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# Manga Shakespeare: Romeo And Juliet



## Synopsis

Now presenting Manga Shakespeare<sup>®</sup>;the Bard<sup>™</sup>'s greatest plays in an accessible, lively format for a new generation of readers

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: GN530L (What's this?)

Series: Manga Shakespeare

Paperback: 208 pages

Publisher: Harry N. Abrams (April 1, 2007)

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Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 0.6 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars<sup>®</sup> <sup>®</sup> See all reviews<sup>®</sup> (15 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #783,373 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #71 in<sup>®</sup> Books > Literature & Fiction > Dramas & Plays > Children's #85 in<sup>®</sup> Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Theater #494 in<sup>®</sup> Books > Children's Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Manga

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 2 - 8

## Customer Reviews

This was a bit odd. I got this for my second grader. He is picky about what he will bother to read, Star Wars, Capitan Underpants and comics in many forms. We negotiated this one as he has seen the play. He read it through in several hours, happily. Now he keeps asking when more are coming out. The older sister, 5th grade, read 2/3 of the play with me this summer. She read it, enjoyed it, noted that it was missing some good parts. So I read it through, against my better judgment. The pictures are fine I dislike the cuts. Halfway through I realize that I am really into it and the story, as portrayed in manga, works. Did I pick up new insights? Not any deep ones, but it was better than some productions. I found it a reasonable and moving presentation. I'll buy more of these for the kids. This would be useful for the kids who can not fathom reading Shakespeare. If a student was slipped a copy a year before there first school reading it might make a huge difference.

When I was in high school and first starting out in college, I used to be completely against the idea

of adapting classical works into more popular formats, such as comic books or illustrated and abridged children's stories. I am often a completist and want to read and know the entire story, not an abridged or shortened version. However, I think experience has tempered me with some wisdom and I see how useful such adaptations can be and sometimes actually get excited about them. Therefore, I was quite excited when a friend introduced me to this manga version of ROMEO AND JULIET. The story uses the manga art form to tell the story of Romeo and Juliet. The story is moved from medieval Italy to modern day Tokyo. The characters speak in the original text of the play, but it has been abridged (I'd say about 70% of the dialogue remains). I'm not all that familiar with the manga format, but I know that manga is now huge in the U.S., especially with the pre-teen set, and is growing in popularity. As much as I myself like to read stories in their complete unabridged form, I know that many pre-teens and teenagers don't. I love Shakespeare's language, but I'd rather young people become familiar with the story and key lines than being forced to read the entire book. The MANGA SHAKESPEARE: ROMEO AND JULIET is a great way to introduce people to the play and hopefully get them excited to read it in its entirety in the future. Recommended for those who have an interest in manga and might be interested in reading and learning about the classics.

The tragic story of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet has no doubt inspired countless spin offs of the same story told in different ways. The musical "West Side Story" is probably the most obvious retelling of the same theme. I recently purchased this book (Romeo and Juliet: A Manga Shakespeare graphic novel illustrated by Sonia Leong) on Amazon for a bargain price. This play was one of the most popular plays during his lifetime. The original play takes place in Verona, Italy. This graphic novel story version begins with a street fight between the Montague and Capulet clans two feuding mafia families. Romeo is the son of Montague and Juliet is the daughter of Capulet. They fall in love with each other and like all of Shakespeare's plays; there are conflicts, twists, turns and tragedy. I never like to give away too much information when reviewing any novel because it spoils it for the reader; however, if you are familiar with Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet you already know the ending. If you are into Shakespeare and like graphic novels you should check out this book. Rating: 5 Stars. Joseph J. Truncale (Author: Zen Poetry Moments: Haiku and Senryu for special occasions).

The decision to set the story in modern Tokyo seemed to have no artistic reason, and in fact detracted from it, particularly since all original names were kept. The reader is left wondering why Japanese yakuza families have Italian names. For that matter, the reader is left wondering why the

families were made into yakuza. While it does give them a reason to be brawling and fighting, and for a long-standing feud, the decision was a poor one as it feels like a misguided or perhaps naive attempt to capitalize on western interest in the east rather than as a way to add to the story, plot, or art. The script is also disappointing, as it uses but abridges the original. This is a choice that will almost always fall flat since it destroys the flow and rhythm that are characteristic of Shakespeare -- and which would have given the book merit even for classroom use that it now lacks. Even the choice to modernize the setting could have been handled much better. The depiction of Mantua in particular looked almost wholly taken from the "Romeo and Juliet" movie starring Leonardo di Caprio. Despite my complaints, I consider the book worth having because I believe in the basic idea of taking Shakespeare's original scripts and making them visual. But I believe the visual should be kept in the Elizabethan era when the plays were written and performed, and I certainly believe the script should not be tampered with unless it is wholly an adaptation; halfway measures hurt half of the point of the endeavor.

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