

Romeo and Juliet: Theme Workbook



Major Themes: *Romeo and Juliet*

The idea the writer wishes to convey about the subject—the writer’s view of the world or a revelation about human nature.

Utilizing the table below:

1. Identify a pervading idea for each Act within *Romeo and Juliet*
(i.e. Provide a few short sentences to demonstrate what Shakespeare is saying)
2. Include evidence to support your theme statement (Quotes from text)
3. Connect your theme to the adaptation discussed in class.

Utilize the box below to guide your thinking

Common topics identified within *Romeo and Juliet*

The Nature of Free Will - Honour and Obligation - The Naivety of Youth - The Power of Love and Hate
Violence and Death - Gender Roles - Revenge - The Multiplicity of Identity

An example of evidence used from text and an appropriate citation 📌

JULIET:

“Tis but thy name that is my enemy; Thou art thyself, though not a Montague. What’s Montague? ...O, be some other name! What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet; So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call’s, retain that dear perfection which he owes without that title.”

(*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-II, Scene-ii, Lines 38-49)

Track Your Understanding:

ACT I	Explanation
Evidence from text	<p>“O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright! It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night Like 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. 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.” <i>(Romeo and Juliet, Act-I, Scene-V, Lines 42-51)</i></p> <p>“Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urged! Give me my sin again.” <i>(Romeo and Juliet, Act-I, Scene-V, Lines 107-108)</i></p> <p>“This, by his voice, should be a Montague. Fetch me my rapier, boy. What, dares the slave Come hither, covered with an antic face, To fleer and scorn at our solemnity? Now, by the stock and honor of my kin, To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.” <i>(Romeo and Juliet, Act-I, Scene-V, Lines 52-57)</i></p>

1. Topic Revealed
2. Idea writer wishes to convey

The topic revealed is Naivety of Youth. This was shown in Romeo's love interests and proving in the questioning line of "Did my heart love till now?" (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-I, Scene-V, Line 50-51) because it shows how he is unsure of his past loving feelings. Earlier in the play he was in love Rosealine, but when he laid eyes on Juliet his love desire immediately changed proving how there is a naivety of youth. In addition to this Naivety of Youth Romeo also states "Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urged!" (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-I, Scene-V, Line 107) showing that he is so love sick that he doesn't care about the repercussions of the kiss. With this concept Williams Shakespeare could have the intent to convey how the youth is incapable in making the right decision. He could've wanted to establish the idea, in the audience's mind, that the important decisions shouldn't lay in the hands of the youth.

In the second quote the topic revealed is Hate in addition to Honour and Obligation. Tybalt shows his hatred when intends to cause harm when he states "This, by his voice, should be a Montague. Fetch me a rapier, boy." (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-I, Scene-V, Lines 52-53). This topic of hate is shown when Tybalt states "To strike him dead I hold it not a sin." (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-I, Scene-V, Line 57) showing that because Romeo comes isn't from the supporting clan (family line) he is an instant enemy. The fact that Tybalt states "by the stock and honor" (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-I, Scene-V, Line 56) that directly describes the motivation behind his hateful intentions, honour and obligation to the Capulets. This shows how the writer wanted to convey the separation between two groups of people can lead to intense hatred and possibly violent conflict.

<p>Connection to Adaptation</p>	<p>Shakespeare's work had been replicated in many forms. In the film <i>West Side Story</i> there are two gangs, the Jets and the Sharks, similar to the two families in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (the Montagues and the Capulets). Tony (from the Jets) and Maria (from the sharks) are separated at a dance but see each other and instantly fall into love. This is similar to <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> because, as mentioned above, they too see each other and instantaneously fall in love.</p> <p>There is a scene in the movie that shows the connection to Naivety, specifically in Tony because he is love sick and doesn't think as responsibly as Maria. With the feud between gangs happening Tony disregards it and is instead obsessed with Maria, exactly how Romeo, too, disregards the feud between the Montagues and Capulets when he states "Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urged!" (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act-I, Scene-V, Line 107). This connection is shown with Maria saying "I cannot stay, go quickly" (<i>West Side Story</i>, 1:00:31) proving that she doesn't want to risk her relationship with her family (knowing that they won't approve of her love for Tony). Being the love sick, unreasonable character, Tony states, in reply to Maria, "I'm not afraid" (<i>West Side Story</i>, 1:00:33) showing that he has Naivety similar to Romeo. Overall, the adaptation of <i>West Side Story</i> shows the same characteristics of the love between <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, but with Maria and Tony.</p>
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<p>ACT II</p>	<p>Explanation</p>
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Evidence from text

“Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee, I have no joy of this contract tonight.

