



# ROMEOW & DROOLIET

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GRADES **3-5**

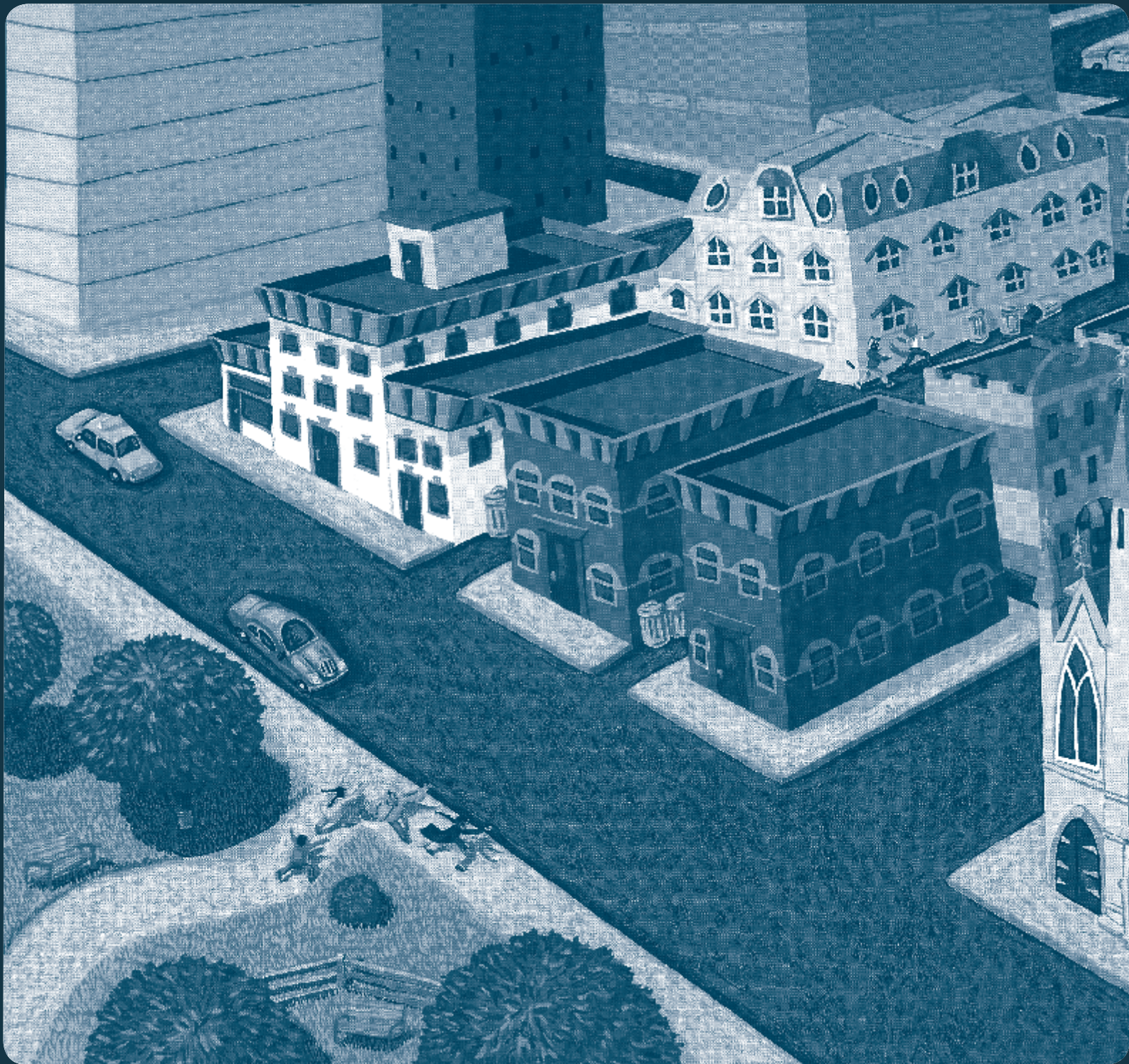


## INTRODUCTION

*Romeow & Drooliet* offers young readers an introduction to William Shakespeare and to one of his best known plays. In this book, they will find many clever twists of language; detailed paintings that both add to the story and tell tales of their own; and lots of laughter along the way. Students will relish discovering all these aspects of the book, as well as enjoy the story on its own: a love story between a cat and dog, for goodness sake's! What fun.

