

9.1.3

Lesson 1

Introduction

In this first lesson of the unit, students begin their study of *Romeo and Juliet* by reading the 14-line prologue of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (from "Two households, both alike in dignity, / In fair Verona" to "What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend"), in which the Chorus introduces the events of the play. Students begin to acquaint themselves with Shakespeare's English and explore how his specific word choices create tone within the text. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How do Shakespeare's specific word choices establish a tragic tone in the Prologue?

For homework, students write an objective, one-paragraph summary of the Prologue. Students also continue to read their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) text through the lens of a chosen focus standard and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
Addressed Standard(s)	
SL.9-10.1.b, c	<p>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues</i>, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <p>b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussion and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.</p> <p>c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.</p>

L.9-10.4.a, b	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 9–10 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., <i>analyze, analysis, analytical; advocate, advocacy</i>).</p>
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Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do Shakespeare’s specific word choices establish a tragic tone in the Prologue? <p>① Throughout this unit, Quick Writes will be evaluated using the Short Response Rubric.</p>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify specific word choices (e.g., Shakespeare makes specific word choices in the Prologue, such as “fatal” (line 5), “star-crossed” (line 6), “misadventured” (line 7), and “death-marked love.” (line 9)). Analyze how these word choices create a tragic tone (e.g., These word choices create a tragic tone by describing how Romeo and Juliet are “star-crossed” (line 6) to fall in love, but they are also marked for death because of it. This is their inescapable fate, as is shown by the word <i>fatal</i>, which means both “causing death” and “inevitable.”).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lamentable (adj.) – regrettable; unfortunate prologue (n.) – an introductory speech, often in verse, calling attention to the central idea of a play household (n.) – a family, including its servants dignity (n.) – elevated rank, office, station mutiny (n.) – rebellion against authority

- forth (adv.) – onward in time, in order, or in a series
- foes (n.) – enemies
- doth (v.) – does
- naught (n.) – nothing

Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- alike (adj.) – having resemblance or similarity
- fatal (adj.) – causing death; proceeding from or decreed by fate; inevitable
- star-crossed (adj.) – ill-fated
- misadventured (adj.) – unfortunate
- piteous (adj.) – evoking or deserving pity; pathetic

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- grudge (n.) – a strong feeling of anger toward someone that lasts for a long time
- overthrows (n.) – defeats; destructions; ruins
- strife (n.) – a very angry or violent disagreement between two or more people or groups

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: RL.9-10.4, SL.9-10.1.b, c, L.9-10.4.a, b • Text: <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> by William Shakespeare, Prologue 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Introduction to <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> and Masterful Reading 4. Reading and Discussion 5. Quick Write 6. Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% 2. 10% 3. 15% 4. 50% 5. 15% 6. 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 9.1.1 Lesson 1)

Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
▶	Indicates student action(s).
💬	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RL.9-10.4. In this unit, students work with William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. In this lesson, students read the Prologue and analyze how Shakespeare's specific word choices establish a tragic tone in the text. Students engage in evidence-based discussion and complete a brief writing assignment to close the lesson.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they applied a chosen focus standard to their AIR text. Lead a brief share out on the previous lesson's AIR homework assignment. Select several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied a focus standard to their AIR text.

- ▶ Students (or student pairs) discuss and share how they applied a focus standard to their AIR text from the previous lesson's homework.

Activity 3: Introduction to *Romeo and Juliet* and Masterful Reading

15%

Distribute copies of *Romeo and Juliet* to students. Ask students to look at the full title—*The Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*—as well as at the list of characters.

Provide students with the following definition: *lamentable* means “regrettable; unfortunate.”

- ▶ Students write the definition of *lamentable* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of the following questions.

What information can you gather from the full title of this play?

- 💬 The full title of the play lets the reader and audience know that this play is a tragedy.

How does the word *lamentable* impact the title of the play?

- 💬 It shows that something unfortunate happens in the play.

What meanings of the word *tragedy* do you know? Why might a play be called a *tragedy*?

- 💬 Student responses may include:
 - A tragedy is a very sad and unfortunate event.
 - A play might be a tragedy if it is about sad and unfortunate events.

