



ROMEO AND JULIET: FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS MODEL ANSWER

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ROMEO AND JULIET: FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS: QUESTION

Read the following passage and, in a separate document such as Google Docs, answer the questions that follow.

Enter LADY CAPULET

LADY CAPULET

Why, how now, Juliet!

JULIET

Madam, I am not well.

LADY CAPULET

Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?

What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?

An if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live;

Therefore, have done: some grief shows much of love;

But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

JULIET

Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

LADY CAPULET

So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend

Which you weep for.





JULIET

Feeling so the loss,
Cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

LADY CAPULET

Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death,
As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.

JULIET

What villain madam?

LADY CAPULET

That same villain, Romeo.

JULIET

[Aside] Villain and he be many miles asunder.--
God Pardon him! I do, with all my heart;
And yet no man like he doth grieve my heart.

Starting with this passage, explain how you think Shakespeare presents family relationships.

Write about the following:

- How Shakespeare presents family relationships in this passage.
- How Shakespeare presents family relationships in the play as a whole.

400 – 450 words minimum

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]





ROMEO AND JULIET: FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS: 100% MODEL ANSWER OUTLINE

ESSAY OUTLINE

Introduction

<p>Hook (quote, question, metaphor, shocking fact/statistic)</p>	<p>Two aspects of the family dominate Shakespeare's attention: he had, Stephen Greenblatt noted, 'a special, deep interest in the murderous rivalry of brothers and in the complexity of father-daughter relations'.</p>
<p>Building sentences (some background/contextual info)</p>	<p>Shakespeare was intrigued by both individuals and families contrasting and mirroring one another, and this is particularly noticeable when compared with his most successful rivals, Marlowe, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher. Seventeen of the plays have significant father-daughter relationships, and surrogate fathers feature in many others. Consequently, one of the central topics in Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> is the 'generation gap': the sad misunderstanding of each other's feelings and motives by parents and children, which acts as one of the main driving forces behind the tragedy's plot structure. In act three, scene five, as Capulet goes off to bed, Romeo and Juliet appear on the balcony, having just been married without their parents' knowledge. Their conversation is a kind of aubade, or 'dawn song', the song of secret lovers forced to part by the coming of day – Warned by the Nurse of Lady Capulet's coming, Romeo climbs down from the balcony, and the lovers part for ever. Romeo at the last moment tries to be optimistic: ... all these woes shall serve / For sweet discourses in our times to come. (53). Juliet, however, as earlier in the orchard scene, has a foreboding premonition: o God, I have an ill-divining soul. / Methinks I see thee, now thou art so low, / As one dead in the bottom of a tomb' (54).</p>
<p>Thesis statement (your position on the argument you are presenting)</p>	<p>It is at this point that the growing divide and misunderstanding between the parents and the children begins to manifest itself.</p>

Body paragraph 1(a)

<p>Topic sentence (introduce what this paragraph is about)</p>	<p>In answer to Lady Capulet's call, Juliet joins her mother on the main stage, wondering why she is summoned and unable to hide her grief, so that even Lady Capulet must notice, and, asking what is wrong, rebuke her daughter for 'evermore weeping for your cousin's death' (69), and advise a more moderate amount of grief.</p>
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Supporting sentences
(your analytical and contextual evidence)

They have an extraordinary conversation in which Juliet speaks in riddles, conveying very different meanings to her mother (who believes her 'feeling loss' is Tybalt) and to the audience, who have just seen her parting from Romeo. Lady Capulet is still exhibiting her hatred, and calling for vengeance, suggesting that Juliet's tears are not for Tybalt's death, but rather because his murderer Romeo is still alive. 'Would none but I might venge my cousin's death' (86) says Juliet – for then Romeo would have nothing to fear. But Lady Capulet responds 'We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not', and plans to send a poisoner to Mantua to kill Romeo. Now Juliet speaks her longing for Romeo and her grief for Tybalt, but in such a way that Lady Capulet thinks she is demanding Romeo's death. It is possible that Shakespeare may have used this riddled conversation between Juliet and Lady Capulet to comment upon the convention among upper-class women of the early modern European period, who, wanting to avoid inconvenience and discomfort, typically employed a 'wet-nurse' to breastfeed their children, as symbolised by the Nurse in this drama.

Concluding sentence(s)
(final thoughts this paragraph)

This convention amongst upper-class mothers at the time was actually contrary to the advice set out in most medical guidebooks and conduct books on female behaviour which encouraged women to suckle their own children, not only to strengthen and preserve the bond between mother and child, but also to avoid negligence by a woman who did not bear the child. This appears to be one of the reasons why we learn more biographical details about Juliet's history than we do with any other character in Shakespeare, mostly through Nurse's affectionate, if embarrassing, banter. The Nurse sees marriage for what it mostly is in Verona, a practical matter concerned in the first instance with money

Body paragraph 2 (b)

Topic sentence
(introduce what this paragraph is about)

However, Shakespeare increases the dramatic irony act three scene five by making it follow the scene where, In the Capulet mansion, Old Capulet is explaining to Paris that there has not been an opportunity to speak to Juliet, mourning for Tybalt, about his wooing.

