



## ***Romeo and Juliet*** **Performance Guide**

Witness the tragic love story of *Romeo and Juliet*. Follow the feuding Montagues and Capulets, the secret romance of Romeo and Juliet and the consequences of their forbidden love. This abridged script by Cincinnati Shakespeare Company features engaging narration and opportunities for student participation, bringing Shakespeare's iconic tale to life in an unforgettable way.

**This performance guide includes:**

- Artist bios
- Warmup activities
- Background information
- Shakespearean vocabulary
- Suggested Q & A questions
- Post-show discussion questions
- Post-show activities
- Related Ohio Learning Standards

# BEFORE THE SHOW

## Meet the Artists

**Cincinnati Shakespeare Company (CSC)** is a resident ensemble theatre company bringing Shakespeare and the Classics to life for all. CSC's educational touring company brings Shakespeare's plays directly to students throughout Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. CSC engages and invites young voices to join the conversation about Shakespeare, the classics, drama and more. Find Cincinnati Shakespeare Company at [www.cincyshakes.com](http://www.cincyshakes.com).

### The 2025-2026 CSC Educational Touring Company:



**Nate Marcum**

BENVOLIO / CAPULET /  
FRIAR LAURENCE



**Kenny Rayborn**

SAMPSON / PRINCE /  
MERCUTIO / NURSE



**Kayamarie Roll**

TYBALT / JULIET



**Worley Stidham**

ABRAHAM / ROMEO

*Wait — only four actors?! Yep, you read that right! With such a tiny cast, our performers play multiple roles each. We trimmed a few characters (sorry, Paris), smooshed Capulet and Lady Capulet into one powerhouse parent, and got creative with some scene blocking. But don't worry — it's still the same iconic story you know and love, just with a whole lot of costume changes!*

## Classroom Warmup

**As a class:** Study the poster collage on page 3. How many of these movies/shows do you recognize? You might be surprised to learn that they are all inspired by *Romeo and Juliet*!

**Individually:** Choose one of the movies or shows and answer these questions.

- Who are the two main characters?
- What sides or groups do they belong to?
- What is keeping them apart?

**In partners:** Share your ideas. Discuss the following questions.

- What patterns do you notice across the different stories?
- Why do you think this story continues to be retold in so many different settings and time periods?



## Think While You Watch: Archetypes



'Romeo and Juliet', Act II, Scene 4, Romeo and Juliet with Friar Lawrence by Mather Brown, c. 1805.

[View online here](#)

**Ever notice how some characters just *feel* familiar? That's **archetype** at work!** Shakespeare borrowed classic character types from ancient stories, myths, and even old-school comedy shows called *commedia dell'arte*.

*Romeo and Juliet* is packed with them: the star-crossed lovers, the hotheaded rivals, the wise old mentor. Shakespeare's audiences recognized them instantly — and honestly? So do you.

Look at this painting by 19<sup>th</sup>-century American artist Mather Brown, depicting a scene from *Romeo and Juliet*. Which archetypes do you think are at work here, and why? Consider where each character is standing, what their postures, expressions, clothing and relative positions suggest about their relationships and roles. Which one looks like they're in charge, and which ones depend on someone else? Write down your observations. You'll come back to them after the show.

## Romeo and Juliet Synopses

1. The Royal Shakespeare Company offers leveled interactive text-based plot summaries here: <https://www.rsc.org.uk/shakespeare-learning-zone/romeo-and-juliet>

2. Video SparkNotes YouTube channel offers a synopsis: <https://youtu.be/dRrvQIvZxcg?si=EuOOqagdcI2MsGwd>

## Shakespearean Vocabulary

- **Anon:** Soon
- **Bescreened:** Hidden or covered
- **Bandyng:** Arguing or fighting
- **Chide:** To scold
- **Civil blood:** Citizens fighting or killing other citizens
- **Consort:** Spend time with
- **Doting:** Foolishly or excessively loving
- **Doff:** To remove
- **Favor:** Approval or affection
- **Forfeit:** Punishment or penalty
- **Forswear:** To reject or deny
- **Garish:** Too bright, flashy
- **Heartless hinds:** Insult meaning cruel or worthless servants
- **Misadventured:** Caused by bad luck
- **Naught:** Nothing

## The Q & A

Artists love to answer thoughtful questions! If you are having trouble thinking of a question, here are some that are sure to be well-received.

- Which is your favorite Shakespeare role to perform?
- What kind of training/education did you complete?
- What's your favorite (or least favorite) part about this work? Why?
- What advice would you have for someone wanting to follow in your footsteps?

