PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE
A feud between two families, the Capulets and the Montagues, has been raging for many years. While attending a masked ball at the Capulet household, young Romeo, a Montague, falls in love with fair Juliet. Friar Lawrence secretly performs a wedding ceremony in the hopes that the union will bring peace to the rival families. Instead, a tragic tale unfolds as Romeo's friend, Mercutio, is killed by Tybalt, a Capulet relative. Romeo then kills Tybalt and flees. He learns he has been banished. Desperate after being separated from Juliet, he attempts to take his own life. The Friar calms him and makes a plan to bring the couple together. Part of his scheme involves having Juliet take a potion that will produce the effect of death. A messenger fails to reach Romeo to explain that Juliet is not dead, simply asleep. Romeo, bereaved at her supposed death, buys poison and returns to Verona. He visits Juliet in the tomb, drinks the poison, and dies. Juliet awakens, sees Romeo's body, and stabs herself. The play ends with the reconciliation of Capulet and Montague over the bodies of their children.

The play's author, William Shakespeare was born in 1564, and during his lifetime wrote 38 plays, four long poems and 154 sonnets.

THINK ABOUT IT
If you had one hour to spend with one of the characters in the play, which character would you choose? Why? What would you talk about?

Did Will & Company's performance stir your interest about the plays of William Shakespeare? Would you like to read some? Would you like to see more of them? If so, what does interest you?

DIG DEEPER
To learn more about Shakespeare, check out The Music Center’s Artsource Curriculum: “Jennifer Tipton’s The Tempest.”
www.musiccenter.org/education/Teacher-Resources/Artsource-Curriculum/Available-ArtSource-Units/Jennifer-Tipton/

TRY THIS CHALLENGE
Watch the musical “West Side Story” online and discuss how the play, “Romeo and Juliet,” translates to a different time period and set of circumstances. What is the relationship between the poetry in Shakespeare's play and the songs in the musical?