CAPITOLO

12

Love and Laughter: Romeo and Juliet and the Comedies

"If music be the food of love, play on." — William Shakespeare, Twelfth Night, I.1

OBIETTIVI

1. I can explain why Shakespeare set so many plays in Italy and how Italian *novelle* reached the English stage.
2. I can tell the story of *Romeo and Juliet* and analyse its Prologue and the balcony scene (fate, haste, light and dark, dramatic irony).
3. I can describe the structure and the devices of Shakespearean comedy and analyse a dialogue of wit from *Much Ado About Nothing*.
4. I can talk about habits and typical behaviour with *will / would*, *always* + continuous, *tend to*, *be used to* and *get used to*.
5. I can give advice, respond to problems and write an email of advice in the right register.
6. I can compare Shakespeare's play with Luigi da Porto's novella and separate history from legend in Verona.

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Two teenagers fall in love at a party, discover that their families are enemies, marry in secret and are dead within a few days. More than four hundred years after it was written, *Romeo and Juliet* is still the most famous love story in the world, and it is set in an Italian city, Verona. In the same years Shakespeare wrote a series of comedies, many of them also set in Italy or in an imaginary south, in which lovers get lost in woods and disguises and end, after much confusion, in marriage.

This chapter asks why Shakespeare set so many plays in Italy and how Italian stories reached him. You read the Prologue and two passages of the balcony scene of *Romeo and Juliet* and a "merry war" of words from *Much Ado About Nothing*. In the Language section you learn to talk about **habits and typical behaviour**, including *be used to* and *get used to*; in Skills you follow Giulia's class on the first two days of its trip to England, give advice and write an email of advice. Finally you go back to the Italian source of the story, Luigi da Porto, and to Verona.

12.1 History and Society: Shakespeare's Italy

In chapter 11 you followed Shakespeare from Stratford to London. This chapter looks at the plays he wrote in the middle of the 1590s, when he was in his early thirties and wrote for the Lord Chamberlain's Men. Figura 12.1 shows the period, from the first Italian version of the story of Romeo and Juliet to the First Folio.

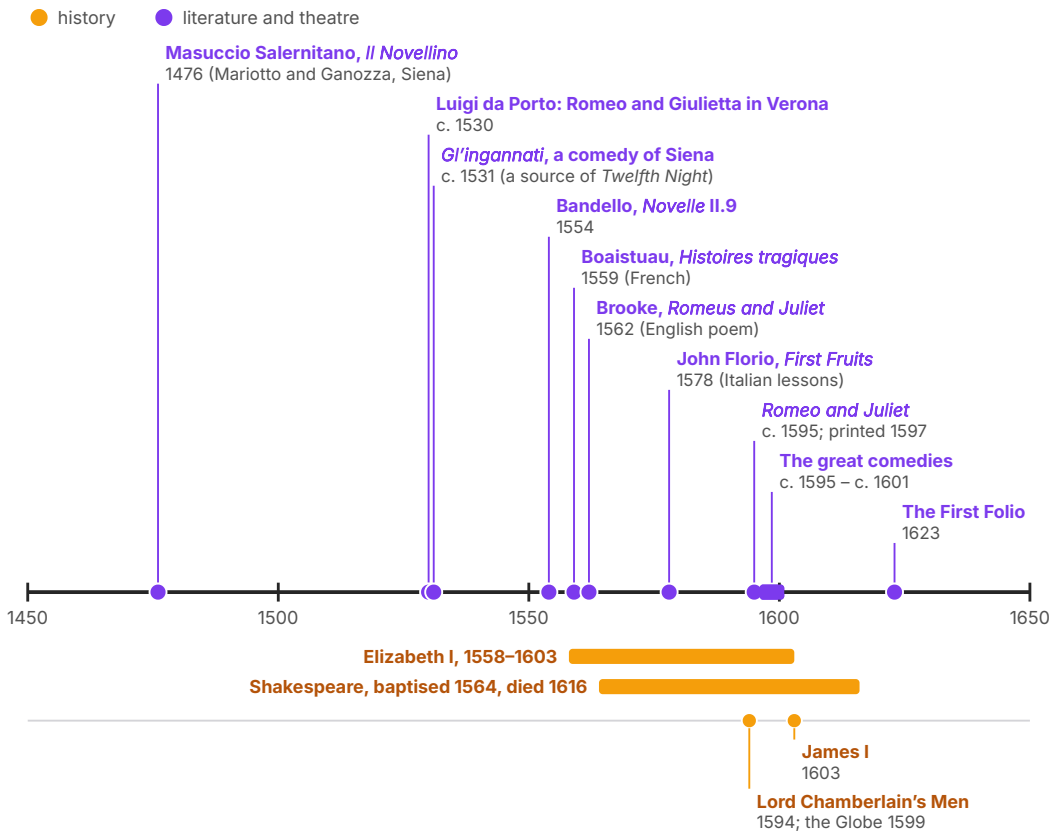


Figura 12.1 From the Italian *novelle* to Shakespeare's comedies, 1450–1650 (proportional time axis, ticks every 50 years). Amber: history; violet: literature and theatre. Bars show periods; "c." dates are approximate.

12.1.1 Italy on the English stage

About a dozen of Shakespeare's plays are set, wholly or partly, in Italy, ancient or modern. Some are set in Rome, in the time of the Romans (*Julius Caesar*, chapter 13). Many others take place in the Italy of his own century: Verona in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Romeo and Juliet*, Padua in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Venice in *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*, Messina in *Much Ado About Nothing*. There is no evidence that Shakespeare ever travelled to Italy, and scholars still discuss how much he knew about the country. His Italian cities have few precise local details — Verona's Roman Arena, for example, is never mentioned in *Romeo and Juliet*: his Italy is above all a place in the imagination of his audience.

What did that audience imagine? Italy was rich, elegant and learned, the home of the Renaissance; it was also, for many English Protestants, the home of the Pope and of dangerous passions — love, jealousy, revenge and poison. Distance made a story more exciting, and also safer: the faults on stage belonged to foreigners.

12.1.2 The prestige of Italian culture

For an educated Elizabethan, Italy was the model to imitate. English poets learned the sonnet from Petrarch (chapter 9); English gentlemen learned manners from Castiglione's *Cortegiano*, translated by Thomas Hoby in 1561 (chapter 8); young noblemen travelled to Venice, Padua and Florence. Even the fashionable way of fighting with a sword was Italian. In *Romeo and Juliet* Mercutio laughs at Tybalt, who fights by the book with Italian terms: "ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso!" (II.4).

Not everyone approved. In *The Scholemaster* (printed 1570) the humanist Roger Ascham, who had been tutor to the young Elizabeth, warned against sending young Englishmen to Italy, and quoted what he called an Italian proverb: «*Englese Italianato, e vn diabolo incarnato*» — an Italianised Englishman is a devil in human form. Admiration and suspicion lived side by side, and Shakespeare's Italian plays use both.

12.1.3 Stories, translators and teachers

Italy also gave the English theatre its plots. Renaissance Italy produced many collections of **novelle** (singular *novella*): short prose tales of love, tricks and revenge, in the tradition of Boccaccio's *Decameron* (chapter 6). Masuccio Salernitano's *Novellino* (1476), Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* (1554–1573) and Giovanni Battista Giraldi Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* (1565, chapter 14) were read across Europe, often in French translations. English writers translated them in turn: Arthur Brooke turned Bandello's story of Romeo and Juliet, through a French version, into an English poem (1562), and William Painter collected dozens of Italian tales in prose in *The Palace of Pleasure* (1566–67). Dramatists looked in these books for stories, and Shakespeare used *novelle* for *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and later *Othello*.

Some Italians lived in London. The most famous teacher of Italian was **John Florio** (1553–1625), the son of an Italian Protestant who had fled to England. He published two books of Italian lessons in dialogue form, *First Fruits* (1578) and *Second Fruits* (1591), an Italian–English dictionary, *A World of Words* (1598), and later an English translation of Montaigne's *Essays* (1603). Florio shows that a Londoner who wanted to learn Italian could find books and teachers; we do not know whether Shakespeare was one of them.

12.1.4 Comedy and the festive year

The Elizabethan year was marked by holidays, many of them older than the Reformation. The twelve days of Christmas ended on **Twelfth Night**, the eve of the Epiphany, with feasts, games and plays; in great houses and colleges a "Lord of Misrule" was chosen to turn order upside down for a few days. Spring brought **May Day**, when young people went into the woods at dawn to gather flowers; **Midsummer Eve** (23 June) was a night of bonfires and, people said, of magic. The playing companies performed at court in the Christmas season, and comedies were part of the celebrations.

Shakespeare's comedies remember this calendar in their titles and their stories. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the duke finds the young lovers asleep in the wood and supposes that "they rose up early to observe / The rite of May" (IV.1). *Twelfth Night, or What You Will* takes its name from the last night of Christmas; a law student recorded a performance of it in the hall of the Middle Temple in London on 2 February 1602. A modern critic, C. L. Barber, called these plays "festive comedies": like a holiday, they suspend the normal rules for a time, and then send everybody back to ordinary life a little changed. Not everybody enjoyed holidays and plays: the Puritans, as you saw in chapter 10, attacked both.

DA RICORDARE

Shakespeare's Italy = about a dozen plays set in Italy (Verona, Padua, Venice, Messina, Rome). **Why?** The prestige of Italian culture (Petrarch, Castiglione, fashion, fencing), the attraction of a distant, passionate south, and the Italian *novelle*, read in French and English translations (Painter 1566–67, Brooke 1562). **But**: no evidence that Shakespeare ever went to Italy.

