**A Visit to the Theatre in the Time of Shakespeare**

1. **William Harrison (1577)**

‘There are diverse ferries, and small wherries of nimble fashion, which continually pass to and fro between the banks, laden with all sorts of people, rich and poor alike, who for a penny fare are conveyed safely over.’

1. **Phillip Stubbes (1583)**

‘There you shall have, with harlotry, drunkenness, swearing, and such like abominations: a resort of all who seek the devil’s works under the guise of sport and pastime.’

1. **John Stow (1598)**

‘In Southwark are many fair inns for travellers, and places of public resort for pleasure, as the playhouses, bowling alleys, and gardens. Not far from the bridge are the bear gardens, where great crowds assemble to see the sport of bears and bulls baited.’

1. **Ben Johnson (1600)**

‘The taverns are filled with poets, scholars, and gentlemen, exchanging wit and argument.’

1. **John Stockwood (1578)**

‘The blast of a trumpet will call a thousand people to see a filthy play: an hour’s tolling of a bell would only bring a hundred people to a sermon.’

1. **Thomas Platter (1599)**

‘Daily at two in the afternoon in the city of London, the plays begin and continue for two hours, and they are so dearly loved by the people that they will sometimes go and pay a penny to watch them, which is why they prefer to forgo other entertainments.’

1. **Stephen Gosson (1579)**

‘In the playhouses at London, it is the fashion of youths to go first into the yard and to carry their eye through every gallery, then they go and sit as near to the fairest as they can.’

1. **Paul Hentzer (1598)**

‘Without the city are some wooden houses where the common people assemble to see plays. These are built in a circular form, with galleries all around. If the spectators grow tired of the play, they may refresh themselves with wine, ale, and beer, and tobacco.’

**Creative Writing**

**Extract from *A Time Traveller’s Guide to Elizabethan England*, by Ian Mortimer**

‘If you are heading to the Swan, the Rose or the Globe, you will cross London Bridge or take a wherry across the river and then walk through Paris Garden. All sorts of people will be heading in the same direction: working men in groups, shop owners, gentlemen, householders’ wives accompanied by their servants or husbands, foreign tourists, boys and girls. As you approach the theatres, you will notice that they all seem to be round. Whichever one you choose, you can expect to queue with two thousand other people to get in. You will see people standing in hats with pipe in hand, and women in their headdresses, all chatting, with an eye open for people they know.’

‘Entrance costs a penny: this allows you to stand in the yard in front of the stage. As you sit there watching a performance of a play, the crowd will fade into the background. Instead, you will be struck by the language. There are words and phrases that you will not find funny, but which will make the crowd roar with laughter. Your familiarity with the meanings of Shakespeare’s words will rise and fall as you see and hear the actors’ deliveries and notice the audience’s reaction.’

**Write about traveling across the Thames** Source **A**

* What can you see and hear on the boat?
* Who else is traveling with you?
* Are they excited, nervous or distracted?

**Write about walking through the streets of Southwark** Sources **B**, **C** and **D**

* What can you see and hear on the streets?
* What are the other people doing?
* Do you stop to watch the attractions?

**Describe your first impressions of the theatre** Sources **E** and **F**

* What does the theatre look like as you approach?
* How do you feel about the crowd?
* Are you jostled by eager theatre-goers?

**Explain what it’s like to be part of the crowd** Sources **G** and **H**

* Does you feel overwhelmed by the noise?
* Who can you see in the upper galleries?
* Do you enjoy the lively atmosphere?

**Plot Summary and Timeline**

The cause of the feud is never revealed, but its effects are clear. Frequent brawls disrupt life in Verona, and the enmity between the families ultimately leads to the deaths of Romeo and Juliet.

