

ROMEO AND JULIET  
PROLOGUE CLOSE READ



- ▶ **INFORMATION:** The prologue is spoken by the chorus, one actor who serves as the narrator. The prologue introduces the audience to the themes of the play. The job of the chorus is to hook the audience by telling them just enough to quiet them down and make them eager for more. The opening prologue is like a preview to the rest of the play. We learn that there is a feud between two families (the Capulets and the Montagues), and the feud will end in tragedy.

## PROLOGUE CLOSE READ

- ▶ Step 1.
- ▶ Read to yourself once. Circle any unfamiliar words.
- ▶ Answer the question on the back of your handout.
- ▶ Listen as a classmate reads. Circle any unfamiliar phrases.
- ▶ Answer the question on the back of your handout.
- ▶ Listen as Mrs. Monte reads.
- ▶ Answer the questions on the back of your handout.
- ▶ Watch the video of a portion of the prologue from the movie version.
- ▶ Answer the question on the back of your handout.

## PROLOGUE CLOSE READ

► Step 2. Underline the following words:

- 1 Two households, both alike in dignity,
- 2 In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
- 3 From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
- 4 Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
- 5 From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
- 6 A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life;
- 7 Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
- 8 Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.
- 9 The fearful passage of their death-marked love,
- 10 And the continuance of their parents' rage,
- 11 Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,
- 12 Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
- 13 The which if you with patient ears attend,
- 14 What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

PROLOGUE CLOSE READ

- Step 2. Write a synonym beneath each of the words below. Work with a partner. FOUR MINUTES ONLY.

1 **households, dignity**

2

3 **grudge, mutiny**

4

5 **fatal, loins, foes**

6 **star-crossed**

7 **misadventured, piteous, overthrows**

8 **doth, strife**

9 **death-marked**

10 **continuance**

11 **naught**

12

13

14 **toil**

PROLOGUE CLOSE READ

## ► Step 3. Figure out the RHYME SCHEME.

A “rhyme scheme” is a way of describing the **pattern of end rhymes** in a poem. Each new sound at the end of a line is assigned a letter, starting with “A,” then “B,” and so on. If an end sound repeats the end sound of an earlier line, it gets the same letter as the earlier line.

My cat is nice. → A  
My cat likes mice. → A  
My cat is fat. → B  
I like my cat. → B

The rhyme scheme of this short poem is AABB.  
THREE MINUTES.

# PROLOGUE CLOSE READ

- ▶ Step 4. Paraphrase each line in your own words. Work independently. FIVE MINUTES
- ▶ *\*Paraphrase: express the meaning of (the writer or speaker or something written or spoken) using different words, especially to achieve greater clarity.*

## SAMPLE

- 1 Two households, both alike in dignity, *Two families, similar in their social status and wealth,*
- 2 In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
- 3 From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
- 4 Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
- 5 From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
- 6 A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life;
- 7 Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
- 8 Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.
- 9 The fearful passage of their death-marked love,
- 10 And the continuance of their parents' rage,
- 11 Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,
- 12 Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
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- ▶ Step 4 CONTINUED
- ▶ Check your paraphrase with a partner. FOUR MINUTES.

## SAMPLE

1 Two households, both alike in dignity, *Two families, similar in their social status and wealth,*  
2 In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,  
3 From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,  
4 Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.  
5 From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
6 A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life;  
7 Whose misadventured piteous overthrows  
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- ▶ Step 5. Answer the prologue questions on the back of the page.

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A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel white lines of varying lengths, slanted upwards from left to right, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.