

TEACHER'S GUIDE

May/June 2009

Guide compiled by Trish Tillman

PREP YOUR STUDENTS FOR THE SHOW—

Book your pre- or post-show

Classroom Workshop!

Contact the Artistic Learning Administrator

at 510.548.3422x105

for more info.

Romeo and Juliet



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CAL SHAKES
CALIFORNIA SHAKESPEARE THEATER

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OUR MISSION

We strive for everyone, regardless of age, circumstance, or background, to discover and express the relevance of Shakespeare and the classics in their lives.

- We make boldly imagined and deeply entertaining interpretations of Shakespeare and the classics.
- We provide in-depth, far-reaching artistic learning programs for learners of all ages and circumstances.
- We bring disparate communities together around the creation of new American plays that reflect the cultural diversity of the Bay Area.

OUR FUNDERS AND SPONSORS

Artistic Learning programs are underwritten by generous support from The Margaret A. Cargill Foundation, Citigroup Foundation, The Dale Family Fund, The Thomas J. Long Foundation, Koret Foundation, Oakland Fund for the Arts, The San Francisco Foundation, and Yahoo! Employee Fund.

Cal Shakes' 2009 Main Stage season is funded by the corporate sponsors below:

Presenting Sponsors:



Artistic Learning Sponsor:



Season Sponsors:



Additional season underwriting is provided by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Dean & Margaret Leshner Foundation.

ARTISTIC LEARNING PROGRAMS AT CAL SHAKES

The Artistic Learning Department represents the California Shakespeare Theater's commitment to integrate our artistic and education efforts. The vision of Artistic Learning is to become a leading Bay Area citizen, creating a culture of life-long learners and nourishing imaginations in preparation for the work of life. Listed below are some of our many programs for youth both in and out of the classroom.

ARTIST RESIDENCIES

To support student achievement and teacher professional development, Cal Shakes brings working artists into the schools to teach with the aim of developing students' creative minds and voices. Collaborations can be based on established school and teacher curriculum (called "arts integration"), or can be rooted in theater-related disciplines, such as acting, Shakespeare, or stage combat.

AFTERSCHOOL CLASSES

In addition to in-school activities, afterschool programs are offered in many aspects of theater including acting, physical comedy, and improvisation, all taught by professional working theater artists.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

Cal Shakes hosts three intensive Summer Theater Programs focusing on Shakespeare studies in acting, text, movement and a variety of other skills, culminating in a shortened version of a Shakespeare play. Students study with Cal Shakes professional actors and artists. Limited scholarships are available.

STUDENT DISCOVERY MATINEES (Field trips)

Our well-rounded approach to Student Matinees consists of multiple offerings, including a free Teacher/Student Guide, optional pre- and post-show classroom visits by Teaching Artists, a lively pre-performance engagement at the theater, and a Q&A session with actors immediately following the show. This multipronged approach offers a unique opportunity for students to develop a lasting appreciation of theater and of Shakespeare through dynamic presentation and the experience of a live work of art.

TEACHER'S GUIDES AND STUDENT ACTIVITY GUIDES

This teaching and student activity guide is available for each Shakespeare Main Stage production. It is available free of charge to all classrooms regardless of whether or not a class attends a student matinee.

For more information or to register for any of our programs, please call the Artistic Learning Coordinator at 510.809.3293 or email learn@calshakes.org.

ROMEO AND JULIET OVERVIEW

A NOTE TO TEACHERS

“The first and most important lesson... is that there are no rules about how to do Shakespeare, just clues. Everything is negotiable.”

-Antony Sher and Greg Doran, *Woza Shakespeare!* 1996,
on training in the Royal Shakespeare Company

Welcome! We are thrilled to have you and your students join us for this season’s Student Discovery Matinee production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Our goal is to engage students with the work on a variety of levels through the live performance and the activities in this Teacher’s Guide.

The challenge with any production of *Romeo and Juliet* is how to make it fresh and relevant after 400 years of productions, rewritings, and new interpretations. The fact that a new film has been made titled *Romeo & Juliet vs. the Living Dead* speaks to how far we’ve gone in our need to reinvent this play. However, the work endures because it continues to speak to the tremendous strength of our personal passions.

In the words of the director, Jonathan Moscone, *Romeo and Juliet* are “a youthful energy in an ancient world.” The Cal Shakes production is set in modern Italy, in a town with Mafia-like tendencies toward grudges and retaliation. This traps *Romeo and Juliet* in a culture of violence that cannot be changed, and drives them to their tragic end. Violence is accepted and understood as an everyday occurrence, and within these constraints there is no option for *Romeo and Juliet* to be together. There is virtually no real communication in this play. Parents don’t understand their children, and vice versa; people only command, taunt, or fight. Even *Romeo and Juliet* talk in contradictions, although, unlike the rest of the characters, they use the oppositions as a point of connection rather than divisiveness. Every character’s complexity comes from his or her interactions with this society, and this makes them prey to the devastating effects of misunderstanding and chance.

In our production, the director emphasizes the everyday fact of violence in this culture and how it shapes everyone’s attitudes and actions throughout the play. The set is reminiscent of a prison and the graffiti on the wall a splash of violence within its walls. The minimal set pieces help speed the play through a series of settings, keeping the action tumbling forward from moment to moment, almost never letting the characters catch their breath.

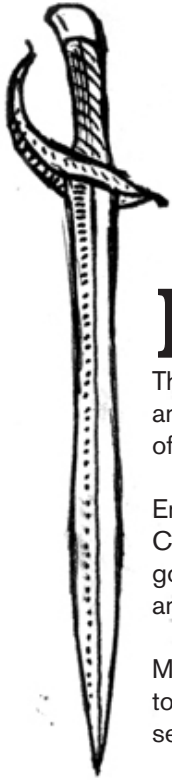
The theme of this guide is “You Just Don’t Understand.” Cue your students to look for the misunderstandings in the play and how the world of the play creates and perpetuates them.

Enjoy!



ROMEO AND JULIET SUMMARY:

CAUGHT IN A DANGEROUS WORLD



Romeo and Juliet is set in Italy in the city of Verona, a place famous, in Shakespeare's time, for violence. The fight which begins the play is part of an overarching feud between two wealthy families: the Montagues and the Capulets. However, in the very first scene, Prince Escalus decrees that all fighting is banned on pain of death.

Enter Romeo and his friend Benvolio, and we hear of Romeo's passion for Rosaline, a young woman from the Capulet family. He and Benvolio plan to attend a masked ball at the house of Lord Capulet. Romeo wants to go because he hopes to see Rosaline, and Benvolio because he is sure that Romeo will find other beauties and get over his infatuation.

Meanwhile young Juliet and her Nurse talk about love, and Juliet says that she doesn't want to commit herself to Paris, the suitor her parents have chosen for her. But she agrees to attend the ball that evening to at least see what he looks like.

At the ball Romeo and Juliet fall in love at first sight. Later that night Romeo comes to Lord Capulet's orchard and sees Juliet in her balcony window. They declare their love, and Juliet challenges Romeo to really mean his love: If he truly does love her, she says, he will marry her the next day!

In the morning, Romeo and Juliet seek the help of Friar Lawrence, who wants to help the two families end their war. He agrees to marry them, and they marry secretly in his cell. They agree to meet again that night.

Meanwhile, Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, enraged by Romeo's crashing the Capulets' ball, comes in search of Romeo to pick a fight. Romeo refuses to fight the man he now secretly knows to be his new cousin, and Mercutio leaps in. Tybalt takes advantage when Romeo tries to stop the duel, and kills Mercutio under Romeo's arm. Blind with rage, Romeo stabs Tybalt and kills him. Prince Escalus, in a moment of lenience, chooses not to punish Romeo by death as decreed, but to banish him forever from Verona.

Now Romeo and Juliet have a terrible problem: They are married but can never live together in Verona. Juliet is very upset, and her father, thinking that she is grieving for her cousin's death, gives her a cheering surprise—she is going to marry Paris in three days! Juliet, horrified, goes to the Friar. He gives her a potion that will put her to sleep for 42 hours. Presumed dead, she will be carried to the Capulet tomb; then the Friar will rescue her and take her to Mantua to be with banished Romeo and live happily ever after.

All goes according to plan, except that the Friar sends a letter to Romeo that never arrives. All Romeo hears is that his beloved wife is dead. He obtains a poison from an apothecary and goes to drink it at his dead wife's tomb. There, he meets a grieving Paris whom he does not recognize, and kills him in his desperation. Romeo then drinks down his poison and dies. Juliet awakens and finds her husband dead, and the Friar arrives and offers to take her to a convent, since she no longer has a husband. But then the Friar thinks he hears a noise and runs off, thinking he will be blamed for the tragedy. Juliet tries to kiss the poison from Romeo's lips, then picks up his dagger and kills herself. The Prince and the Montague and the Capulet parents come in and they all declare that, since they are united in their grief, they will take a lesson from Romeo and Juliet, and the families will live in peace.



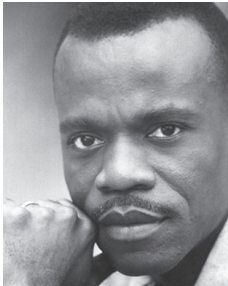
WHO'S WHO IN *ROMEO AND JULIET*

CAST



Thomas Azar

Benvolio: One of Romeo and Mercutio's friends. His name suggests "goodness," and he tries to make peace when fights break out, but does not succeed.



L. Peter Callender*

Montague: The head of the Montague family and Romeo's father. He perpetuates the feud that has been raging between the families of the Capulets and the Montagues.

