



## BBC LIVE LESSONS AND ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

In our Live Lesson which explores Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* with KS3 children, we will be looking at how actors and learners can work as text detectives to find information from the text. These optional activities are designed for use in the classroom as a preparation for the Lesson. We know that the more preparation young people have the richer the lesson experience can be.

### *Romeo and Juliet: Text Detectives*

#### Exploring Characters

During the Live Lesson we will be offering you the opportunity to send in your questions for

- Romeo
- Juliet
- The Nurse.

Your questions could be about any part of the play and will be answered by the characters during the lesson.

As a reminder of these characters you might want to use the following facts:

#### **Romeo**

- Romeo is the youngest member of his family and the son of Lord and Lady Montague
- Romeo seems to be in love with Rosaline at the start of the play.
- His best friend is Mercutio
- He and his friends go to the Capulet party without their permission

#### **Juliet**

- Juliet is a young teenager
- She is supposed to marry Paris but has never met him
- She seems to have a closer relationship with the Nurse than her Mother

- Juliet cares deeply about her cousin Tybalt

### **Nurse**

- The Nurse has looked after Juliet since she was a baby
- She has a child of her own
- Juliet trusts the Nurse with her secrets
- She helps Romeo and Juliet to meet and marry even though she knows the Capulet family will disapprove.

If your students need some help in generating their questions, have only just started studying the play or may need to revise the events of the play the following activity recapping the plot may be useful as preparation.

### **Romeo and Juliet in 20 Minutes**

On the following page will find a version of Romeo and Juliet in 20 minutes.

- Organise students into small groups and provide each group with one or two of the scenes from the story.
- Ask each group to create a freeze frame, showing what happens in their section.
- Using the text they've been given, ask each group to animate their freeze frame, using the text and the narrative description they've been given to bring it to life for no more than a minute.
  - They could do this with one student reading the narrative while the others move and speak the lines, or they could share the description between them.
- Allow each of the groups to perform their short, minute long, scene in order until the class has seen the whole play.

## **ROMEO AND JULIET IN 20 MINUTES**

**1.**

**In Verona, for as long as anyone can remember, there has been an ancient grudge between two great families, the CAPULETS and the MONTAGUES. They fight in the street:**

**Abraham: Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?**

**Sampson: Draw, if you be men.**

**The fight escalates. TYBALT, Capulet's nephew, wades in. BENVOLIO, Montague's nephew, tries to calm things down, but no one listens to him. Then the PRINCE OF VERONA, law maker, strides in:**

**Prince: Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace.  
If ever you disturb our streets again  
Your lives shall pay the forfeit.**

**2.**

**LORD and LADY MONTAGUE are worried about their son ROMEO who is in unrequited love with a kinswoman of the Prince called ROSALINE. They send Romeo's cousin BENVOLIO to try and cheer up their son, but Romeo still pines for true love:**

**Benvolio: Be ruled by me, forget to think of her**

**Romeo: Love is a smoke made with a fume of sighs**

**3.**

**Meanwhile, PARIS, kinsman to the Prince, is making an arrangement with LORD CAPULET to marry his daughter, JULIET, who is fourteen.**

**Paris: But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?**

**Capulet: My child is yet a stranger in the world;  
Let two more summers wither in their pride  
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.**

**4.**

**LORD CAPULET** decides to hold a party where his daughter can be introduced to Paris, and sends a servant called **PETER** to give out invitations. Without realising who they are, Peter gives invitations to **ROMEO MONTAGUE**, his cousin **BENVOLIO** and their mate **MERCUTIO**:

Peter:            My master is the great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montague, I pray you come and crush a cup of wine.

Hoping that Rosaline might be there, Romeo and his mates decide to make a night of it.

**5.**

**JULIET** is getting ready for the party, helped by her **NURSE**. **LADY CAPULET** comes in and tells her daughter of Paris' intentions:

Lady Capulet:    The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

Juliet:            I'll look to like, if looking liking move.

Nurse:            Go girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

6.

At the party, LORD CAPULET, with his nephew TYBALT at his right hand side welcomes PARIS and introduces him to his daughter JULIET. They dance. Juliet's NURSE watches excitedly. Wearing masks, in come ROMEO and BENVOLIO. Romeo spots Juliet and it is love at first sight:

Romeo:                   Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!  
                              For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

But Tybalt hears him talking, realises that there are Montagues at the party, and challenges Romeo. Lord Capulet intervenes, and calms Tybalt down, anxious that nothing spoil his daughter's big night:

Tybalt:                   Villain! I'll not endure him!

Romeo and Juliet meet. They dance palm to palm. They kiss. But the Nurse intervenes and tells Romeo who Juliet is:

Romeo:                   What is her mother?

Nurse:                   Her mother is the lady of the house.

Romeo:                   Is she a Capulet?

Benvolio:                Away, be gone.

Romeo and Benvolio quickly leave the party. The nurse tells Juliet who Romeo is:

Nurse:                   His name is Romeo, and a Montague;  
                              The only son of your great enemy.

Juliet:                   My only love sprung from my only hate

**7.**

**Romeo does not go home that night. Instead he finds the Capulets' garden. To his delight Juliet appears at a balcony window!**

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

**Juliet doesn't see Romeo and talks to the stars:**

Juliet:                    O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?  
                                 Deny thy father and refuse thy name;

**When he hears his name, Romeo climbs onto the balcony, swears his love, and Juliet makes him a promise:**

Juliet:                    What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?

