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THANK YOU TO ALL TEACHERS! You are an integral part of our success. When you participate as an audience member and as a workshop participant, you help us make the very most of our visit! Last year, during the workshops, actor-teachers found that some teachers jumped in to every activity while others participated in the warm-up games and then chose to float around the room and offer suggestions. Either way, teacher participation made a difference. According to one actor-teacher, once teachers “committed fully... the students really were enthusiastic about [them] being a part of the workshop!” In this guide, we have included contextual information and discussion ideas connected to the workshops and the production.

THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING FEEDBACK DURING AND AFTER OUR VISIT AND LETTING US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!

EACH TOUR IS DESIGNED TO MAKE THE MOST OF OUR TIME WITH YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS. The teacher materials are prepared with ideas and suggestions to add to and enhance your own English/Language Arts or Drama curriculum and, most especially, to your study of the rich poetry of Shakespeare and his relevance to our contemporary world. They are designed to prepare students for seeing the performance and for further discussion after the performance whether you are reading the full play or not. Also included with these materials are additional resources and a list of how we connect to key Montana State Content Standards in English/Language Arts for grades 7 - 12. Many thanks to all of you for the work you do and please feel free to contact us with questions or suggestions!

TEACHERS:
PLAY WITH US AND WE’LL NOT FAIL YOU!

WELCOME TO MSIS 2019 TOUR OF ROMEO AND JULIET!
"...for my mind misgives
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels."

**ROMEO SAYS THIS AS HE AND HIS PALS PREPARE TO CRASH A PARTY.** It’s supposed to be fun. And it is fun. He will meet the extraordinary young woman that he will love for the rest of his life. And yet Romeo, even as he stands at the door of the party, feels that fate will not be on his side. The accidents of fate play an important part in this story. It starts so well. Romeo and Juliet seem to understand each other immediately, completely. By the end of the evening, they will pledge their love to each other. They will marry. They will not be distracted by fate. Nor will they be distracted by the mindless hatred that dominates their world.

The play begins with a fight. No one knows why they are fighting. The two fighters don’t even know why they are fighting. The two families of *Romeo and Juliet* have hated each other for generations. They’ve forgotten why.

Juliet’s parents love her and want the best for her. Romeo’s family feels the same about him. And there are two other adults willing to risk everything to help them love each other. There is so much love and beauty and laughter and happiness in this play. What could go wrong?

It is the accidents of fate that actually bring these two amazing people together. But it’s not fate that destroys them. Blind, willful, stupid hate does.

We are very happy to present this timeless story to you. And, as always, grateful for your support.

Thank you,

William Brown, Director
THEATRE IS A LIVING ART

WHETHER IT’S THE DISTRACTION OF SCHOOL BELLS, FIRE DRILLS OR STUDENTS RUSTLING PAPERS, touring actors have their work cut out for them. We know we need to be on our toes and in tip top shape for every performance! But we also know it is a two-way street. Live theatre is not a passive activity. It requires active attention.

Classroom teachers lead the way. Your active participation as an audience member is vital to our success. Here are some ideas for before, during and after the performance that can help you and us continue this wonderful tradition of Montana Shakespeare in the Schools!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEFORE MSIS ARRIVES</th>
<th>DURING THE PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>AFTER MSIS LEAVES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read through the play and the teacher materials included here.</td>
<td>Look and listen for the motivations of the various characters. Why are they behaving the way they are? How do the set, costumes, sounds help to create the world of the play?</td>
<td>Discuss the different motivations of the individual characters. Did the design (sets &amp; costumes) of the production match your predictions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage predictions on what you all think you will see! Review theatre etiquette: why is this important to viewing a live performance? (see below)</td>
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<tr>
<td>*NOTE: Teacher materials here can also be accomplished after the performance!</td>
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THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Going to see a play is very different from going to the movies. During live theatre, the audience is as important a part of the experience as the actors. The following are things that most experienced audience members know:

1. **LIVE RESPONSE IS GOOD!** If you’re telling a story to a friend, and they really respond or listen, it makes you want to tell the story better—to keep telling the story. So, the better an audience listens, laughs and responds, the more the actors want to tell the story. In this way, the audience (as well as the actors) can make a performance great.

2. **THE ACTORS CAN HEAR YOU TALKING.** If an audience member is not paying attention, the actors know it. Have you ever had a conversation with someone and felt that they’d rather be someplace else? This is the EXACT feeling actors get when people in the audience are talking.

3. **THE ACTORS CAN SEE YOU.** Even though the actors are pretending to be other characters, it is their job to “check in” with the audience in order to tell the story better. Film actors can do a take over and over to try to get it right. Theatre actors have one chance with an audience and want to make sure they are communicating clearly. Think about it...

4. **CELL PHONES, BEEPERS, CANDY WRAPPERS, LOUD GUM SMACKING.** Please turn off all cell phones, beepers, school bells if possible and open any candy before a show.
ROME AND JULIET IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE MOST COMMONLY TAUGHT PLAY IN HIGH SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE US. Perhaps as educators we are bound to ask at some point: Why? Why is this the chosen play for introducing adolescents to Shakespeare? Is this tragedy the story that we want our young people to absorb? These are questions well worth asking and debating, for it is crucial to understand why we teach what we do.

