

Miguel Molina Cordero

For my unit 1 assignment, I made a modernized, social media version of the events that take place after the party in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. I was inspired by the 1996 adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, and how it utilizes modernness to mix into the original story. I was also inspired by the many stories I read as a kid that would utilize messaging or social media as a main way to progress their plots. I wanted to demonstrate how easily these same events could occur in a modern setting, so I formatted the story for social media. I wanted readers to understand that while the communication platform has evolved, the basic feelings have remained the same. By doing this, I wanted to close the gap between today's audience and a classical text.

I accomplished this by changing the story's language and structure while retaining the story's central conflict and emotional turning point. I rewrote important ideas in more straightforward, modern English rather than following Shakespeare's original dialogue. For example, I brought up the importance of names and identity, which is crucial to the original play, but I did so in a casual and realistic way that mimics the genuine interactions that teenagers might use in real life. I tried to convey the meaning of the original lines rather than simply copying them. I was able to update the tone without sacrificing the core of *Romeo and Juliet*'s relationship by switching from poetic monologues to short, quick private messages.

When choosing my source material, I paid especially close attention to the moments right after the Capulet party. I picked this section because it's where the relationship really starts and some of the play's most well-known concepts are introduced. These scenes matter because they set up the conflict that surrounds the characters as well as their relationship. Since a lot of the play deals with intimate communication and emotional vulnerability, I thought this section would work well in a private messaging setting. I also chose to draw inspiration from the 1996 film adaptation because it does an excellent job of setting the original tale in the modern era while maintaining its themes. I learned from that adaptation that modernization may add meaning rather than diminish it.

To emphasize the closeness of their relationship, I set up my plagiarism as private direct messages instead of a group chat or public post. The conversations they have in the play seem personal and distinct from the mayhem surrounding them. The way many relationships are built today, especially between younger people, can be seen in the use of private messages. I was also able to control the conversation's speed thanks to the format. The messages flow naturally rather than in lengthy speeches, reflecting today's

form of fast communication. The idea that the emotional development is still comparable to the original text despite the format change is further strengthened by this layout.

What makes my project what it is comes directly from the fact that I plagiarized *Romeo and Juliet* on purpose. I stuck to Shakespeare's play by using the same characters, the same post-party scenario, and the same main conflict. My text would not exist without the original story, which is the only source that informs the structure of my work. This dependency is intentional and consistent with the assignment's purpose.

In the end, the assignment forced me to consider plagiarism in more depth. I learned how much a text's identity depends on its wording, format, and context when I purposefully plagiarized. Changing the delivery changes the audience's experience of the story, even if the characters and plot remain the same. Plagiarism can take many forms, as my project highlights. In this case, I obviously drew from Shakespeare's original work, but I also modified it for the modern era and the medium. My final result is made by the balance between straight plagiarism and creative adaptation.