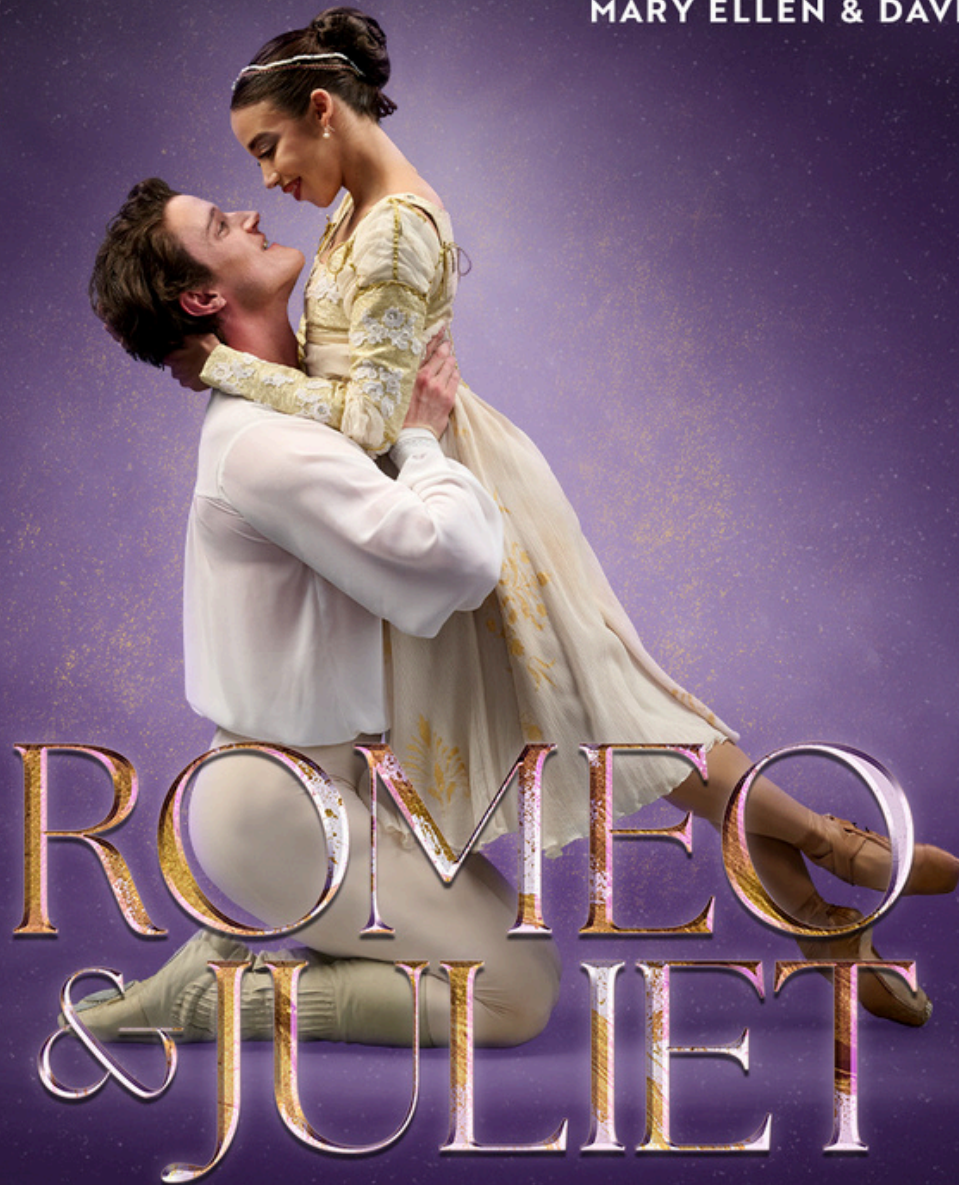




Presented by
MARY ELLEN & DAVID WRIGHT



Jan. 29-Feb. 7, 2027

ARIEL MCCARTY & PATRICK MIHM BY RACHEL NEVILLE

Supplemental Guide

Created By:



