ACT 2 PROLOGUE

1. Paraphrase the Prologue of Act 2. Again, why does Shakespeare use a prologue here?

"Now Romeo's old feelings of desire are dying, and a new desire is eager to take their place. Romeo groaned for the beautiful Rosaline and said he would die for her, but compared with tender Juliet, Rosaline doesn't seem beautiful now. Now someone loves Romeo, and he's in love again—both of them falling for each other's good looks. But he has to make his speeches of love to a woman who's supposed to be his enemy. And she's been hooked by someone she should fear. Because he's an enemy, Romeo has no chance to see Juliet and say the things a lover normally says. And Juliet's just as much in love as he, but she has even less opportunity to meet her lover. But love gives them power, and time gives them the chance to meet, sweetening the extreme danger with intense pleasure."

Shakespeare uses the prologue again to foreshadow our star-crossed lovers.

ACT 2 SCENE 1

1. Lines 1-2 “Can I go forward when my heart is here?/Turn back, dull earth, and find thy center out.” Why does Romeo call himself “dull earth”?

He cannot move or feel emotion without Juliet.

ACT 2 SCENE 2

1. Juliet is on the balcony outside her bedroom but cannot hear the words that Romeo says to himself as he looks at her from the hiding place below. Answer the following questions about lines 2-25 “But soft...that check”:

a. Romeo repeats the light and dark images he introduced when he saw Juliet for the first time. Why does Romeo compare Juliet to the sun?

Juliet shines as brightly as the sun. She is his new shining love.

b. Why does he want the sun to kill the envious moon?

If Juliet is the sun and Rosaline is the moon, Romeo wants to forget his love for Rosaline by replacing it with his love for Juliet.

c. Why is the moon envious?

Juliet is prettier than Rosaline.

d. Why does he compare Juliet’s eyes to the stars?

They glisten and show depth; stars were revered in that time period

e. Why is this comparison to stars another example of foreshadowing?

They will soon be "star-crossed" lovers, fate hanging in the stars (both echoes of the prologue from act one and what Romeo said about going to the caplet party at the end of act one.

*2. Lines 33-36. “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 is still unaware that Romeo is nearby. Paraphrase these lines

She says, why are you Romeo? Change your name or if you say you love me, I'll no longer be a Capulet.

*3. Lines 38-49. “’Tis but thy name...Take all myself” Paraphrase lines 38-49. What is Juliet’s attitude toward the feud that has separated the two families?

Names are just names; they don’t define who we are as people.

4. After Juliet asks some pertinent questions (lines 58-84 “My ears have not yet... I would adventure for such merchandise”), she realizes that Romeo has overheard her intimate thoughts about him. How does her attitude change in lines 85-105 “Thou know’st the mask of night... Which the dark night hath so discovered”? What is she worried about?

She now knows Romeo has overheard her and she thinks that maybe they are moving too fast (another foreshadow)
5. Why does Juliet object to Romeo's swearing on the moon (lines 109-111 “O, swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon/ That monthly changes in her circle orb,/Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.”)?
   The moon is inconsistent; it changes every month so will Romeo's love change every month?

6. Juliet speaks of her fears in lines 116-124 “Well, do not swear... Come to thy heart”. Explain.
   As soon as they marry and express their love, something bad might happen.

7. What is Juliet's plan in lines 142-148 “Three words, dear Romeo...”?
   Send word to me tomorrow what time and where will be married and I'll give you all of myself and my love.

ACT 2 SCENE 3

1. Friar Lawrence is introduced in a lengthy soliloquy in which he philosophies about nature and about mankind. Paraphrase his speech (lines 7-30).
   The earth provides us with plants to help if used correctly but that could harm if abused.

2. What does Romeo tell Friar Lawrence, and what does he want from the Friar (lines 43-64 “That last is true... That thou consent to marry us today”)?
   Romeo wants the friar to perform the marriage of him and Juliet.

3. What is Friar Lawrence's reaction to hearing of Romeo's new love (lines 65-80 “Holy Saint Francis... Women may fall when there's no strength in men”)?
   He's shocked that Romeo has changed his mind so quickly from Rosaline to Juliet.

*4. Lines 89-92 “To turn your households' rancor to pure love”. What reason does Friar Lawrence give for agreeing to marry Romeo and Juliet?
   He agrees to marry them hoping their marriage could end the feud.

ACT 2 SCENE 4

1. This scene shows us more of the nurse's character as she trades quips and puns with Mercutio. What malapropisms (an inappropriateness of speech resulting from the use of one word for another which resembles it) does the nurse use (“If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.”)?
   She means conference—confidence implies intimacy between the nurse and Romeo.

2. What message does Romeo urge the nurse to give to Juliet (line 84-87 “Bid her devise...”)?
   That he and Juliet will be married later that day at friar's cell if Juliet can get out for confession.

ACT 2 SCENE 5

1. Juliet is very impatient to hear news from Romeo (lines 1-17). What images does she use in her soliloquy to express this?
   Cupid's wings/Venus/sun being high in the sky.

2. The nurse is supposed to be gone only a half hour, but she is actually gone for how long?
   Three hours.

3. The nurse knows Juliet is impatient, but she keeps putting her off. Why does the nurse do this?
   Tired of being the messenger and from being picked on by Mercutio.

4. Why does the Nurse agree to help Juliet marry Romeo?
   She wants what's best for Juliet and she knows Romeo is a good man.

ACT 2 SCENE 6

1. What foreshadowing do we see in this scene?
   The friar is asking for a blessing for the marriage because he fears a future bad event.