Year 9 English
Distance Learning Quiz and Learn Booklet Summer 2

Name:

Form:
Week 1: Jane Eyre – Plot

This week you will be recapping the plot of Jane Eyre – the first text you studied in Year 9. How much can you remember? This book is full of interesting themes and ideas that will also help you with the new texts that you will be reading in Year 10!

Jane Eyre is a first-person narrative told from the perspective of Jane, a seemingly ‘plain’ girl who meets a lot of challenges in life. The novel presents Jane’s life from childhood to adulthood.

Jane Eyre is a novel written by Charlotte Brontë in 1847. The novel follows the story of Jane, a seemingly plain and simple girl as she battles through life's struggles. Jane has many obstacles in her life - her cruel and abusive Aunt Reed, the grim conditions at Lowood school, her love for Rochester and Rochester's marriage to Bertha. However, Jane overcomes these obstacles through her determination, sharp wit and courage. The novel ends with Jane married to Rochester with children of their own.

There are elements of Jane Eyre that echo Charlotte Brontë's own life. She and her sisters went to a school run by a headmaster as severe as Mr Brocklehurst. Two of Charlotte's sisters died there from tuberculosis (just like Jane's only friend, Helen Burns). Charlotte Brontë was also a governess for some years before turning to writing.

Jane Eyre – Short Plot Summary

1. The novel begins with Jane living at her aunt’s, Mrs Reed. Mrs Reed and her children are very cruel towards Jane and one night, Mrs Reed locks Jane into the 'Red Room', a supposedly haunted room in the family home.
2. Mrs Reed sends Jane to Lowood School where the headmaster, Mr Brocklehurst, is also cruel towards Jane. Conditions are very poor at the school and Jane's best friend, Helen Burns, dies of consumption. Jane later becomes a teacher at Lowood.
3. Jane applies for a governess position at Thornfield Hall and gets the post. She becomes governess for Adele. Jane begins to fall in love with her employer, Mr Rochester.
4. A fire breaks out at Thornfield, nearly killing Rochester as he sleeps. Jane saves him. Rochester claims it was Grace Poole - a servant - who started the fire, however Jane doesn’t think it was.
5. Jane is shocked when Rochester confesses his love and desire to marry her. She thought he wanted to marry Blanche Ingram. On the day of their wedding, a man turns up at the church to declare that Rochester cannot marry as he is already married. Rochester reveals all about his marriage, claiming his wife Bertha, is mad and he still wants to be with Jane.
6. Jane cannot be with Rochester when he is still married so she runs away, becoming homeless and then sick. The Rivers family take her in and nurse her back to health.
7. Jane inherits her uncle's wealth and estate. She finds out that the family that took her in are actually her cousins. St John Rivers asks Jane to join him in his missionary work abroad and be his wife. She nearly accepts but when she hears Rochester calling her in a dream, she decides she cannot marry someone she doesn’t love.
8. Jane returns to Thornfield. When she arrives, she discovers it has burnt down and Rochester is now living at Ferndean, his usual retreat, and is blind. Jane rushes to him and they marry. The novel concludes with Jane and Rochester married with children. Rochester also regains his sight in one eye.

Jane Eyre – Detailed Plot Summary

Life at Gateshead

The novel opens with Jane reading alone in the breakfast room, hoping she can find peace away from the Reed family. However, this doesn't last, as Master John Reed arrives, wanting to torment Jane. He taunts Jane by calling her a 'rat', claiming she is poor, ungrateful and as she depends on his mother's wealth, is a beggar. Jane retaliates and a fight breaks out. Mrs Reed arrives with her servants to stop the fight and orders Jane to be taken and locked in
the 'Red Room.' The Red Room is a 'haunted' room in the household, and it is here that Jane believes she meets her uncle's ghost. She is terrified by this and bangs on the door, wanting to be let out, but no one comes for her. Jane suffers a fever and it nearly kills her.

**Lowood School**

Mrs Reed does not want Jane in her household anymore so sends her to Lowood School, a school run by the cruel Mr Brocklehurst. She tells him that Jane must be punished and Brocklehurst relishes any opportunity to punish Jane in front of her peers. Conditions at the school are not very good - illness is rife and there isn't enough food or water for the girls. Jane makes her first friend and, for the first time in her life, understands the value of friendship and love. Tragically, Helen Burns, Jane's best friend, dies of consumption and Jane is there with her until her death, refusing to leave her side. Soon after, the school is taken over by some kind and sympathetic gentlemen, thus improving the conditions. Jane later becomes a teacher there.

**Thornfield Hall**

Jane decides to leave Lowood School and applies for a governess position. She gets the position and moves to Thornfield Hall where she looks after and teaches Adele, a lively French girl. After a few months, Jane meets Rochester, the owner of the estate and her boss. She finds him aloof and rude yet intelligent and sharp. She begins to fall in love with Edward Rochester, fantasising what life would be like with him.

**A fire**

During the night, a fire breaks out at Thornfield, nearly killing Rochester as he sleeps. Jane raises the alarm and saves Rochester by putting out the fire. Rochester thanks Jane and leaves her wondering who started the fire. The next morning, Rochester claims it was Grace Poole, his alcoholic servant. However, Jane isn't convinced by Rochester’s story and is convinced Grace Poole didn't start the fire, as she hasn't been dismissed by Rochester.

**Blanche Ingram**

Mrs Fairfax, the housekeeper at Thornfield, announces that Rochester is expecting guests. The household are extremely excited and anxious, as they haven't had guests to the household for years. Preparations get underway to prepare for the party's arrival. A party of guests arrive, including the beautiful Blanche Ingram who it is rumoured Rochester will marry. Jane becomes heartbroken at this news, and awaits the marriage proposal, supposing that Rochester loves Blanche.

**Rochester proposes**

Rather than proposing to Blanche, Rochester confesses his love for Jane and asks her to marry him. Jane is shocked and does not believe him at first but eventually accepts. They prepare for their marriage, Rochester insisting that he wants to marry quickly and quietly. On the day of their wedding, Mr Mason arrives at the Church and declares that Rochester cannot marry as he is already married to his sister, Bertha Mason. Rochester confirms the story by taking Jane to the attic to see his wife, who is mentally unstable and prone to violence. Rochester exclaims that despite his marriage, he still wants to be with Jane and they could still live together. Jane locks herself in her room, away from everyone so she can think and decide what to do.

**Jane flees from Thornfield**
Jane decides that she cannot be with Rochester, as he is already married. She stays true to her principles and decides to run away, becoming homeless in the process. She forages for food in villages and journeys away from Thornfield Hall, hoping Rochester will never find her. When she is hungry, delirious and close to death, the Rivers family take her in and nurse her back to health. When she gets better, Jane becomes a schoolmistress at the village.

**Jane inherits family and fortune**

St John Rivers (the brother in the Rivers family) arrives at Jane’s school to announce that her uncle has died, leaving his wealth and estate to her. John also reveals that Jane’s uncle is also his, making them cousins. Jane is overwhelmed and rejoices that she has family, splitting the inheritance between them. St John decides to undertake missionary work in India. He asks Jane to accompany him and she agrees; however, St John suggests they should be married for their journey. Jane reluctantly accepts, however, when she hears Rochester calling her name in the night, she decides she cannot marry someone she doesn't love.

**Jane returns to Thornfield**

Upon hearing Rochester’s voice, Jane returns to Thornfield. When she arrives, she discovers it has burnt down. Jane suspects the worst - that everyone in the household has died, including Rochester. She soon hears the truth, that Bertha burnt the Hall down and Rochester, in his attempt to save her, became blind and lost his hand. Jane makes the journey to Ferndean to see Rochester. As he has lost his sight, he believes he is imagining Jane’s voice. He is overwhelmed that she is there, breaking down and confessing his love for her. The novel concludes with Jane and Rochester married with children. Edward manages to regain sight in one eye to see his first-born child.

**Activity**

Create your own *storyboard* for the plot of Jane Eyre – you can focus on the first 10 chapters that we read together in class, or the whole novel using the plot summary above.

For each plot event, you should include a picture and a summary of what happened in your own words. You can use the template below or complete it on a separate piece of paper.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Picture</th>
<th>Plot Summary</th>
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Quiz

1. From the beginning of the novel, we learn that Jane is an orphan and lives with her aunt. Her aunt is called:
   - Grace Pool
   - Mrs Fairfax
   - Mrs Reed

2. Jane's aunt punishes her by locking her in:
   - The Haunted Room
   - The Red Room
   - The Blue Room

3. Mrs Reed sends Jane to Lowood School. At the school, Jane meets Helen Burns, her best friend. Helen dies from:
   - Typhus
   - Consumption
   - Starvation

4. When Jane finishes school, she applies to work as a governess. A governess’ role can be summarised as:
   - Teaching young children
   - Cleaning and cooking in a grand house
   - Looking after young children

5. After a few months of being governess at Thornfield, Jane eventually meets Edward Rochester, her boss, in a lane where he falls off his horse. Rochester can best be described as:
   - Rude and arrogant
   - Kind and gentle
   - Handsome and funny

6. As Jane is falling in love with Rochester, Mrs Fairfax announces that Thornfield Hall will be hosting a party of guests, stating that her master may marry one of the guests. Rochester's intended fiancée is:
   - Grace Poole
   - Bertha Mason
   - Blanche Ingram

7. Rochester confesses his love to Jane and asks her to be his wife. She accepts. However, their wedding day is ruined when ________________ arrives at the church and declares Rochester cannot marry.
   - Richard Mason
   - Blanche Ingram
   - Bertha Mason

8. Jane and Rochester cannot marry because...
   - Rochester is already married
   - Jane comes from a poor background
   - Jane is engaged to someone else

9. After Jane has discovered Rochester is married, she runs away and is taken in by the Rivers family. When Jane inherits her Uncle’s estate, she discovers that the Rivers family are her:
   - equals
   - relatives
   - enemies

10. The novel concludes with Jane visiting Thornfield Hall. Jane discovers that:
the house has burnt down and Rochester is dead
Rochester has married Blanche Ingram
Rochester has gone blind because of the fire

Week 2: Jane Eyre – Characters

Jane Eyre has many memorable characters that appear in the novel and interact with the heroine, Jane - influencing her development for better or for worse. In the novel, Jane is the main character.

