

Worksheet 1

Romeo and Juliet

Say it Shakespeare Style

Romeo and Juliet is one of William Shakespeare's most popular literary works and has been adapted countless times for stage, film and opera. In its original form, Shakespeare used **Early Modern English** to tell the story of the ill-fated lovers. This language is thought to be a transition from **Middle English** (used in the late 15th century) to **Modern English** (used during the mid to late 17th century). You will have noticed that the Ziptales modernised version of *Romeo and Juliet* has included some of the Early Modern English terms so commonly used in Shakespeare's day.

Task 1: Match the Early Modern English terms to their modern day interpretations:

alas	where
barn	forbidden or not allowed
forsooth	go away, leave
forbode	in truth, or in fact, indeed
art	you
wherefore	will
o'er	an exclamation of sadness or regret
yonder	perhaps, possibly or maybe
thou/thee	problems
woe	your
be gone	a child
perchance	are
wilt	sadness
woes	an indicated place
thy	over

Task 2: Locate a copy of Romeo and Juliet in its original form. Test yourself to see how much of the story you can interpret.

Extension Activities:

- The setting of *Romeo and Juliet*, Verona, is a city in northern Italy and home to an ancient amphitheatre. What is an amphitheatre? Describe some of the historical significance of the Verona amphitheatre and identify other world famous amphitheatres located around the world.
- Compose an author profile about William Shakespeare. Include facts about his life story and explain why he is considered to be the greatest English writer of all time.