Romeo and Juliet Vocabulary and Literary Terms

I. Vocabulary

- adversary: opponent; enemy
- ambiguity: statement or event in which meaning is unclear
- banishment: exile
- boisterous: stormy; violent; rowdy
- dexterity: skill; cleverness
- idolatry: extreme devotion to a person or thing
- lament: to grieve for
- nuptial: wedding
- peruse: look over
- reconcile: to become friendly again
- shroud: a burial cloth

II. Literary Terms:

- allusion: a reference in one work of literature to a person, place, or event in another work of literature or in history, art, or music
  - Example: the band Veruca Salt is an allusion to the character Veruca Salt in the film Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory.
- analogy: an extended comparison showing the similarities between two things
  - Example: Juliet’s comparison of a rose and Romeo in her soliloquy
- antagonist: the character or force that works against the protagonist; introduces the conflict
- aside: words spoken by a character in a play, usually in an undertone and not intended
- blank verse: unrhymed iambic pentameter
- characterization: the personality a character displays; also, the means by which the author reveals that personality
- climax: the point of greatest emotional intensity, interest, or suspense in a narrative
- conflict: a struggle (between two opposing forces or characters)
- couplet: two consecutive lines of poetry that rhyme
  - Example: My only love, sprung from my only hate!
    Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
- diction: a writer’s choice of words for clarity, effectiveness, and precision
dramatic irony  a contrast between what the audience perceives and what a character does not know

dramatic structure  the structure of a play

epithet  a descriptive adjective or phrase used to characterize someone or something. (Peter the Great).
   ✓ Example: Romeo! Humors! Madman! Passion! Lover! (II.i.7)

figurative language  language that is not intended to be interpreted in a literal sense

foil  a character who sets off another character by contrast

foreshadowing  the use of hints or clues in a narrative to suggest what action is to come

iambic meter  unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable
   ✓ Example: ā gain

iambic pentameter  five verse feet with each foot an iamb (a total of ten syllables)

imagery  language that appeals to any sense (sight, hearing, taste, touch, or smell) or any combination of the senses

irony  literary technique that portrays differences between appearance and reality (dramatic irony; situational irony; verbal irony)

metaphor  comparison between two unlike things with the intent of giving added meaning to one of them

motivation  a reason that explains or partially explains why a character thinks, feels, acts, or behaves in a certain way (Motivation results from a combination of the characters personality and the situation to be dealt with.)

protagonist  the main character in a play or story

pun  the humorous use of a word or phrase to suggest to or more meanings at the same time
   ✓ Romeo: The game was ne’er so fair, and I am done.
   Mercutio: Tut! Dun’ s the mouse, the constable’s own word!
   If thou art Dun, we’ll draw thee from the mire. (I.iv.39-41)

repetition  the return of a word, phrase, stanza form, or effect in any form of literature (forms: alliteration; rhyme; refrain)

monologue  a long, uninterrupted speech presented in front of other characters

oxymoron  a figure of speech that combines apparently contradictory terms
   ✓ “sweet sorrow”; “loving hate”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>personification</td>
<td>a figure of speech in which an animal, object, natural force, or idea is given a personality and described as human</td>
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<tr>
<td>simile</td>
<td>a comparison made between two dissimilar things through the use of a specific word of comparison such as <em>like</em> and <em>as</em></td>
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<td>situational irony</td>
<td>a contrast between what is expected and what really happens</td>
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<td>soliloquy</td>
<td>a speech in which a character is <em>alone</em> on stage and expresses thoughts out loud</td>
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<tr>
<td>sonnet</td>
<td>a fourteen-line lyric poem, usually written in iambic pentameter, that has one of several rhyme schemes. A sonnet form used by William Shakespeare is called the Shakespearean sonnet. It has three four-line units (quatrains) followed by a concluding two-line unit (couplet). The most common rhyme scheme for the Shakespearean sonnet is <em>abab cdcd efef gg</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>symbol</td>
<td>any object, person, place, or action that has a meaning in itself and that also stands for something larger than itself—such as a quality, attitude, belief, or value.</td>
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<td>suspense</td>
<td>that quality of a literary work that makes the reader or audience uncertain or tense about the outcome of events</td>
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<td>theme</td>
<td>the central idea of a work of literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>verbal irony</td>
<td>a contrast between what is said and what is meant</td>
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