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Romeo and Juliet

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



AUDIO ON APP



ONLINE ACTIVITIES ON **e-zone**

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A Shakespeare Timeline

Shakespeare is born and baptised in Stratford-upon-Avon.

First record of Shakespeare in London, working as a playwright, poet and actor.

Shakespeare buys the house, New Place, in Stratford.

Shakespeare marries Anne Hathaway.

His daughter, Susanna, is born.

Twins, Judith and Hamnet, are born.



1564

1582

1583

1584

1585

1586

1587

1588

1589

1590

1591

1592

1593

1594

1595

1596

1597

1598

The Comedy of Errors, Two Gentlemen of Verona

Henry VI part 1, King John

Henry VI part 2, Titus Andronicus

Henry VI part 3, Richard III, The Taming of the Shrew

Begins writing the *Sonnets, Romeo and Juliet, Love's Labour Lost*
A Midsummer Night's Dream, Richard II
First performance of *Romeo and Juliet*.

The Merchant of Venice, Henry IV part 1

An incomplete and unauthorised version of *Romeo and Juliet* is published in the First Quarto.

Henry IV part 2, The Merry Wives of Windsor

Much Ado About Nothing

- 1559** Elizabeth is crowned Queen of England. She is known as the Virgin Queen because she never marries.
- 1563** There is an outbreak of the plague or Black Death in England. Further outbreaks occur in 1589, 1603, 1625, and 1636 and culminate with the Great Plague of London in 1665, when an estimated 100,000 people died.
- 1564** French reformer John Calvin dies. Calvin breaks from the Catholic church and is a leading figure in the Protestant Reformation.

- 1577-1580** Sir Francis Drake, an English patriot and adventurer, sails around the world.
- 1569-1607** A rebellion in Ireland against English rule culminates in 1593 with the Nine Years' War. The rebels are ultimately defeated and the number of English settlers increases.
- 1585** Mary Queen of Scots is accused of treason and executed.
- 1585** Colonisation of the Americas continues. Britain's first American colony is established, named Virginia after the queen, and its governor is courtier and

The Play



Romeo and Juliet is one of William Shakespeare's best-known plays. Shakespeare rarely invented new stories, he preferred to choose tales which had proven their popularity through time and make them his own. He would add new characters and develop existing ones, he would make the story even more interesting and he would tell it all in his own very special language. So, how did Shakespeare get the idea for the story of *Romeo and Juliet* and when did he write it?

Italian roots

Girolamo della Corte, an Italian author of the late 1500s, wrote in his *L'Istoria di Verona* (1594) that the story of the two young lovers was a true event dating back to 1303. The first written version of the story appeared in 1476 in *Il Novellino* by Masuccio di Salerno and was set in Siena. In 1554, Matteo Bandello wrote a story about Romeo and Juliet in his *Novelle*, which was based on a previous work, Luigi da Porto's *La Giuletta* (1530). It was da Porto who named the lovers Romeo and Giulietta and described the rivalry of their two Veronese families. Pierre Boistean translated da Porto's story into French and entitled his work *Histoire de Deux Amants* (1559). The first English version was in the form of a poem by Arthur Brooke in 1562. At the beginning of his poem *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, Brooke says his source was Bandello. However, literary historians agree that his main inspiration came from Boistean. The direct source of William Shakespeare's play is considered to be Arthur Brooke's poem.

Timing

Shakespeare is thought to have moved to London between 1585 and 1592. *Romeo and Juliet* was written in 1594, at the same time as he started writing his collection of sonnets. By this time, documents indicate that he was already a well-known and successful writer. The play was first published with the title *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedie of Romeo and Juliet* which subsequently became *The Tragedie of Romeo and Juliet*.

Did you know?


Women were not allowed to be professional actors in England until 1660. Until that time Juliet would have been played by a male actor.

Romeo and Juliet today

The story which Shakespeare borrowed and developed has become one of the greatest (and saddest) love stories of all time. It has been made into numerous films, including one in modern dress but with the original language, starring Leonardo di Caprio and Claire Danes (1995), and into a musical, *West Side Story* (1961), set in 1950s New York. The word 'Romeo' has entered the English language to refer to a man who is passionate or flirtatious. The Italian city of Verona has become a place of pilgrimage for lovers and tourists keen to visit Juliet's tomb and see her balcony.

- 1 Read the text on pages 10 and 11.
Complete the table with information in chronological order.