Apothecary: Similar to a modern-day pharmacist, although not at all regulated, an apothecary was a person who specialized in preparing and selling drugs or compounds for medicinal purposes. The apothecary sells the illegal poison to Romeo because he is desperately poor and needs the money.



James Carpenter*

Capulet: Juliet's father and the head of the Capulet family. Though he dislikes the Montagues, he abides by the Prince's rule and restrains Tybalt from fighting Romeo at the masquerade ball in his house. However, he shows no compassion for Juliet when she refuses to marry Paris.



Catherine Castellanos*

Nurse: Juliet's guardian, who has raised her from birth. She is a servant, but has lived with the Capulet family for so long that she feels comfortable speaking her mind. She is bawdy and long-winded, and wants what is best for Juliet in any situation.

*Denotes member of Actors' Equity.



WHO'S WHO IN *ROMEO AND JULIET*

CAST



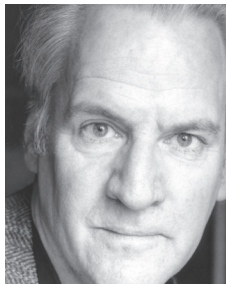
Julie Eccles*

Lady Capulet: Juliet's mother. She was married young at about Juliet's age, and is eager to have Juliet make a good match with someone from a wealthy, noble family.



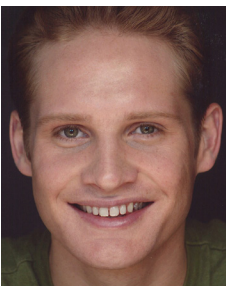
Dan Hiatt*

Friar Lawrence: A monk who is a friend to both Romeo and Juliet, and secretly marries them with the hope that their union will bring peace between their families. He is also expert in the art of herbal medicine and potions.



Julian Lopez-Morillas*

Prince: The Prince of Verona wants to establish peace in the city, and punishes those who break his law against fighting in the streets. He banishes Romeo for defending Mercutio, which leads to Romeo's separation from Juliet.



Craig Marker*

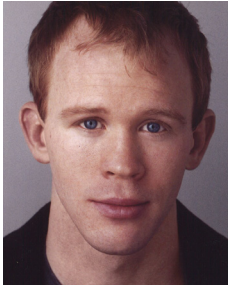
Tybalt: Juliet's Capulet cousin, nephew of Lady Capulet. He defends the Capulets against any insult from the Montagues, imagined or real. He is hot-tempered and quick to avenge the family honor.

*Denotes member of Actors' Equity.



WHO'S WHO IN *ROMEO AND JULIET*

CAST



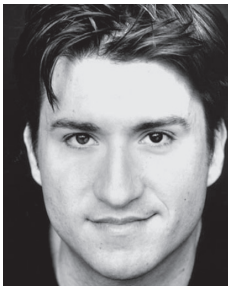
Alex Morf*

Romeo: A romantic, well-bred young man from a wealthy family, the son of Montague and Lady Montague. He is infatuated with a girl named Rosaline at the beginning of the play, but then meets Juliet, and deeply falls in love. His feelings are intense and seem to dictate his extreme actions throughout the play.



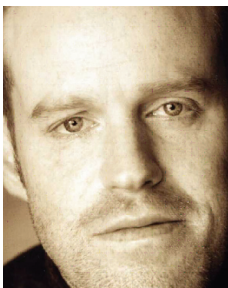
Sarah Nealis*

Juliet: The young daughter of Capulet and Lady Capulet, who is approaching 14—not too early to be engaged in Elizabethan times. She is naïve, but matures quickly into a strong, determined woman.



Liam Vincent*

Paris: A young relative of the Prince who has asked Juliet's father for permission to marry her. When Capulet sets the date of the marriage earlier than agreed, Juliet, who has already married Romeo, fakes her own death to get out of marrying Paris.



Jud Williford*

Mercutio: Romeo's best friend. His name is derived from the word "mercury" which exists peculiarly as a liquid metal and is notoriously hard to capture. Mercutio is a funny, high-spirited joker and class clown, always looking for the most fun or the most action in any given situation, which leads him to his fatal fight with Tybalt. He speaks the truth about the stupidity of the feud, Tybalt's devotion to honor, and Romeo's "blind" love.

*Denotes member of Actors' Equity.



WHO'S WHO IN *ROMEO AND JULIET*

CAST



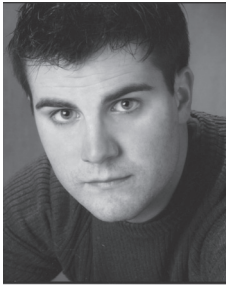
Nick Childress

GREGORY,
PARIS' PAGE,
ENSEMBLE



Matt Hooker

ENSEMBLE



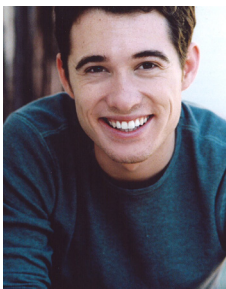
Patrick Lane

ABRAHAM,
ENSEMBLE



Marilet Martinez

ENSEMBLE



Avery Monsen

SAMPSON,
PETER,
BALTHASAR,
ENSEMBLE

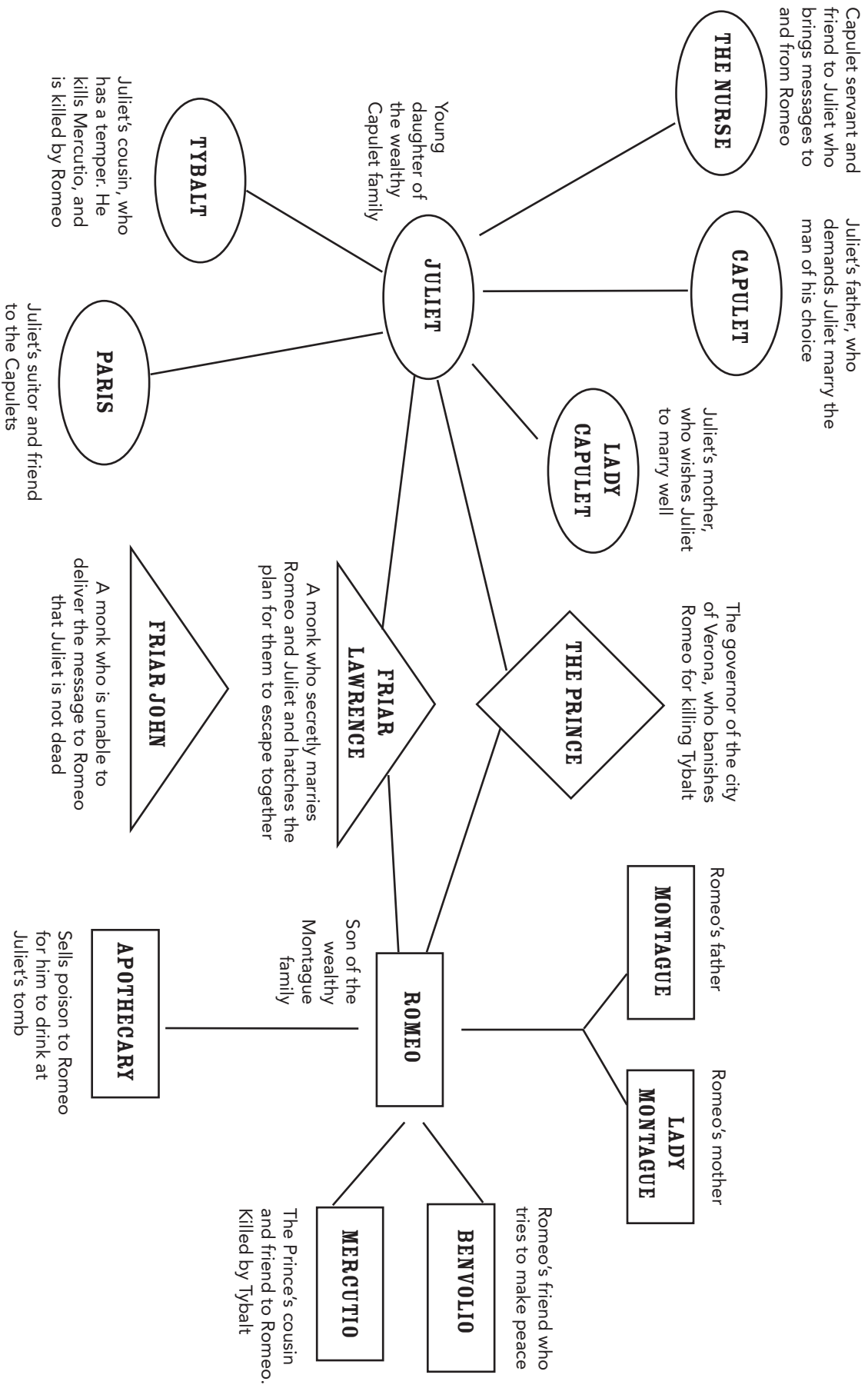


Ashley Wickett

ENSEMBLE



CHARACTER MAP



SEEING THE PLAY: BEFORE AND AFTER

“These violent delights have violent ends”

-Friar Lawrence, Act 2, sc. 6

Consider the following questions before and after the show.

BEFORE Viewing the Play

What to watch for:

What are the pressures put on Romeo and Juliet by their families and friends, and how do they react?

How are Romeo and Juliet trapped in this world?

How does Romeo talk about love in the beginning of the play? Does this change?

Are the adults helping them in any way?

Look for moments that you recognize in modern life: Are the characters acting like people would today? Why or why not?

