

# NYS Theatre Institute Study Guide

## Romeo and Juliet



*by* William Shakespeare

2009-2010 Season Study Guides are made possible in part by funding provided by First Niagara Bank.

# ...NYSTI education programs

## *For Teachers*

### **INSERVICE/TEACHER PREVIEW**

A free, two-hour program offering a chance to meet the director and designers. Look behind the scenes...walk the set. Observe a segment of rehearsal. Gather ideas for your classroom and updated information.

### **EDUCATOR PREVIEWS**

Unable to join us for the Inservice? We can arrange for you to see a rehearsal.

### **PERUSAL SCRIPTS FOR EDUCATORS**

Contact the NYSTI Education Department at (518)274-3286.

## *For Teachers and Students*

### **PRE-SHOW INTRO/CLASSROOM PREP**

An interactive PowerPoint presented by an Institute educator! tracing the technical creation of the production, introducing characters and exploring the responsibilities of the audience. To arrange call (518) 274-3286 or email [cbs@nysti.org](mailto:cbs@nysti.org). There is a fee for this program.

### **POST PERFORMANCE CLASSES**

Interdisciplinary teaching by NYSTI teacher/actors and teacher/technicians connecting with the specific performance. An integration of the performance into the classroom curriculum occurring in the theatre building following a 10AM performance. Scheduled by request. There is a fee for the program. To arrange call (518) 274-3286 or email [cbs@nysti.org](mailto:cbs@nysti.org).

For additional information regarding availability and cost visit the Educators' Greenroom at:

[www.nysti.org/greenroom.shtm](http://www.nysti.org/greenroom.shtm)

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*Romeo and Juliet* Study Guide developed by the staff of the New York State Theatre Institute and educators.

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*Dear Colleague,*

*The power of theatre to engage students in multi-disciplinary learning is at the heart of this guide. We hope that the connections that we have made are helpful in providing integrated learning experiences for your students as you develop lesson plans, units of study, or simply expand upon the theatre experience. To that end, we have noted connections to the **NYS Learning Standards**.*

*Here are some activities connecting Romeo and Juliet with the **Learning Standards for the Arts**.*

**Standard #1:** Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theatre and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts.

- *Use an improvisation to explore feuding and gang violence.*
- *Write a scene about the nurse, which would follow the end of the play.*

**Standard #2:** Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles.

- *Attend post-performance classes with the teacher/technicians and teacher/actors.*
- *Arrange a Pre-Show Intro/Classroom Preparation.*

**Standard #3:** Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought.

- *Use the At the Performance section of the guide to discuss individual interpretations and evaluation of the creative team's work.*
- *Use the General Questions section to prompt discussion of this theatre experience.*

**Standard #4:** Students will develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts in turn shape the diverse cultures of past and present society.

- *Use various sources to explore other depictions of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.*
- *Read or listen to another play by William Shakespeare.*

# *...before the performance*

## PROLOGUE

*Two households, both alike in dignity,  
In fair Fallujah, where lay our scene,  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,  
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.  
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life:  
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows  
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.  
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,  
And the continuance of their parents' rage,  
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,  
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;  
Which if you with patient ears attend,  
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.*

*Romeo and Juliet*

William Shakespeare

The setting of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is not as important as the characters and their plight. The story of the feuding Montagues and Capulets can be transported to another country and another time. In this production, Director Ron Holgate has placed Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers and their feuding families in the present day Iraq to play out their tragic tale.

ROMEO. *Bid her devise*

*Some means to come out this afternoon;  
And there she shall at Imam Laurence's cell  
be married.*

Act II Scene iii

## TELLING THE TALE A DIRECTOR'S APPROACH

At the first read thru, Ron Holgate made introductory comments about his approach to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

The story has been placed in today's Iraq and the characters have been changed to fit into the battle scarred Iraqi landscape. The Chorus figure will be a photo journalist trying to capture the situation in contemporary Iraq. The Prince will be an Iraqi military captain, accompanied by two American soldiers. The patriarchs of the feuding families will represent the Sunni - Shi'a schism. Capulet, a Sunni businessman, is concerned with profit and arranges the marriage of Juliet to Paris, his contemporary, as a business deal. Montague, a Shiite, is more conservative. Romeo and Juliet will be 16 instead of 14. Friar Laurence is now Imam Laurence, who wants to unite the two factions.

Mr. Holgate stated that the setting is a vehicle to demonstrate the universality of Shakespeare's vision. The focus of this production is the story of Romeo and Juliet.

With regard to the language, Mr. Holgate drew a comparison to music. As we speak the speeches, like music, we will play all the notes. ...Mind the punctuation and do not try to make the language into modern vernacular. As you will notice in the Rowse edition, the thees and thous have been changed to you and yours making it more accessible to the audience.

