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# ACT 1

## PRE-GRAMMAR | Preparation

*Prepare to think about the novel and its Central One Idea by drawing upon my prior knowledge, experience, or interests.*

1. What does your family name mean? What is its nationality or history? Write what you know about your family name and its significance. Feel free to do some research or ask some member(s) of your family who can provide you with some important information.

## GRAMMAR | Presentation

*Discover essential facts, elements, and features of the play through the Reading Notes, Words to Be Defined, and Comprehension Questions.*

### READING NOTES

1. **alliteration** – a succession of similar sounds in nearby words
2. **antimetabole** – (a kind of chiasmus) the repetition of identical words (or phrases) in successive clauses, but in reverse grammatical order. Example: “When the **going** gets *tough*, the *tough* get **going**.”<sup>1</sup>
3. **antithesis** – a rhetorical device that features contrasting words or phrases in a strong parallel structure. Example from Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities*: “It was the **best** of times, it was the **worst** of times.”
4. **chiasmus** – 1) the repetition of ideas in inverted order; or 2) the repetition of grammatical structures in inverted order (not to be mistaken with *antimetabole*, a kind of chiasmus in which identical words are repeated and inverted)<sup>2</sup>
5. **dénouement** (also called **conclusion** or **resolution**) – “the untying of the knot”; the conclusion or resolution that follows the climax

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[1]. “Antimetabole.” <http://rhetoric.byu.edu>

[2]. “Chiasmus.” <http://rhetoric.byu.edu>

6. **diacope** – the repetition of a word or phrase with one or two intervening words – usually used to express deep feeling
7. **dynamic character** – a character who, during the course of the narrative, grows or changes in some significant way
8. **epithet** – a figure of speech in which an adjective or noun phrase is used to characterize a person, place, or thing, summarizing its most essential quality
9. **epizeuxis** – the repetition of words with no others in between – used for vehemence or emphasis
10. **extended metaphor / conceit** – An extended metaphor or conceit is a detailed metaphor that extends over several lines or stanzas in a poem, or over many sentences or paragraph(s).
11. **paradox** – a statement that is self-contradictory on the surface, yet seems to evoke a truth nonetheless
12. **scansion** – the scanning of a line of poetry to mark its stresses and meter
13. **static character** (flat character) – a character who stays the same over the course of the story, and usually only has one outstanding trait

### Prologue

14. **star-cross'd** (Pro.1.6) – ill-fated
15. **doth** (Pro.1.8) – do (archaic form)

### Act 1, Scene 1

16. **take the wall of** (1.1.12) – In Elizabethan England, it was cleaner and safer to walk closer to the wall than the street.
17. **civil** (1.1.22) – friendly
18. **list** (1.1.40) – like
19. **partisans** (1.1.92) – weapons (pikes) with steel heads and long wooden shafts
20. **Free-town** (1.1.100) – Free Town is the name of a castle in Arthur Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet*. In his play, Shakespeare makes it a court of justice.
21. **ere** (1.1.105) – before

- 22. **fray** (1.1.115) – a brawl; a skirmish
- 23. **importun'd** (1.1.143) – questioned
- 24. **gall** (1.1.192) – a bitter poison
- 25. **Dian's wit** (1.1.207) – Diana (Artemis) was the goddess of chastity in classical mythology; “wit” = sense; intelligence

#### Act 1, Scene 2

- 26. **tut** (1.2.45) – an interjection used to express annoyance, impatience, or a mild reproof
- 27. **whither** (1.2.71) – to what place; where

#### Act 1, Scene 3

- 28. **wean'd** (1.3.25) – accustomed (a child or young mammal) to food other than its mother's milk
- 29. **to bid me trudge** (1.3.35) – to tell me to run away
- 30. **besech** (1.3.105) – to fervently ask someone to do something; to beg

