

## ACTIVITY TWO

# SHAKESPEARE IN OUR TIMES

As you may have noticed, in some places, the new film **ROMEO & JULIET** updates Shakespeare's text in creative ways to connect with a twenty-first century audience. But in order to make these changes thoughtfully and effectively, the film's writers had to first understand and appreciate Shakespeare's original language.

**PART 1** Here's your chance to develop the same skills, so that you, too, can move easily between Shakespeare's English and the way we speak today. Below you'll find lines from *Romeo and Juliet* revised to sound like modern-day English. Your job is to identify Shakespeare's original text. Circle the correct answer.

**1. Romeo! Why must you be Romeo? Forget about your family and change your name!**

- A. O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo? Deny thy father and refuse thy name.
- B. Romeo, Romeo, why call thyself Romeo? Forego thy family and their fatal name.
- C. O Romeo, Romeo, where art thou, my Romeo? Hide not behind thy home and noble name.

**2. Wait! What's that light coming through the window?**

- A. Hark! What candle glows in Juliet's window?
- B. But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
- C. Anon! What moonlight pierces that glassy pane?

**3. The one person I love is the son of my family's only enemy!**

- A. My only love, sprung from my only hate!
- B. The sprout of mine enemy is the seed of my love!
- C. My sole beloved, born of my family's sole competitor!

**4. If love gives you a hard time, give as good as you get.**

- A. If love be rough with you, be rough with love.
- B. If love proves a prickly friend, well then, friend, you too be prickly.
- C. Should love prove tough on thee, then be thou tough on love.

**5. Both of your families deserve what you get! I'm done for.**

- A. A pox on all your kinsmen! I am rid of you.
- B. Montagues and Capulets alike, be cursed! I am spent.
- C. A plague o'both houses! I am sped.

**PART 2** Now that you've seen how it's done, listen for examples of updated language when you watch the new film, **ROMEO & JULIET**. Note one or two examples in the space below, and explain briefly what is gained (or lost) by putting Shakespeare's poetry into the language of our times.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**ROMEO+JULIET — THE MOST DANGEROUS LOVE STORY EVER TOLD!**  
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