AFTER Viewing the Play

What are some examples of the characters not really listening to or understanding each other?

Was there something one of the adult characters could have done to prevent the tragedy?

Is it still necessary to defend your or your family's "honor"?

Was Romeo and Juliet's suicide a reasonable thing to do? Why do you think that?

Which of the characters do you like the best? Why?

Do you believe in fate? Or can people make their own destiny? Explain.

Did you recognize any parts of this story from modern movies or books, or your own life?

See the "Write Your Own Critique" page in the Activity Appendix for more ideas about what to watch for, and how to write about your reactions after the show.



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?: SHAKESPEARE'S WORDS

SHAKESPEARE'S WORDS

When asked the number one challenge with Shakespeare's works, modern day audiences will almost always respond "the language." It's true that the language does sound a bit different to our ears, and Shakespeare uses phrases that we no longer use in our everyday speech. But think of this: There are phrases that we use today that would baffle Shakespeare, should he mysteriously time travel to this day and age. That's because language (especially English) is constantly transforming.

Here are some original quotes from *Romeo and Juliet*. Can you match them to their modern-day translations?

O mischief, thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
Romeo, Act 5, Scene 1

Love goes toward love as
schoolboys from their books,
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.
Romeo, Act 2, Scene 2

From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Chorus, Prologue

For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.
Juliet, Act 1, Scene 5

But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Romeo, Act 2, Scene 2

A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worms' meat of me. I have it,
And soundly too. Your houses!
Mercutio, Act 3, Scene 1

For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.
Prince, Act 5, Scene 3

O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name.
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.
Juliet, Act 2, Scene 2

**Two unlucky children of enemy families
become lovers and commit suicide.**

**No story has ever been sadder than
what happened to Romeo and Juliet.**

**Destructive thoughts come quickly to the
minds of desperate men!**

**Oh, Romeo, Romeo, why do you have to be who
you are? Forget about your family and change
your name. Or just swear you love me, and I'll
stop being a Capulet.**

**A lover goes toward his beloved as
enthusiastically as a student leaving homework,
but when he leaves her, he feels as miserable as a
student does on his way to school.**

**Shhh! What's that light in the window over there?
It's Juliet, and she is like the sun rising.**

**After all, pilgrims touch the hands of
statues of saints. Holding one palm
against another is like a kiss.**

**May a deadly sickness strike both your families!
They've turned me into a corpse, food for
worms. I'm done for. Curse your families!**

See BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE on page 42.



YOU DON'T GET IT: PARENTS AND CHILDREN

“Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunce have I had!” —Nurse
“I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news.” —Juliet, Act 2, sc. 5

The “generation gap” refers to the differences in experience that people of different ages have had which shape their point of view and attitudes.

Students today are part of the “Millennial” generation. Your experiences with technology, world events, and American society will continue to shape your cultural understanding in different ways than the generation before you. This will lead to inevitable misunderstandings, even if they are not intended.

In Shakespeare’s Time:

Children at the beginning of the Renaissance generally were treated as little adults, expected to act, dress, and work just as if they were grown up. Children had no rights and were absolutely subject to the decisions of their parents, including who and when to marry. In wealthier families such as the Capulets and Montagues, boys were sent to school and girls trained in domestic accomplishments such as needlework, music, and drawing. Later in Renaissance times, children of the wealthy began to be treated more in accordance with their abilities, and playtime was considered as important as studies, but absolute rule of the parents remained.

In Modern Times: Try this!

Interview an older family member about how they were supposed to act when they were children and teenagers. Ideally this person should be at least 30 years older than you. Sample questions could be:

What did your parents expect from you in terms of marriage or a career? Did you have to fight them to get your own way or did you agree?

How was a child supposed to act at a grown-up party?

Were children expected to work or go to school? What did you study?

What were the clothes like?

How were teenagers supposed to go about dating? Was there a certain period of time that had to be observed before “going steady”? What was “going steady”?

See ORAL HISTORY PROJECT on page 36.



LOST IN TRANSLATION: MALE AND FEMALE ROLES IN SOCIETY

**“An you be mine, I’ll give you to my friend.
An you be not, hang! Beg! Starve! Die in the streets!”**

—Capulet to Juliet when she refuses to marry Paris, Act 3, sc. 5

Society’s expectations of boys and girls are usually always different. Queen Elizabeth I, the ruler of England in Shakespeare’s time, always had to defend her extraordinary ability to run the country, since women were not expected to be capable of leadership.

In Shakespeare’s Time:

PERCEPTIONS OF MALES

- Natural capacity for learning and rational thought.....
- Leaders in society
- Physically strong
- Dominant over a wife and children.....

PERCEPTIONS OF FEMALES

- Emotional, not capable of logical thought.....
- Indecent for women to be seen in public as leaders
- Should be beautiful for others to enjoy
- Submissive to the husband’s or father’s rule.....

RESULTS

- School day lasted from 6AM – 5PM
- Politicians and rulers were usually male
- Noble boys schooled in swordplay, horsemanship, etc.
- The father’s rule prevailed in the household

RESULTS

- Were kept home from school and taught domestic chores of housekeeping and child-rearing
- Only had command over children
- Beauty regimens proposed
- Had no rights as an individual citizen

As you can see, the way boys and girls are treated has changed greatly. But boys and girls are still different from each other, and are still subject to opposing expectations.

In Modern Times: Ask Yourself:

Do any of these Elizabethan attitudes towards boys and girls remain today? For instance, are girls still expected to be beautiful? How and why?

What qualities and attributes made a person popular or a leader in Elizabethan times? Are they the same now? Are they the same for men as for women?

Do adults treat boys and girls differently? How?

Do certain cultures place more value on being a boy or being a girl? Why?

Do you think men get certain opportunities in life that women don’t? Do women have opportunities that men don’t get? Why do you think that?



YOU DON'T SEE HOW IMPORTANT THIS IS: BELIEFS

How people should behave is an important topic for many people.

In Shakespeare's Time:

Elizabethans had strict codes of behavior—for instance, the code of honor. One could be challenged to a duel over a perceived lie, a physical hurt, or an insult in even the slightest degree to one's honor. Any difference of opinion could be perceived as an insult. Of course, just like in modern times, differences went way beyond the personal as well.

One interesting thing about *Romeo and Juliet* is that it is never explained exactly why the Capulet and Montague families are fighting, but they are described as having equal status in Verona society and that an "ancient grudge" has continued to give rise to violent conflict. What could have happened to begin this feud?

MODERN TIMES: OPPOSING BELIEFS		
SUBJECT	WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM?	CONSEQUENCES
Politics:	Highly opposing visions of the way a society should be run tend to clash.	Political assassinations are not uncommon, and in America 13 attempts on Presidents have been made, four of them successful (Lincoln, Kennedy, Garfield, and McKinley).
Love:	Have you ever looked at someone's boyfriend or girlfriend and said to yourself, "I just don't understand what she sees in him"?	Families can be split up over approval or disapproval of in-laws.
Religion:	What people hold as deep beliefs can create resentment and hatred between groups of different faiths.	The current Israeli-Palestinian conflict reflects the deep religious oppositions in the Middle East that have been raging for hundreds of years.
Art:	Artistic expression represents human emotion, actions, and opinions as well as color, line, and form, and can easily be interpreted in a variety of positive or negative ways.	Artist Michael Dickinson is currently facing up to three years in a Turkish prison for portraying the Prime Minister of Turkey as a dog.
Equality:	The injustices and privileges that governments bestow upon the people they govern continue to affect different ethnic, racial, and political groups.	In April of 1992, riots in Los Angeles killed 55 people when four white police officers were cleared of assaulting Rodney King, a young black man.

In Modern Times: Ask Yourself:

What differences of belief affect you in your life? Pick one of the categories above and ask yourself how you see different points of view on that subject show up in your life. You don't have to use the specific examples here—come up with ones you know.

See THE GREAT DEBATE on page 41.



DANCE OF CONFLICT: STAGED VIOLENCE IN *ROMEO AND JULIET*

“Fetch me my rapier, boy.” —Tybalt

Everything you see onstage has been planned out—every movement and every word rehearsed for weeks before the performances. With violence onstage, it must be choreographed and practiced so that, though the actors are never actually in danger, but it *looks* like they are.

Actors who engage in stage combat for a play usually have a Fight Choreographer design the fight for them, choose the kinds of weapons involved, and show them how their moves must be performed to be safe.

In Shakespeare’s Time:

In the original setting of *Romeo and Juliet* in Italy in the 16th century, a typical weapon would have been the rapier, mostly used in duels between nobility with grudges to settle. The rapier was a sharper and lighter weapon than the previously used broadsword. This left one hand free for other weapons (daggers, lanterns, anything handy), while its sharper edge made thrusting and stabbing the favored way of doing damage. Only people of noble status would have carried the rapier.

Shakespeare would have been familiar with dueling. Dueling was a popular way to settle arguments and defend honor among the noble classes. In fact, laws were passed in Elizabethan times to forbid dueling because too many young noblemen were dying.

In Modern Times:

In the Cal Shakes production, the play is set in today’s Italy, so there will not be rapiers and daggers, but knives and switchblades.

Our Fight Choreographer, Dave Maier, talks about his choice of weapons:

“We’ve thought about *Romeo and Juliet* having three kinds of groups: Romeo, Benvolio, and the younger members of each family; slightly older and more experienced men such as Mercutio and Tybalt, who understand and have participated in much local violence; and finally, the oldest, Capulet and Montague, who have probably been to war. Each group will have a weapon that shows their status: The younger group has knives; the middle group has more serious, bigger knives; and the eldest have guns. With wealth and power come access to more dangerous weapons in any era, and the Prince decrees no more public fighting because he does not want the violence to escalate.”

Remember, every action you see onstage in the fight has been planned for safety and for maximum drama; that is, the *characters* are in danger, but the *actors* are not.



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: A MYSTERIOUS LIFE?

William Shakespeare is considered one of the world's finest playwrights of all time. Writing in England during the late 1500s during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth I and King James I, he established himself as a major poet, actor, and playwright. He mastered the comic and tragic dramatic forms and introduced over 2,000 new vocabulary words into the English language. Shakespeare is read by nearly every American student and is perhaps best known for *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

However, Shakespeare's life is a constant source of debate and question in the scholarly community. Many records of the time that might have tracked his life or given more clues to how, when, and why he wrote the plays that he did have been lost, if they even existed at all. Here are some of the more interesting things that we actually know about his life.

- Shakespeare was born under the old Julian calendar, not the current Gregorian calendar that was created in 1582 and adopted in England in 1751. What was April 23 during Shakespeare's life would be May 3 on today's calendar.
- Shakespeare is listed as an actor on documents from 1592, 1598, 1603, and 1608. It is supposed that he played mostly unassuming parts, such as the ghost in *Hamlet*, to allow him more time to write.
- On June 29, 1613, the Globe Theatre went up in flames during a performance of *Henry VIII*. A theatrical cannon, set off during the performance, misfired, igniting the wooden beams and thatching. According to one of the few surviving documents of the event, no one was hurt except a man whose burning breeches were put out with a bottle of ale. It was rebuilt in the following year.
- Countless excellent phrases, now commonly used, occurred first in Shakespeare's writing, including *one fell swoop*, *vanish into thin air*, *play fast and loose*, *be in a pickle*, *foul play*, *tower of strength*, *flesh and blood*, *be cruel to be kind*, and *with bated breath*. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, Shakespeare wrote about one-tenth of the most quotable quotations ever written or spoken in English.
- Shakespeare's son, Hamnet, died in 1596. His daughter Susanna died in 1649. His younger daughter Judith had three children, but all died before their mother and without children. His granddaughter Elizabeth, daughter of Susanna, died childless in 1670, ending the William Shakespeare line.
- Shakespeare was buried in the Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon. He supposedly put a curse on anyone daring to move his body from that final resting place. Though it was customary to dig up the bones from previous graves to make room for others, Shakespeare's remains are still undisturbed.

Web Sources for these facts:

www.wikipedia.org

www.nosweatshakespeare.com

facts.randomhistory.com/2009/01/11_shakespeare.html

www.william-shakespeare.org.uk/facts-about-william-shakespeare.htm



ELIZABETHAN CULTURE: LOVE AND MARRIAGE FOUR CENTURIES AGO

Romeo and Juliet gives a fascinating snapshot of English life in the late 16th century, especially about love and marriage.

Obedience, hierarchy (“knowing your place in life”), and order were prized and expected of all good citizens. Any violation of duty or rebelliousness and disrespect of the laws would have consequences, even though enforcement of those laws was often arbitrary and ineffective. However, the way women were seen by the society was clearly defined. Elizabethan culture was patriarchal, and loyalty to your relatives was more important than anything else. Men controlled their wives and daughters. Chastity was a woman’s most important virtue. A father could disown, starve, or lock up a woman who had violated the family “honor.”

Queen Elizabeth defied all expectations of the age. She never married because she realized early that marriage meant loss of power. Even though the general opinion of the time was that women’s minds were weak and that a female head of state was an “offense against nature,” she ruled with great political skill and cunning.

Juliet is expected, as she approaches her 14th birthday, to be married and already planning her family. Shakespeare never specifies Romeo’s age, although it is often assumed to be a few years older than Juliet. In Elizabethan England the age of consent was 12 for a girl and 14 for a boy. However, statistics show that the average age of marriage in Elizabethan England at the time *Romeo and Juliet* was written was in the mid-20s, about the same as it is today. It is thought then that Juliet’s young age was meant to be extreme to audiences of that time as well, and perhaps a comment on Shakespeare’s perception of Italian culture.

The decision to marry is in the hands of Juliet’s parents. A father chose a daughter’s husband and it was considered dishonorable and disrespectful to communicate her desires in the process. Juliet must beg her father’s forgiveness after speaking out against marrying Paris. When a woman married, all of her personal property became the property of her husband and she had no say in how it was spent. Women were regarded as chattel (property) to be married to improve the family fortune or political alliances. Elizabethans thought women needed a male caretaker (remember, females could not have careers). However, Shakespeare lived during the time of the Renaissance, which was a turbulent and exciting period of history in which many old and accepted ideas were being questioned, examined, and interpreted. In this time the idea of romantic, personal love flourished. *Romeo and Juliet* is all about the struggle between personal love and “correct” matchmaking.



RESOURCES

ROMEO AND JULIET ON FILM

Romeo and Juliet is a popular play on stage, and even more popular on film. In fact, over 77 film versions exist—more than any other Shakespeare play. Many of these films update the play to a modern setting.

Romeo and Juliet on Film:

Romeo and Juliet (1936)

Director: George Cukor

Writer: Talbot Jennings (adaptation)

William Shakespeare (play)

Famous adult stage actors of the time play a traditional Romeo and Juliet.

West Side Story (1961)

Directors: Jerome Robbins, Robert Wise

Writer: Jerome Robbins (conception), Arthur Laurents (play)

Story updated to the world of New York gang rivalry; adapted from a famous Broadway musical.

Romanoff and Juliet (1961)

Writer: Peter Ustinov

Director: Peter Ustinov

Cold-war stage parody.

Romeo and Juliet (1968)

Director: Franco Zeffirelli

Writers: Franco Brusati, Masolino D'Amico, Franco Zeffirelli (screenplay)

William Shakespeare (play)

Set in the Renaissance with young actors in lead roles.

Romeo + Juliet (1996)

Director: Baz Luhrmann

Writers: Craig Pearce, Baz Luhrmann (screenplay)

William Shakespeare (play)

Fast-paced, contemporary, violent, and romantic.

High School Musical (2006)

Director: Kenny Ortega

Writer: Peter Barsocchini

The young lovers are in rival high school cliques instead of feuding families.

Activity: Compare Interpretations:

Ask students to look at the opening scenes of *Romeo + Juliet* and the Zeffirelli film. What are the differences? Similarities? Do they tell the same story? Which one do you think is more effective and why?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES - INTERNET

General Shakespeare:

www.folger.edu

www.pbs.org/shakespeare/educators/

Tudor and Elizabethan Times: <http://www.snaithprimary.eril.net/ttss.htm>

Life in Elizabethan England: <http://renaissance.dm.net/compendium/>

Shakespeare Resource Center - Elizabethan England: <http://www.bardweb.net/england.html>

Shakespeare and Hip Hop: <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3656/>

Shakespeare for Elementary Students:

www.pbs.org/shakespeare/educators//elementary

More Activities:

Public service announcement vs. violence lesson: <http://www.edutopia.org/pdfs/PA-ti-lessons/edutopia-romeo-and-juliet-psa.pdf>

Shakespearean Insults

Have half the students become Montagues and half become Capulets, line up on opposite sides of the room, and let them fling Shakespearean insults at each other. We're not sure who gets credit for the original idea since it's all over the web, but the list of insults can be found at: http://gallery.carnegiefoundation.org/collections/quest/collections/sites/divans-hutchinson_yvonne1/yvonne%20scans/insultsheet.pdf

See also <http://www.teachit.co.uk/armoore/shakespeare/romeoandjuliet.htm> for more information on Shakespeare's language.

Create Your Own Tabloid *Romeo and Juliet* scandal!

Bring in examples of tabloid papers such as National Enquirer or The Star. Have students study the style and layout of the papers, and the style of the written articles, and create a front-page article breaking the news of the double suicides of Romeo and Juliet. Use pictures and sensationalist text liberally, but convey the facts of the play as they happen in the story. You may want to do character "interviews" in a modern context as well, or quote lines from the play that applies to their view of the situation. See sample and full lesson at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/drama/shakespeare/60secondshakespeare/themes_romeojuliet.shtml



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY GUIDE

May/June 2009

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Romeo and Juliet



NOTE TO TEACHERS: This guide was created as a supplement for teachers preparing students to see California Shakespeare Theater's production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Worksheets are designed to be used individually or in conjunction with others throughout the guide. While we realize that no aspect of this guide fully outlines a course for meeting all subject area standards, discussion questions and topics are devised to address certain aspects of California state standards. The activities here can be minimally reproduced for educational, nonprofit use only. All lessons must be appropriately credited.

There are many excellent *Romeo and Juliet* lesson plans on the internet. The Folger Library site at www.folger.edu and the Web English Teacher site at www.webenglishteacher.com/romeoandjuliet, are particularly good. This guide concentrates primarily on ideas that help students understand language, plot and character and activities to get students on their feet and speaking.

If you are interested in a California Shakespeare Theater Professional Development Workshop, which provides easy-to-learn tools for teachers to incorporate theater and arts education activities into California standards-based core curriculum to enhance student's learning, please contact the Artistic Learning Administration Manager at **510.548.3422 x105** or sfryer@calshakes.org.

CAL SHAKES
CALIFORNIA SHAKESPEARE THEATER

OUR MISSION

We strive for everyone, regardless of age, circumstance, or background, to discover and express the relevance of Shakespeare and the classics in their lives.

