

For:

- English teachers
- English subject leaders



**Qualifications
and Curriculum
Development
Agency**

Active
Shakespeare:
Capturing
evidence of
learning

Exploring the soliloquies of *Romeo and Juliet* Exemplification level 7

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The *Active Shakespeare: Capturing evidence of learning* materials provide teachers with a way of building assessment into their ongoing teaching of Shakespeare that supports the periodic assessment of reading. The supporting exemplification materials give examples of evidence generated by pupils working at different levels and can be used as a resource and reference point for teachers. Each set of exemplification includes:

- examples of the pupil's classroom work drawing on the synoptic task and the reflection log
- commentary on the evidence at assessment focus (AF) level which contributes to a judgement on the pupil's overall reading level
- teacher observations contributing to the assessment judgement
- an assessment summary outlining the overall evidence that could contribute to a periodic reading judgement for the different AFs.

These *Active Shakespeare* materials provide a useful and varied range of written and oral evidence that will contribute towards a periodic review of pupils' progress in reading using the Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) guidelines. Because the material relates to a single text and helps to generate evidence for selected assessment focuses only, it does not provide sufficient evidence on its own to make an overall judgement of a pupil's reading level.

STAGE 1

Taking it further B: Romeo's first soliloquy

Romeo compares Juliet to both the sun and to the stars. Think about the setting of this scene, for example time and place. In what ways do Romeo's words suggest what an audience would actually be seeing on stage at this point?

Now have a look at one other 'night' scene in the play. Does your chosen night scene have the same impact as Romeo's soliloquy?

This soliloquy is set at night, this helps Romeo to hide in the shadows of Juliet's garden to watch her. Romeo constantly refers to the stars, moon and heaven. He uses these to describe Juliet. 'her eyes in heaven', 'The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars'. These descriptions make us realise that Romeo is a very romantic and dreamy character. The reference to light and the dark makes the scene very romantic and gentle. 'That birds would sing and think it were not night'. This is how Romeo sees Juliet, the light setting makes the scene more dramatic as Juliet cannot see Romeo but he can see her. The lighting is crucial in this soliloquy as the romance & drama is made by the fact that Juliet is the light in the dark. She lights up Romeo's life. The light and dark image could be used as a metaphor for the Montagues and Capulets. Without the light and dark comparison this soliloquy wouldn't work as well as it does. Every soliloquy and all through the play there is a reference to these types of opposites.

Some detailed explanation, with appropriate terminology, of how language is used
AF5 L6 b1

Responses begin to develop an appreciation of how particular techniques and devices achieve the effects they do
AF6 L7 b3

This response shows evidence of a close engagement with the text, with some detailed explanation of the impact of the language, *These descriptions make us realise that Romeo is a very romantic and dreamy character* (AF5 L6 b1). There is also an appreciation of how particular techniques and devices achieve their effects, for example the pupil is able to make the connection between the on stage physical, textual and metaphorical references to light and darkness (AF6 L7 b3).

STAGE 1

 **Task 1: Romeo's soliloquy**

Use highlighter pens to select all the words and phrases in the speech that refer to:

- the stars and the heavens
- light and brightness.

Write two short paragraphs to explain why Shakespeare uses each of these words and phrases in this soliloquy.

Shakespeare uses words and phrases to do with heaven and light because this makes Romeo sound dreamy, romantic and madly in love. Descriptions like 'Two of the fairest stars in all of the heaven'. This is where Romeo is talking about Juliet's eyes lighting up heaven. The referal to the ~~heavens~~ ^{stars} could be the fact that Romeo and Juliet believed that their fate was written in the stars, they were destined to be together. Romeo describes Juliet as if she is the light of his life.

Comments begin to develop an interpretation of the text(s), making connections between insights, teasing out meanings or weighing up evidence
AF3 L7 b1

The use of the light and dark contrast help us see that Romeo and Juliet are complete opposites. The light is also used for Romeo to display how much he loves Juliet, how she has lead him to see how bad the fighting is. To Romeo, Juliet is the light at the end of the tunnel. The fact that Juliet cannot see Romeo during this soliloquy makes the audience feel sorry for him, because he has all these feelings for Juliet that he cannot tell her. If this was in the daylight this soliloquy would not be as dramatic or romantic as it is.

Responses begin to develop some analytic or evaluative comment on author's purpose
AF6 L7 b1

This response to Romeo's soliloquy begins to make connections and interpretations across texts teasing out other levels of meaning, *their fate was written in the stars* - an implicit reference to "*star crossed lovers*" (AF3 L7 b1). The drama of the scene, heightened by the contrast of light and dark, is analysed and evaluated in terms of both the characters' feelings for each other and the possible audience response to Romeo (AF6 L7 b1).

