

# Before You Read

This selection also appears in *Elements of Literature*.

## The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2 by William Shakespeare

Romeo and Juliet are one of the most famous couples in all of literature. In telling the story of these young lovers, William Shakespeare used his dramatic skills to bring to life a tale filled with action, passion, humor, and tragedy. Romeo and Juliet are teenagers, like you. Do you think that their story could take place today?

### LITERARY FOCUS: TRAGEDY

A **tragedy** tells about serious and important actions that end unhappily. In fact, tragedies often end in death. *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy about two teenagers who fall in love. As you read this scene from the play, look for hints that foreshadow what will happen to their love.

### READING SKILLS: PARAPHRASING

When you paraphrase a text, you restate it using your own words. Note that a paraphrase differs from a summary. A **paraphrase** is a detail-by-detail retelling; a **summary** is a condensed form of the original text—made up of only the main details. Here is a checklist for paraphrasing:

- Have you replaced difficult words with simpler words?
- Have you restated figures of speech (similes and metaphors) in your own words? Have you clarified what is being compared with what?
- Have you restructured sentences so that they are clearer? For example, if a sentence says “Bury me not on the lone prairie,” you might paraphrase it to read “Don’t bury me on the lonely prairie.”
- Does your paraphrase include all the details in the original text?

#### SKILLS FOCUS

##### Literary Skills

Understand characteristics of tragedy.

##### Reading Skills

Paraphrase a text.

##### Vocabulary Skills

Understand archaic language.

## VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

## WORD ORIGINS: ARCHAIC WORDS

Shakespeare wrote this play more than four hundred years ago, so it's only natural that a great many of the words he uses have either disappeared from the English language or taken on new meanings. Words that have dropped out of common use are called **archaic** (är-kā'ik) words. Footnotes will help you with the meanings of these outdated words and expressions.

Below are some of the archaic words you will encounter as you read *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*.

**'a:** he.

**a':** on.

**alike:** both.

**an'** or **and:** if.

**anon:** soon; right away; coming.

**but:** if; except; only.

**counsel:** private thoughts.

**frank:** generous.

**Good-den** or **go-den** or **God-den:** Good evening (said in the late afternoon).

**hap** or **happy:** luck; lucky.

**humor:** mood; moisture.

**Jack:** common fellow; ordinary guy.

**maid:** unmarried girl.

**mark:** listen to.

**Marry:** mild oath shortened from "by the Virgin Mary."

**nice:** trivial; foolish.

**owes:** owns.

**shrift:** forgiveness for sins that have been confessed to a priest. After confessional, a person was said to be **shriven**.

**soft:** quiet; hush; slow up.

**stay:** wait.

**still:** always.

**strange:** aloof or cold.

**wherefore:** why.

**withal:** with that; with.

**wot:** know.





### CLARIFY

An **aside** is a remark that other characters onstage are not supposed to hear. Whom is Romeo speaking to in line 37? Who is not supposed to hear him?

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### PARAPHRASE

Underline lines 43–44, which are often quoted. Restate Juliet's lines in your own words.

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### CONNECT

Romeo finally speaks to Juliet in lines 49–51, but Juliet has to ask who he is (lines 52–53). Why can't she see him?

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And sails upon the bosom of the air.

**Juliet.**

O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore<sup>5</sup> art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father and refuse thy name;

35 Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,

And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

**Romeo** (*aside*).

Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

**Juliet.**

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.

Thou art thyself, though not<sup>6</sup> a Montague.

40 What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,

Nor arm, nor face. O, be some other name

Belonging to a man.

What's in a name? That which we call a rose

By any other word would smell as sweet.

45 So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,

Retain that dear perfection which he owes<sup>7</sup>

Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name;

And for thy name, which is no part of thee,

Take all myself.

**Romeo.** I take thee at thy word.

50 Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;

Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

**Juliet.**

What man art thou, that, thus bescreened in night,

So stumblest on my counsel?<sup>8</sup>

**Romeo.** By a name

I know not how to tell thee who I am.

55 My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself

Because it is an enemy to thee.

Had I it written, I would tear the word.

5. **Wherefore:** why. In other words, "Why is your name Romeo?" (It is the name of her enemy.)

6. **though not:** even if you were not.

7. **owes:** owns.

8. **counsel:** private thoughts.

**Juliet.**

My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words  
Of thy tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound.  
60 Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

**Romeo.**

Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.

**Juliet.**

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?  
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,  
And the place death, considering who thou art,  
65 If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

**Romeo.**

With love's light wings did I o'erperch<sup>9</sup> these walls;  
For stony limits cannot hold love out,  
And what love can do, that dares love attempt.  
Therefore thy kinsmen are no stop to me.

**Juliet.**

70 If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

**Romeo.**

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye  
Than twenty of their swords! Look thou but sweet,  
And I am proof<sup>10</sup> against their enmity.

**Juliet.**

I would not for the world they saw thee here.

**Romeo.**

75 I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes;  
And but<sup>11</sup> thou love me, let them find me here.  
My life were better ended by their hate  
Than death prorogued<sup>12</sup>, wanting of thy love.