#### Act 1, Scene 4

- 31. **prompter** (1.4.8) – a person out of sight from the audience who supplies forgotten words or lines to the actor during the performance of a play
- 32. **Let wantons, light of heart** (1.4.35) – Let playful, lighthearted people
- 33. **constable** (1.4.40) – a police officer; a sheriff
- 34. **waggoner** (1.4.64) – a driver of a horse-drawn wagon
- 35. **courtiers** (1.4.72) – attendants to the royal court; advisors to the king or queen
- 36. **plats the manes of horses** (1.4.89) – makes the manes knotted and unkempt
- 37. **vile** (1.4.111) – without value; worthless

#### Act 1, Scene 5

- 38. **knaves** (1.5.25) – male servants
- 39. **nuptial** (1.5.33) – wedding

40. **forswear** (1.5.50) – deny
41. **rapier** (1.5.53) – a long, light, sharp-pointed sword
42. **hither** (1.5.54) – here
43. **scorn at our solemnity** (1.5.55) – deride and mock our ceremony
44. **stock and honour** (1.5.56) – honorable breeding; station
45. **contrary me** (1.5.83) – oppose my will
46. **anon** (1.5.141) – soon; at once

**WORDS TO BE DEFINED**

**Definitions Bank**

a cruel and oppressive ruler	hated; detested
bold resistance; opposition	increasing; adding to
celebrations; festivities	a minister; a pastor
courageous; determined	ominous; foreboding
descendants; family lineage	sad; pitiful
facial expression; countenance	sprightly; lively
foreshadows; warns	very dangerous; hazardous
harmful; destructive	

1. Whose misadventur'd **piteous** overthrows, *adj.* (Pro.1.7)
2. 'Tis all one; I will show myself a **tyrant**. *n.* (1.1.21)
3. That quench the fire of your **pernicious** rage, *adj.* (1.1.82)
4. Which, as he breath'd **defiance** to my ears, *n.* (1.1.108)
5. With tears **augmenting** the fresh morning's dew, *v.* (1.1.130)
6. Black and **portentous** must this humour prove, *adj.* (1.1.139)
7. Cuts beauty off from all **posterity**, *n.* (1.1.218)
8. A **perilous** knock; and it cried bitterly. *adj.* (1.3.55)
9. The **valiant** Paris seeks you for his love. *adj.* (1.3.75)
10. With **nimble** soles: I have a soul of lead, *adj.* (1.4.16)
11. Give me a case to put my **visage** in. *n.* (1.4.29)
12. Tickling a **parson's** nose as 'a lie asleep, *n.* (1.4.80)
13. Which once untangled much misfortune **bodes**, *v.* (1.4.91)
14. With this night's **revells** and expire the term, *n.* (1.4.109)
15. That I must love a **loathed** enemy, *adj.* (1.5.139)

**WORDS TO BE DEFINED**

1. sad; pitiful
2. a cruel and oppressive ruler
3. harmful; destructive
4. old resistance; opposition
5. increasing; adding to
6. ominous; foreboding
7. descendants; family lineage
8. very dangerous; hazardous
9. courageous; determined
10. sprightly; lively
11. facial expression; countenance
12. a minister; a pastor
13. foreshadows; warns
14. celebrations; festivities
15. hated; detested

