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:

| ACTI | Explanation |
|--------------------|---|
| Evidence from text | Example 1: Both by myself and many other friends; But he, his own affections' counselor, Is to himself—I will not say how true—But to himself so secret and so close, So far from sounding and discovery, As is the bud bit with an envious worm Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air Or dedicate his beauty to the sun. Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow, We would as willingly give cure as know. (Montague, Act I, Scene II, 139-148) Example 2: 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. Example 3: Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone. 'A bears him like a portly gentleman, And, to say truth, Verona brags of him To be a virtuous and well-governed youth. I would not for the wealth of all this town Here in my house do him disparagement. Therefore be patient, take no note of him. It is my will; the which if thou respect, Show a fair presence and put off these frowns, An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast. (Capulet, Act I, scene V, 63-72) |

- 1. Topic Revealed
- 2. Idea writer wishes to convey
- 1. Secrecy
- 2. In this quote the writer is trying to convey the idea of secrecy. Benvolio and Montague are talking about Romeo and his tendency to keep his emotions and thoughts secret. Montague notes that even though Romeo has many friends, he chooses to keep his feelings and emotions to himself, and is very secretive and closed off. The term of a bud being "bit with an envious worm" before it can bloom is basically saying the idea that Romeo's secrets are preventing him from fully expressing himself and allowing his true beauty and feelings to be seen. Montague also says that if they knew the source of Romeo's troubles, they would be willing to help him, but because he keeps his secrets so close, it is impossible for them to know or even help him with this. This line shows the theme of secrecy and how it can prevent true understanding and connection between people.

Example 2:

- 1. Conflicting Emotions
- 2. This line spoken by Juliet shows the conflicting emotions she feels towards Romeo. She says "my only love sprung from my only hate" which could say that her feelings towards him have changed drastically. She also says that she has seen him too early and too late meaning that their timing was not right and they were never meant to be together. Juliet says "prodigious birth of love" which apron further analysis means that her sudden love for Romeo is weird and surprising based on the fact that it has grown out of a place of hatred. In the same sentence as "prodigious birth of love" Juliet says "that I must love a loathed enemy" which highlights the conflict and irony of her feelings, as she must love someone who is her enemy and disgusted by her family.

Example 3:

- 1. Importance of reputation
- 2. This line spoken by Lord Capulet, shows the importance of reputation in Verona. Lord Capulet is talking to his nephew, Tybalt who is angry that Romeo, a Montague, has invited himself and his friends to their family's feast. Lord Capulet is telling Tybalt to leave Romeo alone because he is a well-respected and highly respected young man in Verona. He states that Verona "brags" of Romeo's great character, and that he would not want to do anything to harm Romeo's reputation in his own house. He also tells Tybalt to put on a "fair presence" and not frown, as it would not be a good look for a feast. This shows that Lord Capulet values the reputation of his guests and his own household, and wants to maintain a positive image in front of the other guests. This shows how this line demonstrates the importance of reputation in the Verona society and how it affects the actions and behaviours of the characters.

Example 2: (Warm Bodies): In the movie "warm bodies" Romeo is portrayed as a zombie (R) and Juliet (Julie) as a human. Now even though in the movie the quote itself is never said (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.) but there are definitely connections to this line. In the movie Julie can't stand zombies and wants to shoot R in the head, while finding out later that her feelings have changed from wanting to shoot him to starting to actually like him then eventually love him connecting to the line "my only love sprung from my only hate." Unlike the play where Juliet caught feelings relatively fast it took Julie almost the whole movie to finally warm up to R.

Example 3: (Romeo + Juliet around 28 minutes): in Romeo + Juliet, Tybalt spots Romeo at the party and goes to tell his uncle, Lord Capulet. Lord Caplet, dressed as what looks to be some sort of Greek god, stops him before he can confront Romeo. Unlike the play the line where Lord Capulet tells Tybalt to endure him is shorted leaving out a line or two but the movie still gets the point across while being accurate. The lines following that are also slightly adapted and the scene ended with Tybalt being slapped. This is slightly different then the play and does a really good job on telling the scene accurately despite the modern take.

ACT II

Explanation

Evidence from text

Example 1:

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, oretain that dear perfection which he owes without that title." (Juliet, Act II, Scene ii, 38-49)

Example 2:

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." (Friar Lawrance, Act I, Scene VI,

Example 3:

But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief that thou her maid art more fair than she."

