

WEEK 5: PERSUASIVE LETTER



CONTEXT: ACT 5

At the start of Act 5, we find Romeo in Mantua. His servant, Balthasar, soon arrives and tells Romeo that Juliet has been found, dead. Romeo is distraught and goes to an apothecary (a seller of drugs) to buy some poison. He reveals that he will go to Juliet's tomb, where he plans to kill himself.

Romeo: **Come, cordial and not poison, go with me
To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee.**

In Scene 2, Friar Laurence speaks to Friar John (who was given a letter for Romeo with details of Friar Laurence's plan concerning Juliet's fake death). However, Friar John reveals that he was not able to take the letter to Mantua due to an outbreak of disease, which forced him to quarantine.

Friar John: **I could not send it—here it is again—
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.**

Friar Laurence is worried that Romeo has not been given the letter and therefore is unaware of the plan. He therefore decides to go to the tomb himself to rescue Juliet and sends another letter to Romeo to update him on the situation.

Friar Laurence: **Now must I to the monument alone.
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.
She will beshrew me much that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents.
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come.
Poor living corpse, closed in a dead man's tomb!**

In Scene 3, we find Paris in the churchyard near Juliet's grave. After being warned by his servant that someone is coming, Paris hides. Romeo soon arrives with Balthasar. Romeo tells Balthasar that he is coming to collect a ring from Juliet's tomb and then orders his servant to leave. However, Balthasar is wary of his master's intentions and decides to stay and watch.

Balthasar: (aside) **For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout.
His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.**

Suddenly, Paris appears from the shadows and starts an argument with Romeo. He believes Romeo is to blame for Juliet's death because he murdered her cousin, Tybalt, which caused her such sadness that she died.

Paris: (aside) **This is that banished haughty Montague,
That murdered my love's cousin, with which grief,
It is supposed the fair creature died.
And here is come to do some villainous shame
To the dead bodies. I will apprehend him.**

(to Romeo) **Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague!**

Despite Romeo trying to get Paris to leave, the two men start to fight and Romeo kills Paris. He takes Paris' body into Juliet's tomb and finds Juliet lying peacefully. He says that he wants to spend eternity with Juliet and so drinks the poison he has brought with him. He kisses Juliet and then dies.

Romeo: **O true apothecary,
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.**

Friar Laurence arrives in the tomb and finds the dead bodies of Romeo and Paris. Juliet then wakes up and asks the Friar where her husband is. He explains what has happened and encourages Juliet to leave the tomb as a party of people are approaching, but Juliet refuses to leave with the Friar. She sees Romeo's dead body and stabs herself with his dagger. She dies.

Juliet: **O happy dagger,
This is thy sheath. There rust and let me die.**

The Prince, the Capulets and Lord Montague soon arrive on the scene, along with Balthasar and Friar Laurence. The Prince asks Friar Laurence to explain what has happened, which he does. After hearing about the secret marriage, the Prince explains how angry he is with the two families and their feud, which has taken the lives of far too many innocent people.

Finally, the Prince closes the play with a speech, commenting on what a sad story this is:

Prince: **A glooming peace this morning with it brings.
The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head.
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things.
Some shall be pardoned, and some punished.
For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.**

LESSON 1

U: TO GATHER EVIDENCE FROM A TEXT.

National Curriculum Links

Reading

Pupils should maintain positive attitudes to reading and an understanding of what they read by:

- continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks
- increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books

Pupils should understand what they have read by:

- checking that the book makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and exploring the meaning of words in context
- drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

MAIN TEACHING:

Ask the children the following question:

How has the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues affected the people of Verona?

Ask them to discuss this with their partner and then take feedback from the class. Explain that today, they are going to be looking at different scenes from the play to explore the different ways the feud affects the citizens of Verona.

To make sure the children understand the task, look at an example together. Show the following extract from Act 1 Scene 1.

Ask the children to consider what this extract shows us about how the citizens of Verona feel about the feud (*pupils might say that it shows how angry the people of Verona are with the two families*).

Ask: Why do you think the people are angry? Which part of the text is evidence of this?

Model highlighting the lines in the text that show how angry the people are with the Capulets and the Montagues.

