

An Archetypal Media Piece

The following assignment is designed to help students understand the universality of Shakespeare’s themes, and character and situational archetypes.

**Universal themes** are thematic statements that transcend a specific work, and apply to all peoples and cultures in all eras. Shakespeare’s plays are still studied in high schools because of their universal applications.

Some universal themes found in *Romeo and Juliet* include:

* Action vs apathy
* Beauty
* The coming of age
* Family
* Fate
* Tragic heroes
* Innocence
* Justice
* Love
* Loyalty
* Parent-child relationships
* Obligation
* Quest for knowledge
* Religion
* Secrecy seizing the moment (carpe diem)

Here is a [**Universal Theme Development Worksheet**](http://www.weebly.com/uploads/5/5/7/8/5578009/universal_theme_analysis.doc) for your future reference.

Universal themes are dependent on archetypes. **Archetypes** are stock characters (roles that characters play) or situations that are commonly found in literature from any era or culture. The use of archetypical characters and situations gives a literary work a universal acceptance, as readers identify the characters and situations in their social and cultural context.

Some basic archetypes found in *Romeo and Juliet* include:

**Stock Characters:**

* The tragic hero
* The mother figure
* The father figure
* The old sage / mentor
* The innocent youth
* The villain**Archetypal Situations:**
* The journey
* The initiation
* Good versus evil
* The fall

For more extensive lists of archetypes and stock characters, simply search these terms on the internet.

**Assignment:**

You and a partner are to create a media piece that demonstrates the character relationships in both the Montague and Capulet families. Begin by using the chart below to identify each character’s archetype. Then, find a comparable modern character that also fits this archetype. Then, use the image of the modern character to depict the relationships in the Montague and Capulet families. Review the exemplars in the classroom to get the ball rolling.

Then, **individually**, you are to write an informational paragraph that explains how both characters fit this archetypal role. Both the media piece and the informational paragraph are due on the same date.

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| **R&J Character** | **Archetype Description** | **Modern Character** |
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**Evaluation:**

**Names: Total: /20**

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| **Archetypal Media Piece** | **R** | **Lv 1** | **Lv 2** | **Lv 3** | **Lv 4** |
| **Knowledge**:Understanding of archetypal rolesApplicability of modern representations |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Inquiry**:Correct relations of *Romeo & Juliet* characters |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Communication**:Grammar and mechanicsClear visual layout |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Application**:Overall impressions and use of media conventions |  |  |  |  |  |

Comments:

**Name: Total: /20**

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|  **Informational Paragraph Criteria**  | **R** | **Lv 1** | **Lv 2** | **Lv 3** | **Lv 4** |
| **Knowledge**:Understanding of archetypal rolesDepth of analysis of characters & archetypes |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Inquiry**:Provides textual references to support archetypal choicesMLA formatting for parenthetical references |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Communication**:Writing style, formality, grammar and mechanics |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Application**:MLA formatting |  |  |  |  |  |

Comments:

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**Name: Total: /20**

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Comments: