. Tybalt obeys his uncle, but what does he foresee?

5. Romeo, approaching Juliet, begins a conversation, and ends up kissing her twice before the Nurse comes to tell Juliet that her mother requests her presence. Romeo and his friends leave. How does the audience know that Juliet feels as strongly about Romeo as he does for her?

## **Act II – Prologue**

1. The chorus comments on the action of the play. In your own words, discuss the meaning of the first four lines.
2. What problem is alluded to concerning the lovers?
3. What is the suggested answer to their problem?
4. What is the rhyme scheme of the prologue for Act II? What type of poem is the prologue?
5. Identify the half rhyme within the prologue.

## **Act II, Scene I – A lane by the wall of Capulet's orchard.**

Vocabulary

demesnes – domain, territory

invocation – the act of calling a superior for help

purblind – physically blind

Venus – Roman goddess of love and beauty

1. Romeo slips away from his friends; the practical, vulgar Mercutio makes some indecent comments about Rosaline. What misapprehension are Mercutio and Benvolio under? What truth does the audience know?

## Act II, Scene II – Capulet’s orchard.

Vocabulary

falconer – a hawk trainer

gyves – chains, shackles

idolatry – worship

ivery – appearance

Jove – chief Roman god, Jupiter

lenmity – hatred

perjuries – falsehoods

perverse – passionless, indifferent,  
unsympathetic

vestal – celibate, virtuous

ware – conscious of, aware

1. As the scene opens, Romeo enters and says:

“He jests at scars that never felt a wound.”

What is Romeo referring to? What does this statement suggest?

2. Romeo’s first speech is among the most famous of Shakespeare’s soliloquies. What is the main idea in Romeo’s speech? Put the last seven lines of this speech into your own words.

3. Does Juliet know that Romeo is beneath her window?

4. One of the most famous lines occurs when Juliet exclaims:

“O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?” What do these lines mean?

5. Juliet makes a secret vow to Romeo; what is this vow? What is the significance of this quote in relation to a major theme of the play?

6. Romeo, after listening to Juliet profess her love, decides to make his presence known. How does Romeo identify himself? Find the quote, then put the passage into modern words.

7. As Juliet knows, Romeo is risking death by being there. When she mentions this fact to Romeo, what is his response?

8. Romeo, still trying to convince Juliet of his safety, says: "I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes..." What may "night" symbolize?

9. Juliet is embarrassed that Romeo has overheard how she feels about him, but she decides to ignore convention. Although deeply in love herself, how does she show herself to be shrewd and knowledgeable about men? What concern does Juliet reveal in her private thoughts?

10. When Romeo swears by the moon, what does Juliet tell him?

11. What does Juliet mean when she tells Romeo, "...swear by thy gracious self,/Which is the god of my idolatry,..."

12. Juliet professes how she idolizes Romeo. What previous scene does this remind you of?

13. What second thoughts does Juliet have? Quote the passage that reveals these thoughts.

14. After an exchange of vows, the Nurse calls and Juliet must leave. What is Romeo's feeling as he stands there?

15. Juliet reappears. What does she tell Romeo?

16. When Juliet reappears, for the second time, she claims:

“Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;  
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,  
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,  
With repetition of my Romeo's name.”  
Why is Juliet's allusion to Echo significant?

17. It is apparent that neither Romeo nor Juliet wants the night to end. What is Juliet's famous parting line?

18. What decision does Romeo make?

## **Act II, Scene III – Friar Laurence's cell.**

Vocabulary

brine – tears

chequering – speckling, spotting

chid'st – scolds, reprimands

doting – excessively loving

osier – tree of the willow family

shrift – confession

1. At the beginning of the scene, Friar Laurence makes a very profound speech. Choose one full sentence in his speech to interpret. Can any of what the Friar says be applied to the world now?

2. The Friar assumes that Romeo is out so early because he has been up all night with Rosaline. When the Friar is informed that it is not Rosaline, but a Capulet Romeo wishes to marry, what is the Friar's reaction?