**Jane Eyre - Character overview**

In Brontë’s novel, we have main, secondary and minor characters. The main character is Jane, due to the nature of a first-person bildungsroman. The secondary and minor characters are really important too, as Brontë highlights certain ideas and issues through them.

**Main character**
- Jane Eyre

**Secondary characters**
- Edward Rochester
- St John Rivers
- Helen Burns
- Aunt Reed

**Minor characters**
- Children of Aunt Reed - John, Georgiana and Eliza Reed
- Bessie
- Mr Brocklehurst
- Mr Lloyd
- Miss Temple
- Mrs Fairfax
- Adele
- Blanche Ingram
- Bertha
- Richard Mason
- The Rivers sisters - Mary and Diana Rivers

**Jane in Jane Eyre**
From the beginning of the novel, Brontë describes Jane as a strong-willed, passionate and outspoken young girl. Jane regularly speaks out against the cruel treatment of her cousin, John and her aunt, Mrs Reed. This results in Jane becoming isolated and alienated in the house, as she endures her punishments alone. When Jane moves to Lowood School, her life appears to be similar, as she has to endure horrible taunts and punishments from Mr Brocklehurst. However, it is at Lowood Jane finds true friendship and love. Here, Jane is very loyal and kind towards Helen Burns, her best friend. When Helen dies, she is heartbroken and lost.

As the novel progresses, the reader sees Jane blossoming into adulthood. Jane is always described to be plain and doesn't see herself as a beauty. Nonetheless, she manages to fall in love with Rochester, and eventually Rochester confesses his love for Jane. They plan to marry but their plans are thwarted when it is revealed Rochester already has a wife. Jane suffers more heartbreak and vows to leave Thornfield, as she cannot sacrifice her integrity and principles to live with a man she loves but cannot marry. She leaves, sacrificing her chance of happiness. Jane becomes homeless and finds refuge at the Rivers' home. When it is revealed they are Jane's cousins, she offers them a portion of her newly inherited fortune, thus ensuring their happiness. The novel ends with Jane finding happiness, as she marries Rochester as a confident, independent, young woman.

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<th>How is Jane like this?</th>
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<td><strong>Passionate</strong></td>
<td>Jane is shown to be a passionate child when she tells Helen Burns that she cannot forgive Mrs Reed and refuses to.</td>
<td>&quot;Then I should love Mrs Reed, which I cannot do; I should bless her son John, which is impossible.&quot; This shows that Jane is passionate and headstrong as she will not forgive Mrs Reed and John for their past actions. This also illustrates that Jane's emotions govern her decisions. The use of the adjective 'impossible' highlights how absurd Jane thinks the idea of blessing John is, highlighting how she will never do it.</td>
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<td><strong>Kind</strong></td>
<td>Jane shows kindness towards Adele. When Jane believes Rochester is to marry Blanche Ingram, she asks Rochester to look after Adele and ensure she has a good education. Jane truly cares for Adele and wishes the best for her.</td>
<td>&quot;Adele ought to go to school: I am sure you will perceive the necessity of it.&quot; This request is unusual, as Jane is asking her master, Rochester, to think about Adele's future. In the Victorian era, women and particularly governesses would not comment on their master's decisions. The fact that Jane does highlights how she cares about Adele and is willing to request something from her master.</td>
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<td><strong>Selfless</strong></td>
<td>Despite Jane's feelings for Rochester and her chance of true happiness, she is prepared The house cleared, I shut myself in, fastened the bolt that none might intrude, and proceeded - not to weep, not to mourn, Jane is quite calm and reflective when Rochester's marriage to Bertha is revealed and her happiness has unravellled. Brontë describes Jane shutting herself in - this is</td>
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How is Jane like this?

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<td>I was yet too calm for that, but - mechanically to take off the wedding dress and replace it by the stuff gown I had worn yesterday, as I thought, for the last time.</td>
<td>a metaphor and illustrates how she is willingly shutting her emotions down, as she is afraid of getting hurt. The use of the word 'mechanically' illustrates this point further, as Jane has become a machine, devoid of any emotions.</td>
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**Edward Rochester in Jane Eyre**

Edward Rochester is the master of Thornfield Hall and as a consequence, has a large fortune. Brontë describes Rochester as **aloof, intelligent, rugged and witty**. The reader first meets him when he falls off his horse, accusing Jane of bewitching it. From the beginning, we get the impression that Rochester is aloof, wild and outspoken. Rochester demands that Jane spends time with him, and they spend their evenings arguing and discussing topical issues. His rugged appearance makes him appear wilder, echoing his personality. Jane begins to fall in love with him.

Rochester organises a party, welcoming guests into his house. He flirts with Blanche Ingram, wanting Jane to become jealous and declare her love for him. When she doesn't, he appears angry and flirts all the more - **manipulating** Jane's and Blanche's emotions. Rochester finally declares his love for Jane, stating they must get married straight away. When, at the altar, it is revealed that Rochester is already married, he becomes **angry** and **self-pitying** as he is bound to Bertha, a 'mad-woman' who Brontë describes as being no longer human and animal-like. He wants Jane to stay with him, **selfishly** pleading to her and declaring his love. She leaves him.

When Jane returns to Rochester, she discovers that Rochester lost his sight and Thornfield Hall during a fire that Bertha caused. He repents for his past actions and puts others' safety before his own, becoming a true hero. He cries when he hears Jane's voice, demonstrating his true **love** for Jane.

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<td><strong>Self-pitying</strong></td>
<td>Rochester pities himself as he was forced into a marriage he did not want by his father. He pities the fact that he is married to Bertha.</td>
<td>&quot;You shall see what sort of a being I was cheated into espousing, and judge whether or not I had a right to break the compact, and seek sympathy with</td>
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How is Rochester like this?

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<td>Manipulating</td>
<td>something at least human.&quot;</td>
<td>suggesting that she is less than human.</td>
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<td>Rochester tries to manipulate Jane's emotions by flirting with Blanche Ingram and making Jane believe that they are going to marry.</td>
<td>&quot;Well, tonight I excuse you; but understand that so long as my visitors stay, I expect you to appear in the drawing room every evening; it is my wish, don't neglect it.&quot;</td>
<td>Rochester is demanding that Jane spends time in the drawing room with his guests and himself. During Jane's time in the drawing room, she has to witness Blanche's flirting with Rochester. This shows that Rochester is trying to make Jane jealous so she will confess her love to Rochester.</td>
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Helen Burns in Jane Eyre

Helen lies dying from consumption

Helen Burns is Jane's only friend at Lowood School. **Helen is honest, pious, loyal and compassionate.** Helen is continuously victimised by her teachers and regularly takes the punishment without voicing her opinions. This confuses Jane, as she wishes Helen would stand up for herself. However, Helen does not see it like that - she accepts her perceived failings and apologises for them, waiting for the punishment patiently. This attitude is down to Helen's pious nature, as she continuously 'turns the other cheek' and tries to see the world through others' eyes. She loves and cares for Jane.

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<th>How is Helen like this?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Accepting</td>
<td>Helen is accepting and patient when receiving punishments from her teachers. She believes in their authority and wants to improve herself.</td>
<td>&quot;It is far better to endure patiently a smart which nobody feels but yourself, than to commit a hasty action whose evil consequences will extend to all connected to you; and</td>
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**Helen Burns is Jane's first friend. In your opinion, what did Jane learn from Helen Burns?**

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**Mrs Reed in Jane Eyre**

Mrs Reed is Jane's aunt and she looks after Jane at Gateshead. Mrs Reed is cruel towards Jane, offering her little happiness and punishing her relentlessly. She punishes Jane by locking her in the Red Room and forbidding anyone to let her out. Mrs Reed idolises her children, John, Georgiana and Eliza, making them selfish, egotistical and arrogant.

At the end of the novel, when Mrs Reed is dying, we learn that she is jealous of Jane, as her husband loved Jane dearly, perhaps more than their own children. This could be the reason behind her malicious treatment of Jane.

Whilst Jane is at Thornfield, she visits her aunt, Mrs Reed at Gateshead. This is because her aunt has requested it and is on her death-bed. During this visit, Jane's behaviour and perception of her aunt changes, as she forgives her aunt for her past behaviour and treatment.
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<th>How is Mrs Reed like this?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cruel</td>
<td>Mrs Reed is cruel as she locks Jane in the haunted ‘Red Room’ at Gateshead. She locks Jane in the room and doesn’t come to her aid when she pleads and cries for help.</td>
<td>Mrs Reed appears ruthless, as she 'abruptly' pushes her into the room, and locks the door. Brontë’s uses descriptive language such as 'impatient', 'thrust' and 'abruptly.' These words highlight how Mrs Reed wants to punish Jane and it is almost second nature to her. This makes it all the more horrific as Jane, a child, was 'frantic' and sobbing wildly.</td>
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<td>Jealous</td>
<td>Mrs Reed is jealous of Jane as she believes her husband, Mr Reed, loved Jane more than his own children. As a consequence, this makes Mrs Reed love her children more and despise Jane further.</td>
<td>Mrs Reed never wanted to look after Jane and despised the fact that she had to. The repetition of the word 'weak' emphasises how Mrs Reed despises Mr Reed for loving Jane, almost ridiculing and chastising him for it.</td>
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**John Reed, Georgiana Reed, Eliza Reed and Bessie in Jane Eyre**

During Jane’s childhood, all three children take delight in bullying Jane and making her life miserable. John detests Jane and repeats his mother’s taunts. John believes he is really important as he is the heir to Reed fortune; this makes him **selfish, arrogant and uncontrollable**. These traits are his downfall, as later on in the novel, he becomes an alcoholic who spends all of the family’s wealth. Georgiana is a **spoilt** girl who prides herself on her beauty, nothing more. Eliza and Georgiana argue when Mrs Reed is on her deathbed, as Eliza cannot bear Georgiana’s **selfish** ways.