- We make boldly imagined and deeply entertaining interpretations of Shakespeare and the classics.
- We provide in-depth, far-reaching artistic learning programs for learners of all ages and circumstances.
- We bring disparate communities together around the creation of new American plays that reflect the cultural diversity of the Bay Area.

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Additional season underwriting is provided by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Dean & Margaret Leshar Foundation.

SOCIAL NETWORKING CHARACTER STUDY

Have your students create a Facebook Profile, or Twitter Feed (Tweets) for a character from the play.

Overview: Being able to empathize with fictional characters sheds light on our own personal situations and recasts the plot of the play in relevant terms.

Grade: 6-12

State Standards: English Literary Response and Analysis 3.0-3.4

Goal: To bring the characters of Romeo and Juliet into a real-world context.

Outcomes: Students will be able to use basic facts from the text to imaginatively enter into the thoughts, feelings, and motivations of fictional characters by creating a mock Facebook page.

Activity: Familiarize students with the profile layout of a social networking site page, such as Facebook. (See following examples.)

1. Ask the students to fill in the profile with:
 - a. vital statistics
 - b. likes and dislikes
 - c. friends

Note: Students should use information drawn from their knowledge of the play (for example, Romeo will be killed if Juliet's father sees him under her window), filled out by their imaginations (for example, when Juliet was little she loved to play tricks on her nurse).

2. Profile photos may be drawn or cut out from magazines, or an actual photo of the student could be used and attached to the page. Remember, many actual Facebook profile pages do not have an actual photo of the person who made them—students sometimes choose a picture of something they feel represents them—a tree, a poster they like, etc.

3. Share the pages you have created in student pairs or in a group discussion.

Reflection:

- Name one thing you had to imagine about your character that you think is really interesting.
- Was it easy to imagine beyond the play—for instance, what Mercutio's activities and interests might be? Or do you feel the play did not provide enough information? How so?
- How easy was it to decide who your character's friends are? Would your character ignore a friend request from other characters in the play? Why or why not?

Extension exercise in writing dialogue:

Beyond the basic profile information, a further way to extend the activity is to have the students write on each other's profile "walls." A wall is the area on a profile page where friends can write short messages to each other that are posted directly on the page for others to view.

Note: Require the students to fill out the worksheet manually, rather than actually fill out a public profile online. If you can post the mock profile page that follows onto your school or school blog website for students to fill out online within the framework of this project, that would work as well, but false profiles in a public space should be actively discouraged. Student examples should show a deep understanding of the plot and qualities of the character. Some examples follow.



Mercutio, cousin to the Prince of Verona

is too busy living life to update his STATUS.

Updated: 400 years ago

Networks: Verona, Italy
Sex: Male
Relationship status: Single
Political views: Get away with what you can
Religious views: Self-determination

▼ Friends



Benvolio



Romeo



Prince
Escalus

▼ Recently Received

▼ Information

Contact info:
Email: dreamersoftenlie@queenmab.com
Current town: Verona

Personal Info

Activities:
Making fun of lovers,
Crashing parties,
Dueling.

Interests: Clever banter, witty retorts, double entendres.

Favorite music: "What, dost thou make us minstrels?
An thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but
discords: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you
dance."

Favorite TV shows: Gossip Girl, The OC

Favorite movies: How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days

Favorite quote: "If love be rough with you, be rough with
love."

▼ Wall

TWEETS from *Romeo and Juliet*

Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read other users' updates, known as tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length. Updates are displayed on the user's profile page and delivered to other users who have signed up to receive them.

Have students create a Twitter feed as if they followed a certain character. What would the character relate as they moved through the events of the story?

Here's an example of Romeo and Juliet's tweets.

Romeo: Is heartbroken -- crashing the Capulet party, hoping to see Rosaline.

Romeo: Had a nightmare and has a really bad feeling about this party –

Romeo: Just saw the hottest girl at the party, have 2 go talk 2 her.

Romeo: Noooo!

Romeo: Is climbing a wall.

Romeo: Is so smitten.

Romeo: Can't wait til tomorrow!! Off to the Friar's –

Romeo: Is making plans with the nurse.

Romeo: I DO!

Romeo: Is off to find his boys. What a good day.

Romeo: Is trying to break up a fight -- Uh oh -- You're going down, Tybalt!

Romeo: Is fortunes fool. What will I tell Jules??

Romeo: Banished??? NOOOOO!

Romeo: Can't get reception! Juliet??? R U OK?

Romeo: Sees Balthasar coming, I hope he brings good news!

Romeo: WHAT?! I defy you stars! Where is that Apothecary?

Romeo: Is drinking poison – let's get this over with.

-Romeo is offline-

Juliet: OMG – only 2 more weeks til I'm 14! Mom wants me 2 marry Paris – ewww.

Juliet: Just had my first kiss! Must find out who he is...

Juliet: Noooo!

Juliet: Is wondering what's in a name? Stupid parents.

Juliet: <3 <3 <3

Juliet: Where is the nurse????? I can't wait anymore!!!

Juliet: Is sneaking out –sigh -- I DO!

Juliet: Is sooo happy... I can't wait for my wedding night!

Juliet: Banished??? Romeo, how could this happen??

Juliet: Nope, that was the nightingale, not the lark. You're not leaving yet.

Juliet: No!!... It was the lark – you've got to get out of here!

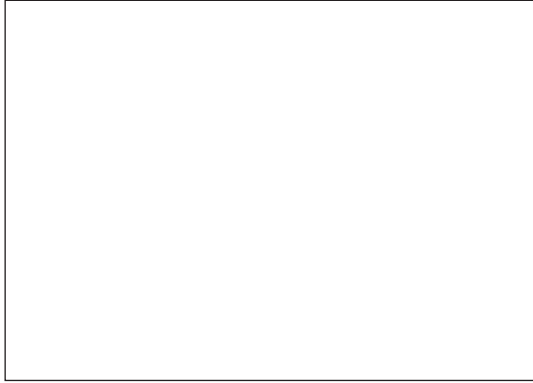
Juliet: Won't marry Paris! I hate you mom and dad!

Juliet: Hopes Romeo has reception in Mantua. R, if you can read this – I'm not really dead! LUV U!

Juliet: I'm suddenly feeling very sleepy...

Juliet: ...I'm waking up – what the?? -- Oh, happy dagger!

-Juliet is offline-



is _____

Networks:

Sex:

Relationship status:

Political views:

Religious views:

▼ Friends

▼ Information

Contact info:

Email:

Current town:

Personal Info

Activities:

Interests:

Favorite music:

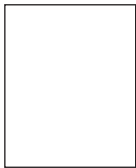
Favorite TV shows:

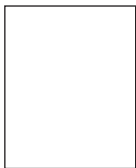
Favorite movies:

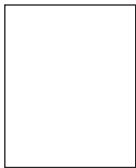
Favorite books:

Favorite _____:

▼ Wall







COMIC BOOK

Overview: Creating comic books is an ideal way to help ELL students visualize the language, increase literacy, and get all students engaged with Shakespeare's words.

Grade: 5-12

Goal: Students will be able to visualize the dramatic situations from the play, realizing the relationships between the characters and the high stakes of each moment.

State Standards: English Literary Response & Analysis §3; Visual Arts Creative Expression §2.

Outcomes: Students will be able to demonstrate discriminatory thinking in their choice of scenes, and translate the dramatic moments of Shakespeare's play into the medium of the dramatic elements of the familiar comic.

Materials:

If you are using technology to achieve this project, you will first need a digital camera. Software to manipulate the photo into the cartoon style is available over the internet. The exercise below is written using Photoshop. See Technology notes below.

If you wish to achieve this without using a computer, have clean white paper of a standard size and many colors and textures of markers available.

Activity

What to do:

1. Students should be familiar with the story.
2. Have students decide on the key scenes in the story and list them in order. If you have done tableaux with your students, they can use those scenes and add to them so there are enough scenes to create a comic book of the whole story.
3. Assign each group of students a "scene" to turn into one page of the comic book.
4. Students should highlight the one or two line(s) from the original text that best illustrate that scene.
5. Students paraphrase Shakespeare's words into their own language.
6. Have students "pose" each scene as a tableau.
7. Take a digital photograph of the pose. Using the Photoshop filter, transform the scene to comic book style.
8. Add "speech" bubbles and fill bubbles with the relevant line(s) of Shakespeare's text.
9. Assemble all the pages into one comic book.
10. Add a Title Page.

Technology Notes: Photoshop is the software program most readily available to create the comic book effect. Comic Life for the Mac is also quite easy to download and use at www.plasq.com. A look around the internet will be able to lead you to many other programs for PC as well.

