

Name:

Class Period:

Romeo and Juliet Prologue
(Keep these notes for test)

Prologue: In Shakespeare's day, the prologue was the introduction. A guy would come out on stage in funny tights and say the part you are about to read. Think of it as a movie preview. The prologue tells the watcher of the play what is going to happen in the future of the play.

Chorus:

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona where they 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-crossed lovers take their life,
Whose misadventured, piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-marked love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which but their children's end, naught could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

Iambic Pentameter Notes:

Questions:

1. What is the setting of the play?
2. What is the relationship between the two households?
3. What does Shakespeare mean by "star-crossed lovers"?
4. What happens to the lovers?
5. What is the conflict for this play?
6. What does the chorus ask of the audience in the last two lines? Why?
7. What is the name of the poetic form which Shakespeare uses for the Prologue?
8. What are the last two lines of this poetic form called?
9. How many lines are there?
10. Mark the rhyming pattern out to the side of the prologue (The Rhyme Scheme)
11. Underline examples of poetic language.
12. Give examples of alliteration. (write one line number and example below)

Translate the prologue into modern English on the lines provided

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A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life;

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Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.

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Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,

Is now the two hours traffic of our stage;

The which, if you with patient ears attend,

What here shall miss out toil shall strive to mend.