**Personality traits:**
- selfish
- self-centred
- arrogant
- uncontrollable
- cruel

**Bessie**
Bessie is Jane's nursemaid and it is her job to look after Jane. Bessie is an inconsistent character, as her feelings for Jane change throughout the course of the novel. At times, Bessie can be kind and loving towards Jane, offering her treats as a child, whereas, on other occasions, she can scold and punish Jane for no apparent reason. At the end of the novel, the reader learns Bessie cares for Jane, as she is excited to see Jane as an adult and is pleased she is happy.

**Personality traits:**
- changeable
- kind
- loving
- forceful

**Mr Brocklehurst**

Mr Brocklehurst is the supervisor of Lowood School. He is mean, vindictive and enjoys making the girls quiver in his presence. He enjoys the power he has and enjoys doling out punishments.

Brocklehurst wants the pupils of Lowood School to be modest and pious and he cruelly restricts their food rations. This is hypocritical, as his family enjoys very fine things and is not deprived of anything.

**Personality traits:**
- vicious
- mean
- powerful
- hypocritical

**St John Rivers in Jane Eyre**

St John is protective of his family, religious, cold-hearted and always striving to do the right thing, whether it is personally right for him or not. His cold nature is the complete opposite of the fiery-tempered Rochester. St John Rivers and his sisters find Jane outside of their home, hungry and feverish. They take her in and nurse her back to health. St John finds Jane a position as schoolmistress at the local village. It is here that Jane witnesses St John's true feelings for Miss Rosamund Oliver, the local wealthy beauty in the village. St John loves Miss Rosamund but will not marry her, as he believes she will not make a good missionary's wife. St John isolates himself from Miss Rosamund by being cold-hearted and distant. He does this, as he believes God has called him to become a missionary. He is extremely pious and determined in his goal to become a missionary in India. He proposes to Jane, as he believes Jane will be a good missionary's wife. Jane refuses and St John is confused, oblivious to Jane's argument that she cannot marry without love.

**Bertha**
Bertha is Rochester's first wife and she lives in Thornfield's attic, locked up and managed by Grace Poole. Bertha is described as mad, jealous, bitter and malicious, as she sets fire to Rochester's bed whilst he is sleeping and tramples on Jane's wedding dress. Brontë describes her as an animal, as she runs around on all fours, grunting and groaning. Bertha sets fire to Thornfield and then jumps from the roof - her final act of madness.

**Personality traits:**
- bitter
- jealous
- malicious
- insane

**Mary and Diana Rivers**

Mary and Diana Rivers are Jane's cousins and the sisters of St John. They are very kind, loyal and loving, as they care for Jane throughout her illness, offering her a place to live when she has nowhere else to go. When they discover Jane is their cousin, they are overjoyed and excited. They welcome Jane into their family with open arms.

**Personality traits:**
- kind
- loyal
- protective
- loving

**Mrs Fairfax**

Mrs Fairfax is the housekeeper at Thornfield Hall. She likes to keep the house in order, ensuring everything is clean and organised for Rochester, the master of the house. When Rochester and Jane announce the news of their marriage, she shuns Jane, as she believes Jane has over-stepped her position.

**Personality traits:**
- organised
- meticulous
- stubborn

**Adele**

Adele is Rochester's ward and she stays at Thornfield under Rochester's instructions. Adele is described as not particularly bright and Jane gets frustrated with her, as Adele is more focused on fashion and true love rather than her studies. Adele is quite fanciful and does not take her studies seriously. Adele respects and loves Jane.
Personality traits:
- fanciful
- kind
- caring

Blanche Ingram

Blanche Ingram is Rochester's 'love interest' and arrives at Thornfield with the intention of marrying Rochester. Blanche is described as beautiful, clever and witty. It is through these traits that she attempts to woo Rochester and become Mrs Rochester of Thornfield. She does not love Rochester and only wants to marry him for his wealth and fortune. This makes her appear cold-hearted, vindictive and scheming.

Personality traits:
- beautiful
- clever
- cold-hearted
- vindictive

Activity
Choose 3 characters from Jane Eyre and create a character profile for each one using the template below:

Name of character: 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives which describe this character</th>
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<th>Occupation (what do they do):</th>
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<th>Positive Personality Traits</th>
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### Adjectives which describe this character

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### Occupation (what do they do):

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### Positive Personality Traits

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### Negative Personality Traits

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### Importance in the novel/summary of what happens to them:

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<th>Adjectives which describe this character</th>
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<th>Occupation (what do they do):</th>
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<th>Positive Personality Traits</th>
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<th>Importance in the novel/summary of what happens to them:</th>
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<th>Who are they related to in the novel (friends/family/enemies):</th>
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**Quiz**

**Part 1**
"Do you think I am an automaton? - A machine without feelings? And can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips, and my drop of living water dashed from my cup? Do you think because I am poor, obscure, plain and little that I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong! - I have as much soul as you - and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you."

1. In Jane’s speech to Rochester, which of Jane’s qualities (personality traits) are apparent?
   - She is timid and afraid of Rochester
   - She is poor and plain but has spirit
   - She is content with her position in life

2. What does Jane’s speech to Rochester tell you about life in 19th century for a woman?
   - Life was hard without connections and a lack of money
   - It was quite easy to move up in society
   - A woman could easily find a career on her own

3. Which words in the passage best describe Jane?
   - Soulless and heartless
   - Obscure and plain
   - Beautiful and wealthy

4. Why does Brontë use exclamation marks? What do they highlight about Jane?
   - She is passionate
   - She is timid
   - She is boring

Part 2

Read the extract from Jane Eyre and answer questions 5-7 below. In this extract, Jane is considering what it would be like to be married to St John.

‘...But as his wife - at his side always, and always restrained, and always checked - forced to keep the fire of my nature continually low, to compel it to burn inwardly and never utter a cry, though the imprisoned flame consumed vital after vital - this would be unendurable.’

5. Why doesn’t Jane want to marry St John?
   - She is jealous of Miss Oliver
   - She doesn’t love him
   - She disagrees with his religion

6. How is St John presented in the extract?
He is loving and affectionate
He is very religious
He is cold and controlling

7. What do Jane's thoughts tell you about marriage in the Victorian era?
- Wives had the power
- Marriage was equal between the two sexes
- Husbands had the power

Part 3

Read the extract from Jane Eyre and answer questions 8-10 below.

"Ah! Jane. But I want a wife."
"Do you, sir?"
"Yes: is it news to you?"
"Of course: you said nothing about it before."
"Is it unwelcome news?"
"That depends on the circumstances, sir - on your choice."
"Which you shall make for me, Jane. I will abide by your decision."
"Choose then, sir - her who loves you best."
"I will at least choose - her I love best. Jane, will you marry me?"
"Yes, sir."
"A poor blind man, whom you will have to lead about by the hand?"
"Yes, sir."
"A crippled man, twenty years older than you, whom you will have to wait on?"
"Yes, sir."
"Truly, Jane?"
"Most truly, sir."
"Oh! My darling! God bless you and reward you!"

8. Why does Rochester keep repeating 'Jane'?
- So that he doesn't forget her name
- Because he loves her and is happy to see her again
- Because he likes the name

9. Which quote shows Rochester is self-pitying? (feeling sorry for himself)
- "A poor blind man."
- "Oh! My darling!"
- "But I want a wife."

10. How does Brontë present their dialogue as comical?
- It isn't funny - it is supposed to be dramatic and romantic
- It's funny because the reader knows Jane isn't really going to marry Rochester
- Their speech is short and to the point and Jane keeps repeating "Yes, sir."
Jane Eyre - Themes Overview

Themes are ideas that run all the way through a literary text. They are great to explore because you can analyse the writer’s intentions: what have they done? Why? What are they trying to make the reader think and feel? This allows your analysis to be extended and developed, allowing you to write comprehensively about a literary text.

Themes of Jane Eyre, showing a heart split into two sections representing love/hate, unbalanced scales representing social class, and cupped hands freeing a butterfly to symbolise personal discovery.

Love and hate in Jane Eyre

In *Jane Eyre* Brontë deals with love and how characters respond to this emotion. Throughout the novel, the reader learns the true value of love - how it can benefit others, how Jane responds to love and how it develops her as a person. Equally, Brontë shows the other side of love, which is hate, and what this can do to individuals.

Love and hate are binary opposites, meaning that the two emotions are the complete opposite.

**Mr Brocklehurst and Mrs Reed are both cruel to Jane**

The emotions of love and hate are primarily shown through the characters Jane meets and has a relationship with. In Jane’s childhood, for example, her aunt and her family are described as detesting Jane, physically and emotionally abusing her on several occasions.

When Jane moves to Lowood, Mr Brocklehurst is also cruel towards Jane. However, it is through the character of Helen Burns that Jane understands what love and friendship mean.