3. How is the Friar making fun of Romeo?

4. Why does the Friar agree to help Romeo and Juliet get married?

## **Act II, Scene IV – A street.**

### Vocabulary

apace – swiftly, rapidly

bawd – whore, prostitute

cleft – split

convoy – carriage, transportation

dowdy – trollop, harlot, prostitute

ell – a measurement of forty-five inches

fantasticoes – gallants, cavaliers, suitors

fishified – changed to a fish

hams – knees

lenten – referring to Lent

lieve – rather, “just as soon”

mar – hurt

prating – gossiping, babbling

roe – fish eggs

shrived – forgiven, pardoned

troth – loyalty, devotion

vexed – disturbed, troubled

1. Once again, Mercutio yammers on and on at the beginning of this scene. Both Mercutio and Benvolio believe that Romeo is still pining over Rosaline. Once Romeo enters, Mercutio, in one passage, makes several allusions. List the allusions, then do a little research to explain what the allusions mean and how they fit in the context of this scene.

2. “Without his roe, like a dried herring: O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified!” What is the pun Mercutio is making here? What type of pun is this?

3. As Romeo enters, Mercutio and Benvolio are discussing Romeo’s longing for Rosaline and Tybalt’s challenge to Romeo. What change in Romeo’s behavior does Mercutio comment on?

4. The Nurse and Peter arrive looking for Romeo. How does Romeo respond?

5. What do you think the Nurse’s malapropism, using “confidence” instead of “conference,” suggests about her character, or about the situation?

6. After Benvolio and Mercutio leave, the Nurse asks, “...what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery?” What is Romeo’s answer?

7. The Nurse expresses certain doubts about Romeo. What are these doubts and how does Romeo respond?

8. What is the message that Romeo gives to the Nurse for Juliet?

9. Romeo tells the Nurse that his “man” will deliver something beyond the abbey wall. What is Romeo’s “man” bringing?

# Romeo and Juliet

Study Guide  
Packet Two





## **Act II, Scene V – Capulet’s orchard.**

### Vocabulary

bespew – a mild curse

feign – fabricate, act

fi – a curse

heralds – couriers, messengers

hie – leave

lame – incapacitated, physically handicapped

wanton – magnificent, extravagant

1. Juliet waits anxiously for the Nurse to return. How is Juliet able to justify her Nurse’s tardiness?

2. How does the Nurse tease Juliet?

3. Finally, what does the Nurse tell Juliet?

4. The Nurse is off to fetch the rope ladder. What is this rope ladder going to be used for?

## **Act II, Scene VI – Friar Laurence’s cell.**

### Vocabulary

blazon – compliment, glorify

flint – stone with which to make fire

wanton – playful, spirited, exuberant

1. When speaking with Friar Laurence, while waiting for Juliet, Romeo says: “Do thou but close our hands with holy words,/Then love-devouring death do what he dare,/It is enough I may but call her mine.” After interpreting Romeo’s words, what do you think this passage suggests?

2. In expressing his reservations about the marriage, find a quote from Friar Laurence that could foreshadow future events.

3. What follows after Romeo, Juliet, and Friar Laurence exit from the stage?

### **Act III, Scene I – A public place.**

#### Vocabulary

addle – jumbled

appertaining – relevant, pertinent

doublet –

piece of men’s clothing

dry-beat – to beat, lash, wallop

effeminate – powerless, weak

haunt – popular place

passado – fencing term

pilcher – case or cover for a sword

zounds – derived from an oath “God’s

wounds” (swounds)

1. How does Benvolio show himself to be a reasoning man?

2. What is Mercutio’s response? Is he correct?

3. How does Mercutio show himself to be the more reckless of the two?

4. Romeo enters. Tybalt has a few heated words for Romeo. Even after hearing the insults, Romeo says he has to love Tybalt. Why does Romeo say this?

5. How does Romeo hint at his marriage to Juliet?

6. How does Mercutio react to Romeo's refusal to fight with Tybalt? Why is this element of the scene significant?

7. In what way is Romeo responsible for Mercutio's being stabbed?

8. In what way are Mercutio's comments about his wound ironic?

9. Romeo says, "My very friend hath got this mortal hurt/In my behalf; my reputation stain'd/With Tybalt's slander,—..." Romeo uses "stain'd", which takes on a dual meaning. What are the different meanings?

10. What is Romeo's reaction to Mercutio's death?

11. What is Romeo willing to sacrifice for Mercutio?

12. Having killed Tybalt, Romeo says, "O, I am fortune's fool!" What does he mean by this? What major theme does this statement support?

13. Throughout this play, loyalty proves to be a determining factor for characters who have a decision to make. What is your opinion of Benvolio after he tells the Prince that Romeo is responsible for Tybalt's death?

