



***Romeo and Juliet* – Act 2, scene 2: Cut to...**

Activity:

1. Divide the students into groups of three or four.
2. Have the groups read through the speech for understanding.
3. Next, have each group cut the speech down to what its members feel are the five most important lines, while still preserving the essential meaning of the speech.
4. Choose one person from each group to read and explain to the rest of the class why the group made the choices it did.
5. Now have each group reduce its five lines to three lines, while still trying to maintain the principal thought.
6. Have the groups make further reductions as follows, at each step trying to maintain the principal thought:
 - First, reduce the three lines to five words.
 - Next, cut those five words to three words.
 - Finally, cut to the one word that the group feels most represents the speech.
7. Each group then shares its cuts from step 5 onwards with the class.

Variation #1

1. Once the activity is complete, rather than presenting to the rest of the class, each group makes a copy of its five-line version and passes that to another group to complete the next step (cutting to three lines).
2. The paper is again passed to a new group to complete the next step (cutting to five words).
3. Once more, the paper is passed to another group to complete the next two steps (cutting to three words and then to one word).
4. The paper is then returned to its original group.
5. Have the groups compare their originals to the versions that the class has collectively cut. Are the choices different?

Variation #2

1. Using the same four groups, have groups 1 and 2 work together and groups 3 and 4 work together.
2. Each group represents a character (Romeo or Juliet) in the balcony scene. Looking at the entire scene, cut each character's lines in each exchange down to a single word.
3. Have a pair of volunteers from each group read their version aloud to the rest of the class, till all four groups have been heard. How are the versions different or similar?

EXAMPLE:

JULIET

1. O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?
2. Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
3. Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
4. And I'll no longer be a Capulet.
5. 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
6. Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
7. What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,
8. Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
9. Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
10. What's in a name? That which we call a rose
11. By any other word would smell as sweet;
12. So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
13. Retain that dear perfection which he owes
14. Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
15. And for that name which is no part of thee
Take all myself.

Cut to five lines

1. Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
2. Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
3. And I'll no longer be a Capulet.
4. Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
5. And for that name which is no part of thee
Take all myself.

Cut to three lines

1. Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
2. And I'll no longer be a Capulet.
3. And for that name which is no part of thee
Take all myself.

Cut to five words

deny father name take myself

Cut to three words

deny take myself

Cut to one word

myself

NOW TRY THESE:

ROMEO

But soft! what light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou her maid art far more fair than she.

Be not her maid, since she is envious;

Her vestal livery is but sick and green

And none but fools do wear it. Cast it off.

It is my lady. O, it is my love!

O, that she knew she were!

She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?

Her eye discourses – I will answer it.

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks.

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,

As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright

That birds would sing and think it were not night.

See how she leans her cheek upon her hand!

O, that I were a glove upon that hand,

That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke, but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "Ay,"
And I will take thy word. Yet if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries
Then say Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo, but else not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,
And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light:
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My true love's passion. Therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

Entire Scene:

SCENE 2. Capulet's orchard.

Enter ROMEO

ROMEO

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.
But soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she.
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green
And none but fools do wear it. Cast it off.
It is my lady. O, it is my love!
O, that she knew she were!
She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses – I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks.
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET

Ay me!

ROMEO

She speaks:
O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head
As is a wingèd messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturnèd wondering eyes
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

JULIET

O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROMEO

[Aside] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

JULIET

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other word would smell as sweet.
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for that name which is no part of thee
Take all myself.

ROMEO

I take thee at thy word:
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET

What man art thou that thus bescreen'd in night
So stumblest on my counsel?

ROMEO

By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

JULIET

My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound:
Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

ROMEO

Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

JULIET

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO

With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;
For stony limits cannot hold love out,
And what love can do that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

JULIET

If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

ROMEO

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.

JULIET

I would not for the world they saw thee here.

ROMEO

I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;
And but thou love me, let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

JULIET

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

ROMEO

By love, who first did prompt me to inquire;
He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

JULIET

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight

Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke, but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "Ay,"
And I will take thy word. Yet if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries
Then say Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo, but else not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,
And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light:
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My true love's passion. Therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discoverèd.

ROMEO

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops –

JULIET

O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO

What shall I swear by?

JULIET

Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

ROMEO

If my heart's dear love –

JULIET

Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract tonight:
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;

Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say "It lightens." Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! As sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast.

ROMEO

O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET

What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?

ROMEO

The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

JULIET

I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:
And yet I would it were to give again.

ROMEO

Wouldst thou withdraw it? For what purpose, love?

JULIET

But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have.
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite. *[Nurse calls within]*
I hear some noise within; dear love, adieu!
Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again. *[Exit, above]*

ROMEO

O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard.
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial. *[Re-enter JULIET, above]*

JULIET

Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honourable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow,
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite,
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay

And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

Nurse

[Within] Madam!

JULIET

I come, anon. – But if thou mean'st not well,
I do beseech thee –

Nurse

[Within] Madam!

JULIET

By and by, I come –
To cease thy strife, and leave me to my grief:
Tomorrow will I send.

ROMEO

So thrive my soul –

JULIET

A thousand times good night!