

Plot	
Act 1	Set in Verona, Italy. There is a brawl between the Capulet and Montague families who hate each other. Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet meet at a masked party and fall in love. Juliet's cousin, Tybalt, is angry that Romeo has come.
Act 2	Romeo and Juliet confess their love in the balcony scene. Romeo persuades Friar Laurence to marry them in secret. The only other character to attend the wedding is Juliet's Nurse.
Act 3	Tybalt and his friends taunt the Montagues in the street. Mercutio defends Romeo when he refuses to fight Tybalt. Tybalt kills Mercutio accidentally. Romeo kills Tybalt in revenge and is sentenced to banishment in Mantua, but spends the night with Juliet first. The next day Juliet's father forces her to marry Paris within a week.
Act 4	Juliet tells Friar Lawrence she will kill herself instead. He gives her a sleeping potion so everyone will believe she is dead. 48 hours later she will wake and she and Romeo will be together.
Act 5	Romeo doesn't know about the plan and thinks that Juliet is dead. He sees her body in the tomb and commits suicide by drinking poison. Juliet wakes and stabs herself. The families are reconciled over their children's deaths.

Themes			
Love	Conflict	Family	Relationships
Parents/children	Hatred	Fate	Gender
Violence	Responsibility	Revenge	Death

Assessment Objectives	
AO1 12 marks	Respond to texts critically and imaginatively; select and evaluate relevant textual detail to illustrate and support interpretations.
AO2 12 marks	Explain how language, structure and form contribute to writers' presentation of ideas, themes and settings.

Vocabulary			
Tragedy	Blank verse	Rhyme/rhythm	Prose
Irony	Hyperbole	Rhyming couplet	Soliloquy
Dramatic irony	Foreshadowing	Gender	Pathetic fallacy
Sonnet	Hamartia	Pun	Humour
Prologue	Metaphor	Simile	

Types of Love
Courtly love; Romeo's idealistic and unrequited love for Rosaline.
Passionate love; the love of Romeo and Juliet which overcomes boundaries, restrictions and family feuds.
Physical love/Lust: Romeo and Juliet's consummation of their marriage; the bawdy jokes at the opening of the play; The Nurse's comments about sex.
Family love: there is a distant relationship between Juliet and her mother compared with her close bond with the Nurse. Similar relationship with Romeo and Friar Lawrence.
Arranged marriages were common in Shakespeare's time. At first, Lord Capulet believes that an arranged marriage between Juliet and Paris should be entered into too quickly. He later changes his mind and when she refuses, he threatens to banish Juliet.

Structure and Form
The entire action of the play takes place in less than four days.
Written in five Acts. Until the death of Mercutio in Act 3, the play has aspects of comedy. Act 3 is the pivot that sends the play into tragedy. The deaths of the eponymous characters occur in Act 5.

Character	
Romeo Montague	The main character. Loves and marries Juliet. Kills Tybalt. Thinks he is a victim of Fortune. Approximately 16 years old.
Juliet Capulet	Loves and marries Romeo. Distant from her mother but has a close relationship with The Nurse. Is willing to defy her parents for love.
Tybalt Capulet	Juliet's cousin. Loves violence and wants to keep the feud with the Capulets alive. Killed by Romeo. Nickname is Prince of Cats.
Mercutio	Romeo's best friend. A joker and witty character. Dies defending Romeo's honour. His death sends the play into tragic mode.
Friar Lawrence	Plays the role of a father and confidante to Romeo. Agrees to marry them in the hope of ending the feud and reconciling the families.
The Nurse	Plays the role of a confidante to Juliet. She knows Juliet's secrets and is heartbroken by her death.
Prince Escalus	Ruler of Verona. Passes a death sentence for the next person to fight in the town but changes it to banishment as Romeo killed Tybalt in revenge for Mercutio's murder.
Benvolio	Romeo's cousin. A peace keeper who tries to stop Mercutio from fighting. A foil to Tybalt.
Lord and Lady Montague	Romeo's parents. Lady Montague dies of grief when Romeo is banished. Lord Montague, with the Capulets, erect a statue of the couple.
Lord and Lady Capulet	Lord Capulet tries to force Juliet to marry Paris and is furious when she disobeys. With Lord Montague, they erect a statue of the couple.

Tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you understand the events of the play. • Check your understanding of the main characters and their relationship with each other. • Integrate key quotes into your response. • Watch different performances of key scenes to enhance your understanding of the characters.

In 'Romeo and Juliet' there is conflict from the beginning to the end. 'Romeo and Juliet' is about 'star crossed lovers' from two different families who do not get on very well. The two meet each other at a ball and fall in love. At the end they die for each other. In this essay I shall be writing about the conflict which is carried through the whole play. I shall be writing about the two key scenes in detail and two scenes which have just a brief overview.

The conflict starts at the beginning of the play in Act 1 scene 1. On line 54, Sampson says 'Draw if you be men'. This could possibly be the drawing of a sword. 'If you be men' could be Sampson trying to encourage them to fight.

As well as that in Act 1 scene 1, Tybalt also brings conflict to the play: 'As I hate hell, all Montagues and thee'. Tybalt clearly states he hates 'hell'. 'Hell' isn't a very nice place and it is known to be where wicked people go. This could mean that Tybalt is referring to the Montagues as 'hell'. He clearly thinks they are wicked.

In Act 1 scene 5, the conflict continues. Tybalt says 'Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting.' This is as if it's another threat towards Romeo. However, immediately after that Romeo and Juliet meet for the first time. The first fourteen lines of the lovers' meeting are written in the form of a sonnet. Juliet says 'For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch and palm to palm is holy palmer's kiss'. This could be religious imagery as Romeo and Juliet hold hands. This is an example of antithesis, when conflict is immediately followed by love.

Shakespeare always uses antithesis as it grabs the audience's attention. He always writes so that love is close to conflict. It makes the reader think how can Romeo and Juliet actually get together with all this conflict around them. It immediately gets their attention and gets them wanting to read on.

In Act 1 scene 5, Capulet brags about Romeo and says how nice he is. On line 76/77, he says 'Verona brags of him to be a virtuous well-governed youth'. 'Well-governed' could possibly mean that Romeo is kind, caring and could not harm anyone. However, in Act 3 scene 1, you see Romeo change as a character and how all this conflict has changed him. On line 115, you see a huge change in him. He is the total opposite to how Capulet describes him. 'And fire eyed fury be my conduct now'. 'Fire' and 'fury' is alliteration and also they are aggressive words. Therefore this may be Romeo changing. Also as well as that the grammar he uses also suggest a harsh, angry fierce tone. At the beginning of Act 3 scene 1, you have this sense of conflict. Benvolio says to Mercutio 'mad blood stirring'. This could suggest everything is running wild. 'Mad' could suggest the fight is getting out of hand. 'Blood' could suggest all the blood of those who are getting hurt by the conflict and hate around them.

On page 93, line 59, Tybalt describes Romeo as a 'villain'. A 'villain' is somebody who is wicked and rather haughty towards others. This could be what Tybalt is describing Romeo as, somebody who is mischievous and wicked.

Later on at the end of the page 93, Mercutio uses a tripling effect. This grabs the reader's attention. He says 'O calm, dishonourable, vile submission.' These are all words full of hatred. Again Shakespeare has used an exclamation mark at the end of the line. This could mean that he is saying it in an angry voice.

On page 95, Mercutio continues to use harsh language against Tybalt. He describes Tybalt as a 'rat-catcher' which is an insult. By calling him a 'ratcatcher' and shouting insults at him he is doing exactly what Tybalt wanted him to do. He's giving him the attention he wanted and is trying to fight back.

Commentary

The candidate makes some detailed references to the text. There is a reasonable understanding of the characters occasionally backed up with textual references. The candidate is able to make reference to the way language is used in a simple way and there is some grasp of the structure.