Coaching:

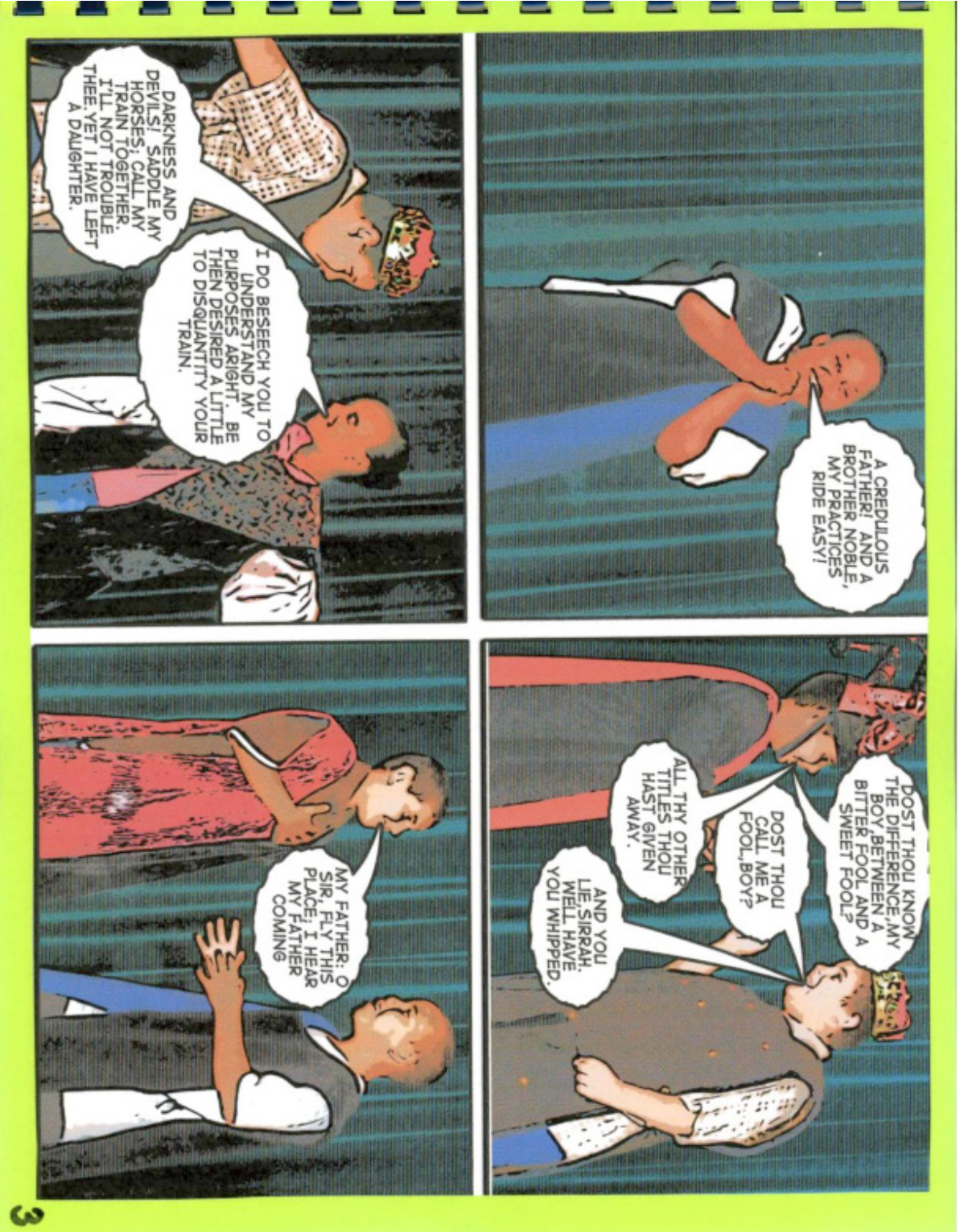
You don't have to do the comic book all at once. The whole class can work together on one page a day.

If your students don't have access to a digital camera and Photoshop, have students draw the scene on standard sized paper. Show samples of different comic book styles (Disney/Superhero/Manga/Anime, etc.) and have students vote on one "style" to use for all the drawings so that the finished book has continuity).

Reflection:

Ask student audience to evaluate the "pose" and make suggestions to improve it. The scene should clearly indicate the emotions of the characters and convey the context and main idea of the text.

COMIC BOOK



3

Comic book of King Lear performed and produced by Claire Stoermer's fifth-grade class at Fruitvale Elementary School, Oakland, CA.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE: THE PLOT OF THE PLAY THROUGH POP CULTURE

(Page 1 of 2)

Overview: Write the story of Romeo and Juliet through song titles.

Grade: 6-12

Goal: To use contextual clues to relate the Shakespeare text and current songs.

State Standards: English Writing Applications §2; Theater Arts §1

Outcomes: Students will research the play for clues to the characters, fully describe the arc of the play through modern lyrics and mood of the music played, and engage critical thinking skills to determine their choices.

Activity:

1. Students will research current music to find connections of meaning through lyrics and musical expression to the plot of the play
2. Students will create a list of song that accurately describes the arc of the plot of the play, paying attention to particular words and moods that connect the song and the original text.
3. Have students share their lists, playing a few selections in class as time permits.

Reflection:

- What difficulty did you have finding the right songs, if any?
- Were certain points of the play harder than others for which to find a current expression?
- Does your soundtrack point to a certain interpretation of the story as you see it?
- Were there certain characters you chose to highlight? Why?

See example on the next page.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

(Page 2 of 2)

By Daniel Moattar, from Urban High School,
Cathleen Sheehan's English class, April 2009

- Act I:** 1. Unnecessary Trouble (Hard-Fi, *Stars of CCTV*)
2. Older Guys (Teenage Fanclub, *Thirteen*)
3. The Wrong Girl (Belle and Sebastian, *Fold Your Hands Child You Walk Like a Peasant*)
4. Fresh Feeling (Eels, *Souljacker*)
- Act II:** 5. Does He Love You? (Rilo Kiley, *More Adventurous*)
6. Hesitating Beauty (Billy Bragg & Wilco, *Mermaid Avenue*)
7. Marry Me (St. Vincent, *Marry Me*)
- Act III:** 8. Sugar Assault Me Now (Pop Levi, *The Return to Form Black Magick Party*)
9. The Payback (James Brown, *Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels OST*)
- Act IV:** 10. Vengeance Is Sleeping (Neko Case, *Middle Cyclone*)
11. I Love You Always Forever (Donna Lewis, *Now in a Minute*)
- Act V:** 12. We Will Not Grow Old (Lenka, *Lenka*)
13. Brand New Colony (The Postal Service, *Give Up*)
14. Arms Tonite (Mother Mother, *O My Heart*)
15. O My Heart (Mother Mother, *O My Heart*)
16. How to Fight Loneliness (Wilco, *Summerteeth*)
17. Adventures in Solitude (The New Pornographers, *Challengers*)
18. The Ghost of You Lingers (Spoon, *Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga*)
19. Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now (The Smiths, *Hatful of Hollow*)
20. Bad Day (Daniel Powter, *Daniel Powter*)

The End.

CHARACTER BACKSTORY: WHAT MAKES A PERSONALITY?

Overview: Write the backstory for one of the minor characters in *Romeo and Juliet*: Mercutio, Tybalt, the Nurse, or Friar Lawrence.

A “backstory” is the personal history of a character that is not described in the actual play or story. In other words, it is what happens to the character before the play starts.

Grade: 4-12

Goal: To use contextual clues to create an imaginative experience of a minor character.

State Standards: English Writing Applications §2; Theater Arts §1: Identify character’s objective and motivations to explain the character’s behavior.

Outcomes: Students will research the play for clues to the characters, and fully describe an imagined life previous to the play’s beginning that justifies the way the character acts in the play.

Activity: Explain to the students that the interior life of the character is something an actor must be able to imagine as they start to understand how to play that character. The life of a minor character has been a popular literary and theatrical exercise and can illuminate the main story even more brightly. For instance, *Wicked* is a very popular book-turned-Broadway musical that explores the backstory and unseen lives of the witches of Oz.

1. Create Word Bank: Create a word bank as a class on the board about a particular character from the book. Use descriptive concrete sensory details (sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing). Guide students through describing how the character looks, how s/he acts (personality), and what we already know about him/her from the book.

2. Write Summary— Prep for writing Backstory: Students choose a character from the reading, and using descriptive words, write a one-page description using words like those in the word bank. Include when possible:

- Timeline of significant events in the character’s life
- Physical description
- Personality traits
- Also answer the following questions about the character:

Where and when does s/he live?

What does s/he want more than anything?

Who or what is standing in the way of what s/he wants?

What is in his/her pockets?

What is your character afraid of?

Who are his/her friends?

What makes him/her happy?

What does s/he think about when s/he is alone?

How does s/he react to stressful situations?

What is s/he most proud of in his/her life?

What does s/he do for fun?

Who has helped him/her?

3. Group Work: Divide students into groups of 4 or 5. Students in each group read their descriptions to each other. Pick one to share with the class and add others if there is time.

4. Theatrical Presentation: each group should pick one of those stories to present to classmates in an artistic way. They can choose how to present it. Possibilities include: a rap, comic strip drawings, tableau, puppet show, etc.

Coaching: Tell the students that this requires them to use their imagination! Think of what the character does in the play and imagine reasons why the character ends up doing what he/she does. Remember, there is no “right” answer to an open-ended exercise, as long as they can justify their choices using the text. This exercise is specifically designed to explore the life of minor characters in the play—characters that are often overlooked, but can yield fascinating discoveries. Actors, even when playing a smaller role, must do this same kind of research to be able to make that character believable on stage.

Rubric for the backstory:

- Be creative.
- Describe the setting (when and where the backstory takes place).
- Describe the character in vivid detail as s/he was early in life—personality, looks, situation, who s/he is friends with, what his or her interests are, how s/he looks or talks, etc.
- Use action words, descriptive words, dialogue, and images.
- Be based on clues from the main story when possible.
- Describe a problem that the character faces and why it is a problem (“I’m tired and my back hurts, but I’ll help my darling Juliet, although I may get fired by Lady Capulet” or “I really hate it that these families keep fighting in the streets and I’m determined to stop it forever”, etc.).
- Describe specifically why s/he chooses to do those things (for example, personal satisfaction, revenge, habit, being forced to do them by someone else, etc.).
- Describe how the character feels about doing what s/he does in the play.

