

English Knowledge Organiser Y9 'Romeo and Juliet' Autumn 2

Key term	Definition
Scene	A scene is a piece of action which takes place in a single place without a break in time
Prose and blank verse	Prose is defined as "ordinary language". It is the language that people speak in. Shakespeare's poorer characters often speak like this. Blank verse is a type of poetry. Shakespeare's characters of higher status usually speak like this.
Satire	A technique employed by Shakespeare to critique societal norms, particularly through the character of Bottom.
Iambic pentameter	A verse rhythm often used in Shakespeare's writing. It has 10 syllables per line. Syllables alternate between unstressed and stressed beats, creating this pattern: "de/DUM de/DUM de/DUM de/DUM de/DUM."
Soliloquy	Shakespeare's plays are full of soliloquies. A soliloquy is a speech a character gives which we as the audience can hear it, but none of the characters in the play can.
Rhyming couplets	Two lines which rhyme, often (but not only) used at the end of a scene. E.g. "This precious book of love, this unbound lover, To beautify him only lacks a cover." - Romeo and Juliet
Acts	An act is a part of a play which gives it structure through usual story elements such as rising action, climax and resolution. Shakespeare plays have five acts
Beat and meter	The beat, or the rhythm, refers to the overall tempo, or pace, at which the blank verse unfolds, while meter refers to the patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables.
Plot	The plot is a series of events inside a story.

Plot of the play
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> is a tragic love story written by William Shakespeare. It's about two teenagers from feuding families in Verona, Italy — the Montagues and the Capulets. Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet meet at a party and instantly fall in love, even though their families hate each other. They secretly get married the next day with the help of Friar Laurence, hoping their love will end the family feud. But things quickly go wrong. Romeo gets into a fight with Juliet's cousin, Tybalt, and kills him. As punishment, Romeo is banished from Verona. Juliet is heartbroken, especially when her parents try to force her to marry someone else. To escape this, Juliet takes a potion that makes her appear dead. The plan is for Romeo to come and rescue her when she wakes up. But Romeo doesn't get the message explaining the plan. He thinks Juliet is really dead, so he takes poison and dies beside her. When Juliet wakes up and sees Romeo dead, she takes her own life too. Life in Elizabethan England When the play was written This was the golden age of English theatre. William Shakespeare became one of the most famous playwrights. People from all classes went to see plays at places like the Globe Theatre. •Society and Class: Society was very structured. People were expected to stay in the class they were born into — nobles, merchants, and peasants all had different roles. Women had fewer rights and were expected to marry and obey their husbands.

Romeo Montague  THE BOY IN LOVE Falls in love with a girl from a rival family and marries her in secret. He is emotional and impulsive, often acting in the moment. He kills himself, believing Juliet to be dead.	Juliet Capulet  THE GIRL IN LOVE Falls in love with a boy from a rival family and marries him in secret, despite being promised to another (Paris). She takes her own death but eventually kills herself when she sees that Romeo has died.	Nurse  THE HELPER A highly comical character. She is crude but clearly cares deeply about Juliet, who she has looked after since she was a baby. She also helps Juliet with her secret plans.	The Prince  THE RULER Threatening the houses of Montague and Capulet when they are found fighting in the street for the third time. He exiles Romeo when he kills Tybalt in a fight.
Paris  THE RICH FIANCEÉ Is promised to marry Juliet. He is wealthy and powerful and therefore a good choice in the eyes of Lord and Lady Capulet.	Mercutio  THE JOKER Friend of Romeo. He always makes a joke out of everything - he seems unable to be serious. He is eventually killed by Tybalt in a fight.	Benvolio  THE PEACE MAKER Romeo's cousin and friend. He attempts to stop the two families fighting and is often the voice of reason. He is logical, level-headed and kind.	Tybalt  THE FIGHTER Juliet's cousin. Tybalt is hot-headed and seems unable to keep the peace with Capulets. He kills Mercutio and then eventually kills Romeo to avenge the murder of his friend.

Greater Depth:



Key Themes: Love  Conflict  Fate 