12.2 Literature: *Romeo and Juliet* and the Comedies

12.2.1 *Romeo and Juliet*

Romeo and Juliet was probably written around 1595 and was first printed in 1597, in a short and imperfect quarto; a fuller and better text followed in 1599. It is an early tragedy, written in the same years as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and it shares a lot with the comedies: young lovers, a witty friend, a talkative Nurse, jokes and wordplay. For two acts it could almost be a comedy. Then, in the middle of the third act, Mercutio dies cursing both families — "A plague o' both your houses!" (III.1) — and the play changes direction.

The plot. In Verona two noble families, the Montagues and the Capulets, are enemies; after a street fight the Prince threatens death to anyone who disturbs the peace again. Romeo, a young Montague, goes uninvited to a feast at the Capulets' house and falls in love with Juliet, the only daughter of the family, who is not yet fourteen. That night, under her window, they promise to marry, and the next day Friar Laurence marries them in secret, hoping to end the feud. A few hours later Juliet's cousin Tybalt kills Romeo's friend Mercutio, and Romeo kills Tybalt. Romeo is banished to Mantua, while Juliet's father, who knows nothing, decides that she will marry Count Paris. The Friar gives Juliet a potion that will make her seem dead, and sends a letter to tell Romeo. The letter never arrives. Romeo hears that Juliet is dead, buys poison and goes to her tomb, where he kills Paris and then himself. Juliet wakes, finds Romeo dead and stabs herself with his dagger. Over their bodies the two fathers make peace. The characters and their relationships are in Figura 12.2.

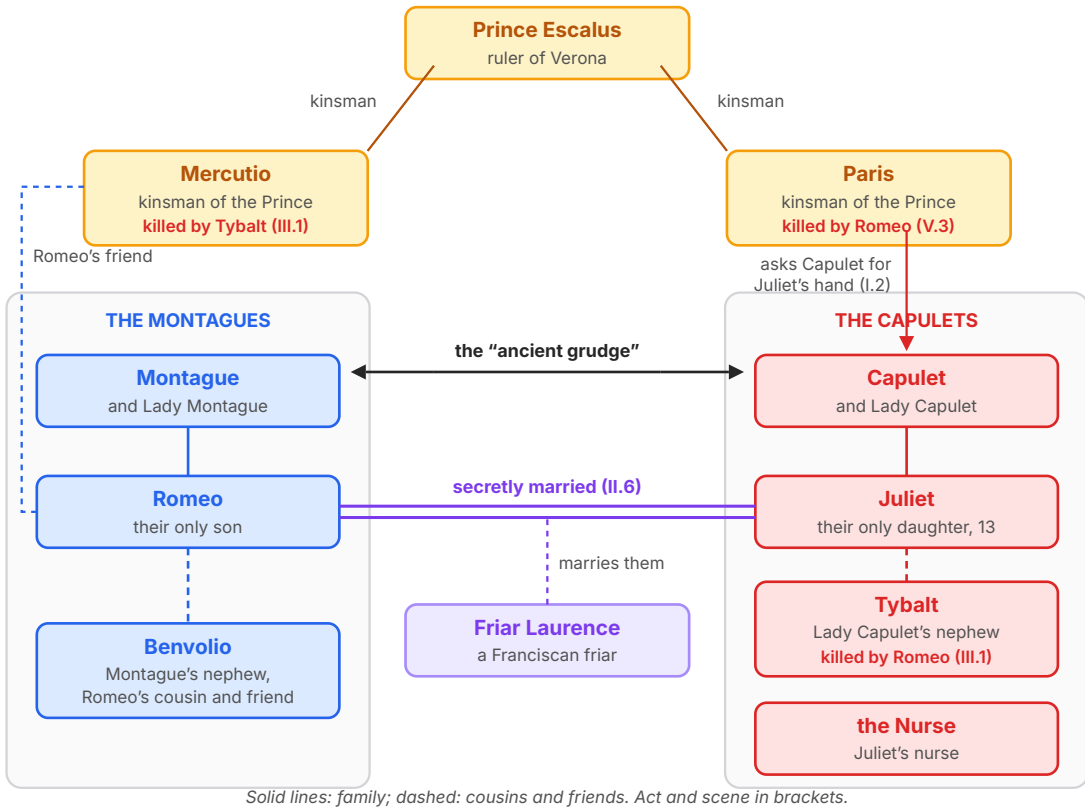


Figura 12.2 The main characters of *Romeo and Juliet*. Every relationship shown is stated in the play: Benvolio is called "nephew" by Montague (I.1), Tybalt is Lady Capulet's "brother's child" (III.1), and the Prince calls Mercutio and Paris "a brace of kinsmen" (V.3).

The Prologue. Before the action begins, the Chorus (chapter 10) speaks a **prologue** (Italian *prologo*): an introduction addressed to the audience. Shakespeare writes it as an English sonnet (chapter 9), the form of love poetry, and in fourteen lines he tells the whole story, ending included. From the start the audience knows that the lovers will die. Everything that follows is seen with this knowledge: when Romeo hopes, when the Friar makes his plan, when Juliet drinks the potion, we know more than they do. This is **dramatic irony** (Italian *ironia drammatica*): the audience knows something that a character does not, and the character's words take a second, often painful meaning. Irony in general was introduced in chapter 6; dramatic irony is the form it takes in the theatre.

Fate and haste. The Prologue calls Romeo and Juliet "a pair of **star-cross'd** lovers": their stars, which in the astrology of the time ruled a person's life, are against them. When he hears that Juliet is dead, Romeo cries "then I defy you, stars!" (V.1). Yet the tragedy also grows out of human choices, above all speed. Everybody in the play is in a hurry: the lovers marry the day

after they meet, Capulet moves Juliet's wedding forward by a day, Romeo buys poison at once. "Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast", the Friar warns (II.3); Juliet herself feels that their love is "too rash, too unadvised, too sudden" (II.2). The story, which in the sources lasts months, takes about four days on Shakespeare's stage (Figura 12.3).

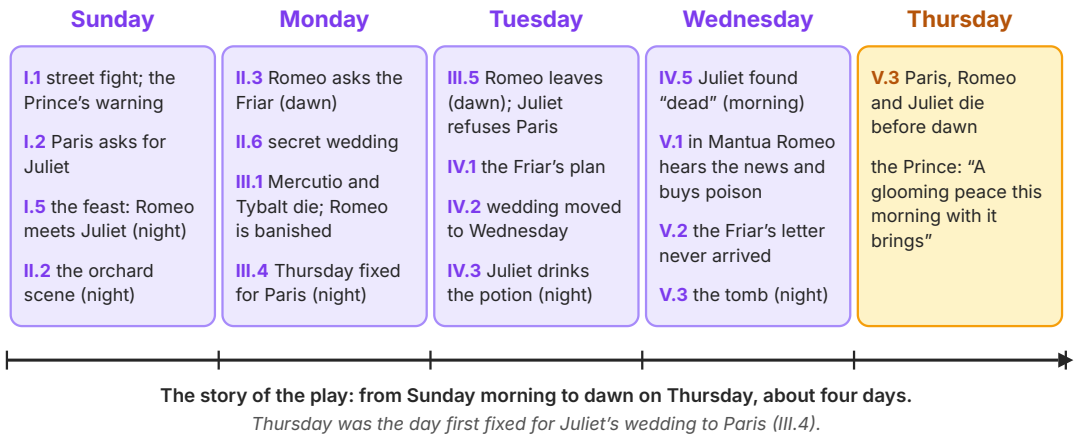


Figura 12.3 The days of *Romeo and Juliet*, act by act. Our reading of the time references in the text: Capulet's "Monday" and "Thursday" (III.4), the Friar's "Wednesday is to-morrow" (IV.1), Capulet's "we'll to church to-morrow" (IV.2). Scenes not shown take place between those listed.

Love and hate, light and dark. The play is built on opposites. Juliet sums them up when she learns who Romeo is: "My only love sprung from my only hate!" (I.5). At the start Romeo, still in love with a girl called Rosaline, speaks in Petrarchan paradoxes (chapter 9): "O brawling love! O loving hate!" (I.1). The images of **light and darkness** run through the whole play: for Romeo Juliet is the sun, a torch, a bright angel; the lovers meet at night and must part at dawn; and on the morning after their wedding night Romeo says: "More light and light; more dark and dark our woes!" (III.5).

12.2.2 The comedies

In Shakespeare's time a **comedy** was not simply a funny play: it was a play that moved from trouble to a happy ending, usually marriage. The ten or so comedies Shakespeare wrote in the 1590s and around 1600 follow a similar pattern (Figura 12.4). They begin in a world of rules, often a court or a city, where something blocks young love: a harsh law, a father's will, a misunderstanding. The lovers escape into a different place — a wood, a far-off country, a night — where the normal rules do not work, identities become uncertain and people are changed. The Canadian critic Northrop Frye called this place the **green world**. In the end the confusion is cleared up, the lovers are paired correctly, and the play closes with weddings, music and dancing: the society of the beginning is renewed.



Figura 12.4 The structure of a Shakespearean comedy, from order through confusion to marriage, in three comedies of 1595–1601. A model, not a rule: every comedy changes it.

