

GCSE

# REVISING Romeo and Juliet

STUDENT  
PACK

- Covers all the key themes, acts and scenes
- Active revision strategies and approaches
- Practice exam questions for all boards

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# Conflict revision activities

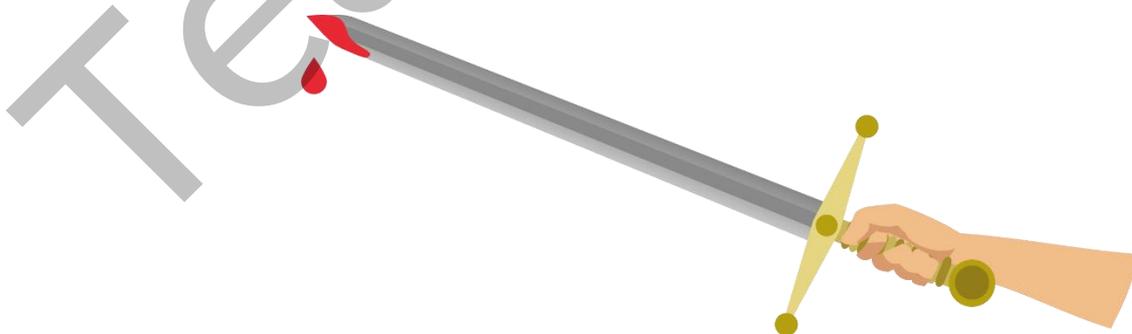


## Overview

'Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean' – the violence of the conflict between the two families turns even the most respectable households into those tainted by the ferocity of hatred. The rift between Montagues and Capulets is so long-standing that no one can really remember what began it. Even the Prince, who warns them the fighting must stop, comments that all the animosity is based on an 'airy' word, as if there is no concrete, reasonable reason for such hostility. Conflict comes in many forms in the play, but these largely interlink: verbal arguments often lead to physical threats and physical threats often lead to full-blown duels and death.

## Characters

Of course, members of the Capulet and Montague families (and even members of the Verona public) are all embroiled in the feud – but this isn't to say they are all fuelled by conflict. It's interesting to think about which characters are naturally inclined to aggression (Tybalt and Mercutio, for example) and those who are more peaceful (Benvolio, Juliet and even Romeo, for example). Why is it that we feel more forgiving towards Mercutio than we do towards Tybalt when both are clearly hot-headed? Is it because Tybalt is arrogant and takes himself so seriously? Is it because we doubt Mercutio truly wants conflict and is really 'all talk'? These are interesting questions that Shakespeare challenges his audience with.



**Setting**

Two interesting things to consider when linking conflict and setting are the different spaces used and how this would work on Shakespeare's stage. Some of the most famous conflicts in the play occur outside in public places – the opening scene, starting with the servants, and the fight scene (Act 3 Scene 1) where Mercutio and Tybalt are killed. In both instances, conflict escalates quickly: there are observers and other people get involved, especially in Act 1 Scene 1 where eventually the heads of both the Montague and Capulet households take arms. This would look very busy and chaotic on stage – a reminder of the widespread consequences of the 'ancient grudge'. But conflict also takes place in private places as the fight between Lord Capulet and Juliet in her room is in a more enclosed space.

**Events**

When exploring the theme of conflict, you may wish to revisit and make notes on:

- Act 1 Scene 1 – the servants' brawl
- Act 1 Scene 1 – the Prince's speech
- Act 1 Scene 5 – Tybalt's threat to Romeo
- Act 3 Scene 1 – the warring families
- Act 3 Scene 5 – Lord Capulet's anger at Juliet
- Act 5 Scene 3 – the reconciliation between the Montagues and Capulets.

**Conflict  
summary**

Choose five words from each of the three sections above (Overview, Characters, Settings) which you think are important (do not choose the word 'conflict' itself!).

Now, order the words from 1 to 15, with 1 being the most important word linked to conflict and 15 the least important.

Lastly, choose three key words: why are they so significant?

**Quick self-check**

1. Can you think of another indoor place where conflict happens?
2. What happens by the end of the play in terms of the feud?
3. Who is in charge of trying to prevent fighting in Verona?

**Challenge yourself!**

Inner conflict is where a character feels torn or is finding it hard to make a decision due to different forces which influence them (e.g. should Juliet stay loyal to her family or marry Romeo?). There are many instances of this in the play – list as many as you can.

## Key quotations

These quotations about conflict have been jumbled up. Can you unscramble them accurately, replacing any wrong words or punctuation?