- 1. Topic Revealed
- 2. Idea writer wishes to convey

Example 1:

- 1. Labels from Society
- 2. This quote said by Juliet highlights the topic of the power of labels from society and how they can negatively impact relationships and people. Juliet is expressing her frustration that her love for Romeo is difficult because he is a Montague which is her family's rival. In the guote she suggests that its not Romeo himself that is the problem, but it's really the social label of "Montague" that is causing conflict and preventing their love from being accepted. She also questions the importance of names and labels. This suggests that names and labels are irrelevant and do not truly define a person or relationship. She goes on to use the metaphor of a rose to show that true love should not be affected by society labels. She points out that even if you call a rose by another name, it will still smell sweet, showing that true love is not based on societal labels but on the personality of the person. This also shows what the societal prejudices and conflicts of the time in which the play was written, where family name and honour were highly valued, and the characters' love is frowned upon by their families. It also highlights the universal theme of the struggles of young love and the societal pressure that can come with it.

Example 2:

- 1. Consequences of Love.
- 2. This line spoken by Friar Lawrence, is a warning Romeo about the potential consequences of love and passion. This quote is suggesting that intense emotions can lead to destructive outcomes. This is backed up by the metaphor of fire and powder, which when brought together, ignite and destroy each other. The line also implies that too much of a good thing can be detrimental, as the sweetest honey can become disgusting when consumed in large amounts. The Friar is advising that love should be moderate and balanced, he also says that too much passion or speed can be just as harmful as too little. This line reflects the theme of the play, which is the tragic consequences of the intense and forbidden love between Romeo and Juliet, and how their families' long-standing feud only fuels the flames of their passion.

Example 3.

- 1.Social Identity
- 2. This line from Romeo and Juliet speaks to the idea of social identity and how it can be shaped by external factors such as one's name. The speaker, Romeo, expresses that his name is "hateful" to himself because it is an enemy to the person he loves, Juliet. This suggests that Romeo's identity is closely tied to his family name and the feud between the Montague and Capulet families. He feels that his name is a hindrance to his relationship with Juliet and wishes he could tear it away. This highlights the power that social identities can have on one's personal relationships and how they can shape one's sense of self.

Example 1: (Romeo + Juliet, 38:11) during the movie Romeo + Juliet, Juliet recites the exact lines from the play "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, oretain that dear perfection which he owes without that title." this adaptation of the play took an entirely new take on the story but scene was almost identical. The difference in this scene was after they chatted for a bit Juliet came down and they both splashed into a pool and kissed and talked some more in there.

Example 2: (Romeo + Juliet) This one is kind of loosely connected but the quotes I chose didn't really match up to any adaptations. Anyways in the movie Romeo + Juliet after Romeo and Juliet's little balcony scene the next morning romeo goes to talk to the Friar about getting married. In the play the Friar warns him that love is a good thing but too much or too quickly could be a bad thing. Where as in the movie it's not really said but it's hinted at. An example of it being hinted at is when Romeo and the Friar are talking there fire across the screen in the background which directly connects to what the Friar said. "And in their triumph die, like fire and powder"

ACT III Explanation

Evidence from text

Example 1: Alive in triumph, and Mercutio slain? Away to heaven respective lenity,

And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!

Now, Tybalt, take the "villain" back again That late thou gavest me, for Mercutio's soul

Is but a little way above our heads,

Staying for thine to keep him company.

Either thou or I, or both, must go with him.

(Romeo, Act III, Scene I, 115-122)

Example 2: Indeed I never shall be satisfied

With Romeo till I behold him—dead— Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vexed. Madam, if you could find out but a man

To bear a poison, I would temper it;

That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof, Soon sleep in quiet. O, how my heart abhors

To hear him named and cannot come to him, To wreak the love I bore my cousin Tybalt Upon his body that hath slaughtered him! (Juliet, Act III, scene V, 93-102)

Example 3: And for that offense Immediately we do exile him hence.

I have an interest in your hate's proceeding,

My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding; But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine

That you shall all repent the loss of mine.

I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;

Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses. Therefore use none. Let Romeo hence in haste, Else, when he is found, that hour is his last. Bear hence this body, and attend our will.

Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

(Prince, Act III, Scene I, 179-190)

- 1. Topic Revealed
- 2. Idea writer wishes to convey

Example 1:

- 1. Undeniable power of Revenge
- 2. This line from Romeo and Juliet, spoken by Romeo after the death of Mercutio, reveals his desire for revenge against Tybalt, the person who killed Mercutio. The line demonstrates a sense of anger and aggression as Romeo speaks of his "fire-eyed fury" and his determination to make Tybalt pay for what he has done. The line also shows the idea that once someone is dead, their soul is just above us, waiting for the person who killed them, to join them. This can be interpreted as an idea that death is not the end, and that the living must be held accountable for their actions. Romeo's use of the word "villain" to describe Tybalt shows his feelings of aggression and hatred towards Tybalt, which is a clear indication of how deeply the death of Mercutio has affected him and how he wants to take revenge. The line also shows the idea that Romeo is willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, either he or Tybalt or both must die, in order to avenge the death of Mercutio. Overall, this line highlights the destructive nature of revenge and how it can lead to more violence and death.

Example 2:

- 1. power of grief
- 2. This line, spoken by Juliet, reveals the depth and intensity of her grief for the loss of her cousin Tybalt. She is consumed with anger and a desire for revenge against Romeo, who killed Tybalt. The line also shows Juliet's desperation and willingness to go to extreme measures in order to avenge her cousin's death. The line "Indeed I never shall be satisfied/With Romeo till I behold him—dead" highlights Juliet's intense hatred towards Romeo and her desire for him to pay for Tybalt's death. The line also shows the power of grief, as it can cloud judgement and lead to extreme actions. The line also reveals the complexity of Juliet's emotions, as she still loves Romeo, but her grief and anger towards him for killing her cousin is overpowering.

Example 3:

- 1. Consequences of violence/ violence is never the answer
- 2. This line from Romeo and Juliet, spoken by the Prince highlights the consequences of violence and how violence isn't the answer and how it can lead to severe punishment. The Prince is exiling Romeo, who has killed Tybalt in a fight between the Montague and Capulet families, and warning that if he is found, that hour will be his last, emphasizing the gravity of the situation and the severity of the punishment. He also expresses his frustration and anger towards the ongoing feud between the two families and how it has led to the death of Tybalt and how his own blood is being spilled because of the "rude brawls." The line also highlights the theme of justice and how it is not always served with mercy. The Prince states that he will be deaf to pleading and excuses and that "nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses" and "Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill." This shows the idea that the justice system has to take a strong stance to put an end to the destructive cycle of violence.

Example 1: (Gnomeo and Juliet) in the movie Gnomeo and Juliet Gnomeo never truly expresses himself through words nor says the line from the play but rather expresses himself through actions. In the movie Gnomeo confronts Tybalt by fighting on a lawnmower eventually leading to Tybalt being smashed against a wall. These 2 scenes show similarities and differences one of the similarities being that Gnomeo took immediate revenge on Tybalt leading to his death. A difference is obviously the setting but also the reactions of the other Gnomes and the amount of words exchanged.

Example 3: (Warm Bodies) This line from Romeo and Juliet, spoken by Prince Escalus, is about the consequences of violence and the power of authority. The line connects to the movie "Warm Bodies" in the sense that both works explore themes of violence and its consequences. In "Warm Bodies", the main character R is a zombie who, through his interactions with a human named Julie, starts to question the violence and destruction caused by his actions as a zombie. While in Romeo and Juliet, the Prince is exiling Romeo, who has killed Tybalt in a fight between the Montague and Capulet families, and warning that if he is found, that hour will be his last, emphasizing the gravity of the situation and the severity of the punishment, and how the violence caused by the feud between the two families, has led to the death of Tybalt. Additionally, both works shows how the characters are starting to guestion their actions, in "Warm Bodies" R starts to question his actions as a zombies and in Romeo and Juliet, Romeo starts to question his actions after he kills Tybalt.

| ACT IV Explanation | |
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Evidence from text

Example 1: Peace, ho, for shame! Confusion's cure lives not In these confusions. Heaven and yourself

Had part in this fair maid! now heaven hath all,

And all the better is it for the maid.

Your part in her you could not keep from death, But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.

The most you sought was her promotion,

For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced; And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?