**Day 1: Sunday**

1. The Montagues and Capulets are involved in a brawl
2. Paris speaks to Capulet about marrying Juliet
3. Romeo attends the Capulet ball in disguise
4. Romeo and Juliet meet and fall in love

**Day 2: Monday**

1. Romeo overhears Juliet expressing her love for him
2. They declare their love and desire to marry
3. Romeo and Juliet are secretly married by Friar Lawrence
4. Tybalt provokes Romeo to fight and then kills Mercutio
5. Romeo kills Tybalt in revenge and is banished from Verona

**Day 3: Tuesday**

1. Romeo leaves Juliet at dawn to go into exile
2. Juliet’s mother informs her that she must marry Paris
3. Juliet threatens suicide and seeks help from Friar Lawrence
4. Friar Lawrence gives her a potion to make her appear dead

**Day 4: Wednesday**

1. Juliet is discovered in a death-like trance
2. The Capulets and Paris mourn her apparent death
3. Juliet’s body is placed in the Capulet family tomb

**Day 5: Thursday**

1. Romeo hears news of Juliet’s death and buys poison
2. Romeo returns to Verona and takes the poison beside Juliet’s body
3. Juliet awakens to find Romeo dead
4. Juliet and kills herself with his dagger
5. Their deaths have the effect of ending the feud

**Big Ideas**

1. The distinction between love and infatuation
2. The power of love to cause joy and misery
3. The conflict between fate and freewill
4. The tension between personal desires and family expectations
5. The consequences of impulsiveness
6. The futility of violence and feuding

* **Shakespeare shows how love and hatred are often inextricably linked**

**Language and Style**

1. The use of oxymorons to convey emotional conflict
2. Contrasting imagery connected to light and darkness
3. A mixture of blank verse, rhymed verse and prose to reflect status and shape tone
4. Wordplay (e.g. puns) to generate moments of provocation and humour

* **Shakespeare uses language to enhance the emotional and thematic depth of the play**

**Context**

1. Social norms of the time promoted the importance of family duty and loyalty
2. The independence of women was significantly limited because society was patriarchal
3. Marriages were often arranged for social and political reasons rather than personal affection
4. The concept of honour is central to understanding the violent confrontations in the play
5. The play is shaped by the Christian values of the time (e.g. ideas of sin and redemption)

* **Shakespeare explores social issues that are still very relevant today like duty and honour**

**Vocabulary**

1. *Fate* The idea that events are predetermined and beyond human control
2. *Patriarchy* A system where men hold power and authority in society and families
3. *Dramatic irony* The knowledge of the audience is greater than that of the characters on stage
4. *Oxymoron* A figure of speech combining contradictory terms (e.g. ‘sweet sorrow’)
5. *Sonnet* A form of poem that is often used to explore themes of love
6. *Blank verse* Formal and rhythmic speech used for important characters or serious topics
7. *Prose* Language that is more informal and used for humor or accessibility

**Exploring the Characterisation of Juliet**

**Act 1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Cautious |  |
| Agreeable |  |
| Independent | ‘I’ll look to like, if looking liking move’ |

**Act 2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Thoughtful |  |
| Uncertain | ‘Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?’ |
| Anxious |  |

**Act 3**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Angry |  |
| Rebellious |  |
| Calculating | ‘Go in and tell my lady I am gone’ |

**Act 4**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Miserable |  |
| Impulsive |  |
| Irresponsible |  |

**How is the character of Juliet presented?**

Juliet is presented as an **independent** character in **Act 1 Scene 3** when she tells Lady Capulet that she will form her own opinions about Paris. Juliet says that she will ‘look to like’ him, which means that she will judge him later at the ball. Given that both Lady Capulet and the Nurse made a point of conveying Paris’s virtues earlier in the scene, the audience are given the clear impression that Juliet is not easy to influence. Juliet’s **independence** is noteworthy because, at the time, daughters were expected to follow the instructions of their parents and, as Lady Capulet points out, many young women of Juliet’s age would already have been married.

**Exploring the Characterisation of Romeo**

**Act 1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Melancholy |  |
| Secretive | ‘And private in his chamber pens himself’ |
| Passionate |  |

**Act 2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Idealistic | ‘O, speak again, bright angel’ |
| Charming |  |
| Impatient |  |

**Act 3**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Calm | ‘I do protest I never injured thee’ |
| Angry |  |
| Vengeful |  |

**Act 5**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Miserable |  |
| Impulsive | ‘Let me have a dram of poison’ |
| Despairing |  |

**How is the character of Romeo presented?**

Romeo is presented as an **idealistic** character in **Act 2 Scene 1** when he reflects on his feelings for Juliet. Romeo says that she is a ‘bright angel’ to him, which suggests that he believes his love for her is something pure and sacred. He elevates Juliet’s status beyond that of an ordinary person, so it becomes clear to the audience that she has captured his heart completely. Romeo’s **idealism** indicates that he is a character who feels emotions very strongly; this is something that was evident at the start of the play when he was infatuated with Rosaline.

