

SOUTHWEST

SHAKESPEARE

COMPANY

Julius Caesar



Julius Caesar Statue



BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A teacher guide for studying the play and
attending Southwest Shakespeare Company's performance

Julius Caesar

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Dear Educator:

Welcome to Southwest Shakespeare Company's 16th season! We are thrilled to continue to provide quality matinee productions to Arizona's students, and we are excited that you have chosen to bring your students to our performance of *Julius Caesar*. We appreciate that you are dedicated to bringing Shakespeare's work alive for your students.

In this age of high-stakes testing, many schools and educators feel forced to limit their focus in the classroom to test-taking skills, thus eliminating enrichment activities such as attending theatrical performances. But as you know, these experiences often make the learning objectives relevant to students and must be valued as much (if not more!) as high AIMS scores and meeting AYP. You are providing your students with lasting memories and helping to create a new generation of theatre-goers and lovers of Shakespeare. This experience will stay with your students long after the last bubble sheet has been marked and the latest mandate has been met. We applaud your efforts to keep the learning process memorable and meaningful for your students.

We hope you find the enclosed information, activities, and resources helpful and entertaining. If you have any suggestions for activities or topics not already found in this study guide, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at education@swshakespeare.org or call me at 610.301.2233. We are always interested in hearing new ways to excite your students (and you!) about Shakespeare and live theatre.

Happy teaching!

Dawn Rochelle Tucker
Southwest Shakespeare Company
Director of Education

Meeting Arizona State Standards

By viewing Southwest Shakespeare Company's production of *Julius Caesar*, students can meet several of Arizona State Arts Standards. In addition, the activities included in this teacher's guide, when implemented in the classroom along with other teacher-assigned reading and writing activities, will allow students to meet various Arizona State Standards in Writing, Reading, and Listening and Speaking.

WRITING STANDARDS – STRAND 3: WRITING APPLICATIONS

Concept 2: Expository

Expository writing includes non-fiction writing that describes, explains, informs, or summarizes ideas and content (Act-By-Act Writing Topics, pages 15-18 Journal Writing, pages 19-22, Rhetoric and Figures of Speech 13-14).

Concept 3: Functional

Functional writing provides specific directions or information related to real-world tasks. This includes letters, memos, schedules, directories, signs, manuals, forms, recipes, and technical pieces for specific content areas (Act-by-Act Writing Topics 15-18).

Concept 5: Literary Response

Literary response is the writer's reaction to a literary selection. The response includes the writer's interpretation, analysis, opinion, and/or feelings about the piece of literature and selected elements within it (What's in a Name pages 23; Act-By-Act Writing Topics, page 15-18; Journal Writing, pages 19-22).

READING STANDARDS – STRAND 1: READING PROCESS

Concept 6: Comprehension Strategies

Employ strategies to comprehend text (Anticipation & Reaction Guide, page 11; Acting Out, page 12).

READING STANDARDS – STRAND 2: COMPREHENDING LITERARY TEXT

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

Identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of literature (Rhetoric and Figures of Speech 13-14).

Concept 2: Historical and Cultural Aspects of Literature

Recognize and apply knowledge of the historical and cultural aspects of American, British, and world literature (Act-By-Act Writing Topics, pages 15-18; Journal Writing, pages 19-22).

LISTENING AND SPEAKING STANDARDS

Standard 3: Students effectively listen and speak in situations that serve different purposes and involve a variety of audiences (Acting Out, page 12).

ARTS STANDARDS – THEATRE

Strand 3: Evaluate

Students describe physical and vocal attributes appropriate to the characters in the play in class and professional performances (**attending and discussing Southwest Shakespeare Company's performance of *Julius Caesar***).

Students justify the perception of a performance and critique its production elements (**attending and discussing Southwest Shakespeare Company's performance of *Julius Caesar***).

Recommended Resources

Reference Books

The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare: An Introduction with Documents by Russ McDonald

The Norton Shakespeare by Walter Cohen (Editor), Jean E. Howard (Editor), Katharine Eisaman Maus (Editor), Stephen Greenblatt (Editor)

ShakesFear and How to Cure It! by Ralph Alan Cohen: This guide includes

Shakespeare in Parts by Simon Palfrey & Tiffany Stern: An invaluable resource on original staging practices. A grasp on how rehearsals, companies and productions worked during the renaissance can help youth relate to the text in a more specific and personal way.