The comedies share some favourite devices. The first is **mistaken identity** (Italian *scambio di persona*): characters are taken for someone else, often a twin. The second is **cross-dressing** (Italian *travestimento*): a young woman disguises herself as a young man, like Viola in *Twelfth Night* or Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*. With boy actors in women's parts (chapter 10), the audience saw a boy playing a girl who pretends to be a boy. The third is the **fool** (Italian *buffone, giullare*), a professional entertainer kept by a great household, like Feste in *Twelfth Night*: he is allowed to joke about everyone, and his jokes often tell the truth that others hide. Finally, there is **wit**: quick, clever language, full of **puns** (Italian *giochi di parole*), jokes based on two meanings of one word or on two words that sound alike. Even the dying Mercutio makes one: "ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man" (III.1).

Four comedies of these years are still among the most performed:

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (c. 1595): in a wood near Athens, young lovers, workmen and fairies get mixed up, thanks to Puck and a magic flower. You know it: it was the Link's production in English 2 (Unit 10), with Giulia as Helena, Marta as Puck, Sam as Peter Quince and Callum as Bottom.
- *The Merchant of Venice* (c. 1596–97): to help his friend Bassanio marry the rich Portia of Belmont, the merchant Antonio borrows money from Shylock, a Jewish moneylender, and promises a pound of his own flesh if he cannot pay. Portia, disguised as a young lawyer, saves

him in court. Shylock is defeated and humiliated, and modern audiences, aware of the history of prejudice against Jews, often find the ending disturbing.

- *Much Ado About Nothing* (c. 1598–99): in Messina, in Sicily, the young Claudio is tricked into believing that Hero, the girl he loves, is unfaithful, and shames her at the altar, while Beatrice and Benedick, who never stop insulting each other, are tricked into falling in love.
- *Twelfth Night* (c. 1601): shipwrecked in Illyria, Viola disguises herself as a young man, Cesario, and serves Duke Orsino; she loves him, while the countess Olivia loves "Cesario". Viola's twin brother, Sebastian, causes and then solves a chain of mistakes.

IN SINTESI

Shakespearean comedy at a glance. *Structure*: order → confusion ("green world") → resolution → marriage · *Devices*: mistaken identity, twins, cross-dressing, overheard conversations, tricks, a fool, wit and puns · *Settings*: often Italy or an imaginary south (Messina, Venice, Illyria, Athens) · *Endings*: weddings, music and dance — but often someone is left out (Shylock, Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*).

12.3 Texts: A Prologue, a Balcony and a Merry War

Shakespeare's texts are printed in modern spelling, from the MIT Shakespeare (the public-domain Moby edition of the Globe text); line numbers are those of that text and may differ slightly from other modern editions. Most words are the ones you know, but some have changed meaning, and the old pronouns *thou / thee / thy* (English 2, Unit 10) are common.

12.3.1 T1 · William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Prologue

Context. The Chorus speaks to the audience before Act I. The fourteen lines are a complete English sonnet.

Tabella 12.1 T1 — *Romeo and Juliet*, Prologue, ll. 1–14 (text of the MIT Shakespeare). Line numbers on the right.

Two households, both alike in dignity,	
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,	
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,	
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.	
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes	5
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;	
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows	
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.	
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,	
And the continuance of their parents' rage,	10
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,	
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;	
The which if you with patient ears attend,	
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.	

Glosses. *households*: families · *alike in dignity*: equal in rank · *lay our scene*: set our play · *ancient grudge*: old hatred · *mutiny*: violence, riot · *civil*: of citizens (and, ironically, "polite") · *fatal loins*: the bodies that gave them life, fated to bring death · *take their life*: are born (and, with a second meaning, kill themselves) · *misadventured piteous overthrows*: unlucky, pitiful ruin · *death-mark'd*: marked for death · *but*: except · *nought*: nothing · *traffic*: business · *miss*: be missing, be unclear · *toil*: work, effort · *mend*: correct.

Analysis

Form. The Prologue is an English sonnet: three quatrains and a couplet, rhyming *abab cdcd efef gg*, in iambic pentameter. Each part has a job. The first quatrain gives the setting and the conflict (two families, Verona, an old hatred that breaks out again); the second introduces the lovers and their end; the third summarises the play; the couplet, as in a real sonnet, changes tone and speaks directly to the audience, asking for patience.

Language. The vocabulary is of fate and death: *fatal, star-cross'd, misadventured, death-mark'd*. The double meanings start here. *Civil blood makes civil hands unclean* plays on *civil* (of citizens / polite): the citizens of a civilised city stain their hands with each other's blood. *Take their life* means "are born", but also "kill themselves": birth and death in the same three words. The lovers' death is presented as a sacrifice: only it can "bury their parents' strife".

1. Divide the Prologue into its four parts. What does each part tell the audience?
2. Find three words or phrases connected with fate or death. Why are they all in the first lines of the play?
3. Explain the two meanings of *civil* in line 4 and of *take their life* in line 6.
4. What will the audience see "on our stage", and for how long?
5. Why do you think Shakespeare tells the ending before the play begins? Does it make the story less or more interesting?

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

Reading the Prologue as a sonnet.

1. Write the rhyme letters: *dignity* (a) · *scene* (b) · *mutiny* (a) · *unclean* (b) · *foes* (c) · *life* (d) · *overthrows* (c) · *strife* (d) · *love* (e) · *rage* (f) · *remove* (e — an eye-rhyme to modern ears) · *stage* (f). Lines 9–12 rhyme *efef* (*love / remove*, *rage / stage*), and the couplet *attend / mend* is *gg*.
2. Mark the stresses in one line: *two HOUSE-holds, BOTH a-LIKE in DIG-ni-TY* — five beats, ten syllables; the last beat falls on a weak syllable, as often at the end of a line.
3. Find the turn: lines 1–12 speak *about* the story; the couplet speaks *to* the audience (*if you with patient ears attend*).
4. Conclusion for your notes: "The Prologue is a love sonnet that announces a death: the form promises love, the content announces tragedy. This contrast is the play in miniature."

12.3.2 T2 · William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, II.2

Context. After the feast Romeo has climbed into the Capulets' orchard. Juliet appears at a window above him (the word *balcony* never appears in the play, but the scene is known as "the balcony scene"). In the first passage Romeo watches her and speaks to himself; in the second Juliet, who does not know he is there, speaks her thoughts aloud.

Tabella 12.2 T2 — *Romeo and Juliet*, II.2, ll. 2–13 (Romeo) and 35–46 (Juliet and Romeo) (text of the MIT Shakespeare).

ROMEO	But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?	
	It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.	
	Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,	
	Who is already sick and pale with grief,	5
	That thou her maid art far more fair than she:	
	Be not her maid, since she is envious;	
	Her vestal livery is but sick and green	
	And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.	
	It is my lady, O, it is my love!	10
	O, that she knew she were!	
	She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?	
	Her eye discourses; I will answer it.	
	[…]	
JULIET	O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?	35
	Deny thy father and refuse thy name;	
	Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,	
	And I'll no longer be a Capulet.	
ROMEO	*[Aside]* Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?	
JULIET	'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;	40
	Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.	
	What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,	
	Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part	
	Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!	
	What's in a name? that which we call a rose	45
	By any other name would smell as sweet;	

Glosses. *soft*: wait, be quiet · *yonder*: that, over there · *envious*: jealous · *her maid*: a servant of the moon (Diana, goddess of the moon, protected virgins) · *vestal livery*: the uniform of a virgin ·

sick and green: pale and unhealthy · *were*: was (her love) · *discourses*: speaks · *wherefore*: why · *deny*: refuse to accept · *be but sworn*: only swear to be · *'Tis but*: it is only · *nor… nor*: neither… nor.

Analysis

Form. Both speakers use blank verse (chapter 10), but they speak in different ways. Romeo's lines are full of images: Juliet is the sun, the moon is jealous of her, her eyes speak. His first speech is a kind of **soliloquy**, since Juliet cannot hear him. Juliet's lines are simpler and more logical: she asks questions and answers them, like someone who is thinking. Romeo's single line in the middle is an **aside** (chapter 10): it reaches the audience, not Juliet.

Meaning. Romeo turns Juliet into a sun, a goddess, a star: the language of Petrarchan love poetry (chapter 9), but now addressed to a real girl at a real window. Juliet goes straight to the problem: the name. *Wherefore* means "why": she is not asking where he is, but why he has to be a Montague, the son of her family's enemy. A rose would smell just as sweet with another name; Romeo would be the same person without his. The young lovers believe that a name is only a word; the play will show that in Verona a name can kill.

> **ERRORE FREQUENTE**
> ✗ «*Wherefore art thou Romeo?* = Dove sei, Romeo?» → ✓ *Wherefore* = **perché** (*why*). Giulietta non cerca Romeo (non sa che è lì): si chiede **perché** lui debba essere proprio un Montecchi. «Dove sei?» sarebbe *Where art thou?*

1. In lines 2–9, what is Juliet compared to, and what is the moon compared to? Why is the moon "envious"?
2. Find two images of light in Romeo's speech.
3. What does Juliet ask Romeo to do in lines 36–38? What will she do if he does not?
4. Explain in your own words Juliet's argument about the rose.
5. Romeo hears Juliet, but she does not know it. What effect does this have on the audience?
6. Compare the way Romeo and Juliet speak. Who is more romantic, and who is more practical?

12.3.3 T3 · William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, I.1

Context. Don Pedro, Prince of Aragon, has come back from a war to Messina with his officers, Claudio and Benedick. Before they arrive, the governor Leonato has warned the messenger about his niece, Beatrice: "There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them" (I.1). This is their first meeting in the play. The dialogue is in prose.