But let’s start with a fundamental point: it’s a really good story. Shakespeare inherited this Renaissance plotline of young lovers thwarted by their families’ hatred and infused it with passion, poetry and dramatic tension that capture the hasty pleasures and immortal longings of young love. The play has been staged, read, and adapted continuously for 423 years, thus it has become a central piece of culture. One might go so far as to say that understanding Romeo and Juliet’s appeal is to understand what attracts us to literature in the first place.

This play’s characters are endearing because Shakespeare has them speak words that are instantly memorable. The experience of falling in love at first sight is captured in Romeo’s lines “Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight, / For I ne’er saw true beauty till this night.” This couplet is one of many places where Shakespeare uses rhyme—not just in occasional lines, but including entire sonnets (the play begins with one, and in their first meeting at the ball the lovers share a sonnet). The rhymes are dependent upon coupling, reinforcing the notion that certain people simply belong together, completing one another in the most harmonious way.

It is Juliet, though, who employs the most striking language of the play. This very young woman understands that vows are dangerous, that words can be used to deceive, so she strives for another kind of expression entirely. She takes control of her own situation and is fearless in counterfeiting death. As the Italian poet Petrarch knew so well, the experience of love is characterized by opposites and extremes. Juliet shows these tendencies, and yet articulates a depth that goes beyond the clichés. When she says “My bounty is as boundless as the sea, / My love as deep; the more I give to thee, / The more I have, for both are infinite”, it is difficult not to believe her.

Shakespeare creates a fascinating portrayal of Romeo and Juliet, but then he places them in the midst of a community that gives texture and meaning to the rest of the play. The fiery Tybalt is not just a stock character, but a young Capulet bent on family honor. His counterpart on the Montague side, Mercutio, brings together the hot-headedness of youth with passion, love for his best friend, and a wicked sense of humor. Meanwhile, the counsellor figures, the Nurse and the Friar, are well-meaning adults who inadvertently advance the tragedy of those that they love. Even the Capulet parents are remarkably fleshed out characters, cruel at times, but without question devoted to their only child. These residents of Verona are a testimony to the close intertwining of people in any community.
Perhaps at some point we all desire a transcendent love that is unsullied by the disappointing experiences of quotidian living. Throughout the sonnets Shakespeare personifies Time, characterizing it as a destroyer of youth and life. He writes of “Devouring Time” (Sonnet 19), of “Time’s injurious hand” (Sonnet 63), and says that “Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth” (Sonnet 60). *Romeo and Juliet* is packed with references to time, including frequent mention of ages, days of the week, hours of the clock. Juliet is impatient for time to pass quickly so that she and Romeo can be together again, thus she references classical mythology and entreats, “Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds”. The sound of Apollo’s galloping horses can always be heard in the background of this drama, for we know from the outset how it will end. Yet we cannot wrench our eyes away from watching something this beautiful, precisely because it is transient.

The peace at the end of *Romeo and Juliet* is indeed, as the play’s final speech articulates, “glooming”. The older generation is left alive, but the most important part of society—the young people—has been lost. Not only Romeo and Juliet are dead, but Mercutio, Tybalt, and Paris too. The monumental tomb that the parents will build as a symbol of reconciliation is cold and lifeless, belying the hot passions with which these lovers found one another. As the seventeenth-century poet Andrew Marvell wrote, “The grave’s a fine and private place. / But none, I think, do there embrace.” The tragedy in *Romeo and Juliet* cuts deeply because it tells of the death of the young: losing those who have hardly had a chance to live. It is all the more cruel that they are lost at the moment that they feel the most intense adult emotions.

Despite the references to Fate—the “star-crossed lovers” and “What must be shall be”—Shakespeare gives every indication in this play that the outcome did not have to be this way. The parents could have listened, the lovers could have been less hasty, the circumstances could have allowed for the message to get to Romeo, Juliet could have awakened a moment earlier. Within seconds a love story or a comedy can turn into tragedy. The brutal speed of the turn in *Romeo and Juliet* is a poignant reminder to hold our young people dear.

The story of *Romeo and Juliet* never grows old because the main characters never do—they are suspended at the moment of ultimate youth and beauty. At one point Capulet says, rather callously, “Well, we were born to die.” This inevitability underscores all life, but the human experience includes much more than that, not the least of which involves witnessing works of art that capture the wonders of living through a range of experiences. Everyone should be allowed to grow old.
Whether outside in parks or inside school gymnasiums or auditoriums, the productions of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks depend upon creative artists to craft flexible and contemporary productions to spark the imaginations of a crowd. Shakespeare’s rich language provides the foundation for artists and audiences to create the world of the play within the limitations of the tour, such as length of the play, scenery, sound, and costumes that can be transported in two vehicles. Performing for audiences in the schools provides a wonderful challenge for all of the artists involved. To get us started, here is a glimpse into the choices for the 2019 MSIS tour of *Romeo and Juliet*.