Picture Books

Matthew Brady's Photography or the Civil War

All the World's A Stage by Rebecca Piatt Davidson

The Bard of Avon: The Story of William Shakespeare by Diane Stanley and Peter Vennema

Tales from Shakespeare (comic book) by Marcia Williams

William Shakespeare and the Globe by Aliki

Websites

www.swshakespeare.org – see what's new at Southwest Shakespeare Company

<http://shakespeare.clusty.com/> - This is a beautiful designed and easy to use search engine of Shakespeare's works. Users can search by play, character, phrase or topic.

www.william-shakespeare.info/index.htm - a comprehensive site with links to the complete works including background information, biographical information and pictures, information about Elizabethan theatres, a Shakespeare dictionary, the first folio, quotes, and a quiz and discussion forum.

<http://tinyurl.com/mefdha> - A Cliff Notes thorough and user-friendly glossary of Shakespeare's language.

www.pbs.org/shakespeare/events - a PBS resource to support the television series, which includes teaching resources, a playwright game, and information on Shakespeare's life and times.

<http://nfs.sparknotes.com> - this is the "No Fear Shakespeare" website that presents the original text of Shakespeare's play side by side with a modern version. USE WITH CAUTION. These texts can imply to students that the original text is incomprehensible and in need of re-writing. Instead, encourage them to do their own rewriting/paraphrasing to illustrate THEY DO UNDERSTAND.

www.folger.edu – access to primary documents and lesson plans for teaching Shakespeare.

shakespeare.palomar.edu/educational.htm – includes links to sites designed for teaching Shakespeare over the Internet; great for finding secondary resources to support the primary play being taught.

www.teachersfirst.com/shakespr.shtml – has on-line quizzes and surveys related to particular plays; also has related sites with information about Elizabethan England

www.stratford.co.uk - the official Stratford resource center on William Shakespeare.

Comments from the director

These comments can be used to help you prepare your students to see Southwest Shakespeare Company's performance of *Julius Caesar* and may also answer any questions about changes or modifications made to the stage performance as compared to the written play.

Name of Production:	Julius Caesar
Director:	Rick Corley
Time Period:	Post Civil War
Altered from Original:	Yes.
Why?	To help an American audience relate to the play without making it feel too contemporary. This plot is timeless. The Roman wars were classical wars to Shakespeare's audience and the Civil War is a classical war to a modern American audience.
Have any Characters been cut?	No one significant.
Have any Characters been added?	No.
Have any Characters been combined?	Yes.
Why?	For congruity of story.
Is there any cross-gender casting?	No.
Have any scenes been cut?	Not in full. This play is already quite compact and the trimming was done in a way that maintained the integrity of the play, yet conformed to modern expectation of time.
Are there any fight scenes?	Yes.
Stage blood?	Yes.
Weapons?	Yes.
Additional Explanation:	This is a play that takes place during a short pause after a war and then during a new war. The play depicts the costs and consequences of the decision to wage war. The major theme of the play is that reasonable men go to war for reasonable purposes and the results are anything but reasonable.
Are there any love scenes?	Yes, but not sexual love scenes. Between husbands and wives. Portia's scene with Brutus is about a relationship of equals made unequal by the secrecy surrounding the assassination. Both scenes are used to show how the march to war corrupts even marital relationships and trust.
Sexual innuendo?	No.
Final Comments:	This play is incredibly relevant right now in light of the questions we face about what makes a great leader, what kind of governmental state is best and when is it best to change a government.

Helpful Tips for seeing and exploring Julius Caesar as Staged by the Southwest Shakespeare Company

Before seeing the play ...

Discuss with your class the similarities between the lives of Lincoln and Caesar (see Uncanny Similarities page 10).

The director used images captured by Mathew Brady during the Civil War as inspiration for sets, costumes and concepts. Many of these images are available online through the Library of Congress and can be used as a great teaching tool for this show, especially in conjunction with paintings and frescos of Caesar's wars. Many of Brady's photography, however, are very graphic and discretion should be used when choosing which photos to show youth.

Many considered Mathew Brady to be the father of photojournalism. Brady photographed only one actual battle choosing instead to focus on scenes of men living in the camps and dead after the battle. His choice to focus on these elements was meant as a statement on the living cost of war.



Young Roman Woman- From a fresco in Pompeii

I have lived long enough both in years and in accomplishments.

-
Julius Caesar

In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years.

-
Abraham Lincoln



Clara Barton- Photo by Mathew Brady

After seeing the play ...