## THE SCRIPT

Director Ron Holgate has selected Alfred Leslie Rowse's Contemporary Shakespeare edition of *Romeo and Juliet*. Mr. Rowse, a prolific British historian, is primarily known for his poetry about Cornwall and his studies of Elizabethan England. The son of poor and illiterate parents, Rowse was always proud of his accomplishments in the academic fields. In the mid to late 1930s, Rowse focused on the society and culture of Elizabethan England. Thirty years later, Shakespeare became his concentration. *Shakespeare the Man* was published and in 1978 Rowse published an annotated edition of the complete works of William Shakespeare.

## A TALE AS OLD AS TIME

Mention Shakespeare to a group of 9th graders and their eyes gloss over, but mention *Romeo and Juliet* and you see the spark of interest. Most students couldn't tell you the plot of many of Shakespeare's works, but almost without exception the same kids will know the basic storyline of *Romeo and Juliet*. Why is that? What is it about the story of the two "star-crossed lovers" that permeates history and causes it to be well-known and recognizable throughout time?

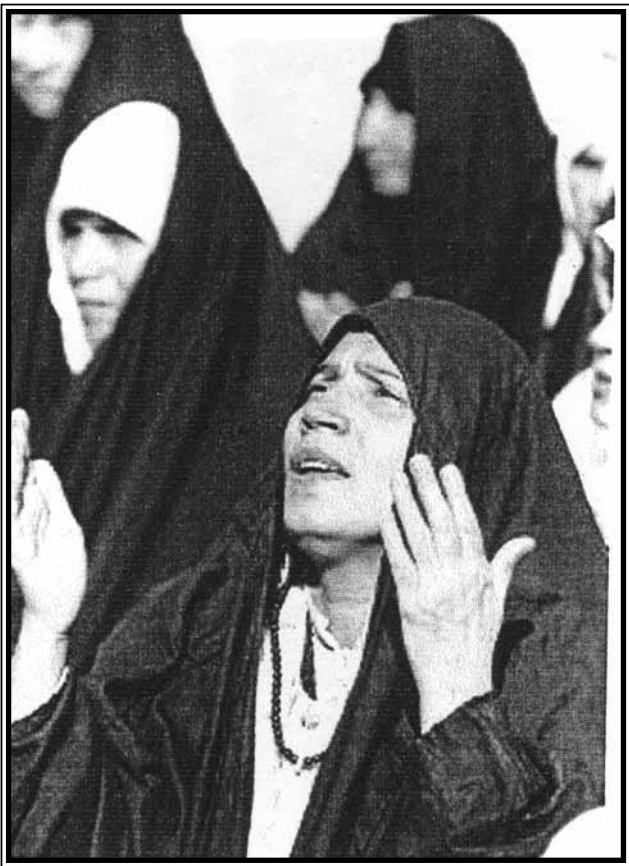
Well, in the case of many students that I have encountered in my 40 years as an educator, the story of two young kids in love, whose parents disapprove of their relationship, is nothing new. And, as most kids will admit, the more their parents force them apart, the more they strive to be together. Hence, *Romeo and Juliet* becomes a timeless love story that can be reworked and relocated endlessly, from Verona, Italy to the West Side of NYC...to the modern day in the Middle East. It may be the Montagues vs. the Capulets, the Americans vs. the Puerto Ricans, or...why not, the Sunnis vs. the Shiites.

Themes of love, hate, passion, fate and fortune resonate loud and clear in the tale of young Juliet and her Romeo, as well as in the lives of all of us. Shakespeare's raw humor also plays well to modern day audiences, forced to see a fine line between reality and art and ready for anything. And although the play ends tragically, Shakespeare does give us that glimmer of hope in the final reconciliation. With forgiveness and love, peace is possible...anywhere. What a marvelous lesson and great fuel for a robust class discussion.

My students are never excited to begin *Romeo and Juliet*, but almost without exception not only do they hate to see it end, but regard the Shakespeare Unit and the reading of the play out loud, the highlight of their year. And, a live performance, uniquely set in a modern day troubled area, is the icing on the cake!

Dora Myers

Shenendehowa High School



Women at a mosque in Baghdad. Costume research by Karen Kammer for NYSTI's production of *Romeo and Juliet*

## SHAKESPEARE'S CRAFT

An awareness of how Shakespeare uses the language is advantageous. Here are some of the techniques employed by Shakespeare in crafting *Romeo and Juliet*.

JULIET. *I'll look to like, if looking liking move.*

Act I, Scene iii

**ALLITERATION** - the repetition of initial consonant sound.

JULIET. *O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!  
Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!  
Just opposite to what you justly seem,  
A damned saint, an honourable villain!  
O nature, what had you to do in hell,*

*When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend  
In moral paradise of such sweet flesh?*

Act III, Scene ii

**ANTITHESIS** - the opposition of words or phrases to create a balanced contrast. Shakespeare uses antithesis often. "To be or not to be" He employs antithesis to illuminate a conflict and uses opposites as adjectives or nouns within a phrase.