**EDUCATION
& COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

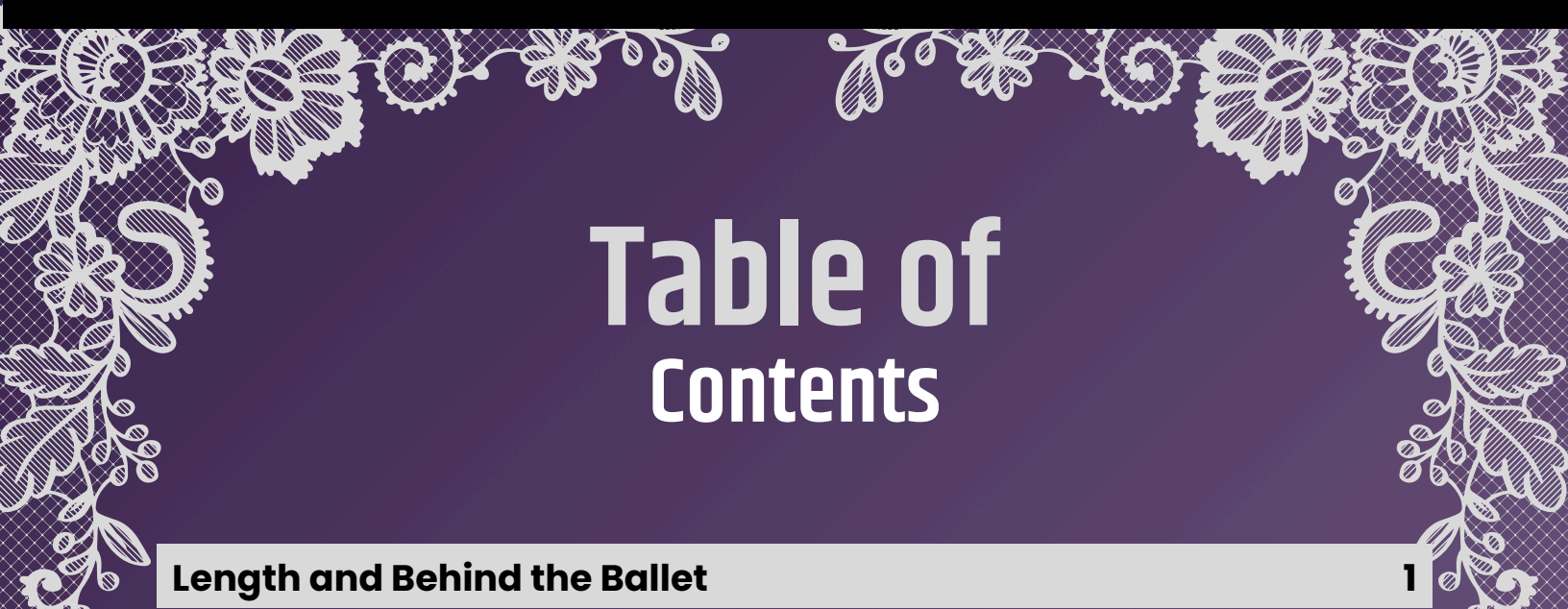


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Please note that the sets and costumes seen in this study guide are from the Derek Deane production.

This season, Colorado Ballet will be performing the John Cranko production, so sets and costumes may look different than those featured here.

Tenga en cuenta que los decorados y vestuarios que aparecen en este libro ilustrado pertenecen a la producción de Derek Deane. Esta temporada, Colorado Ballet presentará la producción de John Cranko, por lo que los decorados y vestuarios pueden verse diferentes a los que aparecen aquí

Act 1 - 53 min

Intermission - 20 min

Act 2 - 30 min

Intermission - 15 min

Act 3 - 45 min

Total Run Time - 2 hours 45 min*

*Times are approximate

Synopsis of the Ballet

Act I

Scene 1: As day breaks in Verona, Romeo, son of Montague, is found declaring his love to the fair Rosaline. With the sunrise, the marketplace fills with townspeople, among whom are members of two rival families, the Capulets and the Montagues. Tempers flare and a quarrel develops. The Duke of Verona appears and warns the two factions that death will be the ultimate punishment if the feud does not stop. Romeo and his friends Benvolio and Mercutio make reluctant peace with Tybalt, a kinsman of the Capulets.