**Juliet.**

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

**PARAPHRASE**

Paraphrase lines 58–59. What does Juliet mean?

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**CLARIFY**

What is Juliet's concern in lines 62–70?

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9. o'erperch: fly over.  
10. proof: armored.  
11. but: if only.  
12. prorogued: postponed.

## Notes

*Fain* (fān), in line 88, is stated three times. It means “gladly.”

### WORD STUDY

### FLUENCY

Read the boxed monologue aloud twice. Before you read it the first time, circle all the punctuation marks you find in the speech: periods, commas, semicolons, dash, question mark. You have to pause at these marks of punctuation. If a line does not end with a punctuation mark, read right on to the next line. In your second reading, try to use your voice to indicate where Juliet switches from embarrassment, to frankness, to pleading, to anxiety, and to doubt.

### Romeo.

80 By Love, that first did prompt me to inquire.  
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.  
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far  
As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,  
I should adventure for such merchandise.

### Juliet.

85 Thou knowest the mask of night is on my face;  
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.  
Fain would I dwell on form—fair, fain deny  
What I have spoke; but farewell compliment.<sup>13</sup>  
90 Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say “Ay”;  
And I will take thy word. Yet, if thou swear’st,  
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers’ perjuries,  
They say Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,  
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully.  
95 Or if thou think’st I am too quickly won,  
I’ll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,  
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.  
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,<sup>14</sup>  
And therefore thou mayst think my havior<sup>15</sup> light;  
100 But trust me, gentleman, I’ll prove more true  
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.<sup>16</sup>  
I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
But that thou overheard’st, ere I was ware,  
My truelove passion. Therefore pardon me,  
105 And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discoverèd.<sup>17</sup>

13. **compliment:** good manners.

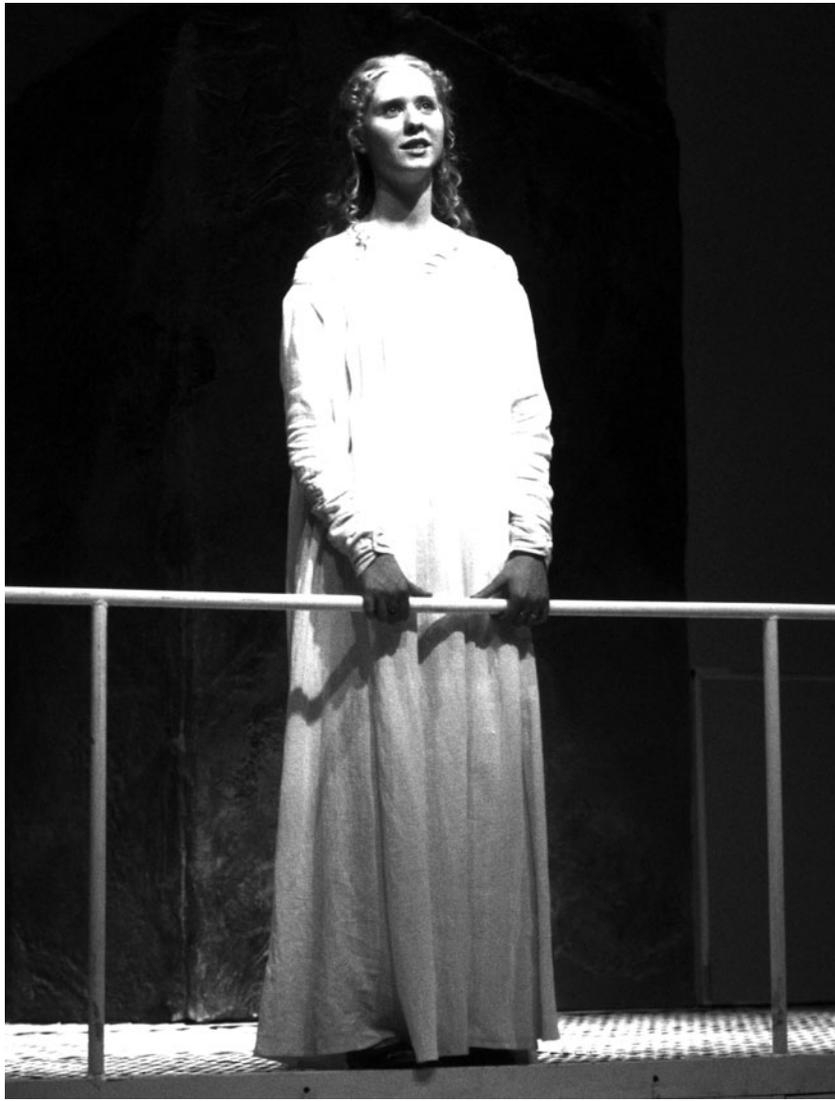
14. **fond:** affectionate; tender.

15. **havior:** behavior.

16. **strange:** aloof or cold.

17. **discoverèd:** revealed.

Martha Swope/TimePix.