Have students listen to a masterful reading of the Prologue (from “Two households, both alike in dignity” to “What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend”). As students listen, instruct them to focus on Shakespeare’s word choices and how they establish tone.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students throughout this lesson:

What is the tone of the Prologue?

- ① If necessary, define *tone* for the students as “the attitude a speaker has toward the subject about which he or she is speaking.”
 - ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student observations.

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion

50%

Instruct students to form small groups with four members. Post or project the questions below for students to discuss. Inform students that they will remain in these groups for the duration of the unit.

Instruct student groups to read the Prologue, lines 1–4 (from “Two households, both alike in dignity, / In fair Verona” to “Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean”), with each student taking a line, and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

- ① Consider reminding students that this is an opportunity to apply standards SL.9-10.1.b, c by participating effectively in a collaborative discussion. Students may focus on setting rules for collegial discussion and decision-making, establishing individual roles, posing and responding to questions, incorporating others into the discussion, and challenging or verifying ideas and conclusions.

Instruct students to annotate their texts for tone and word choice to help prepare them for Quick Writes.

- ① Consider reminding students of their previous work with annotation in 9.1.1 Lesson 4.

Provide students with the following definitions: *prologue* means “an introductory speech, often in verse, calling attention to the central idea of a play,” *household* means “a family, including its servants,” *dignity* means “elevated rank, office, station,” and *mutiny* means “rebellion against authority.”

- ① Students may be familiar with some of these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the class.
 - ▶ Students write the definitions of *prologue*, *household*, *dignity*, and *mutiny* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing the following definition: *grudge* means “a strong feeling of anger toward someone that lasts for a long time.”
 - ▶ Students write the definition of *grudge* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What word parts or phrases help you to infer the definition of *alike* in line 1?

- 💬 *Like* means “similar to,” so *alike* must mean “having resemblance or similarity.”
- ① Confirm that *alike* means “having resemblance or similarity.”
- ① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.9-10.4.b through the process of using word parts to make meaning of unknown words.

What do you learn about the “households” in line 1?

- 💬 They are “alike in dignity” (line 1), or they have the same status.

What words or phrases develop the relationship between these two households?

- 💬 They do not like each other: they share a “grudge” (line 3) against one another.

Whose hands are being made “unclean”?

- ☞ The hands of the members of the “two households” (line 1) are being made unclean.

How does line 4 develop your understanding of this “ancient grudge”?

- ☞ Line 4 shows that the grudge is violent because there is “blood” making hands “unclean” (line 4).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to read the Prologue, lines 5–8 (from “From forth the fatal loins of these two foes” to “Doth with their death bury their parents’ strife”), with each student taking a line, and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide the following definitions: *forth* means “onward in time, in order, or in a series,” *foes* means “enemies,” and *doth* means “does.”

- ① Students may be familiar with some of these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the class.
 - ▶ Students write the definitions of *forth*, *foes*, and *doth* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *overthrows* means “defeats; destructions; ruins,” and *strife* means “a very angry or violent disagreement between two or more people or groups.”
 - ▶ Students write the definitions of *overthrows* and *strife* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What does the audience learn in lines 5–6 about the relationship between the lovers and the “two households”?

- ☞ The lovers are the children of the “two households” (line 1).
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider asking the following questions.

Who are the foes (line 5)?

- ☞ The “two households” (line 1).

How are the lovers related to the foes?

- 💬 The lovers come from “the fatal loins of these two foes” (line 5), suggesting that the lovers are the children of “these two foes” (line 5).

What does the word *fatal* in line 5 tell the audience about the lovers?

- 💬 The word *fatal* means “causing death.” This informs us that the lovers are going to die.

What familiar word can you find in *fatal*? What alternative meaning of *fatal*, besides “causing death,” does this suggest?

- 💬 Fate is present in *fatal*, so *fatal* might also mean “destined or fated.”
- ① Confirm that *fatal* means “proceeding from or decreed by fate; inevitable.”
- ① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.9-10.4.b through the process of using word parts to make meaning of unknown words.

How does Shakespeare’s choice of the word *fatal* develop the tragic tone of the play?

- 💬 Through the choice of the word *fatal*, Shakespeare shows that that Romeo and Juliet are destined to die. There is nothing anyone can do to save them.

What familiar word can you find in *misadventured*? How does the prefix *mis-* impact your understanding of the word?

