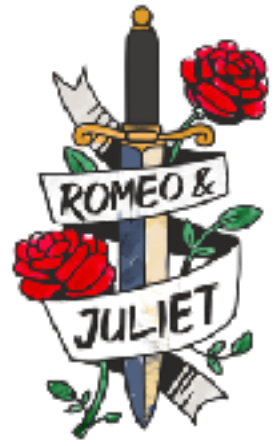


Romeo and Juliet

Facts and Legends



As in all of Shakespeare's plays, female parts were played by boys. A boy would have played the most famous romantic girl in history!

It is believed that *Romeo and Juliet* is one of Shakespeare's earliest plays, and was written around the same time as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

It is believed to be one of Shakespeare's longest plays, with 3093 lines (*Hamlet* is the longest with 4042 lines!)

The play's full title is *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*. Which title do you prefer?

Even though the story is almost definitely fictional, it doesn't stop the city Verona making them out of it. Even today, you can visit Juliet's balcony, Romeo's house and the Capulet tomb (even though we know they most likely never existed!)

If you write a letter, telling of your heartbreak, and send it to 'Juliet, Verona, Italy' - it would probably get there and you would receive a reply. There are people in Verona who call themselves 'The Secretaries of Juliet' and they reply to all the letters.

The story of *Romeo and Juliet* was 'borrowed' from Italian stories that Shakespeare probably read in English. One version, which he may have read, is by Luigi Da Porto. In Shakespeare's time, people would copy plays and sell them in the theatres (stealing stories wasn't a problem back then!)