As a teacher, you'll want to know that the star-crossed Romeow and Drooliet in Nina Laden's book do not die. There is a threatening crisis, but all is saved by true love.

This guide provides suggestions to help you and your class use author/illustrator Nina Laden's book across the curriculum from literature and language arts (reading, writing, performance) to visual arts and math.

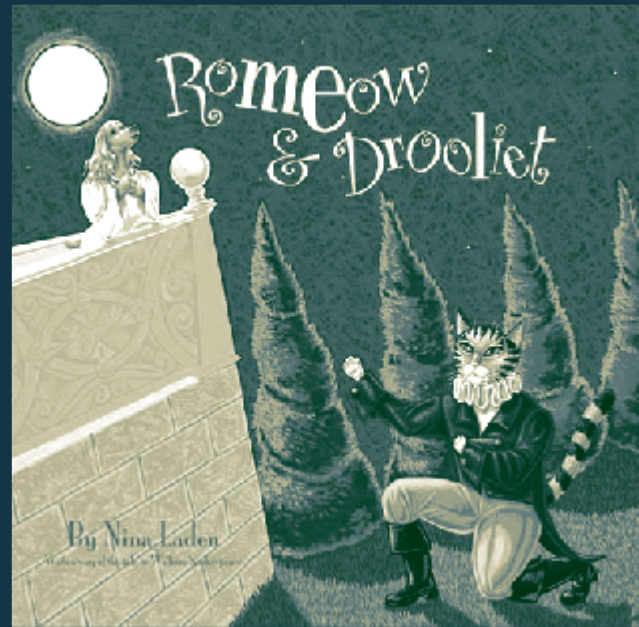


## GENERAL OVERVIEW

### THIS TEACHERS GUIDE CONTAINS:

Six Pre-Planned Activities For Students

- 1 Pre-Reading
- 2 Language Arts
- 3 Language Arts: Writing and Performance
- 4 Literature: William Shakespeare
- 5 Language Arts
- 6 Visual Arts



*Romeow & Drooliet* book cover



A QUICK GUIDE HOW EACH ACTIVITY MEETS FOLLOWING EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS FOR:

Math

Language Arts:

- Reading
- Writing
- Listening and Speaking
- Performance

Visual Arts

Working With Others

Theatre

Media

# 1 PRE-READING

Just like William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Nina Laden's *Romeow & Drooliet* tells of two feuding families. Instead of the Montagues and Capulets, there are the Felinis, a cat loving family, and the Barkers, a dog loving family.

"Two households, both alike in dignity  
(In fair Verona, where we lay our scene)  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny ..."  
—from *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare

"In the fair and sometimes not fair city,  
There lived two nearby feuding families."  
—from *Romeow & Drooliet* by Nina Laden

You and your students can take the idea of feuding families and turn it around into a game similar to "Family Feud." The show is based on opposing teams guessing the most-often given answers to questions in surveys of 100 people.

Introduce *Romeow & Drooliet* to your students. Allow them to look through the book, but they shouldn't read it thoroughly. Then tell the class that they are going to develop surveys that they will later use for a game of "Family Feud." Questions should be built around Shakespeare, cats, dogs, and other events that occur in the story. Brainstorm with them the questions they might want to include.

Sample questions are:

- Name a play by William Shakespeare.
- Name a breed of dog.
- What is a saying about cats?
- What costumes do people wear at costume parties?

Have your students survey a higher grade than your own (if your students are in the fourth grade, they might survey fifth grade classes). Provide each teacher with enough copies of your survey sheet so that each of their students has his or her own form. Each student should fill in a single answer to each question.

When the survey questionnaires are returned, tally up the results. Make a master list of the five most popular responses for each question. To determine the point value for each answer, have your students calculate the percentage of the whole each answer represents.

Use the algorithm:  $R/T \times 100 = P$

- R = the response
- T = the total number of students surveyed
- P = percent or point value

Round up or down accordingly. Do this for only the top five answers. List the responses and the point value for each question in order from most popular to least. (Since you are including only the top five answers, the total point value will not necessarily add up to 100.)

