

# Tybalt

## Key Themes

- Chance/fate
- Youth
- Individuals vs society
- Family vs duty
- Violence
- Love

## Key Words/Phrases

- Craves conflict
- Fuelled by animosity (hatred)
- Propensity (natural want) for violence
- Provocative
- Protects his honour
- Language coloured with violence
- Folly (foolishness) of male youth

## Shakespeare's intentions

- Shakespeare constructs Tybalt to personify **unchecked** (uncontrolled) male violence, fuelled by **hubris** (excessive pride) and honour. Through Tybalt's death ending through violent means, Shakespeare critiques the **folly** (foolishness) **of male youth** and their **propensity** (natural want) for violence.

## “Have at thee coward!” Act 1

Link to main key themes:

- **Violence**
- **Individual vs society**

## Analysis

- **Provocative language:** Tybalt's **provocative language permeates** (spread) throughout the play. Insulting Benvolio with the adjective “coward”. His quick temper is immediately apparent, the audience can see he **craves conflict and is fuelled by animosity** (hatred).
- Additionally, his simplistic and straightforward language suggests **a lack of the wit and intelligence displayed by characters like Mercutio**; Tybalt's character is defined by his **propensity** (natural want) **for violence**.
- **Context:** In the Elizabethan era, honour was a concept that was highly valued and well-guarded and honour that was **jeopardised**, was the **root** of much violence.
- Tybalt is so violent in this scene because he believes his honour to be in **jeopardy** and believes he must **retaliate** with violence. A large amount of male violence **stemmed** from the patriarchy which reinforced this notion.

## “Wretched boy” Act 3

Link to main key themes:

- Youth
- Violence

## Analysis

- **Final line coloured with violence:** One of his final lines of the play is “wretched boy”, in reference to Romeo. Even his exit is coloured with violence, signifying that his **hamartia** (fatal flaw) was his **impetuous** (without thought/care) violence and this directly led to his death.
- It is also shown to be the **folly** (foolishness) **of youth**, not just because Tybalt is quick to anger, but because Mercutio, Benvolio and even Romeo are too. Or rather, it could be seen as **the folly of male youth**.