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Romeo and Juliet Film Review Example

“Two households, both alike in dignity, in fair Verona, where we lay our scene.” These lines mark the beginning of the epic tragedy that is Romeo and Juliet. Written by William Shakespeare, the play has been adapted into two films, one by Franco Zeffirelli in 1968, and the Baz Luhrmann in 1996. The 1996 film version is better because of its understandable style, its appealing actors, and its relatable filming style.

We live in a modern age. Naturally, we are accustomed to movies and books that are also set in modern times. The 1996 film version of Romeo and Juliet, portrays Verona in a modern way, with different costumes instead of the Shakespearean clothing styles of the past. In the film, there happen to be cars, instead of horses and donkeys, and guns instead of swords. These differences are crucial to the focus of the students, and it helps people apply the story to their own lives and see its value and meaning, without having to sift through the extra, old-fashioned props and costumes.

The characters were better portrayed by the actors in the 1996 version. The actors had more talent, and portrayed them in a way so that they didn't seem too dramatic for the viewers. In the 1968 version, the actors did not accurately portray the pain and love of the two characters. Rather, viewers disregarded the emotion, and saw

the movie as a romantic comedy, rather than a tragedy. The 1996 version had actors who were able to speak to the watchers, and make them feel the emotion better. It was not seen as a comedy, rather viewers saw it as what it was: a dramatic tale about the love Romeo and Juliet had for each other.

People for the 1968 version of the play may disagree. They say viewers like how the movie is more similar to the movie. Its actors display the same qualities as the characters do in the play, and Verona in the movie looks how it should in the Shakespearean era. Further, the old-fashioned props and costumes show viewers what it really would have been like to live during that time. It allows them to connect to something that once was, and helps viewers explore their knowledge of history and metaphors in the dialogue. The 1996 version they say makes it too easy for students and viewers to understand what is happening, instead of letting them use their minds to figure out what is happening. While all this may well be true, the 1968 version is simply more confusing and less appealing. For example, during the wedding scene, the 1968 version showed no wedding dress on Juliet, Romeo was not wearing a suit, and no other people were there, which led many to believe that it wasn't a wedding at all. While in the 1998 version it was clear due to the costumes and modern style, that it was a wedding. The older version does have value, if you want a historical version of the play. But if you are looking for an interpretation that will portray the play the same as the 1968 version, or better even, than the 1998 version is the way to go.

At the end of the day, the 1998 film version will always be the best choice. It is hard to beat since it has skilled actors, is easy to follow, and is easily relatable. Its modern style helps viewers understand the play better and connect to the characters and feel the raw emotion. Romeo and Juliet has always been memorable, but the 1998 film version has made the play more unforgettable than the 1968 version ever will.