Now you are ready to play "Family Feud." Invite teams from the other classes in your grade to participate. Each team should consist of five players. Have students from your class take turns as the emcee/game-show host with each student asking one survey question. Other students can be responsible for revealing the correct answers.

The first hand raised giving an answer that is among the survey responses is the family that is "up." They have the chance to answer the question again until all the survey responses are covered. Just like on the TV show, if they make three mistakes in answering the question, the other team has a chance to steal. If that team can give a correct response, it steals the points accumulated. And the next emcee asks the next question. The team with the most accumulated points is the winner.

## 1 STANDARDS

### Math

- Understands that data represents specific pieces of information about real-world activities
- Solves problems involving number operations
- Multiplies and divides whole numbers
- Understands equivalent forms of percent and fractions

### Language Arts: Reading

- Previews text
- Establishes a purpose for reading
- Understands the author's purpose
- Knows themes that recur across literary works

### Language Arts: Writing

- Uses a variety of strategies to compile information

### Language Arts: Listening and Speaking

- Contributes to group discussions

### Working With Others

- Works cooperatively within a group to complete a task

### Media

- Knows the main formats and characteristics of familiar media





## 2 LANGUAGE ARTS

After you've read the book once, your students should go back through it, this time carefully examining the illustrations and the text. Have them collect examples of word play. Just like William Shakespeare in his plays, Nina Laden has filled *Romeow & Drooliet* with puns. Puns are humorous uses of words that emphasize different meanings or applications, or uses of words that are alike but have different meanings. For example:

Romeow plays on the name Romeo, and Romeow is a cat, and cats make meow sounds.

Drooliet plays on the name Juliet, and Drooliet is a dog, and dogs drool.

Benny says to Romeow about Drooliet: "She's a dog. She's not worth it." This plays on the fact that Drooliet is a dog, and the expression is also an unkind comment about a person's appearance.

Create a graphic organizer to collect the puns the children find and their explanations.

Sample Organizer:

Puns in Romeow & Drooliet By Nina Laden	
Pun	Explanation
Book on table in the Felini house: <i>As You Lick It</i>	Sounds like <i>As You Like It</i> , a play by William Shakespeare
"...scram before this party turns into a kitty catastrophe."	Plays on the syllable cat in catastrophe

After the children have collected puns, they can then go back through the book and collect examples of similes, metaphors, and alliteration.

### 2 STANDARDS

#### Language Arts: Reading

- Previews text
- Understands the way in which language is used in literary texts e.g. word play, simile metaphor, alliteration

#### Language Arts: Writing

- Uses graphic organizers

## WRITING AND PERFORMANCE

3

Discuss the difference between writing a story as a narrative and writing one as a play. Have the class divide *Romeow & Drooliet* into Acts and Scenes, and then have the children work in groups to write a script for each act. (FYI: William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* begins with a prologue and has five Acts.)

Students should feel free to use dialogue right out of the book or to change it any way they feel is right.

Hold a reading with the students in each writing group reading their Act.

Mount a full performance of the play your class has written. Children might want to make costumes, add background music to set mood, or even write songs for performing as part of the play.

### 3 STANDARDS

#### Language Arts: Writing

- Writes in response to literature
- Writes narrative accounts such as poems, stories, and plays
- Uses descriptive language to enhance ideas

#### Language Arts: Listening and Speaking

- Contributes to group discussions
- Listens to classmates
- Makes basic oral presentations

#### Theatre

- Demonstrates competence in writing scripts
- Uses acting skills
- Designs and produces informal and formal productions

#### Working with Others

- Works cooperatively in a group



## 4 LITERATURE: WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Have your students research William Shakespeare on the Internet and in the library. Here are some useful websites:

<http://www.folger.edu/template.cfm?cid=588>  
<http://Shakespeare.org.uk/homepage>  
<http://absoluteshakespeare.com>.

They should present their findings in a short report. Be sure they cover at least the following questions:

1. When did William Shakespeare live?
2. Why is it called the Elizabethan era in England?
3. What was the name of the theater in which his plays were most often performed? What was different about that theater than most theaters today?
4. Name four plays by William Shakespeare. Identify each as a history, comedy, or tragedy.