## AFTER THE SHOW

### Post-Show Classroom Discussion

Time to revisit your predictions from the “Think While You Watch” activity. Were you right about who was who and how they related to each other? Now go deeper: how did the actors use their bodies and voices to show those same archetypes — the lovers, the mentor — in ways Brown's painting couldn't? And what did the painting capture in one frozen moment that the performance couldn't? What does each medium do that the other can't?

#### *Questions for Further Discussion*

- Which character in the story did you connect with most, and why?
- In order to make the story fit a production with four actors, some characters were cut. Which change surprised you most? Did anyone feel missing?
- *Romeo and Juliet* is about two people whose families have been enemies for so long, nobody remembers why. Where do you see people, or groups, locked into a conflict they didn't start and can't seem to stop? What would it take to break that cycle?

## Student Survey

Tell us about your experience at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BJPMLRY>

## Archetype Remix

You just watched *Romeo and Juliet*, and you probably recognized some of those character types even before you knew their names. That's the power of archetypes: these characters show up again and again across stories, centuries and genres.

**Pick at least one character from the play** and transport them to a completely different story world. Show how the characters would act, talk and cause trouble somewhere new while staying true to their archetypes.

- Romeo or Juliet (star-crossed lovers)
- Tybalt (the hothead)
- Friar Laurence (the wise mentor)
- The Nurse (the loyal sidekick)
- Capulet (the controlling parent)

### Choose a new world:

- A school cafeteria
- A video game
- A superhero universe
- A reality TV show
- Your own idea: \_\_\_\_\_

### Write your scene:

Write a short scene (8-15 lines of dialogue or a mix of dialogue and action) that shows your character in action in the new world. Someone reading your scene should be able to identify the archetype, even without knowing the Shakespearean source material.

### Perform:

Collaborate with a small group to produce the scene for class. Try out different voices, postures and movements to bring the archetypes to life!

### Reflect:

- What made this archetype easy (or hard) to translate into a new setting?
- What stayed the same about your character, and what had to change?
- Why do you think this character type keeps showing up in stories across time?

# FOR TEACHERS

## Related Ohio Learning Standards

The following standards are linked to the artist’s performance, students’ participation as audience members, and the activities in the performance guide. Teachers may be able to make additional connections.

### Drama

Creating (CE)	
6.3	Examine the basic principles and elements of various theatrical genres.
7.3	Investigate the principles and elements of dramatic and theatrical works from specific time periods and communicate how these aspects work together.
HSP.3	Explain how theatrical artists create meaning to convey a playwright’s intent.
HSP.6	Collaborate with a small group to create a written scene and produce it for class.
Performing (PE)	
6.1	Create and perform improvisations and scripted scenes based on personal experience and imagination.
6.3	Examine and demonstrate how theatrical artists conceptualize and convey an idea or message.
HSP.1	Manipulate vocal qualities, posture, movement, and language to express variety in characters during improvisation and dramatic situations.
Responding (RE)	
6.1	Express and compare personal reactions to various theatrical elements using appropriate theatrical vocabulary and terminology.
6.3	Determine the effectiveness of a specific artistic choice in communicating a theatrical work.
7.4	Critique a personal rehearsal or performance on the basis of technique, vocal quality, facial expression, and gestures.
8.5	Identify ways actors and designers adjust aspects of performance to adapt to different settings, audiences, and contemporary social influences.
HSP.3	Examine traditional and nontraditional interpretations of a theatrical work.
Connecting (CO)	
6.3	Describe how traditional and contemporary media arts influence dramatic production and audience response.
8.7	Investigate opportunities for further theatrical or dramatic arts involvement and instruction in the community.
HSP.5	Research and report on career opportunities in theatre and drama; investigate the level of discipline, knowledge and skill required for career preparation in drama and theatre.

### Reading Literature

CCR Anchor Standard 6	(Grade 8) Analyze how differences in the points of view and perspectives of the characters and the audience or reader create effects such as suspense or humor.
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CCR Anchor Standard 7	(Grade 8) Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.
CCR Anchor Standard 7	(Grade 9-10) Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

## Writing

CCR Anchor Standard 4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCR Anchor Standard 10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

## Speaking and Listening

CCR Anchor Standard 1	Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
CCR Anchor Standard 2	Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
CCR Anchor Standard 3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

## Social and Emotional Learning

Self-Awareness	A4: Demonstrate a sense of personal responsibility, confidence, and advocacy
Relationship Skills	D1: Apply positive verbal and non-verbal communication and social skills to interact effectively with others and in groups D2: Develop and maintain positive relationships
Responsible Decision-making	E4: Explore and approach new situations with an open mind and curiosity while recognizing that some outcomes are not certain or comfortable