

Much Ado With Thoughts, Words, and Deeds

Character Motivation and Theme

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Grade Level	9th Grade	**Time Frame**	4–5 class periods
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	155–200 minutes

Essential Question

How do characters and their motivations influence thematic aspects of a text?

Summary

In this lesson, students will explore character motivation in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" and make connections to theme topics. Students will use this to create theme statements with supporting evidence. They synthesize their learning by creating a visual Theme One-Pager that explains the connection between the character's actions and the play's larger meaning. This lesson is adaptable to fit any act from the play.

Snapshot

Engage

Students make connections between a series of quotes and the ideas of love, hate, peace, and free will.

Explore

Students investigate how the thoughts, words, and deeds of their character from *Romeo and Juliet* connect to the ideas of love, hate, peace, and free will.

Explain

Students formalize their understanding of and the difference between theme topics and theme statements.

Extend

Students apply what they have learned to create a Concept One-Pager.

Evaluate

Students justify that their supporting quotes are evidence for their theme statements.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR401: Locate important details in somewhat challenging passages

Oklahoma Academic Standards English Language Arts Vertical Progressions, Grades 6–12 (6th-12th)

9-12.3.R.3: Students will evaluate how literary elements impact theme, mood, and/or tone, using textual evidence: 1) setting; 2) plot structure (e.g., foreshadowing, flashback, in media res); 3) conflict (i.e., internal, external); 4) characters (e.g., protagonist, antagonist); 5) characterization (i.e., direct, indirect); 6) point of view (e.g., narrator reliability); 7) archetypes
9-12.7.W: Students will create engaging multimodal content that intentionally enhances understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence for diverse audiences.

Attachments

- Four Corners—Much Ado With Thoughts, Words, and Deeds.docx
- Four Corners—Much Ado With Thoughts, Words, and Deeds.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Much Ado With Thoughts, Words, and Deeds.pptx
- Planning Guide—Much Ado With Thoughts, Words, and Deeds.docx
- Planning Guide—Much Ado With Thoughts, Words, and Deeds.pdf
- Theme—Much Ado With Thoughts, Words, and Deeds.docx
- Theme—Much Ado With Thoughts, Words, and Deeds.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Planning Guide document (attached)
- Four Corners signs (attached; one set per classroom; print one-sided)
- Theme handout (attached; one per student; print two-sided)
- Large pieces of paper (butcher, chart, legal, etc.; one per group)
- Pens or pencils
- Highlighters (optional)
- Markers and colored pencils
- Notebook paper

Preparation

This lesson is designed to be used with any of the five acts from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Before teaching this lesson, decide which act you would like to be the focus for this lesson, then use the attached **Planning Guide** document to prepare the specifics of the lesson.

During this lesson, students are expected to highlight the text. Before the lesson, decide if you would prefer this to be done digitally using a tech tool like mySHakespeare or if you would like to print the text, make copies, and have students use physical highlighters. If that is the case, consider going to the Folger Shakespeare Library (folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/download/) to download the PDF or other file version of the play and print the act you want the students to read for this lesson. This lesson is written using the myShakespeare tech tool.

Prior to beginning the lesson, print the attached **Four Corners** signs. Hang the four signs around the room with space for students to gather around each one. If space is a concern, consider hanging the signs in the hallway.

During the Engage phase of the lesson, students will walk to one of the Four Corners signs based on the quote shown on the slide. There are eight quotes, each on their own slide. Before beginning the lesson, select four of the quotes to show. Hide and unhide **slides 6–13** as needed.