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- Two noble families of Verona, Italy, are locked in an ancient, bitter feud.
- A pair of “star-crossed” lovers from the two feuding families fall in love, meet with unfortunate events, and take their lives. Their deaths bring about the end of their parents’ rage.
- Gregory is more sarcastic. “*To move is to stir, and to be valiant is to stand; therefore, if thou art moved, thou run’st away.*” (1.1.9-10)
- Capulet
- Benvolio:** quite reasonable; a peacemaker; seems wise  
“*Put up your swords; you know not what you do.*” (1.1.63)  
**Tybalt:** impulsive - wants to bring death upon his enemy immediately; fiery, quick to extreme anger; bold, daring  
“*Turn thee, Benvolio; look upon thy death.*” (1.1.65)
- He responds in vicious anger:  
“*What, drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word, / As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee.*” (1.1.68-69)
- It reveals the volume and magnitude of the brawl—that it has upset the domestic tranquility of the Capulet estate.
- “*Rebellious subjects*”; “*enemies to peace*”; “*Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel*”
- They will receive a sentence of death:  
“*Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.*” (1.1.95)
- Many mornings outside of town, Romeo walks alone, pining and sighing with a broken heart. Unrequited love has severely darkened his mood. He shuns the daylight, secluding himself in his room and shutting the windows. Desire for Rosaline has consumed Romeo, so much so that when she rejects him, he cries and separates himself from others. He creates an “artificial night” around himself. Answers will vary. This reveals that Romeo is overly emotional and passionate. He has caused his entire world to depend on acquiring an amorous relationship with Rosaline—an idealized girl whom, in reality, he does not know very well.
- Benvolio personifies love as Cupid, the classical god of love. He says that it is unfortunate that Cupid is so gentle in appearance, but so tyrannous and rough in experience.
- Benvolio suggests that Romeo give up thinking about Rosaline; and to achieve this, he suggests Romeo look at other pretty women. Romeo responds that such an endeavor will only make him think about her more because her beauty will be unparalleled in comparison.
- Paris is asking Capulet for the hand of Juliet in marriage. Capulet responds that Juliet is not quite 14 years old, and “*is yet a stranger in the world*” (1.2.8-9). He suggests that they wait two more years before considering her ready to be wed. Students may also refer to Capulet’s response in l. 13 ff., where he asks Paris to woo her, to get her to agree “*within her scope of choice*” (1.2.18).



**Read the Prologue and Act 1, marking the text in key places according to the method taught in “How to Mark a Book.”**

As you read through Act 1, be sure to pause as often as necessary to read the helpful footnotes for difficult words and phrases. You may not need to read all of the footnotes because you will probably know some of the words already or have a sense of their meaning as you read. If you pause frequently in any section, it will be helpful to read the section again without pausing so that you get a proper sense of the rhythm and continuity of the language, as well as the gist of the complete speech or scene.

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- List two details about the **setting** from the prologue.
- What tragic event is announced, and what **dénouement** (resolution) does it bring about?
- Regarding Gregory and Sampson, who is more sarcastic with whom? Quote a line(s) that reveals this.
- Sampson and Gregory come from which house?
- List four **characteristics** of Benvolio and four of Tybalt. Include one quotation from each character that casts some light on his personality.
- Read 1.1.66-67, starting at “*I do but keep the peace; put up thy sword ....*” How does Tybalt respond to Benvolio? Quote his response.
- In scene 1, Capulet arrives to the brawl in his dressing gown. What does this **detail** of his arrival in a gown suggest?
- Read 1.1.79-83, starting at “*Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace ....*” Identify three **epithets** the Prince uses in his tirade and copy them below.
- What ultimatum does the Prince deliver in his tirade?
- Read 1.1.129-138, starting at “*Many a morning hath he there been seen ....*” Briefly **summarize** these lines. What do these words by Montague reveal about Romeo? Conduct a **character study** of Romeo by listing two aspects of his personality that are revealed in these lines.

11. *“Alas that love, so gentle in his view, / Should without eyes see pathways to his will!”* (1.1.167-168)  
Explain Benvolio’s use of **personification** here.
12. What advice does Benvolio give to Romeo in the final lines of scene 1? What is Romeo’s response?
13. What is Count Paris requesting at the opening of scene 2, and what is Capulet’s response? Include a phrase or line from the text in your response.
14. Read 1.2.13-15, starting at *“And too soon marr’d are those so early made.”* What does Capulet reveal here about Juliet and his other children?
15. Conduct a **character study** of Juliet’s Nurse from scene 3. List four **characteristics** that describe her.
16. In scene 3, from what you can tell, does it seem that Juliet has considered marriage before? How does Juliet respond to Lady Capulet when she is asked about her inclination to marry?
17. From Mercutio’s and Romeo’s witty conversation in scene 4, conduct a **character study** of Mercutio. List four **details** about him that reveal his character.
18. At the end of scene 4, what major instance of **foreshadowing** (or foreboding) can you find in Romeo’s talk with Mercutio and Benvolio? Quote a few key lines below.
19. In scene 5, how does Tybalt react when he sees Romeo at the banquet? And what is Capulet’s response?
20. Shakespeare frames Romeo and Juliet’s first kiss within a **metaphor** of \_\_\_\_.

