

# AQA English Literature GCSE

## Romeo and Juliet: Character Profile Lady Capulet

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## LADY CAPULET

### INTRODUCTION

Lady Capulet is Juliet's mother, however she acts in an **unconventional** way. Instead of having a close, maternal relationship with her daughter their relationship is **tense** and **formal**. Perhaps their strained relationship serves to **highlight the differences** between the two female characters.



Lady Capulet wishes for Juliet to marry Paris, and conforms heavily to the ongoing conflict between the two families.

### CHARACTER IN CONTEXT

- **Traditional Elizabethan woman:** in wealthier families, the mother was not expected to care for or have a large role in raising their children; instead, families would employ a nurse to look after their sons and daughters. This is reflected in the character of Lady Capulet, who appears to act **coldly** towards her daughter. It was also usual for Elizabethan women to marry and give birth young - it is revealed that Lady Capulet herself was only fourteen when she gave birth to Juliet. This is why she tries to pressure Juliet into marrying Paris so young.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Self-Centred** - instead of listening to Juliet's concerns for marrying Paris, Lady Capulet focuses on how their marriage will help the family's image.
- **Unloving** - Lady Capulet appears to neglect her daughter's feelings and refuses to love her in a maternal sense.
- **Materialistic** - Lady Capulet is concerned with the material gain she will obtain once Juliet has married Paris. She values her status over Juliet's happiness. She only forgives her daughter when Juliet's decides to marry Paris to appease her and her father.



## RELATIONSHIPS

**Juliet** | Their relationship is essentially **non-existent**. The only time in which the audience sees an exchange between the mother and daughter is when Lady Capulet **must** talk to her daughter or is **sent by her husband** to talk to her. Lady Capulet and Juliet are also **opposites** of each other; everything that Lady Capulet wants, Juliet does not. While her mother was married and with a child at Juliet's age, Juliet is not even **"dream(ing)"** of it which suggests that Juliet is an independent woman. However, it could be argued that the way in which Juliet becomes **infatuated** with a man at a young age shows her to be **more like her mother** than previously thought.

**Lord Capulet** | It appears that Lady Capulet is fearful of her husband, demonstrated when she refuses to tell him that Juliet does not wish to marry Paris. She fears his reaction.

## LADY CAPULET QUOTE BANK

QUOTE	EXTENDED ANALYSIS
<b><i>"Here comes your father; tell him so yourself, And see how he will take it at your hands."</i></b> (A3S5)	Here, it could be interpreted that Lady Capulet fears Lord Capulet, so encourages her daughter to tell him herself that she no longer wishes to marry Paris. This portrays her as a weak character who cares more for herself than her daughter, further demonstrating the distanced relationship between Juliet and her mother. This distance is suggested through the <b>repeated</b> use of the <b>pronoun "your"</b> .
<b><i>"Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word, Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee."</i></b> (A3S5)	Again, the major separation between mother and daughter is heavily implied here. It shows the unemotional address that Lady Capulet utilises when conversing with her daughter - but again, this may be seen as common practice to a contemporary audience.
<b><i>"We will have vengeance for it."</i></b> (A3S5)	This comes after the Capulets find out about Tybalt's death - Lady Capulet is an unforgiving character who desires revenge.
<b><i>"Nurse, come back again."</i></b> (A1S3)	This implies how she is unable to look after her own daughter, relying on staff to do this for her. This may show how she is an incapable character, but also demonstrates her as a stereotypical (wealthy) Elizabethan woman.