**Romeo.**

Lady, by yonder blessèd moon I vow,  
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops—

**Juliet.**

O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circle orb,  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

**Romeo.**

What shall I swear by?

**Juliet.**

Do not swear at all;  
Or if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,  
Which is the god of my idolatry,  
And I'll believe thee.

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**INTERPRET**

Re-read lines 109–111. Why is Juliet afraid of having Romeo swear by the moon?

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**Romeo.**

O blessèd, blessèd night! I am afeard,  
140 Being in night, all this is but a dream,  
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

[Enter JULIET again.]

**Juliet.**

Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.  
If that thy bent<sup>20</sup> of love be honorable,  
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow,  
145 By one that I'll procure to come to thee,  
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;  
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay  
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

**Nurse** (*within*). Madam!

**Juliet.**

150 I come anon.—But if thou meanest not well,  
I do beseech thee—

**Nurse** (*within*). Madam!

**Juliet.**

By and by I come.—  
To cease thy strife<sup>21</sup> and leave me to my grief.  
Tomorrow will I send.

**Romeo.** So thrive my soul—

**Juliet.**

155 A thousand times good night! [Exit.]

**Romeo.**

A thousand times the worse, to want thy light!  
Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books;  
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

[Enter JULIET again.]

**INTERPRET**

What is Romeo afraid of in lines 139–141?

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**IDENTIFY**

In lines 142–148, Juliet returns with a plan. Underline her proposal to Romeo.

**PARAPHRASE**

Underline Romeo's comment in lines 157–158. Paraphrase what he says about leaving Juliet.

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20. **bent:** intention.

21. **strife:** efforts to win her.

PARAPHRASE

Restate lines 166–167 in your own words.

Handwriting lines for paraphrasing lines 166–167.

INTERPRET

What does Juliet mean by the statement “’Tis twenty years till then” (line 170)?

Handwriting lines for interpreting Juliet's statement.

Juliet.

160 Hist! Romeo, hist! O for a falc’ner’s voice  
To lure this tassel gentle<sup>22</sup> back again!  
Bondage is hoarse<sup>23</sup> and may not speak aloud,  
Else would I tear the cave where Echo<sup>24</sup> lies  
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine  
With repetition of “My Romeo!”

Romeo.

165 It is my soul that calls upon my name.  
How silver-sweet sound lovers’ tongues by night,  
Like softest music to attending ears!

Juliet.

Romeo!

Romeo. My sweet?

Juliet. What o’clock tomorrow  
Shall I send to thee?

Romeo. By the hour of nine.

Juliet.

170 I will not fail. ’Tis twenty years till then.  
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

Romeo.

Let me stand here till thou remember it.

Juliet.

I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,  
Rememb’ring how I love thy company.

Romeo.

175 And I’ll still stay, to have thee still forget,  
Forgetting any other home but this.

Juliet.

’Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone—

22. tassel gentle: male falcon.

23. Bondage is hoarse: Juliet is in “bondage” to her parents and must whisper.

24. Echo: In Greek mythology, a girl who could only repeat others’ final words.

And yet no farther than a wanton's<sup>25</sup> bird,  
That lets it hop a little from his hand,  
180 Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,<sup>26</sup>  
And with a silken thread plucks it back again,  
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

**Romeo.**

I would I were thy bird.

**Juliet.**

Sweet, so would I.

Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.

185 Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow  
That I shall say good night till it be morrow. [Exit.]

**Romeo.**

Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!

Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!

Hence will I to my ghostly friar's<sup>27</sup> close cell,

190 His help to crave and my dear hap<sup>28</sup> to tell. [Exit.]



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### INTERPRET

What does Juliet compare Romeo to? Underline the comparison in lines 178–182.

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### INTERPRET

What does line 184 mean, and what could it foreshadow?

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### WORD STUDY

An **oxymoron** is an expression that combines terms that seem contradictory. Underline the oxymoron in line 185. How does Juliet feel about parting?

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### IDENTIFY

Romeo speaks the last four lines of this scene alone on-stage. What is he about to do?

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25. **wanton's**: careless child's.

26. **gyves** (jivz): chains, like the threads that hold the bird captive.

27. **ghostly friar's**: spiritual father's.

28. **hap**: luck.

## The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2

**Elements Chart** The characters in *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* speak in **dialogue**, **monologues**, **soliloquies**, and **asides**. They use **metaphors** and other figures of speech. Fill in the chart by identifying passages from the selection that contain these elements. Identify who is speaking, describe the passage, and include the line numbers.

Elements	Example from Play
Dialogue	
Monologue	
Soliloquy	
Aside	
Metaphor or other figure of speech	

### Test Practice

## The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2

Complete the sample test item below. Then, check your answer, and read the explanation that appears in the right-hand column.

