**Explore Shakespeare’s presentation of the theme of disorder in the play.**

1. Be clear what you mean by disorder – use an online dictionary if you have to –write what it means in the box below:

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1. List as many examples of disorder as you can think of in the play:

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| Examples of disorder | Why it is important to the plot |
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Now ask yourself – what is Shakespeare showing us about disorder? What examples of disorder are there? What causes the disorder?

Fill in the box below with one sentence which sums up your perspective on disorder:

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**You have now planned the first Assessment Objective – coming up with an original and informed argument or opinion on the theme of disorder. This is worth ten marks.**

1. Now find evidence from the play that you can use to explore how Shakespeare presents disorder. What quotes can you remember? Look at the previous hand-out – which quotes are relevant to this question? Look again at the key moments from the play that deal with the theme. Fill in the chart of the next page:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Disorder in the play** | **Evidence / quote** | **Explore effect of the evidence – including comment on literary devices** |
| *Chorus comments on the feud* | ***‘…new mutiny…’*** | *Chorus is in the form of a sonnet – this is usually a love poem; this suggests love for family has resulted in violent disorder against their rivals* |
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**You have now planned the second AO – explore how the use of language and literary devices shapes the meaning of the play. This is also worth 10 marks.**

1. Now for the slighter harder part – your final AO and 10 marks are for linking the play to its context. On the last document, we suggested the following points could be used to talk about context:

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| **Contextual point** | **Link to text** |
| **English Renaissance (rebirth of Classical learning)** | The references to Cupid – or Love personified – as well as other Classical figures e.g. Dian |
| **Reformation** | English Protestant audience watching Italian Catholics sinning and indulging passions – appealed to national pride |
| **Great chain of being** | The idea that everything was ranked beneath God. It was better to be closer to God. Rational humans who used their minds were considered closer to God than passionate beings – who were seen as closer to beasts |
| **patriarchy** | The church at this period was deeply patriarchal – it saw men as innately superior to women – hence the Friar insulting Romeo when he is having a breakdown |
| **The literary tradition** | The use of sonnets associated with love; the conventions of tragic theatre (we will cover this in another lesson) |
| **The cult of love** | Fashionable young men – like Romeo – liked to play the role of the unrequited lover |
| **Word play and the ‘dispute’** | Word play – or battle of wits (think a rap battle today) – were popular, a ‘dispute’ was an educated, sometimes witty argument were participants contested opposing points of view e.g. Mercutio whenever he speaks |
| **Free will and fate** | Shakespeare’s audience believed in astrology – that the stars influenced life on earth i.e. fate.  The Protestant reformation free will – each individual has the choice of how they live their life.  Are Romeo and Juliet fated to love each other and die, or is it down to individual choices? |

Using the table from 3 – add a fourth column which links your points to context:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Disorder in the play | Evidence | Explore | Link to context |
| *Chorus comments on the feud* | *‘…new mutiny…’* | *Chorus is in the form of a sonnet – this is usually a love poem; this suggests love for family has resulted in violent disorder against their rivals* | *Play was performed in the Reformation, the English Protestant audience could watch Italian Catholics sinning because of their disordered passions* |
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1. You now have a plan for an essay which could score full marks. To structure it, look at your final chart which links point-evidence-explore with context and number the order in which you will make these points. Each ‘line’ of your table will become a new paragraph.

When you write your essay up – aim to start with a first sentence that sums up your perspective on the theme of ‘disorder’ e.g.

***Shakespeare presents disordered emotions as the source of his tragedy.***

**Or,**

***Shakespeare presents Romeo as a character whose disordered passions result in his own downfall and that of Juliet.***

**Or,**

***Shakespeare presents social disorder such as the feud as a source of disorder in the hearts and minds of its younger characters resulting in the tragedy.***

Then expand on this first sentence with your first point, backed up with evidence and linked to context:

***Shakespeare presents disordered emotions as the source of his tragedy. The Chorus opens the play with a sonnet – traditionally a love poem – that references the ‘…new mutiny…’ of the families. This would be an emotive word for Shakespeare’s audience who would fear social disorder and civil war. The Reformation changed the religion of England to Protestantism – this meant the audience would watch Italian Catholics behaving in a disordered way as they allow their passions instead of their reason to control them. This would appeal to English national identity.***

The above paragraph establishes an argument, uses and explores evidence and links it all to context – this essay could go onto get full marks.

Have a go at writing this essay up yourselves. Make a note of what you find difficult and confusing and let me know if you want a zoom meeting to explore these difficulties.