

“Romeo and Juliet” Reading Guide Questions

Directions: Answer each question in note form (complete sentences are not necessary.)

Act 1

Scene 1:

1. What is your first impression of Romeo? What is his attitude toward love?
2. Considering Benvolio’s and Tybalt’s actions in the scene, which character would you want for a friend? Why?
3. Why doesn’t Shakespeare give reasons for the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues? What reasons might cause such a bitter rivalry?

Scene 2:

4. At this point, what is your opinion of Capulet as a father? How do you think he feels about Paris as a possible son-in-law?
5. Do you think Benvolio gives Romeo good advice? Explain.

Scene 3:

6. What is the nurse’s attitude toward Juliet? What is Juliet’s mother’s attitude toward her?
7. At this point, what can you tell about Juliet’s personality?

Scene 4:

8. What kind of person is Mercutio?
9. What is the purpose of his dream speech? Do you think he accomplishes his purpose?

Scene 5:

10. Why do Capulet and his nephew Tybalt react so differently to Romeo’s presence at the party? Which reaction would you have had?

Act 2

Scene 1

11. Why is it ironic that Mercutio teases Romeo and Rosaline?

Scene 2

12. Explain Romeo’s line “He jests at scars that never felt a wound.”
13. Give two examples of how Romeo describes Juliet’s beauty in lines 27-34.
14. After Romeo appears, what is Juliet embarrassed about?
15. Juliet does not want Romeo to swear his love for her? Why not?
16. Why is Juliet sending someone to meet Romeo the next day?
17. Where’s Romeo going at the end of scene 2?

Scene 3

18. According to the Friar, how are plants and humans alike?
19. Why is Friar shocked when he sees Romeo?
20. Why does Friar Laurence mistrust the love between Romeo and Juliet?
21. Why does Friar Laurence agree to marry the young lovers?

Scene 4

22. Why has Tybalt sent a letter to Romeo’s house?
23. What do we learn about Tybalt from the discussion between Mercutio and Benvolio?
24. Why is Romeo “already dead” according to Mercutio?
25. How do Mercutio and the others insult the Nurse?
26. What warning does the Nurse give to Romeo?
27. What instructions does Romeo give to the Nurse?

Scene 5

28. How’s the Nurse a dramatic foil for Juliet in this scene?
29. How do the actions of the Nurse add to the suspense of the scene?

Scene 6

30. Explain the conversation in Lines 3-16 between Romeo and the Friar.
31. What advice does the Friar give Romeo about love?

Act 3

Scene 2

32. How does the nurse confuse Juliet with the news of the death?
33. What is Juliet’s initial reaction to the news that Romeo has killed Tybalt?

34. How and why do Juliet's feelings change about Romeo killing Tybalt?
35. What bothers Juliet most about the events that have transpired?

Scene 3

36. Explain Romeo's reaction to the news of his fate.
37. How does the Friar feel about the Prince's sentence?
38. What desperate measure does Romeo try to take in this scene?
39. List the instructions that Friar gives to Romeo.
40. Why does Juliet send Romeo the Ring?

Scene 4

41. Why does Capulet think Juliet is grieving? What is the real reason why she is grieving?
42. What arrangement does Capulet make with Paris?

Scene 5

43. How does Romeo convince Juliet that he should leave?
44. How is there double meaning in Juliet's words to her mother?
45. What are Lady Capulet's plans for Romeo?
46. How does Capulet insult Juliet when she refuses to marry Paris?
47. What ultimatum does Capulet give to his daughter regarding her impending marriage?
48. How does the nurse betray Juliet at the end of the scene and what are her reasons?

Act 4

Scene 1

49. What motivates Friar Laurence to come up with his plan?

Scene 3:

50. Do you think Juliet is courageous or foolish to take the drug? Why?

Scene 5:

51. Friar Laurence knows Juliet is not dead. Is he admirable for consoling the family or shameful for lying to them? Why?

Act 5

Scene 1

52. Give Romeo's reason for going to an apothecary, and tell what he buys.

Scene 2

53. How do these two incidents – Balthasar's information and John's quarantine- affect Romeo?
54. What does Romeo tell Balthasar he's at the tomb for?

Scene 3

55. Who is hidden in the graveyard when Romeo arrives? Why?
56. Why does Romeo kill Paris?
57. After Juliet discovers Romeo, she refuses a plan of the Friar. What is it? What does she do instead?
58. What purpose does the letter from Romeo serve? Who was this letter originally for?
59. Who tells the Capulets that they have crossed heaven in some way?
60. Why must the Friar be the character who tells the Prince what has happened?