•

JULIET. *O Fortune, Fortune! All men call you fickle:  
Be fickle, Fortune;  
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,  
But send him back.*

Act III, Scene v

**APOSTROPHE** - addressing a person, personified object, abstract quality or idea as if it was actually present.

•

ROMEO. *Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?*

Act II, Scene ii

**ASIDE** - a brief remark by a character, usually to the audience, unheard by other characters

•

JULIET. *Just opposite to what you justly seem,  
A Damned saint, an honorable villain!*

Act III, Scene II

**BOMBAST** - boastful or ranting language

•

JULIET. *My only love sprung from my only hate!  
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!*

Act I, Scene v

**CHIASMUS** - a mirror image antithesis where one phrase is the reverse of the other.

•

Chorus: *Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,  
Alike bewitched by the charm of looks,*

Act II, Prologue

**CHORUS** - a narrator who introduces or comments on the play

## TEACHER PREVIEW

NYSTI invites you to the Inservice/Teacher Preview for *Romeo and Juliet* at the Schacht Fine Arts Center, Russell Sage College, Troy, New York on **Tuesday, March 9, 2010, 4-6 PM**. This program provides teachers with an opportunity to meet the creative team, look behind the scenes, walk the set, and observe a segment of rehearsal. It's **free** - just

call (518) 274-3286 or e-mail [cbs@nysti.org](mailto:cbs@nysti.org) before **Friday, March 5, 2010 to RSVP**. Teachers bringing classes to a performance are invited to return at 7:30 PM to watch a dress rehearsal. Check with your administration. This program offers professional development credit.

If you are unable to attend the Inservice, but would like to preview the performance. Please call to arrange to see a rehearsal.

# *...at the performance*

## **THINGS TO WATCH AND LISTEN FOR**

### **SHAKESPEARE'S VISUAL IMAGERY**

Shakespeare has actors describe locations, times, weather and other environmental details because his stage was relatively unadorned. There were no lighting fixtures to adjust for day or night scenes; there were no major set pieces. The stage, as built, was dressed with curtains, flowers, but there were no changes. In many instances, Shakespeare's actors were dressed in clothing that had been donated to the acting troupe.

### **SHAKESPEARE'S VERSE**

Shakespeare meant for his use of verse to be a guide to the actor as to how to say the words. Shakespeare starts with blank verse. Iambic Pentameter stresses 5 beats per line. The stresses often indicate important words within the phrase. Using that premise, when the stresses don't scan, it is Shakespeare "directing" the actor to say certain words stressed that, in the Iambic mode, wouldn't be stressed. Thereby offering the actor and then the audience a way to clearly understand the author's meanings. Shakespeare generally used language to indicate elevated thought, character or romanticism. His prose represented, more often than not, baser thought, a character of lesser intelligence, or greater urgency.

## ***Costumes***

MERCUTIO. *A sail, a sail!*

BENVOLIO. *Two, two! A shirt and a smock.*

Act II, Scene iii

The costumes in this production must set the time and place. Note how the clothing suggests the culture of Iraq and the codes of Moslem dress. The clothing worn by Juliet's nurse and members of the servant class reveal the more traditional clothing of the Iraqis. The nurse will be the only character wearing a "closed" Iraqi abaya, a loose outer garment. This is different from a burka which totally covers the wearer's body, head, and face.

When out in public, Juliet and the other women will wear clothing that covers but is not shapeless, representing a desire for modesty that adheres to the framework of Moslem traditions. The "look" for Romeo and his friends will be very edgy, modern, and dangerous. The Prince will wear the uniform of a general.

How has the **costume designer, Karen Kammer**, indicated the class of the character through the costuming? Notice how the "westernization" of the clothing seems to be more prevalent in the higher classes.

## ***Lighting***

JULIET. *Yon light is not day-light, I know it,*

*It is some meteor that the sun exhales,*

Act III, Scene v

Discover what atmospheric conditions have been created by the **lighting designer, John McLain**. How does he reinforce the imagery of Shakespeare's poetry? How do the lights establish the atmosphere of each scene?