Tabella 12.3 T3 — *Much Ado About Nothing*, I.1, ll. 102–128 (text of the MIT Shakespeare; prose).

BEATRICE	I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you.
BENEDICK	What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living?
BEATRICE	Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.
BENEDICK	Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.
BEATRICE	A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.
BENEDICK	God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face.
BEATRICE	Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.
BENEDICK	Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.
BEATRICE	A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.
BENEDICK	I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But keep your way, i' God's name; I have done.
BEATRICE	You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old.

Glosses. *still*: always, continually · *marks*: pays attention to · *Lady Disdain*: Lady Contempt · *yet*: still · *meet*: suitable · *convert*: change · *turncoat*: traitor · *I would*: I wish · *else*: otherwise · *pernicious suitor*: dangerous lover · *of your humour*: of your opinion · *I had rather*: I would rather · *predestinate*: certain, fated · *an 'twere*: if it were · *parrot-teacher*: someone who repeats the same words, as if teaching a parrot · *continuer*: (a horse) able to keep going · *a jade's trick*: the trick of a bad horse, which stops suddenly.

Analysis

Form. The exchange is a duel in prose: short attacks, quick replies, and each speaker picks up the other's last word and turns it against him or her. Benedick calls Beatrice *Lady Disdain*; she answers that disdain cannot die while Benedick exists to feed it. He calls her a parrot-teacher; she replies with birds and beasts. When he gives up, she has the last word.

Meaning. Beatrice and Benedick both say they will never love anyone. The audience suspects the opposite: people who talk about each other so much are not indifferent. This is the start of one of Shakespeare's favourite comic situations, two proud lovers who must be tricked into admitting their feelings. Notice also Beatrice's first and last lines: *you will still be talking* and *You*

always end with a jade's trick describe Benedick's irritating habits — exactly the language of habit you study in this chapter.

1. How does Beatrice start the conversation? Is it polite?
2. Find two examples of a speaker turning the other's word against him or her.
3. What do Beatrice and Benedick say about love? Do you believe them?
4. What is a "jade's trick", and what does Beatrice mean by it?
5. Beatrice is a woman of the 1590s. In what ways is she surprisingly modern?

LEARNING TO LEARN

Reading a whole play. A play is long and has many characters: organise your reading. (1) **Character map**: before Act I, draw the families and groups as boxes, like Figura 12.2; add each relationship as you discover it. (2) **Scene-by-scene summary**: after each scene, write one line — who, where, what changes (*II.6: the Friar marries R. and J. in secret*). A play with five acts and twenty scenes becomes one page. (3) **Quotations**: copy two or three short quotations per act, with act and scene, and a key word (*haste, fate, light*). Before an oral or a written test, these three pages are your revision. The method works for Italian theatre too — try it with Goldoni or Pirandello, or with a Latin comedy by Plautus.

12.4 Language: Habits and Typical Behaviour

In English 2 (Unit 2) you learned *used to* and *would* for past habits, and met *be used to* in an Approfondimento. At B2 you need more ways of describing what people **typically** do — their habits, their character, and the habits that annoy us — and you need to use *be used to* and *get used to* with confidence.

12.4.1 *Will* and *would* for typical behaviour

We use ***will* + base form** for present habits and for behaviour that is typical of a person or a thing; ***would* + base form** does the same in the past. The meaning is not future: it describes character.

Tabella 12.4 Typical behaviour: *will*, *would* and the continuous with *always*

Structure	Use	Examples
will + base form	present habits; typical behaviour	*The Nurse **will** talk for hours about Juliet's childhood. · A good fool **will** say what nobody else dares to say.*
would + base form	past habits (actions only, never states)	*When Romeo was in love with Rosaline, he **would** walk alone before dawn.*
stressed *WILL* / *WOULD*	criticism of an annoying habit	*He **WILL** leave his socks on the floor! · She **WOULD** say that — she always defends him.*
won't / *wouldn't*	refusal (people and things)	*Juliet **won't** marry Paris. · The door **wouldn't** open.*
always + present / past continuous	a habit that annoys or surprises the speaker	*Benedick **is always making** jokes about women. · Mercutio **was always teasing** Romeo.*
tend to + base form	what usually happens; a general tendency	*Shakespeare's comedies **tend to** end with weddings.*

With *always*, *constantly*, *forever* or *continually*, the continuous adds the speaker's feeling: *You're always interrupting me!* is a complaint, while *You always interrupt me* simply states a fact. Beatrice uses both kinds of habit language in T3: *I wonder that you **will** still be talking* (= you keep talking, it's typical of you) and *You **always** end with a jade's trick*.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Comportamenti tipici: *will / would* e *always* + forma progressiva. *Will* + forma base può descrivere un'abitudine o il carattere di qualcuno, senza valore di futuro: *She'll sit there for hours* = sta lì seduta per ore (è fatta così). Al passato si usa *would*, solo per azioni ripetute, mai per stati: *he would walk alone* = passeggiava da solo. Con l'accento forte (*He WILL interrupt!*) il tono è di critica.

Confronto con l'italiano. L'italiano usa il presente o l'imperfetto, spesso con *sempre* o con il verbo *stare*: *Benedick sta sempre a fare battute = Benedick is always making jokes*; *continuava a, non fa che* (*non fa che lamentarsi = he's always complaining*). In inglese la forma progressiva con *always* esprime proprio questa irritazione.

12.4.2 *Tend to*, and *used to / would* again

***Tend to* + base form** describes what is usual or typical, in the present or in the past: *Teenagers tend to sleep late*; *In Shakespeare's comedies the women tend to be cleverer than the men*. The negative is *don't tend to* or, more formally, *tend not to*: *Tragic heroes don't tend to listen to good advice*. The noun is *a tendency*. *Tend to* is very useful in essays because it makes a statement less absolute:

compare *Elizabethans hated Italy* (false) with *Elizabethan writers tended to see Italy as both a model and a danger*.

Remember the past forms from English 2: ***used to*** for past habits and states that are no longer true (*Romeo used to love Rosaline*), ***would*** for repeated past actions only (*Every morning he would walk in the sycamore grove*; ✗ *he would love Rosaline*). In the play, Romeo's father describes his son's habits with the present simple, the most neutral way: "Away from the light steals home my heavy son, / And private in his chamber pens himself" (I.1).

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

***Tend to* + forma base.** Significa «tendere a, avere l'abitudine di, di solito»: *I tend to study at night* = di solito studio di sera / tendo a studiare di sera. Negativa: *I don't tend to…* oppure *I tend not to…*. Al passato: *he tended to…*. È più neutro di *always* e attenua le generalizzazioni, come in italiano *tendenzialmente, in genere*: utilissimo nei temi e nelle risposte di letteratura.

12.4.3 *Be used to* and *get used to*

***Be used to* + -ing or noun** means that something is familiar and normal for you, so it is no longer strange or difficult. ***Get used to* + -ing or noun** describes the process of change: something strange slowly becomes normal (Figura 12.5). In both, *to* is a preposition, as in *look forward to*, so a verb after it takes *-ing*.

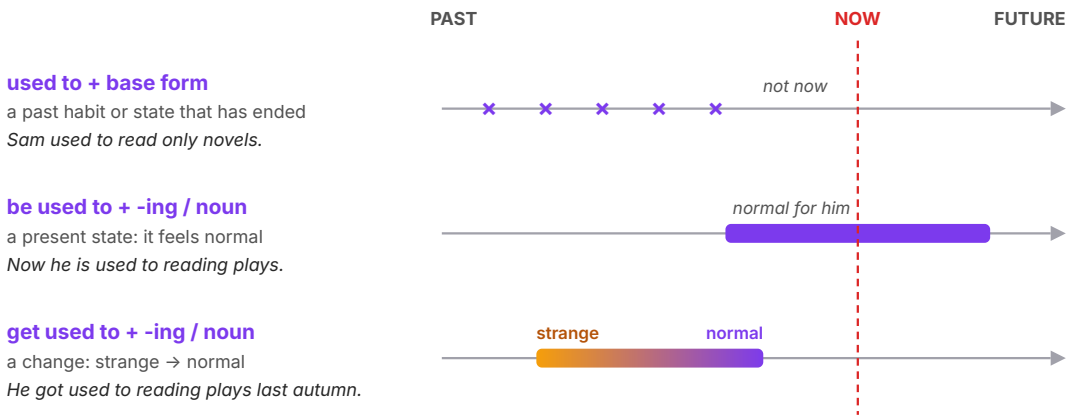


Figura 12.5 *Used to*, *be used to* and *get used to* on a time line. Crosses: repeated actions; violet bar: a state that is true now; the gradient: the change from strange (amber) to normal (violet).

- *Giulia **is used to** reading Shakespeare in English now; in September it was hard.* (present state)
- *At first the Italian students **weren't used to** having dinner at six.* (past state)
- *Juliet's parents **are used to** deciding everything for her.*
- *You'll soon **get used to** the old pronouns: thou, thee, thy.* (future change)

- *Have you **got used to** your new timetable yet?* (present perfect)
- *It took the actors weeks **to get used to** performing in the open air.* (infinitive)

Unlike *used to* + base form, which exists only in the past, *be used to* and *get used to* can be used in every tense, with modals and in the infinitive: *I'm used to it, I was used to it, I'll never get used to it, you must get used to it*.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

***Be used to / get used to* + -ing.** *Be used to* = essere abituato a (uno stato); *get used to* = abituarsi a (un cambiamento). Si usano in tutti i tempi, ma dopo *to* il verbo va in *-ing*, perché *to* qui è una preposizione: *I'm used to getting up early* = sono abituato ad alzarmi presto.

