

Romeo & Juliet

In the play Romeo and Juliet, conflict is the foundation of the play as there is conflict between the two families the whole way through and there is fighting because of it. There is verbal and physical conflict.

In the prologue it mentions that there will be conflict in the play to come so it pricks our interest. A prologue is an introduction to the play explaining the basis of what is going to happen. It occurs at the beginning of the play and it is like the blurb on the back of a book. The mention of conflict in the play is about a family feud between the Montague and Capulet families. The idea of conflicts in a play adds a sense of excitement.

We are supposed to learn that you shouldn't make people hate each other and that a lot of pain and suffering could have been resolved if they had made up or just let Romeo and Juliet get on with their lives without interfering and trying to separate them and control them.

The prologue is supposed to captivate the audience in a trance so they don't lose track of the play. The way the sonnet was written as well is good for the rhythm of the prologue. Also the prologue is good to make them want to know what is going to happen throughout the play so that the actors can grab the attention and interest of the audience. The mood and tone would be quite serious so that the audience become enslaved into the play's ambiance.

The scene straight after the prologue is very important as first impressions count and it has to live up to the audience's expectations. The audience is expecting a thrilling and conflict packed play. Conflict interests the audience because it keeps the audience wanting more and makes them want to know what is going to happen in the end or to a particular character especially if they have got to know the character and feel particularly sorry for them. Sampson and Gregory enter the play in the first scene in a public place armed with swords and bucklers on. They are servants of the Capulet family and they hate the Montague family just as much they talk about killing off the Montague family. They also talk of other bad things like raping the maids of Montague or killing them.

Sampson and Gregory are scared of fighting in a way as they don't know if they are going to win so they sort of play it safe at the moment then Sampson sees that Tybalt is coming and hopes that he will help them so he provokes Abram. In this scene there is verbal conflict like calling names and physical conflict like biting your thumb or fighting with swords. Benvolio sees the fight and gets involved and tries to stop the

fight between the servants but then Tybalt gets involved and he is then forced into a fight himself ; so begins the 'new mutiny' of the prologue. Tybalt wants to fight Benvolio and says 'turn thee, Benvolio ; look upon thy death'. Benvolio then says I do but keep the peace; put up thy sword, or manage it to part these men with me'. Tybalt then says 'what drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word, as I hate hell, all Montague's, and thee'. Here Tybalt is trying to start a fight and is saying 'turn to fight so I can kill you' then Benvolio replies 'all I do is keep the peace put down your sword or use it to separate these men fighting with me. Tybalt then says in answer to that what you have your sword drawn and you talk of peace, I hate the word as I Hate all Montague's and you.

Capulet and Montague wants to get involved with the conflict as they both have to be held back. Capulet goes to reach for his long sword and Montague has to be held back by his wife so that he doesn't run off in a rage. They both want to kill each other. The Prince and some of the citizens of Verona had to break up the quarrels between the parties of Montague and Capulet. The Prince says that these two parties have had too many brawls and disturbed the streets of Verona one two many times so he said the next person to start a fight will be killed. He says 'if ever you disturb our streets again, your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace'.

The audience is captivated by this as they want to know what happens next. They know that somewhere in the play there will be more conflict so they want to know what will be the punishment and what will happen especially because Benvolio and Tybalt have some conflict so it may continue throughout the play. Romeo loves a girl called Rosaline but she doesn't love him he says 'well, in that hit you miss: she'll not be hit with cupid's arrow. She hath Dian's wit, and in strong proof of chastity well arm'd, from love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd'. Which means that Rosaline doesn't love him and she has the cleverness of Diana(the Roman goddess of chastity) in avoiding the temptations of love and remaining a virgin.

I think that Shakespeare intends the audience to have a feeling of ambiguity and curiosity in what is going to happen next but Shakespeare wants the audience to like Romeo and think of Capulet and their family as an enemy. I also think that he wants the audience to feel sorry for Romeo and to try and guess what is going to happen so he can put a twist in the story somewhere.

