

# *Romeo and Juliet*



## **Supplemental Activities Packet**

This packet contains classroom activity suggestions and worksheets to reinforce concepts from the Playbook® story and to go beyond the story into the content areas of Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, Health, etc., as well as Character Development.

Activities range in age appropriateness and skill level so that teachers can choose activities that best suit their particular students. An Answer Key is provided on the last page.

# Thee or Thou? Poetry or Prose?

## Know the Difference!

**PART A:** Shakespeare wrote with many words which are no longer in common use today. In some cases, Shakespeare used both outdated and modern day words with the same meanings. For example, he often used the words, “thee,” “thou,” “thy,” and “thine,” but also throughout the same plays used the words “you,” “your” and “yours.” So what is the proper usage of these words? See the chart below.

Word	Usage	Example
thee	Objective form of “you” <b>Note:</b> Use “ye” to refer to more than one person	By a name I know not how to tell <b>thee</b> who I am.
thou	Subjective form of you <b>Note:</b> Use “ye” to refer to more than one person	Art <b>thou</b> not Romeo and a Montague?
thy	Indicates possession, when referring to a noun that follows (or precedes in some cases), and when the noun does not begin with a vowel sound	And I will take <b>thy</b> word.
thine	Indicates possession, when no noun follows, or when the following noun does begins with a vowel sound	Thus from my lips, by <b>thine</b> , my sin is purged.

**Special Note:** When using “thou” instead of “you,” certain verb forms must be different. Proper verb forms to follow “thou” include “art,” “hast,” “doest” “wast” and “hadst.” Include this information when completing the following activity.

**Directions:** The sentences or passages below are from *Romeo and Juliet* and show instances where Shakespeare used “you,” “your,” and “yours.” Cross out the instances of “you,” “your” and “yours” and write above or below the correct word to replace it from the chart above. Remember to also cross out and replace any incorrect verb forms following “thou.”

- Good morrow to **you** both. What counterfeit did I give **you**?
- A plague on both **your** houses! Why the devil  
Came **you** between us? I was hurt under **your** arm!
- Well, what was **yours**?
- You** must contrary me?  
Go, be quiet, or for shame, I’ll make **you** quiet!
- Good pilgrim, **you** do wrong **your** hand too much.



**Next,** on a separate sheet of paper, write a letter to your best friend using the words “thee,” “thou,” “thy,” and “thine,” wherever appropriate.

**PART B:** While reading *Romeo and Juliet*, you probably noticed a difference between the way Romano and Julia speak and the way Shakespeare’s character’s usually speak, but did you notice that Shakespeare’s characters’ lines are not *always* in this poetic form? The contrast is not as evident in this particular play as in some other works of Shakespeare’s because only 7% of the play is not in verse. However, like many of his plays, *Romeo and Juliet* shows a variance in form in that some (most) of the lines are written in iambic pentameter (verse) and some are in everyday normal speech (prose).

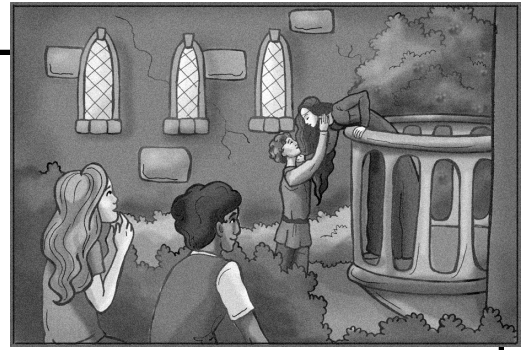
Prose is usually indicated when you see a paragraph or sentence that carries over to the next line like the sentences in the paragraph above, without starting a new capitalized line. While sometimes a poetic form other than iambic pentameter may be used, if a line does not fit the rules of iambic pentameter it may be a clue that it is prose. For example, if the line does not have 10 syllables, or if it does not alternate in syllable sounds of non-stressed followed by stressed, it does not fit the strict requirements of iambic pentameter and may be identified as prose.