Tell the children that they are going to be given a range of different extracts from the play. Working with a partner, they need to:

1. Think about what the extract shows about the effect the feud has on others
2. Pick out evidence from the text which best shows this
3. Be ready to share their findings with the rest of the class

Children should work in mixed ability pairs for this activity.

Resources for this activity are found on the next page.

Act 1 Scene 1

**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!**

Tybalt and Benvolio fight. Enter three or four citizens, with clubs and spears.

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

Enter Lord Capulet in his gown, and his wife, Lady Capulet.

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

Extract 1: Act 1 Scene 1

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,
Cankered with peace, to part your cankered hate.
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
For this time, all the rest depart away.
You, Capulet, shall go along with me,
And, Montague, come you this afternoon
To know our farther pleasure in this case,
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.**

thrice = 3 times wield = hold partisan = a type of weapon

What does this extract tell us about the effect of the feud on the citizens?

Highlight parts of the text as evidence of this.

Extract 2: Act 3 Scene 1

Mercutio: **Tybalt, you ratcatcher, will you walk?**

Tybalt: **What wouldst thou have with me?**

Mercutio: **Good King of Cats, nothing but one of your nine lives...
Make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.**

Tybalt: **I am for you.** (*draws his sword*)

Romeo: **Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.**

Mercutio and Tybalt fight.

Romeo: (*draws his sword*) **Draw, Benvolio. Beat down their weapons.
Gentlemen, for shame! Forbear this outrage.
Tybalt, Mercutio! The Prince expressly hath
Forbidden bandying in Verona streets.
Hold, Tybalt! Good Mercutio!**

Romeo tries to break up the fight. Tybalt stabs Mercutio under Romeo's arm.

Petruchio: **Away, Tybalt.**

Tybalt, Petruchio and other Capulets exit.

Mercutio: **I am hurt.
A plague o' both your houses! I am sped.
Is he gone and hath nothing?**

rapier = sword o' = on/ am sped = I am finished

What does this extract tell us about the effect of the feud on Mercutio?

Highlight parts of the text as evidence of this.

Extract 3: Act 4 Scene 1

Juliet: **O, shut the door! And when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me, past hope, past cure, past help.**

Friar Laurence: **O Juliet, I already know thy grief.
It strains me past the compass of my wits.
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue it,
On Thursday next be married to this county.**

Juliet: **Tell me not, Friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it.
If in thy wisdom thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,
And with this knife I'll help it presently.
(shows him a knife)
...I long to die
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.**

prorogue = delay

What does this extract tell us about the effect of the feud on Juliet?

Because she has to keep her marriage to Romeo a secret, what is she being asked to do by her parents?

How does this make her feel?

Highlight parts of the text as evidence of this.

Extract 4: Act 5 Scene 3

Romeo: **Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man.**

Paris: **I do defy thy commination.
And apprehend thee for a felon here.**

Romeo: **Will thou provoke me? Then have at thee, boy!**

Romeo and Paris fight.

Paris: *(falls)* **Oh, I am slain! If thou be merciful,
Open the tomb. Lay me with Juliet.**

Paris dies.

What does this extract tell us about the effect of the feud on Paris?

Highlight parts of the text as evidence of this.

Extract 5: Act 5 Scene 3

Prince: **Where be these enemies?—Capulet! Montague!
See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
And I, for winking at your discords, too
Have lost a brace of kinsmen. All are punished.**

scourge = great suffering brace = a pair

What does this extract tell us about the effect of the feud on others?

Highlight parts of the text as evidence of this.

Once the children have been given enough time to look at the five different extracts, ask them to share the different ways that the feud between the two families has had an effect on others.

Record a list of their ideas to be displayed in the classroom. The list might include some of the following ideas:

- Feud has caused lots of violence on the streets of Verona
- Older citizens have been forced to fight to try and keep the peace
- Paris and Mercutio have lost their lives
- Two young people (Romeo and Juliet) have died

Plenary

Also ask children to pick out key phrases from the text which show the effect of the feud on others (i.e. the lines they highlighted).

Then ask children to pick one line/phrase and prepare it for performance by learning it off by heart and adding an action.

They should then perform their line to the rest of the class.

E.g. *“Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!”*

“Thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets.”

“A plague o’both your houses!”

“I long to die!”