



## ***Romeo and Juliet* – Getting Across: Act 1, scene 5 (excerpt)**

### **Overview**

Students will explore the first meeting between Romeo and Juliet to determine each character's objectives and emotional drive.

Grade Level	Subject Area	Curriculum Expectations and Learning Outcome		Time Needed	Space	Materials	
7–12	English, Drama	Analyse the text, focusing on how it communicates info, ideas and themes, and influences the listener's / viewer's response.	Enhance understanding of the text by making connections between the ideas expressed in it and the students' personal knowledge, insights and experience of the world around them.	Use a variety of conventions to develop character and shape the action in ensemble drama presentations.	1 class Period	Desks moved to the sides; use open spaces for exploring the text	Attached handouts of Activities

## **Romeo and Juliet – Getting Across: Act 1, scene 5 (excerpt)**

**Background Info:** In their first meeting Romeo and Juliet speak in sonnet form – a poem of 14 lines of iambic pentameter (10 syllables per line that alternate unstressed and stressed syllables). The rhyming lines take on the pattern of ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.

### **THE ACTIVITY:**

This exercise is about dealing with overcoming obstacles and discovering what one character wants from another in a scene.

- Choose someone to play Romeo and another to play Juliet, the rest of the class (or a group selected from volunteers) will try to “block” them.
- Have Romeo and Juliet first read their lines facing each other.
- Then have Romeo and Juliet read their lines again a little further apart. As they speak, each will attempt to get closer and reach the other actor with action and emotion.
- The rest of the class (or the assigned group of volunteers) will try to stop them by physically stepping in their way or restraining each character by holding them by the elbows. (No pushing or shoving allowed: at all times the actors must be safe.)

**NOTE:** if the actors are restrained at the elbows, have someone hold the script up in front of them so they can read their lines.

### **DISCUSSION POINTS:**

- ◆ For Romeo and Juliet: What instinctive reaction came to mind while doing this activity? How did it make you feel when you met with resistance?
- ◆ For the class or resistance group: What did you discover about the two characters as they were thwarted in their endeavour to reach each other?
- ◆ Did the obstacles heighten the language and offer new insights into this scene?

## ***Romeo and Juliet – Act 1, scene 5 (excerpt)***

**ROMEO**

[To JULIET]

If I profane<sup>1</sup> with my unworthiest hand  
This holy shrine<sup>2</sup>, the gentle fine is this:  
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand  
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

**JULIET**

Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,  
Which mannerly devotion shows in this<sup>3</sup>;  
For saints<sup>4</sup> have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,  
And palm to palm is holy palmer's<sup>5</sup> kiss.

**ROMEO**

Have not saints lips, and holy palmer's too?

**JULIET**

Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

**ROMEO**

O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;  
They pray, grant thou<sup>6</sup>, lest faith turn to despair.

**JULIET**

Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

**ROMEO**

Then move<sup>7</sup> not, while my prayer's effect I take.

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### **GLOSSARY:**

1. **profane** – desecrate, dishonour
2. **shrine** – Juliet's hand
3. **mannerly devotion shows in this** – shows proper devotion in this action
4. **saints** – images of saints
5. **palmer's** – pilgrims who have travelled to the Holy Land and returned with a palm leaf to symbolize that they were there / also playing on the word "palm" as in hand
6. **grant thou** – you must grant their prayers
7. **move** – entreat, pray / Romeo means it as "do not change position"