	DATE	TITLE	AUTHOR	NOTES
1	1476			
2		<i>La Giulietta</i>		
3			Matteo Bandello	A translation in French of da Porto's story
4				
5				
6	1954			

- 2  Using the table and the following expressions, speak to a partner and retell the history of the different versions of *Romeo and Juliet*.

First - Then - Next - After that - Subsequently - Finally

PRODUCE


- 3 Now write a short paragraph using the same information and expressions.

.....


.....

.....

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

- 4  Find out more about Luigi da Porto's *La Giulietta*, Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* or Arthur Brooke's poem and report back to the class.

OR

-  Watch a modern version of *Romeo and Juliet* and report back to the class with your opinion.

The Main Characters

- 1 Look at the characters below and read the texts.
Highlight all the words which describe **relationships** and **positions**.
- 2 Which words can you find to describe the characters' personalities?
Make lists in your notebook, as in the example below.

Character	Relationships, Position	Personality
-----------	-------------------------	-------------

Prince Escalus	Head of the ruling family	Fair
----------------	---------------------------	------

The Ruling Family



Prince Escalus

is the prince of Verona and head of the ruling family. He is a fair ruler and tries to stop the fighting between the Montagues and Capulets.

Mercutio

is a close relative of Prince Escalus' and a good friend of Romeo's.

Paris

is related to the prince and is one of Juliet's admirers. Juliet's father would like to have him as his son-in-law.

Lord Montague

is the head of the Montague family and Romeo's father. He is highly respected.

The Capulets



Lord Capulet

is the head of the Capulet family, and like Lord Montague, he is well-respected. He is Juliet's father and he is fatherly and wise but also materialistic and easily angered at times.

Lady Capulet

is Juliet's mother and Lord Capulet's wife. She has a weak character and would like her daughter to marry Paris.

Juliet

is Lord and Lady Capulet's daughter. She is 13 and is beautiful, witty and intelligent. She is also passionate, determined and courageous.


Tybalt

is Juliet's cousin and hates the Montagues. He can be aggressive and violent and he is very sure of himself.

VOCABULARY

- 3 Are there any words you don't understand? Guess or find out what they mean and write synonyms, e.g. *fair = just*

PRODUCE

- 4  Use your notes to ask and answer questions about the main characters with a partner.



Lady Montague is Lord Montague's wife and Romeo's mother. She is very attached to her son and when he is exiled from Verona, she dies of grief.



Benvolio is Romeo's cousin and Lord Montague's nephew. He is a good friend of Romeo's.



Romeo is the son and heir of Lord and Lady Montague. He is about 16 and even though his family is obsessed with fighting, his main interest is love. He is sensitive and idealistic but also reckless, passionate, daring and handsome.

Other Characters



The nurse is Juliet's faithful nurse. She is sentimental and at times she can be quite loud and vulgar.



Friar Lawrence is a kind Franciscan friar who helps both Romeo and Juliet. He marries the couple in secret.



Rosaline is the girl that Romeo thinks he is in love with at the beginning of the play.

THE PARTY

With the party scene the story moves forward. In a tragedy, the development follows the introduction and moves the story towards the climax.

1 Read the summary of the story so far. Then answer the questions below.

- a Who is going to have a party?
- b Who are Romeo and Juliet hoping to see at the party and why?

THE STORY SO FAR

A fight breaks out in the street between some members of the Capulets and the Montagues. The prince of Verona intervenes and stops it. He tells the heads of both families that, if they are caught fighting again, he will have them executed.

Meanwhile, Romeo is feeling sad. He thinks he is in love with a girl called Rosaline who has sworn a vow of chastity and, therefore, is not interested in him or any other males. Benvolio says that he will help Romeo forget his sadness.


A young nobleman called Paris has asked Lord Capulet for Juliet's hand in marriage but Lord Capulet says that she is too young to marry as she is only thirteen. He invites Paris to his party that evening, in the hope that he will meet lots of other girls there and perhaps forget Juliet.

Romeo and Benvolio discover that Lord Capulet is organising a party. They plan to go there even though they are not, of course, invited. Benvolio wants to distract Romeo with other girls whereas Romeo secretly hopes to see Rosaline.

Juliet's mother tells her daughter that many young noblewomen of her age are already married and have babies and then she says that Paris has asked to marry her. She asks Juliet to have a good look at him at the party that evening to see if she likes him.

Romeo and his friends go to the party in masks. On the way, Romeo has a premonition that something bad will happen. As soon as they arrive at the party, instead of looking for Rosaline, Romeo sees Juliet across the room and he is immediately struck by her beauty.

