

## End Stage 5 English student work sample – Grade C

I have been given the challenge to come up with a new concept for one of the world's best and most famous written plays ever known. I have completed the challenge given to me from the New Shakespeare Theatre Company, which was to create and direct my new stage performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. The concept I have come up with is a Bollywood version of the play, and is set in the fictitious Indian city of Verona, where The Capulets and Montagues are two families of very high positions who run two of India's top spice supply companies. They have been fighting each other for many decades, due to the attempted destruction of either family's business. The two families are separated by a section of the town and they hold authority over either half, respectively.

This concept came to my mind when I asked myself: in what way or style could I portray this play as one that is different to any others made before but at the same time is entertaining, colourful and would persuade viewers to come and watch? And I thought about a recent Bollywood movie I had watched and remembered it having all the characteristics that I was looking for, and I wanted my new concept to have. I thought, well it definitely hasn't been done before, it's entertaining, it's definitely colourful and I believe people would come to watch it. I think that this production will encourage audiences to come and watch it due to the reason previously said, as a large number of people wouldn't have ever watched a Bollywood style film or play. So it would be a new experience for many people and hopefully one to remember.

I have chosen two scenes that will reflect my concept and how it would be portrayed on stage. My first choice was Act I Scene V (Big party scene).

This scene is the party where Romeo and Juliet meet and fall in love. The stage will be set out as basically a big room with a long table down one side with all Indian foods, curries etc. and a raised platform where a band will be playing. The lighting will be very bright and colourful as per normal for Bollywood films, which gives the atmosphere of fun and enjoyment. Also, the lights will be positioned so that subconsciously your attraction is drawn to Romeo and Juliet. The costuming will be traditional Indian clothing as they are of the higher classed society and want to look their best in their formal clothing. Also their clothing will be bright colours as one of the main themes in a Bollywood film is that they are very colourful. The people on stage will all be dancing and talking within groups and communicating with others, so basically like any party. The voices of the characters will be talking in a calm and friendly tone, switching from a soft pitch to louder depending on what is being said. The music will be like traditional Indian music, with Indian instruments and songs played live from a band.

Act III Scene I (fight scene where Mercutio dies).

This scene is the fight scene toward the end where Tybalt kills Mercutio, so I will have it set in the section of the town where Romeo and his group of friends and family usually associate, with tiny houses, muddy pathways and not much space to spare once they are fighting. The lighting will be not so bright and colourful as this is a moment where there is much tension between the characters on stage and results in the death of Mercutio which is basically the beginning of the end for Romeo. The characters will be wearing just casual clothing, something that isn't for special occasions as they are just hanging around with friends. Their weapons will be old handguns painted either blue for a Montague or black for a Capulet. The movements of the characters in this scene will be fast and powerful; they must show the emotion in their actions and allow the audience feel the conflict present throughout the scene. The way they must speak is to exaggerate the emotions they are feeling, whether it be hate coming from Tybalt or a lust for peace from Romeo.

There will be no music played although there will be some dramatic background music that will emphasise the mood set during this scene.

Clearly demonstrates an appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* that engage audiences and proposes an engaging 'Bollywood' concept

Creatively applies existing knowledge of cinema to new contexts and audiences

Attempts to explain the ways in which an idea can be transformed imaginatively. More insight into the reason for staging the play in this way and its impact on the audience enhance the response

## Grade Commentary

Ashley has demonstrated a sound understanding of composing a persuasive speech. An imaginative concept has been provided and an understanding of the play is evident. A few persuasive techniques have been used and language is appropriate for the audience. Some discussion of the staging has been provided, but it would benefit from greater depth and detail.

Ashley's response demonstrates characteristics of work typically produced by a student performing at grade C standard at the end of Stage 5.