When Shakespeare uses prose, it can indicate several different things. Often, servant or working class characters speak in prose to show their ranking below the more important characters. Sometimes, prose is used for practicality to show more realistic speaking patterns, especially for very short phrases. In addition, prose can sometimes portray a character’s unstable mental or emotional condition, or by contrast, a comedic or joking tone.

**Directions:** Find four examples of lines from different parts of the play that show Shakespeare’s characters speaking in prose, and for each case, explain why you think Shakespeare chose to use prose instead of verse. Write down the act, scene, and page number of each of your examples and your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

# Romano and Julia

**Directions:** In this version of *Romeo and Juliet*, we meet two modern day characters who are transported to the world of Romeo and Juliet and see the play taking place before their eyes. Answer each essay question about the role of our guest characters on the lines provided.



1. Explain the various purposes of the characters of Romano and Julia in this script. What do they bring to the story?

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2. Compare and contrast the relationships and situations between Romano and Julia and Romeo and Juliet.

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3. Describe how either Romano or Julia changes or grows through the course of the play.

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4. What did you think of the play's twist ending (the fact that the events they were watching were not real after all but a magical performance with actors)? How, if at all, does this turn of events affect your interpretation of the play in its entirety with its modern day framing?

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# You Can't Read Shakespeare Without Puns!



Whether you're looking at Shakespeare's comedies or tragedies, you will always find puns used for humor or to highlight a point. A pun is a play on words based on the similarity of sound between two different words with different meanings. The example that Julia points out to Romano in *Romeo and Juliet* is this:

Mercutio: Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man.

*Explanation:* Mercutio has been wounded and is about to die, so what he means is that he will be dead and buried in a grave, but the sentence sounds as if he is saying he will be sad.

**Directions:** Look for seven more puns in *Romeo and Juliet* and complete the chart below with your findings.

Pun (quote, act, scene, and page number)	Why is it funny? What does the pun mean?

Does a certain character or characters seem to use the most puns in their lines in the play? What does this show about their role in the play?

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## ***From Quill to Stage ... and Potion to Poison***



**PART A:** Clearly, the process of writing a play in Shakespeare's time was a lot different than it is now. Instead of being able to type or even write with a convenient ink-stocked pen, he wrote the drafts of his plays with a quill (made from a feather) dipped in ink. Some types of quills were better than others, and what was used would have been based on what was affordable at the time. Goose quills were cheapest and swan quills were more luxurious, for example.

Shakespeare most likely attempted to do most of his writing during the day, because writing at night would require lighting candles or a gas lamp, which were quite costly. However, because his work as an actor required him to work during the day, he probably was forced to do substantial writing at night as well.

One interesting note about the writing process in Shakespeare's time is that there was no standardized dictionary, so writers could use alternate spellings, foreign words, and even make up their own words as they pleased, which Shakespeare did plenty! For example, in his plays, he invented the words, "eyeball," "cold-blooded," "critic," and "gossip."

***Next:** Censorship and Purchase*

**Directions:** Using the Internet at home or at your school's library, research what the process for editing, censorship, and selling of a play manuscript was like in Shakespeare's time. Write an essay describing what you learn.

**PART B:** In the play, Romeo buys poison from an apothecary, the equivalent of a pharmacist in Shakespeare's time. Apothecaries were first considered a type of grocer and prepared and sold herbs, medicines, and other concoctions, some of which were of a poisonous variety. Poisons play a large role in many of Shakespeare's plays, including *Romeo and Juliet*, with both Juliet's sleeping potion and Romeo's choice of suicide method.

Eventually, apothecaries were separated from grocers and created a new specific class of workers. Apothecaries were one option for the sick to seek treatment by purchasing reported cures. There were also doctors whose job was to diagnose and treat patients in Shakespeare's time, but illnesses were largely misunderstood. Shakespeare's son-in-law, John Hall, was a physician, and Shakespeare's resulting fascination with medicinal issues can be seen in his work. Interestingly, Dr. John Hall actually stands out as a relatively effective care provider for his time, with patients responding to treatments offered for scurvy, for example.