O, in this love, you love your child so ill

That you run mad, seeing that she is well. She's not well married that lives married long, But she's best married that dies married young. Dry up your tears and stick your rosemary

On this fair corse, and, as the custom is, In all her best array bear her to church; For though fond nature bids us all lament, Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

(Friar, Act IV, Scene V, 65-84)

Example 2: 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.

Therefore, out of thy long-experienced time,

Give me some present counsel; or, behold, 'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that Which the commission of thy years and art

Could to no issue of true honor bring. Be not so long to speak. I long to die

If what thou speakst speak not of remedy.

- 1. Topic Revealed
- 2. Idea writer wishes to convey
- 1. Acceptance of death
- 2. This line from Romeo and Juliet, spoken by Friar Lawrence, highlights the theme of acceptance of death. The Friar is addressing the family and friends of Juliet, who have just learned of her death, and trying to confort them by encouraging them to accept her death as a natural part of life. He points out that heaven has taken Juliet and that she is in a better place now and explains the idea that death is not something to be feared but instead something that should be accepted and understood as an inevitable part of life.

The Friar also touches on the theme of love and how it can lead to grief and sorrow, he says "O, in this love, you love your child so ill, that you run mad, seeing that she is well." suggesting that the family and friends are unable to control the situation and how they love Juliet so much that they run mad, seeing that she is well. He also mentions the idea that being married for a long time is not always the best thing, it's better to die young. The line also touches on the idea of tradition and customs and how it can help us to cope with death by saying to "Dry up your tears and stick your rosemary on this fair corse, and, as the custom is, In all her best array bear her to church." The Friar is suggesting that although it is natural to grieve and be sad, following tradition and customs can help us to come to accept death.

Example 2:

- 1. Desperation and Desire
- 2. This line spoken by Juliet, highlights the theme of desperation and desire. Juliet is expressing her despair and hopelessness over the situation with Romeo and her family and is begging Friar Lawrence for a solution or a way out of the marriage with Paris and is willing to do whatever it takes, including killing herself, to prevent the tragic outcome that she sees coming. This line shows Juliet's intense desire to be with Romeo, after finally making things right after Tybalt as death, as she believes that "God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands" and that any other outcome would be unacceptable.

The line also describes Juliet's desperation as she is willing to take drastic measures, even if it means ending her own life, if no solution is made. Juliet's expression of her willingness to die if the friar can't provide a solution shows how desperate she is for a way out of her current situation. The line also touches on the theme of societal pressure and how it can lead to tragic consequences, as Juliet is aware of the consequences of defying her family's wishes and is willing to take drastic measures, as she believes there's no other way. Another thing presented in the line is the theme of the limitations of wisdom and experience, as Juliet is asking for the friar's guidance and counsel, but is also willing to act on her own if no solution is presented.

Example 1: (Warm Bodies) this quote was incredibly hard to connect to an adaptation but I think I'm able to connect it to warm bodies. The quote is basically about the Friar talking to Juliet's family and comforting them after the "death" and such. The only way I can think of a connection is in warm bodies when Julie pretends to be a zombie which is essentially faking a death because zombies are dead. The person who could be comforting her I guess could be R but than again this connection is quite loose and was hard to do.

Example 2: (Romeo + Juliet, 1:57:27)

In the movie Romeo + Juliet, Juliet says almost the exact same line she says in the play except with more dialogue between herself and the friar. Romeo + Juliet takes a modern look at the movie so you could imagine the differences being quite different in this scene but surprisingly they are very similar. One of the only and few changes in the scene would be the way Juliet portrays her death by instead of using verbal warning to kill herself, she pulls out a pistol and puts it against her head threatening to do it right there and then if no solution was presented.

ACT V Explanation

Evidence from text

Example 1:

I must indeed; and therefore came I hither.

Good gentle youth, tempt not a desp'rate man. Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone;

Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth, Put not another sin upon my head

By urging me to fury. O, be gone!

By heaven, I love thee better than myself.

For I come hither armed against myself. Stay not, be gone. Live, and hereafter say A madman's mercy bid thee run away. (Romeo, Act V, Scene III, 58-67)

Example 2:

Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.

What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand? Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.

O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop

To help me after? I will kiss thy lips.

Haply some poison yet doth hang on them To make me die with a restorative.

[kisses him]

Thy lips are warm

Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief. O happy dagger!

[snatches Romeo's dagger]

This is thy sheath; there rust, and let me die.

