

ROMY & JULIAN

A worksheet to accompany
Vienna's English Theatre's 2026/27 touring production
by Adrienne Ferguson

PART 1: QUICK COMPREHENSION CHECK

Warm-up

1. What famous play does the title of this show remind you of?
2. Who is the author of this original play?
3. Have you ever read it or seen a production or film version before?
4. Team up with a partner or small group to brainstorm what you know about the original play so you can compare the story to this one.

Scene 1

1. What play did Julian go see at The Greyfriars School for Girls?
2. Julian calls the school an “*upmarket school in an upmarket part of town, not like the crappy comprehensive...*”. What does this mean? What comparison is he making?
3. Julian says he couldn't understand a word of the play and that it would have helped if Shakespeare had written in English. Why does he say this? Didn't Shakespeare write in English?
4. The first scene of *Romy and Julian* has a “play within a play” which is a device often used by Shakespeare. What does this term mean?
5. What did Julian think of the actress playing Juliet?
 - a) She is boring and not a good actress.
 - b) She is a brilliant actress.
 - c) She is very “fit” – meaning good-looking.

Scene 2

1. What is the name of Julian's friend?
2. What party does he suggest they go to?

3. Which of the following definitions fits the terms “It’s like shooting fish in a barrel.” and “Taking candy from a baby.”
 - a) It will be very difficult
 - b) It will be very easy.
4. What did Ben buy to bring to the party?

Scene 3

1. Who does Julian see first at the party, Romy or Sara?
2. What happens to Julian when he sees Romy?
3. Is Sara nice to Julian?
4. What do you think Romy’s first impression of Julian is?
5. Who did Romy play in Romeo and Juliet? Who did Sarah play?
6. What is the name of Julian’s headteacher who is also at the party? Why is it awkward that Julian calls him “*An old sod*” in front of Romy?
7. Does Julian’s headteacher recognise him at first?
8. Why does Julian get kicked out of the party?
9. At the end of the scene do you think Romy is interested in seeing Julian again? How do you know this?

Scene 4

1. At the top of Scene 4 Julian tells his mom that he is playing X-box at Ben’s place. Is this the truth? What is he really doing? What time does he say he is going to be home?
2. How does Julian know which house is Romy’s?
3. How did Julian try to get Romy’s attention when he saw the light turn on in the house? Whose attention did he get instead?
4. What excuse does Romy give her father when he asks her why she is outside?
5. Where and when do Romy and Julian agree to meet the following day?
6. What are Romy and Julian about to do at the end of the scene before her father interrupts?

Scene 5

1. What is the first thing Mrs. Moore says to Julian at the top of the scene?
2. Mrs. Moore is a very strong woman raising a teenage boy on her own. Put a circle around the following words that best describe her:

strict, loyal, lazy, soft spoken, worried, weak, hard-working, mild-mannered, loud, protective, loving

3. What is the name of the estate Julian lives on with his mother? Do you know the name of the Italian city where Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is set? (To find the answer go to the Chorus text on page 4 of the *Romy and Julian* script.)
4. Julian says that the group of friends he hangs out with on the estate is not a gang, it's a _____. Fill in the blank with the correct word.
5. Why is Mrs. Moore worried about knives?
6. Why do you think Mrs. Moore says "The *Greyfriars*...*Why do I feel someone's going to get hurt?*"

Scene 6 and 7

1. In both these scenes there is an argument between teenager and parent. What is Romy arguing with her father about? What is Julian arguing with his mother about? What do these two arguments have in common?
2. Have you ever had an argument with a parent or guardian about what you choose to wear? If yes, what was the main topic of argument? Looking back now, can you understand the other side of the argument or do you still disagree with what they were saying?
3. What does Mrs. Moore accuse Julian of looking like?
4. What does Mr. Caple accuse Romy of looking like?
5. Both Julian and Romy express good reasons why they dress the way they do. Julian wears his freshly cleaned Adidas outfit to look cool and to make a good impression. What reason does Romy give for choosing to wear her vintage clothes? What impression do you think she is trying to make?

