

Romeo and Juliet Reading Guide #2

Act III

Scene 1

1. Explain how Romeo's reaction to Tybalt's insults is probably NOT what Tybalt expected (lines 63-73), and explain why Romeo says this.
2. Why does Mercutio get involved in a fight with Tybalt when Tybalt is really only interested in Romeo?
3. Explain the part Romeo *inadvertently* plays Mercutio's death.
4. Mercutio says, "*A plague on both your houses!*" three times to Romeo. What does he mean by this?
5. Why should Romeo risk his life in attacking Tybalt?
6. What does the Prince decide will be Romeo's punishment for killing Tybalt? Why would he choose this instead of death?

7. After Romeo kills Tybalt he says he is "*Fortune's fool*." Considering what has happened so far in the play, should Romeo be blaming fate or chance for this situation? Explain.

Scene 2

New word: *epithalamium* Def: wedding song Lines 1-31 are Juliet's epithalamium

1. Explain how the Nurse is confusing Juliet in lines 42-62.
2. Explain how Juliet's feeling for Romeo waiver in this scene.

Scene 3

1. Explain why Romeo feels exile will be as bad (or worse) than death. (lines 31-35)
2. Friar Lawrence tells Romeo he has at least **three things** to be grateful for. What are they?
3. Explain how Romeo's desire to kill himself (lines 114-117) is not surprising for Romeo considering previous characterization.
4. The friar also tells Romeo not to be so depressed about his situation. What does Friar Lawrence predict as the outcome of this exile in lines 158-164?

Explain how Friar Lawrence's predictions for the future could be inaccurate.

5. **Paraphrase** Friar Lawrence's words to Romeo in lines 176-183.

Go hence; good night; and here stands all your state.

Either be gone before the watch be set,

Or by the break of day disguised from hence.

Sojourn in Mantua. I'll find out your man,

And he shall signify from time to time

Every good hap to you that chances here.

Give me thy hand. 'Tis late. Farewell; good night.

Scene 4

1. Explain why Capulet's decision to marry Juliet to Paris at this point is NOT what most of us expect.

Scene 5

1. What **foreshadowing of death/disaster** can be found in this scene?
2. Explain how BOTH parents react to Juliet's refusal to marry Paris.
3. What ultimatum does Juliet's father give her in this scene? (Lines 203-206)

4. What are the Nurse's reasons for urging Juliet to marry Paris? (lines 225-238) What does this change reveal about the Nurse's character?
5. Why would the change in the Nurse's attitude be especially hard for Juliet to deal with at this point?
6. What reason does Juliet give towards the end of this scene for going to Friar Lawrence? What is the REAL reason (make a logical guess)?
7. Considering her situation, what other options does Juliet seem to have? (Keep the limitations of the time period in mind!)
8. In Juliet's closing lines (248-255), she expresses her thoughts to the audience. Paraphrase her words.

Juliet. Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend!

Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,

Or to dispraise my lord with the same tongue

Which she hath praised him with above compare

So many thousand times? Go, counselor!

Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.

I'll to the friar to know his remedy.

If all else fail, myself have power to die.

Act IV

Define:

Monologue:

Soliloquy:

Scene 1

1. What does Juliet say she'll do if Friar Lawrence does not help her? (lines 51-68)

2. What are six things Juliet would rather do than marry Paris?
 - 1-
 - 2-
 - 3-
 - 4-
 - 5-
 - 6-

3. Explain Friar Lawrence's plan. (lines 91-122) What could easily go wrong with this plan? Why would he offer her such a strange solution?

4. Suggest another, seemingly easier, **realistic** way to solve Juliet's problem which they never discuss?

Scene 2

1. What change in the marriage plans is made after Juliet agrees to marry Paris?

2. What is the **dramatic irony** in this scene?

Scene 3

1. List the fears Juliet expresses before she takes the potion Friar Lawrence has given her? Which of the fears seem to be the most realistic? Unrealistic? Explain your choices.

Scene 4

1. Why include this scene? (What is its function/purpose?)

Scene 5

1. What gives the impression Juliet is dead?
2. In lines 71-84, Friar Lawrence is trying to comfort the family. What does he say they should take comfort in?
3. Why include the conversation between the musicians and Peter at the end of this scene?

How has Juliet's character developed (how has she changed or what new traits have been revealed) since the beginning of the play?

From what you know so far about him, characterize Paris. Include traits and evidence.

Act V

Pre-Reading

Romeo and Juliet present the archetype of the Star-crossed lovers. Explain what it means to be the *archetype* of *star-crossed lovers*.

Describe two events that show that their love is truly star-crossed

Scene 1

1. What news does Balthasar bring to Romeo? How does this put a different twist on Friar Lawrence's plans?
2. Why does Shakespeare have Romeo say so much about the Apothecary's poverty?
3. Why does Romeo want the poison? How is this appropriate considering Romeo's characterization?
4. What does Romeo mean when he tells the apothecary, "*I sell thee poison; thou hast sold me none?*" (line 88)

Scene 2

5. What has prevented Friar John from taking Friar Lawrence's letter to Romeo?

6. What two things does Friar Lawrence plan to do now?

Scene 3

7. What is Paris doing in the graveyard?

8. Why does Balthasar plan to stay even though Romeo does not want him to? (lines 43-44) What purpose does Balthasar finally serve in this scene by staying?

9. What does Paris assume Romeo must be doing there? (lines 49-53)

10. Explain why Romeo kills Paris. What possible reason is there in having Paris killed in this scene?

11. **Paraphrase** these lines said by Romeo: *"Oh, what more favor can I do to thee/ Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain/ To sunder his that was thine enemy."* (lines 98-100)

12. Why does Friar Lawrence go out of the tomb, leaving Juliet alone? What happens when he leaves?

What does this reveal about Friar Lawrence?

13. We learn that someone else has just recently died besides Paris, Romeo, and Juliet. Who? What was the cause of death? Why include this death?
14. Who does the Prince point out as the real cause of all these deaths? Do you agree or is the Prince overlooking something/someone? Explain.
15. What “**good**” comes from these deaths?
16. **Paraphrase** these lines spoken by the Prince: *“See what a scourge is laid upon you hate,/That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love”*? (lines 302-303)
17. If this were your only example of a **traditional tragedy**, what would you list as the **basic characteristics** of this type of literature?