

Y8 HT6 Romeo and Juliet: Knowledge Organiser

Plot Summary:

Romeo and Juliet is a play written by Shakespeare. It is a tragic love story where the two main characters, Romeo and Juliet, are supposed to be sworn enemies but fall in love. Due to their families' ongoing conflict, they cannot be together, so they kill themselves because they cannot cope with being separated from one another. *Romeo and Juliet* is a Shakespearean *tragedy*.

Steps to success:

- Comprehension of plot is key: identify what is happening, to who and why throughout the play.
- Develop an understanding of characters and their motives especially in relation to context.
- Be able to explore how the play's structure is designed to create specific meanings and feelings.
- Aim to respond to the reaction of other readers to show understanding of their opinion alongside your own views.

Character	Description
Romeo Montague	Son of the Montague family. Tragic Hero.
Juliet Capulet	Daughter of the Capulet family. The Tragic Heroine.
Mercutio	Romeo's friend – not a Capulet or Montague.
Tybalt	Juliet's cousin – a prominent character in <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> 's love story.
Benvolio	Romeo's cousin.
Friar Lawrence	A kind-hearted cleric who helps Romeo and Juliet.
Nurse	Close with Juliet, motherly and her confidant.



8.6 Key Vocabulary: Terms and Definitions

Key Vocabulary	Definition
Prologue	(n.) A section that comes at the beginning of a text often giving information about the events that happened before the time the text begins.
Fate	(n.) A power that some people believe causes and controls all events in such a way that you cannot change or control the way things will happen.
Pilgrimage	(n.) A visit to a place that is considered special, where you go to show your respect.
Duelling	(v.) The activity of fighting, competing or arguing between two people or teams.
Soliloquy	(n.) A speech in a play that the character speaks to himself or herself rather than to the other others.
Empathy	(n.) The ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences by imaging what it would be like to be in that person's situation.
Foreshadow	(v.) To act as a warning or sign of future event.
Tragedy	(n.) A play about death or suffering with a sad end.
Oxymoron	(n.) Two words or phrases used together that have or seem to have opposite meanings.
Patriarchal	(adj.) ruled or controlled by men

Context:

Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* during the Elizabethan era. It is set in Renaissance Italy. The 'Renaissance' was known as a time of change where there was significant change in religion, culture and arts. At this time, religion was really big in society where most of Europe was Catholic where mortal sins like suicide were punished harshly. Family honour was also very important in Elizabethan society where the father was the head of the household, making the society patriarchal. The father made all the key decisions such as getting their daughters married when they were young and would go to all lengths to protect their family honour.