

***Romeo and Juliet* and the Elizabethan Era**

Historical Research Project



Learning Expectations:

- You will gain knowledge for *Romeo and Juliet* and Shakespeare by researching and writing about a topic related to the time period and playwright.
- You will practice skills needed to research, cite, and present information on a given topic.
- You will learn about a variety of related issues while only researching one.

Topics:

Below you will find a list of topics, some guidelines for research, and a few suggested web sites. You and a partner will select your three top choices. You will then be assigned a topic.

1. **The Elizabethan Era:** What years does it cover? What were the major developments and important historical events?
2. **Shakespeare's Life and Career in the Theater:** When, where and to whom was Shakespeare born? What kind of education did he receive? Describe his marriage/children. When did he start writing plays? When did he stop? Were there any interruptions in his playwriting career? Why? What other types of writing did he do besides plays? Highlight a few of his most famous plays and sonnets.
3. **Nuts and Bolts: The Globe Theater:** When and where was it built? Describe the structure. What was it made of? Shape? Size? Roof? Describe the stage, actors, and spaces available for the audience. What were groundlings? What was the purpose of the flags? How much did it cost to see a show in the Globe? Describe the audience. What would the audience do if they did not like a performance? How/when did the theater burn down? When/where was it rebuilt? Does the theater exist today? Of so, where?
4. **Courtship/Marriage/Wedding Customs of Elizabethan times:** What did betrothal mean? Research marriage and betrothal customs. What color should the bride's dress be? How is the intention to marry announced? What happens if it is not announced previous to the event? Describe the wedding procession. What is a dowry? Explain how important is a wedding ring to the Elizabethans?
5. **Patronization:** What is patronization? Why was it necessary? Research and describe Shakespeare's four patrons.
6. **The Role of the Female:** What role did the Elizabethan woman play in society? What rights and privileges did she have and which were denied women? Why were females not tolerated as actors during Shakespeare's lifetime? What was the thinking that had young boys playing female roles?
7. **The Class Structure of Elizabethan England:** Discuss how power, authority, wealth, work, living conditions, lifestyles, religion, and culture differed among the gentry, middle class, and working class.

8. **Religion in Europe in the 1500's:** What were the predominant religions in England? Italy? Describe the structure of the church hierarchy. Discuss the power yielded by the church.
9. **Unsolved Mysteries:** Some people believe that Shakespeare did not really write his plays. There are some theories that someone wrote the plays under the pen name of Shakespeare. Was Shakespeare an imposter? Some say the portraits you see of Shakespeare are not really him. Explore these theories. What was the authorship controversy all about? Why are there doubts about Shakespeare's authenticity? Look into the following: Sir Francis Bacon, Edward De Vere, Christopher Marlowe, and Queen Elizabeth.
10. **Say Yes to the Dress: Fashions of the Elizabethan Times:** What styles were fashionable for men and women during this time and why? Who were the most famous designers of this time? How did fashion impact society during this time? What materials and colors were used for clothing for the various classes?
11. **Origins of the Story of Romeo and Juliet, Italian Blood Feuds/Vendettas, and Historical and Cultural Background on Verona:** The story of Romeo and Juliet has roots in Italy's past history. Blood feuds were an integral part of Italian history, especially in certain areas. Explore this topic and the roots of the Romeo and Juliet story.
12. **Holidays, Entertainment, Foods of the Elizabethan Era:** What were popular forms of entertainment? Sports? Describe some of the more popular customs and holidays of the times. What were some of the typical foods and drink of the times – for lower and upper classes?
13. **Creepy Elizabethan Stuff: Medicine, Magic, Superstitions, The Plague, and Punishment:** Explore the common superstitions that were held to be true during this time period. How was medicine practiced, and how were common ailments treated? What was the Black Plague and what was its impact? What were some of the more popular forms of punishment and torture used during this period?

Research: (Individual Grade)

Minimum Required Sources:

- 2 database articles from the MHS Media Center Databases
 - 1 book
 - 2 websites
- (See Ms. Fallon if you have problems finding sources.)

Research Sources Check:

- 25 notes cards (minimum)
- 5 source cards

Project Writing:

Written research report (individual grade):

Partners should split the research equally so that each writes his/her portion of the research information.

Research writing should:

- Use general paragraph form with citations.
- Apply formal writing, MLA Format.
- Have an introduction which includes an interesting hook, background and an insightful thesis.

- Include a properly formatted Works Cited page that should include **AT LEAST** one book, one database article, and one web site article.

Interview Script (group grade):

Once research has been completed, students will develop an interesting angle to use for a live 5-8 interview. This interview should incorporate much of the research you have found and be presented in an entertaining manner, from an interesting point of view. (For instance, you might consider interviewing a “doctor” for the topic of Medicine.) The script should be properly formatted in script form (with speakers and stage direction).

Remember!!! It is never acceptable to present someone else’s work, words, or ideas as your own! Remember to cite, cite, and cite all the information that is not your own – that means directly quoted AND paraphrased information. Plagiarism is illegal and punishable according to the Montgomery High School Student Handbook.

Project Presentation:

Live Interview (group grade):

You will create and perform a **5-8 minute** interview on your assigned topic designed to teach your classmates what you have researched (while entertaining as well.) While you do not have to memorize your script, you should be familiar enough with it that you need only glance down from time to time. Reading the script will result in points deducted. You will be evaluated on your preparation, creativity, and presentation.

Visual: You must include some kind of visual (poster, chart, props, costuming, etc.) to enhance your presentation.

Romeo and Juliet Research Project Checklist/Rubric

Topic: _____

Partner(s): _____

Guidelines	Student Check	Total Points
Research Process (Individual Grade)	Homework grade	
2 database articles 1 book 2 websites		10 pts.
25 Note Cards 5 Source Cards		10 pts.
Research Writing Guidelines (Individual Grade)		
<i>Introduction (Individual Grade)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should be in MLA FORMAT with a heading - Should follow formal writing rules - Intro should have a strong lead, background information, and thesis statement - Thesis statement should be clear, succinct, and reflect the order of the body paragraphs <i>Body Paragraphs</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should be in MLA FORMAT - Should follow formal writing rules - Should have a clear and succinct topic sentence and closing sentence - Applies parenthetical citations correctly 		50 pts.
<i>Works Cited Page</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should be in MLA FORMAT - It includes at least one book, one database, and one web site article. 		10 pts.
Presentation Guidelines (Group Grade)	Class Presentation	
<i>Presentation:</i> Well prepared, informative, smoothly presented in an entertaining manner. Preparation is evident.		50 pts.
<i>Visual:</i> Presentation is accompanied by creative visual(s). Can be a poster, props, costumes, etc. (large enough for class to easily see)		10 pts.
<i>Script Writing</i>		10 pts.

You must hand in this rubric with your project!!!!

Total: _____/150 pts.