

# Romeo's role in "romeo and juliet" as the tragic hero essay sample

[Literature](#), [William Shakespeare](#)



## **Romeo's role in "Romeo and Juliet" as the tragic hero**

### **Essay Sample**

Like most Shakespearean plays, "Romeo and Juliet" exemplifies Shakespeare's astonishing comprehension and ability to write tragic plays. The simplest definition of "tragedy," a serious disaster or a sad event, blatantly describes the horrific story of two "star crossed lovers." While reading the fatal tale of Shakespeare's novel, Romeo and Juliet, a reader indulges in terrific medieval tragedy. Although the prologue by the chorus tells the stories conclusion, six distinctive characteristics of a tragic hero is exemplified through the novel that a reader should look for while attempting to identify the tragic hero - noble stature, tragic flaw, free choice, the punishment exceeds the crime, increased awareness, and produces catharsis. Although Romeo, the tragic hero of the novel, displays examples of all six elements, in the following analysis, three elements are discussed - noble stature, the punishment exceeds the crime, and produces catharsis.

First, Romeo, the son of the powerful Montague, holds a high noble stature in Verona. In Act 1, Benvolio makes reference to his "noble uncle," Lord Montague, declaring his high class in Verona's society. Even Lord Capulet refers to Romeo's stature at his party and states "Verona brags of him...a bears him like a partly gentlemen."

The Prince of Verona himself warns the Montague and Capulet family to end their family's feud, not an enforcer of the law, but the Prince. All of which exemplifies Romeo as a nobleman.

Secondly, Romeo possesses the tragic flaw of falling in love too quickly. In Act 1, Shakespeare introduces a young man hopelessly in love with Rosaline. Romeo states, " Not having that which makes having short," illustrating the depth in which Romeo believed he was in love with Rosaline. Romeo's family and friends attempt to cheer him up but depression is the conqueror until he meets Juliet. Phillis Rackin, author of " Shakespeare Tragedies," states " if Romeo's character does have a tragic flaw, it is it is youthful impetuosity; an older or more deliberate man might somehow have managed to avoid the quarrel and would not rush to kill himself as soon as he believed that Juliet was dead."

Lastly, the audience feels a great deal of catharsis for Romeo and his young bride, Juliet. Catharsis is a feeling of " emotional purgation" and most readers of the novel and viewers of the play are left with this feeling after the fatal and unfortunate ending. The height of the cathartic feeling stems from the chorus' prologue. The chorus tells the readers that the young lovers are " star crossed" or destined to fail, but readers endure the emotional misfortune of fate while watching both lovers take their own lives. Viewers of the play try to delay Romeo's reaction to Juliet's death, but the unfortunate ending reveals two " untimely deaths."

In conclusion, Romeo, the tragic hero of the novel, displays examples of all six elements, in the following analysis, three elements are discussed - noble stature, the punishment exceeds the crime, and produces catharsis. Like most Shakespearean plays, " Romeo and Juliet" exemplifies Shakespeare's astonishing comprehension and ability to write tragic plays. Although only

three elements were discussed, there are six requirements a character must possess to consider him or her the tragic hero. While attempting to identify the tragic hero readers should identify the noble stature, tragic flaw, free choice, the punishment exceeds the crime, increased awareness, and produces catharsis.