**Some Themes, Motifs in *Romeo and Juliet***

**Definition of Theme**

*Themes are the main, fundamental, overall, and often universal ideas or lessons explored in a literary work.*

*A theme is a message about life, or factors of life, that teaches something. It is also not related to the book or work in question.*

*Theme is the main idea or message of the work. It is a thought or idea the author presents to the reader. The theme of a work may be profound, difficult to understand, intended to teach a lesson or moral. Usually, readers have to figure out the theme of a specific work as they read it. Theme is important because it helps the reader understand part of the reason why the author wrote the work.*

**Questions related to Theme** *What is the author trying to convey to me in this work?  
What is the significance of what the author wrote?*

***Literary Devices***

Since motifs can also be (some, not all) literary devices, here is a list of literary devices.

Literary devices are techniques authors use to improve their story. Here are some examples of literary devices:

Alliteration

Allusion

Analogy

Characterization

Conflict

Contrast

Foreshadowing

Formal patterning

Genre

Hyperbole

Imagery

Internal Rhyme

Irony

Juxtaposition

Metaphor

Motif

Mood

Narrative hook

Onomatopoeia

Oxymoron

Parallels

Plot

Point of View

Setting

Simile

Structure

Symbol

Theme

Tone

**Some Themes Romeo and Juliet**

Note: these are the largest, most over-arching themes in the play. They can be stated in other ways. Note also that each of these themes has many associated sub-themes. There are other themes in the play as well.

* **Fate/Destiny – sub-themes: free will, character**
* **Passion - sub-themes: love, difficulty in making relationships work, dark side of relationships, infatuation, sex, violence, honour**
* **Individual versus Society**

**Definitions of Motifs***Motifs are recurring* ***structures****,* ***contrasts****, and* ***literary devices*** *that can help to develop and inform the text’s major themes.*

Motifs are r*ecurring elements and patterns of imagery which support the play's themes*

*Motifs are reoccuring object or idea in a work. A motif can also be something abstract, such as an emotion or quality like love, bravery or honesty. Motif is easily confused with theme. A theme is the main, overall idea or lesson the author is trying to teach in his book. A motif is a smaller idea that we see come up again and again in the book. A motif can be used to help develop the theme.*

**Questions related to Motif**

*Are there objects, ideas, or concepts I have seen repeated in this book?  
What could that object, idea, or concept mean?  
What could that object, idea, or concept teach me about the theme of the story?*

**Some Motifs in Romeo and Juliet**

(There are many others as well)

* **Light**
* **Darkness**
* **Opposite Points of View**

**Symbols**

*Symbols are objects, characters, figures, and colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts*

**Some symbols in Romeo and Juliet**

* **Thumb biting**
* **Queen Mab**
* **Poison**