Scene 8

1. Why do Romy and Julian not recognise each other at first?
2. This scene uses a theatrical device called a **split scene**. This is a staging technique where two or more separate locations or time periods are shown simultaneously on stage. What are the two locations/time periods performed at the same time in Scene 8?
3. Why do you think the playwright uses this theatrical device? How does it make the meeting between Romy and Julian more interesting than if the conversations between Romy and Sara, and Julian and Ben were not included or were extra scenes by themselves?
4. What does Julian say that Romy's hat looks like?
5. Do you get the impression from this scene that Ben and Sara approve of this date? Why or why not?
6. It's true that Romy and Julian do not have many things in common. Fill in the blanks in the following chart that shows how different they really are.

	Romy	Julian
Home		A small apartment on a government estate
Family	Mum is a surgeon Dad is a headteacher	
School		Public Comprehensive School
Dress Style	Second Hand/Vintage clothing	
Music Taste		Drum and Bass, Grime, Hip Hop
Future Plans	Environmental studies at university	

7. Can you think about anything that Romy and Julian might have in common? If you need a hint, think about how they both talk about their plans and what they would like to leave behind.
8. Do Ben and Sara think their friends should see each other again?
9. The end of the Scene 8 is another split scene. Romy and Julian are in two separate locations texting each other. Why do you think the playwright chose to present this section also as a split scene? How does it affect the pacing and comedy of the moment?
10. Where and when do Romy and Julian agree to meet again?

Scene 9

1. Describe the “incident” that happened on Verona Hill Estate the night before.
2. Why does Mrs. Moore get so defensive with Mr. Caple? (See Scene 10, Question 2 for the answer) How does Mr. Caple react to this?

3. What does Julian mean when he says, “*Did I mention it – you don’t tangle with my mom.*”?

Scene 10

1. What is Romy reading about at the beginning of the scene?
2. Both Romy and Mr. Caple “**assume**” (*to accept something is true without definitive proof or evidence*) things about Julian because of where he comes from. In Scene 9 Mr. Caple assumes that because Julian is from the estate he will have many distractions preventing him from doing well on his exams. In Scene 10 Romy assumes that Julian was involved in the incident at Verona Hill Estate. Why does she assume this? Is it true? Is it fair for her to assume that without asking first?
3. Julian calls the online article deliberately one-sided and exaggerated and calls it “*nasty clickbait*”. What does this mean? How would a digital media company benefit from posting “clickbait”?
4. Why does Romy say her father is being hypocritical?

Scene 11

1. Why do you think the playwright chose to include this scene in the car with Mr. Caple yelling at the traffic while at the same time warning Romy about Julian? Think about the fact that he then calls Julian “*edgy and dangerous*”. What does this scene tell us about Mr. Caple’s personality?
2. What does Mr. Caple say about kids from council estates?
3. Why does Romy say, “I’m glad you’re not my head teacher” in response to what Mr. Caple says about Julian?
4. Romy calls her father “prejudiced” and “a stuck-up snob”. She also calls him out for being “ashamed of where he came from”. What does this mean and why does she say it? How does Mr. Caple react to this?

Scene 12

1. Mrs. Moore tells Romy that Julian is the “youth representative on the estate council”. What do you think this means? Why would a youth representative need to be at the estate council meeting? What does this tell you about Julian’s true character?
2. What does “virtue signalling” mean? How would Romy’s choice of clothing be considered “virtue signalling” as Mrs. Moore suggests?
3. Mrs. Moore implies that Romy is only dating Julian as a statement: “*well-off middle-class girl dates council estate boy*”. Is this fair of her to say or is she also making an “assumption”?