2 Predict. What will happen next?

- a How do you think Romeo will approach Juliet – shyly, boldly or cautiously? Why do you think so?
- b How will Romeo get to meet Juliet?
- c  Imagine what Romeo and Juliet say to each other. Compare with a partner.



1 Read the text. Use the notes on the right.

THE PARTY

ACT I SCENE V

ROMEO, *to a Servingman*

1 What lady's that which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?

SERVINGMAN I know not, sir.

ROMEO, O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!

5 It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear—
Beauty too rich for use, for Earth too dear.
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.

10 The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.

Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight,
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.
(...)

ROMEO, *taking Juliet's hand*

15 If I profane with my unworhiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this:
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

JULIET Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,

Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
20 For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

ROMEO Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

JULIET Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

ROMEO O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do.

Romeo asks a servant about the beautiful lady dancing with a knight on the other side of the room.

He says she is so beautiful that she fills the room with light. She is like a jewel shining in the darkness or a white dove in a flock of crows.

He says he will see where she goes when she stops dancing and go over to her and touch her hand. He thinks he is already in love.

Romeo says if his hand is too rough to hold Juliet's, his lips are ready to kiss her hand to make it better.

Juliet says that touching hands is enough and is polite. She says it is the way that pilgrims show their respect to the statues of saints and is like a kiss.

Romeo insists that saints and pilgrims have lips, too.

Juliet says that they use their lips to pray.

Romeo asks Juliet to let him kiss her or he will feel desperate.

25 They pray: grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

JULIET Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

ROMEO Then move not while my prayer's effect I take.

He kisses her.

Thus from my lips, by thine, my sin is purged.

JULIET Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

30 **ROMEO** Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urged!

Give me my sin again.

He kisses her.

JULIET You kiss by th' book.

NURSE Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

Juliet moves toward her mother.

ROMEO What is her mother?

35 **NURSE** Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous.
(...)

ROMEO, *aside* Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! My life is my foe's debt.

40 **BENVOLIO** Away, begone. The sport is at the best.

ROMEO Ay, so I fear. The more is my unrest.

All but Juliet and the Nurse begin to exit.

JULIET Come hither, nurse. What is yond gentleman?

(...)

NURSE His name is Romeo, and a Montague,
The only son of your great enemy.

45 **JULIET** My only love sprung from my only hate!

Too early seen unknown, and known too late!

Prodigious birth of love it is to me
That I must love a loathed enemy.

Juliet says that saints do not move, even when they answer people's prayers.

Romeo asks her not to move while he 'prays'. Then he kisses her and says that now his sins are forgiven.

Juliet asks if that means she now has his sin on her lips.

Romeo says that would be terrible and immediately kisses her again to take away his 'sin'.

Juliet says he has studied the art of kissing well.

Juliet's nurse says that her mother wants to speak to her and, when Juliet is gone, Romeo asks the nurse who Juliet's mother is.

The nurse says that her mother is the lady of the house.

Romeo realises that Juliet is a Capulet and therefore that his life is in the hands of his enemy. Benvolio suggests they leave the party and Romeo agrees.

Juliet asks her nurse who Romeo is and discovers that he is a Montague, the only son of her enemy.

Juliet says that she has fallen in love with the son of the family her family hates. She fell for him before she knew who he was and when she found out, it was too late. She says it is terrible when you love your worst enemy.

Understand and Analyse

UNDERSTAND

- 1 Put the main events in the correct order.
- a Juliet says that holding hands is enough.
 - b Romeo takes Juliet's hand and asks to kiss it.
 - c Juliet discovers that Romeo is a Montague.
 - d Romeo kisses Juliet on the lips.
 - e Juliet seems to give in to Romeo's demands.
 - f Romeo discovers that Juliet is a Capulet.
 - g Romeo asks a servant who Juliet is.
 - h Romeo kisses Juliet a second time.
 - i Romeo insists that he wants to kiss Juliet.
 - j Juliet's nurse calls her away.
 - k Romeo says he has never seen such a beautiful lady before.

ANALYSE

- 2 The dialogue contains both similes (when one thing is compared to another) and metaphors (when one thing is described as another). These are both figures of speech.
- a Find line references in the text for the similes and metaphors below.
 - b Use different colours to highlight the similes and the metaphors.
 - c Match the similes and metaphors to their paraphrases.

Figures of speech

- 1 "It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear"
- 2 "So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows"
- 3 "This holy shrine"
- 4 "my prayer's effect I take"
- 5 "O trespass sweetly urged!"