It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
120 Ere one can say "It lightens." Sweet, good night!”
(*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-II, Scene II, Lines 116 - 120)

“But to be frank and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have.
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.
I hear some noise within. Dear love, adieu!”
(*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-II, Scene II, lines 131-136)

— — Scene 5 — —

“Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not how to choose a man. Romeo? No, not he. Though his face be better I'll... 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. He is not the flower of courtesy, but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb. Go thy ways, wench; serve God. What, have you dined at home?”
(*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-II, Scene V, lines 38-44)

— — Scene 6 — —

“These violent delights have violent ends
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume. The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness
And in the taste confounds the appetite.
Therefore love moderately: long love doth so;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.”
(*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-II, Scene VI, lines 9-15)

1. Topic Revealed
2. Idea writer wishes to convey

The first quotes ties onto the idea of Gender Roles. At the start of this scene Juliet is sceptical towards the idea of marriage. This is proven when she states “I have no joy of this contract tonight. It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden” (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-II, Scene II, lines 117-118). A few moments after Juliet showed her view on the topic she listened to manipulated, Romeo. She changed her thought and was seduced to say, in a reply to marriage “My love as deep; the more I give to thee, The more I have, for both are infinite. I hear some noise within. Dear love, adieu!” (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-II, Scene II, lines 134-136). Proving that the author could’ve wanted to show how young men can pressure those around them to make poor decision.

— —Topic From Scene 5— —

This quote connects to the idea of Free Will, or lack of it for that matter. Throughout this scene the nurse is stalling to tell Juliet the information about the wedding arrangements. This stalling also takes a for of protection in the eyes of the Nurse because in her opinion Romeo isn’t a good boy for Juliet. This is shown when she states “Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not how to choose a man. Romeo? No, not he.” (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-II, Scene V, lines 38-39) and “He is not the flower of courtesy” (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act-II, Scene V, line 42). This connects to the topic of Free Will because the nurse is trying to prevent Juliet from having free will so she doesn’t make bad decisions.

When writing this the author could wish to convey the idea that all people shouldn’t necessarily have free will because bad result can lead from that. In addition to this he could’ve also wished to display the Naivety of Youth.

— —Topic from Scene 6— —

This quote shows the topic of the Naivety of Youth. When the Friar states “These violent delights have violent ends” he is explaining how rushed decisions can lead to devastating result. Due to the fact that Romeo and Juliet this shows that they have naivety because they aren’t thinking about these outcome, which can come from their naive actions. This shows how the author wishes to convey how the naivety of youth connects to the inability of analyzing the future problems that could occur.

<p>Connection to Adaptation</p>	<p><i>West Side Story</i> connects to another topic in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, the lack of free will. Also, many characters are different but have the same motives. In <i>West Side story</i> there is a lack of free will within the different groups. There are the two gangs called the Sharks and the Jets (similar to the Montagues and the Capulets). The Jets come from white ethics, while the Sharks come from Puerto Rico. An example of the lack of free will comes from one of the characters, Officer Krupke, who likes the Jets more than the sharks but still prevents them from doing what they want. This was shown when he states, towards the Jets after he kicks out the Sharks, “I said nice get it, because if you don’t and I catch any of you brawling in my territory I’m gonna personally going to beat the crap outta you.” (<i>West Side Story</i>, 0:17:00). Overall, this adaptation connections to the topic relevant in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Lack of Free Will.</p>
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ACT III	Explanation
<p>Evidence from text</p>	<p>“Lady Capulet. He is a kinsman to the Montague; Affection makes him false, he speaks not true. Some twenty of them fought in this black strife, And all those twenty could but kill one life. I beg for justice, which thou, Prince, must give. Romeo slew Tybalt; Romeo must not live.” (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act-III, Scene I, lines 169-174)</p> <p>“God's bread! it makes me mad. Day, night, late, early, At home, abroad, alone, in company, Waking or sleeping, still my care hath been To have her matched; and having now provided A gentleman of princely parentage, Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly trained, Stuffed, as they say, with honorable parts, Proportioned as one's thought would wish a man- And then to have a wretched puling fool, A whining mammet, in her fortunes tender, To answer "I'll not wed, I cannot love; I am too young, I pray you pardon me"! But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you. Graze where you will, you shall not house with me. Look to't, think on't; I do not use to jest. Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise: An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend; An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets, For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee, Nor what is mine shall never do thee good. Trust tot. Bethink you. I'll not be forsworn.” (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act-III, Scene V, lines 177-196)</p>

