

FIGURES OF SPEECH IN *ROMEO AND JULIET* Acts One and Two

Directions: Look at the following examples of different kinds of figurative language from Acts One and Two. Explain the effect of the figurative language on the conversation and the scene.

1. pun – Humorous use of a word with two or more possible meanings.

Example: I. i

“I’ll back you up.”

“How? By backing up and running?”

Effect:

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2. oxymoron – Figure of speech in which opposites are combined.

Example: I. i.,

“Loving hate, cold fire, waking sleep, living dead.”

(description of lovesickness)

Effect:

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3. simile – Figure of speech that compares two things using “like” or “as.”

Example: I. ii.

“Read his face like a diary

Inscribed with the rest of your life.”

Effect:

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4. allusion – A reference to a person, place, or event in past history, religion, mythology, or literature.

Example: I. iii.

“Borrow Cupid’s wings for the night

And let your spirits fly.”

Effect:

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5. foreshadowing – Hints of something to happen later.

Example: I. iv.

“For my mind misgives

Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars

Shall bitterly begin his fearful date

With this night’s revels, and expire the turn

Of a despised life closed in the breast

By some vile forfeit of untimely death.”

Effect:

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6. paradox – A statement which seems contradictory but is really logical.

Example: I. iii.

“My only hate is now my only love.”

Effect:

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7. hyperbole – An exaggeration to make a point.

Example: II. i.

“It’s twenty years ’till then”

(until the afternoon)

Effect:

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8. personification – Figure of speech that gives human characteristics to an inanimate object, animal, or idea.

Example: I. vii.

“Our child has married Death.”

Effect:

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9.. metaphor – a comparison between two apparently dissimilar things.

Example: II. i.

“Wisely and slow; they stumble who run fast.”

-Friar Lawrence

Effect:

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