Sample Test Item	Explanation of the Correct Answer
<p>Juliet says “My bounty is as boundless as the sea, / My love as deep.” In these lines she is comparing —</p> <p><b>A</b> her love for Romeo to the depth of the sea</p> <p><b>B</b> her father’s fortune to the vast sea</p> <p><b>C</b> Romeo’s love to the wild sea</p> <p><b>D</b> the depth of her love to her riches</p>	<p>The correct answer is <i>A</i>.</p> <p><i>B</i> is not correct because her father is not mentioned. <i>C</i> is not correct because she says it is “my” bounty. <i>D</i> is not correct because riches are not mentioned at all.</p>

**DIRECTIONS:** Circle the letter of the best response.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. In lines 2–25, Romeo speaks in —</p> <p><b>A</b> a dialogue</p> <p><b>B</b> a monologue</p> <p><b>C</b> an aside</p> <p><b>D</b> a soliloquy</p> <p>2. Romeo says: “But soft! What light through yonder window breaks? / It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!” What comparison is he making?</p> <p><b>F</b> He is comparing Juliet to the sun.</p> <p><b>G</b> He is comparing himself to the East wind.</p> <p><b>H</b> He is comparing a broken window to the sun.</p> <p><b>J</b> He is comparing the East to Juliet.</p> | <p>3. In lines 26–32, Romeo compares —</p> <p><b>A</b> Juliet to an angel</p> <p><b>B</b> himself to a cloud</p> <p><b>C</b> an angel to messengers of heaven</p> <p><b>D</b> mortals to angels</p> <p>4. Which is the best <b>paraphrase</b> of Juliet’s question “Wherefore art thou Romeo?” (line 33)</p> <p><b>F</b> Where are you, Romeo?</p> <p><b>G</b> Why are you called Romeo?</p> <p><b>H</b> Where are you hiding, Romeo?</p> <p><b>J</b> Why did you do this, Romeo?</p> |
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**Literary Skills**  
Analyze characteristics of tragedy.

### Test Practice

## The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2

### Academic Vocabulary

#### SKILLS FOCUS

#### Vocabulary Skills

Understand academic language. Use archaic words in context.

**DIRECTIONS:** Match each term with its definition by writing the correct letter on the lines provided.

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|--------------------|---|
| _____ 1. tragedy   | a. long speech made by one character to one or more other characters onstage                          |
| _____ 2. comedy    | b. play that ends happily, in which the main character gets what he or she wants                      |
| _____ 3. monologue | c. play that presents serious and important actions and ends unhappily for the main character         |
| _____ 4. soliloquy | d. speech made by a character who is alone onstage, speaking to himself or herself or to the audience |

### Archaic Words in Context

**DIRECTIONS:** Have some fun. Try speaking like someone from Shakespeare's time. Complete the paragraph below by writing the correct archaic word from the word box in each numbered blank.

#### Word Box

maid  
nice  
Jack  
hap  
stay

"(1) \_\_\_\_\_!" shouted I, running like Mercury after the school bus. It was my good (2) \_\_\_\_\_ that the driver was a regular (3) \_\_\_\_\_ and stopped the bus so that I might board. Would but that I were never so (4) \_\_\_\_\_ that I would sleep past my clock's alarm! Perhaps I am not so luckless a fool, thought I, when there, the only seat remaining, 'twas next to Julie, the fairest (5) \_\_\_\_\_ in the ninth grade!

## Before You Read

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#### LITERARY FOCUS: TRAGEDY

A **tragedy** tells about serious and important actions that end unhappily. In fact, tragedies often end in death. *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy about two teenagers who fall in love. As you read this scene from the play, look for hints that foreshadow what will happen to their love.

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- Does your paraphrase include all the details in the original text?



**Literary Skills**  
Understand character in tragedy.

**Reading Skills**  
Paraphrase a text.

**Vocabulary Skills**  
Understand archaic language.

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## PLAY

### VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

#### WORD ORIGINS: ARCHAIC WORDS

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- Good-den or go-den or God-den: Good evening (said in the late afternoon).
- hap or happy: luck; lucky.
- humor: mood; moisture.
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- mark: listen to.
- Marry: mild oath shortened from “by the Virgin Mary.”
- nice: trivial; foolish.
- owes: owns.
- shift: forgiveness for sins that have been confessed to a priest. After confessional, a person was said to be **shriven**.
- soft: quiet; hush; slow up.
- stay: wait.
- still: always.
- strange: aloof or cold.
- wherefore: why.
- withal: with that; with.
- wot: know.

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# THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET

## ACT II, SCENE 2

### William Shakespeare

The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet takes place long ago in Verona, Italy. Two families, the Montagues and the Capulets, are sworn enemies. Even their servants fight when they meet in the street. When we first meet Romeo, who is a Montague, he is pining for a girl named Rosaline, who does not return his affections. To distract Romeo, his friends Mercutio and Benvolio take him to a party at the home of the Capulets. It's a masquerade, so the boys wear masks. There, Romeo and Juliet, who is a Capulet, fall in love at first sight. Only after they talk and share their first kiss do they discover they have fallen in love with an enemy. Following the party, Romeo makes his way to Juliet's house, where he hides in the orchard, hoping to catch a glimpse of his new love. His friends have just left him. They have been teasing him for being in love—but they think he still loves Rosaline.

### Scene 2. Capulet's orchard.

Romeo (coming forward).

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

[Enter JULIET at a window.]

But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?

It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!

#### PARAPHRASE

Paraphrase Romeo's first line. What is Romeo saying to Benvolio, who has just left the scene?

**"He who never felt a wound is laughing at my scar,"** which means, **"People laugh at someone's problems when they've never experienced them."**

5 Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,  
Who is already sick and pale with grief  
That thou her maid' art far more fair than she.

Be not her maid, since she is envious.  
Her vestal livery<sup>2</sup> is but sick and green,<sup>3</sup>  
And none but fools do wear it. Cast it off.

10 It is my lady! O, it is my love!  
O, that she knew she were!  
She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?  
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.  
I am too bold; 'tis not to me she speaks.

15 Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,  
Having some business, do entreat her eyes  
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.  
What if her eyes were there, in her head?  
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars

20 As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven  
Would through the airy region stream so bright  
That birds would sing and think it were not night.  
See how she leans her cheek upon her hand!  
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,  
That I might touch that cheek!

**Juliet.** Ay me!  
**Romeo.** She speaks.  
O, speak again, bright angel, for thou art  
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,  
As is a winged messenger of heaven

30 Unto the white-upturned wond'ring eyes  
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him  
When he bestrides the lazy puffing clouds

#### INTERPRET

Re-read lines 2–6. What does Romeo compare Juliet to? Why is the moon envious?

**He compares Juliet to the sun; the moon is envious because Juliet is more beautiful than she (the moon) is.**

#### CLARIFY

Re-read lines 10–23. Underline all the lines in which Romeo compares Juliet's eyes to stars.

- 1. thou her maid:** Juliet, whom Romeo sees as the servant of the virgin goddess of the moon, Diana in Roman mythology.
- vestal livery:** maidenly clothing.
- sick and green:** Unmarried girls supposedly had "greensickness," or anemia.
- discourses:** speaks.

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And sails upon the bosom of the air.

**Juliet.**

O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore<sup>9</sup> art thou Romeo?  
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;  
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,  
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

**Romeo** (*aside*),  
Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

**Juliet.**

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.  
Thou art thyself, though not<sup>10</sup> a Montague.  
What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,  
Nor arm, nor face, O, be some other name  
Belonging to a man.  
What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other word would smell as sweet.  
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes<sup>11</sup>  
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name;  
And for thy name, which is no part of thee,  
Take all myself.

**Romeo.** I take thee at thy word.  
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;  
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

**Juliet.**

What man art thou, that, thus bescreent in night,  
So stumblest on my counsel?<sup>12</sup>

**Romeo.** By a name  
I know not how to tell thee who I am.  
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself  
Because it is an enemy to thee.  
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

**5. Wherefore:** why. In other words, "why is your name Romeo?" (It is the name of her enemy.)  
**6. though not:** even if you were not.  
**7. owes:** owns.  
**8. counsel:** private thoughts.

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**CLARIFY**

An **aside** is a remark that other characters onstage are not supposed to hear. Whom is Romeo speaking to in line 37? Who is not supposed to hear him?

**Romeo is speaking to the audience. Juliet is not supposed to hear him.**

**PARAPHRASE**

Underline lines 43–44, which are often quoted. Restate Juliet's lines in your own words.

**Names do not change the nature of a thing. If a rose were called by another name, it would still smell sweet.**

**CONNECT**

Romeo finally speaks to Juliet in lines 49–51, but Juliet has to ask who he is (lines 52–53). Why can't she see him?  
**It is night; Juliet is on a balcony and she can't see Romeo in the darkness below.**

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My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words  
Of thy tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound.  
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

**60**

**Romeo.**  
Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.

**Juliet.**  
How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?  
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,  
And the place death, considering who thou art,  
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

**65**

**Romeo.**  
With love's light wings did I o'erperch<sup>9</sup> these walls;  
For stony limits cannot hold love out,  
And what love can do, that dares love attempt.  
Therefore thy kinsmen are no stop to me.

**70**

**Juliet.**  
If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

**Romeo.**  
Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye  
Than twenty of their swords! Look thou but sweet,  
And I am proof<sup>10</sup> against their enmity.

**Juliet.**  
I would not for the world they saw thee here.

**Romeo.**  
I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes;  
And but<sup>11</sup> thou love me, let them find me here.  
My life were better ended by their hate  
Than death prorogued<sup>12</sup>, wanting of thy love.

**75**

**Juliet.**  
By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

**9. o'erperch:** fly over.  
**10. proof:** armored.  
**11. but:** if only.  
**12. prorogued:** postponed.

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Notes \_\_\_\_\_

80

**Romeo.**

By Love, that first did prompt me to inquire,  
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.  
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far  
As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,  
I should adventure for such merchandise.