Supporting sentences
(your analytical and contextual evidence)

However, secure in the belief that his little daughter will do whatever he advises, Capulet arranges that Paris will marry Juliet immediately. It is Monday; Thursday will be the wedding day. An Elizabethan father, especially in a wealthy family where property was concerned, expected and usually received absolute obedience from his daughter. This attitude Capulet assumes without thought, as a matter of course emphasises the divide between father and daughter and is compounded by the fact that Juliet is only 13, while Capulet can be assumed to be around 60 years old. When Capulet hears of Juliet's rejection of marriage to Paris, he cannot believe his ears: 'Doth she not give us thanks? Is she not proud?' (142). On one hand, we could view him as an overbearing patriarch, however, Elizabethan parents would have sympathised with Capulet's feelings; he has done the very best he can for his beloved only child: arranged a match (and at this level of society almost all marriages were





arranged) with a high-born gentleman, who is rich, young, well-educated: an ideal husband.

Concluding sentence(s)
(final thoughts this paragraph)

Capulet has actually fixed the wedding day with the bridegroom, however, in a society that valued honour and status almost to an obsessive level, Juliet's rejection of the splendid future he has conjured up for her, would make him look a fool in the eyes of Paris.

Body paragraph 3 (OPTIONAL)

Topic sentence
(introduce what this paragraph is about)

Supporting sentences
(your analytical and contextual evidence)

Concluding sentence(s)
(final thoughts this paragraph)

Conclusion

Restated thesis
(your position of the argument you are presenting)

Ultimately, however, these conflicting ideals between the different generations can be seen as Shakespeare's criticism of a deeper problem in early modern society; an elaborate cult of honour had exerted a powerful grip, and its effects extended beyond the generational ideals to all other aspects of life, including identity, which is the central obstacle to Romeo and Juliet's marriage.

Summary of controlling concept
(central theme)

Juliet recognises this in her profound 'what's in a name?' soliloquy, which questions the true value of names, the object of Capulets and Montagues' feud. On the contrary, Juliet suggests that a name is simply a label to distinguish something from another. It does not create worth nor does it create true meaning. What is important is the worth of the individual or thing because 'that which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet.' Juliet likens the rose to Romeo - Romeo is still the man she loves had he a different name; Romeo's name does not define him as a man. Just as he does through Samson and Gregory,

Author's purpose
(why the author wrote the text)

Shakespeare uses Juliet here to expose the ridiculousness of the feud between the two families over, simply, who they are. What the feud is about is, therefore, unknown and irrelevant. Juliet's soliloquy suggests that Shakespeare believed that a name means little - it is the worth of the individual that counts; however, he illustrates how even the most trivial of obstacles can result in the most regrettable tragedy and,





perhaps, therefore, Shakespeare wants us to see the play as a criticism and warning about going to extremes in beliefs such as the Early Modern beliefs about honour.

Final thought
(What key idea(s) do we
learn?)

In essence, he suggests that obsessions with honour were meaningless, and, ultimately, an unnecessary obstacle to happiness. The reconciliation at the end between the two families, therefore, can be seen as the lesson of the play; peace is only achievable when we put our pride aside and see each other as family, not enemies by look beyond superficial qualities such as names, to see the true worth of people.

MAKE SURE YOUR ESSAY CONTAINS ALL OF THESE QUALITIES

Tick these off when you have added them to your essay

- Methods - author's techniques
- Context
- Effects of the author's methods on the audience/reader
- Link to another part of the text - talk about the meaning of the connection
- Symbolism
- Themes
- Author's purpose

MCELSTA





ROMEO AND JULIET: FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS: 100% MODEL ANSWER

HOW DOES SHAKESPEARE PRESENT FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS?

Two aspects of the family dominate Shakespeare's attention: he had, Stephen Greenblatt noted, 'a special, deep interest in the murderous rivalry of brothers and in the complexity of father-daughter relations'. Shakespeare was intrigued by both individuals and families contrasting and mirroring one another, and this is particularly noticeable when compared with his most successful rivals, Marlowe, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher. Seventeen of the plays have significant father-daughter relationships, and surrogate fathers feature in many others. Consequently, one of the central topics in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is the 'generation gap': the sad misunderstanding of each other's feelings and motives by parents and children, which acts as one of the main driving forces behind the tragedy's plot structure.