Prologue	1. 'From grudge ancient break to mutiny new, / Where civil makes civil hands unclean blood.'
Abram: Act 1 Scene 1	2. 'you sir do you bite thumb at us?'
Prince: Act 1 Scene 1	3. 'Three civil bred brawls, of an airy word'
Tybalt: Act 1 Scene 5	4. 'Now, by the strike and honour of my sin, / To stock him dead, I hold it not a kin.'
Juliet: Act 1 Scene 5	5. 'enemy I must loathed a love.'
Juliet: Act 2 Scene 2	6. 'The orchard walls are hard to climb, / And the place high and death.'
Tybalt: Act 3 Scene 1	7. 'villain, the hate I bear thee can afford / No better term than this, - thou art a Romeo.'
Romeo: Act 3 Scene 1	8. 'be my conduct now fire-eyed fury'
Lord Capulet: Act 3 Scene 5	9. 'Speak not, itch not, do not answer me; / My fingers reply.'
Paris: Act 5 Scene 3	10. 'Condemned villain go with me, I do apprehend thee: / Obey, and for thou must die.'

## Revision activity 1: Types of conflict

Organise the different events/quotations in the play into four categories of conflict. You could colour code these to make them easier to remember. Can you think of any other examples you could add, on the following page?

- Threats of violence
- Verbal conflict
- Physical conflict
- Inner conflict

'Make it a word and a blow.' (Mercutio)	Mercutio challenges Tybalt to show him his sword-fighting skills.	'Give me my long sword, ho!' (Capulet)
<i>They fight; Tybalt falls.</i>	'A dog of the house of Montague moves me.' (Sampson)	'Did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?' (Juliet)
'Fetch me my rapier, boy.' (Tybalt)	'I think you are very happy in this second match' (Nurse)	Tybalt tells Romeo to turn and draw.
Lord Capulet insults his daughter.	'What if it be a poison?' (Juliet)	'That I must love a loathed enemy.' (Juliet)
'As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee.' (Tybalt)	'Romeo slew Tybalt. Romeo must not live.' (Lady Capulet)	'... tempt not a desperate man.' (Romeo to Paris)

Verbal	Threats of violence
Physical conflict	Inner conflict

Think it through ...

Which conflict do you think is the most intense in the play, and why?



## Revision activity 2: Ordering the fight scene

Put these events from the climactic fight scene (Act 3 Scene 1) in the right order. The first one has been done for you.

You could create a comic strip as an extension of this activity, with images and quotations to develop your understanding. This sort of activity, called dual coding, helps with retaining information in your memory.

Order	Event
	A. Romeo arrives and tries to avoid conflict – he doesn't want to hurt Tybalt as they are now related due to his secret marriage to Juliet.
	B. Tybalt arrives with the Capulets and requests to speak to Romeo.
	C. The Prince and the parents of both Romeo and Juliet arrive. Benvolio gives an honest account of the fight.
	D. Mercutio dies of his wounds, cursing the family as he does so.
	E. Benvolio advises Romeo to leave.
	F. Benvolio and Mercutio talk: Benvolio is worried about the prospect of a fight.
	G. Lady Capulet wants Romeo killed, but the Prince compromises – Romeo is banished from Verona indefinitely.
	H. Mercutio and Tybalt insult and tease each other.
	I. Tybalt leaves but quickly returns – Romeo gets his revenge and kills him.
	J. Tybalt goes to stab Romeo, but accidentally gets Mercutio instead (under Romeo's arm).
	K. Romeo cries 'O, I am fortune's fool!'

## Revision activity 3: Context and conflict

Match the context fact to the quotation it helps you to understand.

Renaissance Italy wasn't ruled by one central power but divided into lots of city states, each with its own government. Families vied for power – explaining some of the tensions between the Montagues and Capulets.

Men were expected to be masculine: ruling their families (and work life) with self-control, reason and strength.

Marriage was also seen as adding to a man's masculinity – he was seen as mature and capable of physical dominance over his wife.

Audiences at the Globe loved the spectacle of sword-fighting.

One of the main features of Shakespearean tragedy is the deaths of key characters in the play.

'O Romeo, Romeo, brave  
Mercutio is dead!'

'The day is hot, the Capels  
[Capulets] are abroad.  
And if we meet we shall  
not scape a brawl,'

'Come, sir, your *passado!*'

'...we have a curse in  
having her.  
Out on her, hilding!'

'O sweet Juliet,  
Thy beauty hath made me  
effeminate. And in my  
temper softened valour's  
steel!'