- **Slide 6 (free will):** "It is our actions that show who we truly are," from *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*.
- **Slide 7 (hate):** "You took everything from me!" from *Avengers: Endgame*.
- **Slide 8 (free will):** "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us," from *The Fellowship of the Ring*.
- **Slide 9 (love):** "Ohana means family. Family means nobody gets left behind or forgotten," from *Lilo & Stitch*.
- **Slide 10 (peace):** Benvolio from Act 1, Scene 1 of *Romeo and Juliet*, "Part, fools, put up your swords…"
- **Slide 11 (love):** Juliet from Act 2, Scene 2 of *Romeo and Juliet*, "O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art…"
- **Slide 12 (hate):** Tybalt from Act 1, Scene 1 of *Romeo and Juliet*, "What, drawn and talk of peace! I hate…"
- **Slide 14 (love):** Romeo from Act 2, Scene 2 of *Romeo and Juliet*, "She speaks. O, speak again, bright angel…"

15 minutes

Engage

Introduce the lesson using the attached **Lesson Slides**. Share the essential question on **slide 3** and then the learning objectives on **slide 4**. Review each of these with your class to the extent you feel necessary.

Show **slide 5** and introduce the Four Corners strategy. Point out the four ideas hung around the room on the signs: *love*, *hate*, *peace*, and *free will*. Preview the activity by explaining to students that they will see a quote on the slide, and they are to move to the sign that they feel the quote best connects to. Once they are in their groups, they are to discuss why they made their choice and elect a spokesperson to later share their thoughts with the class.

Then, transition through **slides 6–13**, pausing on each unhidden slide with a quote and giving students time to move to the sign that they believe best connects to the quote, discuss, and share their groups' reasoning with the class.

65 minutes

Explore

Have students get into groups of 3–4 or assign groups. Direct students to move their desks to create a large work surface. Give each group a large piece of paper (butcher paper, chart paper, legal paper, etc.), and make sure each student has a writing utensil. If desk space is a concern, students could hang their paper on the wall and work standing up.

Display **slide 14** and assign each group one of the four concepts from the previous activity: *love*, *hate*, *peace*, or *free will*. Have a member of the group write that concept in the middle of their paper.

Show **slide 15** and direct all group members to write on their groups' paper their responses to the following prompt: *What could a character do, say, or think that would show they are motivated by your assigned idea?* Allow students to record their responses however they would like. This may look messy or organized, but allow students to make this decision on their own. Tell students they have three minutes to complete this task, then start the 3-minute timer on the slide.

When the timer expires, display **slide 16** and introduce the Chalk Talk strategy. Explain that they are not allowed to talk with each other but instead are to use writing (or drawing) to communicate. Direct students to read what their group members wrote and respond to them (on the paper) silently. Responses can include words, sentences, pictures, etc., and they should use arrows, circles, stars, etc. to respond to their group members' ideas. Tell students they have 3 minutes to complete this task, then start the 3-minute timer on the slide.

When the timer expires, move to **slide 17**. Ask groups to choose a spokesperson, and then have groups take turns sharing what they came up with.

Digital Option

Instead of using pencil and paper, consider using a tech tool like K20 Jam or Canva as a place for students to complete their Chalk Talk activity. Try to use a tool that your students are familiar with to minimize time spent learning the tool.

Next, show **slide 18** and introduce the Why-Lighting strategy. Assign each student a character and tell students that they are to focus on their assigned character as they read their assigned act. Refer to the **Planning Guide** document for a list of which characters are available to assign based on the selected act.

Explain to students that as they read, they are to highlight thoughts, words, or deeds of their assigned character that connect to love, hate, peace, or free will. Then they need to write why they highlighted the text they did by making note of which idea (love, hate, peace, or free will) their character's action connects to. Direct students to highlight at least five examples.

Move to **slide 19** and have students go to myShakespeare.com and sign in. Have them find their assigned reading by selecting the "Play Menu" tab at the top of their browser. To digitally highlight, students need to use their cursor to highlight (to select) the desired text, then select the note icon that will display just above that text.

Then display **slide 20** to show students an example of the task. Use this slide to point out to students that they can select the highlight color, add a tag (for the idea), and type longer notes for themselves. Explain to students that they will be later using what they highlighted, so it is important that they create helpful annotations now.

Show **slide 21**, which has the same information as slide 18. Leave this visible while students read for them to use as a reminder of their task. This may take multiple class periods, depending on the length of the act.