[She stabs herself and falls.]

(Juliet, Act V, Scene III, 160-171)

Example 3:

Capulet. O brother Montague, give me thy hand. This is my daughter's jointure, for no more Can I demand.

Montague. But I can give thee more;

For I will raise her statue in pure gold,

That whiles Verona by that name is known,

There shall no figure at such rate be set As that of true and faithful Juliet.

Capulet. As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie— Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

(Montague and Capulet, Act V, Scene III, 296-304)

- 1. Topic Revealed
- 2. Idea writer wishes to convey

Example 1:

- 1. self control
- 2. This line spoken by Romeo says, "I must indeed; and therefore came I hither" sets the stage for his struggles with self-control. He is acknowledging that he is in a desperate state and that his actions are driven by his emotions. He then goes on to say "Good gentle youth, tempt not a desp'rate man. Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone; Let them affright thee." This shows that he is aware of the danger he could bring and is actively trying to protect Paris from his own actions. He is also using the memory of past events to remind himself of the consequences of giving in to his impulses.

Romeo then continues to plead to Paris to leave him saying "I beseech thee, youth, Put not another sin upon my head By urging me to fury. O, be gone!" In this line he is acknowledging that his own anger and fury is a sin then finally Romeo says "By heaven, I love thee better than myself. For I come hither armed against myself. Stay not, be gone. Live, and hereafter say A madman's mercy bid thee run away." This shows that his love for Juliet is stronger than his own wishes and impulses and he is putting the safety and well-being of Juliet above his own and is willing to sacrifice his own happiness for their safety. This passage as a whole shows the complexity of self-control and the internal struggle that can come with it especially when strong emotions are involved.

Example 2:

- 1. Loyalty to love
- 2. This line from Romeo and Juliet shows the extreme loyalty and devotion that Juliet feels towards her true love Romeo. Despite the fact that he has taken his own life and left her alone she still expresses her desire to be with him in death. She is willing to take her own life by drinking poison or using Romeo's dagger to die alongside him. This shows the depth of her love and loyalty towards Romeo as she is willing to sacrifice her own life to be with him even in death. The line also shows the tragic consequences of love and how it can lead to extreme actions.

Example 3:

- 1. Reconciliation and forgiveness
- 2. This line from Romeo and Juliet highlights the theme of reconciliation and forgiveness between the Capulet and Montague families. After the tragic deaths of Romeo and Juliet, the two families are finally able to put aside their long hatred for each other and come together in grief and mourning. The Capulet and Montague leaders are able to reconcile and make up for the harm caused by their battles. Capulet offers to give Montague his daughter's jointure, and Montague responds by offering to raise a statue of Juliet in pure gold, as a symbol of her worth and a symbol to their forgiveness. The line also shows the families' realization that Romeo and Juliet were the victims of their feud and that they are willing to make things right by honouring their memory. It also emphasizes the idea of forgiveness and the ability to move on from the past.

Example 2: (Warm Bodies)

In the play Romeo and Juliet, after Romeo kill's himself Juliet can't stand to be alive without her true love so she kills herself as well. I connect this to warm bodies because a similar event took place towards the ending of the film where R and Julie where on the edge of a building about to get eaten by bonies. They decide rather to die the the zombie variants they decide to jump into a pool of water with the same thought as the play, "if we die we die together." Unlike the play this movie took an interesting turn where once they landed in the shallow pool of water instead of both of them dying the survive the fall and R makes his final transition from zombie to a full human.

Example 3: (Gnomeo and Juliet)

In the play Romeo and Juliet once both the Montague and Capulet family's come to the chamber to see the aftermath of their children's death they come to realize all the death and destruction caused from their feud and decide to make amends as their battles have gone on too long and cost them too much. Similar to the movie Gnomeo and Juliet the 2 gnome gardens finally come together after the huge garden battle. They look around the garden and see the only thing they both loved is now destroyed and not only that but they also realize that Gnomeo and Juliet are both "dead." During the mourning of their "deaths" the leaders of the garden come to an agreement to put the hatred behind them and to stop the fighting. As this agreement is made Gnomeo and Juliet arise from the debris and everyone starts cheering. Despite them not being dead the 2 gardens still think that peace is a better option. This is a nice twist on the original play as you would think that they would both die and come out of the debris as a heartwarming ending unlike the dark one in the play.