

William Shakespeare
Romeo & Juliet
Act 1, Prologue

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1. What is the purpose of the prologue? (2)
2. Explain what form this prologue takes. (4)
3. "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."
 - Name the "two households"? (2)
 - Why should they have been "both alike in dignity"? If you know the play, would you agree? (4)
 - Comment on the meaning of "ancient grudge" and "mutiny". (4)
 - Explain what is meant by, "Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean". (3)
4. "A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whole misadventured piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love."
 - A major theme of this play is the intervention of fate into the lives Romeo and Juliet. List the three phrases by which the prologue introduces this theme? (3)
 - What is meant by the term "star-cross'd lovers"? (3)
 - How could Romeo and Juliet "with their death bury their parents' strife"? (2)
5. "The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend."
 - What does the narrator mean by this? (4)

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