Confronto con l'italiano. Attenzione ai tre *used to*: *I used to read* = leggevo (una volta, ora non più); *I'm used to reading* = sono abituato a leggere; *I got used to reading* = mi sono abituato a leggere. In italiano solo gli ultimi due contengono il verbo *abituarsi*, e la frase con *used to* + forma base si rende con l'imperfetto.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ *I'm used to get up early.* → ✓ *I'm used to **getting** up early.* (dopo *be / get used to* il verbo va in *-ing*) · ✗ *I used to getting up early.* → ✓ *I used to **get** up early.* (abitudine passata: forma base)

✗ *I'm not used to this food yet, but I'm used to it soon.* → ✓ *...but I'll soon **get used to** it.* (il cambiamento si esprime con *get*) · ✗ *I use to read at night.* → ✓ *I usually read / I tend to read at night.*

✗ *When I was a child I would have long hair.* → ✓ *I **used to have** long hair.* (*would* solo per azioni, mai per stati) · ✗ *He is always make jokes.* → ✓ *He is always **making** jokes.*

12.5 Skills: Giving Advice

12.5.1 Vocabulary: love, conflict and family

Tabella 12.5 collects words for the relationships of *Romeo and Juliet*, which are still the relationships of every family and every school. You met *feud* in chapter 3.

Phrasal verbs of relationships

You studied separable and inseparable phrasal verbs in English 2 (Unit 12). These four describe the life of a relationship; all of them are inseparable except *ask out*:

- **ask** sb **out**: invite someone on a date (separable: *He asked her out*; ✗ *He asked out her*)
- **fall out** (with sb): stop being friends after a quarrel (*Sam fell out with his best friend over a girl.*)
- **make up** (with sb): become friends again after a quarrel (*They made up the next day.*)

- **get over** sb / sth: recover from the end of a relationship or from a bad experience (*It took Romeo less than a day to get over Rosaline.*)

Notice the pairs: you *fall out* and then *make up*; you *split up* and then, slowly, *get over* it.

Tabella 12.5 Love, conflict and family

Word	Meaning	Example
feud (n.)	a long, bitter quarrel between families or groups (chapter 3)	*The feud between the two houses is very old.*
rival (n., adj.) → *rivalry*	a person or group competing with another	*The two rival families fight in the streets.*
grudge (n.)	a feeling of anger about something that happened in the past	*Old Capulet holds a grudge against the Montagues.*
banish (v.) → *banishment*	send someone away from their country or city as a punishment	*The Prince banishes Romeo to Mantua.*
elope (v.)	run away secretly to get married	*In some versions the lovers plan to elope.*
reconcile (v.) → *reconciliation*	make two people or groups friends again	*The deaths reconcile the two families.*
fall for sb (phr. v.)	suddenly fall in love with someone	*Romeo falls for Juliet at the feast.*
split up (phr. v.)	end a romantic relationship	*They split up after two months.*

12.5.2 Reading: Two Days in Shakespeare's Country

Before you read. Have you ever visited the house of a famous writer or artist? What did you expect to see, and what did you really see? Read Giulia's trip diary on the Literature Trail blog. (testo della redazione)

The Link Blog · Literature Trail · Giulia's Trip Diary

Day 1, Monday — Bristol. After an early flight and a coach from the airport, by eleven Prof.ssa Rossi was counting us in the Hillside reception, under the eyes of Mr Evans, who will tell you every single time that he is the secretary, not a teacher. It felt very strange to be back. Two years ago I spent a whole school year here, and I used to walk through these corridors every day; now I was the guide, and Marta, Elena and the others were the confused visitors. Marta kept asking why everybody says "cheers" when they mean "thank you". She'll get used to it.

Sam and Callum had planned the afternoon: Callum had a clipboard, of course, and a timetable in fifteen-minute slots, which lasted about fifteen minutes. We walked along the harbour and up to the Clifton Suspension Bridge. In the evening I went home with Sam: I'm staying with

his family, and Lily, who is five now, had made me a card with a drawing of a rabbit that she says is Biscuit. Sam's mum warned me that Lily will talk until you fall asleep. She was right.

Day 2, Tuesday — Stratford-upon-Avon. We left at eight by coach, and the journey took about two hours. Stratford is small and very pretty, full of black-and-white houses, and full of tourists — Sam was right to suggest a weekday. Our first stop was the **Birthplace** on Henley Street, the house where Shakespeare is believed to have been born and where he grew up. His father, John, was a glove-maker, and one room is shown as his workshop. Mrs Hill pointed out that we don't know which room William was born in, or even the exact day: only the date of his baptism is recorded. "Most of what you hear in a tourist town is what people would like to be true," she said. "Your job is to ask how we know."

After lunch we walked along the river to **Holy Trinity Church**, where Shakespeare was baptised and buried. His grave is inside, near the altar, next to his wife's. The stone does not even have his name, only four lines asking us not to move his bones: "Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear / To dig the dust enclosed here…". There is a copy of the parish register with the record of his baptism. Marta, who is always looking for numbers, worked out that he died at fifty-two.

On the coach back, Prof.ssa Rossi asked us what had surprised us most. For me it was how ordinary everything was: a house, a church, a river. I had got used to thinking of Shakespeare as a monument, and today he was a boy from a market town whose father made gloves. Sam says that's the point: "He wasn't born a genius. He had to get there." Tomorrow: London. Callum has already sent us the timetable.

Language in context. Find in the diary: two sentences with *will* or *would* for typical behaviour; one with *always* + continuous; two forms of *get used to*; one past habit with *used to*. What does each one express?

12.5.3 Speaking: giving advice and responding to problems

In the play everybody gives advice: the Friar to Romeo, the Nurse to Juliet. In English the tone matters as much as the words: show that you understand first, then suggest; do not order. Tabella 12.6 collects the most useful language.

Tabella 12.6 Useful language — giving advice and responding

Function	Phrases
Showing empathy	*That sounds really hard. · I can see why you're upset. · I know how you feel. · It's not your fault.*
Giving advice (gentle)	*Have you thought about…? · Maybe you could… · It might be a good idea to… · If I were you, I'd… · Why don't you…?*
Giving advice (strong)	*You really should / ought to… · You'd better… · Whatever you do, don't… · The best thing would be to…*
Warning	*Be careful not to… · Don't rush into anything. · Think about what might happen if…*
Responding	*That's a good idea. · I hadn't thought of that. · I'm not sure that would work, because… · I've already tried that. · What would you do?*

1. **Role play: the Friar and Romeo, today.** Student A is Romeo, a seventeen-year-old who has fallen for the daughter of his family's worst enemies and wants to marry her tomorrow. Student B is the Friar, a wise school counsellor. Romeo explains the problem; the Friar shows empathy, gives advice and warns him ("Wisely and slow…"). Romeo responds to each piece of advice. Then swap: Juliet asks the Nurse what to do about the marriage her father has arranged.
2. **Problem cards.** In groups, each student writes a problem on a card (invented, not personal): *My best friend and I fell out over a stupid joke; My parents won't let me go on the school trip; I can't get used to my new school*. Mix the cards. Each student reads one and the others give advice, from gentle to strong; the reader responds and chooses the best idea.

12.5.4 Writing: an email of advice

In a B2 task you may have to answer a letter or email from a friend, or a reader of a magazine, who asks for advice. A **letter of advice** (or email) has a clear purpose: help a person with a problem. It must show empathy, give practical, realistic advice with reasons, and use the right **register**: informal for a friend (contractions, *Hi*, phrasal verbs), semi-formal for an advice column (fewer contractions, *Dear…*, more careful language). Sam's cousin Ella, who is fourteen, sent him this message: *"Zoe's mum and mine had a massive argument about the fence between our gardens, and now they won't speak to each other. Mum says I shouldn't go round to Zoe's any more. Zoe's my best friend! What do I do?"* This is Sam's reply.

Tabella 12.7 Model text — an email of advice (220 words, greeting and close excluded)

Subject: Re: help!!
Hi Ella,
Thanks for telling me — I'm really sorry. It must be horrible to be caught in the middle of an argument that isn't yours. And no, before you ask, you're not Juliet, and Zoe's mum is not a Capulet!
First of all, don't panic. Grown-ups tend to say things in the heat of the moment that they don't really mean. I'd give it a few days: in my experience, people who fall out over a fence usually make up as soon as one of them needs to borrow a ladder.
In the meantime, there's no reason why you and Zoe can't stay friends. You could meet at school or at the park. Whatever you do, don't take sides or carry messages between the two mums — that never ends well.
Have you thought about talking to your mum calmly, when she isn't angry? If I were you, I'd tell her how much Zoe means to you and ask whether she really wants the argument to spoil your friendship. Parents tend to listen when you're reasonable, not when you slam doors (I speak from experience).
Finally, be patient. It might take a while for things to get back to normal, but the two of them will get used to being neighbours again.
Let me know how it goes, and say hi to Max!
Love, Sam

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

Analysing the model.