The planning for MSIS 2019 began in November 2018. The play and director were selected and auditions were held in late November and again in February. By April 2019, the design team (costume designer, set designer, sound designer, etc.) was in place and production meetings began with the director’s concept guiding the way. More meetings and emails followed throughout the summer of 2019. By September 14, the set is built, costumes are underway, sound choices are selected, and props are gathered. The actor-teachers rehearse the production and develop the workshops six days a week for three weeks. In addition to rehearsals, the actors must also learn how to drive and pack the vehicles. Members in the company also attend diversity and inclusion workshops offered by Montana State University.

**DIRECTOR CONCEPT**

When a director creates the concept for the overall production, he/she looks to the script, making cuts and adaptations as well as the characters and the casting. The director works closely with each designer to achieve the look and feel that matches his concept. For this production, the play is set in modern-day Verona, Italy—with echoes of the Elizabethan/Renaissance Italy of Shakespeare’s day (for example, look for the costumes in the masked ball). The director, William Brown, envisions a love story set in the context of hate. Here is a world where the bonds of family, honor, and friendship are tightly held; a world where young people strive to uphold those bonds even when love wrestles with the hate those bonds require; a world where all must fight to honor their connections at all costs. Through casting and design, the production explores the ways the play falls along class lines where “the Capulets have all the money and the Montagues are scrappier.”

**STORY/SCRIPT**

MSIS productions are live stage plays with all of the language of Shakespeare’s original. Those audiences familiar with the play may see a few surprises. Due to the limitations of school schedules, touring and accessibility, the director adapts Shakespeare’s play and distributes his/her version of the script to the designers and actors. MSIS’s *Romeo and Juliet* has been pared down to fit within the confines of 90 minutes and a cast of nine actors.

*Gnomeo and Juliet*, an animated adaptation of the play from 2011
CASTING

With a company of nine actors, the roles of Paris and Tybalt are played by one actor. This is called double-casting and offers a wonderful challenge for the individual actor. Because the director has set the MSIS production in modern times, the casting also reflects contemporary society of young people as well as the adults. The youth are current and hip; the adults strive to keep up. Benvolio has been changed to Benvolia and is played by a woman to reflect the freedom of women to join men to form alliances and fully participate in the group. As a woman, Benvolia can also step outside the action to comment on events. Lady Capulet and Juliet are played by African-Americans, reflecting the diversity of modern-day families.

"NOTE CHARACTERS NOT IN THE MSIS VERSION:" the Chorus, the Prince, Lord and Lady Montague, the apothecary, Balthazar, etc.

By cutting these characters, certain scenes are either eliminated (such as the apothecary scene) or changed. The chorus lines are shortened and are spoken by Benvolia. Thus, Benvolia becomes more of an outsider, still a close friend to Romeo and Mercutio but able to take on the role and purpose of Shakespeare’s chorus. By cutting the Montagues, Romeo is still devoted to his family’s name and honor, but in the MSIS production, he is scrappier and more independent. As in Shakespeare’s full play, the Friar becomes a kind of parent to Romeo, offering advice and protection. Without the Prince, Shakespeare’s emphasis on the state control of society is lessened to a degree, although all of the characters are very much aware of the state’s desire for peace between the families.
SYNOPSIS

HERE FOLLOWS A SYNOPSIS OF THE MSIS PRODUCTION.

JULIET is part of the CAPULET family; ROMEO is from the MONTAGUE family. The two families have been fighting with each other for a long time. The play opens with a street fight between the two clans. LORD CAPULET wishes to soothe the troubles and throws a costume ball. Romeo, MERCUTIO and BENVOLIA don costumes and attend the party. There, Romeo and Juliet meet and fall in love. TYBALT, Juliet’s cousin, spies Romeo and Mercutio at the Capulet’s party. Later that night, Romeo and Juliet pledge their love for each other.

The next day, the FRIAR agrees to marry Romeo and Juliet believing their union holds the promise to finally bring the two sides into a much-needed truce. No sooner have the wedding vows been spoken, that such peace is upended by Tybalt who is still incensed by those who crashed the party and insulted the Capulet honor. Meeting in the town square, he challenges Mercutio to a fight. Romeo attempts to break it up and in doing so, Tybalt kills Mercutio. Romeo, to avenge his best friend’s death, kills Tybalt. The tragic news is conveyed to Juliet, and Romeo is banished from Verona. The two enjoy their wedding night before Romeo must leave and wait until it is safe to return.

Lord Capulet, thinking that Juliet is distressed by the death of her cousin, arranges for her to marry PARIS, a family friend. Unbeknownst to him, Juliet is already married. The Friar arranges for her to take a drug that will by all appearances make it seem as though she is dead. Once in the tomb, the plan is for Romeo to find her and they will escape together.

Romeo enters the tomb only to run into Paris. In his fury, he kills him. Thinking his dearest love has died, he embraces Juliet and, with a final kiss, takes his life. Juliet awakens, sees her love dead and hearing the sounds of people approaching, takes her life. The Capulets, the NURSE, Benvolia and the Friar arrive to find all dead—Tybalt, Paris, Romeo and Juliet.