STAGE 2

Task 1: Juliet's soliloquy

Use a highlighter pen and find lines or phrases in the speech that refer to:

- 'speed' or 'time'.

Looking at the speech as a whole write a paragraph in which you analyse three of these phrases closely and describe how the references to time and speed build anticipation and tension for the audience. Look at the way Shakespeare ends the soliloquy. Why does the list of adjectives in the last line make an effective ending?

This Soliloquy has many references to time. This is because Juliet is wishing the time by, she knows that she doesn't have much time alone with Romeo before she has to marry Paris. The whole play is taking place over a 4 or 5 day period. Juliet is also talking very fast and she is panicking. She complains about the nurse being slow. Another opposite, fast and slow, Montague and Capulet. The last line contains words with more syllables eg. 'heavy' rather than 'swift' these longer words slow the soliloquy down and Juliet calms herself down. The references to time make the audience feel tense as they don't want time to run out for Romeo and Juliet. 'Clock struck nine' this is the time that Juliet sent her nurse, Juliet is tense, we can tell this because she keeps checking the time. 'Ten times faster' Juliet knows that she would find Romeo a lot faster than the nurse could. 'Three long hours' Juliet is wishing the time away and has realised that the nurse has only been gone for three hours. The longest hours of her life.

Some detailed explanation, with appropriate terminology, of how language is used

Some drawing together of comments on how the writer's use of language contributes to the overall effect on the reader
AF5 L6 b1 and b2

This evidence shows a detailed engagement with the text. The focus of attention is the language and impact of the text and the pupil is able to use some appropriate terminology, such as her analysis of the use of syllables (AF5 L6 b1). The pupil draws together a range of comments on how the writer's use of language contributes to the overall effect on the reader. These comments are consistently linked to the ways in which various techniques contribute to the overall impact of the writing upon their intended

audiences, for example *The references to time make the audience feel tense as they don't want time to run out for Romeo and Juliet* (AF5 L6 b2).

STAGE 3

 Resource 2: 'as ifs'

1 How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point!

❖ As if she's ↙
repeating a
worst
nightmare
❖ As if she's only
just thought
about this 1
❖

2 Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in.
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?

O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
Environèd with all these hideous fears,
And madly play with my forefathers' joints?
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
And in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
As with a club, dash out my desp'rate brains?

❖ ~~As if she's~~
~~terrified~~
❖ As if she's now
exhausted by
all her fears
❖ As if she's
thinking of all
the possibility.

O, look! methinks I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit¹ his body
Upon a rapier's point. Stay, Tybalt, stay!

❖ As if she's
scared of
ghosts
❖ As if she's
pleased to see
Tybalt again
❖ As if she doesn't
want to see Tybalt
because she is

Romeo, Romeo, Romeo? Here's drink - I drink to thee.
(She falls upon her bed)

scared that'll haunt
her because of what
Romeo did to him.

❖ As if ...?
She just wants
the whole thing
over and done with.

Comments
begin to
develop an
interpretation of
the text(s),
making
connections
between
insights, teasing
out meanings or
weighing up
evidence
AF3 L7 b1

In this brief annotation, the pupil shows the ability to speculate intelligently on the thoughts and feelings driving Juliet's need to speak. Comments make a reasonably insightful connection between Romeo's past actions and the need for revenge which may motivate the ghost of Tybalt and develop an interpretation of Juliet's desire to have, *the whole thing over and done with* (AF3 L7 b1).

STAGE 3

Task 1: Juliet's soliloquies

In the soliloquy on page 8 Juliet imagines a series of increasingly terrifying images of her future. By carefully selecting six different images from the speech show how Shakespeare structures the soliloquy to become more and more dramatic and to build up the sense of horror and anticipation in the audience.

