Year 8 Cycle 2 – Knowledge Organiser – Romeo and Juliet (c.1595)

Social / Historical Context 1-4, Genre Conventions 5-10		Key Themes 1-6		Language and Structural Techniques 4-13	
1.Queen Elizabeth	reigned 1533-1603; as a female monarch defied expectations of patriarchal society	1.honour / loyalty	importance of kinship / family loyalty; affects male behaviour and violence	4.personifiction	attributing human / living qualities to something non-human / living
2.Patriarchal society	women denied all political rights; were subject to their husbands / fathers	2.religion	impacts characters' attitudes / choices	5.juxtaposition	placement of two ideas, statements or things next to one another for contrasting effect
3. setting	14th Century Verona; cultured city suffered widespread violence based around a family rivalry	3.fate and free will	idea that characters' destinies are decided against the choices they make	6.oxymoron	combination of words / ideas which have opposite meanings
4. staging	first performed around 1595; open-air theatre with few props, no scenery; boys played female characters	4.love	love in the play is powerful, brutal and dangerous	7.symbolism	use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities
5.Shakespearean Tragedy	play dealing with tragic events; possesses unhappy ending involving downfall of a character	5.death	how the certainty, fear and welcoming of death is presented in the play	8.foreshadowing	Where something is hinted at throughout text before it happens
6.tragic hero	high status character(s); sympathetic; inevitable downfall (their deaths)	6.individual vs society	Romeo and Juliet struggle against parents' / society's expectations	9.contrast	where words / scenes / ideas differ extremely from one to the next
7.Harmartia (fatal flaw)	fatal flaw (weakness); leads to downfall of hero	Language Techniques 1-3		10.dramatic irony	where things are revealed to the audience before they are to the characters, increasing tension
8.conflict	between good and evil; external conflict (e.g. violence); internal conflict (e.g. emotions)	1.imagery	language which creates vivid sensory ideas	11.soliloquy	when a character, thinking they are alone, speaks their thoughts aloud
9.peripeteia	turning point; hero's fortunes reverse	2.simile	figurative comparison using 'like or 'as'	12.chorus	group of actors who comment on the action through song, throughout the play
10.catastrophe	a disastrous conclusion; contains tragic waste e.g. death of innocent people	3.metaphor	figurative comparison by saying one thing is another	13.sonnet	poem of 14 lines with a strict rhyme scheme, associated with love / romance in conflict