**Juliet.**

Thou knowest the mask of night is on my face;<sup>13</sup>  
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.  
Fain would I dwell on form—<sup>14</sup> fair, fain deny  
What I have spoke;<sup>15</sup> but farewell compliment!<sup>16</sup>  
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say “Ay,”<sup>17</sup>  
And I will take thy word;<sup>18</sup> yet if thou swear'st  
That thou mayst prove false, at lovers' perjuries  
They say love laughs; O gentle Romeo,  
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully!<sup>19</sup>  
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,<sup>20</sup>  
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,<sup>21</sup>  
So thou wilt woo;<sup>22</sup> but else, not for the world.  
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;<sup>23</sup>  
And therefore thou mayst think my havion<sup>24</sup> light;<sup>25</sup>  
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true  
Than those that have more cunning to be strange;<sup>26</sup>  
But that thou overheard'st ere I was ware,<sup>27</sup>  
My true love passion; therefore pardon me,  
And not impute this yielding to light love,<sup>28</sup>  
Which the dark night hath so discovered.<sup>29</sup>

85

90

95

100

105

**WORD STUDY**

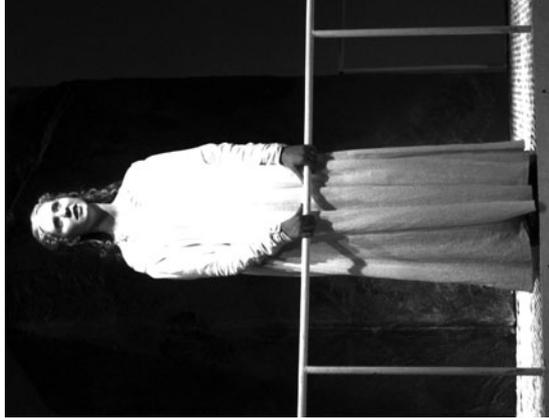
*Fain* (fan), in line 88, is stated three times. It means “gladly.”

**FLUENCY**

Read the boxed monologue aloud twice. Before you read it the first time, circle all the punctuation marks you find in the speech: periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks. You have to pause at these marks of punctuation. If a line does not end with a punctuation mark, read right on to the next line. In your second reading, try to use your voice to indicate where Juliet switches from embarrassment, to frankness, to pleading, to anxiety, and to doubt.

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

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Martha Swope/Timex

**Romeo.**

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow,  
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops—

**Juliet.**

O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circle orb,  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

**Romeo.**

What shall I swear by?

**Juliet.**

Do not swear at all;  
Or if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,  
Which is the god of my idolatry,  
And I'll believe thee.

**INTERPRET**

Re-read lines 109–111. Why is Juliet afraid of having Romeo swear by the moon?

The moon is always changing.

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Part 1

Collection 11: Drama

319

The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2

**INFER**

In lines 116–120, underline the words that tell why Juliet won't meet with Romeo that night. Why has she become fearful and cautious?

**Sample response:** She may be getting worried that someone will come by and discover that Romeo is there.

---

115 **Romeo.** If my heart's dear love—  
**Juliet.** Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,  
I have no joy of this contract tonight.  
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;  
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be  
Ere one can say it lightens. Sweet, good night!  
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,  
May prove a beautiful flower when next we meet.  
Good night, good night! As sweet repose and rest  
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

125 **Romeo.** O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?  
**Juliet.** What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?  
**Romeo.** The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.  
**Juliet.** I gave thee mine before thou didst request it;  
And yet I would it were to give again.

130 **Romeo.** Wouldst thou withdraw it? For what purpose, love?  
**Juliet.** But to be frank<sup>18</sup> and give it thee again.  
And yet I wish but for the thing I have.  
My bounty<sup>19</sup> is as boundless as the sea,  
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,  
The more I have, for both are infinite.  
I hear some noise within. Dear love, adieu!  
[*Nurse calls within.*]  
Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.  
Stay but a little, I will come again. [Exit.]

**IDENTIFY**

Underline Juliet's description of her love for Romeo in lines 133–135. What comparison does she make?

**She compares the vastness of her love to that of the sea.**

18. frank: generous.  
19. bounty: capacity for giving.

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**INTERPRET**

What is Romeo afraid of in lines 139–141?

**Romeo is afraid that Juliet's love is only a dream; that it's too good to be true.**

---

**IDENTIFY**

In lines 142–148, Juliet returns with a plan. Underline her proposal to Romeo.

**PARAPHRASE**

Underline Romeo's comment in lines 157–158. Paraphrase what he says about leaving Juliet.

**Love goes toward love as eagerly as boys run away from their schoolbooks. Love leaves love as reluctantly as boys go to school.**

---

**Romeo.** O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard,  
Being in night, all this is but a dream,  
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.  
[Enter JULIET again.]

**Juliet.** Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.  
If that thy bent<sup>20</sup> of love be honorable,  
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow,  
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,  
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;  
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay  
As stake to win that hourglass.  
Nurse [*within*]. Madam!

**Juliet.** I come anon.—But if thou meanest not well,  
I do beseech thee—  
Nurse [*within*]. Madam!  
**Juliet.** By and by I come.—  
To cease thy strife<sup>21</sup> and leave me to my grief.  
Tomorrow will I send.  
Romeo. So thrive my soul—  
**Juliet.** A thousand times good night! [Exit.]