14. What does Lady Capulet request of the Prince?

15. What slant does Benvolio put on his account of the fight?

16. What is Lady Capulet's comment on Benvolio's story?

17. What is the Prince's decision?

## **Act III, Scene II – Capulet's orchard.**

### Vocabulary

amorous – passionate, loving

bedaub'd – covered, smeared

beguiled – fooled, seduced

bower – surround, encompass

cockatrice – a mythological creature said to have the ability to kill with a single look

corse – corpse

garish – elaborate, pretentious

monarch – prince, king, ruler

Phaethon – son of Apollo

Phoebus – Roman god of the sun (Apollo)

weal – security, success, fortune

1. The night is a very significant time for Romeo and Juliet. In her soliloquy, she mentions "night" many times. List 10 ways Juliet uses "night".

## **Act III, Scene III – Friar Laurence’s cell.**

### Vocabulary

affliction – agony, depression, grief

digressing – departing, diverging, drifting

sack – rob, ransack, raid

usurer – money-lender

1. How does Romeo react to the news that he has been banished?
2. What is Friar Laurence’s reaction to Romeo’s complaining?
3. Romeo is obviously devastated to be banished from his Juliet, but he is being very stubborn, not even attempting to listen to the Friar’s advice and positive words. Romeo tells the Friar to “...talk no more.” What does the Friar conclude at this point?
4. Why is the Friar unable, according to Romeo, to truly understand Romeo’s feelings about Juliet and being banished?
5. The Nurse arrives and informs the Friar and Romeo that Juliet, too, is crying just as Romeo is. Hearing of Juliet’s unhappiness and the hatred he supposes she feels toward him, he draws his knife to kill himself. What does the Friar accuse him of?
6. What things does the Friar say Romeo should be happy about?
7. What does the Friar then tell him to do? What instructions does the Friar give Romeo?

## **Act III, Scene IV – A room in Capulet’s house.**

Vocabulary

kinsman – relative

1. In the conversation among Lord Capulet, his wife, and Paris, what do they think is Juliet’s present cause of grief?
2. What is learned about Paris’ character?
3. What decision does Lord Capulet make, and why do you suppose he makes this decision?
4. What is your opinion of Juliet’s parents and of Paris?

## **Act III, Scene V – Capulet’s orchard.**

Vocabulary

asunder – split, separate, apart

carrion – contaminated person; diseased flesh

dishcloth – dishcloth

dram – destructive, harmful potion

jocund – joyful; invigorating

prudence – sense, shrewdness

puling – lamenting, complaining

runagate – wanderer, nomad

stealth – secret, concealed action

stratagems – horrifying, shocking acts

twain – two

1. Summarize the conversation between Romeo and Juliet at the opening of this scene.

2. The mother enters and, seeing Juliet weeping at Romeo's departure, believes the weeping is for Tybalt. The mother then vents her own anger at Romeo and discloses her plan to have him found and poisoned. Why does Juliet appear to speak ill of Romeo?

3. What news does Juliet's mother bring? What is Juliet's response to her mother?

4. Why does Lord Capulet get angry when he hears of Juliet's desire not to marry?

5. Why do you think Lord Capulet is so controlling of his family?

6. What does Lord Capulet threaten if Juliet chooses not to marry Paris?

7. When the Nurse tries to speak up for Juliet, what is she told?

8. In the last words of Lord Capulet's speech, how does he try to persuade Juliet to go through with the marriage to Paris?

9. If forced to marry, what does Juliet threaten? What is her mother's response?

10. What is the Nurse's advice, and how can she give that advice knowing how Juliet feels?

11. In what way does the Nurse's opinion contrast with Juliet's? What kind of character does this make the Nurse?

12. When Juliet hears this opinion, what is her decision regarding the Nurse?

13. Juliet tells the Nurse she is going to Friar Laurence to confess her sins. Why is she really going there?

## **Act IV, Scene I – Friar Laurence's cell.**

### Vocabulary

arbitrating – settling, resolving

charnel-house – designated area for discarding bones of the dead

inundation – deluge, surge

pensive – melancholy

prorogue – postpone, suspend

reeky – wretched, foul, vile

shanks – calves (parts of the human body)

surcease – to end, stop, halt

1. What does Juliet tell the Friar?

2. List three things Juliet is willing to do "...without fear or doubt...rather than marry Paris"?



3. What plan does the Friar set out?

## **Act IV, Scene II – Hall in Capulet’s house.**

Vocabulary

behests – orders, rulings

forsooth – in fact, correct

gadding – lazily wandering, strolling

prostrate – lying flat

tush – “keep quiet”

