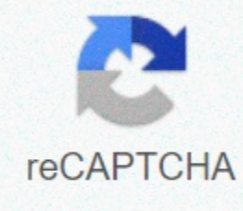




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Created by the original team behind SparkNotes, LitCharts are the best literature guides in the world. William Shakespeare was born in 1564. His father was a glove manufacturer and assembly artist in Stratford-upon-Avon, and his mother was the daughter of an attack. At the age of 18, Shakespeare married a woman eight years his eldest, Anne Hathaway; just six months after her marriage, Hathaway gave birth to a daughter. He later had two more children, one of whom, Hamnet, died at the age of 11. There is a gap in the historical record between the birth of Shakespeare's twins and their first appearance recorded on the London theatre scene in 1592. His theatrical career probably began in the mid-1580s, and between then and 1613, he composed plays such as Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Hamlet, Henriad, Julius Caesar, Othello, and many more. In 1609, he published a book of sonnets, and published other long poems in the mid-1590s, while London theatres were closed due to the plague. Shakespeare died in 1616 of a rumored fever just a month after creating a will in which he declared himself in good health. His surviving works include nearly 40 plays and more than 150 sonnets, and his body of work is widely performed, analyzed, studied and reinterpreted to this day. In the early years of the Renaissance, Italy was divided into several smaller city-state that often struggle with each other. Rome was mostly ruins, but Padua and Verona were under Venetian control, and cities such as Florence and Milan (sometimes called the cradle of capitalism) flourished under the first financial innovations led by the Medici clan of bankers and politicians. In cities, rich politically powerful elites became patrons of the arts and a kind of luxury emerged rapidly, but social inequality throughout the country was profound, profound, most of Italy belonged to the peasant class. Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy, but the play knowingly moves with the finger in the Capulets and Montagues war, wealthy families who cannot look beyond their own insularity and their ally self-importance to be good to each other, or to allow their children the opportunity for real love. Shakespeare relied on many poems, novels and myths in the construction of Romeo and Juliet, but the play may also well have been a timely critique of the social inequality of the Renaissance era and the trivial concerns of the rising mobile elite. Shakespeare relied on many sources—both ancient and contemporary with his own time—on the writing of Romeo and Juliet. The story of Pyramus and Thisbe of Methamorphoses of Ovid tells the story of two Babylonian lovers forbidden to marry each other by their disputed parents. Pyramus and Thisbe, like Romeo and Juliet, encounter their tragic ends when poor communication leads each of them to commit suicide by believing (or realizing) that the other is dead. Luigi da Porto, adapting the pyramus and Thisbe myth while building on autobiographical elements of his own life, wrote the story of Giulietta and Romeo in 1524, his version of the tale including Italian families at war whose struggle prevents two young lovers from realizing their passion for each other. A 1592 poem by Arthur Brooke called The Tragical Historye of Romeus and Juliet , supposedly translated from an Italian novel by Matteo Bandello – follows the same arc as Shakespeare's work, but the ending differs in that the nurse, apothecary and friar are punished for their involvement in the deaths of young lovers. Just as Romeo and Juliet represents that Shakespeare has been based on a mix of previously written texts, the play itself has inspired many new adaptations and stories from the history of cross-star lovers throughout history. Some of the story's most notable contemporary reimaginings include young adult novels by Rachael Lippincott (Five Feet Apart) and Sharon M. Draper (Romiette and Julio), as well as West Side Story, a musical by Leonard Bernstein, Arthur Laurents and Stephen Sondheim in which the Montagues and Capulets become the Sharks and the Jets, rival bands on the 1950 Upper West Side. Key data on Romeo and Juliet Complete title: Romeo and Juliet when written: Probably 1591-1595 Where written: London, England when published: Bad quarto (incomplete manuscript) printed in 1597; Second, the most complete quartet printed in 1599; First folio, with clarifications and corrections, printed in 1623 Literary period: Renaissance Gender: tragic work Set: Verona, Italy Climax: Believing that Juliet is dead, Romeo commits suicide at his funeral by drinking poison. Juliet wakes up, finds Romeo dead and fatally stabs herself with her dagger. Antagonist: Capulet, Lady Capulet, Capulet, Lady Montague, Tourist Trap Tybalt. Casa di Giulietta, a 12-year-old villa in Verona, is located right in front of Via Capello (the possible origin of the anglicized surname Capuleto) and has become an important