Scene 2: Juliet receives her first ball dress from her mother, Lady Capulet, and learns that she is to meet the nobleman Paris, to whom she will be betrothed on the following day. Now she must bid farewell to her childhood.

Scene 3: Guests arrive at the Capulets' ball, among them Rosaline. Romeo, Mercutio and Benvolio, masked, follow her to the ball.

Scene 4: Juliet is introduced to the guests and to Paris. While dancing with Paris, she and Romeo behold one another. It is love at first sight. Tybalt, nephew of Lady Capulet, suspects Romeo's identity and tries to incite a quarrel, but is prevented from doing so by Juliet's father who abides by the laws of hospitality.

Scene 5: On the balcony outside her bedroom Juliet dreams of Romeo. He appears below in the garden. They declare their eternal love.



Jennifer Grace and Artists of Colorado Ballet by Mike Watson

Act II

Scene 1: A carnival is in progress in the town square. Romeo, daydreaming, is indifferent to the gaiety around him. Juliet's nurse brings him a letter from Juliet asking him to meet her in the chapel of Friar Laurence.

Scene 2: In his cloister, Friar Laurence joins the young lovers in marriage.

Scene 3: At the height of the carnival, Romeo returns from his wedding to the square. Tybalt accosts him, but Romeo declines to fight. Mercutio, angered, engages in a duel with Tybalt, and dies at his hands. Romeo, stunned and distraught, turns on Tybalt and kills him.

Act III

Scene 1: In Juliet's bedroom the lovers are awakened by the sunrise, and Romeo, who has been banished by the Duke, must leave Verona. Lord and Lady Capulet enter with Paris, but Juliet rejects him.

Scene 2: Juliet, appealing for help to Friar Laurence, receives a potion from him that will place her in a death-like sleep. He explains that Romeo will find her in the family tomb and from there they can escape together.

Scene 3: Juliet's parents return, and Juliet pretends to agree to the marriage with Paris. Left alone, Juliet takes the sleeping potion and is thought to be dead when her family and friends discover her, on what was to have been her wedding day.

Scene 4: Romeo, who has not received Friar Laurence's message revealing the plan, believes Juliet to be dead and rushes to her tomb. There he finds the mourning Paris and kills him. Embracing Juliet for the last time, he plunges his dagger into his heart. Juliet awakens to find Romeo dead. Grief-stricken, she kills herself.



Christopher Mitchell, Christophor Moulton, Jonnathan Ramirez and Artists of Colorado ballet by Mike Watson

Behind the Ballet

John Cranko created his ballet adaptation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in 1962 for the Stuttgart Ballet, using Sergei Prokofiev's eponymous score. The production quickly became a cornerstone of narrative ballet, combining expressive choreography with richly detailed sets and costumes that evoke Renaissance Verona. Cranko's version emphasizes the intensity of young love against the backdrop of family rivalry, blending sweeping ensemble scenes with intimate, emotionally charged pas de deux.

The ballet premiered in America in 1969 and was first performed by the Joffrey Ballet in 1984–1985, receiving critical acclaim for its lavish and emotionally compelling staging. Over the decades, it has become a defining work in the repertoire of major ballet companies worldwide.

Dana Benton and Yosvani Ramos by Mike Watson



Choreographer



John Cranko

What is a Choreographer?

A person who
creates the
sequence and
movements for a
dance
performance.

John Cranko was born on August 15, 1927, in Rustenburg, South Africa, and trained at the University of Cape Town, where he created his first ballet. In 1946, he moved to London to study at the Sadler's Wells School and soon joined the Sadler's Wells Ballet (later The Royal Ballet). He quickly gained recognition for his choreography, dedicating himself fully to it by 1949. His early successes included works for major companies and his first full-length ballet, *The Prince of the Pagodas* (1957).

In 1961, Cranko became ballet director in Stuttgart, where he built a celebrated company and nurtured talents like Marcia Haydée. His breakthrough came with *Romeo and Juliet* (1962), followed by acclaimed narrative ballets such as *Onegin* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. He also encouraged young dancers in his company, including Jiří Kylián and John Neumeier, to try their hand at choreography.

