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**Allusions to Romeo and Juliet in Pop Culture Songs**

*Many artists have been inspired by Shakespeare’s famous tragedy and alluded to Romeo and Juliet’s love in their songs. Sometimes, these artists only make brief mention of the play as a means of developing the song’s message, others weave references to the famous lovers into songs to a much more integral degree.*

*As you read the lyrical example of such an allusion below, consider how the artist has both alluded to Shakespeare’s original work and themes, but also transformed the story to develop a theme or plot unique to the song. Mark and the text of the lyrics and use the column to the right to annotate, playing close attention to* ***imagery, references to dialogue, plot, or themes in Shakespeare’s play, divergence from Shakespeare’s original story, and development of the characters and plot of the song itself.***

**“Romeo and Juliet”**  
[Dire Straits](https://www.google.com/search?safe=strict&client=firefox-b-1&q=Dire+Straits&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAONgVuLUz9U3MDS3NLUEAIwpFgwNAAAA&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjI1_LLkZXbAhUD7lMKHW8sB68QMQgsMAA)

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| A lovestruck Romeo sang the streets of serenade Laying everybody low with a love song that he made Finds a streetlight, steps out of the shade Says something like, "You and me, babe, how about it?"  Juliet says, "Hey, it's Romeo, you nearly gave me a heart attack" He's underneath the window, she's singing, "Hey, la, my boyfriend's back You shouldn't come around here singing up at people like that Anyway, what you gonna do about it?"  "Juliet, the dice was loaded from the start And I bet, and you exploded into my heart And I forget, I forget the movie song When you gonna realize it was just that the time was wrong, Juliet?"  Come up on different streets, they both were streets of shame Both dirty, both mean, yes, and the dream was just the same And I dreamed your dream for you and now your dream is real How can you look at me as if I was just another one of your deals?  When you can fall for chains of silver you can fall for chains of gold You can fall for pretty strangers and the promises they hold You promised me everything, you promised me thick and thin, yeah Now you just say "oh, Romeo, yeah, you know I used to have a scene with him."  "Juliet, when we made love, you used to cry You said 'I love you like the stars above, I'll love you till I die' There's a place for us, you know the movie song When you gonna realize it was just that the time was wrong, Juliet?"  I can't do the talk like they talk on the TV And I can't do a love song like the way it's meant to be I can't do everything but I'd do anything for you I can't do anything except be in love with you  And all I do is miss you and the way we used to be All I do is keep the beat and bad company All I do is kiss you through the bars of Orion Julie, I'd do the stars with you any time  "Juliet, when we made love you used to cry You said 'I love you like the stars above, I'll love you till I die' There's a place for us you know the movie song When you gonna realize it was just that the time was wrong, Juliet?"  And a lovestruck Romeo, he sang the streets of serenade Laying everybody low with a love song that he made Finds a convenient streetlight, steps out of the shade He says something like, "You and me, babe, how about it? You and me, babe, how about it?"  *Songwriters: Mark Knopfler*  *Romeo and Juliet lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group* |  |

In a few sentences, summarize what’s going on in the song.

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In a few sentences, explain how the song uses allusions to *Romeo and Juliet* to develop its plot or theme.

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**Extension Activity:** Choose a song that references *Romeo and Juliet* from the list provided. Look up the lyrics and read them, listen to the song, and watch the music video if one is available. Then, write a 2-3 paragraph analysis. In the first paragraph, summarize the meaning of the song. In the second/third, discuss how the allusions to *Romeo and Juliet* help develop the plot or theme of the song. Cite specific quotes from the lyrics to support your analysis.