Shakespeare uses lots of punctuation in this part of the soliloquy. He uses commas and questions to add drama and effect. 'Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point!' This is when Juliet is starting to question herself 'Come to redeem me?' and then she laughs at herself to try and get the tight off of her head 'There's a fearful point! Juliet is trying convince herself that she'll be ok but she cannot help all of these morbid thoughts. 'No healthsome air breathes in.' Juliet is starting to panic about the fact that no air can get into the vault and the air that has been trapped in there has been saturated with the smell of decomposing bodies. She is terrified that she won't be able to breathe. This image of Juliet suffocating, scares the audience and it makes them want to help Juliet. A feeling like you can't breathe makes people feel claustrophobic, especially in and this helps make it more dramatic. 'Stay, Tybalt, stay' Juliet is scared that Tybalt's ghost is with her, she is scared that he may hurt her for what Romeo did to him and that Juliet is a traitor to the Capulet family. She could be talking to Tybalt as reassurance for herself, so she isn't alone. When Juliet talks to Tybalt this makes the audience on edge in a sense that Juliet may not be alone anymore, this makes the scene very scary and spooky. 'Here's drink - I drink to thee.' Juliet drinks the vial because she knows that she has no other choices. 'Here's drink' Juliet says this as if she is fed up and she just wants this all to end, as if she wants to get it all over and done with.

Responses begin to develop an appreciation of how particular techniques and devices achieve the effects they do
AF6 L7 b3

Some appreciation of how the writer's use of language contributes to the overall effect on the reader
AF5 L7 b2

Comments begin to develop an interpretation of the text(s), making connections between insights, teasing out meanings or weighing up evidence
AF3 L7 b1

This analysis of how language is used largely focuses on Juliet's internal processing of her current dilemma, and shows some appreciation of how the writer's language choices contribute to the overall effect on the reader. For example, she comments on the effect of punctuation and the use of *commas and questions to add drama and effect* (AF5 L7 b2). The pupil also makes connections, teasing out meanings and weighing up evidence, for example *Juliet is starting to panic about the fact that no air can get into the vault ... This image of Juliet suffocating scares the audience* (AF3 L7 b1). This is also one of two examples within this response that show an appreciation of how techniques and devices achieve the writer's purposes (AF6 L7 b3).

STAGE 4

 **Task 1: Romeo's soliloquies**

Look at Romeo's speech alongside Juliet's soliloquy in Act 4 Scene 3. Using a highlighter pen choose five details that link the two speeches. Write a short explanation of why you have chosen to compare the two lines/phrases in each case and discuss how Shakespeare structures the two speeches for dramatic effect. How do your chosen lines/phrases link in to the themes of the play?

Romeo and Juliet's soliloquies are very similar. They both talk of death and love. In his final soliloquy Romeo says ~~that he will stay with her~~ 'I still will stay with thee' here Romeo is promising Juliet that even in death, they will be together.

~~to~~ Earlier in the soliloquy Romeo says 'Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks'. Romeo is perplexed that even though Juliet is 'dead' that she has colour in her cheeks and in her lips and that she still looks beautiful.

In ~~the~~ Section 6 Romeo talks of Juliet's lips being 'doors of breath' and in Juliet's soliloquy she talks about the rotten air in the vault. Romeo & Juliet keep referring to death and taking a last breath, this helps prepare the audience for their deaths. In his last soliloquy Romeo says 'Here's to my love' just before he takes the poison, Juliet also says 'Here's drink - I drink to thee' just before she takes the vial. I think that they say this because they know that they are dying for each other.

A few seconds before he dies Romeo says 'Thus with a kiss I die.' Romeo says this because he knows that that would be his last kiss for Juliet.

Relevant points clearly identified, including summary and synthesis of information from different sources or different places in the same text

Commentary incorporates apt textual reference and quotation to support main ideas or argument

AF2 L6 b1 and b2

Some appreciation of the skill with which a range of features relating to organisation at text level are used

AF4 L7 b2

In this evidence the pupil identifies and summarises two of the most relevant themes of the play *death and love* and the commentary incorporates appropriate quotations in order to support the argument that *Romeo is promising Juliet that even in death, they will be together* (AF2 L6 b1 and b2). The commentary establishes clear connections between the two speeches – *Romeo and Juliet keep referring to death and taking a last breath* – showing recognition of the writer's skilful choice and organisation of echoing lines or ideas (AF4 L7 b2).

 **SYNOPTIC TASK: A commentary on two soliloquies**

Write a detailed commentary comparing and contrasting two of the soliloquies you've studied. These should be either Juliet's two soliloquies OR Romeo's two soliloquies.

In Romeo's first soliloquy we can tell by the tone in which it is written that Romeo is calm and romantic. Romeo uses a constant reference to light. This contrast of light and dark is a metaphor for Montague and Capulet. The fact that they can't be together. The soliloquy has many cryptic phrases that could be associated with death or separation. This soliloquy talks of grief, thus soliloquy, even though it takes place at the ~~very~~ beginning of the play, still contains references of death. This soliloquy is set at night, Romeo talks of ~~the~~ 'heaven' and 'stars' he talks about Juliet as if she has light up his life. She is the only light in the dark garden. During this soliloquy Juliet cannot see or hear Romeo, this helps the audience sympathise with Romeo because he has all of these feelings for Juliet that he can't tell her about. Romeo also talks about Juliet's hands and cheeks, this description runs throughout the play, the fact that Romeo and Juliet are so close to being together but they can't quite touch.