When I saw Baz Luhrman's production of Romeo and Juliet I couldn't understand all of what had been said in the play as they said it so fast but when I got the general feeling of the play as I watched it. It seemed as

though you were a ghost witnessing the disastrous love between Romeo and Juliet. Once I had read it though I understood what the actors had been saying and saw the humour to the play as well as the sadness and conflict so there were many mixed emotions.

In act 3 scene 5 the conflict is different as it is within the Capulet family. Therefore it differs from the sort of conflict from one family to the other. When Juliet is talking to her mother she says some lines that could mean two things. When Lady Capulet tells Juliet about the arranged marriage with Paris, Juliet replies 'I would rather marry Romeo'. Which in reality she already has married him but her mother doesn't know that so she thinks that she really doesn't want to marry Paris so she says that she would rather marry the enemy of the Capulet family. Juliet was expected to be happy and it was supposed to cheer her up instead of her dwelling on her cousin's death.

Capulet thinks that Juliet will be happy with the news that her father has found her a perfect suitor, but it is quite the opposite. Juliet tells her father that she doesn't want to marry Paris. Capulet is enraged at this, so he says 'after all I have gone through to get you the perfect man, and you throw it back in my face'. Capulet then says you have two choices either marry Paris who is rich and will be a good match or you can get out of my house and I would want nothing to do with you after that happens. Juliet doesn't want to marry Paris as she is in love with Romeo and has married him. Lord Capulet is angered by even the thought that his daughter will not marry the person he chose her to marry. It is against all the traditions of a lady. Lord Capulet would probably be shouting and maybe waving something like a newspaper around. He would also be in shock.

Lord Capulet's anger builds up quickly but he tries to keep himself calm by repeating himself. I think Shakespeare does this to add some sudden and unexpected conflict into the plays atmosphere. Juliet doesn't get much chance to talk or to show her opinions but in a way if her father had listened to her the play would not have been the same and it may not have turned out as it did. In those days women in general did not really have much of an opinion and the men were the dominant ones whatever they said went or else! So to Lord Capulet her views are not important and he does not care what happens as long as she listens to him one way or the other but he would be a bit surprised as he would not have guessed that his daughter will defy his word. It was not right in his mind. The way Capulet doesn't allow Juliet to speak makes the audience feel sorry for Juliet. Modern marriages are usually by choice to marry but in some cultures the

father or even parents find a suitable partner for their daughter and the marriage can be arranged from a very young age, sometimes just after birth. When Lady Capulet finds out about Juliet not wanting to marry Paris she looks scared and you can imagine that she would go pale as if she saw a ghost as she is afraid of lord Capulet and would not want to anger him as he might hurt her or something. Shakespeare's audience in those days would have cheered on Capulet as the men were allowed to hit women and so on. Where as now days people would feel sorry for Lady Capulet, Juliet and the nurse as they take a beating from him as it is not proper for us to do it now.

Baz Luhrman manages to intensify this scene by having Capulet flying around the house on a rampage destroying things, shouting and insulting Juliet so that the Nurse then interferes and he hits her as well saying that it has nothing to do with her. If I was to direct the scene I would have the tone to be very anxious, and to be a depressing tone. The pace of it would vary but when Capulet is in a tantrum then the pace would be very quick. There would be a lot of action going on and it would be very loud and there would be some insults being thrown around at each other.

I think that the theme of conflict in this play is one of the most important aspects of the play. This is where the play gets a certain feel to it. If there wasn't any conflict in the play then the play would not have ended in the same way then it wouldn't have had the same impact on the audience. Personally I think that the love and hatred in the play are equally as important. If it wasn't for the love then the play's atmosphere wouldn't be the same as it is Romeo and Juliet's love that cause some of the hatred and lead to it. Then the other side is the hatred, this leads to the love and is also a very important part of the play which could not be missed out. If it wasn't for the hatred of the two families then there wouldn't be any meaning to the play. The conflict in the play does appeal to a modern audience today as it is similar to everyday things that we may see. This sort of conflict is in all of the soaps that people watch on television.