*See the following section on adaptation to explore comparisons between story and characters further.
PAGE TO STAGE: HOW MSIS PRODUCTION HAPPENS

SET DESIGN

The challenges in designing for MSIS involve set, costumes, sound, and props. Given the nature of the tour and the school spaces there is no lighting used for the MSIS productions. All of the design elements must align with the overall concept of the production. For Romeo and Juliet, the elements need to capture the youth culture of contemporary Verona but also find echoes in the Renaissance Italy of Shakespeare’s play. The set is the stage for the world of the play. Because it must be taken apart and transported from school to school, the set must invoke a fully realized environment through the suggestions of location and time period so audiences can enter in through their imaginations. The movement between the various locations in the play is fluid and evocative.

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE, make predictions based on the rendering of what the set will look like. Or design your own set based on the director’s concept.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, discuss reactions to the set. Compare and contrast with your predictions and/or designs.

COSTUME DESIGN

The costumes must also carry the look of a contemporary world of the characters. Each character’s costume is designed to connect the words and actions of the individual throughout the play. Just as in everyday life, our personalities, family circumstances, professions, etc. are reflected in our dress. Capulet’s costume party offers a wonderful opportunity to evoke the Renaissance Italian look while maintaining the modern setting for the production. For example, look for the dress selected for Juliet to wear for her wedding to Romeo contrasted with the choices her mother offers for the proposed wedding to Paris. How do those design choices support the characters and the text?

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE, make predictions based on the renderings of what the costumes will look like. Or select a character and design your own costumes based on the director’s concept.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, discuss reactions to the costumes. Compare and contrast with your predictions and/or designs.
PAGE TO STAGE: HOW MSIS PRODUCTION HAPPENS

SOUND
The sound must be created to capture the modern setting, with music that is not so recognizable that it will distract from the story but captures the underlying emotion of each individual scene. Music can foreshadow events and also be repeated throughout the play. Just as sounds surround our everyday lives, the sounds inside the world of the play create the emotions and tensions of the language. Listen for the variations in music and how the choices support the words and actions of the scene. On a practical note, the sound must be organized so that the actors can control the sound and execute the cues themselves. There are no technicians or stage managers on tour.

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE, make predictions of what music and sounds might accompany the action of the play. Or select a key scene and find or compose your own music to support and enhance the scene and the director concept.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, discuss reactions to the music and sounds. Compare and contrast with your predictions and/or designs.

PROPS
Finally, props are gathered or made. Just as in everyday life, our worlds are surrounded by objects. Each prop used in the performance is deliberately selected or constructed so that the objects align with the character and the world of the play.

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE, make a list of the everyday objects in a room inside your home.

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE, select a character in the play and decide 3 to 4 objects that are critical to that character.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, compare and contrast your list with the props in the performance.

In Romeo and Juliet, props of particular importance are the stage weapons used to carry out the violence of the play. In the MSIS production, the fights are hand-to-hand and rather than swords, knives are used. The choice is not to use guns even though those seem to be a weapon of choice in our contemporary world.

DISCUSS THE VIOLENCE IN THE PLAY AND THE DIFFERENT WAYS EACH CHARACTER USES VIOLENCE. When do they resort to violence and why? How does the choice of weapon on the stage affect the impact of words and actions of the play? Discuss why the director chose to use knives instead of guns.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, review and discuss your reactions to the violence seen in the performance.
THE MSIS PRODUCTION OF ROMEO AND JULIET COULD BE CALLED AN ADAPTATION OF SHAKESPEARE’S PLAY. Although unlike other adaptations, the characters and the language remain the same as in the original play. Shakespeare himself adapted several written stories he studied in school and popular with the public for his version of Romeo and Juliet. The first English version of the story of Romeo and Juliet was published by Arthur Brooke in 1562. Shakespeare probably would have studied Latin in school. Another inspiration for his play was the story of “Pyramus and Thisbe” found in Ovid’s Metamorphoses. Shakespeare used this story to comic effect in A Midsummer Night’s Dream. A pirated version of Romeo and Juliet was printed in 1597. For more information on sources, see Royal Shakespeare Company.

Since that time, Shakespeare’s play has been produced countless times in theatres across the globe. Each time, the director, designers and actors put their own stamp on the production. Other artists have changed the medium and adapted the play into musical theatre, opera, ballet, modern dance, and of course, in contemporary times—films. A listing of some contemporary film versions can be found in this Washington Post article from 2015.

A very familiar and popular adaptation was the Jerome Robbins production of West Side Story. On Broadway in 1957, this famous musical featured a modern day Romeo and Juliet involved in New York street gangs. The music was composed by Leonard Bernstein with lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. The stage musical was adapted into a film in 1961. A new film of West Side Story, adapted by Tony Kushner and directed by Steven Spielberg, is set to open in movie houses December 18, 2020.

Just as Shakespeare found when he wrote his version, the heart of all these adaptations is the story. As Gretchen Minton points out in the Dramaturgical Notes (see page 6), Romeo and Juliet is a really good story and the characters evoke powerful themes from our own lives and stories. Young lovers separated by family feuds, conflicts between youngsters and parents, people divided into opposing sides through family ties, useful sleeping potions, and best-laid plans going horribly astray strike a deep human chord.