- **Opening**: thanks and **empathy** first (*I'm really sorry. It must be horrible…*), plus a light joke that links to the problem without making fun of it.
- **Paragraph 2**: calm her down, with a reason (*Grown-ups tend to say things…*).
- **Paragraphs 3–4**: the practical advice, from gentle to strong — *You could…*, *Whatever you do, don't…*, *Have you thought about…?*, *If I were you, I'd…* — each with a reason.
- **Paragraph 5**: a realistic, positive ending (*be patient… you'll see*).
- **Register**: informal — contractions, phrasal verbs (*fall out, make up, get back to*), dashes and brackets, *Hi* and *Love*; the language of habit (*tend to, get used to*) makes the advice sound general and less personal.
- **Close**: an invitation to reply (*Let me know how it goes*).

Checklist. ✓ a greeting and a reference to the problem · ✓ empathy before advice · ✓ at least three pieces of advice, with reasons · ✓ a range of advice language, gentle and strong · ✓ a warning · ✓ a positive close and an invitation to reply · ✓ a consistent register · ✓ 180–220 words.

Task. Write an email of advice (180–220 words). Choose: a) your friend writes: *"My parents want me to study medicine like my sister, but I want to study drama. They say acting is not a real job. What should I do?"* (informal); b) a reader of the Literature Trail blog writes: *"I have just moved to a new city and a new school, and I can't get used to it. Everyone already has their friends."* (semi-formal reply for the blog). *Research:* the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust publishes images of documents from Shakespeare's Stratford on its website. Find the record of Shakespeare's baptism and say who published the page and what the document is; one detail can open your email in an original way.

12.6 Connections: Verona, from Da Porto to Shakespeare

Shakespeare did not invent the story of Romeo and Juliet. It came to him from Italy, through a chain of retellings that Figura 12.6 follows from Masuccio Salernitano to Arthur Brooke.

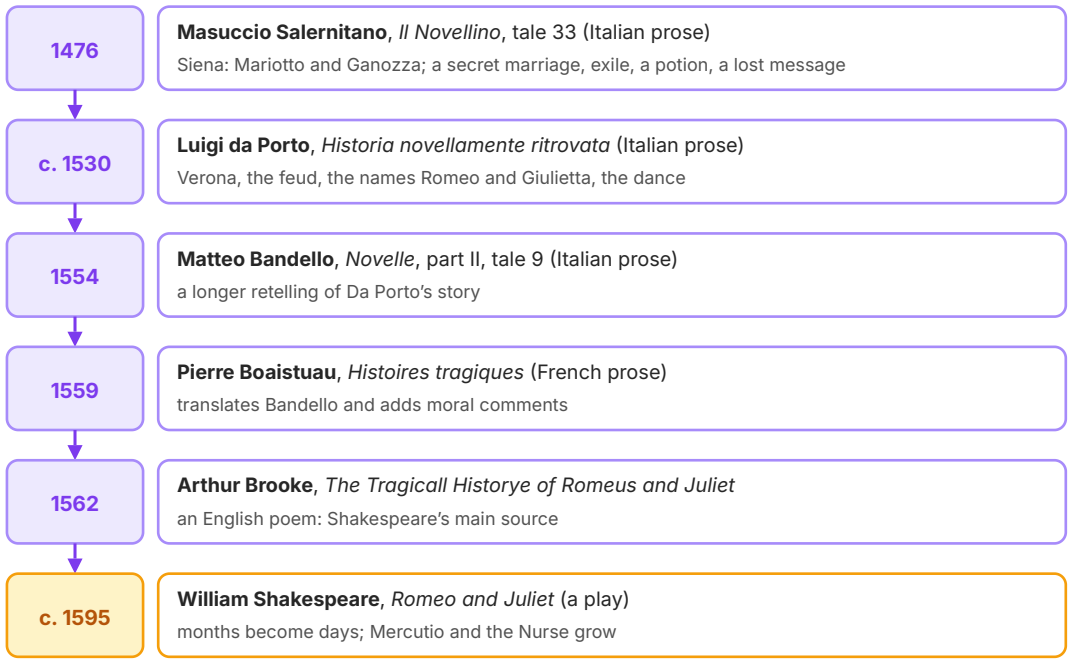


Figura 12.6 The source chain of *Romeo and Juliet*: each writer read the one before. Dates are those of first publication (Da Porto's story was printed in Venice after his death in 1529).

12.6.1 Luigi da Porto and the *Historia*

The first writer to place the story in Verona, with the names Romeo and Giulietta and the rival families of the Montecchi and the Cappelletti, was **Luigi da Porto** (1485–1529), a nobleman from

Vicenza who had been a soldier. His *Historia novellamente ritrovata di due nobili amanti* was printed in Venice around 1530. It begins like a true chronicle:

Tabella 12.8 Luigi da Porto, *Historia novellamente ritrovata di due nobili amanti*, opening and the death of Giulietta (text of the Milan edition, Truffi, 1831, from Liber Liber) and a translation by the editors

Italiano	English (translation by the editors)
«Nel tempo che Bartolommeo dalla Scala, signore cortese ed umanissimo, il freno alla mia bella patria a sua posta e stringeva e rallentava, furono in lei, secondo che mio padre dicea aver udito, due nobilissime famiglie per contraria fazione, ovvero particolar odio; nemiche, l'una è Capelletti, l'altra è Montecchi nominata.»	"At the time when Bartolomeo della Scala, a courteous and most humane lord, tightened and loosened the reins of my beautiful city as he pleased, there were in it, as my father said he had heard, two very noble families, enemies because they belonged to opposite factions, or because of a private hatred: one was called Capelletti, the other Montecchi."
«...raccolto a sè il fiato, ed alquanto tenutolo, e poscia con un gran grido fuori mandandolo, sopra il morto corpo morta si rese.»	"...she drew in her breath, held it for a while, and then, letting it out with a great cry, fell dead on his dead body."

Many details that we think of as Shakespeare's are already in Da Porto: the feast, the meeting during a dance, the window at night, the secret marriage by Friar Lorenzo, the killing of Juliet's cousin Tebaldo, the banishment, the sleeping powder, the tomb. Others are different. Da Porto's Giulietta is eighteen, not thirteen; the lovers meet at Carnival and marry in Lent, so the story lasts weeks, not days; Marcuccio is not a witty friend but a young man famous only for his cold hands, «così il luglio, come il gennaio»; and Giulietta wakes before Romeo dies, so the lovers speak to each other one last time. She then dies, as the passage above says, by holding her breath. About twenty-five years later Matteo Bandello retold the story at greater length in his *Novelle* (1554, part II, tale 9), and from Bandello it reached France and England.

COLLEGAMENTI

History: the Italian city-state and the feud. The Montagues and Capulets are not pure invention. In the 13th and 14th centuries the cities of northern and central Italy were divided into factions — the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, and inside them rival noble families — that fought for control of the city, often in the streets. Families built towers and kept old grudges for generations, and many cities ended up in the hands of one lord, a *signore*, such as the Della Scala (Scaligeri) in Verona. Dante, who lived as a guest of the Della Scala, used two of these family names to show the ruin of Italy without an emperor: «Vieni a veder Montecchi e Cappelletti, / Monaldi e Filippeschi, uom sanza cura: / color già tristi, e questi con sospetti!» (*Purgatorio* VI, 106–108: "Come and see Montecchi and Cappelletti, Monaldi and Filippeschi, you careless man: those already ruined, these afraid of ruin", translation by the editors). Shakespeare's Prince Escalus, who cannot keep the peace in his own streets, is a distant echo of these lords; his name may even recall *Scala*.

12.6.2 Verona and “Juliet’s house”

Every year thousands of visitors queue in Via Cappello, in Verona, to see Juliet’s balcony. The building is a real medieval tower-house, but it has nothing to do with Juliet. For centuries it was an inn, «del Cappello», and the hat (*cappello*) carved on the keystone of its arch suggested a link with the Cappelletti when, in the 18th and 19th centuries, visitors began to look for the places of the story. The City of Verona bought the house in 1905; in the late 1930s the director of the civic museums, Antonio Avena, turned it into a house-museum and created the balcony, from a medieval stone panel of the city’s collections and new supports. The bronze Juliet in the courtyard dates from 1973. “Juliet’s house” is a 20th-century tourist attraction built on a story that itself grew from book to book.

APPROFONDIMENTO

Romeo and Juliet after Shakespeare. The story kept travelling. In Italy, Vincenzo Bellini’s opera *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Venice, La Fenice, 1830) was based on Italian versions, not on Shakespeare; Sergei Prokofiev turned the play into a famous ballet in the 1930s; the Broadway musical *West Side Story* (1957) moved the feud to the streets of New York, between two gangs. And Juliet still receives letters: people from all over the world write to her in Verona asking for advice in love, and volunteers of the Juliet Club (*Club di Giulietta*) answer them — an advice column for a character who never existed.

1. Compare Da Porto’s Giulietta, who dies by holding her breath, and Shakespeare’s Juliet, who stabs herself with Romeo’s dagger. Which ending is more dramatic on a stage, and why?
2. Da Porto presents his story as true and heard “from my father”; Shakespeare’s Prologue presents it as a play (“our stage”). Why do you think a novella writer and a playwright chose such different openings?

