

Literary Analysis Questions for *Romeo and Juliet*

Type 3 Writings

1. Literary Response #1 (25 points)

Interpreting the Effect of Imagery. Throughout the play, imagery creates mood, reveals character, suggests ideas, and otherwise affects your response. In Scene 5, reread lines 94-111, which Romeo and Juliet speak when they first meet.

1. What kind of imagery is introduced by the words “shrine”, “sin”, and “saints”?
2. How does this imagery affect the reader’s view of Romeo and Juliet?
3. Explain what the imagery suggests about Romeo and Juliet’s love?

Focus Correction Areas(FCA’s) Literary Response #1

FCA 1: HIGHLIGHT your topic sentence that defines imagery (5 points total)

FCA 2: Answer the 3 major questions (15 points total)

Number these
in your paper!

1. What kind of imagery is introduced by the words “shrine”, “sin”, and “saints”? (5 points)
2. How does this imagery affect the reader’s view of Romeo and Juliet? (5 points)
3. Explain what the imagery suggests about Romeo and Juliet’s love? (5 points)

FCA 3: Underline your accurate conclusion sentence that tells us why this imagery is used in contrast to the original language Romeo uses to discuss love, and how it shows a change in Romeo by the end of Act I. (5 points)

2. Literary Response #2 (25 points)

Understanding the Character Foil. A *character foil* contrasts with another character and helps to highlight this character’s traits. Explain how the first character in each of the following pairs is a foil for the other.

1-2 Mercutio and Romeo

3-4 the Nurse and Juliet

Focus Correction Areas(FCA’s) Literary Response #2

FCA 1: HIGHLIGHT your topic sentence defines what a character foil is. (5 points)

FCA 2: 4 examples from the play (2 PER CHARACTER SET) demonstrating how each one is a character foil To the other. NUMBER each detail. (15 points)

Number these
in your paper!

- 2 examples from the play of how Romeo & Mercutio are foils (Numbers 1-2)
- 2 examples from the play of how Juliet & the Nurse are foils (Numbers 3-4)

FCA 3: Underline your accurate conclusion sentence that tells us why Shakespeare chooses to use character foils in his play. (5 points)

3. Literary Response #3 (50 points)

Word Origins: What's in a Name? In Act II, Scene ii, Juliet, upset to discover that this handsome young man she has just met is named Montague, delivers these famous lines about the insignificance of names: "What's in a name? That which we call a rose/ By any other word would smell as sweet." Names, however, *are* significant in Shakespeare's plays. They are often used to suggest something about a person's character or temperament. Use a dictionary and the side notes to help you research the origins of three important names in Romeo and Juliet.

1. What chemical element is Mercutio named for?
2. What characteristics of this element match Mercutio's character?
3. What does it mean to say that someone is *mercurial* in temperament?
4. Benvolio's name comes from the same Latin word as the adjective *benevolent*. What does this Latin word mean?
5. How does Benvolio's name match his temperament?
6. How is Tybalt like the cat he is named for? (HINT: reference his title "Prince of Cats" that comes from a medieval text, "Reynard the Fox")

Focus Correction Areas(FCA's) Literary Response #3

FCA 1: HIGHLIGHT your topic paragraph discussing:

- Juliet's speech about names (5 points)
- How names are important in R&J (5 points)

FCA 2: Answer the six major questions (30 points total)

- Number these
in your paper!
1. What chemical element is Mercutio named for? (5 points)
 2. What characteristics of this element match Mercutio's character? (5 points)
 3. What does mean to say that someone is *mercurial* in temperament? (5 points)
 4. Benvolio's name comes from the same Latin word as the adjective *benevolent*. What does this Latin words mean? (5 points)
 5. How does Benvolio's name match his temperament? (5 points)
 6. How is Tybalt like the cat he is named for? (5 points)

FCA 3: Underline your accurate conclusion paragraph that tells the importance of names and what they reveal about characters thus far in the play. (10 points)

4. Literary Response #4 (50 points)

Understanding Dramatic Speeches. A *soliloquy* is a speech in which a character, alone on stage, speaks directly to the audience. An *aside* is a brief remark to the audience, uttered while other characters are nearby but unable to hear. A *monologue* is a lengthy speech addressed to other characters, rather than to the audience.

1. What thoughts and feelings does Juliet reveal in her soliloquy that ends Act III, Scene v?
2. When Lady Capulet, in Act III, Scene v, refers to Romeo as a villain, Juliet utters the aside "Villain and he be many miles asunder." In your own words, what is Juliet saying? Why is it important that the audience, but not Lady Capulet, hear this remark?
3. Reread Friar Lawrence's monologue in Act III, Scene iii beginning "Hold thy desperate hand." What criticisms is he addressing to Romeo?