**How the binary opposites of love and hate are shown in the novel:**

**Love:**
- Jane’s first friend, Helen Burns
- the love she feels for Mr Rochester
- the love she feels for her family, the Rivers

**Hate:**
- the way the Reed family responds to Jane
- the way Mr Brocklehurst treats Jane
- Bertha’s hatred towards Rochester
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<tr>
<th>How is this shown in the novel?</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hate - the Reed Family</strong></td>
<td>From the beginning of the novel, the reader learns that the Reed family are cruel towards Jane. They do not treat her as family and tell her she is not wanted.</td>
<td>John Reed is vicious towards Jane and taunts her: &quot;You have no business to take our books; you are a dependent, mama says; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg, and not to live here with gentleman's children like us.&quot; John explicitly says that Jane should not be living with them, reflecting what his mother believes. The repetition of the personal pronoun 'you' illustrates John's hatred for Jane and highlights the difference between her and them.</td>
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| **Love - Helen Burns**           | When Jane moves to Lowood School she makes her first friend. The reader learns that Jane loves Helen and enjoys the friendship they have. | This is shown when Jane seeks solace in Helen: 'Resting my head on Helen's shoulder, I put my arms round her waist; she drew me to her, and we reposed in silence.' Jane is comfortable in Helen's presence and she finds peace with Helen. This extract highlights their true friendship, as Helen 'drew' Jane into her - making them closer and loving. |

| **Hate - Bertha**                | During the run-up to Jane's marriage to Rochester, Bertha escapes from her attic and stamps on Jane's wedding veil. | Bertha stamps on Jane's wedding veil in the middle of the night: "Sir, it removed my veil from its gaunt head, rent it in two parts, and flinging both on the floor, trampled on them." The use of the verbs 'flinging' and 'trampled' highlight Bertha's viciousness, as she wanted to damage the wedding veil. The trampling of the wedding veil also predicts Jane's future. Her dreams of marrying Rochester will be trampled on. |

**Social class in Jane Eyre**

Jane and Rochester belong to very different social classes.

In Brontë's Jane Eyre social class is a recurring theme, as class dictates what a character can and can't do and how they are viewed by others. This is because in the Victorian period, class determined how an individual lived their life. Social class determined marriage, as people tended to marry partners within their own social class. Women were in a particularly vulnerable position, as men and their families tended to choose a suitable wife on the basis of the woman's dowry, a sum of money that the male received from the bride's family through marriage.

Social class is presented in Brontë's Jane Eyre through Jane's lack of money and how others view her because of this. It is also presented through Jane's role as a governess and the money she later receives in her uncle's will.

**How is social class presented in Jane Eyre?**

- Through Jane's lack of money and how others view her because of this.
- Jane's role as a governess.
- The money she receives from her uncle's will and how she then feels 'an equal' to Rochester.
Social and historical context

In the Victorian era, women’s wealth and dowry determined who they should marry. Through marriage, the husband would receive the dowry, making the woman dependent on the husband.

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<th>How is it presented in the novel</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jane's role as a governess</td>
<td>Jane is well-educated and must take the role of a governess to support herself financially. Later on in the novel, Jane's cousins must also take on the role of governesses - something they wish they didn't have to do.</td>
<td><em>I told her I had a prospect of getting a new situation where the salary would be double what I now received.</em></td>
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<td>Mrs Fairfax's response to Jane's engagement</td>
<td>After Rochester has announced his forthcoming marriage to Jane, Mrs Fairfax shuns Jane as she believes she has stepped above her station by marrying Rochester.</td>
<td><em>&quot;I believe she thought I had forgotten my station, and yours, sir.&quot;</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane as an independent woman</td>
<td>At the end of the novel, Jane proclaims that she is an independent woman, as she has money and wealth of her own.</td>
<td><em>&quot;I am independent, sir, as well as rich: I am my own mistress.&quot;</em></td>
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How does social class impact on Jane's journey to happiness and adulthood?

- Jane is forced to go to Lowood School and not be part of the Reed family, as she is viewed as 'poor' and as a child who is clinging onto the Reed's wealth.
- Jane becomes a governess in an attempt to make her own money and have her own independence.
- Jane believes Rochester will marry Blanche Ingram as she is wealthy. She expects this to happen and it breaks her heart.
- Jane is shunned by Mrs Fairfax when Rochester announces his marriage to Jane.
- Jane receives money from her uncle's will and splits it with her cousins, giving them independence and happiness.

Can you think of anything else to add to those bullet points?

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Personal discovery in Jane Eyre

The form of Brontë's Jane Eyre is a bildungsroman. A bildungsroman is a novel that follows the main protagonist and the struggles they have from their childhood to adulthood. The main protagonist learns from their experiences and this develops them as a person. The novel ends with them usually succeeding in later life, often finding happiness.

In *Jane Eyre*, Jane goes on a journey of personal discovery and finds out who she is, both in terms of her own identity and personality, and how she can find her own happiness. She is a true heroine and many readers rejoice in Jane's story and how she conquers Victorian society by pursuing her own happiness.

**How is personal discovery shown in *Jane Eyre***?

- Through Jane’s experiences and what she learns from them.
- Through the ending of the novel - Jane gains her independence and marries Rochester.

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<th>How is personal discovery shown in the novel?</th>
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<tr>
<td>St John asks Jane to marry him so they can both become missionaries in India. Jane nearly accepts but then realises she cannot marry a man she does not love.</td>
<td>Jane tells St John she cannot marry him, refusing when he keeps insisting: &quot;Seek one elsewhere than in me, St John: one fitted to you.&quot;</td>
<td>This illustrates Jane's forthright nature, as she is telling St John she will not marry him. Jane sticks to her principles and can't marry without love. Later on she tells St John that, &quot;If I were to marry you, you would kill me.&quot; This is symbolic as Jane is suggesting a marriage without love would be deadly.</td>
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<td>After St John has proposed to Jane, she hears Rochester calling to her in the night. It is then that Jane realises she cannot marry a man she does not love.</td>
<td>After Jane’s refusal, St John tells Jane that he knows she loves Rochester: &quot;I know where your heart turns and to what it clings.&quot;</td>
<td>The use of personification illustrates how Jane's love is a part of her and is ready to be awakened again. This shows personal discovery as Jane is now aware of her love and will do something about it.</td>
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<td>At the end of the novel, Jane is independent and marries Rochester as an equal, finally achieving ultimate happiness.</td>
<td><em>I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine. No woman was ever nearer to her mate than I am: ever more absolutely bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.</em></td>
<td>Jane is stating that she and Rochester are the same - they are joined together through love. Jane has achieved her happiness in Rochester. This quotation also links to the Bible, highlighting how pure their love is.</td>
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Jane visits her Aunt Reed at Gateshead when her Aunt is severely ill and at risk of dying.

"Love me, then, or hate me, as you will," I said at last, "you have my full and free forgiveness: ask now for God's and be at peace." Poor, suffering woman! It was too late for her to make now the effort to change her habitual frame of mind: living, she had ever hated me - dying she must hate me still."
**Analysing the evidence**

- "**my full and free forgiveness**" - this shows that Jane has truly changed the way she feels for her aunt, as she pities her and forgives her for her poor treatment and abuse. The use of the words 'full' and 'free' illustrate how earnest Jane is and how her personality has changed over the course of the novel.

- "**ask now for God's**" - Jane is instructing her aunt to ask for God's forgiveness, therefore highlighting how independent and confident she is, as she is instructing her aunt to do something.

- '**Poor, suffering woman!**' - Jane pities her aunt. This demonstrates how Jane's feelings towards her aunt have changed and how she has learnt to sympathise with her situation. The use of the exclamation mark heightens Jane's emotion.

**Activity**

Choose one of the themes (love/hate, social class or personal discovery). Create a detailed mind map in the space below showing how this theme relates to the novel. You should think about multiple characters and events in the story and try to fill your mind map with as much information as possible!
Quiz

Read the extract from Jane Eyre and answer questions 1-4 below.

'Reed pitied it; and he used to nurse it and notice it as if it had been his own: more, indeed, than he ever noticed his own at that age. He would try to make my children friendly to the little beggar: the darlings could not bear it, and he was angry with them when they showed their dislike. In his last illness, he had it brought continually to his bedside; and but an hour before he died, he bound me by vow to keep that creature. I would as soon have been charged with a pauper brat out of a workhouse: but he was weak, naturally weak.'

1. How does Mrs Reed refer to Jane as a baby? What words does she use?
   - Creature and darlings
   - It and darlings
   - It and creature

2. What does Mrs Reed's language suggest about her feelings towards Jane as a baby?
   - She despises Jane
   - She loves Jane
   - She is indifferent towards Jane

3. Which words in the passage show Mr Reed's feelings towards Jane?
   - Bound and friendly
   - Angry and darlings
   - Pitied and nurse

4. Mrs Reed is jealous of Jane. Why is she jealous of Jane in this extract?
   - Because Jane was prettier than her daughters
   - Because Jane had more money than her family
   - Because Mr Reed loved Jane more than his own children

Read the following extract and answer questions 5-7 below.

'My father had been a poor clergyman; that my mother had married him against the wishes of her friends, who considered the match beneath her; that my grandfather Reed was so irritated at her disobedience, he cut her off without a shilling; that after my mother and father had been married a year, the latter caught the typhus fever while visiting among the poor of a large manufacturing town where his curacy was situated, and where that disease was then prevalent: that my mother took the infection from him, and both died within a month of each other.'

5. What does the quotation 'considered the match beneath her' mean?
   - Jane's father was small
   - Jane's father wasn't very nice
   - Jane's father wasn't rich

6. What had Jane's mother done that had irritated her father, Jane's grandfather?
   - Married a rich man
Decided to marry a poor clergyman
Caught Typhus fever

7. What does it mean when it says 'cut her off without a shilling'?
- Jane's grandfather tried to cut a shilling
- Jane's grandfather refused to acknowledge his daughter and didn't give her any money
- Jane's grandfather was very poor

Read the following extract and answer questions 8-10 below.

'It seemed I had found a brother: one I could be proud of; one who I could love; and two sisters, whose qualities were such, that, when I knew them as mere strangers, they had inspired me with genuine affection and admiration.'