SINTESI

- About a dozen of Shakespeare's plays are set in Italy, but there is no evidence that he ever went there: his Italy is a place of the imagination, admired and feared (Ascham's «Englese Italianato…», 1570).
- Italian **novelle** — Masuccio (1476), Da Porto (c. 1530), Bandello (1554), Cinthio (1565) — reached England in French and English translations (Brooke 1562, Painter 1566–67); John Florio taught Italian in London (*First Fruits* 1578, *A World of Words* 1598).
- Comedy belonged to the **festive calendar**: Christmas and Twelfth Night, May Day, Midsummer Eve; *Twelfth Night* was performed at the Middle Temple on 2 February 1602.
- *Romeo and Juliet* (c. 1595, printed 1597): two feuding families in Verona, a secret marriage, a lost letter, the lovers' deaths and the families' reconciliation — about four days, Sunday to Thursday dawn.
- The **Prologue** is an English sonnet that tells the whole story: the audience watches with **dramatic irony**.
- Themes and images: fate ("star-cross'd") and haste ("they stumble that run fast"), love and hate, light and dark.
- Shakespearean **comedy**: order → confusion in a "green world" → resolution → marriage; mistaken identity, cross-dressing, the fool, wit and puns.
- The comedies of 1595–1601: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Messina; Beatrice and Benedick's "merry war"), *Twelfth Night* (Viola as Cesario, Feste).
- *Wherefore* = why: Juliet asks why Romeo must be a Montague, not where he is.
- Typical behaviour: *will / would* + base form, stressed for criticism; *always* + continuous for annoying habits; *tend to*; *used to / would* for the past.
- *Be used to* (a state) and *get used to* (a change) + *-ing* or noun, in every tense: *I'm used to reading plays*, *you'll get used to it*.
- Da Porto first set the story in Verona with Romeo, Giulietta, the Montecchi and the Cappelletti (Dante, *Purgatorio* VI); "Juliet's house" and its balcony are a 20th-century creation.

ESERCIZI

History and Literature

1. ● Which of these plays is NOT set in Italy?

   A. *The Merchant of Venice*

   B. *Much Ado About Nothing*

   C. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

   D. *The Taming of the Shrew*

2. ● Who first set the story of Romeo and Juliet in Verona, with the Montecchi and the Cappelletti?
   A. Masuccio Salernitano
   B. Arthur Brooke
   C. Matteo Bandello
   D. Luigi da Porto

3. ● In Shakespeare's comedies, the "green world" is…
   A. a place outside normal rules, where identities become confused
   B. the garden where the final wedding takes place
   C. the court, where the play begins and ends
   D. a forest where only fairies live

4. ● True or false? Correct the false statements. a Shakespeare visited Verona before writing *Romeo and Juliet*. b *Romeo and Juliet* was first printed in 1597. c John Florio published an Italian–English dictionary. d *Twelfth Night* is named after a summer festival. e In the play, Juliet is not yet fourteen. f The word *balcony* appears in the balcony scene.

5. ●● Put the source chain of *Romeo and Juliet* in order and add the dates: Bandello · Brooke · Da Porto · Masuccio · Boaistuau · Shakespeare.

6. ●● Explain these terms in your own words, with an example from the chapter: a prologue · b dramatic irony · c mistaken identity · d cross-dressing · e fool · f pun.

7. ●●● Short answer (40–60 words). Why did Shakespeare set so many plays in Italy? Give at least two reasons.

Text Analysis

8. ● In T2, what does Juliet mean by "wherefore art thou Romeo?"
   A. Where are you, Romeo?
   B. Why are you Romeo, a Montague?
   C. Are you really Romeo?
   D. Why have you come here, Romeo?

9. ● T1. Answer the questions. a Where is the play set? b How old is the hatred between the families? c How do the lovers end? d How long will the performance last, according to the Chorus?

10. ●● T1. Write the rhyme scheme of the Prologue and mark where each quatrain and the couplet begin. Then say what the couplet does differently.

11. ●● Scansion. Copy line 2 of T2 and write the stressed syllables in CAPITALS. How many stresses are there? Is the line rhymed?

12. ●● Paraphrase lines 40–46 of T2 (from "'Tis but thy name" to "smell as sweet") into modern English.

13. ●● T3. a Find the line in which Beatrice gives her opinion of love. b Which insult does Benedick use to open the attack? c Who has the last word, and how?

14. ●●● Write a PEE paragraph (about 80 words): How does Shakespeare use images of light in T2? Use one short quotation.

Language

15. ● My little sister ___ ask "why?" after everything you say. It's her favourite word.
    - **A.** will
    - **B.** is used to
    - **C.** used
    - **D.** gets used to

16. ● It took me weeks to get used to ___ in the dark for the play.
    - **A.** act
    - **B.** acting
    - **C.** acted
    - **D.** have acted

17. ●● Romeo ___ Rosaline before he met Juliet.
    - **A.** was used to love
    - **B.** would love
    - **C.** used to love
    - **D.** is always loving

18. ●● "Benedick ___ making fun of me!" Beatrice complained.
    - **A.** always
    - **B.** is always
    - **C.** tends
    - **D.** will always to

19. ● Complete with the correct form of *be used to* or *get used to*. a Giulia ___ (be) speaking English with English families: she spent a whole school year in Bristol. b At first the Italian students couldn't ___ (get) driving on the left. c Don't worry about the old pronouns: you'll soon ___ (get) them. d I ___ not (be) reading verse, so it took me a long time. e Have you ___ (get) your new timetable yet? f Shakespeare's actors ___ (be) performing in daylight.

20. ●● Rewrite the sentences with the word in brackets, without changing the meaning. a Callum usually arrives early. (tend) b My brother keeps borrowing my phone without asking. It's so annoying! (always) c When we were children, my grandmother told us a story every night. (would) d Reading Elizabethan plays isn't difficult for me any more. (used) e Juliet refuses to marry Paris. (won't) f She lived in a small town in the past, but not now. (used)

21. ●● Error correction. Each sentence has one mistake. a I'm used to get up at six. b When I was young I would have a dog called Leo. c She is always forget her keys. d You will get use to the food. e Romeo is used to love Rosaline, but then he met Juliet. f I don't used to read plays.

22. ●● Complete the dialogue with a suitable form: *will / won't, would, always + continuous, tend to, used to, be / get used to*. "How's life with your English host family?" "Great! At first I (1) ___ (not) having dinner at six, but now I love it. The only problem is their dog: he (2) ___ sleep on my bed if I leave the door open. And the little boy (3) ___ (ask) me to play football — every single evening! In Italy I (4) ___ go out after dinner, but here people (5) ___ stay at home in the evening. I suppose I'll (6) ___ it."

23. ●●● Translate into English. a La Balia parla sempre troppo: è fatta così. b Mi sono abituato a leggere Shakespeare in inglese, ma all'inizio è stato difficile. c Da piccola Giulietta giocava ogni giorno nel giardino. d Le commedie di Shakespeare tendono a finire con un matrimonio.

Vocabulary

24. ● Complete with the words in the box in the correct form: *banish · elope · feud · grudge · reconcile · rival*. a The Prince decided to ___ Romeo from Verona. b The two ___ teams have hated each other for decades. c He still holds a ___ against me for something I said years ago. d The young couple decided to ___ because their parents were against the marriage. e The ___ between the two families had lasted for generations. f Only the death of their children could ___ the Montagues and the Capulets.

25. ●● Complete with the correct form of *ask out, fall out, make up, get over, fall for, split up*. a Romeo ___ Juliet the moment he saw her. b Sam and Callum ___ about the timetable, but they ___ an hour later. c It took her months to ___ the end of the relationship. d After two years together, they ___ last summer. e He was too shy to ___ her ___.

26. ●● Word families. Complete with a word formed from the word in brackets. a The ___ between the two schools is friendly. (rival) b After his ___, Romeo went to Mantua. (banish) c The play ends with the ___ of the two families. (reconcile) d There is a ___ in comedy to end with weddings. (tend) e Their ___ was secret. (marry)

Writing and Speaking

27. ●● Write an email of advice (180–220 words). Your Italian friend has been invited to spend a month with a family in England this summer, but is worried: "I'm shy, my English isn't perfect and I've never been away from home. Should I go?" Show empathy, give at least three pieces of advice with reasons, and use the language of habit (*you'll get used to…, people tend to…*).

28. ●● Rewrite the beginning of Sam's email (first two paragraphs of the model) in a **semi-formal** register, as a reply in a school advice column. Change at least five expressions.

29. ●●● Speaking (pairs, 3 minutes). Student A is Juliet the morning after the wedding night: her father wants her to marry Paris on Thursday. Student B is a modern friend. A explains the problem; B shows empathy and gives advice, from gentle to strong; A responds to each idea. Use the language of Tabella 12.6.

Towards B2

30. ●● Multiple-choice cloze. Choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D) for each gap.
Juliet's Nurse is one of Shakespeare's great comic characters. She (1) ___ talk for hours about the past, and she is always (2) ___ the same stories. She has looked (3) ___ Juliet since she was a baby, and she is (4) ___ to being treated as one of the family. But when Juliet needs her most, the Nurse lets her (5) ___: she advises her to forget Romeo and marry Paris.
1 A would B will C used D tends · 2 A telling B tell C told D tells · 3 A for B at C after D up · 4 A use B used C using D usual · 5 A up B down C off D out

31. ●● Open cloze. Write ONE word in each gap.
Before the trip, Marta had never been abroad on her (1) ___. On the first evening in Bristol she couldn't get used (2) ___ the early dinner, and the next morning she found it strange that everybody said "sorry" all the time. "English people tend (3) ___ apologise even when it's your fault," Sam explained. By the end of the week Marta was used to (4) ___ "cheers" and "sorry" herself, and her host family said that she (5) ___ always welcome back.

