

Light

From the moment Romeo sees Juliet at the party in Act 1 Scene 5, she fills his life with light. His first words describing her begin,

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!

A few lines later, in another image showing how pure and bright she is he says,

So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows.

Later, in Act 2 Scene 2, he says Juliet is like the sun,

But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!

He also imagines how bright she'd be if she were a star,

Her eyes in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright

That birds would sing and think it were not night.

Later still in Act 2 Scene 2, he calls her a 'bright angel'.

Finally, in Act 5 Scene 3, Romeo says that even in the darkness of her tomb, Juliet still shines out,

For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes

This vault a feasting presence full of light.



Talking points

Does Romeo's use of imagery show how much he loves Juliet, or does it show that his love for her is in some way unreal – since she's not really as bright as the sun or stars? Does he just love the sound of his own voice?



What would be lost from the play if Shakespeare hadn't used any imagery at all?

Romeo often uses imagery linking Juliet with light, but how much of the play takes place in darkness? How does the dark of night help speed Romeo's relationship with Juliet?

Sunrise is described on four mornings in the play. How is the last morning different from the other three?

On paper or computer

Look at Romeo's long speech at the start of Act 2 Scene 2. Write your own version replacing Romeo's images of the sun, moon and stars with modern imagery of light, e.g. laser shows, neon lighting, street lights etc.



Or

Write Romeo's speech as a text message!