

KEY WORDS

Provocative, Sibilance, Plosive, Direct address, Wit, Jeopardised, Hamartia, The folly of youth.

Tybalt

COMPARISON

It is not just Tybalt, but almost all of the male characters that are quick to anger. Lord Capulet, Benvolio, Mercutio and more are all examples of this. Perhaps this is Shakespeare critiquing the way the patriarchy encourages male violence and the plays tragic end demonstrates the dire consequences such violence can have.

TOPIC SENTENCES

Tybalt demonstrates the **folly of youth**, which is that they are often quick to anger and that is his **hamartia**.

Tybalt is presented as a **foil to Mercutio** through his violent filled lexis. Mercutio's playful and sexual diction serves as a stark contrast, yet both men are subject to the same fate – their own tragic deaths.

TYBALT'S FOLLY IS THAT HE IS QUICK TO ANGER

- Tybalt is shown to be violent and quick to anger from the play's **onset** (start), as he brawls with the Montagues in the first scene.
- He exclaims **"have at thee coward!"**. He is using **provocative** language, insulting Benvolio with the adjective **"coward"**. He is established as quick to anger as it took him less than two lines to offer up a fight upon his entrance.
- He uses a combination of **sibilance and plosive** sounds on the line **"to scorn at our solemnity this night"**. His language is dripping with harsh sounds but also an ominous hissing undertone.
- He is confrontation when he says to Romeo **"thou art a villain"**. Shakespeare uses **direct address** to show that he does not shy away from confrontation and is direct and almost violent in the way he expresses himself.
- He also uses fairly simple language, showing him to lack the **wit** and intelligence of a character like Mercutio, he is all violence.
- In Shakespeare's time, 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 respond to that with violence. A large amount of male violence **stemmed** from the patriarchy which reinforced this notion.
- One of his final lines of the play is **"wretched boy"**, in reference to Romeo. Even his exit is coloured with violence, he shows no regret which is ultimately his **hamartia** (fatal flaw) and what leads to his death. It is also shown to be the folly of youth, not just because Tybalt is quick to anger, but because Mercutio, Benvolio and even Romeo is too. Or rather **the folly of male youth**.



FOIL TO MERCUTIO

- Mercutio and Romeo embody **contrasting worldwide views** and therefore are foils to one another.
- Mercutio is depicted as more **playful in his wit and charm**, starkly **juxtaposing** (contrasting) Tybalt's barbaric and **violent lexis** (word-choice).
- We see Mercutio's playful language in regards to the **sexual** imagery he crafts: "*prick love for pricking*". Mercutio is **microcosmic** (one character representing a group of people) for the young men of Verona with his sexual references and ceaseless objectification of women.
- This contrasts Tybalt whose language is always centred around violence, especially in an **antagonistic way** (he tries to get a reaction). He insults Romeo by saying "*What, dares the slave*".
- The young men are unlike in their lexis, but are united by the same fate – death.
- This reinforces the **motif (recurring symbol) of love vs hatred**, as both men are unified in death through hatred and familial feuds – nobody is **left unscathed** (unharmed) .