

Romeo and Juliet Act I Study Guide

ACT 1 SCENE 1

1. When we first see Romeo he shows all the signs of a Petrarchan Lover—someone who is in love with the idea of being in love. How has Romeo been acting, according to his father?

2. We then learn that Romeo is suffering from Unrequited Love—He loves someone who does not love him back. What suggestion does Benvolio make to Romeo to help him get over his unrequited love for Rosaline?

ACT 1 SCENE 2

1. In this scene Lord Capulet talks to Paris about marrying his daughter Juliet. What two reasons does he give for not wanting Juliet to marry at this time?

2. On what condition will Lord Capulet agree to Juliet's marriage with Paris?

3. What does this reveal about Lord Capulet's love for his daughter?

4. From the servant who cannot read we learn that Rosaline, with whom Romeo believes he is in love, will be at the Capulet party. Why does this excite Benvolio? What is his plan?

5. Why does Romeo agree to go to the party?

6. What coincidence takes place in this scene? Explain how the theme of fate is being developed.

ACT 1 SCENE 3

1. What is the nurse's relationship with Juliet?
2. How would you describe the nurse's personality?
3. What is the nurse's one wish for Juliet and why?
4. When Lady Capulet asks Juliet how she feels about being married, what is Juliet's answer, and what does it reveal about her character?
5. Lady Capulet's speech about Paris compose a conceit. A conceit is an extended, exaggerated comparison or metaphor between two unlike things—in this case, between Paris and a book that needs to be bound. What does Lady Capulet see in Paris that would make him a good match for Juliet? What is Lady Capulet's attitude toward love and marriage?
6. Explain Juliet's answer to her mother when asked if she can love Paris. What does it reveal about her knowledge of being in love? What is her attitude toward love and marriage?

ACT 1 SCENE 4

1. Why does Romeo feel uneasy about going to the party? What dream-like premonition has he had?

2. What does his speech say about the Elizabethan attitude toward the stars and astrology?

3. What decision does Romeo make at the end of the scene?

ACT 1 SCENE 5

1. We learn from Romeo's Soliloquy (a speech delivered while the speaker is alone, calculated to inform the audience of what is passing in the character's mind) that he is struck by love at first sight when he sees Juliet at the party. Paraphrase Romeo's speech. To what does he compare Juliet?

2. Tybalt recognizes Romeo's voice and tries to start a fight. What two reasons does Lord Capulet give for stopping him?

3. What threat does Tybalt make as he agrees to withdraw [from fighting with Romeo]?

4. What does this Foreshadow?

5. Dramatic Irony is when the audience knows something the characters do not. What is ironic about Juliet's last few lines?