### 4 STANDARDS

#### Language Arts: Writing

- Uses a variety of strategies to plan research
- Uses electronic media to gather information for research topics

For the scene at the church where Mousignor Mouse marries Romeow and Drooliet, the narration can begin:

Mousignor Mouse married them. No one knew

II. The balcony scene in *Romeow & Drooliet* mirrors the original scene in *Romeo and Juliet*. Hand out the two balcony speeches that are copied in this guide. If you can get a recording of the song “Maria” from *West Side Story*, play that as well. Have the children compare and contrast the speeches.

### 5 STANDARDS

#### Language Arts: Reading

- Uses reading skills to understand a variety of literary passages
- Understands elements of character development in literary texts
- Understands the ways in which language is used in literary texts

#### Language Arts: Writing

- Writes in response to literature
- Writes narrative accounts such as poems
- Uses descriptive language

## 5 LANGUAGE ARTS

I. William Shakespeare often wrote in defined rhythms and in specific poetic forms such as blank verse, rhyming couplets, and quatrains. Nina Laden does the same in the narrator’s speeches. For example:

Now stories will come and stories will go.  
Some wither and die. Some blossom and grow.  
Some live in your heart. So don’t you forget  
The tale of Romeow and Drooliet.

Ask your students to count out the syllables (meters). They will find there are 10 beats per line, and that every pair of lines rhymes (The rhyme scheme is “AABB”). Nina Laden has written these speeches as rhyming couplets in pentameter rhythm.

Have children try to tell a part of the story of *Romeow & Drooliet* in sets of rhyming couplets using the same rhyme scheme. They can pick any action to narrate in this way. For example:

The first line of the rhyming couplet for the scene where the Felini boys look for clothes to wear for the party might be:

Back at the Felini house, they dressed up

## VISUAL ARTS

6

Royal families in the time of Shakespeare often had a crest or coat of arms that defined some aspect of the family’s history. Look at the end papers of *Romeow & Drooliet* and examine the coats of arms for the Felini and Barker families. Have the class discuss the meaning of the pictures and symbols. Your students can create their own coats of arms for their families. Use the template provided in this guide as a reproducible, enlarge it to any size you want, and trace it onto oak tag, cardboard, or foam core. Display your students’ work around the classroom or on a hallway bulletin board.

### 6 STANDARDS

#### Visual Arts

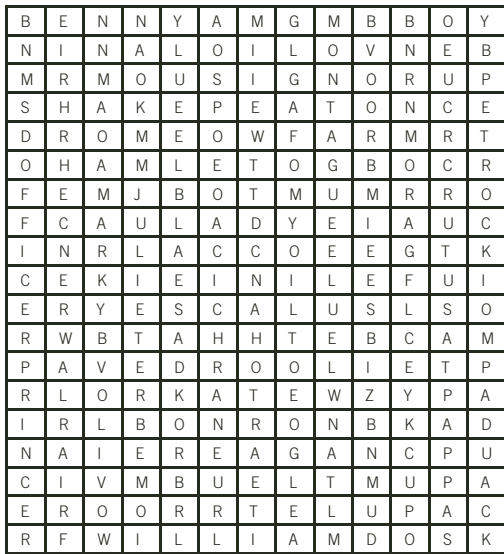
- Understands and applies media techniques and processes to the visual arts
- Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts
- Understands the visual arts in relation to history and culture

#### Art Connections

- Knows how ideas are expressed in the various art forms

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Have some fun! Hidden in this word search are names of characters from Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare and their corresponding characters from Romeow and Drooliet by Nina Laden.