Through adaptation, artists employ different techniques to tell the perennial story. Storytelling itself is the art of repeating stories and also the unique interaction between story, teller(s), and audience. No matter how far afield a teller may take us, each one carries the aura of the original. As audience members, we recognize the similarities, we remember previous engagements with the story and we relish the changes artists make. There is the familiar with the surprise of experiencing the story in a new way.
DISCUSS ADAPTATIONS IN GENERAL.

GENERATE A LIST OF TELEVISION/MOVIE/STAGE/GAME ADAPTATIONS THEY KNOW. List the adaptation and if possible, the original source as best they know.

AS A WHOLE CLASS OR IN SMALL GROUPS, PICK ONE OR TWO FROM THE LIST. Compare and contrast the original with the adaptation. Consider the medium and context for the audiences for both. What were some of the creative decisions made by the artists doing the adaptation?

INDIVIDUALLY OR IN SMALL GROUPS, PICK A FAMILIAR NOVEL, PLAY OR MOVIE AND CREATE YOUR OWN ARTISTIC CONCEPT FOR AN ADAPTATION TO A DIFFERENT MEDIUM. Examples: novel to play; novel to movie; movie to video game; movie to musical play.

USING THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE PAGE TO STAGE SECTION, COMPARE AND CONTRAST SHAKESPEARE’S PLAY WITH THE MSIS PRODUCTION. Encourage predictions for before the performance and compare those with reflections after the performance.

COMPARE THE CHARACTER LISTS. What changes were made and what effect will/do those changes have on your reception of the performance?

COMPARE THE TWO STORIES. Given the character lists, what parts of Shakespeare’s story will not be told in the MSIS performance? What effect will/do those changes have on your reception of the performance?

READ THROUGH THE CASTING AND DESIGN CHOICES FOR MSIS. How do those compare with your reading of Shakespeare’s play? What effect will/do those changes have on your reception of the performance?

USING THE WASHINGTON POST LIST OF RECENT FILM ADAPTATIONS OF ROMEO AND JULIET, WEST SIDE STORY OR AN ADAPTATION OF YOUR CHOICE—SELECT ONE. Either watch the trailer or the whole version (if possible). In small groups, analyze the adaptation using the production elements of character, story/script changes, casting, and design.

*If you select a movie version of Shakespeare’s play Romeo and Juliet, add in the MSIS performance to compare three adaptations.*
VERSE

Shakespeare knew rhythm and rhyme aids both the speaker and the listener to remember what is said. Contemporary writers and musicians know this as well (think of your favorite song). In blank and rhyming verse, Shakespeare usually writes in iambic pentameter. The verse is created through iambic pentameter, where the rhythm is based on iambs (unstressed syllables followed by stressed syllables) and there are five iambs (“penta” meaning five). That’s ten syllables all together. The rhyming comes at the end of the lines, usually in couplets, or pairs. Shakespeare uses rhymed verse to signal a character’s heightened emotional state or the conclusion of an act or scene. The chorus prologue in Romeo and Juliet is a good example:

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross’d lovers take their life:
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents’ strife.

EXPLORE

READ SILENTLY AND THEN READ ALOUD. Tap put the rhythm and identify the rhyming words. Write out just the last words of each line. Dignity, scene, mutiny, unclean, foes, life, overthrows, strife. What predictions as to the meaning of the passage can be made just from these words?
SONNETS

In addition to plays, Shakespeare wrote sonnets. (He wrote 154 of them.) But he also used the sonnet structure inside his plays. The first conversation between Romeo and Juliet at the party is written in sonnet form. The structure is 14 lines of iambic pentameter divided into 4 sections: three sections of 4 lines of rhyming verse that follows an ABAB rhyming pattern and a rhymed couplet at the end.

EXPLORE

ROMEO
1. If I profane with my unworthiest hand
2. This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this:
3. My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
4. To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

JULIET
5. Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
6. Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
7. For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
8. And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

ROMEO
9. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

JULIET
10. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

ROMEO
11. O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;
12. They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

JULIET
13. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

ROMEO
14. Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.

BREAK THE PASSAGE INTO THE FOUR SECTIONS AND FIRST READ EACH SILENTLY. What is the primary metaphor the characters are using to express their desires? What actions do the words evoke? How is the tension created through the words? Then read the last section (last two lines) silently and aloud. What predictions can you make as to what is about to happen?
THE LANGUAGE OF SHAKESPEARE

IMAGERY
As evidenced in the sonnet above, *Romeo and Juliet* is rich in imagery. Vivid words and phrases conjure up mental pictures through the use of conventions such as simile, metaphor and personification. A simile compares one thing to another using ‘like’ or ‘as’. Metaphors make comparison without the like or as. Personification turns inanimate things into animate beings, often giving them human feelings or attributes.

EXPLORE
FOCUS ON ACT II SCENE 2 IN THE COURTYARD OF JULIET’S HOUSE. Hand out copies or turn to the play. Scan the whole scene looking for images—glove upon the hand, night’s cloak, mask of night, the inconstant moon, etc. Speak the passages aloud and ask listeners to conjure up what they see as a result of the words.