<p>1. Topic Revealed 2. Idea writer wishes to convey</p>	<p>The topic shown is Honour & Obligation. When Lady Capulet states “He is a kinsman to the Montague” (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act-III, Scene I, line 169). The writer implies that those in charge instinctively throw shame and another family’s name to show Honour & Obligation to their own family line. In addition to this topic shown by Lady Capulet there is also a sense of the topic, Violence. This violence is described when Lady Capulet states “Romeo slew Tybalt; Romeo must not live” (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act-III, Scene I, line 174). In the overall scope of this quote the writer conveys the idea that, in this era, Honour & Obligation is turned into violence. This is proven because in order for Lady Capulet to show obligation she feels the need to kill/exile Romeo.</p> <p>— —Scene 5— —</p> <p>In scene 5 the topic of Honour & Obligation was also shown, but in a slightly different way to the other quote. The statement “An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets, For, by my soul, I’ll ne’er acknowledge thee, Nor what is mine shall never do thee good. Trust tot. Beshink you. I’ll not be forsworn.” (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act-III, Scene I, lines 192-196) implies that Capulet, the father of Juliet, is forcing her into obligation. This is displayed by Capulet explaining that he will basically disown her if doesn’t show her obedience. In addition to this the writer could’ve wanted to imply that there was a lack of free will to those without power.</p>
<p>Connection to Adaptation</p>	<p>When viewing the film, <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i> by Rob Sprackling and John Smith. there is a sense of Honour and Obligation that connects is present in William Shakespeare’s <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, as well. In there are two groups/families represent, which are the same as Romeo and Juliet (the Montagues and Capulets). At the first opening scene (00:02:00, <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i>) of the film there is a shot of two neighbouring houses with a mailbox labeled Montague and Capulet (signifying the two different groups). The Gnomes are apart of each house and were bought by the owner. This shows the connection to the play because Honour and Obligation is shown in the first scene because the owners of each house is bickering with one another showing that the Gnomes are just honouring and obligating with the owners’ feud.</p>
<p>ACT IV</p>	<p>Explanation</p>

<p>Evidence from text</p>	<p>“Tell me not, friar, that thou hearst of this, Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it. If in thy wisdom thou canst give no help, Do thou but call my resolution wise And with this knife I'll help it presently. God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands; And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo's sealed, Shall be the label to another deed, Or my true heart with treacherous revolt Turn to another, this shall slay them both.” <i>(Romeo and Juliet, Act-IV, Scene I, lines 50-59)</i></p> <p>“Like death when he shuts up the day of life; Each part, deprived of supple government, Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death; And in this borrowed likeness of shrunk death Thou shalt continue two-and-forty hours, And then awake as from a pleasant sleep. Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead.” <i>(Romeo and Juliet, Act-IV, Scene I, lines 101-108)</i></p>
<p>1. Topic Revealed 2. Idea writer wishes to convey</p>	<p>The topic revealed is the Power of Love and hate. This is shown when the author convey's Juliet's desire to do anything to love Romeo. When Juliet states “Or my true heart with treacherous revolt Turn to another, this shall slay them both.” <i>(Romeo and Juliet, Act-IV, Scene I, lines 50-59)</i>” shows that when the power of love consuming Juliet she would revolt and kill from hate.</p> <p>This then leads to Friar Laurence creating a plan with Juliet to ensure that the wedding of her and Paris (the man she is forced to marry) won't happen. When Friar Lawrence states “Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death” <i>(Romeo and Juliet, Act-IV, Scene I, line 103)</i> he displays his plan to make Juliet seem dead so the wedding doesn't continue. This shows the authors conveying of the power of love and hate because Juliet is literally faking her death just to be with Romeo! The hate is implied because she is hating her family for trying to force her into a marriage she doesn't want to be a part of.</p>