#### LITERARY & RHETORICAL DEVICE EXERCISES

1. Looking at the first five lines of the Prologue, write the line that contains **diacope** and the line that contains **alliteration**.
2. What **rhetorical device** is present when Romeo says, *“Here’s much to do with hate, but more with love”* (1.1.173)?
3. What **rhetorical device** is present when Mercutio says, *“If love be rough with you, be rough with love”* (1.4.27)?
4. Quote the line(s) that contains **epizeuxis** in Capulet’s welcome speech at his banquet in scene 5, lines 14-31.

16. Because she is so young—not quite 14 years old—Juliet has probably not considered marriage yet. After all, she replies, *“It is an honour that I dream not of.”* (1.3.67)
17. Answers will vary.
  - Mercutio is highly imaginative.
  - He is witty and fond of wordplay.
  - He can be crude with innuendos.
  - He is intelligent.
  - He has a cynical view of love and romance.
  - He seeks to discredit Romeo’s lofty, sublime notions of love and romance.
18. Answers will vary. Any of these lines will suffice: *“I fear, too early; for 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 clos’d in my breast, / By some vile forfeit of untimely death. / But He that hath the steerage of my course / Direct my sail! On, lusty gentlemen.”* (1.4.106-113)
19. When Tybalt recognizes Romeo, he becomes infuriated and asks for his rapier. Capulet commands Tybalt to endure Romeo without causing any scene. Tybalt resists his uncle’s orders until Capulet threatens him and angrily chastises him.
20. sin

#### LITERARY & RHETORICAL DEVICE EXERCISES

1. *“Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean”* (l. 4) (diacope)  
*“From forth the fatal loins of these two foes”* (l. 5) (alliteration)
2. antithesis
3. antimetabole or chiasmus
4. *“... ’Tis gone, ’tis gone, ’tis gone!”* (l. 22); *“A hall, a hall! ...”* (l. 24)

14. He reveals that Juliet is his only remaining child. All of his other children have passed away.
15. Answers will vary.
  - She loves to talk.
  - She is a trusted counselor to Lady Capulet and Juliet.
  - She is somewhat vulgar and bawdy with regard to relationships between men and women.
  - Sadly, the Nurse’s daughter, Susan, died when she was just 12 years old.

## SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Answers will vary. The Chorus is traditionally played by a male actor wearing a large cloak. He is a gentleman who provides the comforting voice of a narrator or guide to the play. He contributes a wise voice of reason throughout the play.
2. This will be nearly impossible for students to get on their own. It will need to be mostly teacher-led, but should facilitate some good discussion. As Crystal Downing so convincingly suggests in her essay in the back, “A Rose by Any Other Name,” in *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare may have been exploring “the power of clichés to control behavior.” This means that shallow, excessive language (like that present in the Petrarchan sonnet tradition of love poetry) functions as a plague for Romeo and other characters in the play, causing much of the dysfunction and tragedy. Clichéd and hyperbolic language separates many characters and actions from authenticity and truth. It separates appearance from reality. But not all the characters are afflicted thus. Juliet is different, a kind of heroine. Shakespeare elevates her to speak against such insubstantial language. For example, she says, “Conceit, more rich in matter than in words, / Brags of his substance, not of ornament” (2.6.30-31)—asserting that Romeo’s love must be substantial and active, and consist of more than mere words.
3. Montague’s assertion foreshadows that Romeo’s mood (humour)—his excessive romantic passion—if unchecked by reason and balance, will prove tragic—“*black and portentous*.” These words also convey that good (i.e., reasonable and wise) counsel must come from the adults surrounding Romeo in order to remove this defect in him and prevent tragic ends.
4. *Here’s much to do with hate, but more with love.*  
*Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate!*  
*O anything, of nothing first create!*  
*O heavy lightness! serious vanity!*  
*Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!*  
*Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!*  
*Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!*  
*This love feel I, that feel no love in this.*  
(1.1.173-180)