Scene 13

1. At the top of Scene 13 Julian says he has been dumped by text. Why do you think Romy breaks up with Julian at this point in the play? Why would a person break up with someone via text? Do you agree with this? What might you do differently?
2. What does the term “plenty of fish in the sea” mean in the context of dating?
3. Who does Julian meet at the bus stop on his way to Romy’s place?
4. Put a circle around the following words that best describe the character of Al: arrogant, upper-class, open-minded, welcoming, prejudiced, snobbish, aggressive, cruel, generous, empathetic, violent, stuck-up, working-class

5. Number the following events from 1-10 in order of how they occurred:

- ___ Sara tells Al that Julian broke into Romy’s garden.
- ___ Sara recognises Julian at the bus stop.
- ___ Al tells Julian to “go back to Verona Hill where he belongs” and trips Julian as he is leaving.
- ___ Al pulls out a knife.
- ___ Sara tells Julian that Romy’s father thinks he is dangerous.
- ___ Al starts putting Julian down and saying things like, “People on welfare are so selfish”
- ___ Sara introduces her older boyfriend Al.
- ___ Julian gets the knife and turns towards Sara holding it, which Sara captures on camera.
- ___ Al calls Julian a chicken and Julian pushes Al.
- ___ Julian and Al begin to fight as Sara films with her phone.
- ___ Sara says, “If Romy didn’t believe her father before – she will now!”

Scene 14

1. What did Sara do with the film she took of the fight between Julian and Al?
2. Why did it look like Julian was the one who pulled out the knife?
3. Julian was given a caution and a police record, suspended from school and grounded by his mother, but what does he say was the worst punishment of all?

Scene 15

1. Does Julian know that Ben went to talk to Romy?
2. How did Ben find out the truth about what really happened during the fight between Julian and Al?
3. Why does Ben tell Romy the truth?

Scene 16

1. Why is Julian going to stay at his uncle's house? Does his mother know this and how does she feel about it?
2. Julian takes out his expensive tracksuit he was so proud of and lays it on the ground outside Romy's window. Why does he do this? What does this gesture symbolise?
3. What does Julian place on top of his clothes?
4. What does Romy do when she finds Julian's pile of clothes?
5. The ending of the play leaves the future of the relationship between Romy and Julian open. What do you think will happen?
 - a) They will never see each other again.
 - b) They will stay friends via texts and messages.
 - c) They will continue a long-distance relationship and visit each other as often as possible.
6. Can you think of any other endings?

PART 2: YOUR OPINION MATTERS

1. Did you enjoy reading the play? Say why or why not.
2. Which of the characters did you like best? Why?
3. Which parts of the play did you find most enjoyable?
4. What, if anything, would you change about it? Why?
5. If you were going to be in a production of this play which role would you like to play and why?
6. Was the text easy/medium/or difficult to understand?
7. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being the lowest and 10 the highest) how would you rate this play?
8. On a scale of 1-10 how interesting did you find the topic of the play?
9. How did you like the ending of the play? Is there anything you would have done differently, or do you like not knowing if Romy and Julian will see each other again?

PART 3: ROMEO & JULIET- THE ORIGINAL

1. *Romy and Julian* is based on Shakespeare's most famous play, *Romeo and Juliet*. Have you ever read this play or seen any productions of it?
2. Shakespeare's plays are divided into three categories: the tragedies, the comedies, and the history plays. Which category is *Romeo and Juliet*?
3. Using the "play-within-a-play" from Scene 2 of *Romy and Julian* as a guide, number the following events from 1- 15 in the order of how they occur in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