## ***Set***

CAPULET. *Go, fellow, trudge about*

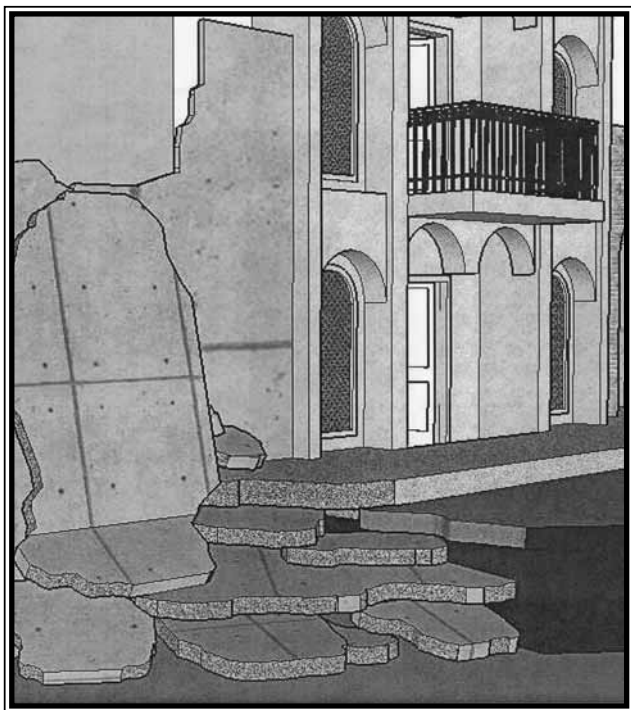
*Through fair Fallujah; find those persons out*

*Whose names are written there, and to them say,*

*My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.*

Act I, Scene ii

**Garett E. Wilson, set designer**, has created a street in Fallujah, Iraq. The buildings are battle-scarred. It is an area that has been affected by but not



Set detail from design sketches by Garrett E. Wilson for NYSTI's production of *Romeo and Juliet*

destroyed by the conflicts. Mr. Wilson will rely heavily on texture rather than paint to distinguish the buildings and their inhabitants. An area downstage from the proscenium will represent Karbala, the area to which Romeo has been exiled.

### ***Fight Choreography***

ROMEO. *Benvolio; beat down their weapons.*

*Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage!*

ActIII, Scene i

As **fight choreographer**, **David Bunce** will train the actors and direct their movements for the fights. Instead of swords, the fights between the Romeo's friends and foes will be with "found" weapons.

### ***Sound***

CAPULET. *You are welcome, gentlemen! Come, musicians, play.*

Act I, Scene v

The music at the Capulet's party will be provided by a DJ and be contemporary. The original music, composed by **Will Severin**, will remind us of the contemporary setting as well as the Middle Eastern setting. Listen for melodies that invoke the sounds of Iraq and the call to prayer.

## CONCEPTS TO CONSIDER

### TRUST

JULIET. *O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,  
From off the battlements of any tower;*  
Act IV, Scene i

Romeo and Juliet seem to have blind trust in the Imam as to what he tells them to do.

### VENDETTAS

MERCUTIO. *A plague on both your houses!*  
Act III, Scene i

Consider family feuds that have affected history. Are these a thing of the past? Can you draw parallels to situations today?