ACT 1 • Logic | Dialectic

## LOGIC | Dialectic

*Reason with the facts, elements, and features of the play; sort, arrange, compare, and connect ideas – and begin to uncover and determine the Central One Idea.*

### SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

May be verbally discussed or answered in written form in your Literature Notebook.

1. Describe the **Chorus**. What perspective or **voice** does he give to the play?
2. Of his 38 plays, this is the only play in which Shakespeare opens with a **sonnet**. Stemming from the Petrarchan tradition, sonnets in Shakespeare’s day were the conventional form of love poetry that idealized the perfect woman. What might Shakespeare be saying about this kind of conventional (e.g., hyperbolic, clichéd) language?
3. “*Black and portentous must this humour prove, Unless good counsel may the cause remove.*” (1.1.139-140) Is there any **foreshadowing** present here? How might these words by Montague (about Romeo) serve as the **Central One Idea** of the play?
4. Read 1.1.173-180, starting at “*Here’s much to do with hate, but more with love.*” Underline the **paradoxes** in Romeo’s words. Explain the use of **irony** and the overall **gist** of his speech.
5. Read 1.1.206-212, starting at “*Well, in that hit you miss: she’ll not be hit ....*”
  - a) Explain the **extended metaphor** and **summarize** Romeo’s speech.
  - b) Conduct a **scansion** of the lines: what is the **meter** and **rhyme scheme**?
6. Read 1.2.16-19, starting at “*But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart ....*”
  - a) Briefly **summarize** these lines.
  - b) Do you think Capulet’s advice is sound? Why or why not?
  - c) Do you think Capulet will be a **static character** who remains committed to this perspective over the course of the play, or will he be a **dynamic character** who undergoes significant change?

Footnote 56 in the text gives much of the answer to this question. But it is best for students to answer this on their own, or to discover the footnote on their own. The quarrel between the two families has much to do with hate, but ironically, even more to do with love—i.e., the love between Romeo and Juliet. Then the following list of paradoxes—“*brawling love*,” “*loving hate*,” etc.—implies the irony present in having a strong love for one’s own family that leads to the hatred of another family.

7. Read 1.5.42-51, starting at “*O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!*”
  - a) When Romeo sees Juliet, he makes a number of **comparisons (similes, metaphors, etc.)**. Identify three and list them here.
  - b) What do you think of Romeo’s infatuation here? “*Did my heart love till now?*” Do you believe he has found true love, or something else?

**PERSONAL & SUBJECTIVE  
SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**May be quietly reflected upon, verbally discussed, or answered in written form.**

1. Read 1.1.188-192, starting at “*Love is a smoke rais’d with the fume of sighs ....*” Do you agree with Romeo’s assessment of love? Why or why not?
2. At the beginning of scene 2, Capulet responds to Paris’s entreaty for Juliet by saying that she is not quite 14 years old, “yet a stranger in the world.” Capulet suggests that they wait two more years before considering her ready to be wed. Do you agree with Capulet? Why or why not?
3. Read 1.2.45-46; 48-50, starting at “*Tut, man, one fire burns out another’s burning ....*”
  - a) Do you agree with Benvolio that one person’s pain is lessened by someone else’s misery, or that desperate grief can be cured by someone else’s pain? Why or why not? What is a moral or right perspective concerning this?
  - b) Do you think that turning to another object of affection helps cure the pain of losing someone or something that you desired?