## Revision activity 4: Analysing Juliet's inner conflict

When Juliet finds out that Romeo has killed Tybalt she is placed in an almost impossible situation. She loves her cousin and is incredibly upset at his death; she also is devoted to her husband and cannot bear the idea that she may never see him again due to his banishment. Take a close look at this speech from Act 3 Scene 2 when she first hears the news.

1. In one colour, identify all the words/phrases which describe Romeo negatively.
2. In another colour, identify all the words/phrases which describe Romeo positively.

'O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!  
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?  
Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!  
Dove-feathered raven! Wolvish-ravering lamb!  
Despised substance of divinest show!  
Just opposite to what thou justly seemest –  
A damned saint, an honourable villain!  
O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell,  
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend  
In moral paradise of such sweet flesh?  
Was ever book containing such vile matter  
So fairly bound? O, that deceit should dwell  
In such a gorgeous palace!'

3. Choose just one positive and one negative word/phrase – closely analyse how language and/or structure reveal her feelings in a PEE sentence.
4. Look at the pattern of colours across the whole speech – what do you notice? What final comments could you make about Juliet's state of mind at this point in the play?

## Conflict practice exam questions

Read the play extract below and answer the question which is relevant to your exam board.

### AQA

Starting with this moment in the play, explore how Shakespeare depicts conflicts between the two families.

Write about:

- the presentation of conflict in this extract
- how Shakespeare explores conflict in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

AO4 [4 marks]

### Edexcel

- a) Explore how Shakespeare presents conflicts between the two families.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

[20]

- b) In this extract, conflict increases between servants to the heads of household.

Explain how conflict escalates elsewhere in the play.

In your answer you **must** consider:

- where conflict is shown
- how conflict affects those involved.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

[20]

(Total for question = 40 marks)

## OCR

Choose **ONE** question.

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

### EITHER

1. Explore the different ways Shakespeare presents conflict. Refer to this extract from Act 1 Scene 1 and elsewhere in the play. **[40]**

### OR

2. How and why does conflict affect different characters within the play? Explore at least two moments from the play to support your ideas. **[40]**

## EDUQAS

Answer **both** (a) **and** (b).

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on part (a) and about 40 minutes on part (b).

- a. Read the extract below. Then answer the following question:

What does the extract show an audience about the Capulet and Montague families and those who work for them? Refer closely to details from the extract to support your answer.

**[15]**

- b. \*Write about how the theme of conflict is presented at different points in the play.

**[25]**

\*5 of this question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

**Act 1 Scene 1**

**TYBALT**

What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?  
Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

**BENVOLIO**

I do but keep the peace. Put up thy sword,  
Or manage it to part these men with me.

**TYBALT**

What, drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word  
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee.  
Have at thee, coward!

*They fight*

*Enter three or four Citizens with clubs or partisans*

**FIRST CITIZEN**

Clubs, bills, and partisans! Strike! Beat them down! Down with  
the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!

*Enter CAPULET in his gown, and LADY CAPULET*

**CAPULET**

What noise is this? Give me my long sword, ho!

**LADY CAPULET**

A crutch, a crutch! Why call you for a sword?

**CAPULET**

My sword, I say! Old Montague is come,  
And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

*Enter MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE*

**MONTAGUE**

Thou villain Capulet! – Hold me not. Let me go.

**LADY MONTAGUE**

Thou shalt not stir a foot to seek a foe.

*Enter PRINCE, with Attendants*

**PRINCE**

Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,  
 Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel –  
 Will they not hear? What, ho – you men, you beasts,  
 That quench the fire of your pernicious rage  
 With purple fountains issuing from your veins!  
 On pain of torture, from those bloody hands  
 Throw your mistempered weapons to the ground,  
 And hear the sentence of your moved prince.  
 Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,  
 By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,  
 Have thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets  
 And made Verona's ancient citizens  
 Cast by their grave-beseeming ornaments,  
 To wield old partisans, in hands as old,  
 Canker'd with peace, to part your cankered hate.  
 If ever you disturb our streets again,  
 Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.

**Some prompts to help you:**

Extract	Whole text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the impact of Tybalt's heavily punctuated sentences.</li> <li>• What language techniques help reveal Tybalt and Mercutio's perspectives towards fighting?</li> <li>• How does the scene, with its levels of tension, develop?</li> <li>• What are the Prince's thoughts on the feud? What language techniques emphasise these?</li> <li>• How might audiences feel when Lord Capulet and Montague get involved?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where else does conflict begin verbally and then get worse?</li> <li>• What conflicts happen within, rather than between, families?</li> <li>• Which more peaceful characters can become involved in conflict?</li> <li>• Where can family loyalty create conflict?</li> <li>• What does Shakespeare want us to think about the arguments that take place in the play?</li> </ul>