32. ●● Word formation. Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits the gap. a The play ends with a ___ between the families. (RECONCILE) b Shakespeare's ___ of Italy came from books, not travel. (KNOW) c Mercutio is a ___ friend, always ready with a joke. (WIT) d Juliet's ___ to the Friar's plan is immediate. (AGREE) e Florio was a famous ___ of Italian. (TEACH) f The lovers' ___ is the centre of the play. (MARRY)

33. ●●● Key-word transformation. Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first, using the word in brackets. Use two to five words.
a Reading Shakespeare in English is no longer strange for me. (USED) I ___ Shakespeare in English. b My sister keeps leaving her clothes on the floor. (ALWAYS) My sister ___ her clothes on the floor. c People usually remember the balcony scene. (TEND) People ___ the balcony scene. d When I was a child, I played in the park every afternoon. (WOULD) When I was a child, I ___ in the park every afternoon. e It was difficult at first, but now living in England feels normal to her. (GOT) She has ___ in England.

PER APPROFONDIRE

- [NOR] S. Greenblatt (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol. B: the introduction to Shakespeare and the sixteenth-century drama.
- [OXS] S. Wells, G. Taylor (eds), *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*: the introductions to *Romeo and Juliet*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Twelfth Night*.
- [SAN] A. Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*: the chapter on Shakespeare's comedies and early tragedies.
- [ABR] M. H. Abrams, G. G. Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*: the entries "comedy", "irony" (dramatic irony) and "pun".
- [SWA] M. Swan, *Practical English Usage*: the entries on *will* and *would* for habits and on *be used to*.
- [HEW] M. Hewings, *Advanced Grammar in Use*: the units on *will* and *would* for typical behaviour and on *used to*.

Glossario del capitolo

Banish
bandire, esiliare — send someone away from their country or city as a punishment (noun: *banishment*).

Cross-dressing
travestimento — in comedy, a character, usually a young woman, disguised as the other sex (Viola, Portia).

Dramatic irony
ironia drammatica — the audience knows something that a character does not, so the character's words take a second meaning.

Elope
fuggire per sposarsi — run away secretly to get married.

Fall out (with)
litigare, rompere con qualcuno — stop being friends after a quarrel; opposite: *make up*.

Fool
buffone, giullare — a professional entertainer in a great household, free to joke about everyone (Feste in *Twelfth Night*).

Get over
superare, riprendersi da — recover from the end of a relationship or a bad experience.

Green world
mondo verde — in Shakespearean comedy, a place outside normal rules (a wood, a far country) where the characters are changed; Northrop Frye's term.

Grudge
rancore — a lasting feeling of anger about something that happened in the past (*hold a grudge*).

Letter of advice
lettera / email di consigli — a reply to someone with a problem: empathy, advice with reasons, the right register.

Mistaken identity
scambio di persona — a situation in which a character is taken for someone else, often a twin.

Novella
novella — a short prose tale of the Italian tradition (Boccaccio, Masuccio, Bandello), a source of many Elizabethan plays; plural *novelle*.

Prologue
prologo — an introduction addressed to the audience before a play begins.

Pun
gioco di parole — a joke based on two meanings of one word or on words that sound alike ("a grave man").

Reconcile
riconciliare — make two people or groups friends again (noun: *reconciliation*).

Star-crossed
nato sotto una cattiva stella — (of lovers) ruined by fate; from the Prologue of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Tend to (do)
tendere a, di solito — describes what usually happens: *Comedies tend to end with weddings*.

Wit
arguzia, spirito — quick, clever language and the ability to use it (Beatrice and Benedick's "merry war").

Soluzioni

1. C (it is set in and near Athens).

2. D (Da Porto, c. 1530; Masuccio's tale of 1476 is set in Siena).

3. A.

4. a F — there is no evidence that he ever went to Italy. b T (a first, imperfect quarto; a better text in 1599). c T (*A World of Words*, 1598). d F — Twelfth Night is the last night of the Christmas season, the eve of the Epiphany. e T. f F — Juliet appears "above at a window"; the word *balcony* is not in the play.

5. Masuccio, *Il Novellino* (1476) → Da Porto (c. 1530) → Bandello, *Novelle* II.9 (1554) → Boaistuau, *Histoires tragiques* (1559) → Brooke, *Romeus and Juliet* (1562) → Shakespeare (c. 1595, printed 1597).

6. Model answers: a an introduction spoken to the audience before the play (the sonnet before Act I of *Romeo and Juliet*). b the audience knows something a character does not (we know the lovers will die while Romeo hopes). c a character is taken for someone else (Sebastian taken for "Cesario" in *Twelfth Night*). d a character dressed as the other sex (Viola as Cesario, Portia as a lawyer — played by boy actors). e a professional entertainer who may joke about everyone and often tells the truth (Feste). f a joke on two meanings of a word (Mercutio's "a grave man").

7. Traccia: Italy had great prestige (Petrarch, Castiglione, fashion, fencing) and was also a place of dangerous passions in the English imagination, so it suited stories of love, feuds and revenge; distance made the stories exciting and safe. Above all, many plots came from Italian *novelle*, read in French and English translations (Brooke, Painter).

8. B.

9. a In Verona. b It is an "ancient grudge", an old hatred. c They die ("take their life", "their death"), and their death ends their parents' strife. d "two hours".

10. *abab cdcd efef gg*: quatrains at ll. 1, 5, 9; couplet ll. 13–14. The quatrains speak about the story; the couplet speaks directly to the audience and asks for patient attention, promising to "mend" what is missing.

11. but SOFT! what LIGHT through YON-der WINdow BREAKS? — five stresses, ten syllables: iambic pentameter. It is not rhymed: blank verse. (Some readers also stress *what*; the five main beats stay.)

12. "Only your name is my enemy; you would be yourself even if you were not a Montague. What is a Montague? It isn't a hand, a foot, an arm, a face, or any other part of a man. Oh, take another name! What does a name matter? A rose would smell just as sweet if we called it something else."

13. a "I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me." b "my dear Lady Disdain". c Beatrice: when Benedick says "I have done", she accuses him of always stopping like a bad horse ("a jade's trick").

14. Model: Point — Romeo sees Juliet as a source of light in the darkness. Evidence — "It is the east, and Juliet is the sun." Explanation — the metaphor makes her the centre of his world, as the sun is the centre of the day; she is so bright that she "kills" the moon. The image also hides an irony: the lovers can meet only at night, and their love will be as brief as a flash of light.

15. A (*will* for typical behaviour).

16. B (*to* is a preposition: *-ing*).

17. C (a past state: *used to*; *would* is not used for states).

18. B (*always* + present continuous for an annoying habit).

19. a is used to · b get used to · c get used to · d wasn't (was not) used to · e got used to · f were used to.

20. a Callum tends to arrive early. b My brother is always borrowing my phone without asking! c When we were children, my grandmother would tell us a story every night. d I'm used to reading Elizabethan plays now. e Juliet won't marry Paris. f She used to live in a small town.

21. a I'm used to **getting** up at six. b I **used to have** a dog (state: not *would*). c She is always **forgetting** her keys. d You will get **used** to the food. e Romeo **used to love** Rosaline. f I **didn't use to** read plays (or, for the present: I'm not **used to reading** plays).

22. 1 wasn't used to · 2 will · 3 is always asking · 4 used to (also possible: would / tend to) · 5 tend to · 6 get used to.

23. a The Nurse will always talk too much: that's what she's like. (or: The Nurse is always talking too much.) b I've got used to reading Shakespeare in English, but at first it was difficult. c When she was little, Juliet would play / used to play in the garden every day. d Shakespeare's comedies tend to end with a marriage / with weddings.

24. a banish · b rival · c grudge · d elope · e feud · f reconcile.

25. a fell for · b fell out, made up · c get over · d split up · e ask her out.

26. a rivalry · b banishment · c reconciliation · d tendency · e marriage.

27. Traccia: greeting and thanks; empathy (*It's normal to feel nervous*); advice with reasons (go — *you'll get used to it after a few days*; prepare some questions about the family; *English families tend to* eat early, so be ready; join in, even with mistakes; keep in touch with home but not all day); a warning (*don't spend every evening on your phone*); positive close; informal register; 180–220 words. Assess content, organisation, range of advice language, accuracy.

28. Model: "Dear Ella, Thank you for your message. I am very sorry to hear about your situation: it must be difficult to find yourself in the middle of a disagreement that does not concern you. First of all, try not to worry. Adults often say things in the heat of the moment that they do not really mean, and in my experience neighbours who have argued over a fence tend to be reconciled quite quickly." (No contractions, no jokes or brackets, *Dear*, more formal vocabulary: *disagreement, adults, be reconciled*.)

29. Model exchange: A: "My dad says I have to marry Paris on Thursday. He won't listen to me!" B: "That sounds awful. Have you thought about telling your mum the truth?" A: "I can't — she's always taking his side." B: "Then maybe you could talk to the Friar; he married you, after all. But whatever you do, don't do anything desperate." A: "I hadn't thought of that... but what if he can't help?" B: "If I were you, I'd leave Verona and join Romeo." (Empathy, gentle and strong advice, responses, a warning.)

30. 1 B (*will* = typical behaviour, present) · 2 A · 3 C (*look after*) · 4 B (*be used to* + noun/-ing) · 5 B (*let someone down* = disappoint).

31. 1 own · 2 to · 3 to · 4 saying · 5 was (or: would be).

32. a reconciliation · b knowledge · c witty · d agreement · e teacher · f marriage.

33. a am used to reading · b is always leaving · c tend to remember · d would play · e got used to living.