Context:

**The Elizabethan era** - This period was ‘The Elizabethan Era’ which was also known as ‘The Renaissance’. A time of significant change in the fields of religion, politics, science, language and the arts.

**Patriarchy** – patriarchal societies are those in which men dominate, and inheritance passes through male heirs.

**Women** – Women were expected to obey everything that their husbands said. They were expected to be faithful and respectful at all times. They would have been regarded as a possession, first owned by the father, then given to and owned by the husband. Women were supposed to be religious and hate violence of any kind. They were considered the delicate, “fairer” sex and they should be quiet and reserved, always respecting the wishes and opinions of the males in their lives.

**Family** - Going against your family would have been seen to be betraying God.

**Religion –** Catholics and protestants were the dominating religions in Elizabethan England. Juliet’s parents want her to marry Paris although she is only 14 at the time! She secretly marries Romeo the day after they meet. Suicide and bigamy were both considered to be mortal sins.

**Love and arranged marriage** - for those in the court, love was something that was subject to rules and traditions. Marriages were often arranged by parents almost like a business transaction for wealth and status rather than love and happiness. Children were chaperoned by adults and did not have the same freedom to choose who they spent their life with in the way we can today. Marriage would happen at a much younger age that we expect today. It was perfectly normal for girls to be married aged 12.

**Love at first sight** - Love at first sight was a common 16th century belief. People thought that if you didn’t fall in love at first sight then you weren’t really in love. Romeo thought he was in love with a girl called Rosaline until he set eyes on Juliet

**Fate** - another common belief was that your future was mapped out in the stars and you couldn’t influence the future in anyway. Just like us reading our horoscopes really.

Plot Summary:**Act 1 Scene 1** – Prologue gives the backstory of the feud between the Montagues and Capulets; we are told that Romeo and Juliet will meet, fall in love and commit suicide. There is a fight on the streets of Verona which is stopped by the prince. Romeo’s parents ask Benvolio where Romeo is.

**Act 1: 2**- Paris comes to seek Juliet’s father’s permission for her hand in marriage. Capulet tells him he can meet Juliet at the ball tonight. Romeo finds a servant delivering the invitations and the woman he loves (Rosalind) is on the guest list. Benvolio convinces him to attend the ball to help him get over his love for Rosalind.

**Act 1: 3** – Lady Capulet discusses Paris’s proposal with Juliet; the nurse talks of her close relationship with Juliet; Juliet agrees to meet Paris at the ball.

**Act 1 Scene 4** – The Montegues go to the ball. Mercutio speaks about the need for Romeo to take a few risks. Romeo expresses concern about what may happen tonight.

**Act 1 Scene 5** – Romeo and Juliet meet – preparations are made for the ball. Romeo meets Juliet; Tybalt tells Capulet that Romeo is there, but Capulet won’t let him cause trouble and reprimands him. Tybalt is angry. Romeo and Juliet fall in love; at the end they find out they belong to rival families.

**Act 2 Scene 1** – Romeo manages to give his friends the slip in order to sneak into Juliet’s orchard.

**Act 2 Scene 2** – the balcony scene: Romeo sees Juliet on the balcony, then they declare their love for each other. Juliet asks him to arrange the wedding tomorrow.

**Act 2 Scene 3** – Romeo goes to Friar Lawrence to arrange the marriage. Eventually the Friar agrees to let them marry as it will unite the rival families.

**Act 2 Scene 4** – Benvolio tells Mercutio that Tybalt has challenged Romeo. Romeo arrives and banters with Mercutio until the nurse arrives and Romeo tells her when and where the wedding will take place.

**Act 2 Scene 5** – The nurse torments Juliet, delaying giving her the news, but informs her eventually of the wedding.

**Act 2 Scene 6** – Romeo and Juliet get married.

**Act 3 Scene 1**– Tybalt insults Romeo which enrages Mercutio. Romeo refuses to fight Tybalt, so Mercutio takes his place; Tybalt kills Mercutio and in rage Romeo kills Tybalt. Romeo flees the scene as Benvolio explains what happened to the Prince who banishes Romeo from Verona.

**Act 3 Scene 2** – Juliet hears the news and is upset – the nurse promises to find Romeo and tell him to visit tonight.

**Act 3 Scene 3** – At Friar Lawrence’s, Romeo is distraught and suicidal. The nurse comes with her message to Romeo; the friar calms Romeo. Romeo is to go to Juliet, then to Mantua the next morning to await news from the Friar.

**Act 3 Scene 4** – Capulet discusses Juliet’s sadness at Tybalt’s death to Paris and decides she should marry Paris.

**Act 3 Scene 5** – Romeo and Juliet separate after a night together as man and wife. Lady Capulet arrives and tells Juliet she is to marry Paris; Juliet refuses and her father is enraged. Her nurse agrees that she should marry Paris.

**Act 4 Scene 1**- Juliet goes to the Friar for help: he gives her a drug to take which will make her sleep, but feign death. He will send a letter to Romeo who will be there in the crypt when Juliet wakes up.

**Act 4 Scene 2** – Juliet consents to marry Paris; her father is delighted. The marriage is brought forward to Wednesday.