- 💬 The word *adventure* is in *misadventured*. An adventure is an exciting journey or an unexpected event. The prefix *mis-* appears in words like *mistake*, *misuse*, or *misbehave*, so *mis-* must mean something bad, accidental, or wrong. *Misadventured* means “unfortunate.”
- ① Confirm that *misadventured* means “unfortunate.”
- ① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.9-10.4.b through the process of using word parts to make meaning of unknown words.

How does Shakespeare’s specific word choices in lines 5–8 develop the definition of *star-crossed*?

- 💬 Student responses may include:
 - Shakespeare uses the word *fatal*, meaning both “causing death” and “proceeding from or decreed by fate; inevitable,” suggesting that the lovers are going to die. This is confirmed when the Chorus states that the lovers “take their life” (line 6) and refers to “their death” (line 8).
 - Shakespeare refers to their deaths as “misadventured” and “piteous” in line 7, suggesting that the lovers are going to be unhappy and suffer.

- Shakespeare's word choices suggest that the lovers are going to suffer and eventually commit suicide because of their parents' strife, and that they cannot be saved. This suggests that the word *star-crossed* means that they are unhappy and unlucky.

① Confirm that *star-crossed* means "ill-fated."

① Consider drawing students' attention to their application of standard L.9-10.4.a through the process of using context to make meaning of unknown words.

What effect do the "star-crossed" lovers' deaths have on their parents?

- The lovers' deaths end "their parents' strife" (line 8), meaning their deaths end the households' grudges against each other.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to read the Prologue, lines 9–14 (from "The fearful passage of their death-marked love" to "What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend"), with each student taking a line, and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the follow definition: *naught* means "nothing."

① Students may be familiar with this word. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the class.

- ▶ Students write the definition of *naught* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

How does Shakespeare's choice of the word *death-marked* develop the tone of the Prologue?

- The word *death-marked* (line 9) develops the tragic tone of the Prologue by describing the lovers as marked for death.

To whom do "our" and "you" refer to in these lines? Cite evidence from the text to support your response.

- "Our" refers to the Chorus and/or the actors and "you" refers to the audience. The Chorus says "where we lay our scene" (line 2), meaning that they are the subject of "we" and "our." As there is no one else onstage, the Chorus must be speaking to the audience when they say "you" (line 13).

Paraphrase what happens during the "two hours traffic" on the stage.

- Student answers should include:

- Line 9: The romance between the lovers.
- Line 10: The continuing feud between their parents.
- Line 11: Nothing could end their parents' feud except their death.

What does the Chorus ask of the audience?

- 💬 The Chorus asks the audience to lend their “patient ears” (line 13) and watch their “toil” (line 14), or performance. In other words, the Chorus asks the audience to be patient and watch the play.

How do lines 9–11 and the definition of *prologue* develop the role of the Chorus?

- 💬 Because a prologue is meant to inform the audience what will happen and lay out the central ideas of a play, then the Chorus's job must be to perform and provide all of the information within the Prologue. For example, the Chorus explains that Romeo and Juliet's love is “death-marked” (line 9) and that only their deaths end the feud between their families.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider asking the following questions.

Given what the Chorus says earlier in the Prologue, what does the audience know about the lovers?

- 💬 The audience knows that they are destined to fall in love.

What does the audience know about the lovers' parents?

- 💬 The Prologue reveals that the families are at war.

What ends the conflict between the lovers' parents?

- 💬 Only the deaths of the lovers end the conflict.

How does the Prologue impact the audience's understanding of lines 9–11?

- 💬 Lines 9–11 restate what has already been stated in the Prologue: the two families are in a feud, their children fall in love, and the two lovers “take their life” (line 6), which ends the quarrel.

Lead a brief whole class discussion of student responses.

Activity 5: Quick Write

15%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

How do Shakespeare's specific word choices establish a tragic tone in the text?

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this lesson's vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition to the independent Quick Write.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
- 🗣 See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

Activity 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to write an objective, one-paragraph summary of the Prologue.

Also for homework, students should continue to read their AIR text through the lens of a focus standard of their choice and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Write an objective, one-paragraph summary of the Prologue.

Also, continue reading your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of a focus standard of your choice and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.