

9 – THE BALCONY SCENE

Is the balcony scene comic and why would Shakespeare do this in a tragedy?

WHAT YOU NEED

- Some pieces of note paper, or a notebook and something to write with.
- A computer with internet connection, ready to play [this clip](#).
- A copy of Act 2 Scene 1 from Romeo and Juliet to read either on the page or on your screen.

ACTIVITY

- Play the clip above of two RSC actors performing this scene onstage. As you watch, make a list of all the moments that make the audience laugh or that you find funny. These things can include the choices the actors make in the way they say their lines or in the staging the director has chosen.
- Choose two funny moments that you thought stood out. Spend a minute or two writing down why you think they are funny.
- Read through the scene until you spot where these moments are. Is there anything about the text that suggests it should be directed or played as a comedy moment? Why do you think the actors and director have chosen to make it funny?
- Ask yourself: Why are comic moments so important in a tragic story? Why are they important in this scene in particular?

EXTENSION

- Create a soundscape for the scene. Decide on your sound effects and how you are going to make them. Will they be recorded and edited together, or will you perform them live? These could include music, sounds from nature, voices, words or lines from the play, vocal or physical reactions from both characters.
- Play your recording to someone else - can they guess where your scene is set? What kind of story do they think the soundscape belongs to - a love story or a drama? Comedy or horror?
- If you have time, watch the [scene in rehearsal](#) here. Pay particular attention to the same section played differently (time code 2:30-3:03) and (time code 4:02 - 6:35). Which do you prefer?