

Romeo and Juliet

by William Shakespeare

Synopsis

3

Lesson Plan Overview

4

Learning Objectives

Skills

Assumed Knowledge

Resources and Materials

Estimated Time

Class Profile

Common Core Standards

Previous Lesson

5

Main Lesson

8

Following Lesson

11

Handouts and Worksheets

12



Romeo and Juliet

by William Shakespeare

While *Romeo and Juliet*, one of the most famous Shakespearean tragedies in the Western canon, is heralded as the greatest love story ever told, this claim is controversial.

Romeo, the main romantic hero of this love story, claims to be in love with another woman at the beginning of the play. We meet a morose Romeo in act I, scene II bemoaning the lack of care his love Rosaline shows him and promising Benvolio that he will never fall in love with another woman. Romeo compares his love to a religion and swears that if he betrays his love for Rosaline, it will be heresy—a crime punishable by burning at the stake.

However, from the title, prologue, and general lore of the story, the audience knows that Romeo will spend most of the play in love with Juliet, not Rosaline.

This contradiction seems to challenge the image of Romeo as the archetype of romantic love. Over the course of the play, Shakespeare uses subtle rhetorical shifts in the interactions between Romeo and Juliet in order to show the maturation of Romeo's love. Juliet moves his love out of the realm of romantic fantasy in order to transform him from a fickle lover into the ideal romantic hero.

Constructing Love with Metaphors

This lesson plan asks students to analyze the lovers' first exchange in the famous balcony scene in order to determine how Juliet uses rhetoric to correct Romeo's romantic discourse and ground his idealized love in reality. Students will closely examine Romeo and Juliet's language in act II, scene II to notice the difference in the metaphors both characters use: Juliet creates more logical metaphors that advance her thought process and dialogue, whereas Romeo crafts metaphors that resemble unrealistic tropes of Petrarchan love poetry. Students will discuss their interpretations of these metaphors with their peers and determine to what extent Juliet converts Romeo's unrealistic romantic love into real love. Upon completing this lesson plan, students will be able to analyze complex metaphors and use their analysis to evaluate the romantic relationship in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Lesson Plan Overview / Constructing Love with Metaphors in Act II, Scene II

Estimated Time

60 min.**Skills**

Close reading / Drawing inferences / Textual interpretation / Lexical analysis

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- examine complex Shakespearean metaphors to evaluate deeper meanings in the dialogue
- distinguish rhetorical shifts in the characters' conversation to evaluate their thoughts and feelings
- create an interpretation of the scene that displays/presents students' awareness of both characters' motivations
- judge how this scene sets up the romance that develops throughout the rest of the play

Resources & Materials

- www.owleyes.org
- Owl Eyes Classroom
- *Romeo and Juliet* from Owl Eyes Library
- Handouts:
 - *Analyzing Romeo and Juliet's Lines in Act II, Scene II*
 - *Key: Analyzing Romeo and Juliet's Lines in Act II, Scene II*
- Computers or tablets; paper and pencil

Common Core Standards

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3**
Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4**
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.5**
Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Assumed Knowledge

- Students can use a computer to access information and navigate a web site
- Students have experience taking notes and annotating texts
- Students have experience analyzing language within texts
- Students can discuss texts with peers in a cooperative learning environment
- Students have read *Romeo and Juliet*. They are familiar with Shakespeare's style, plot, and characters

Class Profile

This lesson is appropriate for high school students of different racial/ethnic heritages, cultural experiences, and reading skills who are studying English literature in grades eleven and twelve. Some elements in the lesson are consistent with the content found in Advanced Placement Literature classes and dual-credit courses in literature.

Main Lesson / Constructing Love with Metaphors in Act II, Scene II

Time /
Interaction

Stage

Aims

10 min.

T-CL

Pre-Main Event

Tell students that today they will be looking at metaphors in the famous balcony scene. Establish the context of the debate by reminding students that Romeo was in love with another woman at the beginning of the play. In the scene before he meets Juliet, Romeo claims that falling in love with a woman other than Rosaline would be heresy and that he would gladly be burned at the stake if it happened.

This context raises the question: how is this play recognized as the quintessential love story when the main character seems to be more in love with the concept of love than the actual woman?

