

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

# Romeo & Juliet

## Act One | Discussion Questions

**Directions:** You will be expected to answer these discussion questions from the play. If you have questions or do not understand something, please ask. It will save your time and your grade. Due: \_\_\_\_\_

### Part I. Each response should be at least three complete sentences long.

1. Discuss the sources of tension in the first scene. Why are these characters upset?
2. How does Romeo describe the woman he loves in Scene 1? Refer to things like word choice, connotation, tone, figures of speech, and so on.
3. Describe the Nurse. Describe her relationship with Juliet.
4. Who are Romeo's friends and what is their plan? Discuss the debate they have with Romeo, as well as their motivations for this plan.
5. Describe Romeo's reaction when he first sees Juliet.
6. Discuss the parallelism between Romeo's "story" and Paris' "story" so far in Act 1.

### Part II. Each response should be at least four complete sentences long.

7. Refer to Mercutio's lines in Act 1. What kind of friend is he to Romeo? Would you like to have him for a friend? If so, why? If not, why?
8. Discuss the Prologue and what you already know about the play. If you were Romeo and Juliet, would you follow love or stay loyal to your family and friends? Explain your reasons.

### Part III. Literary Elements. Follow the directions for each question.

9. **Foreshadowing.** The Prologue states that this is the story of "star-crossed lovers." There are four strong foreshadowings of evil in Act 1. Identify at least two foreshadowings and explain their purpose.
10. **Pun.** A pun is a play on words. Usually a pun involves words that sound alike, even though they are spelled differently and have different meanings. In scene 4, Romeo is punning when he tells Mercutio why he cannot dance. "You have dancing shoes / With nimble soles. I have a soul of lead / So stakes me to the ground I cannot move" (1.4.14-16). What is Romeo's pun? Find another example of punning in Scene 1.
11. **Paradox.** A paradox is a statement that appears to contradict itself, but that on closer examination reveals a truth. For example, when Juliet describes Romeo as "My only love, sprung from my only hate!" (1.5.152) she appears to contradict herself. On closer examination, however, you understand that she realizes a sad fact: Romeo, her "only love," belongs to the Montague family, a family she has been taught to despise since birth, hence, her "only hate." In scene 1, Romeo describes his love for Rosaline in a series of paradoxes. See 1.1.181-187. Choose two paradoxes and explain them.
12. **Aside.** An aside is a remark whispered by one character to another, which other characters on stage are not supposed to hear. In Scene 1, for example, when Sampson and Gregory pick a fight with the Montagues, they plan their strategy through whispered asides. Find another example of an aside in Act 1 and explain how it is used.