Reflection:

- What did you learn about your character that you didn’t know before?
- What did you especially like about one of the descriptions you heard today?
- Did you see a picture of the character in your head?
- How did you describe it in your writing so that other people could imagine the same thing you did?
- (To classmates): Did you see that character the same way the writer did? What was different if anything?
- Who imagined their character’s day while writing the description? What was it like?
- Why did you decide on the specifics that you did for your character? For example, why did you choose a particular setting for that character’s childhood?
- Does the play provide enough clues to spark your imagination? Why or why not?
- What did you find (in your backstory or someone’s from your group) that was particularly interesting?
- How hard was it to imagine beyond the story?

UNDERSTANDING CHARACTER THROUGH PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

The classroom leader should lead the students through this exercise verbally, having the students write their answers down on paper, using the provided text below. After you ask each question, ask them to write one sentence describing the situation they answered “Yes” for.

Overview: Frame this as an imaginative exercise but using real life feelings. Let students know their answers are personal and they won’t have to share them unless they want to.

Grade: 6-12

Goal: to understand the characters’ dilemmas through real-life experience.

State Standards: English Literary Response and Analysis §3; English Writing Applications §2

Outcomes: Students will personally relate to the choices the characters make in the play.

Activity: Read each questions out loud and ask students to write down their answers.

1. Did you ever feel like you know something no one else does?
2. Did you ever try to stop a fight or argument? What happened?
3. Have you ever identified with someone who was being picked on?
4. Did you ever disobey your parents? What happened?
5. Do you sometimes think your parents are being unreasonable? Why?
6. Have you ever had someone try to shut down your good time?
7. Do you know someone who always makes everyone laugh?
8. Have you ever written a love letter? A love text message?
9. Did you ever have a message get lost or go to the wrong person?
10. Have you ever listened to a song over and over again because it reminded you of someone you loved?
11. Do you believe in “love at first sight”?

Reflection:

After completing this exercise on paper, ask the students to reflect on their experiences. Do not ask the students to share their personal choices unless they are willing. Using more general questions will help them share without having to reveal anything specific, such as:

- Did anyone find one of these situations was more meaningful for you than another?
- Think about your own reaction to that situation—did you see a character in the play with the same reaction? Which character?

Now ask the students to identify the situations in the play that correspond to the questions above.

- Can you see any times in the play when the characters expressed the same kinds of feelings that you described? Did they have different reactions?
- Are you more sympathetic to Juliet’s or her father’s situation?
- Which situation do you think is the most important in the play? Why?

Advanced research paper topics: teen suicide, marriage customs, gang warfare, violence, etc.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: BRIDGING GENERATIONS

(page 1 of 2)

Overview: Many first world countries are “aging”. That is, the number of older people is increasing faster than the number of young people. Sometimes the generations have difficulty understanding each other. This activity can help students “connect” with the elderly.

Grade: 5-12

Goal: Students will gain understanding of previous generations in the context of their modern lives.

State standards: English Listening and Speaking §1; History-Social Science Research, Evidence and Point of View

Outcomes: Students will gain cross-generational empathy with others outside of their immediate social sphere.

Activity:

1. Each student finds one elderly person who is willing to be interviewed about his or her life. It can be a family member, a friend of the family, or someone in a local nursing home, etc.
2. If the students have access to a video camera, it can be very informative to videotape the interview. Otherwise, just tape record it.
3. Give students the interview question sheet (below) and go over the questions. Have them add some questions of their own.
4. Discuss interview techniques with students: tell them to ask “open-ended” questions. Encourage the students to get the older person talking a lot, rather than just giving short answers.
5. Each student completes an interview and writes a report summarizing the interview. If videotaped... class can make a video montage of the interviewees most interesting answers. Otherwise students give oral reports to the other students. We suggest you DO NOT use this as a graded written project, but as a way to get better acquainted with an older person.
6. It's fun to have a culminating activity: Invite the interviewees and the students' parents to the classroom to look at the video and reports and celebrate with cake and ice cream.

Reflection:

Ask the students the following questions to help deepen their understanding of the experience.

- Did interviewing an elderly person help you to understand more about how times have changed from their childhood to yours? Why or why not?
- Did you find any similarities between your interview subject and Romeo or Juliet?
- Do you think someone like Juliet would like the person you interviewed? Would they get along? Why or why not?

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

(page 2 of 2)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Record the interview on a separate piece of paper.

Interviewer's Name:

Interviewer's Age:

Classroom Teacher's Name:

Interviewee's Name:

Interviewee's Date of Birth:

Where born:

1. What was it like when you were my age? Describe:

- * Food
- * Clothes
- * School
- * Vacations
- * Games
- * Jobs
- * Favorite activity
- * Friends
- * Family

2. What did your parents expect of you?

3. What did they do when you disobeyed or ignored them?

4. When you were my age, what gave people high status?

- For example, did your family have to be rich?
- Did you have to have certain clothes or be good at certain activities? What?

5. What is the biggest change you have seen in your lifetime?

6. What is the worst thing about getting older?

7. What is the best thing about getting older?

8. What advice would you give to a young person?

9. (Insert your questions here)

VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT in *ROMEO AND JULIET*: THE VERONA NIGHTLY NEWS

(Page 1 of 2)

Overview: Creating a modern television newscast on the terrible fate of Romeo and Juliet.

Grade: 5-12

Goal: Students will be able to visualize the dramatic situations from the play, realizing the relationships between the characters and the high stakes of each moment.

State Standards: English Literary Response & Analysis §3

Outcomes: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the text in asking and responding in the interview format; discriminatory thinking in their choice of questions, and ability to translate the dramatic moments of Shakespeare's play into the medium of the dramatic elements of the familiar newscast.

Activity: Use the script below to "perform" a newscast interviewing characters from the play Romeo and Juliet.

1. Make sure students are very familiar with the characters from the play, and choose three or four to be interviewed "live".
2. Cast your news reporter, and the students to play the characters they have chosen.
3. Have the entire class brainstorm questions for the characters that they'd like the news reporter to ask, or choose from samples below.
4. Prepare the students to answer in character when the news reporter asks them the questions. You may prefer to have students write their answers beforehand, or reply extemporaneously.
5. Have the newscaster student and the characters stand in front of the class; or you may wish to have them sit at a news desk.
6. If you wish, videotape the interviews for playback during the Reflection part of the lesson.

Script:

Newscaster: Welcome to THE VERONA NIGHTLY NEWS—IF IT BLEEDS, IT LEADS!

Tonight we have an exclusive! The bloody battle continues to rage between the Capulets and Montagues. They're at it again!

The blood feud between the two wealthy families of Capulet and Montague has been going on for years, and last night, a third bloody fight erupted between the clans. The fight might have led to many deaths if the Prince hadn't arrived in the town square and stopped it.

Tonight we have never-before-seen interviews with members of each faction.

(The Newscaster will now turn to Lord Capulet, for example, who is sitting at the desk, and begins to ask him questions.)

Sample Interview Questions for characters:

For Lord Capulet: Lord Capulet, this feud has been going on for years and years; can you tell us what started it?

Why do you feel your honor is at stake?

What is your response to people who say that you are a warlord who keeps the quarrel alive in order to grab the reins of power in the city?

Have you ever done anything to try to end this dispute?

We understand that you have chosen Paris to be husband to your daughter Juliet. Why have you picked him to be her husband?

What if Juliet doesn't like your choice?

If she disobeyed you, would you throw her out of your house?

Romeo

Juliet is very attractive but, since your families are enemies, why would you risk being killed over a woman? Many people believe that you're going after her only to annoy her cousin Tybalt. What is the difficulty between you and Tybalt?
Would you ever kill anyone?
Are you a good fighter?

Tybalt

I understand you're an excellent swordsman, Tybalt.
Is it true that you went to a very expensive sword fighting school overseas?
Do you work out every day? What is your practice regimen?
How do you keep your sword so sharp?
Have you ever killed anyone?
You have a reputation as a rash and hot-blooded trouble maker. What do you say to this accusation?
Is it true that you're planning to challenge Romeo to a duel?
Won't the Prince be upset if you stir things up again?
Are you afraid of anyone?

Juliet

You're almost 14 years old and your father would like you to marry. Do you believe you're old enough to get married?
How do you feel about marrying Paris?
Isn't he a lot older than you are?
If you refused to marry the man your father chose for you, what do you think your father's reaction would be? Would he disinherit you?
Have you ever disobeyed your family?
How do you feel about lying?

Newscaster: Thank you and goodnight.

Discussion: Focus discussion around the topic of violence and how it relates to today's world.

1. Pick one of the characters that were interviewed. Why does character choose violence rather than other options? What are the consequences of character choices?

2. Do you think violence plays a part in today's society?

As a prompt, list kinds of violence on the board. (Students will have more suggestions. This list below is a good starting point.)

- bullying • spousal, child, or dating abuse • weapon-related violence • emotional abuse
- gang violence • violence caused by prejudice • violence caused by a struggle for power
- violence caused by religious differences • violence institutionalized (government of a country goes to war)

Which of these affects you right now in your life? How?

3. Compare and contrast:

The Elizabethans saw an increase of violence in their world with the introduction of the Italian rapier. Many people say that video games increase violence in today's society. Is this true from your experience? Are there other things that you think do, or do not, cause violence to happen today?

Reflection:

Did you gain any insight into a character's mindset when they were interviewed? Why or why not?
How do these characters understand violence?
What was the most surprising thing that happened? Why?

See BELIEFS on page 16, and DANCE OF CONFLICT on page 17.