This is probably one of the most memorable scenes in dramatic literature. After exploring the language, without looking at the text, write down words, phrases that come to mind. Write a brief synopsis of the scene and the primary emotions. What actions might take place during the scene?

2013 film version of *Romeo and Juliet*, starring Douglas Booth as Romeo and Hailee Steinfeld as Juliet

ANTITHESIS
A key language convention used to highlight the themes throughout *Romeo and Juliet* is antithesis. Antithesis is the opposition of ideas, words or phrases against each other. Shakespeare gives this language to all of the characters, but most especially to *Romeo and Juliet*, to heighten and intensify the opposites inside and outside their relationship. Juliet speaks these lines just after meeting Romeo:

**JULIET**
Go ask his name. If he be married.  
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

**NURSE**
His name is Romeo, and a Montague;  
The only son of your great enemy.

**JULIET**
My only love sprung from my only hate!  
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!

EXPLORE
READ THE PASSAGE ALOUD AND ASK STUDENTS TO IDENTIFY THE ANTITHESIS BY LISTENING. After reading a synopsis of the story, ask students to list out all of the opposites that come to mind just from hearing the story. Then select a scene or Act and ask students to find all of the places where Shakespeare uses antithesis to highlight the divisions within the world of the play. Share those with each other by speaking the lines out loud.
THEMES

LOVE AND HATE

SHAKESPEARE’S ROMEO AND JULIET IS A PLAY OF COUPLES, CONTRASTS, AND COMPLICATIONS. The love story is set within the context of hate. Family honor is in conflict with respect and love for others. The emotions are debated, fought over and ultimately compromised beyond grief. Love and hate are also compared and contrasted between young and old. Shakespeare counters the intensity of the young characters’ emotions with the adults. Capulet, the Nurse, and the Friar display the reason and patience that comes with lived experiences. Through Shakespeare’s words, the characters couple and uncouple in light of the contrasting emotions and by the end of Act III Scene I, the paths of love and hate have converged and split apart.

EXPLORE

BEFORE SEEING THE PLAY, explore the first acts of the play and take note of the ways Shakespeare has created the tension between love and hate and young and old.

AFTER THE PLAY, revisit these and discuss how the performance brought these to life.

Here are some places to get you started:

IN ACT I, Romeo and Juliet meet and embody a most beautiful and desired human emotion: true love. Romeo recognizes the difference between love and true love:

Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight,
For I ne’er saw true beauty till this night.

In the same scene, Shakespeare introduces the deep divisions such love must confront:

My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me
That I must love a loathed enemy.

BY ACT II, Juliet has a depth of love she believes to be true:

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.

For his part, Romeo is quick to give over his allegiance and name if such a name makes it impossible to love:

My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself;
Because it is an enemy to thee.
Indeed he is ready to give in to his enemies:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued (put off), wanting of thy love.

For the adults in the play, love is presented in terms of marriage. In Act I, we learn of Capulet’s desire to marry Juliet and Paris in the first act. Capulet softens the practical as he remembers what is necessary for love to take hold and advises:

... woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part;

Juliet’s Nurse wishes nothing more wonderful than for her charge to be married:

Thou wast the prettiest babe that e’er I nursed:
An I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish.
IN ACT II, he Friar chides Romeo for his quick turn about in love for Rosalind to love for Juliet. And yet, he sees the union as a pragmatic and hopeful alliance:

In one respect I'll thy assistant be;
For this alliance may so happy prove,
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

Another couple of young people in the play, Tybalt and Mercutio, embody a most destructive human emotion: the capacity to hate. In Act I, when Tybalt discovers Romeo at the Capulet party, he cries out to Capulet:

What, talk of peace!
I hate the word, all Montagues, and thee!
Tybalt then foreshadows what is to come:
Now, by the stock and honour of my kin
To strike him dead, I hold it not a sin.

IN ACT II, Mercutio first takes a high road, describing the indemnity between Tybalt and the Montagues. Tybalt, he says (not without some irony), is:

More than Prince of Cats, I can tell you.
O, he is the courageous captain of compliments.
He fights as you sing song, keeps time, distance,
and proportion.

Once challenged though, Mercutio is quick to pursue:
I will not budge for no man's pleasure.

In the ensuing fight, Mercutio is mortally wounded and issues the final challenge:
A plague o' both your houses! Your houses!

Romeo must cast aside his love for Juliet and avenge the death of his dearest friend and ally:
(Tybalt) Alive, in triumph! and Mercutio slain!
Away to heaven, respective lenity,
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!

A 2014 musical adaptation of Romeo & Juliet in Milan, Italy
BY THE END OF ACT III, the adults, Capulet, the Nurse and the Friar, are left with the Prince’s order, each one knowing only part of the whole story. Capulet, for his part, warns of further damage:

Let Romeo hence in haste,
Else, when he’s found, that hour is his last.