Cranko's gift for nuanced story-telling, clear dramatic structure and his exquisite mastery of the art of the pas de deux led to worldwide acclaim. He and his young company toured the globe until his sudden death in 1973 at age 45.

Dana Benton by Mike Watson



Composer

A revolutionary composer who gave us some of the 20th century's most dazzling music.

Sergei Prokofiev was born in 1891 in Ukraine, then part of the Russian Empire, and was taught piano by his musically gifted mother. A prodigy, he composed his first piece at age five. In 1904, he entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory as its youngest student, developing a taste for modern music over traditional Russian styles.

After graduating, Prokofiev traveled west in 1914, seeking inspiration and recognition. Following the 1917 Russian Revolution, he briefly returned home, premiering his acclaimed Classical Symphony before departing again for the United States and later Paris. There, he collaborated with Sergei Diaghilev and composed notable ballets.

Celebrated upon his return to the Soviet Union in 1927, he eventually settled permanently in Moscow in 1936, producing works like *Peter and the Wolf*. Despite wartime hardships and later political condemnation, he remained prolific, composing symphonies, sonatas, and *War and Peace*. Prokofiev died on March 5, 1953.



Sergei Diaghilev

What is a Composer?

A person who writes music, especially as a job.



Artists of Colorado Ballet by Mike Watson



General Activities

LISTEN AND LEARN: Listen to music. Close your eyes, if you need to. Now, answer the following questions: If this piece of music were a shape, what shape would it be? A color? An animal? A season? A place? Why? Is it fast, slow, or varied? What is the mood of the piece, or what emotions do you feel when you listen to it? Think of three more adjectives that you believe describe the music. Compare your answers with other students' answers. Are any of your answers the same? Why do you think you came up with similar or different answers?

MOVE TO THE MUSIC: Now, divide into groups and create movements that go with your team's answers from the listening activity. Try to incorporate some of everyone's answers. How do the animals move? How would you move in winter that's different from how you move in summer? How would blue move, as opposed to orange? Some movements should be high; others should be low. Some should be fast; others could be slow. Be mindful of using all of your body, not just your feet. Link your movements together into a dance and perform it for the class.

POETRY IN MOTION: After seeing the production, write a poem inspired by the performance. Now, try reversing that process! Get into groups, find a poem that you really like, and create a dance to go along with it! Identify powerful words and themes within the poem, and associate movements with them. Link the movements together to create a dance to perform for your peers. If you were to make an entire production out of your dance, what kind of sets and costumes would be fitting? Draw or make a collage of pictures representing how you would set the scene.

