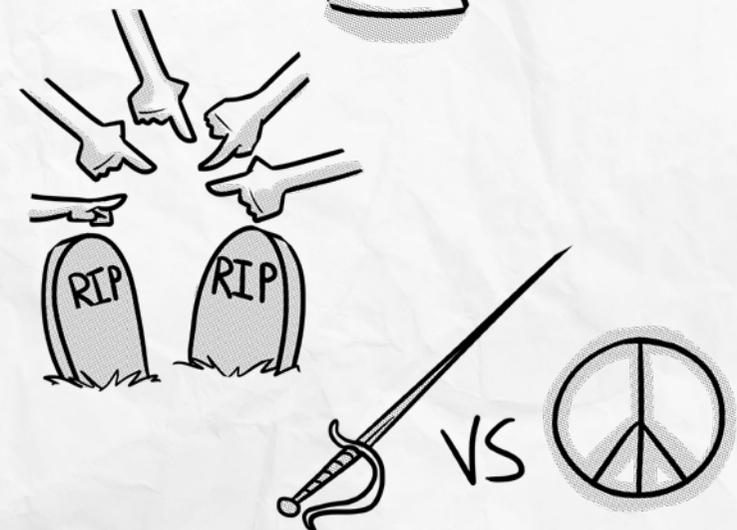
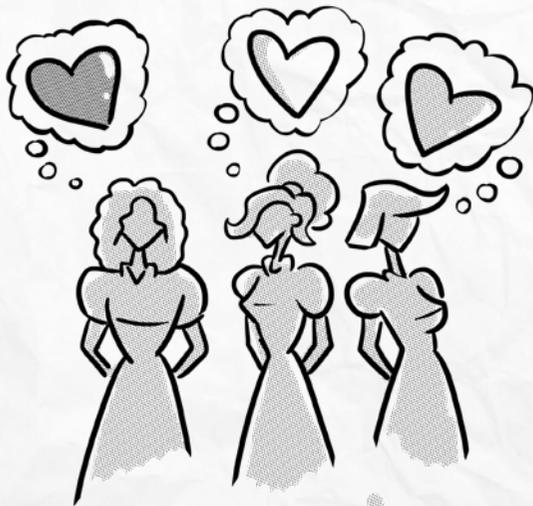
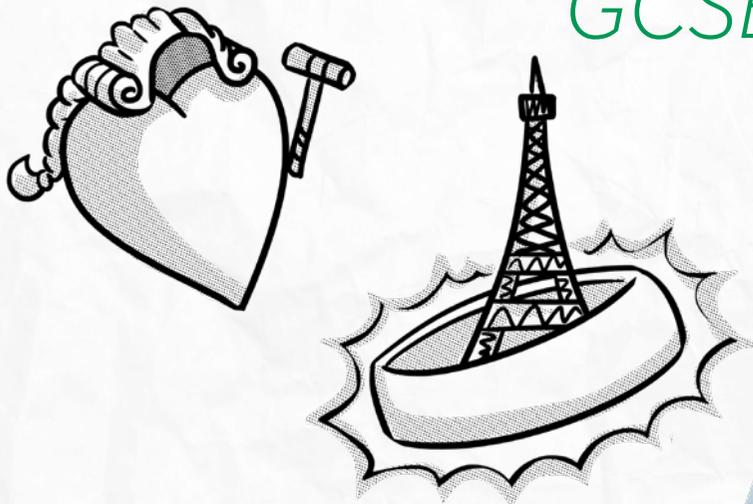


# GCSE Romeo and Juliet

William Shakespeare



### Characters: The Cousins

- Benvolio's name means '**well-wishing**' - How is this translated through the presentation of his character?
- How do other characters respond to Benvolio?
- Mercutio suggests, in Act 3, that Benvolio is hot-tempered and quarrelsome - to what extent do you agree with this view? Is he not the peace-maker?
- How do Benvolio's attitudes towards love differ to those of Romeo?
- '*Fetch me my rapier, boy*' - What does this response suggest about Tybalt's nature?
- How is Tybalt's relationship with his family presented?
- 'Tybalt is often referred to as aggressive and irrational, yet in fact he is actually the most loyal of all characters' - To what extent do you agree? Why?

### Characters: Dutiful Juliet?

- 'Despite her youth, Juliet appears wiser than not only Romeo but her parents also' - Provide evidence to support this statement.
- How does Juliet fulfill the **expectations of women** at the time? How, on the other hand, can she be seen to defy these?
- The Nurse informs Juliet '*I think it is best you married with the County*' - why does she change her stance on this? What does Juliet's response suggest about her?
- How do Juliet's attitudes towards love differ to those of Romeo's? Who is more 'conventional' and how?
- 'Juliet's feelings for Romeo are not fueled by love but by rebellion' - To what extent do you agree?

### The 'Other' Loves

- How do the characters of Rosaline and Paris contrast with Romeo and Juliet?
- '*Open the tomb lay me with Juliet*' - What do we learn of Paris through his final line? How do the audience respond to this?

### Themes: Responsibility and Fate

- Shakespeare has Mercutio die first - what is the significance of this?
- 'The death of Mercutio can be blamed primarily on Romeo' - to what extent do you agree?
- 'The death of Romeo is not fate but a result of rash, immature reactions' - to what extent do you agree?
- To what extent is the Friar the most **rational** of characters? Provide evidence to justify your response.
- How do the Friar's religious vows underpin/inform his actions?
- How far can the death of Romeo and Juliet be blamed on the Friar? Can it be suggested that he was most responsible?
- Who can be deemed most **responsible**? Why?
- Despite his involvement the Friar is presented as almost **cowardly** at the end of the play - how?
- How is '**fate**' explored in the play? Consider this in relation to 'free-will' - which is more dominant?
- How is the concept of fate used by the characters to place blame on others?

### Staging the Play

- Shakespeare writes the Prologue in **sonnet form** - what is the significance of this?
- Identify two examples of when Romeo's dreams/visions **foreshadow** the play's fateful outcomes.
- How does Juliet's soliloquy in Act 4 differ to that delivered in Act 2?
- What is the purpose of Shakespeare's repeated use of **dramatic irony**?
- Shakespeare's play builds initially to romance and then to tragedy - what is the purpose and significance of structuring the play in such a way?
- 'The Nurse functions as far more than a comedic character' - how?
- Characters are often seen to make **crude** references about sex and relationships - what is the effect of this?
- '*Juliet is the sun*'/'*I have night's cloak to hide me*' - how are ideas surrounding light and darkness used to portray Romeo and Juliet's relationship?
- Shakespeare includes frequent and deliberate scene changes - what is the impact of these?
- How is the concept of **time** explored in the play? Consider this in relation to both character and plot development.

### Family, Love and Honour

- How is the tradition of **courtly love** explored in the play?
- How does Romeo use language to express his views on love? Consider how this changes as the play develops.
- Identify three quotations that evidence Juliet's **loyalty** lies with Romeo rather than her family.
- How are Romeo and Juliet's relationships with their parents presented?
- How do the three female protagonists (Juliet, Lady Capulet and Nurse) differ in their views on love and relationships - provide examples for each.
- How would an Elizabethan society have responded to Romeo and Juliet's relationship? How is this similar/different to a modern-day audience?
- In what ways is the **feud central** to the plot?
- How is the concept of **honour** critiqued in the play?
- 'Honour is shown to be more important than love' - To what extent do you agree?
- How are society's wider issues exemplified and explored through the presentation of Romeo and Juliet?
- How is **religion** presented in the play? Is it central to the plot? If so, how?