1. Why is Lord Capulet happy?

## **Act IV, Scene III – Juliet’s chamber.**

Vocabulary

mandrake – a plant whose root was said to look like the human form; if the root was pulled from the ground it was believed to cause madness or death

orisons – prayers

receptacle – place for discarding the unwanted or those who have passed away

1. If the potion does not work, what is Juliet’s plan?

2. Juliet is a little fearful and a little suspicious. What suspicion about the Friar does she voice?

3. What worry occupies Juliet next?

4. What is the literary term for Juliet’s speech in this scene?

## **Act IV, Scene IV – Hall in Capulet’s house.**

Vocabulary

quinces – fruits

trim – decorate, beautify, adorn

1. During the interchange of three characters in this scene, of what does Lady Capulet accuse her husband?

2. What does all the action in the house indicate?

## **Act IV, Scene V – Juliet’s chamber.**

Vocabulary

aqua-vitae – intense spirits (Latin: “water of life”)

confusions – chaos

dirges – sad songs played at funerals

lamentable – wretched, woeful

martyr’d – abused, punished

pestilent – extremely offensive, dreadful

troth – truth

1. How do Lord and Lady Capulet react to the news of Juliet’s death?

2. As he learns of Juliet’s supposed death, what does Lord Capulet compare Juliet to? What literary term is being illustrated?

3. Does the grief seem sincere?

4. How does the Friar try to comfort the grieving parents?

5. What literary term is illustrated here:

“Our instruments to melancholy bells;  
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast;  
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;  
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,…”

6. The next section between Peter and the musicians, seems to be for comic relief. How do you think the comic relief scene is supposed to function in the play?

## **Act V, Scene I – Mantua. A street.**

Vocabulary

apothecary – a pharmacist

caitiff – slave-like

meagre – scrawny, slender

penury – deprivation, neediness

presage – predict

1. In Romeo’s short speech at the start of this scene, find an example of foreshadowing.

2. The Friar is supposed to send a messenger to Romeo informing him of the plan and Juliet’s fake death. Who arrives in Mantua instead, and what news does he give Romeo? What theme is this incident supporting?

3. Although it is illegal to sell poisons in Mantua, how is Romeo able to purchase some?

4. Romeo has to do some convincing before the pharmacist agrees to sell the poison. How does Romeo convince the pharmacist and what does this show about Romeo's opinion of the world? In addition, discuss how this scene demonstrates the power of love, continuing with a major theme of the play?

## **Act V, Scene II – Friar Laurence's cell.**

Vocabulary

pestilence – disease

1. Why is Friar John not able to go to Mantua and deliver Friar Laurence's message to Romeo? What theme does this situation support?

2. What revision does Friar Laurence make in his plan?

## **Act V, Scene III – A churchyard; in it a monument belonging to the Capulets.**

Vocabulary

ambiguities – mysteries, uncertainties

contagion – disease

crimson – red

descry – find, uncover

direful – horrible, awful

ensign – sign, pennant

sunder – sever, disconnect (the soul from the body)

inauspicious – unimportant

mattock – axe

maw – mouth (like a grave)

obsequies – devotion; mourning

paramour – concubine, mistress

restorative – successful, competent medication

sepulchre – vault, grave

1. What is Paris doing at the crypt?

2. What does Romeo give to Balthasar? What does Romeo tell Balthasar to do? Why does Balthasar choose not to do it?

3. What metaphor does Romeo create regarding the crypt, and what is his meaning?
  
4. Why do Paris and Romeo fight, since Romeo really has no wish to fight anyone?
  
5. Although he has just fatally wounded Paris, what act of compassion does Romeo perform for Paris?
  
6. Who or what does the Friar say has thwarted all their plans?
  
7. With Romeo and Paris dead, Juliet wakes. How does the Friar hope to resolve this mess?
  
8. When Juliet refuses to leave the monument, what does the Friar do?
  
9. What does Juliet do?
  
10. What has happened to Romeo's mother?
  
11. The concluding lines of the play state a major theme in this play. Identify these lines, state what they mean and how they reflect the theme.