The Friar finds mercy in the Prince’s pardon and counsels Romeo:

Hence from Verona art thou banished:
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

Young Romeo will have none of it:
Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel.
Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,
Doting like me and like me banished,
Then mightst thou speak

The Nurse challenges Romeo to own up to his deeds:

Stand up, stand up; stand, and you be a man:
For Juliet’s sake, for her sake, rise and stand...

The Friar and the Nurse acquiesce to the emotions of love and allow the young people their wedding night with the firm counsel that once enjoyed, they must obey the Prince. Romeo must patiently wait in Mantua for a future reunion:

Where thou shalt live till we can find a time
To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
Beg pardon of the prince and call thee back...

THROUGH THE FINAL TWO ACTS of Shakespeare’s tragedy, passionate love of youth race forward colliding with unforeseen complications brought on by well-meaning adults. As plans unravel, the emotions of love and hate lead to a lack of reason and haste. By the end, the young people are lost and only the adults remain.

For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

REVIEW THE EVENTS ACT IV AND V. Discuss the motivations of the characters and the ways those motivations lead to actions that interact and complicate what looked like a potential road to peaceful conclusion. Brainstorm some alternate endings for the play given the circumstances and characters at the end of Act III. Discuss why Shakespeare chose this ending.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, discuss the effects of the ending and review choices for how it might have been different.
TIME AND FATE

THE EVENTS AND ACTIONS WITHIN ROMEO AND JULIET ADVANCE AT WHAT OUR DRAMATURG CALLS A “BRUTAL SPEED.” Four days and nights until the tragic conclusions occur. Clearly Shakespeare intended for the play to move quickly if only to contrast youthful exuberance and passion with older wisdom and caution. In Act II, the Friar calls for patience—"Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast:"

Romeo declares he “stand(s) on sudden haste.” Juliet sums up her frustration with her Nurse:

Had she affections and warm youthful blood,
She would be as swift in motion as a ball;
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
And his to me:
But old folks, many feign as they were dead;
Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

HERE IS A BRIEF TIMELINE OF THE MAJOR EVENTS OF THE MSIS PRODUCTION:

ACT I – DAY 1
Street fight in the afternoon; Capulet party in the evening where Romeo and Juliet meet.

ACT II – DAY 1 LATE NIGHT INTO DAY 2
Romeo and Juliet pledge their love for each other and promise marriage.

ACT II – DAY 2 LATE AFTERNOON
Mercutio, Benvolio, Romeo and Tybalt fight; Tybalt is killed and Romeo is banished; Juliet is given the news; plans are made for the wedding night.

ACT II – DAY 2 EVENING INTO DAY 3 MORNING
Capulet arranges for Paris to wed Juliet; Romeo and Juliet enjoy their wedding night and, in the morning, Romeo takes his leave; Juliet learns of her father’s plan.

ACT IV – DAY 3 (WEDNESDAY)
Afternoon into evening into DAY 4 (THURSDAY) morning
Paris tells the Friar that the wedding is scheduled for the coming Thursday; Friar provides Juliet with a potion to render her lifeless; Juliet returns home and prepares for bed, drinks the potion; in the morning of Day 4, Capulet enters to find his daughter dead; they must prepare now for a funeral not a wedding.

ACT V – Late night of a day soon after
Romeo enters the tomb; kills Paris; finds Juliet and kills himself; Juliet awakes to find Romeo dead and kills herself; the Capulets, the Friar, and the Nurse discover the scene and Benvolia concludes the play in the early morning.

A glooming peace this morning with it brings;
The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head.

EXPLORE

DISCUSS THE TIMELINE OF THE PLAY AND THE QUICK PACE OF DECISIONS AND ACTIONS MADE. How does the pace affect the judgement of the characters? Why is it so difficult for the characters to slow down? How does the instant information world of today relate to the speedy timeline of the play? How does this contribute to the tragedy of the play?
TIME AND FATE

**TIME**

Time weaves its way in and out of the language of the play. Days are contrasted with nights; the past with the present; clocks and bells strike and toll the hours, meetings are set, birds sing (or not) and messages are delivered (or not). An example of how Shakespeare plays with time is in the Act II balcony scene between Romeo and Juliet. Here are some excerpts from that scene:

Juliet tells Romeo:

*I have no joy of this contract to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden.*

and later....

*If that thy bent of love be honourable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow*

Juliet asks “At what o'clock to-morrow/Shall I send to thee?” To which Romeo relies “By the hour of nine.” And Juliet says, “I will not fail: ‘tis twenty years till then.” And perhaps one of the most famous lines of Shakespeare Juliet at last bids good night saying:

*Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.*

**EXPLORE**

**THESE EXCERPTS GIVE A TASTE OF SHAKESPEARE’S DESIGN.** As students read through the scene, count how often time/day/night; tomorrow, etc. is mentioned. How many times do they say goodnight to each other until the scene ends? If reading the whole play, chart the timeline of events and note how often time is invoked. Who are the characters who wish to slow time down and who are the ones who want to speed it up?
FATE

When events start moving very fast, often characters start to feel that actions, decisions, etc. are out of their control. Shakespeare counters this feeling with fate or a sense that things are predetermined. Shakespeare creates this contrast between being in control of our own actions and being caught in things beyond our control at the very beginning of the play. In Act I, as Romeo and friends prepare to go to Capulet’s party, Romeo says:

…my mind misgives
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels and expire the term
Of a despised life closed in my breath
By some vile forfeit of untimely death.