Paraphrases

- a Oh I must kiss you again quickly!
- b Juliet's 'sacred' hand.
- c I will kiss you.
- d She is like a bright jewel shining in the darkness.
- e She is like a white bird among black ones.

- 3 Shakespeare emphasizes contrast throughout the play, in particular the contrast between love and hate and life and death.

 Find examples in this part of the play. Compare with a friend.

Vocabulary Building

“As a rich jewel in an Ethiop’s ear „

Comparisons

- 1 Read the first lines of this traditional English poem called *As*, by an anonymous author.

a Which figure of speech is the poem based on?

b Match some of the comparisons to the pictures on the right.

As

(Anonymous)

As wet as a fish - as dry as a bone;

As live as a bird - as dead as a stone;

As plump as a partridge - as poor as a rat;

As strong as a horse - as weak as a cat;

As hard as flint - as soft as a mole;

As white as lily - as black as coal.



ANALYSE

- 2 Which of these similes are also used in your mother tongue? Which are different?
- 3 The usual simile for 'weak' is 'as weak as a kitten'. Why do you think that the author used 'cat' instead of 'kitten'?
- 4 When a simile is used a lot, it can become a cliché. Which similes in the poem do you think are clichés?
- 5 Think of a cliché in your language. Does it have an English equivalent?

PRODUCE

- 6 Here are the beginnings of some more similes from the poem. How would you complete them? Add some more of your own.

as rough as

as free as

as light as

as hot as


as cold as

as slow as

as swift as

as proud as

as heavy as

- 7  In pairs or small groups write two more lines which rhyme to add to the poem.

From Reading to Performing



- 1 Before you listen, predict how the party scene will be read. Use these words and add some of your own.

happily/sadly/solemnly slowly/fluently/with excitement flirtatiously/modestly/romantically

- 2   Listen and see if you were right. Discuss the tone used. Then try for yourself. Read the script aloud with the recording and then without. Imitate reading speed, intonation and tone.

STAGE MANAGEMENT (TRADITIONAL OR MODERN)


- 3 Look at the following photographs from stage productions of Romeo and Juliet.
- Describe the actors' costumes.
 - What scenery or props have been used in each case?
 - What is the effect of each setting?
 - Which setting (modern or traditional) do you prefer? Why?
 - Think of parties you have been to. Could this scene have taken place there?



Review



Use this review of the book to check what you have achieved.

1 SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE

- a Review the information on pages 6 and 7.
- b  Fill in this biography card with key information and then use it to ask and answer questions about Shakespeare with a partner. Use expressions of fact (e.g. *Records show ...*) and opinion (e.g. *It is likely that ...*) as you speak.

Full name:	_____
Date and place of birth:	_____
Names and details of parents:	_____
Education:	_____
Date of marriage:	_____
Wife's full name:	_____
Children:	_____
Job:	_____
Retirement:	_____
Date and place of death:	_____

2 THE PLAY

- a  Review the information on pages 10 and 11 with a friend.
- b Complete the paragraph below on the history of *Romeo and Juliet* individually and then check your answers in pairs.
- c  Cover the paragraph, remember and add more detail if you can. Use sequencing words (*First, then, next ...*) as you speak.

Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* in when he was living in and well-established as an and playwright. The tale of the two ill-fated lovers might be based on a story from the 1300s. The young couple first appeared with their names Romeo and and the Veronese setting in Luigi da’s work *Giulietta* in 1530. This story was translated into by Pierre Boisteanu and then reworked in a poem in by Arthur Brooke. It is likely that based his play on Brooke’s poem.

Exam Practice

P B1 PRELIMINARY: WRITING PART 1

TIP: Read the question carefully and make sure that you answer all the points in the notes. Write about 100 words.

Read this email from your English-speaking friend Chris and the notes you have made.

From: Chris
Subject: Next Saturday

Hi,
 I'm really pleased that you can come to stay at my house next Saturday. *me too!*
How are you going to get here? *Say how and when*
 In the evening my parents are going to take us out for dinner. There are lots of great places to eat in our town. *Explain*
 Tell me what type of food you like and mum will book a table somewhere.
 On Sunday, we could go for a bike ride in the countryside, if you like. My brother says you can use his bike.
 See you on Saturday,
 Chris
No, because...

Write your email to Chris using **all the notes**.

Romeo and Juliet

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

“A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life”

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	6	B1+	Towards First
	7	B2	First

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