tourist attraction over the years due to its distinctive balcony. The house, bought by the city of Verona in 1905 by private participations, has been transformed into a kind of museum dedicated to the history of Romeo and Juliet, where tourists can see pieces from some of the main film adaptations of the work and even leave letters to their loved ones. No matter that the balcony scene, one of the most famous scenes in English literature, has never existed—the word balcony never appears in the play, and the balconies were not an architectural feature of Shakespeare's England—tourists flock from everywhere to glimpse Juliet's famous terrace. The language of love. While much of Shakespeare's later work is written in a combination of verse and prose (mainly used to offer distinction between social classes, with nobility speaking in verse and commoners speaking in prose), Romeo and Juliet is notable for their heady mix of poetic forms. The foreword to the work is written in the form of a sonnet, while most of the dialogue adheres strictly to the rhythm of the iambic pentameter. Romeo and Juliet alter their cadences when talking to each other, using a more casual and naturalistic speech. When they talk about other potential lovers, such as Rosaline and Paris, their speech is much more formal (to reflect the emotional falsehood of those alchemies). Fray Laurence speaks largely in sermons and aphorisms, while the nurse speaks in blank verse. Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare's most famous tragedy and one of the most enduring love stories in the world, derives its plot from various 16th-century sources. Shakespeare's main inspiration for the play was Arthur Brooke's Tragic Story of Romeo and Juliet (1562), a long, dense poem. Brooke's poem, in turn, was based on a French prose version written by Pierre Boaistuau (1559), which is derived from an Italian version written by Bandello in 1554. Bandello's poem, for his part, was an interpretation of Luigi da Porto's 1525 version of a story by Masuccio Salernitano (1476). Shakespeare's plot of Romeo and Juliet remains primarily true to Brooke's poem, although Shakespeare held artistic license in several cases. For example, as Shakespeare often does, Shakespeare telescopes the events of Brooke's poem (which took place over 90 days) in a few days in the play. In addition, Shakespeare's Juliet is thirteen, while Brooke wrote it as sixteen. Compression time and the younger Juliet enhance the youthful nature of the central relationship, emphasizing her passion and novelty. One of the most powerful aspects of Romeo and Juliet is Shakespeare's use of language. Characters curse, swear swear banish each other and, in general, demonstrate great verbal prowess through excessive use of action verbs. In addition, the work is saturated with oxymorones, word games, paradoxes and double meaning. Shakespeare even calls into question the use of names, most famous in the soliloquie of Juliet's balcony. Shakespeare also executed a fairly strong change in the language spoken by Romeo and Juliet after they fell in love. While Romeo is hopelessly normal in his courtship before meeting Juliet, after he falls in love, his language becomes infinitely richer and stronger. Romeo and Juliet also deal with the issue of authoritarian law and order. Many of Shakespeare's works feature characters representing the unalterable force of the law, such as the Duke in Comedy of Errors and Prince Escalus in Romeo and Juliet. In this play, the law tries to stop civil disorder, and even banishes Romeo at the midpoint. However, as in The Comedy of Mistakes, the law is finally dominated by the forces of love. There are several different fonts that inform the contemporary text of Romeo and Juliet. Romeo and Juliet were first published in the fourth in 1597, and republished in a new edition only two years later. The second copy was still used to create a third quarter in 1609, from which both 1623 Quarto and the First Folio are derived. The first room is generally considered a bad room, or an illicit copy created from the memories of various actors rather than the writer's original material. The second quarter appears to be taken from Shakespeare's draft, and therefore has an inconsistent speech and some lines that Shakespeare apparently intended to eliminate. Please refer to the About Shakespearian Theatre section of this note for more guidance on these concepts. Romeo and Juliet were popular during Shakespeare's time, but over the centuries it has become nothing short of ubiquitous. It is arguably the most filmed work of all time, and has been adapted 4 times to date - first by George Cukor in 1936, then by Franco Zeffirelli in 1968, Baz Luhrmann in 1996, and more recently, by Carlo Carlet in 2013. John Madden's Oscar-winning film Shakespeare in Love is a fictional account of Shakespeare's life as he writes the play. It was the basis of Prokofiev's famous ballet, and has inspired numerous operas, pop and jazz songs, books, games and musicals. Musical.