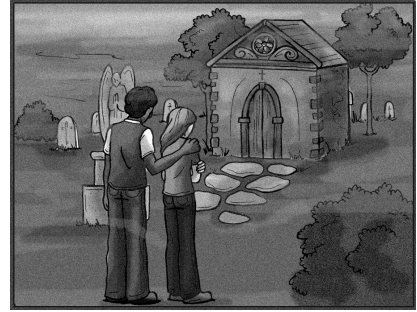
**Directions:** Choose one of the following topics below to research using the Internet at home or at your school's library.

**Option 1:** Research and write a short essay on Dr. John Hall, Shakespeare's son-in-law. Explain the common medical practices of the time and how/why Dr. Hall found some unique success in treating disease.

**Option 2:** Research some of the types of poisons that were common in Shakespeare's time or that Shakespeare would have been referring to in his plays. Explain their origins, properties, and any interesting facts.

# Discussion Questions

**Directions:** Take notes on your answers to the following questions about *Romeo and Juliet* (completing whichever questions your teacher instructs). Your teacher will then lead a discussion of the questions with the entire class.



1. At the beginning of the play, the chorus says it is the tale of two “star-crossed lovers.” Explain what this means and how the circumstances and events of the play match up with this theme.
2. What are some examples of foreshadowing in the play formed by the characters’ language? Explain.
3. How do many of the characters in the play act selfishly? Give various examples and discuss how their failure to think of the effects on other people led to disaster.
4. How is the theme of hastiness apparent in the play? What is the lesson taught?
5. Compare Juliet’s relationship with her nurse to her relationship with her parents. What do you think contributed to this family dynamic?
6. Why does the Friar agree to marry Romeo and Juliet? What factors known ahead of time would cause you to question the wisdom of his decision?
7. What is Mercutio’s role in the play? How do his speeches and statements compare with Romeo’s?
8. Why does the Apothecary sell Romeo the poison, knowing nothing good would come of it? What is Shakespeare saying about humanity with the Apothecary’s decision?
9. How is love portrayed in the play and what are its results? Is it a benevolent force?
10. How is the motif of poison explored in the play? Examine the Friar’s lines on pages 25-26 and explain what he means.
11. What is the meaning behind Mercutio’s speech about Queen Mab (pages 13-14)?
12. Compare and contrast Romeo’s love for Juliet with his former love for Rosaline. Do you think his feelings are fundamentally different with Juliet or do certain additional factors (if so, what?) cause the much stronger bond to be formed?
13. How does Juliet mature (or not) over the course of the play? Examine Juliet’s response to her parents in regard to considering Paris as a husband (page 12). What is your impression of her attitude?
14. What is the overall attitude towards the feud between the Capulets and Montagues in the play? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
15. What is the role of the Nurse in the action of the play? How does the Nurse’s advice to Juliet vary?

# Answer Key

## Romeo and Juliet

### Thee or Thou? Poetry or Prose?

#### PART A:

- Good morrow to **ye** both. What counterfeit did I give **ye**?
- A plague on both **thy** houses! Why the devil  
**Camest thou** between us? I was hurt under **thine** arm!
- Well, what was **thine**?
- Thou** must contrary me?  
Go, be quiet, or for shame, I'll make **thee** quiet!
- Good pilgrim, **thou dost** wrong **thy** hand too much.