**Act 4 Scene 3** – Although Juliet is scared, she takes the potion given to her by the Friar.

**Act 4 Scene 4** – at 3 in the morning they are already preparing for the wedding: the nurse goes to wake Juliet.

**Act 4 Scene 5** – The nurse discovers Juliet is ‘dead’; the family are overcome with grief: burial arrangements are made.

**Act 5 Scene 1** – In Mantua, Romeo learns of Juliet’s death as Friar Lawrence’s letter is delayed. He finds an apothecary and buys poison, then returns to Verona to die at Juliet’s side.

**Act 5 Scene 2** – Friar Lawrence finds out his letter is undelivered and dashes off to Juliet to be there when she wakes.

**Act 5 Scene 3** – Paris is at the crypt and Romeo kills him to get in; he sees Juliet, drinks poison and dies; the Friar finds Romeo dead: Juliet wakes up but won’t go with the Friar. She stabs herself – grief reconciles the two families.

Key Characters:

**Prince Escalus**

**Lord Montague** – father to Romeo

**Lady Montague** – Romeo’s mother

**Romeo**

**Benvolio Montague** – Romeo’s cousin

**Lord Capulet** – Juliet’s father

**Lady Capulet** – Juliet’s mother

Juliet

**Tybalt Capulet** – Juliet’s cousin

**Nurse** (to Juliet)

**Paris** – match for Juliet

**Mercutio** – Romeo’s friend/ cousin to the Prince

**Friar Lawrence** – Romeo’s confidente/ friend

Key Themes:

Love/ hate

Fate/free will/desiny

Violence

Life/death

Marriage

Family/ status

Religion

Parenthood

Methods

**Simile** – A phrase comparing one thing to another, using *as* or *like*.

**Metaphor** – A phrase comparing one thing to another, without using *as* or *like*.)

**Personification** – A phrase giving human characteristics to a non-human object.

**Imagery** – Words or phrases that create visual images.

**Emotive language** – Words that create feeling and emotion.

**Colloquial language** – Words that are informal and slang.

**Semantic field** – A group of words that follow the same theme.

**Rhetorical question** – A question that does not require an answer.

**Alliteration** – Words close together that begin with the same sounding letter.

**Assonance** – Words close together that begin with a vowel sound.

**Sibilance** – Words close together that begin with an ‘s’ sound.

**Oxymoron** – A phrase using contradictory words.

**Onomatopoeia** – Words that create a sound.

**Symbolism** – The representation of ideas in images or motifs.

**Punctuation** – Marks used to separate or express meaning.

**Repetition** – A word or phrase that is repeated.

**Dialogue** – Words that are spoken by a character.

**Perspective** – A point of view. Text can be written form a first (I), second (you) or third person (he/she/they) perspective.

**Sentence structures** – The way that sentences are put together. Sentences can be simple (main clause), compound (main clauses joined with a conjunction, comma or semi colon) or complex (main and subordinate clauses).

**Foreshadowing** – A hint or a warning of something in the future.

**Withholding** – A technique where the author to holds back important information.

**Juxtaposition** – Two concepts, themes, ideas or characters that are contrasting or opposite.

**Stage directions** – an instruction indicating the movement, position, or tone of an actor, sound effects and lighting.

1. **Asides -** a remark or passage in a play that is intended to be heard by the audience but is supposed to be unheard by the other characters in the play.

**Sonnet –** 14 line love poem with strict rhyme and rhythm – usually iambic pentameter and ababcdcdefefgg rhyme scheme.

**Soliloquy** – Thoughts spoken aloud by a character.

**Dramatic irony** – A technique where the audience knows more than a character.

Key Quotes:

A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life.
**(Chorus, Prologue)**

But, soft, what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
**(Romeo, Act 2 Scene 1)**

O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?
**(Juliet, Act 2 Scene 1)**

These violent delights have violent ends.
**(Friar Laurence, Act 2 Scene 5)**

A plague o' both your houses!
**(Mercutio, Act 3 Scene 1)**

Hang thee, young baggage, disobedient wretch!
I tell thee what: get thee to church o'Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face.
**(Capulet, Act 3 Scene 5)**

O happy dagger,
This is thy sheath: there rust, and let me die.
**(Juliet, Act 5 Scene 3)**

All are punished.
**(Prince, Act 5 Scene 3)**

For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.
**(Prince, Act 5 Scene 3)**

Sentence Starters:

Shakespeare presents/explores/demonstrates/depicts

Quote (embedded)

Shakespeare uses the dramatic technique of….

Shakespeare is revealing… (his ideas/context)

In particular, Shakespeare’s use of (method) implies … This affects the audience as…

Key Words:

**Patriarchy** – a male dominated society

**Matriarchy** – a female dominated society

**Elizabethan** – the era of Elizabeth I’s reign

**Apparition** – a ghost

**Tragedy** – a disaster or a play with an unhappy ending

**Hamartia** – a tragic flaw usually leading to a character’s downfall.

1. **Prologue** – a separate introductory section of a literary, dramatic, or musical work.
2. **Banishment** - the punishment of being sent away from a country or other place.
3. **Iambic pentameter** - a line of verse with five metrical feet, each consisting of one short (or unstressed) syllable followed by one long (or stressed) syllable, for example *Two households, both alike in dignity*.
4. **Brawl** - a rough or noisy fight or quarrel.
5. **Arranged marriage** - a marriage planned and agreed by the families or guardians of the couple concerned.