In act three, scene five, as Capulet goes off to bed, Romeo and Juliet appear on the balcony, having just been married without their parents' knowledge. Their conversation is a kind of aubade, or 'dawn song', the song of secret lovers forced to part by the coming of day – Warned by the Nurse of Lady Capulet's coming, Romeo climbs down from the balcony, and the lovers part for ever. Romeo at the last moment tries to be optimistic: ... all these woes shall serve / For sweet discourses in our times to come. Juliet, however, as earlier in the orchard scene, has a foreboding premonition: o God, I have an ill-divining soul. / Methinks I see thee, now thou art so low, / As one dead in the bottom of a tomb'. It is at this point that the growing divide and misunderstanding between the parents and the children begins to manifest itself. In answer to Lady Capulet's call, Juliet joins her mother on the main stage, wondering why she is summoned and unable to hide her grief, so that even Lady Capulet must notice; asking what is wrong, Lady Capulet rebukes her daughter for 'evermore weeping for your cousin's death', and advises a more moderate amount of grief. They have an extraordinary conversation in which Juliet speaks in riddles, conveying very different meanings to her mother (who believes her 'feeling loss' is Tybalt) and to the audience, who have just seen her parting from Romeo. Lady Capulet is still exhibiting her hatred, and calling for vengeance, suggesting that Juliet's tears are not for Tybalt's death, but rather because his murderer Romeo is still alive. 'Would none but I might venge my cousin's death' says Juliet – for then Romeo would have nothing to fear. But Lady Capulet responds 'We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not', and plans to send a poisoner to Mantua to kill Romeo. Now Juliet speaks her longing for Romeo and her grief for Tybalt, but in such a way that Lady Capulet thinks she is demanding Romeo's death. It is possible that Shakespeare may have used this riddled conversation between Juliet and Lady Capulet to comment upon the convention among upper-class women of the early modern European period, who, wanting to avoid inconvenience and discomfort, typically employed a 'wet-nurse' to breastfeed their children, as symbolised by the Nurse in this drama. This convention amongst upper-class mothers at the time was actually contrary to the advice set out in most medical guidebooks and conduct books on female behaviour which encouraged women to suckle their own children, not only to strengthen and preserve the bond between mother and child, but also to avoid negligence by a woman who did not bear the child. This appears to be one of the reasons why we learn more biographical details about Juliet's history than we do with any other character in Shakespeare, mostly through Nurse's affectionate, if embarrassing, banter. The Nurse sees marriage for what it mostly is in Verona, a practical matter concerned in the first instance with money.

However, Shakespeare increases the dramatic irony in act three scene five by making it follow the scene where, in the Capulet mansion, Old Capulet is explaining to Paris that there has not been an opportunity to speak to Juliet, mourning for Tybalt, about his wooing. However, secure in the belief that his little daughter will do whatever he advises, Capulet arranges that Paris will marry Juliet immediately. It is Monday; Thursday will be the wedding day. An Elizabethan father, especially in a wealthy family where property was concerned, expected and usually received absolute obedience from his daughter. This attitude Capulet assumes without thought, as a matter of course emphasises the divide between father and daughter and is compounded by the fact that Juliet is only 13, while Capulet can be assumed to be around 60 years old. When Capulet hears of Juliet's rejection of





marriage to Paris, he cannot believe his ears: 'Doth she not give us thanks? Is she not proud?' (142). On one hand, we could view him as an overbearing patriarch, however, Elizabethan parents would have sympathised with Capulet's feelings; he has done the very best he can for his beloved only child: arranged a match (and at this level of society almost all marriages were arranged) with a high-born gentleman, who is rich, young, well-educated: an ideal husband. Capulet has actually fixed the wedding day with the bridegroom, however, in a society that valued honour and status almost to an obsessive level, Juliet's rejection of the splendid future he has conjured up for her, would make him look a fool in the eyes of Paris.

Ultimately, however, these conflicting ideals between the different generations can be seen as Shakespeare's criticism of a deeper problem in early modern society; an elaborate cult of honour had exerted a powerful grip, and its effects extended beyond the generational ideals to all other aspects of life, including identity, which is the central obstacle to Romeo and Juliet's marriage. Juliet recognises this in her profound 'what's in a name?' soliloquy, which questions the true value of names, the object of Capulets and Montagues' feud. On the contrary, Juliet suggests that a name is simply a label to distinguish something from another. It does not create worth nor does it create true meaning. What is important is the worth of the individual or thing because 'that which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet.' Juliet likens the rose to Romeo - Romeo is still the man she loves had he a different name; Romeo's name does not define him as a man. Just as he does through Samson and Gregory, Shakespeare uses Juliet here to expose the ridiculousness of the feud between the two families over, simply, who they are. What the feud is about is, therefore, unknown and irrelevant. Juliet's soliloquy suggests that Shakespeare believed that a name means little - it is the worth of the individual that counts; however, he illustrates how even the most trivial of obstacles can result in the most regrettable tragedy and, perhaps, therefore, Shakespeare wants us to see the play as a criticism and warning about going to extremes in beliefs such as the Early Modern beliefs about honour. In essence, he suggests that obsessions with honour were meaningless, and, ultimately, an unnecessary obstacle to happiness. The reconciliation at the end between the two families, therefore, can be seen as the lesson of the play; peace is only achievable when we put our pride aside and see each other as family, not enemies by look beyond superficial qualities such as names, to see the true worth of people.