#### PART B: (Sample Answers)

- GREGORY:** "The quarrel is between our masters and us, their men." (Act 1, Scene 1, page 3) Shakespeare has written this line in prose because the speaker is a servant.
- BENVOLIO:** "Why, Romeo, art thou mad?" (Act 1, Scene 2, page 9) This line is in prose because Benvolio's short statement directly to Romeo would sound unnatural and excessive in verse.
- NURSE:** "A man, young lady! Lady, such a man as all the world." (Act 1, Scene 3, page 11) The nurse is a working class character, her line forms an exclamation to Juliet that would not translate into verse, and also, perhaps her excitement about the topic could be a reason for her to speak in prose.
- LADY CAPULET:** "Tybalt! O my brother's child!" (Act 3, Scene 1, page 36) Lady Capulet is grief-stricken by Tybalt's death and this could be a reason for speaking in prose. The line is also short and provides a realistic reaction to the situation that verse would not.

### Romano and Julia (Sample Answers)

- Romano and Julia help make the story more relatable. They offer a current day contrast to the traditions of Shakespeare's time and yet mirror a tale of two people who like each other but are different. Julia loves Shakespeare and Romano doesn't; Julia isn't sure if her parents would let her date Romano. In addition, the characters help make the play more understandable by discussing key passages and language used in Shakespeare's text.
- Romeo and Juliet and Romano and Julia are all teenagers. While Romano and Julia are in high school, Romeo and Juliet are quickly approaching adulthood and even think about and follow through on getting married. Romano and Julia, in today's modern times, are much too young to think about more than possibly dating. Romeo and Juliet can't be together because their families are enemies, and hints are made that Romano and Julia isn't sure if her parents would like her dating Romano. Of course, Romano and Julia are sensible, while Romeo and Juliet make some very rash decisions that end in tragedy.
- Romano learns to appreciate Shakespeare because it is so much easier to enjoy when he actually understands what is happening and being said. This will help him find new confidence in school. In addition, at first he seems to think the situation and possibly Julia are a bit strange, but by the end, their friendship has started.
- I liked the ending because it is a little more realistic (though still requires suspension of disbelief) than the play actually happening in real events. It also means that Romano and Julia were not actually watching the gruesome ends of the characters who died, but instead just getting the treat of a fantastic performance.

### You Can't Read Shakespeare Without Puns!

Pun	Why is it funny? What does the pun mean?
<b>MERCUTIO:</b> "That dreamers often lie!" (Act 1, Scene 4, page 13)	Those who dream usually are asleep lying in bed, but Mercutio also means that dreams can be untrue and give false hopes.
<b>ROMEO:</b> "You have dancing shoes with nimble soles. I have a soul of lead." (Act 1, Scene 4, page 12)	Romeo refers to the physical properties of shoes, but also to emotional states. He is too sad and love sick to dance.
<b>ROMEO:</b> "He jests at scars that never felt a wound." (Act 2, Scene 2, page 19)	Romeo's literal statement really means that Mercutio can't understand Romeo's feelings because he has never been in love before.
<b>MERCUTIO:</b> "Poor Romeo, he is already dead, stabbed with a white wench's black eye, shot through the ear with a love-song." (Act 2, Scene 4, page 28)	Mercutio is referring to the danger of death faced in a duel with Tybalt, but pointing out Romeo's helpless condition of being in love.
<b>MERCUTIO:</b> "You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night." (Act 2, Scene 4, page 28)	Mercutio goes on to explain he means "the slip" because a counterfeit coin was called a slip. Mercutio means that Romeo snuck off to see Juliet without them.
<b>MERCUTIO:</b> "Consort! What, dost thou make us minstrels?" (Act 3, Scene 1, page 34)	Mercutio is asking if Tybalt is calling them musicians, because "consort" sounds like "concert" and a minstrel is a type of band.
<b>ROMEO:</b> "Is it even so? Then I defy you, stars! Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight." (Act 5, Scene 1, page 57)	Romeo thinks that Juliet is dead, and so instead of being with her in their marriage bed, he will lie next to her in death after killing himself.

**Question:** Mercutio uses puns very often in his lines, showing him to be a character offering jokes at Romeo's expense regarding his lovesickness, and comic relief in serious circumstances.



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