8. Why is Jane excited about the prospect of having a family?
- Because she's never had a family that love her
- Because she's got lots of money to spend on them
- She's not very excited

9. How does Jane feel when she discovers she has family?
- Elated
- Distraught
- Anxious

10. How does this extract link in with the theme of personal discovery?
- Jane has discovered her family by herself
- Jane is happy and content
- Jane loves St John and wants to marry him
The poor

Away from the luxury of the monarchy in the Elizabethan era, life for ordinary people was often hard and the number of poor people increased during Elizabeth’s reign. Unlike now, there was no welfare system or support for anyone who fell on hard times. Poverty was mostly considered to be your own fault in Elizabethan times - the belief that you had a ‘divinely appointed’ position in society was reinforced every week at church and this attitude was widely held.
Increase in poverty - reasons why

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<th>Reason</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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<td>Rising population</td>
<td>The population rose by a million during the Elizabethan period. More people meant there was more demand for goods, and so prices rose.</td>
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<td>Inflation</td>
<td>Prices for goods rose, but wages fell as there were more people around to do the work.</td>
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<td>Cloth trade collapse</td>
<td>Woollen cloth was England’s main export. There was a decline in demand and this led to unemployment.</td>
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<td>Wars</td>
<td>Taxes were increased to compensate for the price of waging war.</td>
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<td>Bad harvests</td>
<td>Harvets were particularly bad in the 1590s leading to even higher demand and more rising prices.</td>
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<td>Changes in farming</td>
<td>Many landlords decided to enclose their fields and keep sheep instead of growing crops which led to high unemployment.</td>
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Education

In Elizabethan England there was no compulsory schooling. Most children's lives revolved around the family, the church and the farm or workshop. However, Renaissance ideas spread from the continent, including the idea that society could be improved through education and learning. This meant that the demand for education grew:

- The ability to read and write became a highly desirable asset.
- Wealthier boys were better educated than ever before.
- New universities and schools were opened. Some grammar schools with the name ‘Queen Elizabeth’ in the title still exist today. They taught exclusively in Latin to prepare the sons of the wealthy for university.
- There were two universities, Oxford and Cambridge, although the Inns of Court in London where lawyers were trained was regarded as a third university.
Leisure

Theatre

**Shakespeare** wrote most of his plays during Elizabeth’s reign, in what was considered a ‘golden age’ of culture.

Purpose-built theatres were popular and offered tiered seating with prices suitable for people from all ranks of society. Many nobles protected groups of actors and became their **patrons**.

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**Opposition to the theatre**

Not everyone approved of theatres. There was some opposition from:

- The **Puritans** - they believed theatres were the work of the devil, spreading rude and lewd ideas encouraging poor moral behaviour. They also associated the theatre with the Romans, who had persecuted Christians.

- The **authorities** - an extract from a law passed in 1572 stated that: “All common players...who wander about and have not a license shall be taken, adjudged and deemed rogues, **vagabonds** and sturdy beggars.”
Daughters in Shakespeare: dreams, duty and defiance

A number of Shakespeare’s plays show daughters negotiating the demands of their fathers, often trying to reconcile duty with a desire for independence. Kim Ballard discusses women’s obligations to the men in their lives during the Elizabethan era.

Shakespeare created not only complex and engaging female roles, but also many memorable parent-child relationships. A significant number of these relationships involve fathers and daughters. Interestingly, mothers are often absent from the drama, throwing the daughter/father relationship into sharp relief. A father of two daughters himself, Shakespeare’s dramatic daughters make a formidable line-up of young women, most of them at a transitional stage between the protection of their childhood home and an adult life beyond it. The transition is rarely a smooth one: in both comedies and tragedies, tension rises as daughters go in search of love, adventure and independence.

Romeo and Juliet may be a love story, but a daughter/father relationship lies at the heart of the play’s events. Juliet is not yet 14 when the young nobleman Paris approaches her father Capulet for permission to woo his daughter. At first, Capulet seems protective of Juliet, his only surviving child, and proposes that ‘two more summers’ should pass before ‘we may think her ripe to be a bride’ (1.2.10–11). But Paris is a good prospect, a relative of the Prince of Verona, so Capulet agrees to Paris’s request, inviting him to a family feast that very evening which Juliet will be attending.

In Shakespeare’s time, daughters of respectable families, like Juliet, could expect their fathers to have a significant involvement in choosing their future husband. This reflected the subordinate position of women in a society at the time, and particularly the traditional view that daughters were a commodity and could be used in marriage to create useful alliances. Paternal involvement in husband selection provided material for many of Shakespeare’s plays, and he makes dramatic use of the resulting family clashes. Initially, Capulet is seemingly kinder than many fathers in allowing Juliet some say over her future husband: ‘But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart, / My will to her consent is but a part…’ (1.2.16–17).

Later in the play, however, when the family is in shock after their kinsman Tybalt has been murdered, Capulet leaps ahead and sets an early date for the wedding without consulting his daughter first. ‘I think she will be rul’d / In all respects by me’ (3.4.13–14) he comments, clearly expecting Juliet to be obedient.

The obedient way young women of the 16th century were meant to behave towards their parents was not only reflected in religious teaching but also well documented in publications known as ‘conduct books’. At the beginning of the play, Lady Capulet – sent to speak to Juliet by her husband – tells Juliet about Paris’s interest in her, and encourages her to consider him. Juliet’s reply exemplifies the behaviour expected of her:

I'll look to like, if looking liking move;
But no more deep will I endart mine eye
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly. (1.3.97–99)

Unfortunately, Juliet’s dutiful words are soon forgotten when, overcome by her ‘warm youthful blood’, she falls in love with Romeo (the son of her father’s enemy) and marries him in secret.
Time and again Shakespeare’s plays dramatise the conflict between the status quo in which fathers chose husbands for their daughters and the new order in which daughters wished to choose their own mates based on affection. A Midsummer Night’s Dream opens with Egeus demanding that his daughter Hermia either marry Demetrius, the husband he has selected for her, or be put to death; while Hermia remains steadfastly committed to Lysander, the prospective husband that she has chosen.

It’s part of Juliet’s tragedy that she’s unable to tell her authoritarian father about her marriage to Romeo, even though she could express her love with an eloquence that could overcome anger and hatred. Capulet is determined to ‘give’ her to Paris (a father’s right, even enshrined in the marriage ceremony).

After seeing their daughters married off to the husband of their choosing, the relationship between a father and a daughter would grow more distant. They have, after all, ‘given’ their daughter away in marriage; the child is no longer theirs. Rather, the woman is now the husband’s. He is now the superior influence in her life.

The Christian scholar, John Knox, summarised the age’s attitudes to women: ‘woman in her greatest perfection was made to serve and obey man, not to rule and command him.’ However, the triumphant rule of Elizabeth I marked the beginning of a change in these opinions – indeed, Shakespeare can be seen to challenge these viewpoints with his strong, confident and defiant female characters.
Write your summary here of what life was like in the Elizabethan era.

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Draw your image of Elizabeth life here
Lesson 4 - Romeo and Juliet Context

1. What era did Shakespeare write in? *

Enter your answer

2. Which of the following true for the Elizabethan Era? *

- Kings James I ruled
- Queen Elizabeth ruled
- Exploration and discovery of new land was important
- Theatre was the main form of entertainment
- Poor people had a difficult life

3. What was life like for women during the Elizabethan era? *

Enter your answer

4. Who generally dominated and controlled family life and why? *

Enter your answer
5. What does subordinate mean? *
   - Below standard
   - Lower rank or position
   - Not good enough

6. Who was subordinate in Elizabethan society? *

Enter your answer

7. Where did Shakespeare grow up? *

Enter your answer

8. Why was Shakespeare popular during the Elizabethan era? *
   - Because he lived in London in a popular area
   - Because his plays entertained many people
   - Because his plays were performed in front of royalty

9. According to the Elizabethans, whose fault was it that the poor were poor? *

Enter your answer

10. Which other era had similar beliefs about the poor that you have previously studied? *

Enter your answer
Romeo and Juliet - Plot summary

*Romeo and Juliet* is a play written by Shakespeare. It is a tragic love story where the two main characters, Romeo and Juliet, are supposed to be sworn enemies but fall in love. Due to their families’ ongoing conflict, they cannot be together, so they kill themselves because they cannot cope with being separated from one another. Romeo and Juliet is a Shakespearean tragedy.
1. Two wealthy families, the Montagues and the Capulets, have another brawl in the city of Verona. The Prince and the townspeople cannot cope with the constant fighting so the Prince declares that the next person to break the peace will be killed.

2. Romeo Montague and his friends gatecrash a Capulet party and Romeo meets Juliet Capulet. He falls in love with her instantly. They are shocked to discover they are sworn enemies due to their feuding families. Friar Laurence marries Romeo and Juliet.

3. Romeo goes to celebrate his marriage with his friends, Mercutio and Benvolio, but gets into a fight with Juliet’s cousin, Tybalt. Tybalt kills Mercutio and Romeo avenge his death by killing Tybalt.

4. The Prince banishes Romeo because he killed Tybalt. Both Romeo and Juliet are heartbroken.

5. Capulet, Juliet’s father, decides she should marry Paris. Juliet refuses and goes to Friar Laurence where they come up with a plan for Romeo and Juliet to be together.

6. Juliet fakes her death and lies in a tomb waiting for Romeo to come so they can run away together. Romeo doesn’t receive the message about the plan, so thinks Juliet has actually died. He goes to Verona and sees Juliet in her tomb, ‘dead’.

7. Romeo drinks poison so he can be with Juliet in death. She wakes up to discover Romeo is dead. Juliet kills herself with his dagger.

8. The Capulet and Montague families vow never to argue again.

Romeo and Juliet is a tragic love story where two teenagers fall in love and commit suicide due to their families’ ongoing feud.
Detailed plot summary

An ancient grudge

The play opens with a prologue that highlights to the audience the conflict between the two families: the Montagues and the Capulets. It is described to be an 'ancient grudge'. The families' servants have an argument, which quickly turns into something more violent and draws the families into the conflict. Romeo's cousin, Benvolio, and Juliet's cousin, the fiery Tybalt, get involved in the fray. The heads of the families, Capulet and Montague, also get involved but are quickly stopped when Prince Escalus arrives and puts a stop to the brawling. He declares that anybody fighting on the streets of Verona will be killed. He hopes to put a stop to the fighting and have peace in his city once again.