But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail!

By Act III, as Juliet bids the banished Romeo farewell, she too sees into what she cannot control:

O God, I have an ill-divining soul!
Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb;
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

Such predictions might also be seen as a device Shakespeare uses to prepare the characters and the audience for the tragedy that is about to occur. The Friar foreshadows this more directly when he warns the couple:

These violent delights have violent ends.
Therefore love moderately; long love doth so.
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

EXPLORE

DISCUSS WITH STUDENTS WHY SHAKESPEARE USES THIS DEVICE IN THE PLAY. What effect does it have on the audience (or reader) of the play? If reading the whole play, look for other places where characters call on fate or foreshadow events.
BORN

Shakespeare was born on April 23, 1564 in Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, about 100 miles northwest of London. April 23, 2014 marked the 450th anniversary of Shakespeare’s birth! His parents were John and Mary Shakespeare. His father John was a whittawer, someone who made and worked with leather goods such as purses, belts, and gloves. William Shakespeare had seven brothers and sisters. He was the third son.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582. They had three children. Daughter Susanna was born in 1583, and twins Judith and Hamnet born two years later.

CAREER

Shakespeare produced most of his work between 1589 and 1613. He wrote 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and some other short verses. By the early 1590’s, records indicate that Shakespeare was a managing partner with The Lord Chamberlain’s Men, an acting company in London. After the crowning of King James in 1603, the company changed its name to The King’s Men. By 1599, Shakespeare and his business partners built their own theatre on the bank of the South Thames in London. They called it The Globe. The Globe was destroyed by fire on June 29, 1613.

DEATH

Shakespeare is believed to have died on April 23, 1616, and was survived by his wife. 2016 marked the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death, and there were many events and celebrations planned throughout the world.

A rendering of Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre

Shakespeare’s home in Stratford upon Avon
FOR EVERY SHAKEPEARE IN THE SCHOOLS TOUR, MSIP education staff and guest artists create new, play-specific workshops that explore topics like dramatic language, relevant themes, theatrical production, and movement. Our workshops align with Montana Common Core Standards in reading, speaking/listening, language, and literacy.

7TH GRADE

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE (RL.7)

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

RL.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

RL.7.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

RL.7.5 Analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

RL.7.6 Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

RL.7.7 Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

RL.7.9 Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history and include texts that contain portrayals and/or accounts by and about American Indians.

RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY

RL.7.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
8TH GRADE

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE (RL.8)

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

RL.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.8.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

RL.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

RL.8.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

RL.8.6 Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

RL.8.7 Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

RL.8.9 Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new and include texts by and about American Indians.

RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY

RL.8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
9TH – 10TH GRADES

READING STANDARDS
FOR LITERATURE (RL.9-10)

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including works by and about American Indians.

RL.9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text, including those by and about American Indians, and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, including those of American Indians, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

RL.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

RL.9-10.5 Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

RL.9-10.6 Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

RL.9-10.7 Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s Landscape with the Fall of Icarus. Painting: American Progress, by John Gast (circa 1872) with “Birthright,” a poem, by M. L. Smoker in Another Attempt at Rescue).RL.9-10.8 (Not applicable to literature)

RL.9-10.9 Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare or how American Indian stories and oral histories appear in contemporary works, such as James Welch’s Fools Crow, the author retells the Pikuni traditional story, “Star Boy”).

RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY

RL.9-10.10 By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
11TH – 12TH GRADE

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE (RL.11-12)

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text, including those by and about American Indians, and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.3 Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama, or oral or written history (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

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, works by American Indian authors, as well as other authors.)

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.

RL.11-12.6 Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement), include works by and about American Indians.

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

RL.11-12.7 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), or traditional American Indian oral histories, evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

RL.11-12.9 Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including American Indian works, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY

RL.11-12.10 By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.
WHO IS SHAKESPEARE?
www.shakespeare-online.com
This website has everything you need to know about Shakespeare. Including: biographies, analyses of his plays, pronunciations, quizzes, all of his plays and sonnets, and much more!

A quick overview of the life of the bard
www.folger.edu/shakespeares-life

Shakespeare Staging: Media resources for students & teachers
www.shakespearestaging.berkeley.edu/search/site/romeo%20and%20juliet

ROMEO AND JULIET TEACHER GUIDES/MATERIALS

Folger
www.teachingshakespeare.folger.edu/search?s=romeo%20and%20juliet&l=1

Chicago Shakespeare Festival
www.chicagoshakes.com/education/teaching_resources/teacher_handbooks

Oregon Shakespeare Festival

Royal Shakespeare Company Learning Zone
www.rsc.org.uk/shakespeare-learning-zone/romeo-and-juliet

Utah Shakespeare Festival
www.bard.org/education/study-guides

ADAPTATIONS

Dates and Sources for Shakespeare
www.rsc.org.uk/romeo-and-juliet/about-the-play/dates-and-sources

Retellings of Romeo and Juliet

New Version of West Side Story