- ___ At the party Romeo sees Juliet for the first time, and they fall in love at first sight.
- ___ Romeo hears that Juliet has died and comes back to town.
- ___ Romeo must leave town and Juliet's parents try to marry her off to someone else.
- ___ Romeo and Juliet speak at the balcony and agree to get married.
- ___ The Capulets are having a party so Romeo and his friend decide to crash the party since everyone will be wearing masks.
- ___ The Chorus ends the play: "*O, never was a story of more woe, than this of Juliet and her Romeo.*"
- ___ Tybalt kills Mercutio.
- ___ Juliet comes out onto her balcony and starts saying Romeo's name. She wishes that he was not a Montague so she could love him freely.
- ___ Before they can marry Romeo interrupts a sword fight between his best friend Mercutio and Juliet's cousin, Tybalt.
- ___ Juliet takes something that makes her appear dead and she is put in a tomb.
- ___ After the party Romeo goes to Juliet's garden and stands under her balcony.
- ___ Romeo kills Tybalt in revenge for his friend.
- ___ Juliet wakes up and sees Romeo dead beside her and stabs herself.
- ___ Romeo sees Juliet in her tomb and, believing she is truly dead, kills himself.
- ___ The Chorus introduces the story of two families, the Capulets and the Montagues, who hate each other.

4. One of the main themes of *Romeo and Juliet* is Love vs. Hate. Have a look at the list of events above. Which events represent love and which ones represent hate?

5. In his plays Shakespeare uses a theatrical device called a “**soliloquy**” where a character speaks their private thoughts, feelings, and motivations aloud while alone on stage or apart from others. Describe when and how Clive Duncan, the author of *Romy and Julian*, also uses soliloquy in his play. Why do you think a playwright would choose to use this device?
6. If you are interested in watching a version of the original play please see the following recommendations:
 - a) The 1996 film of *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Baz Luhrmann, is an iconic version featuring a young Leonardo Dicaprio as Romeo. It features a modern action movie style while still using the Shakesporean language.



Do you think this movie poster accurately conveys the themes of love vs. hate in *Romeo and Juliet*? Why or why not?

- b) During the covid pandemic, The National Theatre in London released a wonderful version of the play starring Jesse Buckley and Josh O’Connor as the star-crossed lovers. Because of covid restrictions they were unable to play live so the National Theatre organised a film version entirely shot backstage and in the rehearsal rooms. You can rent this on National Theatre at Home.
<https://www.ntathome.com/romeo-juliet> or
<https://www.ntathome.com/romeo-juliet/videos/romeo-and-juliet-trailer>



- c) If you are not a fan of Shakespeare, you may like the new movie version of the musical *West Side Story* instead, starring Rachel Ziegler. This famous adaptation of the *Romeo and Juliet* story is set during the street gang fighting in Manhattan, New York.



PART 4: EXTRA ACTIVITIES

A- DISCUSSING THE THEMES OF *ROMY AND JULIAN*

Discuss the following questions in small groups or pairs.

1. Authenticity and Identity (Finding Your Authentic Self)

- a) How does the story of *Romy and Julian* address this theme?
- b) Do you agree with the following statement: Throughout the play Romy is

rebelling against where she comes from and shapes her identity as the opposite of a privileged “rich girl”, whereas Julian embraces where he comes from and dresses accordingly.

- c) At the end of the play both Julian and Romy “shed their skins”. How do they do this? What does this symbolise?
- d) What does the term “authentic self” mean? Are Romy and Julian on the path of finding a more “authentic version” of themselves once they have “shed their skins”?
- e) Think about the way you dress and the things you do that form your own personal identity. How would you describe it to another person? Do you think this is your “authentic self”?
- f) Circle the following things you think might have an influence on your personal identity:
 - Friendships
 - Home Environment (where you live)
 - School Environment
 - Economic class
 - Media Tastes (music, television shows, films etc)
 - Family
 - Cultural background
 - Social media influences