Romeo meets Juliet

Mercutio, Romeo's best friend, decides it would be a good idea to gatecrash a Capulet party. Romeo, Mercutio and Benvolio (Romeo's cousin) all go and have a good time. Whilst dancing, Romeo meets Juliet and is struck by her beauty. He speaks with her and they kiss, declaring their love for one another. As he leaves, Romeo asks Juliet's nurse for Juliet's name. The nurse tells him and he is shocked to discover they are sworn enemies and that she is the daughter of Capulet. Juliet feels the same way about Romeo when she discovers his real identity. Romeo sneaks into the Capulet mansion where he meets Juliet and they decide to get married. The next day, Friar Laurence marries Romeo and Juliet in secret. He secretly hopes that it will end the conflict.
Detailed plot summary

Tybalt kills Mercutio

Romeo meets with Mercutio and Benvolio to tell them about his marriage to Juliet. However, he is soon stopped when he sees Tybalt Capulet there arguing with Mercutio. Tybalt challenges Romeo to fight, but Romeo declines, saying that he loves Tybalt like family. Tybalt is confused and angry at his response and repeats his demand. When Romeo declines again, Mercutio loses his temper and cannot believe Romeo will not fight like a man. He takes Romeo's place and Tybalt and Mercutio fight. Romeo tries to stop the fighting. Tybalt, trying to injure Romeo, accidentally stabs Mercutio. Mercutio dies a slow, painful death. He curses the Montague and Capulet houses, blaming them for his death.

Romeo kills Tybalt and is banished

Romeo, angered by Mercutio's death, goes searching for Tybalt. They find each other and fight. The fight ends when Romeo kills Tybalt. Realising what he has done, he flees. The Prince arrives on the scene and declares that Romeo must be banished and must leave Verona immediately. Juliet finds out the news of her cousin's death and Romeo's banishment and cannot cope with the sadness. She is heartbroken and confused.

Before Romeo leaves Verona forever, he and Juliet spend the night together and consummate their marriage. Romeo leaves in the morning and they are both heartbroken.
Detailed plot summary

Juliet refuses to marry Paris

Capulet decides Juliet should marry Paris, as this will make her feel better following her cousin's death. He relays this news to his daughter and she is furious. Juliet defies her father and tells him she won't marry Paris and she will not be at the church as arranged. He is horrified with her response and tells her she must be married to Paris or else he will disown her forever. Juliet flees to Friar Laurence where she tells him this news. Friar Laurence and Juliet come up with a plan where she will fake her own death.

Juliet fakes her death

Juliet drinks a sleeping potion the night before her marriage to Paris. In the morning, she does not wake and she is pronounced dead. They take her to the Capulet tomb where she will wait for Romeo. Friar Laurence writes a letter to Romeo informing him of their plan, however, the letter doesn't get delivered to Romeo and he is told that Juliet is dead.

Romeo takes poison

Distraught, Romeo buys some deadly poison and heads to the Capulet vault. On seeing Juliet, he drinks the poison so he can be with her in heaven. Juliet finally awakens to see Romeo there with her - however, she quickly realises he has drunk poison. She kisses his lips to try and taste the poison herself, but it doesn't work. So, instead, she kills herself with Romeo's dagger.

Capulet and Montague repent

Realising that their two children have died because of their conflict, Capulet and Montague are mortified and declare they will honour their children's names for ever more. They vow never to argue again.
Complete storyboard here:
Draw a picture from one scene of the play here
1. Where is the play set? *
   - England
   - No place in real life
   - Italy- Verona

2. What had the two families done at the beginning of the play that causes trouble? *
   Enter your answer

3. What are the names of the two houses? *
   Enter your answer

4. What does Juliet agree to in Act 1? *
   Enter your answer

5. Why does Romeo gate crash his enemies party? *
   - To provoke his enemies to fight
   - To have fun
   - To meet a new girl
6. What do Romeo and Juliet decide to do the night they meet each other? *

Enter your answer

7. Which of the following are true about the scene where Mercutio dies? *

- Romeo doesn't want to fight because he is secretly married to the Capulet family
- Romeo accidentally kills Mercutio
- Tybalt wants revenge on the Montagues because they gatecrashed the Capulet ball
- Tybalt dies and blames both houses for his death

8. What happens to Romeo after the death scene of Mercutio? *

Enter your answer

9. Which of the following statements are true about the scene where Juliet goes to Friar Lawrence *

- Juliet has refused to marry Paris and disobeyed her father
- Juliet's father says he will disown Juliet and threatens her
- Juliet kills herself to get away from the pain of Romeo not being there
- Friar Lawrence and Juliet come up with a plan to reunite the two lovers

10. Write short summary of what happens in the final scene of Romeo and Juliet. *

Enter your answer
Romeo and Juliet - Characters overview

In Shakespeare's play, we have main, secondary and minor characters. Shakespeare also illustrates certain plot points and themes through the secondary and minor characters.

Main Characters
- Romeo Montague
- Juliet Capulet

Secondary Characters
- Lord Capulet
- Lady Capulet
- Tybalt Capulet
- Mercutio
- Friar Laurence
- The Nurse

Minor Characters
- Lord and Lady Montague
- Paris
- Benvolio
- Prince Escalus
Romeo Montague is a young, passionate and headstrong teenager who thinks and acts with his emotions. When the audience first meets Romeo, he declares that he is in love with Rosaline. He states that he is heartbroken because Rosaline doesn't love him back. However, his emotions are changeable, as that very night, Romeo meets Juliet and falls in love with her instantly. He vows to marry her and they marry the next day, unbeknown to their feuding families.

As the play progresses, Romeo illustrates how passionate he is by avenging his best friend Mercutio's death. He kills Juliet’s cousin, Tybalt, and is forced to leave the city of Verona. Romeo thinks he cannot live without Juliet and is devastated when he hears of Juliet’s 'death'. Here, he takes his own life so he can be with his one true love in heaven.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is Romeo like this?</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passionate</strong></td>
<td>Romeo is passionate when he meets Juliet for the first time. At the Capulet party, he declares his love for Juliet as she is so beautiful and promises they will get married in the morning.</td>
<td>“Henceforth I will never be Romeo.” Here, Romeo is telling Juliet he will not be Romeo Montague if it displeases her. This shows how passionate he is, as he is prepared to break away from his family and Christian name in order to be with Juliet. As the Montague family are wealthy and reputable, this would have caused great dishonour and therefore illustrates how serious Romeo believes his love is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Changeable</strong></td>
<td>Romeo is changeable as at the start of the play he declares his love for Rosaline, describing his heart as &quot;heavy as lead&quot;. However, his emotions and feelings soon change when he meets Juliet.</td>
<td>“I have forgot that name and that name’s woe.” This shows that Romeo is fickle, as he is openly stating he has ‘forgotten’ his past love, Rosaline. The fact that he isn’t saying her name also indicates how his emotions have moved on, as he has almost forgotten that she is a real person, she is just a name to him now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Headstrong</strong></td>
<td>Romeo is headstrong when he avenges Mercutio's death by killing Tybalt.</td>
<td>“Either thou or I, or both, must go with him.” This shows that Romeo is prepared to die in order to avenge his best friend’s death. This is the ultimate sacrifice and illustrates how headstrong he is but also how much he values his friendships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysing the evidence

ROMEO
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man.
Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone,
Let them offright thee. I beseech thee, youth,
Put not another sin upon my head
By urging me to fury. O, be gone!

Act 5 Scene 3

Question

Looking at this quote, what does it illustrate about Romeo's personality?

Juliet Capulet in Romeo and Juliet

Juliet Capulet is a young and innocent teenage girl, but she is also decisive, passionate and headstrong. When the audience first meets Juliet, it is at her father's party. Here, she meets Romeo and flirts with him, not knowing he is a Montague. Juliet is completely smitten with Romeo and when she finds out he is a Montague, she is devastated. However, knowing her own feelings, she decides to speak to Romeo more and when he reveals his true love for her, she persuades him to promise his love and they arrange their marriage.

When Romeo is banished for killing her cousin Tybalt, she is devastated. She feels very confused but knowing how she feels for Romeo, she forgives him. During the mourning period for Tybolt's death and Romeo's banishment, Juliet's father tells her she is going to marry Paris. She refuses and takes drastic action to secure her relationship and future with Romeo by faking her own death. When she wakes up to find Romeo dead, she decides to take her own life so they can be together in heaven.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is Juliet like this?</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passionate</td>
<td>Juliet is passionate when she first meets Romeo. She kisses him when they first meet, and later on, in the famous balcony scene, she declares her love for him.</td>
<td>“I gave thee mine before thou didst request it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headstrong</td>
<td>Juliet is headstrong when she refuses to marry Paris. This shocks her father and causes her father to threaten to disown her if she doesn’t obey him.</td>
<td>“He shall not make me there a joyful bride!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisive</td>
<td>Juliet is decisive when she fakes her own death so she can be with Romeo. She listens to Friar Laurence’s plan and decides to fulfil it.</td>
<td>“Love give me strength, and strength shall help afford.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Analysing the evidence

**JULIET**

*O happy dagger!*

**Act 5 Scene 3**

### Question

Looking at the evidence, what does this quotation illustrate about Juliet’s personality?

"O happy dagger!"