155 **Romeo.** A thousand times the worse, to want thy light!  
Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books;  
But love from love, toward school with heavy books.  
[Enter JULIET again.]

20. bent: intention.  
21. strife: efforts to win her.

The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2 321

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**PARAPHRASE**  
Restate lines 166–167 in your own words.

**Lovers' voices sound so sweet at night, like lovely music to the listening lovers.**

---

**INTERPRET**  
What does Juliet mean by the statement "Tis twenty years till then" (line 170)?  
**Time will drag until she sees him again, the following morning.**

---

**INTERPRET**  
What does Juliet compare Romeo to? Underline the comparison in lines 178–182.  
**She compares him to a bird on a string.**

---

**WORD STUDY**  
An oxymoron is an expression that combines terms that seem contradictory. Underline the oxymoron in line 185. How does Juliet feel about parting?  
**Parting makes her sad, but kissing goodbye is sweet.**

---

**IDENTIFY**  
Romeo speaks the last four lines of this scene alone on stage. What is he about to do?  
**He's going to the priest to get his help in marrying them.**

---

**Juliet.**  
Hisi! Romeo, hisi! O for a falc'ner's voice  
To lure this tassel gentle!<sup>22</sup> back again!  
Bondage is hoarse<sup>23</sup> and may not speak aloud,  
Else would I tear the cave where Echo<sup>24</sup> lies  
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine  
With repetition of "My Romeo!"

**Romeo.**  
It is my soul that calls upon my name.  
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,  
Like softest music to attending ears!

**Juliet.**  
Romeo!

**Romeo.** My sweet?

**Juliet.** What o'clock tomorrow  
Shall I send to thee?

**Romeo.** By the hour of nine.

**Juliet.**  
I will not fail. 'Tis twenty years till then.  
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

**Romeo.**  
Let me stand here till thou remember it.

**Juliet.**  
I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,  
Remembering how I love thy company.

**Romeo.**  
And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,  
Forgetting any other home but this.

**Juliet.**  
'Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone—

---

**22. tassel gentle:** male falcon.  
**23. Bondage is hoarse:** Juliet is in "bondage" to her parents and must whisper.  
**24. Echo:** In Greek mythology, a girl who could only repeat others' final words.

**322** Part 1 Collection 11: Drama

**INTERPRET**  
What does Juliet compare Romeo to? Underline the comparison in lines 178–182.  
**She compares him to a bird on a string.**

---

**INTERPRET**  
What does line 184 mean, and what could it foreshadow?  
**Juliet worries about "killing" Romeo with too much love. Juliet's words may foreshadow Romeo's death.**

---

**WORD STUDY**  
An oxymoron is an expression that combines terms that seem contradictory. Underline the oxymoron in line 185. How does Juliet feel about parting?  
**Parting makes her sad, but kissing goodbye is sweet.**

---

**IDENTIFY**  
Romeo speaks the last four lines of this scene alone on stage. What is he about to do?  
**He's going to the priest to get his help in marrying them.**

---

**Romeo.**  
And yet no farther than a wanton's<sup>25</sup> bird,  
That lets it hop a little from his hand,  
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,<sup>26</sup>  
And with a silken thread plucks it back again,  
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

**Juliet.**  
I would I were thy bird.  
Sweet, so would I.  
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.  
Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow  
That I shall say good night till it be morrow. [Exit.]

**Romeo.**  
Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!  
Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!  
Hence will I to my ghostly friar's<sup>27</sup> close cell,  
His help to crave and my dear hap<sup>28</sup> to tell. [Exit.]

---

**25. wanton's:** careless child's.  
**26. gyves (jivz):** chains, like the threads that hold the bird captive.  
**27. ghostly friar's:** spiritual father's.  
**28. hap:** luck.

**323** The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2



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**SKILLS PRACTICE**

**The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2**

**Elements Chart** The characters in *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* speak in **dialogue, monologues, soliloquies, and asides**. They use **metaphors** and other figures of speech. Fill in the chart by identifying passages from the selection that contain these elements. Identify who is speaking, describe the passage, and include the line numbers.

Elements	Example from Play
Dialogue	Romeo and Juliet's conversation about Romeo's staying longer at the end of the balcony scene, in lines 125–130
Monologue	Juliet's speech admitting her love to Romeo, in lines 85–106
Soliloquy	Juliet's speech when she thinks she is alone, about Romeo's having the name of Montague, in lines 38–49
Aside	Romeo's question about listening or speaking, directed to the audience, in line 37
Metaphor or other figure of speech	Romeo's comparison of Juliet to the sun, in line 3

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**Skills Review**



**The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2**



Complete the sample test item below. Then, check your answer, and read the explanation that appears in the right-hand column.