2. Making Assumptions About Other People

- a) The definition of the term “**assumption**” is a belief, statement, or claim that is accepted as true without proof or verification. It is true that people tend to assume things about other people based on the way they dress and/or where they come from. Why do you think we do this? What are the negative sides of these assumptions? Are there any positive or beneficial sides?
- b) Even though it is Sara’s boyfriend Al who pulls out the knife in scene 13, it is very easy for everyone, even the police, to assume it was Julian who had the weapon. Why do people jump to this conclusion? What are the main differences between Al and Julian that people would consider? Do you think this is fair? Can you think of other instances where things like this occur in the world?
- c) In Scene 8, Ben and Sara make assumptions about Romy and Julian without really knowing them at all. What are these assumptions?
- d) In Scene 9 Mrs. Moore gets angry with Mr. Caple for making assumptions about her son based on where he comes from. What assumptions does Mr. Caple make? Why does Mrs. Moore get so angry? Why in Scene 11 does Romy call her father “prejudiced” and “ashamed of where he comes from”?

- e) What assumptions do you think people make about you based on how you dress/where you are from/your friends/the music you listen to?

3. **Love has no rules**

- a) What does the term “love has no rules” mean? Do you agree?
- b) Have you heard of the phrase “opposites attract”? What does this mean and how might it apply to the characters of Romy and Julian?
- c) Both the original *Romeo and Juliet* and *Romy and Julian* are based on the premise of “love at first sight”? Do you believe that this can happen? Why or why not?
- d) In the prologue of the original play Shakespeare calls Romeo and Juliet “**star crossed lovers**”. What does this mean? In what way might Romy and Julian also be considered “star crossed lovers”?

B- ACT IT OUT

Work on one or more of the following drama activities in class.

1. **The Balcony Scene** – Probably the most famous scene in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* is the balcony scene.
 - a) Watch the following clip of “the balcony scene” from the National Theatre at Home version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQCgmyvqfzQ>
 - b) Which scene in *Romy and Julian* would be the equivalent of the “balcony scene”? Read the scene through with a partner or a group of 3 with someone reading Mr. Caple.
 - c) Both in *Romeo and Juliet* and in *Romy and Julian* the fun of the scene is the danger of getting caught vs. the excitement of being together. Read the scene through again keeping this in mind. How did the fear of getting caught effect the way you read the scene? How did the excitement of being together weigh against the fear of getting caught? In acting we call this “raising the stakes”. It is a way to make a scene more fun to play by knowing that the character has a lot to gain and a lot to lose both at the same time.

2. **The Split Scene**: Another fun scene to act out from *Romy and Julian* is Scene 8, the split scene in the café.
 - a) Find a group of 4 and choose who will play which part and what qualities each character needs to have. Read the scene out loud.

- b) Next find a way to stage the scene (how the actors will move in the space and how they will use furniture and/or props). Decide how to show when Romy and Julian are in the café and when they are talking to Ben and Sara in the future.
 - c) After a few practices present your scene in front of the class.
- 3. The Romeo and Juliet Challenge:** Test your teamwork skills by working in a small group to put together a speed version of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* using the list from question three of Part 2: The Original Story from above.
- a) Create a very short "micro" scene or frozen picture (tableau) of each event in the order they occur. You can use a chorus or narrator to read out the text that describes each scene. Use Scene 1 where Julian describes the events of the school play as another reference.
 - b) Present your creation to the rest of the class.

C- Use Your Imagination

Choose from the following creative prompts.

1. **Costume Design:** Imagine you are a costume designer and draw some sketches of what the main characters of *Romy and Julian* look like in your imagination especially what each character might be wearing and how these clothes express their character.
2. **Music:** Julian is really into music. On page 19 in the café he sings a few bars of a rap he has written. Write down the lyrics to a rap Julian might write for Romy to win her over in the car park of the school in Scene 10.
3. **Advertising:** Create a poster or flyer advertising a production of *Romy and Julian* that captures the spirit of the show and will help attract a young audience.
4. **Writing:** Write an extra scene between Romy and Julian that takes place a few years later. They are meeting again for the first time since they parted in Scene 16.

PART 5: FINAL THOUGHTS

Write down any final thoughts or reflections that come up when you think back on the play. If you don't want to write you can always draw a favourite memory or impression from the play.