Romeo:                    Th'exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

Juliet:                    If that they bent of love be honourable,  
                                 Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow,  
                                 And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,  
                                 And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

**8. Next morning, ROMEO goes to his mentor and family priest FRIAR LAURENCE, to ask if he will marry them in secret. The Friar hopes that the marriage might bring peace to Verona, so he agrees:**

Friar:                    For this alliance may so happy prove  
                                 To turn your households rancour to pure love.

**So the NURSE helps JULIET to sneak out of her family home, come to Friar Laurence's cell, where Romeo and Juliet are married.**

**9. Later that day, BENVOLIO AND MERCUTIO are out on the streets of Verona.**

**Benvolio:               The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,  
                              And if we meet we shall not 'scape a brawl,  
                              For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.**

**Along comes TYBALT from one direction, and ROMEO, fresh from his wedding from another. Tybalt draws his weapon and challenges Romeo, but does not want to fight his new wife's cousin. Mercutio cannot stand by and see his friend insulted, so he draws his weapon:**

**Mercutio:               O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!**

**Mercutio and Tybalt fight. Romeo desperately tries to stop them and gets in between them, but Tybalt stabs Mercutio under Romeo's arm, and Mercutio falls. With his dying breath he says:**

**Mercutio:               A plague on both you houses.**

**Romeo, with fire-eyed fury burning in his heart now fights Tybalt, and kills him. Benvolio, realising that Romeo now faces the death penalty, urges his friend to leave:**

**Benvolio:               Be gone! Away!**

**And Romeo runs away, just as PRINCE ESCALUS arrives to find out what has happened, closely followed by the Capulets and Montagues. Benvolio explains what has happened to the Prince, and LADY CAPULET says:**

**Lady Capulet:        I beg for justice, which thou, Prince, must give.  
                              Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.**

**But the Prince is merciful:**

**Prince:                 For that offence, immediately we do exile him hence.**

10.

Meanwhile JULIET is at home, waiting for Romeo on her wedding night. The NURSE comes in and tells her of Tybalt's death and Romeo's banishment. Juliet is in torment: her great love and husband has killed her cousin!

Nurse:                               Shame come to Romeo!

Juliet:                               Blistered be thy tongue!

Nurse:                               Will you speak well of him that killed your cousin?

Juliet:                               Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?

11.

ROMEO has fled to FRIAR LAURENCE's cell. The Friar tells him that he is banished, and Romeo is devastated:

Romeo:                               There is no world without Verona's walls.  
  Heaven is here, where Juliet lives.  
  Banished? O Friar, the damned use that word in hell.

The NURSE arrives, looking for Romeo, and the Friar and the Nurse help him to go to JULIET for one last night before he must leave for exile.



12.

Next morning, ROMEO and JULIET are lying in each other's arms in Juliet's room, when there is a knock on the door. Romeo climbs down from the balcony, off to exile in Mantua. In comes LADY CAPULET and THE NURSE, with the news that Juliet's wedding to Paris has been brought forward to the next Thursday. Juliet refuses to marry Paris. In comes her father LORD CAPULET:

Juliet:                    Good father, I beseech you on my knees,  
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

Lord Capulet:        Hang thee, young baggage! Disobedient wretch!  
I tell thee what – get thee to church a'Thursday  
Or never after look me in the face.

Lady Capulet turns her back on Juliet, and even the Nurse advises her to do as her father wishes and marry Paris:

Lady Capulet:        Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.

Nurse:                    I think it is best you married with the County

13.

In despair, Juliet goes to Friar Laurence for help. He mixes up a sleeping potion for her, which is so strong that it will make her appear dead. His plan is that she drinks it the night before her wedding so that her family will think that she has died, and lay her in the family tomb. The friar then writes a letter to Romeo telling him the plan, and asking him to come and find Juliet at the tomb. Juliet eagerly agrees:

Juliet:                    Give me, give me! O tell not me of fear!

**14.**

**That night, JULIET is alone in her room. She takes the sleeping potion and falls into a dead faint:**

**Juliet:** I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins

**Next morning, the NURSE finds her apparently dead:**

**Nurse:** O woeful, woeful, woeful day!

**Her cries rouse the household, and LADY CAPULET and LORD CAPULET are devastated.**

**15.**

**Now things go horribly wrong. There is plague in Verona, and the MESSENGER with the Friar's letter to Romeo is prevented from leaving. So the letter is never delivered. In Mantua, ROMEO is waiting for news of his wife, when his servant BALTHAZAR comes and tells him that Juliet is dead. Horrified, he gets a bottle of deadly poison and vows to die by her side:**

**Romeo:** Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight

**16.**

**JULIET is laid out in the tomb. PARIS mourns her. ROMEO arrives. They draw their daggers and fight:**

**Paris:** Obey, and go with me. For thou must die.

**Romeo:** Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man.

**Paris is killed. ROMEO lies by Juliet, and takes the poison:**

**Romeo:** Thus with a kiss I die!

**Juliet wakes up, realises that Romeo is dead, picks up Romeo's dagger, and stabs herself:**

**Juliet:** O happy dagger!  
This is thy sheath; there rust, and let me die.

17.

**Too late, FRIAR LAURENCE comes to the tomb with the CAPULETS and the MONTAGUES. PRINCE ESCALUS follows:**

Prince:                   Where be these enemies? Capulet, Montague  
                              See what a scourge is laid upon your hate.

**Lord Capulet shakes hands with Lord Montague. The Prince warns them to learn from what has happened to their children:**

Prince:                   Some shall be pardoned, and some punished.  
                              For never was a story of more woe  
                              Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

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