**Act 1**

1. What are two important details that the Chorus convey to the audience?
2. How does the brawl between the Montagues and Capulets begin?
3. What threat does Prince Escalus make to the two families?
4. Why are Montague and Lady Montague worried about Romeo?
5. What advice does Benvolio give Romeo?
6. How does Capulet respond to Paris’s request to marry Juliet?
7. What are Lady Capulet’s views on the marriage?
8. How does Tybalt react to seeing Romeo at the ball?
9. Why doesn’t Capulet allow Tybalt to confront Romeo?
10. What dilemma do Romeo and Juliet face at the end of the ball?

**Characterisation**

1. Explain how the attitudes of Benvolio and Tybalt differ in A1-S1
2. Choose three words to describe Romeo in A1-S1
3. Explain what makes Capulet’s attitude towards marriage seem quite progressive in A1-A2
4. Explain what makes Lady Capulet’s attitude towards marriage seem more traditional in A1-S3
5. Retrieve two short quotations that suggest Paris is a good match for Juliet in A1-S3
6. Choose two words to describe Tybalt in A1-S5
7. Choose two words to describe Capulet in A1-S5
8. Explain how Romeo reacts when he first sees Juliet in A1-S5
9. Retrieve two short quotations that show Juliet feels distressed at the end of A1-S5

**Quotations**

1. From ancient \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ break to new \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. A pair of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lovers take their life
3. Once more, on pain of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ all men \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. O, teach me how I should forget to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ !
5. My \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to her \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is but a part
6. Nay, he’s a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , in faith, a very \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. O, she doth teach the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ !
8. My only \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ sprung from my only \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ !

**Personal Response**

* Choose a character and write a detailed paragraph about what you know about them so far

**Act 2**

1. Where does Romeo go after the ball?
2. What do Romeo and Juliet agree to do the next day?
3. Why does Romeo need help from Friar Lawrence?
4. Why does Friar Lawrence question whether Romeo’s love is genuine?
5. Why does Friar Lawrence eventually agree to help Romeo?
6. What main concern does Friar Lawrence have about the relationship?

**Characterisation**

1. Provide two reasons why Romeo compares Juliet to the sun in A2-S2
2. Explain why Juliet says that her name is an enemy to her in A2-S2
3. Retrieve a short quotation that suggests Juliet is more cautious than Romeo in A2-S2
4. Explain how Friar Lawrence reacts when Romeo asks for his help in A2-S3
5. Explain what advice Friar Lawrence gives Romeo at the end of A2-S3
6. Choose two words to describe Romeo in A2-S3
7. Retrieve a short quotation that suggests Friar Lawrence is concerned in A2-S6

**Quotations**

1. It is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , and Juliet is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo
3. What’s in a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ?
4. My \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , dear saint, is hateful to myself
5. With love’s light \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ did I o’erperch these \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. In truth, fair \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , I am too \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. Young men’s love then lies not truly in their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , but in their eyes
8. Thou chid’st me oft for loving \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
9. They \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that run fast
10. These violent \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have violent \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
11. The sweetest \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is loathsome in his own \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Response**

* Choose three words to describe Romeo and then explain why you’ve chosen them

**Act 3**

1. Why does Tybalt attempt to provoke Romeo into fighting?
2. Why does Romeo initially refuse to fight?
3. What happens to change his mind?
4. Why does Lady Capulet believe Juliet is sad?
5. What does Capulet demand Juliet to do?
6. What does the Nurse advise Juliet to do?
7. How does Juliet secretly plan to do?