DIALOGUE AND ALTERNATE SCENARIOS: *ROMEO AND JULIET*

Romeo and Juliet have been young lovers in almost every incarnation and genre across the estimated 417 years since Shakespeare wrote his play. But Shakespeare, too, took a familiar story and changed it for his own purposes, and other authors have done the same with Shakespeare's version. In 1748, David Garrick's production added 70 lines to Shakespeare's play so that the lovers being could be reunited one last time, and Prokofiev's orchestral score, for a ballet in 1935, changed the story to have an ostensibly happy ending in which the lovers live.

Overview: To give students an opportunity to explore Shakespeare's text and characters and use that information to create dialogue for an alternative scene.

Grade: 7-12

State Standards: English Literary Response & Analysis §3; Speaking applications §2

Outcomes: Students will be able to demonstrate discriminatory thinking in their choice of scenes, expand upon the dramatic moments of Shakespeare's play, and create dialogue.

Activity

What to do:

1. Students should be familiar with the plot and characters of the story.
2. Have your students read Garrick's version (see next page).
3. Have students brainstorm the key scenes or actions that could have changed the outcome of the story and list them on the board. For example:
 - The nurse could have told Juliet's parents about her plan to elope with Romeo.
 - Friar John could have convinced the Mantua guard that he didn't need to be quarantined and then could have delivered Friar Lawrence's message telling Romeo not to worry, that Juliet will only look dead for 42 hours.
 - Montague and Capulet could have worked out a truce.
 - Romeo could have stopped the fight between Mercutio and Tybalt without killing Tybalt, etc.
4. Assign each group of students a "scene".
5. Students should highlight the line(s) from the original text that best illustrate where their new scene would begin.
6. Students should create the dialogue for the changed scene in standard English.
7. Advanced students should rewrite their scene in Elizabethan English. See BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKSPEARE, p. 42.
8. Students perform their altered scenes for the class.
9. Students explain their scene and answer questions/get feedback from classmates.

Rubric for Scenes and Presentations:

- Scene must reflect a good understanding of the plot and characters.
- Scene must reflect an understanding of Elizabethan culture, values, ideals, morals and politics.
- Dialogue should be interesting and creative.
- All members of the group should participate equally.
- The performance should be interesting and loud enough to be heard.
- The performance can include music or minimal props, but the most important things are the dialogue and the idea.

Reflection:

Why did you choose this scene? How would your scene change the outcome of the play?

What did you especially like about this performance?

What improvements would you make?

Which scenario is more satisfying to you as an audience member? Does Garrick's version above influence your decision?

Why?

ADDED TEXT FROM DAVID GARRICK'S 1748 PRODUCTION OF ROMEO AND JULIET:

Romeo: ...Arms, take your last embrace; and lips, do you
The soft breath seal with a righteous kiss; -
Soft—she breathes, and stirs!

(Juliet wakes)

Juliet: Where am I? defend me!

Romeo: She speaks, she lives! And we shall still be bless'd!
My kind propitious stars o'erpay me now
For all my sorrows past—rise, rise, my Juliet...

Juliet: I know that voice – Its magic sweetness wakes
My tranced soul— I now remember well
Each circumstance— Oh my Lord, my Husband...

(But a few lines later he reveals he's taken poison, and dies, but not before another big speech, which ends:)

Romeo:... Pull not our heart-strings thus—they crack—they break –
Oh Juliet! Juliet! *(Dies)*

Juliet: Stay, stay, for me, Romeo –
A moment stay; fate marries us in death,
And we are one—no power shall part us. *(Faints on Romeo's body.)*

(A few moments later Juliet kills herself with Romeo's dagger as Friar Lawrence tries to get her to leave the tomb.)

Complete text of Garrick's version available at: <http://dewey.library.upenn.edu/sceti>

THE GREAT DEBATE

Overview: To give students an opportunity to step into the shoes of another person’s opposing point of view.

Grade: 7-12

State Standards: English Literary Response & Analysis §3; Speaking applications §2

Outcomes: Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to understand and defend multiple points of view on critical issues, allowing for empathy and understanding of the intricacies of other’s views.

Activity: The teacher should choose a controversial topic for the class to engage with that is appropriate and accessible enough for the students of their particular class to feel fairly comfortable entering into.

1. Students should be familiar the facts of the different sides of a subject of controversy – a political or societal issue which has been studied in the classroom.
2. Have your students write two paragraphs about the facts that are claimed on each side of the subject.
3. Have students brainstorm the words and actions that show a strong point of view. For example: Direct eye contact. Shaking a fist. Speaking sharply and clearly. Showing conviction.
4. Assign pairs of students a “scene” in which they will debate the question from opposing points of view. They may use their writings to refer to, but this must be enacted as if it were a real conversation.
5. You may choose to set the scene at the local coffee shop, where a conversation might take place between people in a familiar setting.
6. About a minute or so into the scene, have the students switch parts, so each now must argue the other point of view.
7. Students get feedback from classmates.

Rubric for Scenes and Presentations:

- Scene must reflect a good understanding of the facts of each point of view.
- Scene must reflect an understanding that the exercise is about learning and understanding, not passing judgment on one point of view or another.
- Dialogue should show engagement with the other participant in responding to what they say, rather than just reading words.
- Both students in the pair should participate equally.
- The scene should be interesting and loud enough to be heard.

Reflection:

What was your experience in playing the part of the person whose point of view you agreed with? The opposite?

Did you expand your understanding of another’s point of view?

Did you learn anything new? What?

BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE – Reference Sheet

Below are some commonly used, but unfamiliar, Shakespearean words.

<p>addition - title affined - bound by duty alarum - call to arms with trumpets anatomize - to analyze in detail ancient - ensign anon - until later arrant - absolute aroint - begone assail - to make amorous siege attend - to await aye - yes baffle - to hang up (a person) by the heels as a mark of disgrace baggage - strumpet, prostitute balk - to disregard barm - the froth on ale belike - maybe belov'd – beloved blank - a target bolted - refined brach - bitch hound brake - bushes brave - fine, handsome bum - backside, buttocks caitiff - a wretched humble person catch - song character – handwriting</p>	<p>Cousin ,coz- relative, good friend chuck - term of endearment, chick clout - a piece of white cloth cog - to deceive coil - trouble cousin - any close relative descant - improvise discourses; speaks dispatch - to hurry e'en - evening enow - enough fare-thee-well - goodbye fie - a curse fustian - wretched got – begot grammarcy - thank you halter - noose honest - chaste, pure heavy - sorrowful housewife - hussy, prostitute impeach - dishonor list - listen mayhap - maybe mess - meal, food mew - confine minister - servant moiety - portion morrow - day nay - no ne'er - never office - service or favor oft - often</p>	<p>passing - surprisingly, exceedingly perchance - maybe perforce - must politician - schemer post - messenger power - army prithee - please quest - a jury recreant - coward resolve - to answer; reply to but soft – be quiet soundly - plainly stale - harlot subscription - loyalty, allegiance tax - to criticize; to accuse troth - belief teem - to give birth thee – you (informal) thou – you (informal) thy – your (informal) tucket - trumpet flourish verge - edge, circumference verily - truly villain – common person, not noble want – lack of, don't have well-a-day -alas wherefore - why yea - yes zounds - by his (Christ's) wounds</p>
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YOU'RE THE CRITIC: CAL SHAKES PLAY CRITIQUE

(Elementary and Middle School)

NAME: _____

1. Circle the number of stars that best matches how you'd rate this performance. (One star is the lowest rating and five stars is the best rating.) Then write a paragraph on the back of the paper that specifically describes why you gave it that rating. Do not simply say "I didn't like it," but say why. For example, "I didn't like the fact that the director changed the setting to modern Italy" or "I loved the way the actors made me believe that they were really going to kill each other."



2. Outline the main actions that happened in the plot (what were the big events in the story?).

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

3. What is the central idea or theme of the play?

4. Describe what the actors did to help you understand the Shakespearean language.

5. What did you particularly like or dislike about the staging (set design, lights, costumes, music, etc.)?

6. Shakespeare writes about things that we all experience: Love, jealousy, death, anger, revenge, etc. Write a paragraph (on the back) about one emotion in the play that relates to your own life at the moment.

YOU'RE THE CRITIC: CAL SHAKES PLAY CRITIQUE

(Middle and High School)

Give this production a rating of 1 to 5 stars. (One star is the lowest rating and five stars is the highest.) On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph review of the play. In other words, describe why you gave it that rating. Give specific examples to support your reasons. On the same sheet of paper, reflect on the following questions:



1. How would you describe the character of Juliet?
2. How would you describe the actions people take in the name of love in the play?
3. Which character did you sympathize with most? Why?
4. Think about and describe:
 - i. the vocal and physical actions of the actors (characterization)
 - ii. the set
 - iii. the costumes
5. What do you think are some of the themes of the play?
6. Did the elements of characterizations, set, and/or costumes reinforce any of these themes?
7. Shakespeare writes about things that we all experience: Love, jealousy, death, anger, revenge, passion, misunderstandings, etc. Write a paragraph about one emotion in the play that relates to your own life at the moment.

Now, imagine you are the director of *Romeo and Juliet*, and use a new sheet of paper to create your new production.

- Cast the characters of Romeo, Juliet, Mercutio, Tybalt, Friar Lawrence, Lord & Lady Capulet, Lord & Lady Montague, and the Nurse with famous actors.
- Would you set the play in modern Italy, as in the Cal Shakes production? What other setting could you place the play in that would make sense? Why?
- How about costumes? Imagine how the characters in your new production would be dressed that would illustrate the kinds of characters they are and what setting you have put the play in.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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