

Lesson Plan: Star-Crossed Influencers — A Modern Romeo and Juliet Project

Subject: English Language Arts

Student: Madison, Age 15 (Homeschool)

Time Allotment: Approximately 4-5 hours, can be split across multiple days.

Materials Needed

- A copy of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (any version, No Fear Shakespeare is also great for reference)
- Computer with internet access
- A Google Account (for Google Docs/Slides) or similar word processing/presentation software
- Access to a free online graphic design tool like Canva
- Notebook and pen for brainstorming

Lesson Overview

This project-based lesson moves beyond simple reading comprehension to help you, Madison, engage with *Romeo and Juliet* creatively. Instead of just analyzing the text, you will reimagine the central conflict in a modern context. You will take on the role of a social media manager for either the Capulet or Montague family, creating a digital campaign that tells the story's key events through a series of social media posts. This will allow you to explore character motivation, theme, and plot in a way that is relevant and fun.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- **Analyze** how complex characters like Juliet, Romeo, Tybalt, and Mercutio develop and interact.
- **Interpret** major themes from the play (e.g., passionate love, societal conflict, fate, the consequences of hate) and apply them to a 21st-century context.
- **Adapt** the play's key plot points into a modern, digital narrative format.
- **Create** a series of compelling digital artifacts (social media posts) that demonstrate a deep understanding of the play's characters and story.

Lesson Activities

Part 1: The Spark - Verona Goes Viral (30 minutes)

1. **Warm-Up Discussion:** Let's start with a big question. If the Montagues and Capulets existed today, what would their feud look like online?
 - Would they be rival corporations? Competing high schools? Two families of powerful influencers?
 - What kind of things would they post to "roast" each other? (Think TikToks, Instagram Reels, shady Tweets).

- How would a secret romance between two of their kids play out in a world of DMs, "finstas," and screenshots?
- 2. **Project Introduction:** Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to become the social media strategist for either **#TeamCapulet** or **#TeamMontague**. Your goal is to create a 5-7 post "social media campaign" that tells the story of the feud and the secret romance from your chosen family's perspective.

Part 2: Character Deep Dive - Building the Brands (1 hour)

1. **Choose Your Allegiance:** Pick a side! Will you manage the brand for the fiery, powerful Capulets or the more reserved but equally proud Montagues?
2. **Create Character "Influencer" Profiles:** In a notebook or Google Doc, create a brief profile for 3-4 key characters from your chosen family. For each character, define their online "brand." Think about:
 - **Username:** What would their handle be? (e.g., @TybaltTheGOAT, @JulietInTheGarden)
 - **Bio:** A short, catchy bio that captures their personality.
 - **Vibe/Aesthetic:** What kind of content do they post? (e.g., Tybalt posts gym selfies and aggressive rants. Romeo posts moody poetry and art. Juliet's early posts are aesthetic and thoughtful.)
 - **Core Motivation:** What drives them in the play? (e.g., Tybalt: Family honor at all costs. Juliet: Finding true, authentic love.)

This step is crucial for making sure your posts later are authentic to the characters!

Part 3: Mapping the Drama - From Page to Post (1 hour)

1. **Identify Key Scenes:** Let's list the major plot points that would definitely go viral or be documented online.
 - Act 1, Scene 1: The street brawl.
 - Act 1, Scene 5: Romeo and Juliet meet at the Capulet party.
 - Act 2, Scene 2: The balcony scene.
 - Act 3, Scene 1: Mercutio and Tybalt's deaths; Romeo's banishment.
 - Act 3, Scene 5: Juliet's refusal to marry Paris.
 - Act 5, Scene 3: The final tragedy in the tomb.
2. **Brainstorm Your Social Media Arc:** Choose 5-7 moments from the list above (or others you find interesting!) and brainstorm how they would look from your family's point of view. How would you spin the story?
 - **Example (if you are #TeamCapulet):** After the Act 3 fight, you might create a post from Lady Capulet. The image could be a black and white photo of Tybalt, with a caption demanding justice and calling Romeo a villain. The comments would be full of Capulet supporters offering condolences and Montagues being blocked.
 - **Example (if you are #TeamMontague):** For the same scene, a post from Benvolio might be a screenshot of a text conversation trying to explain that Tybalt started it, with a caption like "There's two sides to every story. #JusticeForMercutio #ItWasSelfDefense."

Part 4: Creative Production - Launch the Campaign! (1.5 - 2 hours)

1. **Design Your Posts:** Using Canva or Google Slides, create your 5-7 social media posts. Each post should look like a screenshot from a platform like Instagram, Twitter, or TikTok.
2. **Each Post Must Include:**
 - **An "In-Character" User:** Who is posting this? (e.g., Juliet, Lord Capulet, Nurse).

- **A Visual:** A relevant image or simple graphic. You can use stock photos or Canva's elements (e.g., a photo of a party, a dark and moody sky, a picture of a ring).
- **A Caption:** This is where you shine! Write a caption that reflects the character's voice and feelings about the event. This is your chance to adapt Shakespeare's ideas into modern language.
- **Hashtags:** Include 2-3 relevant hashtags (e.g., #CapuletPride, #VeronaDrama, #WhereIsRomeo, #Banishment).
- **Comments (Optional but Recommended!):** Add 1-2 comments from other characters to make the post feel more interactive and real.

Part 5: The Reveal - Share and Reflect (30 minutes)

1. **Present Your Campaign:** Share your series of posts with me. As you show each one, explain your creative choices. Why did you pick that image? How does that caption reflect the character's mindset at that point in the play?
2. **Reflection Discussion:** Let's talk about the project.
 - How did putting the story on social media change your view of the characters' actions?
 - Which theme—love, hate, or fate—do you think is most amplified by a modern, online setting? Why?
 - What does this project show us about how public feuds and private relationships are handled today compared to Shakespeare's time?

Assessment

Your "Star-Crossed Influencers" campaign will be your final assessment. I will be looking for:

- **Authenticity and Insight (40%):** How well do your posts capture the personalities, motivations, and voices of the characters? Do they show a deep understanding of why characters act the way they do?
- **Thematic & Plot Connection (30%):** Does your campaign accurately represent key events from the play and creatively explore at least one major theme (love, hate, fate, etc.)?
- **Creativity and Effort (30%):** How original, engaging, and thoughtful is your campaign? This includes the visual choices, the cleverness of the captions, and the overall narrative you've built.

Extension Ideas (Optional Fun!)

- Create a "DM conversation" between Romeo and Juliet where they plan their secret marriage.
- Design a "Spotify playlist" for a major character. What songs would be on Romeo's "Missing Juliet" playlist?
- Write a script for a short TikTok video where the Nurse gives Juliet advice (or complains about her aching back).