20 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note: Theme

The word *theme* is often used in multiple ways. Help students understand your expectations by using *theme topic* and *theme statement* when asking them to complete a task to ensure they are responding in the way you are expecting. For more guidance on explaining the differences, use LitCharts.

Once students have completed their Why-Lighting activity, display **slide 22** and ask, "What did you learn from your character's thoughts, words, and deeds?" Use the prompts on the slide to facilitate a discussion about how those actions tell the reader about the character, the plot, and the meaning of the story.

Once you have gotten several responses, explain that one of the big things that characters' thoughts, words, and deeds can reveal is *meaning*. Move to **slide 23** and tell students that there are specific terms to use when discussing meaning in a story. Give each student a copy of the attached **Theme** handout for them to take notes from the slide with. Use this slide to explain the difference between *theme topics* and *theme statements*. Then, transition to **slide 24** to give examples of each.

Show **slide 25** and have students consider what previously has been referred to as "ideas" (love, hate, peace, and free will) now as theme topics and ask: "What do your character's thoughts, words, and deeds reveal about those theme topics?" Prompt students to think about which of those theme topics was most important for their character, as they will use that to write their theme statement.

Display **slide 26** and use the prompts on the screen to guide students to the "Example" section of their handout, where they are to write their character's name and circle the one theme topic that they believe was the most important to their character. Move to **slide 27** and have students write their theme statement with two supporting quotes. Remind students to use their Why-Lighting from the reading to help them find support for their theme statement.

Teacher's Note: myShakespeare

For students to quickly find what they highlighted when logged into myShakespeare.com, have students select the "Notebook" option, which is in the toolbar at the top of their browser. From there, they may need to select the play *Romeo and Juliet* and may want to select the act from their assigned reading, to filter their results. If they made any adjustments, selecting the "Apply" button will update the list of results. Selecting the "Expand All" option shows the details of each digital highlight the student made.

Students could filter further by selecting the highlight color(s), typing a word they used for a tag (love, hate, peace, free will), etc., and then reselecting the "Apply" button.

40 minutes

Extend

Show **slide 28** and direct students' attention to the back of their Theme handout. Introduce the Concept One-Pager strategy and tell students that they are going to create a Theme One-Pager. Use the slide and directions on their handout to let students know what their Theme One-Pager needs to include. Let students know how much detail you want for the illustrations and design (in color, etc.). Once students understand the task, direct them to use notebook paper to plan their creation. Give students at least 5 minutes to plan, have students show you their plan, and then provide them with blank paper and coloring utensils.

Give students at least 30 minutes to create their Theme One-Pager.

15 minutes

Evaluate

Once students have finished their Theme One-Pagers, display **slide 29**. Direct students to write an explanation for why their quote supports their theme statement on the back of their Theme One-Pager. Direct students to write three sentences explaining this for each of their two supporting quotes.

Give students at least 10 minutes to write their explanations, and then have students turn in their completed Theme One-Pagers.

Optional Addition

Consider displaying students' Theme One-Pagers and having them complete a Gallery Walk. If you have multiple classes completing this lesson, consider grouping students' work by character. For example, you could have one wall with everyone's work for Juliet, and another wall with everyone's work for Romeo. Having examples across class periods would give students more to compare and learn from.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Canva. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/612
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Chalk talk. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/197
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Concept one-pager. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/5374
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Four corners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/138
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gallery walk. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/118
- K20 Center. (n.d.). K20 jam. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/4457
- K20 Center. (n.d.). myShakespeare. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/5304
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Why-lighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/128
- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). *K20 Center 3 minute timer* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iISP02KPau0
- LitCharts. (n.d.). *Theme Definition*. LitCharts. https://www.litcharts.com/literary-devices-and-terms/theme
- Shakespeare, W. (n.d.). *Romeo and Juliet* [PDF]. Folger Shakespeare Library. https://folger-main-site-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/2022/11/romeo-and-juliet_PDF_FolgerShakespeare.pdf