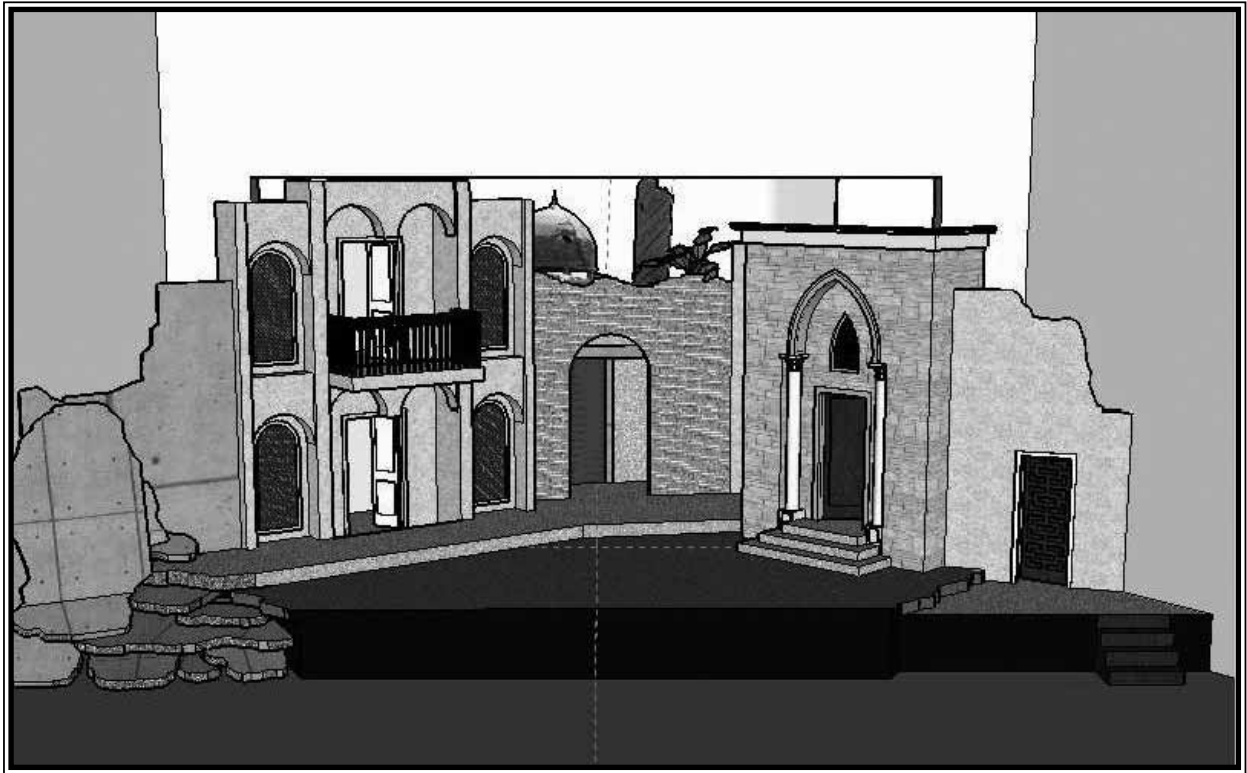
### CONFLICT RESOLUTION

ROMEO. *Benvolio; beat down their weapons.  
Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage!  
Tybalt, Mercutio, the Captain expressly has  
Forbidden this bandying in Fallujah streets:  
Hold, Tybalt! good Mercutio!*  
Act III, Scene i

Romeo, looking at life in Fallujah through his love filled eyes, tries to stop the dust ups his cronies get into with the Capulets. His efforts at trying to affect change in his friends' hostilities lead to tragedy.

### GANG MENTALITY

The young men of both families travel and associate in small groups, familial groups. They find camaraderie and sense of belonging, also protection while traveling through the opposing groups territory.



Set design sketch for NYSTI's 2010 production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Design by Garrett E. Wilson.

## **PEER PRESSURE**

Romeo is goaded by Mercutio and the other boys to behave in certain ways. Romeo, who has fallen in love with his family's enemy, tries to be a peaceful force in calming the enmity. Mercutio clearly tries pushing Romeo into joining in the many scrapes and frays.

## **MARRIAGE AND MORALITY**

LADY CAPULET. *Well, think of marriage now;  
younger than you,  
Here in Fallujah, ladies of esteem,  
Are made already mothers: by my count,*

Act I, Scene iii

How does the Islamic attitude towards marriage relate to the Elizabethan marriage practices. Think about the marriages that are arranged before the couple reaches the age of 15.

## **NOTES TO THE AUDIENCE**

As an audience member, you accept the responsibility of a special agreement. That agreement includes believing what you see is real. It is happening before your eyes. In theatre, the audience has an important role in the experience. Listen carefully and quietly. Let the drama unfold and capture you. A rapport between the actors and audience is established during a performance. The actors are aware of your presence. Your responses can stimulate or stifle the show. When the lights go down, a performance especially for you begins, an opportunity that only live theatre provides.

## **CLASSROOM PREPARATION/PRE-SHOW INTRO**

Presented by an Institute educator, the program traces the creation of the production, introduces characters, and explores the responsibilities of audience members through an interactive PowerPoint presentation. To arrange: call (518) 274-3286 or e-mail [cbs@nysti.org](mailto:cbs@nysti.org). There is a travel fee for this program.

# ...after the performance

## WRITING AND DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Teachers may select one of the following excerpts from *Romeo and Juliet* to begin a class discussion or prompt a creative writing exercise.

JULIET. *What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet;*  
Act II, Scene ii

MERCUTIO. *Any man that can write may answer a letter.*  
Act II, Scene iii

IMAM LAURENCE. *For this alliance may so happy prove, To  
turn your households' rancour to pure love.*  
Act II, Scene iv

ROMEO. *This day's black fate on more days does depend;  
This but begins the woe, others must end.*  
Act III, Scene i

JULIET. *Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night,  
Give me my Romeo; and when he shall die,  
Take him and cut him out in little stars,  
And he will make the face of heaven so fine  
That all the world will be in love with night  
And pay no worship to the garish sun.*  
Act III, Scene ii

IMAM LAURENCE. *Come, come with me, and we will make  
short work,  
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone  
Until the law incorporate two in one.*  
Act II, Scene v

ROMEO. *I fear too early: for my mind misgives  
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars  
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date*

*With this night's revels and expire the term  
Of a despised life closed in my breast  
By some vile forfeit of untimely death.*

Act I, Scene iv

## EXTENSION EXERCISES

JULIET. *Be not so long to speak; I long to die,  
If what you speak speaks not of remedy.*

Act IV, Scene i

There are three “suicides” in the play: Juliet’s feigned “death-suicide,” which, misinterpreted by Romeo, triggers his own suicide which, in turn triggers Juliet’s suicide. The misunderstandings are the final cause of death of these young people. Identify the chain of events, and contributing factors, which lead to the suicide. Compare these with twentieth century causes of young- adult suicide. In this decade, what are the chances of the young lovers’ relationship ending in their suicides?

•

CAPULET. *Paris, I will make a desperate tender  
of my child's love: I think she will be ruled  
In all respects by me; nay more, I doubt it not.*

Act III, Scene iv

Compare and contrast the woman’s role today in the Moslem culture, in the Western cultures and in the culture of Elizabethan England. (e. g., the nurse, the unmarried young woman of noble birth, the lady of the household). What similarities and differences can you identify?

CAPULET. *Hang you, young baggage!  
disobedient wretch!  
I tell you what: get you to mosque on Thursday,  
Or never after look me in the face.*

Act III, Scene v

•

TYBALT. *talk of peace! I hate the word  
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and you:*

Act I, Scene i

The conflict between the Montague and the Capulet families leads inexorably to the deaths of the lovers. Speculate what the cause of the initial conflict was, then list

the specific instance of conflict between the two houses that are given in the play. Classify the method of conflict resolution which best describes each instance you have cited.

•

Investigate the time frame of the play, i.e., how many days is it from the opening scene to the final scene? What affect does this have on the pacing of the play?

•

It is said of Shakespeare's plays that they have a strong sense of order, but are not tidy or neat, i.e., minor characters are introduced, highlighted and then dropped leaving the audience with no information on the character's fate. Is there such a character in *Romeo and Juliet*? Another observation that has been made concerning Shakespeare's plays is the minor characters sometimes seem to "take over" the play. In fact, scholars assert that this is the reason that Shakespeare "killed off" Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* – so that he would not take over the play. Speculate on the viability of this line of reasoning, giving arguments both for and against it.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS TO POSE AFTER A PERFORMANCE

What was your reaction to this performance? Did you discover anything about people and human behavior? How did you feel about the play's conclusion? How was the action executed? What were some of the dramatic conventions used? Were the actors believable? Did the technical aspects of the production help move the performance along?

## CLASSROOM EXERCISES

### NEGOTIATE THE PEACE

The feud between the Capulets and the Montagues along with mis-communication and misunderstanding have brought about the deaths of two young people. Imagine if there was a lawsuit filed by each family against members of the other family. You are the negotiator who must bring these two families to an agreement and a peaceful resolution of the situation. What advice would you give?

## CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES

Do you agree or disagree with the advice given to Romeo and Juliet by Imam Laurence and the nurse? Justify your opinion.

•

You are a close friend of Juliet's. What advice would you give her? Do you agree or disagree with the choices that she made?

•

Decide if Benvolio or Mercutio proved to be the better friend to Romeo.

•

Do you agree with the manner in which the Captain dealt with the feuding families? What might you have done differently?

•

Do you believe that Romeo and Juliet were truly in love with each other? What action or thought best expresses their love for each other?

•

Who is to blame for the deaths of the two star-crossed lovers? Justify your opinion.

•

Shakespeare wrote many non-theatrical pieces, sonnets and poetic narratives. In approaching the plays of Shakespeare, educators very often apply the same techniques of analysis to his plays as are used for his poems, without taking into account the differences in the media actually involved. While much of what Shakespeare wrote in his plays is indeed poetry, the factors of the realities of the play—the actor, the stage, the audience—should never be minimized.

Discuss the real similarities and differences between the presentational styles of a play and of a poem, in terms of:

- visual imagery
- aural impact
- characterization
- plot development
- mechanics of stage presentation

In *Shakespeare Stagecraft*, J.L. Styan discusses, in detail: Elizabethan theatre equipment, the physical setting of stage, staging and acting conventions of this time, movement and its dramatic meaning, visualization of dialogue, the use of the speaking and the silent

figure, entrances and exits of figures, groupings on stage, orchestrating speech, and the contribution of the actor, the director, and the audience.

## USING THE THEATRE EXPERIENCE TO MAKE INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

Here's a list of activities connecting *Romeo and Juliet* to **NYS Education Department Learning Standards**.