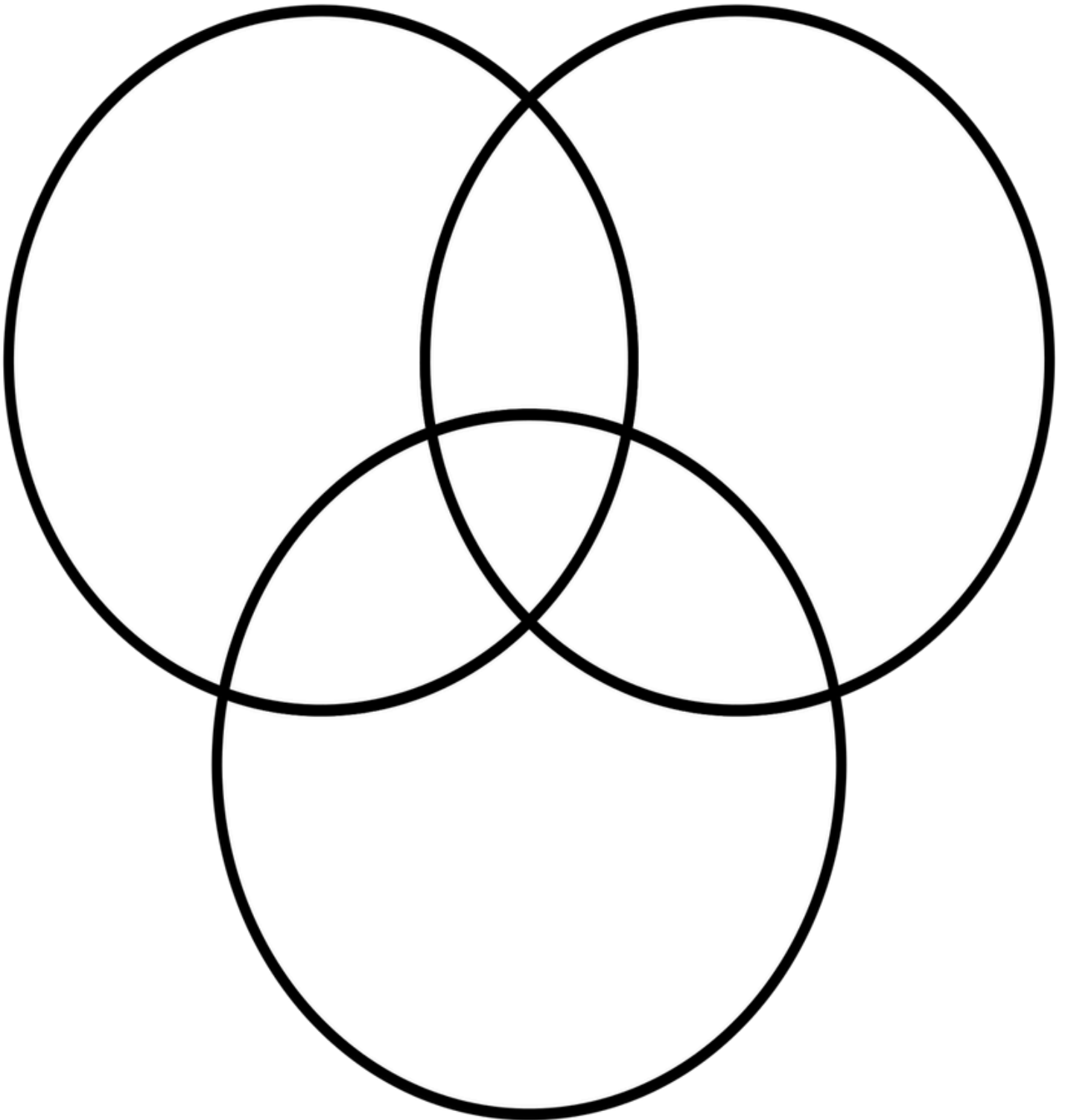
STORYTELLING THROUGH DANCE: Dance is an art form that tells a story through movement. Using a story or text your class is studying, you can recreate scenes from the story using dance. Put the students in small groups and assign different scenes from the story. Instruct the students to reinterpret the story using only movement. Invite the students to be creative in their reinterpretations, allow abstract or literal movement.

Jennifer Grace and Alan Rubin by Mike Watson



Middle & High School Activities

COMPARE AND CONTRAST: Utilize the Venn diagram as a way to compare and contrast three different media mediums for storytelling. Try comparing the ballet to two other stories – one in literature and one in film.