Some detailed explanation, with appropriate terminology, of how language is used
AF5 L6 b1

Some appreciation of the skill with which a range of features relating to organisation at text level are used
AF4 L7 b2

SYNOPTIC TASK: A commentary on two soliloquies (continued)

Responses begin to develop an appreciation of how particular techniques and devices achieve the effects they do
AF6 L7 b3

Romeo talks about death in his second speech. He personifies death calling it a 'lean abhorred monster'. This description scares the audience as much as Romeo is. He stays calm and collected throughout the soliloquy. He talks of Juliet's beauty even in death. 'no power upon thy beauty' Romeo is confused that Juliet is still beautiful even though she is dead. ^{he also believes} ~~and~~ that death has no power over their relationship. He talks very dramatically about death, 'Come, unsavoury guide' The imagery throughout the soliloquy is very moving and thought-provoking. The picture of a 'last embrace' and sealing her lips with a 'righteous kiss' is very upsetting and the audience feel the pain the Romeo is going through. Further disturbing images are that of 'worms that are thy chambermaids'. This line ~~is~~ takes a few moments to think about. Romeo suddenly realises that Juliet is dead and ~~is~~ soon will not be the beautiful girl that he married.

Both soliloquies talk about death either very subtly or very up front. 'kill the envious moon' and 'engrossing death' are good examples of this. In the first soliloquy, ~~Romeo~~ ^{Shakespeare} uses images of light, heaven and stars. In the prologue it talks about 'a pair of star crossed lovers' the images of heaven, and light and

Comments begin to develop an interpretation of the text(s), making connections between insights, teasing out meanings or weighing up evidence
AF3 L7 b1

SYNOPTIC TASK: A commentary on two soliloquies (continued)

Stars remind us of this. In Romeo's death speech Shakespeare talks about Romeo being taken over by an 'engrossing death'. Throughout the whole play we are reminded that Romeo and Juliet's fate has been written in the stars and that they had no control of what would happen to them.

Comments begin to develop an interpretation of the text(s), making connections between insights, teasing out meanings or weighing up evidence
AF3 L7 b1

In the synoptic task the pupil explores the relationship between language, devices and wider themes in the play in a clear and detailed response.

This account of Romeo's development through the play begins with some detailed explanation of the constant references to light in his speeches (AF5 L6 b1). The pupil then begins to show some appreciation of textual features running throughout the play in her reference to – *hands and cheeks, this discription runs throughout the play, the fact that Romeo and Juliet are so close to being together but they can't quite touch* (AF4 L7 b2).

In a close reading of the text, the pupil is able to identify and show an appreciation of a range of techniques such as personification and the use of imagery (AF6 L7 b3). There is particular evidence of the pupil's ability to interpret text and develop insights into meaning such as Romeo's belief, *that death has no power over thier relationship* (AF3 L7 b3).

Assessment summary

This selection of evidence from the reflection log shows the pupil engaging fully with the text to develop an individual interpretation. Whilst much of the evidence in the reflection log fulfils the criteria for level 6, the synoptic task shows the pupil's increasing ability to interpret and make precisely focused comments that fulfil the level 7 criteria. In addition there is evidence for AF2 and AF3.

AF4 The pupil shows an appreciation of how a range of features are used at text level, for example Romeo and Juliet's constant references to death.

AF5 In her response to Juliet's soliloquy the pupil is able to articulate how monosyllables affect pace and is able to demonstrate a sophisticated appreciation of language use in her analysis of Juliet's second soliloquy, for example where she comments on Shakespeare's use of punctuation, commas and questions.

AF6 The pupil consistently demonstrates work at level 7 for AF6. For example, in Stage 1 Task 1 the pupil shows some analysis of writer's purpose when she comments that, *The fact that Juliet cannot see Romeo during this soliloquy makes the audience feel sorry for him.*



About this publication

Who is it for?

Teachers and English subject leaders.

What is it about

Providing active and engaging ways to integrate Shakespeare in the ongoing periodic assessment of pupils' reading.

What is it for?

To support the teaching and assessment of Shakespeare at Key Stage 3.

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