### SOCIAL STUDIES

- ROMEO. *Love goes toward love, as schoolboys from their books, But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.*

Act II, Scene ii

Explore the education of William Shakespeare. **Standard #2**

- Research the difference between the Shiites and the Sunnis. When did the schism between the two sects of Islam occur? How did the conflict diminish or increase during the reign of Saddam Hussein? **Standard #2**

- Explore the geography of the area of Fallujah and Karbala. Investigate The Fertile Crescent formed by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. **Standard #3**

### MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- JULIET. *O swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon, That monthly changes in her circled orb,*

Act II, Scene ii

In the prologue to Act I, *Romeo and Juliet* are referred to as “star-crossed” lovers. Investigate the attitudes toward astronomy and astrology in Elizabethan times. **Standard #1**

- ROMEO. *Hold, there is forty ducats. Let me have a dram of poison.*

Act V, Scene i

- IMAM LAURENCE. *Within the infant rind of this small flower*

*Poison hath residence, and medicine power;*

*For this. Being smelt, with that part cheers each part;*

*Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.*

Act II, Scene iii

Investigate the toxic/ medicinal properties of the following

common herbs and flowers. Which of these plants most closely fit the description of the flower in the speech?

Oleander • Poinsetta • Hyssop  
Hemlock • Belladonna • Foxglove  
Iris • Mint • Wormwood  
Mountain Laurel • Larkspur • Bittersweet

Which plants that we now consider strictly ornamental had specific pharmaceutical uses in Elizabethan times?  
**Standard # 4**

• What would have happened if Romeo and Juliet had access to modern technology such as phones, and internet? How would this change or affect the plot of this story?  
**Standard # 6**

• Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is described as a play which involves a symmetrical division of the characters, pairing up not only the two families, but also neutral characters such as Paris and Mercutio. Define the term symmetry, and describe its application to the story, using specific examples. **Standard #7**

## LANGUAGE ARTS

• Explore three different interpretations of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. See the list at the end of this guide. Compare and contrast the particular treatment of the plot. **Standard #1**

• Select a scene from *Romeo and Juliet*. Re-write the scene in contemporary language. **Standard #2**

• Identify several examples of alliteration and assonance in the text of *Romeo and Juliet*. Explore how an actor might speak each example to a highly dramatic effect. **Standard #3**

## THE ARTS

• Investigate the paintings of Ahmad Alkarhi. Mr. Alkarhi was forced to flee from Baghdad in 2006. His paintings remind all of the beauty of Iraq in direct opposition to the war-torn scenes. **Standard #3**

• Explore J.L. Styan's *Shakespeare Stagecraft*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1967. This provides, in detail, discussions of: Elizabethan theatre equipment, the physical setting of stage, staging and acting conventions of this time, movement and its

dramatic meaning, visualization of dialogue, the use of the speaking and the silent figure, entrances and exits of figures, groupings on stage, orchestrating speech, and the contribution of the actor, the director, and the audience. **Standard #4**

- Listen to the popular song “Love Story” by Taylor Swift. Analyze how it relates to *Romeo and Juliet*. Compare the song and the play. **Standard #3**

- Explore the music of the Islamic culture. What is the instrumentation? How do the melodies differ from the familiar Western melodies? **Standard #4**

- In an interview of Michael Langham, former artistic director of Canada’s Stratford Festival and the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis and head of Julliard’s Theatre Center in New York City in the Sunday New York Times, April 11, 1982, he discussed Americans and their approach to Shakespeare.

“American students are frightened of Shakespeare,[Langham] finds, and need to realize, among other things, that Shakespeare’s characters engage in stream of consciousness. They utter an idea and then explore it without knowing what their conclusion will be, in contrast to characters in modern plays who think and then say what they feel. If spoken as preconceived thought, Mr. Langham said, Shakespeare is *deadly dull and boring*.”

Discuss this quote, in terms of your experience in studying Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. **Standard #3**

- Send your comments and/or questions about the NYS Theatre Institute’s production of *Romeo and Juliet* to: [cbs@nysti.org](mailto:cbs@nysti.org). **Standard #3**

## CHARACTER EDUCATION CONNECTIONS

The following may prompt discussions of attributes of the characters.

MERCUTIO.[referring to Tybalt] *O, he is the courageous captain of compliments.*

ROMEO.[referring to Mercutio] *A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk/And will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.*

MERCUTIO. [referring to Benvolio] *You! Why, you will quarrel with a man that has a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than you have.*

## SUGGESTED READING AND RESOURCES

### SHAKESPEARE RESOURCES on the Internet

International Globe Centre - Information about the reconstruction of the Globe theatre.

Shakespeare Illustrated - paintings inspired by Shakespeare's work.

### ADAPTATIONS ON THE SCREEN

*Romeo x Juliet* (2007), directed by Fumitoshi Oizaki.

*Romeo & Juliet: Sealed with a Kiss* (2006), directed by Phil Nibbelink.

*West Bank Story* (2005), set in the Middle East and directed by Ari Sandel.

*Pizza My Heart* (2005), based in modern-day Verona, New Jersey and directed by Andy Wolk.

*Romeo Must Die* (2000), a martial arts film directed by Andrzej Bartkowiak.

