

# **Romeo and Juliet**

## **Literary Analysis Paper**

For the *Romeo and Juliet* essay, you have a choice of six different topics—you need to choose one. A good essay will have an introduction paragraph with a strong, clear thesis, several well-organized body paragraphs with evidence that supports your point of view, and a concluding paragraph with the thesis restated. Your essay should be two to three pages, typed and double-spaced in 12-point font.

This essay assignment will require you to plan and organize your essay carefully. I will provide time for you to work in class and will also help you organize your ideas and gather evidence. Choose a topic about which you have a strong personal opinion – but your thesis must be supported by evidence in the play.

**Here is the timeline of due dates for your paper.** Add these dates to your calendar:

Due Date	Assignment
Monday, April 27 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 Dialectical Journal entries for your topic</li> <li>• Declare project extension(s)</li> </ul>
Monday, May 4 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-sentence outline</li> <li>• Project Extension: Check-in 1</li> </ul>
Monday, May 11 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rough Draft</li> <li>• Project Extension: Check-in 2</li> </ul>
Monday, May 18 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Draft and Project Extensions</li> </ul>
Monday, May 18 <sup>th</sup> - Thursday, May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Project Presentations

### **Paper topics:**

- I. *Romeo and Juliet* tells the story of two young lovers who fall deeply in love and do everything they can to be together. Compare **and** contrast the actions of this couple with those of typical teenagers we see today in America. What factors play a role in this love story that create similarities and differences to today's love stories?
  - a. Possible topics to consider in your analysis (feel free to add your own):
    - i. What are the common dating practices of each **time period**?
    - ii. How do the different **cultures** affect dating norms?
    - iii. How does **age** play a role in decision-making?
    - iv. How much **parental involvement** is expected in a dating relationship? What is acceptable behavior if parents and children do not see eye to eye?
    - v. Besides family grudges, what are other reasons two young lovers would be **forbidden** from being together?

- II. William Shakespeare is very intentional about how he shapes each character in the play so that each plays an integral role in the tragedy that ensues. Analyze the personality traits of 2-4 characters in *Romeo and Juliet* and explain how their unique traits contributed to the tragedy of the play.
  - a. Possible characters to consider in your analysis (feel free to add your own):

Romeo	Juliet	Lord Capulet
Benvolio	Tybalt	The Friar
Mercutio	The Nurse	

- III. Similar to the discussion we had with *Oedipus*, many have debated whether the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* was a result of fate or freewill. Some argue that the stars were lined against them from the beginning while others say that the actions of various characters were to blame. What do you believe?
  - a. (Fate) Discuss examples of foreshadowing and dramatic irony seen throughout the play that reinforce this theme.

OR

- b. (Freewill) Discuss the characterization and actions of characters that directly impacted the ending of the play.
- IV. What universal messages does Shakespeare want to convey with his play?
- V. Why is *Romeo and Juliet* one of the most popular works of literature still today? What themes continue to resonate with its readers across generations and continents?
- VI. The plot line in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* fits together like pieces of a puzzle. In other words, if any small event of the play did not take place, the ending would not have been as effective or the tragedy itself might not have taken place. Do you agree or disagree with this idea?



## Project Extensions

Remember that you should also be working on your project extension(s) for this unit. You will get *up to* 75 points for your literary analysis paper. In order to make an A or a B on this assignment, you will need to add from the extensions below. Remember that the point value indicates the maximum number of points you can receive for the assignment—you will not automatically receive all the points; it will be based on quality.

### *Romeo and Juliet*

- [5 points] Translate and interpret a sonnet (up to 2)
- [10 points] Memorize and perform a scene from the play
- [10 points] Write a sonnet
- [15 points] Translate a scene into contemporary language
- [15 points] Create a visual representation of a scene (collage, painting, comic strip, etc.)
- [15 points] Create an artistic expression inspired by the play (slam poetry, rap, song, dance, etc.)
- [25 points] Read [Kite Runner](#) and answer questions connecting to the play
- [0-25 points] Design your own extension and discuss with your teacher

### General

- [10 points] Write a piece of prose (follow the writing cycle)
- [10 points] Track your independent reading and complete responses
- [0-25 points] Design your own extension incorporating a tenet of IB
  - Integration with another subject area
  - Connection to the Area of Interaction: *Approaches to Learning*
  - Connection to the Essential Question: *How do societal pressures affect relationship decisions?*
  - Connection to Internationalism
  - Synthesis of learning from previous units