- This shows how Juliet wants to die so she can be with Romeo in heaven.
- 'Happy' - use of the adjective happy illustrates how she welcomes her death, and believes that the 'dagger', the instrument of her death, will allow her to be happy with Romeo.
- '!' - the use of the exclamation mark heightens Juliet’s emotions and makes the audience realise how she is ready for her death. This shows she is passionate and is decisive, as she loves Romeo and will do anything to be with him.
Lord Capulet in Romeo and Juliet

Lord Capulet is the head of the Capulet household and people look up to him, as he has great power and social responsibility. He hosts the Capulet party and fuels the conflict between the Montague and the Capulet households. As Capulet usually gets his own way, he is shocked that Juliet refuses to obey his orders - this causes him to become stubborn and to declare she is no daughter of his. He regrets his anger at the end of the play when he and Montague ask for forgiveness and repent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is Capulet like this?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Powerful</td>
<td>As the head of the Capulet household, Capulet is powerful. At his party, Tybalt tells Capulet that Romeo is there and he is dishonouring the family name. Capulet rebukes Tybalt and says Romeo is a guest and they must treat their guests kindly. This angers Tybalt but he does what he is told, reluctantly.</td>
<td>&quot;Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone... It is my will.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stubborn</td>
<td>Capulet shows his stubbornness as he is shocked by his daughter's refusal to marry Paris and therefore threatens to disown her for displeasing him.</td>
<td>&quot;I tell thee what: get thee to church a' Thursday or never after look me in the face.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lady Capulet in Romeo and Juliet

Lady Capulet is Capulet's wife. Lady Capulet is quite a timid, unknowing and selfish character, as she appears to be frightened of her husband and does not love her daughter like a mother should. In the play, she forgets Juliet's age and they have a formal relationship, illustrating the distance between them both. Lady Capulet is seen as a traditional Elizabethan woman.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is Lady Capulet like this?</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selfish</td>
<td>Lady Capulet is selfish because she doesn't listen to her daughter's woes about her upcoming marriage to Paris; she refuses to listen to her as she is disrespecting her husband and therefore the family name.</td>
<td>&quot;Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word, Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.&quot; This shows how Lady Capulet is selfish as she is unprepared to listen to Juliet as she cares more about her own safety and her relationship with her husband then she does for her own daughter. Shakespeare has made this speech very short to illustrate Lady Capulet's emotion and how she is not prepared to give Juliet any of her time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknowing</td>
<td>Throughout the play, Lady Capulet appears to have a very formal relationship with her daughter and never knows what she is doing or who she really is.</td>
<td>&quot;Nurse, where's my daughter? Call her forth to me.&quot; The question Lady Capulet directs at the Nurse illustrates how Lady Capulet isn't aware of where her daughter is or how she spends her free time. The use of the word 'daughter' illustrates how their relationship is formal, as she is referring to her as what she is, rather than who she is. It also shows how Lady Capulet is possessive over Juliet, as if Juliet belongs to her.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Social and historical context

As the Capulet family are of a high social class, they employed the Nurse to be Juliet's wet nurse. It was the nurse’s role to take care of Juliet and to breastfeed her from birth. This was common for wealthy families in Elizabethan times.

As the nurse looked after Juliet from her birth, they have more of an intimate connection than she and her biological mother do. This is presented through their relationship and how different it is to Juliet and Lady Capulet's.

Analysing the evidence

**LADY CAPULET**
Here comes your father; tell him so yourself, And see how he will take it at your hands.

Act 3 Scene 5

**Question**

What does this quotation tell us of the relationship between Lord and Lady Capulet?
LADY CAPULET

Here comes your father; tell him so yourself,
And see how he will take it at your hands.

- By telling Juliet to tell her father that she doesn’t want to marry to Paris herself, Lady Capulet is distancing herself from Juliet’s decision, the situation and Capulet’s reaction.
- This shows that Lady Capulet fears Capulet and is aware of his changing moods.
- The use of the personal pronouns illustrates how Lady Capulet is emphasising that this is Juliet’s decision and she will have to suffer the consequences of Capulet’s wrath.

Tybalt Capulet in Romeo and Juliet

Tybalt Capulet is Juliet’s cousin. He is extremely feisty and enjoys the conflict between the Montagues and his family. He is strong-willed, argumentative, passionate and loyal. All of these characteristics are demonstrated when he finds out that Romeo has gate-crashed a Capulet party, knowing that the Montagues are not welcome. Tybalt reacts badly, almost causing a fight at the Capulet household. Lord Capulet quickly intervenes and tells Tybalt not to fight Romeo and Tybalt reluctantly obeys. Tybalt seeks his revenge by fighting with Romeo, but when Romeo refuses to fight he kills Romeo’s best friend, Mercutio, instead. This causes Romeo to avenge his best friend’s death.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is Tybalt like this?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Argumentative</strong></td>
<td>Tybalt is argumentative when he speaks to any of the Montague family. He fuels the conflict and rift between the two families. When he seeks Romeo for a fight, he is argumentative when Romeo refuses to fight him.</td>
<td>“Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries that thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loyal</strong></td>
<td>As Romeo has gate-crashed the Capulet party, Tybalt believes that he is dishonouring the family name. He mentions this to Lord Capulet, however, Lord Capulet tells Tybalt to leave Romeo alone. Despite Tybalt’s nature, he is loyal to his Uncle and obeys.</td>
<td>“Why, uncle, ’tis a shame.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet

Mercutio is Romeo's best friend. Mercutio likes to have a good laugh, is **optimistic, loyal and a good friend**. When Romeo is depressed because of his unrequited love for Rosaline, it is Mercutio that suggests they should all gate-crash the Capulet party.

Later on in the play, when Tybalt arrives to fight Romeo, Mercutio stands in for Romeo as he is loyal towards his best friend. Mercutio cannot believe that Romeo would sacrifice his honour in this way, so he fights Tybalt instead. When Tybalt stabs Mercutio and he is severely hurt, Mercutio attempts to joke by saying it is a 'scratch' but when he realises the severity of his situation, he dies cursing the two households.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is Mercutio like this?</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Witty</td>
<td>Mercutio makes fun of Romeo when he declares he feels sick because of the love he has for Rosaline. Mercutio ridicules Romeo's 'love' for Rosaline claiming it is false.</td>
<td>&quot;That dreamers often lie.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyal</td>
<td>Mercutio is loyal when Romeo refuses to fight Tybalt, as he decides to fight Tybalt instead. This is because he cannot stand to see Romeo's honour jeopardised in the face of his enemy.</td>
<td>&quot;Will you pluck your sword out of his picher by the ears? Make haste.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysing the evidence**

**Question**

From reading this extract, what are the similarities between Tybalt and Mercutio?

**MERCUTIO**

Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

**TYBALT**

What wouldst thou have with me?

**MERCUTIO**

Good King of Cats, nothing but one of your nine lives. That I mean to make bold withal and, as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his picher by the ears? Make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

**TYBALT**

I am for you.

**Act 3 Scene 1**
Confidence

- They both believe they will uphold their household's honour.
- Tybalt says 'I am for you' highlighting that he is ready for the fight.
- Mercutio declares he wants one of Tybalt's nine lives, indicating that he believes he will win the fight.

Passionate natures

- Mercutio says to Tybalt 'will you walk?' questioning whether Tybalt will fight with him. This is insulting, as Mercutio is questioning Tybalt's honour and integrity.
- Both parties trade insults prior to the fight.
- Mercutio calls Tybalt a 'rat-catcher' highlighting the cunning side of Tybalt's personality - he is ridiculing him.
Friar Laurence is a priest in Verona and a confidante of Romeo. He is **kind, optimistic, loving, religious and believes the best of people**. Romeo sees Friar Laurence as a role model, an almost father figure. Whenever Romeo has a problem, he confides in Friar Laurence and seeks his advice. When Romeo tells Friar Laurence of his love for Juliet and his wish to marry her, the Friar hopes it will be a positive end to the Montague and Capulet conflict. Throughout the play, he is optimistic and hopes the young lovers will end the fray of their fathers. His role is very similar to that of the Nurse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is Friar Laurence like this?</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wise</strong></td>
<td>Friar Laurence is wise when he advises Romeo. He thinks highly of Romeo and refers to him as 'son' illustrating their close bond. He also tries to impart advice so Romeo can make the right decisions.</td>
<td>&quot;Wisely and slow, they stumble that run fast.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious</strong></td>
<td>As priest of Verona, Friar Laurence is religious. He believes Romeo and Juliet's marriage will unite them in the eyes of God and therefore put an end to the conflict between the two families.</td>
<td>&quot;Till holy church incorporate two in one.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nurse in Romeo and Juliet

The Nurse brought Juliet up from childhood, breast-feeding her and caring for her like a mother. In the play, Shakespeare presents the Nurse as Juliet's surrogate mother - a maternal figure, who truly loves Juliet, wants her to be happy and will do anything for that happiness. This is illustrated when she keeps Juliet's marriage to Romeo a secret, risking her job and livelihood. The Nurse is kind, loving and wants the best for Juliet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Is the Nurse like this?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loving</td>
<td>&quot;Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed. An I might live to see thee married once, I have my wish.&quot;</td>
<td>This shows that the nurse loves Juliet very much, as she is openly saying Juliet was the prettiest baby she had ever nursed and therefore looked after. This highlights the true connection that both the Nurse and Juliet have. The fact that it is the Nurse's wish to see Juliet married illustrates how motherly she is towards Juliet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truthful</td>
<td>&quot;I think you are happy in this second match, for it excels your first.&quot;</td>
<td>This shows that the Nurse wants the best for Juliet - she really cares for her and wants her to be happy. Therefore, she tries to be optimistic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysing the evidence

Question

Looking at this extract, what does this show about the Nurse's character and how she feels about Juliet?

NURSE

But first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her in a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say; for the gentlewoman is young, and therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.
'But first let me tell ye' - before the Nurse speaks to Romeo about his marriage, she wants to discover Romeo's intentions - are they true or not? The Nurse begins her speech with a threat. The Nurse is taking the role of a parent, deciding whether Romeo is good enough for Juliet.

'as they say' - the repetition of this phrase highlights how the Nurse is lacking confidence talking to Romeo and is also rambling on. It also shows that the Nurse isn't well educated and is of lower class, as she keeps repeating **colloquial** phrases.