5. a) The extended metaphor involves references from classical mythology, and in particular, offensive and defensive military/war terminology. Cupid, the god of love, shoots his arrow at Rosaline, the object of Romeo’s infatuation. But Rosaline is well-armored in chastity with Diana’s “wit” (sense; intelligence), so she cannot be pierced by the arrow from “*Love’s weak childish bow,*” nor besieged by a lover’s poetic language (“terms”), nor will she abide the “*encounter of assailing eyes.*” The metaphor continues with reference to Zeus seducing the princess Danae by arriving to her lap in a shower of gold.
  - b) iambic pentameter; rhyming couplets

6. a) Capulet asks Paris to woo Juliet, to win her heart. And Capulet says that his own will for her to consent to marry Paris is only a part of the equation. In her choice and agreement to marry lies his consent and agreement.
  - b) Answers will vary. His advice is really quite sound at this point. He advocates a balance between his will and Juliet’s. He wants her to have some freedom to choose Paris, to be wooed by him and to respond to his suit.
  - c) Answers will vary. Students have not read the play yet, so they will only be able to conjecture at this point. Capulet proves to be quite the dynamic character over the course of the play. With a pugnacious display of aggression, he arrives at the fray in scene 1 and calls for his long sword. But in the face of Tybalt’s aggression at his banquet, he insists on peace, tolerance, and even respect for Romeo. Still later, in Act 3, scene 5, Capulet shows yet another side: he asserts his dominant will over Juliet’s, tyrannically and savagely commanding she marry Paris in two days.
7. a) Answers will vary. He says Juliet teaches “*the torches to burn bright,*” an instance of personification—the torches being able to be taught. Juliet hangs upon “*the cheek of night / As a rich jewel in an Ethiop’s ear*” (simile). Then he says her beauty is too much for this world, and too dear to be buried. Next Romeo says that she surpasses other ladies in beauty as a white dove does in a flock of black crows.
  - b) Answers will vary. Romeo is struck with infatuation and desire over Juliet’s physical beauty. He does not know her in any way, and only sees what she looks like; thus, we should be wary in viewing Romeo’s “love” as true love. He speaks mostly of her “beauty” and seems infatuated and smitten with Juliet just as he did with Rosaline.

## RHETORICAL EXPRESSION

1. The play opens with the Chorus, who presents an overview of the play in the form of a sonnet. This prologue announces that two wealthy families in Verona, Italy, are engaged in an ancient and ongoing feud. A daughter and son from each family fall in love, are entangled in piteous disasters, commit suicide, and “doth with their death bury their parents’ strife.” In scene 1, on the streets of Verona, two servants of the Capulets fight with two servants of the Montagues, and the fray causes quite a scene. Prince Escalus arrives and castigates the patriarchs of each family for allowing repeated conflicts. After the fray, Montague and Lady Montague discuss Romeo’s strange and sad behavior with Benvolio. Shortly thereafter, Romeo tells Benvolio about his unrequited love for Rosaline.

In scene 2, Capulet and Paris discuss Paris’s suit to marry Juliet. Capulet invites him to the family banquet in order to advance the prospect. A servant of Capulet sets out to deliver the invitations to the banquet, but since he is illiterate, he asks Benvolio and Romeo to help him read the list. To repay them for their kindness, he invites them to the party. Benvolio suggests that attending the banquet will cure Romeo of his lovesickness because he will see that Rosaline is just one of many beauties. In scene 3, at the Capulet house, Lady Capulet, Juliet, and Juliet’s Nurse discuss Paris’s proposal to marry Juliet. Lady Capulet and the Nurse make a case for Paris based on his handsomeness and status. In scene 4, outside the Capulet house, Benvolio, Mercutio, and Romeo prepare to attend the banquet. In scene 5, at the banquet inside the Capulet house, Romeo sees Juliet and immediately falls in love with her. Tybalt recognizes Romeo and becomes greatly offended at his presence. Capulet restrains him from fighting and chastises him. Tybalt leaves the party insisting on revenge. As the party breaks up, Romeo discovers Juliet’s identity from the Nurse, and Juliet does likewise. They are both distraught over the news.

