

Romeo and Juliet Synopsis

An ongoing feud between the Capulets and the Montagues breaks out again on the streets of Verona. Both sides are warned by Prince Escalus that they must not disturb the peace again, on pain of death.

Romeo, love-sick for Rosaline, is comforted by his friend Benvolio. Capulet tells Paris that he may not marry his daughter Juliet until she is older. Romeo and his friends learn of a party being held by the Capulets, and decide to go to it as masquers. At the party, Tybalt sees Romeo, but is prevented from fighting him by Capulet. Romeo meets Juliet, and they instantly fall in love. After leaving the party, Romeo eludes his friends, returns to meet Juliet, and they exchange vows of love. Romeo tells Friar Laurence what has happened and he consents to marry them.

Benvolio tells Mercutio that Tybalt has sent Romeo a challenge. Romeo joins them, and is visited by the Nurse, who is told the marriage plan. She tells Juliet, who then goes to Friar Laurence's cell, and the lovers are married. Tybalt, looking for Romeo, finds Benvolio and Mercutio. Romeo returns, and is challenged by Tybalt, but refuses to fight. Mercutio draws on Tybalt and is fatally wounded. Tybalt then fights with Romeo, and is killed. Romeo flies, and Benvolio reports what has happened to the Prince, who banishes Romeo. The Nurse tells Juliet of Romeo's banishment and promises to bring him to her. The Friar tells a distraught Romeo he is banished, but advises him to visit Juliet secretly, then to leave for Mantua.

Capulet tells Paris he may marry Juliet in three days, and Lady Capulet brings the news to Juliet, who has just bid Romeo a hasty farewell. Juliet refuses to marry Paris, persisting in the face of her father's anger. She goes to the Friar for help, and finds Paris there arranging the marriage. After he leaves, the Friar devises a plan: he will give her a drink that will make her appear dead and thus avoid the marriage, and will write to Romeo to tell him; they can then elope to Mantua.

Juliet tells her father she will now marry Paris, and Capulet brings the wedding forward to the next day. Juliet retires, and drinks the liquid. When her 'body' is discovered, all mourn, and she is taken to the family crypt. In Mantua, Balthasar tells Romeo that Juliet is dead. He vows to lie dead next to her that night, and obtains a poison from an apothecary. Friar John tells Friar Laurence that he was unable to deliver Laurence's letter to Romeo. Realizing the danger, Laurence leaves to tell Juliet what has happened.

Paris goes to Juliet's tomb to mourn her, and encounters Romeo. They fight, and Romeo kills Paris. Romeo then drinks the poison and dies by Juliet. The Friar arrives to see Romeo dead and Juliet

waking. She refuses to leave, and kills herself with Romeo's dagger. Officers arrive, and rouse the families and the Prince. The Friar explains what has happened. Montague and Capulet agree to make peace with each other

We start off with a little action: a duel between the servants of two enemy families of Verona: the Montagues and the Capulets. After the swords are sheathed, Verona's Prince shows up to say that the next person who fights is going to get killed, and he *means* it this time.

Along comes Romeo Montague, mooning over some chick named Rosaline. Meanwhile, Juliet Capulet, age thirteen, has just heard that Verona's most eligible bachelor Paris has his eye on her. They're going to check each other out that night at a masquerade ball at the Capulets' house. Romeo and his friends have decided to crash the Capulet ball—in costume—because Rosaline is on the guest list.

Things take a turn when Romeo meets Juliet. They fall instantly in love, obviously, but then—gasp!—find out they're from rival families. It's all very dire, but, being two crazy kids in love, they have a secret meeting and decide to get married. Vegas road trip, anyone?

Oh wait. No Vegas. Instead, Romeo meets with Friar Laurence to arrange the marriage, and Juliet gets her nurse to be a go-between. The Nurse meets Romeo and his friend Mercutio (who thinks the whole situation is hilarious), and they arrange to get Juliet to Friar Laurence.

Get ready for some more names: Benvolio, another member of the Montague posse, runs into Tybalt Capulet, who is angry about the Montagues crashing his family party the other night. Romeo, freshly married, strolls into the middle of a tense situation—which gets way tense when Tybalt kills Mercutio and Romeo promptly kills Tybalt in return. Romeo jets, but the Prince still shows up to banish him. (Hey, at least he's not going to be killed.)

Juliet hears from the Nurse that her new husband has murdered her cousin, which is a major bummer—but not enough of a bummer to keep her from being super stoked about her wedding night. The Nurse finds Romeo hiding at Friar Laurence's, and the Friar hatches a plan. Romeo can spend his wedding night with Juliet, but then he has to leave town while the Friar finds some way to get the Prince of Verona to pardon Romeo.

Meanwhile, back at the Capulet house, Lord Capulet decides a wedding (to Paris) is just the thing to distract Juliet from her grief. Oops. After Juliet's awesome, romantic wedding night, she finds out that she's supposed to marry Paris in two days. Even her nurse thinks she should marry Paris, since Romeo is "as good as dead" to her.

Juliet runs over to Friar Laurence's, where she has a weird kiss with Paris and then threatens to kill herself. The Friar comes up with a plan that is 100% guaranteed to work and doesn't sound risky At All (not): giving her an herbal concoction that will make her appear to be dead for 42 hours. Yes, exactly 42. So, she runs home, agrees to marry Paris, and takes the poison so she can be taken to the Capulet tomb where Romeo can find her and everyone can live happily ever after.

Sadly, Romeo is a little out of the loop off in Mantua, and the news of Juliet's "death" makes it to Romeo before word of the Friar's plan. He buys some poison so he can go to Juliet's grave and kill himself, which is obviously the mature response. But first, he murders Paris and then spends some time with Juliet's "dead" body.

He drinks the poison and dies just in time for Juliet to wake up and find him dead. Argh missed connections. The Friar, who apparently shows up at some point, tries to convince Juliet to run away, but she refuses and kills herself with a dagger. Just then, literally everyone shows up to the tomb at the same time and finds the dead lovers. Friar Laurence confesses everything, and the two lords of the rival houses are moved by their dead children's love story and agree to end the feud. Happy ending?

The basic story

A boy (Romeo) and a girl (Juliet) fall in love. But they come from families which hate each other, and know they will not be allowed to marry. They are so much in love they marry in secret instead. However, before their wedding night Romeo kills Juliet's cousin in a duel, and in the morning he is forced to leave her. If he ever returns to the city, he will be put to death.

Juliet is then told she must marry Paris, who has been chosen by her parents, who do not know she is already married. She refuses - then agrees because she plans to fake her death and escape to be with Romeo.

She takes a sleeping potion and appears to be dead, so her parents lay her in a tomb. However, Romeo does not know about the plan, visits her grave, finds her 'dead', and kills himself. Juliet finally wakes up, finds Romeo dead, and then kills herself.

This is just the basic story. There are lots of extra characters and details you can include. However, do not fall into the trap of retelling the story in your work. No GCSE task will ask you to write out the story of *Romeo and Juliet*, and no marker will expect you just to outline the events in the play. Instead, use the plot to support your work and ideas. Next, let's have a look at how you can do this...