Sample Test Item	Explanation of the Correct Answer
<p>Juliet says "My bounty is as boundless as the sea, / My love as deep." In these lines she is comparing —</p> <p><b>A</b> her love for Romeo to the depth of the sea  <b>B</b> her father's fortune to the vast sea  <b>C</b> Romeo's love to the wild sea  <b>D</b> the depth of her love to her riches</p>	<p>The correct answer is <b>A</b>.  <b>B</b> is not correct because her father is not mentioned. <b>C</b> is not correct because she says it is "my" bounty. <b>D</b> is not correct because riches are not mentioned at all.</p>

**DIRECTIONS:** Circle the letter of the best response.

- In lines 2–25, Romeo speaks in —  
**A** a dialogue  
**B** a monologue  
**C** an aside  
**D** a soliloquy
- Romeo says: "But soft! What light through yonder window breaks? / It is the East, and Juliet is the sun! / What comparison is he making?"  
**E** He is comparing Juliet to the sun.  
**G** He is comparing himself to the East wind.  
**H** He is comparing a broken window to the sun.  
**J** He is comparing the East to Juliet.
- In lines 26–32, Romeo compares —  
**A** Juliet to an angel  
**B** himself to a cloud  
**C** an angel to messengers of heaven  
**D** mortals to angels
- Which is the best **paraphrase** of Juliet's question "Wherefore art thou Romeo?" (line 33)  
**F** Where are you, Romeo?  
**G** Why are you called Romeo?  
**H** Where are you hiding, Romeo?  
**J** Why did you do this, Romeo?

## Skills Review

### VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

#### Test Practice

### The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene 2

#### Academic Vocabulary

**DIRECTIONS:** Match each term with its definition by writing the correct letter on the lines provided.

- c** 1. tragedy a. long speech made by one character to one or more other characters onstage
- b** 2. comedy b. play that ends happily, in which the main character gets what he or she wants
- a** 3. monologue c. play that presents serious and important actions and ends unhappily for the main character
- d** 4. soliloquy d. speech made by a character who is alone onstage, speaking to himself or herself or to the audience

#### SKILLS FOCUS

**Vocabulary Skills**  
Understand some of the language and figurative language used in archaic words in context.

#### Archaic Words in Context

**DIRECTIONS:** Have some fun. Try speaking like someone from Shakespeare's time. Complete the paragraph below by writing the correct archaic word from the word box in each numbered blank.

**Word Box**

maid  
nice  
Jack  
hap  
stay

"(1) **Stay** I" shouted I, running like Mercury after the school bus. It was my good (2) **hap** that the driver was a regular (3) **Jack** and stopped the bus so that I might board. Would but that I were never so (4) **nice** that I would sleep past my clock's alarm! Perhaps I am not so luckless a fool, thought I, when there, the only seat remaining, 'twas next to Juliet, the fairest (5) **maid** in the ninth grade!

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## Before You Read

### Pyramus and Thisby from A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare

You are about to read the "Pyramus and Thisby" scene from Shakespeare's comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In this scene a group of working men present a play to celebrate a duke's wedding. This play-within-a-play echoes the story of Romeo and Juliet, but here the lovers' story becomes a comedy. As you read, watch for the ways in which the actors mangle the tragic story of Pyramus and his beloved Thisby. Notice how the noble audience makes sarcastic remarks about the amateur acting.

#### LITERARY FOCUS: COMEDY

A **comedy** is a play that ends happily. Most comedies make us laugh. "Pyramus and Thisby" is supposed to be a tragedy, but amateur acting turns it into a farce, or comedy with ridiculous situations and comical physical actions.

Comedies, like most plays, contain key elements, including **dialogue** (conversation between characters), **monologues** (long speeches delivered to one or more characters), **soliloquies** (long speeches delivered by a character alone onstage), and **stage directions** (notes to actors on when to enter and exit, and so on).

Commoners play the parts in "Pyramus and Thisby." Their audience is a duke, Theseus; his bride, Hippolyta; and their friends.

#### READING SKILLS: RECOGNIZING HUMOR

The essence of humor is surprise. Not every surprise is funny, but nothing is funny without being surprising. We laugh at surprising situations, surprising actions, and surprising word choices. Look for these elements of humor as you read:

- **Comical physical actions**, including silly actions like slipping on a banana peel or hitting the wrong person in the face with a pie
- **Disguises**, including men playing women's parts and women playing men's parts
- **Parodies**, or mockeries, of other works of literature
- **Puns**, or plays on two possible meanings of words
- **Exaggeration**, or overstatement, talking about something and making it more important than it really is or acting in an exaggerated way (overdoing it)
- **Understatement**, or making something less significant than it really is

#### SKILLS FOCUS

**Literary Skills**  
Understand characteristics of comedy.

**Reading Skills**  
Recognize elements of humor.

**Vocabulary Skills**  
Understand words from Greek and Roman mythology.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Selection Title \_\_\_\_\_

## Dramatic Elements Chart

A drama is a work of literature meant to be performed for an audience by actors. Some elements of a drama are listed in the chart below. Fill in examples of each from the selection you just read.

<b>Dramatic Elements</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Protagonist(s)</b>	
<b>Antagonist(s)</b>	
<b>Dialogue</b>	
<b>Monologue</b>	
<b>Soliloquy</b>	
<b>Aside</b>	
<b>Scene Design</b>	

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