Focus Correction Areas(FCA's) Literary Response #4

FCA 1: HIGHLIGHT your topic paragraph discussing the difference between a soliloquy, aside, and a monologue. (10 points total)

FCA 2: Answer the 3 major questions (30 points total)

Number these
in your paper!

1. What thoughts and feelings does Juliet reveal in her soliloquy that ends Act 3, Scene 5? (10 points)
2. When Lady Capulet, in Act 3, Scene 5, refers to Romeo as a villain, Juliet utters the aside "Villain and he be many miles asunder." In your own words, what is Juliet saying? Why is it important that the audience, but not Lady Capulet, hear this remark? (10 points)
3. Reread Friar Lawrence's monologue in Act 3, Scene 3 beginning "Hold thy desperate hand." What criticisms is he addressing to Romeo? (10 points)

FCA 3: Underline your accurate conclusion paragraph that tells us what these types of dramatic speeches offer to the audience and why playwrights incorporate these types of speeches into their plays. (10 points)

5. Literary Response #5 (25 points)

Understanding Dramatic Irony. *Dramatic Irony* is a device whereby an audience's understanding of a character's words or actions is different from the character's understanding. We as the audience are privy to (know) information that the characters in the play do not. The audience's special knowledge enables it to view the characters with superior understanding. Since we know how the play will end right from the very beginning (the Prologue reveals this), we feel this irony as we make our way through the play.

1. How is Juliet's meeting with Paris in Friar Lawrence's cell an example of dramatic irony?
2. How are soliloquies and asides examples of dramatic irony?
3. Find at least one other example of dramatic irony in the play.

Focus Correction Areas(FCA's) Literary Response #5

FCA 1: HIGHLIGHT your topic sentence defining dramatic irony. (5 points total)

FCA 2: Answer the 3 major questions(15 points total)

Number these
in your paper!

1. How is Juliet's meeting with Paris in Friar Lawrence's cell an example of dramatic irony? (5 points)
2. How are soliloquies and asides examples of dramatic irony? (5 points)
3. Find at least one other example of dramatic irony in the play. (5 points)

FCA 3: Underline your accurate conclusion sentence that tells us how dramatic irony is important in R&J and what it offers to the audience. (5 points)

6. Literary Response #6 (25 points)

Predicting Outcomes. To predict a story's outcome you need to be alert to **foreshadowing**—the hints and preparations for later events. In *Romeo and Juliet*, foreshadowings appear from the very start. In the Prologue to Act I, for example, Romeo and Juliet are described as “star-crossed”, their love as “death-marked”.

1. What foreshadowings are present in Act IV?
2. Find two other examples of foreshadowing in the play.

Focus Correction Areas(FCA's) Literary Response #6

FCA 1: HIGHLIGHT your topic sentence defining foreshadowing. (5 points total)

FCA 2: 3 examples of foreshadowing & explain (15 points total)

- 1 example MUST be from Act IV
- The other two examples can be from Acts I-III (including prologues)
- Must use direct quotes then explain! (remember citation rules!)
- Number each example (1-3)

FCA 3: Underline your accurate conclusion sentence that tells us why Shakespeare chooses to use this literary technique throughout the play to hint what is going to happen. (5 points)

7. Literary Response #7 (30 points)

Understanding Tragedy and Theme. A **tragedy** is a drama in which the central character or characters suffer disaster or great misfortune. In many tragedies, the downfall results from fate, a **tragic flaw**, or a combination of the two. Other contributing causes may be present as well. The **theme** of a tragedy is the central idea or insight about life that explains why the downfall occurred.

- a. What character traits of the lovers may have led to their destruction (what is their **tragic flaw**)?
- b. What events reveal the tragic influence of fate or chance?
- c. Using your answers to the preceding questions, write a one-sentence statement of the theme of *Romeo and Juliet*. You might put your sentence in a form similar to the following: “The theme of the play is that _____ leads to the destruction of _____.” (think back to our opening lesson on R&J and the themes presented!)

Focus Correction Areas(FCA's) Literary Response #7

FCA 1: HIGHLIGHT your topic sentence defining tragedy. (5 points)

FCA 2: Answer 3 major questions (15 points total)

Number these
in your paper!

1. What character traits of the lovers may have led to their destruction (what is their **tragic flaw**)?? (5 points)
2. What events reveal the tragic influence of fate or chance? (10 points)
 - Give at least 2 examples of events that were influenced by fate

FCA 3: Underline your accurate conclusion sentence that tells your statement of theme (see part c above). (5 points)