

Antony and Cleopatra and Romeo and Juliet

Literature



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Affiliation: "Antony and Cleopatra" and "Romeo and Juliet" Question In four scenes, two from each of two plays, give examples of Shakespeare's mixture of the vulgar or common with the nice or refined

a) Antony and Cleopatra - The first scene where Shakespeare mixes vulgar with nice at the famous passage whereby he describes Cleopatra's charms of as those of which age nor custom cannot wither. The second scene also presents where he was portraying Cleopatra's sexual prowess with the political power as being a threat to the Roman politics.

b) Romeo and Juliet - The scene where Shakespeare mixes vulgar with nice as at the time the hurricane was approaching. At this stage, there is a blatant revealing vulgarity, whereby the solution is mixing modern and dialogue, which ended up creating an odd linguistic hybrid that satisfied no one. Another area of mixing vulgar with nice is evident at Act II, Scene II of the play. The line is said by Juliet while referring to Romeo's house, with remarks that there is no possible way of which a rose may be nice if it were subject to call a thistle or a skunk-cabbage.

Question 2: Betrayal takes on many meanings in Antony and Cleopatra; elaborate

There are many occasions where people cite of betrayal in the play. For example, in scene 9, at Caesar's camp, a sentry and second watch observe but unseen, Enobarbus was able to cry out grievously on his awful betrayal of Anthony. In Act II, Scene 6, there is also a prediction that Anthony will betray Octavia by the act of returning to Cleopatra. At scene 4, even though contrary to Cleopatra's wishes, Anthony wakes up early enough and starts alarming himself on the treasures that he had left behind, thus cursing himself as having betrayed Anthony. These and many other scenes justifies <https://assignbuster.com/antony-and-cleopatra-and-romeo-and-juliet/>

on the aspect of betrayal.

Question 3: What were five of Shakespeare's major additions to the original (Plutarch's) story of Antony and Cleopatra?

Most of the stories that Shakespeare narrated were not original. Rather, he was sourcing his plots and characters from various historical accounts and various classical texts. The five main sources are Giovanni Boccaccio, Arthur Brooke, Saxo Grammaticus, Raphael Holinshed, and Plutarch. He used stories from all of these sources in narrating the story of Antony and Cleopatra.

Question 4: What are four of the major themes and four of the images in Antony and Cleopatra?

The four major themes are; theme of ambivalence, theme of betrayal, theme of power dynamics, and theme of gender and cross-dressing. In the language and writings, there was image of darkness, image of desire, image of beauty, and image of love (Shakespeare 13).

Question 5: "Wherefore art thou Romeo" does not ask where Romeo is. What does it ask?

The quote is not asking where Romeo is, but it is instead the case where Juliet was lamenting Romeo's name, which was responsible for alluding to the feud taking place between the two families.

Question 6: Explain the full meaning, including puns, of "anointed," "usurped," and "Queen," as Shakespeare used the words.

"Anointed" means harming, and its puns include molesting, hurting, of injuring. "Usurped" means taking and keeping something with force or violence without the right of doing so, and its puns include seizing or holding.

"Queen" means the female ruler of the independent state, particularly one

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that inherits the position, example is Hamlet's puns.

Question 7: "Despair" was believed part of the humour, melancholy, produced by a surfeit of black bile. Anger was a surfeit of red bile. Give four examples of characters dominated by either melancholy or anger.

Anthony is subject to portray as Hercules, being the "demi-Atlas" thus signifying how he was dominated by anger. Cleopatra was also dominated by anger upon learning that Anthony was planning to leave, thus decides to play the hard to get part. Romeo plays the role of being a melancholy lover through the opening scenes of the play. Juliet's cousin, Tybalt, is another character dominated by anger, whereby his quick temper ends up turning the beautiful romance into becoming a classic tragedy.

Question 8: Why does Mercutio kill Tybalt - a combination of what factors?

An enraged Romeo declares that the love he has for Juliet has changed him into becoming effeminate, and thus justifying the reason why he failed to engage in a fight with Tybalt in Mercutio's place. However, by turn of events, Tybalt storms back to the scene while still angry, prompting Romeo into drawing his sword. Through this fight, Romeo ends up killing Tybalt.

Question 9: State a use of the upper stage in each of the plays read. Is the scene using it the most dramatic scene in that play? If not, what happens in the most dramatic scene?

In "Antony and Cleopatra," there is use of upper stage through several scenes as music is played for long stretches of dialogue to create a cinematic feel. For example at the end of first half, upper stage is visible where a paternal Caesar comforts Octavia after upon Anthony leaving her for Cleopatra. The scene projects on the play's unity while it enunciates the cast's unswerving dedication towards individual characters, being the most
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dramatic scene in the play. In "Romeo and Juliet," there is use of upper stage in a number of scenes. For example, upper stage was in use for presentation on the upbringing, playing the Potion scene, and for the Lamentation part, which happens to be the most dramatic scenes in the play.

Question 10: What are five of Shakespeare's devices for making a character seem (1) noble or (2) ignoble? Does he ever use a humorous situation for the latter? Does the same character ever become noble after acting ignoble way earlier in a play?

At first, Shakespeare makes a character to appear noble or ignoble through the themes and techniques. In "Romeo and Juliet," he used the theme of power of lover to create a noble character. He also uses a humorous situation to the latter as a way of depicting the ideal message of the play (Shakespeare & Levenson 67). The same character may become noble after acting ignoble earlier basing on the setting and the context of the scene that he creates in the play. The second device that Shakespeare uses young boys in playing female characters in his plays, which is a trick that he uses in turning gender ambiguity to be a technique. The third technique is dressing women as men as a way of creating a misunderstanding theme. The fourth device is lists and ladders, whereby he employs this to his characters for intensifying an idea or a feeling. The last device is creating a mood and atmosphere with aid of sounds of the spoken words in creating sceneries of his plays.

Question 11: Comment on these speeches as they pertain to their play.

Explain fully any metaphor or allusion as well.

a). Clown: Look you, the worm is not to be trusted but in the keeping of wise

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people, for indeed there is no goodness in the worm.”

In this speech, the message is that it is impossible to tell on any significance of another person that behaves badly if one is not wise enough. Therefore, one needs to have wisdom to be able to tell on anything good from an individual, especially one that portrays bad character.

b). If I profane with this unworsted hand This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this: My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

It is the most famous passage in the play. Romeo uses these pickup lines to smoothen the environment and reach the heart of a woman, while there is a metaphor where Romeo refers to his lips as being two “pilgrims” would engage in worshipping a holy “shrine,” referring to Juliet’s lips.

Works Cited

Shakespeare, William, and Jill L. Levenson. *Romeo and Juliet*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Print.

Shakespeare, William. *Antony and Cleopatra*. Auckland, N. Z.: Floating Press, 2010. Internet resource.