

ACTIVITY THREE

MUSIC WITH HER SILVER SOUND

Music plays a big role in Shakespeare's plays. In *Romeo and Juliet*, he even created a whole scene for the musicians who perform at the party where Romeo and Juliet first meet. The scene is a reminder that live musicians performed in almost every production on Shakespeare's stage. But while we know the words his actors spoke, we do not have many records of the notes Shakespeare wanted his musicians to play. As a result, modern-day performers have to be creative about choosing music for their productions.

PART 1 Suppose you were producing *Romeo and Juliet*. What creative musical choices would you make? Pick one of the scenes listed below and try to imagine a "soundtrack" that brings out the drama and meaning of the scene. Answer the questions in the chart to develop your ideas. Be prepared to perform or play a sample of the sound you imagine for your scene in class.

Choose from the following scenes:

The Balcony Scene (II.2) The Sword Fight Scene (III.1) The Bedroom Scene (III.5) The Potion Scene (IV.3)

Describe the tone and pace of the scene.	
What musical tempo and rhythm match the action?	
Describe the characters' emotions in the scene.	
What musical sounds and textures capture these emotions?	
Describe the style of music you hear playing behind this scene.	
How does your soundtrack bring out the meaning of this moment in the drama?	

PART 2 When you watch the new film, **ROMEO & JULIET**, listen carefully to the film's soundtrack for the scene you chose. In the space below, describe the music that the filmmakers put to Shakespeare's play for this scene, and compare their choices to your own.



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