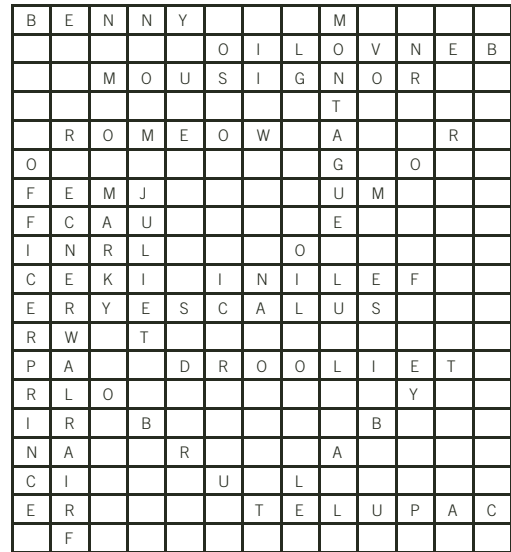


- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Romeo          | Romeow         |
| Juliet         | Drooliet       |
| Tybalt         | Turbo          |
| Mercutio       | Marky          |
| Montague       | Felini         |
| Capulet        | Barker         |
| Escalus        | Officer Prince |
| Friar Lawrence | Mousignor      |
| Benvolio       | Benny          |

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**ROMEOW & DROOLIET WORD SEARCH**

[ ANSWER SHEET ]



**The Balcony Scenes**

From *Romeow & Drooliet*:

Drooliet, from her balcony speaks:

“Oh, Romeow, where is that fur-faced Romeow?  
I do not care that you are a cat or a Felini.  
If you were a creature of any other name  
It would still make my tail wag.”

Romeow responds:

“Call me any name you want, just call me yours.”

From *Romeo and Juliet*:

Juliet, from her balcony speaks:

“O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou, Romeo?  
Deny thy father and refuse thy name  
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,  
And I’ll no longer be a Capulet”

Juliet then adds these famous lines:

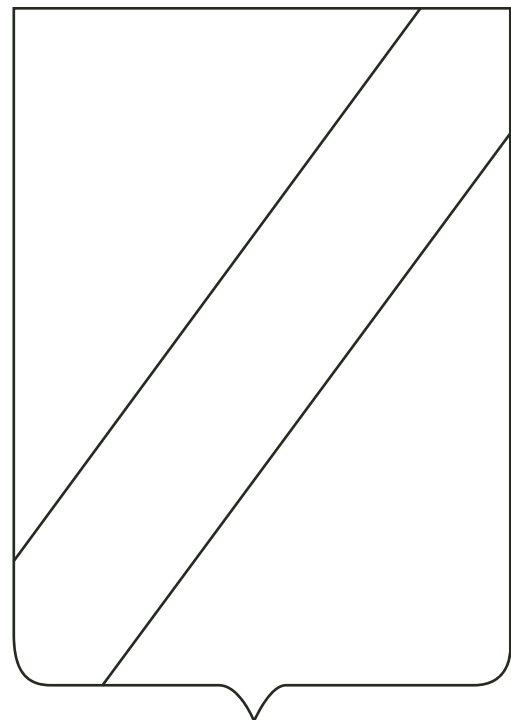
“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other word would smell as sweet.”

Romeo responds:

“I take thee at thy word.  
Call me but love, and I’ll be new baptized.  
Henceforth, I never will be Romeo.”  
(Act 2, Scene 2)

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**Coat of Arms**



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nina Laden lives in Seattle and Lummi Island, Washington, with her husband and cat. She spends several weeks a year participating in school visits all over the country. She is the author and illustrator of several books for children.

Visit Nina Laden at [www.ninaladen.com](http://www.ninaladen.com)

### ***Romeow and Drooliet***

By Nina Laden  
Chronicle Books, 2005  
Full color illustrations by author  
44 pages • Hardcover • ISBN 0-8118-3973-7

## OTHER BOOKS BY NINA LADEN



### ***The Night I Followed the Dog***

A Reading Rainbow Book  
CBC-IRA Children's Choice Award  
Parents' Choice, Gold Award  
Chronicle Books, 1994  
40 pages • Hardcover • ISBN 0-8118-0647-2



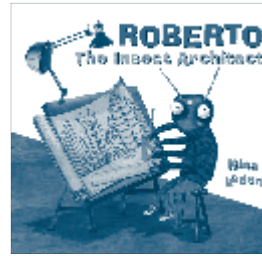
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Society of Illustrators, Silver Medal  
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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THIS GUIDE

This guide was prepared by Clifford Wohl, Educational Consultant.