2. Answers will vary.

## RHETORIC | Expression

*Express in your own words the Central One Idea with supporting points.*

### RHETORICAL EXPRESSION:

To be answered in your Literature Notebook in preparation for your essay.

1. In 1-2 paragraphs, **summarize** the events of Act 1.
2. Write the **Central One Idea** of Act 1 in a complete sentence.
3. List two or three points that **support** your determination of the Central One Idea of Act 1.
4. Write a **lead** (1-2 sentences) that grabs the reader’s attention—such as a *quote, question, startling fact or statistic, scenario, piece of dialogue, etc.*
5. Write an **amplification/importance** (1-2 sentences) that explains why your thesis is important in a larger or more universal sense.

◆ **Central Quote:** Choose a quote from anywhere in Act 1 that you think best embodies the Central One Idea and copy it down.

❶ **Write the Central One Idea as expressed by the teacher.**

### ESSAY OPTION

Choose a topic below and respond with a 3-5 paragraph essay that includes an Introduction with a clear thesis; a Body with organized, logical, and specific support of the thesis; and a Conclusion that recapitulates the thesis and supporting points in a fresh way, and closes with an amplification—why the thesis is important in a larger or more universal sense.

The essay should feature appropriate tone, voice, and point of view; correct grammar, usage, and mechanics; a variety of sentence structures enhanced by subordination and parallelism; a balance of general and specific detail; and enhanced rhetorical effect through transition words, appropriate diction, strong verbs, descriptive adjectives, and other rhetorical devices.

**Note:** Some of these prompts tend toward a shorter essay, and some toward a longer. Check with your teacher to see what length he or she suggests. Both short essays (1 page) and long essays (2-4 pages) are useful and helpful, depending on the intent and purpose.

1. Analyze the ongoing feud between the two families. Determine whether the families' code of justice is a kind of retributive justice ("an eye for an eye"), or a kind of restorative justice ("turn the other cheek"; "do not repay evil with evil"). Then, write a persuasive essay in which you argue for the effectiveness of one particular version of justice over the other. Be sure to support your thesis with evidence from *Romeo and Juliet* as well as with other logical and evidential arguments from outside the play.
2. Write a personal narrative essay about a time when you were mad at a sibling or a friend. What were the causes of the conflict? In what ways were you responsible for the altercation? How was it resolved? If it has not been resolved yet, how could you resolve the conflict?
3. Do you believe in love at first sight? Write an argumentative essay on the validity or invalidity of love at first sight. Choose your position and argue for it with compelling evidence.
4. [Central One Idea] Use the Central One Idea of Act 1 as your thesis, and support it with some evidence from your reading of Act 1, your work in the study guide, and/or outside research.
5. [Open] Write an essay in which you analyze an aspect of Act 1 that is of import to you, such as a particular theme, character, setting, element of plot, dialogue, symbol, or other literary or rhetorical motif.
6. [Teacher] Essay prompt.

3. Support for the Teacher's Central One Idea:
  - Romeo has a juvenile, irrational, self-indulgent "love" for Rosaline.
  - Capulet's "love" for Juliet is in reality more of a love of money and position.
  - Paris's "love" for Juliet seems sincere, but is unrequited by her, and is probably also rooted in maintaining social status and rank.
  - Romeo and Juliet's "love at first sight" is impulsive and ill-advised. Romeo seems infatuated with Juliet in nearly the same way as he was with Rosaline.
  - The feuding families' hatred is groundless and foolish—"bred of an airy word" (1.1.87).
4. Answers will vary.
5. Answers will vary.

◆ **Central Quote:** Answers will vary. Here is an example:

*"Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate!  
O anything, of nothing first create!  
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!  
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!"*  
*"Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs;  
Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;  
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with loving tears.  
What is it else? A madness most discreet"*  
– 1.1.174-177; 188-191

1. False, misdirected loves and groundless hatred lead to much tragedy.