<p>Connection to Adaptation</p>	<p>In the film, <i>Warm Bodies</i>, there are many connections to Shakespeare's work on <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>. The movie takes place in a Zombie apocalyptic world where the Zombies and Humans are in a war similarly to the Montagues and Capulet. The characters in <i>Warm Bodies</i> are also adapted from those in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>. For instance, Marcus (R's friend) has the same loyal characteristics of Mercutio in relation to Romeo from <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> by William Shakespeare.</p> <p>Also, within both creations there is a connection to the topic of the Power of Love. In <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> the power of Love is shown when Juliet states "God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands" (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act-IV, Scene I, line 54). But, instead of the Power of Love is shown in the scene, (00:11:35, <i>Warm Bodies</i>), through the fact that the Parry, the lover of Julie, is killed but his feelings of love travels into a Zombie, R, and causes him to fall in love with Julie. This also shows the similarity of characters because R is Romeo and Julie is Juliet. In the adaptation this topic, which connects the playwright, is shown literally because the actual power of love causes R to have feelings, causing him and Julie to come together.</p> <p>Another, literal meaning of the power of love is shown at (1:24:48, <i>Warm Bodies</i>). Julie and R kiss and the love of their kiss causes R to feel and live again. The proof of this is when Julie states "He's bleeding, corpses don't bleed" (1:26:10, <i>Warm Bodies</i>). Although the plot of <i>Warm Bodies</i> and <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> are different they still connect through the Power of Love.</p>
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<p>ACT V</p>	<p>Explanation</p>
<p>Evidence from text</p>	<p>"Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep. A greater power than we can contradict Hath thwarted our intents." (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act V, Scene III, lines 152 - 154)</p> <p>"A glooming peace this morning with it brings. The sun for sorrow will not show his head. Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things; Some shall be pardoned, and some punished; For never was a story of more woe Than this of Juliet and her Romeo." (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act V, Scene III, Lines 305 - 310)</p>

<p>1. Topic Revealed 2. Idea writer wishes to convey</p>	<p>The topic revealed is Multiplicity of Identity. This is shown by Juliet faking her death, therefore being both alive and dead, having a status of her identity different. When Friar Lawrence states “Hath thwarted our intents” (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act V, Scene III, Line 154) it shows prove that Juliets death was fake and create with intent. Throughout this idea the writer conveys the idea that society and obligation to fit in causes extents, such as creating a Multiplicity of Identity, just to have free will over your own decisions.</p> <p>This ending shows sadness and the depressing truth of this story. The author conveys the idea that unnecessary feuds, suppression and conflicts lead to a wrecked society of people who are either corrupted or mis-treated. This story is the perfect metaphor to explain the results of the societies truth. The closing line “For never was a story of more woe, Than this of Juliet and Romeo.” (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act V, Scene III, Lines 309- 310) shows that this story is devastating, almost just as devastating as the fact that it connects to the real world.</p>
<p>Connection to Adaptation</p>	<p>The Multiplicity of Identity is the status of a character changing, and this was shown in the major picture, <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i>. Many characters in <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i> are similar to that of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>. The frog represents the Nurse because of her protective nature over Juliet and the Flamingo connects to the . There are more characters that connect to <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i>, but there is another way that the Multiplicity of identity is shown within <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i>.</p> <p>There was a scene (00:17:47, <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i>) where Juliet is running along a wall over to a green house, while disguised. Gnomeo is looking up at her and instantly falls in love, but because theres a multiplicity of Identity he doesn't know she's a red (or a capulet in the case of the playwright). Although, in Act V, the context the Multiplicity of Identity different to that of <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i> there is still a connection. In <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> the Friar states “Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep” (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, Act V, Scene III, line 152) showing the fake status of death which Juliet has and in <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i> at (00:17:47, <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i>), when Gnomeo falls in love with Juliet, who also isn't giving the truthful representation of herself.</p> <p>A more obvious approach to the topic of Multiplicity of identity, which connects to Juliet's fake death in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> is shown in <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i>. There is a scene (00:53:40, <i>Gnomeo and Juliet</i>) in the movie where Gnomeo gets chased onto the road and gets smashed by a car. Everyone thinks he's dead, but he isn't because he placed a teapot the broke, therefore faking his death just like Juliet in William Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>. The overall scope of connection, within the play and adaption, is the fact that everyone had to create a false identity status just so the feud wouldn't be enraged.</p>