Movement

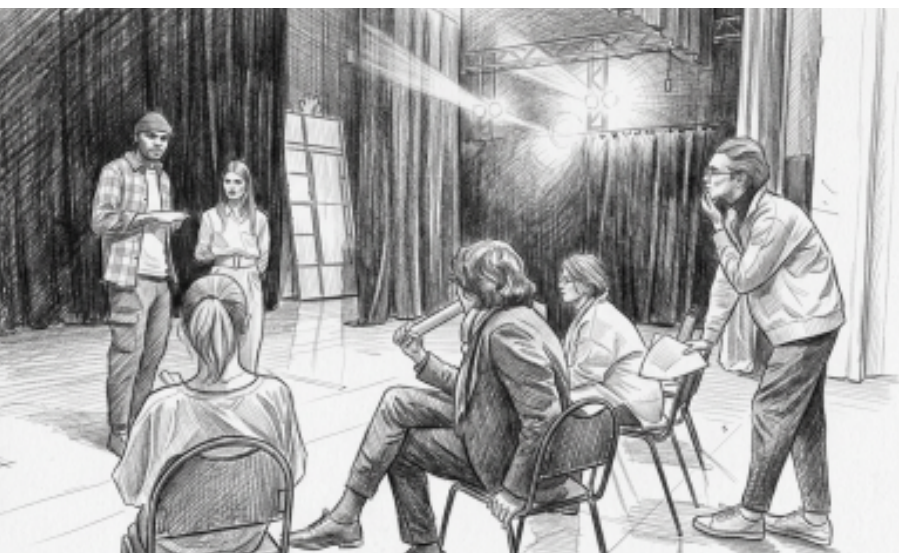
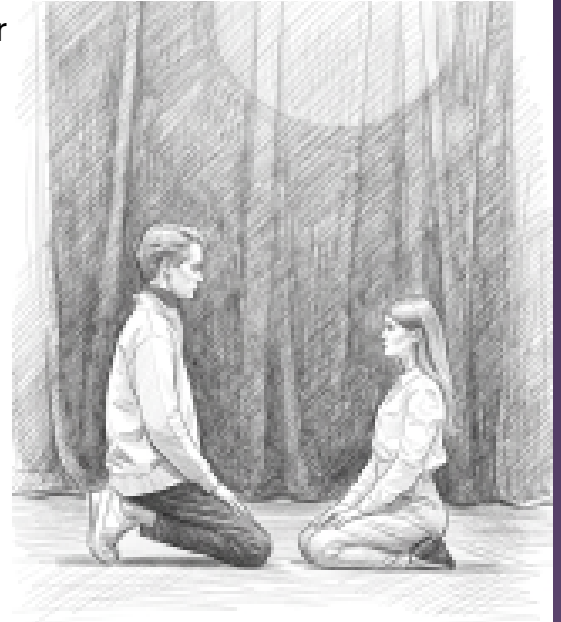
Romeo & Juliet Tableaux

Students use frozen body shapes to express emotion, conflict, love, and story from Romeo and Juliet.

Note: A tableau is a frozen pose or “statue” that tells a story or emotion. Like a moment from a movie paused.

Romeo and Juliet Tableau Prompts

- Two characters from rival families facing each other with anger and tension
- Romeo and Juliet meeting for the first time and feeling an instant connection
- Two characters secretly meeting where no one can see them
- Juliet looking out from her balcony, dreaming of Romeo
- Two characters expressing their love while knowing they must keep it a secret
- Friends trying to stop a fight between the Montagues and Capulets
- Mercutio challenging Tybalt with courage and confidence
- Romeo feeling shocked and heartbroken after a terrible loss
- Juliet showing fear and uncertainty while making a difficult decision
- A character saying goodbye to someone they love
- Two characters torn between their love for each other and their families
- A final moment showing the sadness of the tragedy



Optional: Guess the Scene!

- Divide students into small groups.
- Each group receives a prompt in secret and creates a tableau.
- The rest of the class guesses which Romeo and Juliet moment, relationship, or emotion they are portraying.

Writing Prompts

What are the core elements that make it Romeo and Juliet and not just any love story? Can you name specific characters, scenes, themes, or movements that helped tell the story?

If you were the choreographer, would you keep the story the same? Or would you change something—a scene, a character, the ending, or the setting—to tell the story in a new way or make it more meaningful or exciting for today's audience?

Elementary School Activities

Romeo and Juliet Masquerade Masks

Masquerade masks are an important part of the story of Romeo and Juliet! At a party hosted by Juliet's family, Romeo wears a disguise to hide his identity. This is where Romeo and Juliet meet for the first time! In this activity, you can create your own masquerade mask inspired by the ballet.

You will need:

- 1 piece of cardstock or thick paper
- Scissors
- Markers, crayons, or paint
- Glue
- Feathers, sequins, or any decorations you want!
- A craft stick or string to hold or wear your mask



Instructions:

- Draw a mask shape on your paper, including spaces for your eyes.
- Cut out the mask and eye holes (ask an adult for help if needed).
- Color and decorate your mask with patterns, colors, and designs.
- Add feathers, sequins, or other decorations to make your mask unique.
- Attach a craft stick to hold your mask, or add string to wear it (with adult help).
- Imagine you are attending the Capulet masquerade ball!



Surveys

Teacher/Facilitator Survey

CLICK HERE

or scan QR code below



Student/Viewer Survey

CLICK HERE

or scan QR code below