**Characterisation**

1. Explain how the behaviour of Benvolio and Mercutio differs when Tybalt arrives in A3-S1
2. Explain why Tybalt calls Romeo a ‘villain’ in A3-S1
3. Retrieve two quotations that support the idea that Mercutio antagonises Tybalt in A3-S1
4. Choose two words to describe Benvolio in A3-S1
5. Explain why Benvolio urges Romeo to leave Verona at the end of A3-S1
6. Retrieve two quotations that support the idea that Capulet is angry with Juliet A3-S5
7. Explain how Capulet’s behaviour in A1-S2 is different to his behaviour in A3-S5

**Quotations**

1. The day is hot, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are abroad
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ am I none
3. A \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ o’ both houses!
4. Here comes the furious \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ back again
5. O, I am \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ fool!
6. Evermore weeping for your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ death?
7. He shall not make me there a joyful \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ !
8. Hang thee, young baggage, disobedient \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ !
9. O God! O nurse, how shall this be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ?
10. I’ll to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to know his remedy

**Personal Response**

* Explain which character you think is most to blame for the death of Tybalt

**Act 4**

1. Why is Juliet upset at the start of the scene?
2. Why does she need help from Friar Lawrence?
3. What must Juliet give her ‘consent’ to do?
4. What potion is contained in the vial?
5. What will happen to Juliet the morning after she drink it?
6. How will Romeo be informed of the plan?
7. Why is it crucial that he is told the details?
8. How does the Nurse react when she discovers Juliet?
9. How do Capulet and Lady Capulet react?
10. In what sense is Death Capulet’s son-in-law?

**Characterisation**

1. Retrieve two quotations that show Juliet is distressed in A4-S1
2. Explain how Friar Lawrence’s plan will help Juliet in A4-S1
3. Choose two words to describe the Nurse’s emotions in A4-S5
4. Explain why Capulet likes Juliet to a flower in A4-S5
5. Identify two emotions that the exclamation marks amplify in A4-S5
6. Explain how Capulet’s attitude towards Juliet has changed since A3-S5

**Quotations**

1. Hold, daughter, I do spy a kind of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. And if thou darest, I’ll give thee \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Go home; be merry; give consent to marry \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Let not the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lie with thee in thy chamber
5. I’ll send a friar with speed to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to thy lord
6. O \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_day!
7. Death lies on her like an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is my heir
9. O woe, O woeful, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , woeful day!
10. Alack, my child is dead, and with my child my joys are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Response**

* Explain why some members of the audience might view Juliet’s behaviour as selfish

**Essay Task**

**Read and annotate the following extract from Act 1 Scene 5 and then answer the question that follows.**

*In this extract, Romeo and Juliet meet.*

A page of a poem

Description automatically generated

*Starting with this conversation, explain how the relationship between Romeo and Juliet is presented.*

**Essay Plan**

* **Introduction**

Start by explaining that the extract focuses on the moment where Romeo and Juliet first meet, and that they instantly fall in love. State that their relationship is characterised by idealism and intensity.

1. **Romeo’s Use of Religious Imagery**

**Focus on how Romeo uses religious imagery to express his admiration for Juliet**. Explain how the comparison of Juliet to a ‘holy shrine’ highlights her purity and elevates her above the other guests at the Capulet ball. Discuss why Romeo claims to feel unworthy in her presence and link this to his passionate and romantic nature, which is rooted in the courtly love traditions of the time.

* *‘If I profane with my unworthiest hand / This holy shrine*’

1. **Juliet’s Mirroring of Religious Imagery**

**Explore how Juliet mirrors Romeo’s use of religious imagery**. Explain how this demonstrates her intelligence and willingness to engage with him. Analyse how Juliet’s response introduces the metaphor of a ‘pilgrim’, continuing the theme of spiritual devotion and suggesting that their love is a journey. Mention that Juliet’s tone is reserved, but still playful. Romeo and Juliet seem like an ideal match for each other.

* *‘Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much*’

1. **The Structure of the Extract**

**Now focus on the structure of the extract**. Explain that it forms a sonnet (and that sonnets are typically used to express love), which helps to emphasise the romantic nature of the exchange. Make the point that the lines in this particular sonnet are shared, which shows how Romeo and Juliet effortlessly complete each other’s thoughts.

1. **Making Links**

**Now make a link with the Prologue**. Explain that the audience are told right at the start that Romeo and Juliet are destined to die. Discuss how their defiance of the feud reflects the strength of their love and explore how their love contrasts with the hatred surrounding them. For bonus marks, in a separate paragraph, write about Juliet’s rejection of Paris. She does not behave according to conventions and, ultimately, chooses romantic love over the wishes of her parents.

* *‘A pair of star-crossed lovers*’ **+** ‘Well, think of marriage now’