'truly and very' - these words act as intensifiers - they intensify the meaning of what the Nurse is saying. Shakespeare has used these to show that the Nurse has thought of the different possibilities and outcomes and is concerned for Juliet. She doesn't want Romeo to be a bad choice.
Complete your character mind maps here.
Lesson 6- Romeo and Juliet Characters

1. How does the nurse feel about Juliet? *
   - Loves her
   - Frustrated because she is a lower class to Juliet
   - Angry she has to look after another person's child

2. What does passive mean? *
   Enter your answer

3. How is Juliet passive in the beginning of the play? *
   Enter your answer

4. How might Romeo and Juliet shock an Elizabethan audience? *
   - They are blasphemous by calling each other pilgrims and saints to show their love
   - They are very young in age
   - They fall in love despite being enemies

5. Why is Romeo upset at the beginning of the play? *
   Enter your answer
6. Which words best describe Tybalt? *
   - Vengeful
   - Aggressive
   - Loving to his family
   - A good friend

7. How does Lord Capulet treat his family? *

   Enter your answer

8. Why does Friar Lawrence help Romeo and Juliet? *

   Enter your answer

9. Which statement best describes why Prince Escalus is furious *
   - Because Montagues and Capulets hate each other
   - Because the fighting between the families disturbs the peace in his streets
   - Because the fighting of the families makes the streets dirty with blood

10. What makes Romeo and Juliet exceptional? *

    Enter your answer
Week7: Romeo and Juliet- Tragedy

Bradley, A.C., ‘The Substance of Shakespearean Tragedy’, in Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth (1905)

This is an academic essay. The author, A C Bradley, was one of the world’s most influential Shakespeare scholars. Today, students at universities will read Bradley’s essays when they are studying Shakespeare.

This essay explains what makes a Shakespearean tragedy, and what kind of characters are the heroes in Shakespeare’s tragedies. Note: The majority of tragic heroes are men, which is why Bradley refers to ‘he’ and ‘him’. However, Juliet is also a tragic hero, so the pronouns can refer to men or women.

In this lecture, we will consider this question: What makes a Shakespearean tragedy? To address this task, we will take examples from across his plays and we will gradually arrive at an overall idea of what is meant by the term ‘Shakespearean Tragedy’.

One character
First, a Shakespearean tragedy is the story of one person, the ‘hero,’ or at most of two, the ‘hero’ and ‘heroine.’ It is only in Romeo and Juliet and Antony and Cleopatra that the heroine is as much the centre of the action as the hero. The other tragedies, including Macbeth, have single stars. We may speak of the tragic story as being usually concerned with one person.

Death
The story, next, leads up to, and includes, the death of the hero. No play that ends with the hero remaining alive can be called a tragedy. The play ends with the hero’s death. The rest of the story depicts the troubled part of the hero’s life which leads up to his death. A Shakespearean tragedy is a tale of suffering and calamity concluding in death.

Status
Shakespeare is concerned always with persons of ‘high status’ in his tragedies. They are often kings or princes; at the least, as in Romeo and Juliet, with members of great houses, whose quarrels impact a large number of people.

Action
The calamities of tragedy do not simply happen, nor are they sent by some god; they occur from characters’ actions. We see people placed in certain circumstances; and we see certain actions. These actions lead onto others, and
so on until this series of actions leads to a catastrophe. The
effect is to make us view the sufferings of the catastrophe as
something which is caused by the hero. The hero always
contributes in some way to the disaster in which he or she
perishes.

The tragic world is a world of action. We see men and
women strike into the existing order of things in pursuit of
their ideas. But what they achieve is not what they wanted;
it is terribly unlike it. They act freely, and yet their action traps
them hand and foot. They lead themselves into a snare of
their own creation. Everywhere in Shakespeare’s tragedies,
the hero desires something, and he tries to obtain it. But
whatever he dreams of, he achieves that which he least
dreamed of: his own destruction.

So that, by way of summary, we may define tragedy
thus: ‘A tragedy is a story of human actions producing
exceptional calamity and ending in the death of such a
man’.

Character

Let us turn now from the ‘action’ to the central figure in
it, and let us ask whether they have any characteristics in
common which are essential to Shakespearean tragedies.

Exceptional

One they certainly have. They are exceptional beings.
We have seen already that the hero is a person of high
status or of public importance, and that his actions or
sufferings are of an unusual kind. But this is not all. His nature
also is exceptional, and generally raises him in some respect
much above the average level of humanity.

In almost all tragic heroes we observe a marked one-
sidedness; a deadly tendency to pursue one interest,
object, or passion. This is, for Shakespeare, the fundamental
tragic characteristic. It is present in his early heroes, Romeo
and Richard II. Both are infatuated: one with love, one with
power. This infatuation is what makes them exceptional, and
in both cases, it is what leads to their catastrophic deaths.

Bradley, A.C., ‘Construction in Shakespeare’s Tragedies’, in Shakespearean
Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth (1905)

This is an academic essay. The writer, A C Bradley, was – and remains – one of
the world’s most influential Shakespeare scholars. Today, students at universities
will read Bradley’s essays when they are studying Shakespeare.

This essay explains what makes a Shakespearean tragedy, and what kind of
characters are the heroes in Shakespeare’s tragedies. Note: The majority of
tragic heroes are men, which is why Bradley refers to ‘he’ and ‘him’. However,
Juliet is also a tragic hero, so the pronouns can refer to men or women.

Having already discussed the characters of a
Shakespearean tragedy, we should naturally go on to
examine their structure.
A Shakespearean tragedy contains a conflict which ends in a catastrophe. We can divide the plot of Shakespeare tragedies into three parts.

1. The beginning sets out the situation of the play. In this situation, there will be the potential for some conflict to arise. This section is called the **Exposition**.

2. The second part deals with the growth of the conflicts in the play. The heroes often have to try to overcome more than one conflict. This middle section we may call the **Development**.

3. The final section of the tragedy shows the resolution of the conflict in a **Catastrophe**.

As is the nature of narrative, the three sections do not always have an obvious start and end. They often bleed into one another. The first part glides into the second, and the second into the third, and there may sometimes be difficulty in drawing the lines between them.

### Exposition

The main business of the Exposition is to show an audience the status quo of the world of the play. We are introduced to the location of the play, the characters that live there, their relationships to each other, and perhaps some hints at the tensions that may arise from these situations and relationships. An audience is left expectant because the situation points to great difficulties in the future. For example, we see first the hatred of the Montagues and Capulets; and then we see Romeo ready to fall violently in love; and then we hear talk of a marriage between Juliet and Paris; but the exposition is not complete, and the conflict has not definitely begun to arise, till, in the last scene of the First Act, Romeo the Montague sees Juliet the Capulet and becomes her slave. The end of the Exposition is generally marked in the mind of the reader by a feeling that the action it contains is for the moment complete but has left a problem; for example, in *Romeo and Juliet*, the lovers have met, but their families are embroiled in a deadly feud and Juliet has been promised to another man. And so we ask, *What will come of this?*

### Development

**Obstacles**
The Development of the play makes up the bulk of the play. In some tragedies, the obstacles can be opposing persons or groups. So it is in *Romeo and*...
Juliet and Macbeth, but it is not always so. Indeed, the battle between the two families is not the only obstacle the heroes must overcome in Romeo and Juliet: Juliet must also act in defiance of her father’s promise of marriage to his friend Paris. During the Development, the hero must overcome the obstacles that lay in his or her way. These obstacles have been established in the Exposition. This is where the hero takes action, and these actions always lead to their demise.

**Catastrophe**

We have already touched on the nature of the Catastrophe, the final part of a Shakespearean tragedy. It is worth mentioning, however, that Shakespeare rarely attempts to surprise an audience with his catastrophes. They are felt to be inevitable, though the precise way in which they will be brought about is not, of course, foreseen. Occasionally, where we dread the catastrophe because we love the hero, a moment occurs, just before it, in which a gleam of false hope lights up the darkening scene; and, though we know it is false, it affects us. But no play at the end of which the hero remains alive is a tragedy. The story depicts the troubled part of the hero’s life which precedes and leads up to his death. It is, in fact, essentially a tale of suffering and calamity concluding in death.

- **demise** – death
- **inevitable** – unavoidable, always going to happen
- **calamity** – terrible accidents
Create a mind map of makes a tragic hero
Write your own tragedy following the structure of: Exposition (setting the status quo), Obstacles (the problems your characters face), Catastrophe (the unhappy ending and death of the main character).

Plan it elsewhere and write it up here.
Quiz

Lesson 7- Tragedy

* Required

1. Which of the following is the best definition of the word tragedy when we are thinking about plays? *
   - A play with a sad ending
   - A play that has death
   - A play with tragic events, an unhappy ending and the downfall of the main character/characters

2. How many tragic heroes can you have in a play? *
   Enter your answer

3. Which of the following is true about tragedies *
   - Only the main character dies at the end
   - The main character doesn't die because they are important
   - Lots of characters might die but the main character always dies

4. A tragic hero has to have a high status in society, but in Romeo and Juliet this isn’t true because children don’t have high statuses *
   - True
   - False

5. What does A.C Bradley mean by saying the tragic heroes have to be ‘exceptional’? *
   Enter your answer
6. Which of the following is true? *
   - Romeo and Juliet are exceptional because they fall in love at such a young age
   - Romeo and Juliet are exceptional because they want to get married the first night they meet
   - Romeo and Juliet are exceptional because they have too much passion

7. In the 'Exposition' of Romeo and Juliet, what is the status quo for the characters? *
   Enter your answer

8. List four obstacles Romeo and Juliet face in the middle of the play *
   Enter your answer

9. What is the catastrophe at the end of the play? *
   Enter your answer

10. Was Romeo and Juliet's death preventable (could it have been avoided) and if so how? *
    Enter your answer