*Shakespeare in Love* (1998), directed by John Madden.

*Love Is All There Is* (1996), set in the Bronx and directed by Joseph Bologna and Renee Taylor.

*Tromeo and Juliet* (1996), directed by Lloyd Kaufman and James Gunn.

*Romeo + Juliet* (1996), set in the fictional city of “Verona Beach” and directed by Baz Luhrmann.

*The Sea Prince and the Fire Child* (1981), an animated film by Sanrio.

*Romeo and Juliet* (1978), directed by Alvin Rakoff.

*Romeo and Juliet* (1968), directed by Franco Zeffirelli.

*West Side Story* (1961), directed by Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins.

*Romanoff and Juliet* (1960), a spoof of the Cold War, directed by George S. Kaufman.

*Romeo i Dzhulyetta* (1955), Soviet ballet film directed by Lev Arnshtam.

*Romeo and Juliet* (1954), directed by Renato Castellani.

*Beneath the 12-Mile Reef* (1953), adventure film directed by Robert D. Webb.

*Romeo and Juliet* (1936), directed by George Cukor.

*Romeo and Juliet* (1916), a silent film directed by J. Gordon Edwards.

*Romeo and Juliet* (1908), a silent film directed by J. Stuart Blackton.

*Romeo and Juliet* (1900), directed by Clément Maurice.

## **MUSICAL ADAPTATIONS**

*West Side Story* - Directed and choreographed by Jerome Robbins.

*Roméo et Juliette* - Directed and choreographed by Redha.

*Giulietta e Romeo* - An Italian language musical. Music by Riccardo Cocciante and lyrics by Pasquale Panella.

*Roméo et Juliette* an opera written by Charles Gounod.

*Romeo und Julie* an opera composed Georg Benda.

*I Capuleti e i Montecchi* an opera by Vincenzo Bellini.

*Romeo and Juliet* a ballet by Sergei Prokofiev.

*Roméo et Juliette* an opera composed by Hector Berlioz.

*Romeo and Juliet* composed by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

*Romeo and Juliet* (animated series) (1992)- Director unknown.

## **SUGGESTED READING AND SOURCES**

*Discovering Shakespeare's Language* by Rex Gibson and Janet Field-Pickerin.

*The Annotated Shakespeare* edited by A.L. Rowse.

*The Shakespeare Companion* by Gareth and Barbara Lloyd Evans.

## **BOOKS FOR CHILDREN**

*The Shakespeare Stealer* by Gary Blackwood.

*William Shakespeare and the Globe* by Alikei.

*Shakespeare's Scribe* by Gary Blackwood.

*Matilda Bone* by Karen Cushman.

*Shakespeare's London: A Guide to Elizabethan London* by  
Julie Ferris.

*The Whipping Boy* by Sid Fleischman.

*Bravo, Mr. William Shakespeare!* by Marcia Williams.

## **BOOKS FOR ADULTS**

*William Shakespeare* by Carol Dommermuth-Costa.

*Shakespeare: His Work and his World* by Michael Rosen.

*Life in the Elizabethan Theater* by Diane Yancey.

*William Shakespeare: The Man Behind the Genius: A  
Biography* by Anthony Holden.

# *more NYSTI programs*

## *For Students*

### **INTERNSHIPS**

College and high school students earn academic credit while working in professional theatre. Offering experiential learning about performance, education, technical areas, and arts management. Contact the Intern Director at (518) 274-3573 or [interndirector@nysti.org](mailto:interndirector@nysti.org).

### **THEATRE ARTS SCHOOL**

Saturday workshops taught by theatre professionals. Personal development combined with professional training in acting, voice and movement for students ages 3 through high school. Contact the Theatre Arts School at (518) 274-3295 or [tasdirector@nysti.org](mailto:tasdirector@nysti.org).

### **WINTERSTAGE**

A February vacation program., Monday - Friday, 9AM to 4PM. Students ages 8 through 15 gain skills in juggling, balancing, clowning, gymnastics and much more. Taught by professionally trained clown, Sean Patrick Fagan of Circus Theatriks. Contact the Theatre Arts School at (518) 274-3295 or [tasdirector@nysti.org](mailto:tasdirector@nysti.org).

### **SUMMERSTAGE**

A three-week day program for students ages 8 - 18. With a focus on a theme, training in various performing arts topics combined with individual development in confidence cooperation, and poise. Contact the Theatre Arts School at (518) 274-3295 or [tasdirector@nysti.org](mailto:tasdirector@nysti.org).

### **SUMMER THEATRE INSTITUTE**

A four-week day program for high school and college students. Audition required. Students take acting, singing and dance classes as well as perform a musical. Contact Summer Theatre Institute Director at (518) 274-3754 or [stidirector@nysti.org](mailto:stidirector@nysti.org).

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