Explain that students will compare Juliet's metaphors to Romeo's in order to determine whether or not Juliet is able to convert Romeo's love from a fanciful romance to a tangible love for her.

Primary Aim

Provide the context that will introduce students to the main debate they will examine

Secondary Aims

- Prepare students for the activity that they will be completing in class
- Direct students to the appropriate scene on Owl Eyes

35 min.

T-CL

Main Event

Explain that students will now look closely at selections from Romeo's and Juliet's lines to determine how they use metaphors differently in this scene. Then they will look at how these different approaches to language shape the exchange between the two characters.

Divide students into groups of four. Each group will look at one passage of Juliet's lines, one passage of Romeo's lines, and a short exchange between the two.

Hand out "Romeo and Juliet's Lines Worksheet." Begin the activity.

S-S-S

As students complete the activity with their group partners, circulate throughout the room to monitor their progress; provide assistance as needed, and guide their study by encouraging students to question their assumptions about the text.

Primary Aim

To use literary analysis skills to interpret Romeo's and Juliet's use of metaphors and determine what this interpretation says about their romance as a whole

Secondary Aims

- Practice analysis as a way to draw inferences from the text
- Interpret dialogue to determine shifts within the characters and the overall romance that drives the story

(continued on next page)

T-CL / Teacher-Classroom • S-S / Pair Work • S-S-S / Group Work • OCFB / Open Class Feedback

Worksheet / Analyzing Romeo and Juliet's Lines in Act II, Scene II

To analyze why these characters use metaphors differently in this scene, determine the subject, comparison, and intended impact of the metaphor in each passage. Decide how this use of metaphors informs your understanding of the character.

Romeo Text:

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-pacing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

1. In your own words, paraphrase what is being said in these lines.

2. What is the subject?

3. What is the comparison?

4. What are the connotations of the comparison?

5. What do these connotations tell us about the subject?

6. What does this metaphor tell us about the speaker and their approach to love?

Looking for More Resources?

From lesson plans and teaching guides to classroom activities focusing on specific literary and rhetorical devices, we're adding dozens of new, original teaching resources every month.

Owl Eyes Teacher Members unlock access to

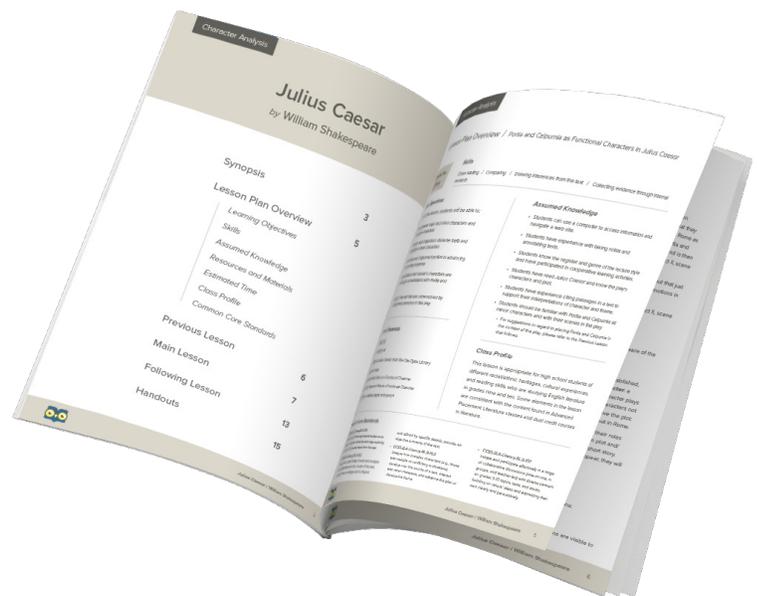
- 50+ lesson plans and teaching guides
- 100+ classroom activities and worksheets
- 200+ annotated texts and primary sources
- Priority Customer Support

All for less than \$10/month. Cancel anytime.



Our **comprehensive lesson plans** have been developed to meet the demanding needs of today's educational environment by promoting interaction, analytical skills, and student-centered activities.

All of our educational resources draw on Common Core standards, save teachers valuable planning time, and get students working directly with the texts.



Visit Us to Get Started

Learn more and sign up today at Owl Eyes!

owleyes.org/teachers

Prefer to email? Contact us at info@owleyes.org