Did your views about the play or any of the characters change after seeing this live production? If so how? Try to be very specific about moments in the action that affected you.

Did the production look like what you imagined as you read the play? How was it similar? How was it different?

Which actor best portrayed his/her character? Why?

How was the production different from the written play? What decisions did the director make about staging? Were these effective decisions? Why or why not?

What did you think of the production values (sets, costumes, lighting)? Did they help you to better understand the plot of the play?

Sources and History



Julius Caesar was known to be first published in the First Folio in 1623. A performance of the play is mentioned by Thomas Platter the Younger in his diary from September 1599, but *Caesar* is not mentioned in the list of Shakespeare's plays published by Francis Meres in 1598 which leads scholars to believe Shakespeare wrote the show in 1599.

Shakespeare's source for *Julius Caesar* was Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Life of Brutus* and *Life of Caesar*; however, Shakespeare never stuck definitively to his sources. Shakespeare changes the year of Caesar's triumph, places the execution in the Capitol not Curia Pompeiana (Pompey's theatre) and Shakespeare also changes many of the historical dates and places to suit the dramatic action of his play.

Shakespeare not only takes liberties with the historical facts in *Julius Caesar*, the play also contains many anachronistic elements from the Elizabethan period. The characters mention objects such as hats and doublets– neither of which existed in ancient Rome– and at one point a clock is heard to strike and Brutus notes it with "Count the clock." Such anachronisms are not exclusive to this play, as Shakespeare's historical plays often contain similar anachronisms, especially when the local is exotic.

The dramatic problem established at the beginning of *Julius Caesar* is alarm at Julius Caesar's ambition to become "king." Before the midpoint of the play, however, Caesar, the title character, is assassinated and shortly after Mark Antony's famous funeral oration ("Friends, Romans, Countrymen ...") the setting shifts permanently from Rome to the battlefields on which Brutus and Cassius meet their inevitable defeat. *Julius Caesar* is a tragedy; but who is the protagonist? The short-lived Caesar or the long-suffering Brutus? Scholars have debated, and will doubtless continue to debate, this question as long as we continue to read the play. The answer, however, lies in the heart of the viewer and that is why no conclusion will ever be reached.

An Introduction



In her book *Shakespeare After All*, the great contemporary scholar Marjorie Garber writes, “To Shakespeare’s original audiences, a play about ancient Rome or ancient Troy was not an escapist document about a faraway world, but something very like the opposite: a powerful lesson in modern – that is to say, sixteenth century – ethics and statecraft. “ In other words, in a country under constant threat of terrorism fueled by religious war, with a ruler (Queen Elizabeth) who possessed no heir, the questions asked by Shakespeare in *Julius Caesar* were highly pertinent. Among them: What kind of government best creates stability and insures the greatest rights to all? How do we reconcile our ideals to the reality of political life? And, most importantly, is it acceptable to kill one person in a society in order to insure the greater good of all?

Those questions are no less meaningful today in our U.S. global empire. We daily call into question the price of our ideals, and many of us feel the profound conflict between self-preservation and reverence for human rights. Our nation struggles with how best to defend itself from threats without and within our borders. Are search and seizure, wiretap and torture out of bounds or justifiable exceptions in our perceived state of siege by terrorists? These questions are not theoretical but practical issues that rip our social fabric and create ugly divisions between otherwise rational people. As a country, Americans are like Brutus, “with himself at war.”

One of the things history – and great art like *Julius Caesar* – teaches us is that men most often go to war with the loftiest of intentions and the finest of ideals, and that killing inevitably involves self-justification and nationalistic righteousness. Brutus kills, as he tells the plebeians, “not because I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more.” And yet, like so many statesmen since, Brutus does not see that there is a difference between Caesar the man and “Caesar” the idea, and that killing a man, no matter how powerful, does not snuff out the passions that underpinned his power. Assassination, whether in ancient Rome, Renaissance England, or twentieth-century Vietnam, Pakistan or Iraq, creates ghosts – powerful spirits of havoc that walk the blasted earth embodying in thousand-fold form the avenging spirit of the fallen idol. There are very few instances of a coup producing anything but another coup – but this doesn’t keep us from giving it another try.

Our choice has been to give the play an American setting, yet leave it in the distant past – a time where a word like “honor” carried weight far greater than it does today. It isn’t difficult to imagine that if Lincoln had lived, he might have continued and even advanced the crackdown on civil liberties prevalent throughout the Civil War. The country was in chaos, and a strong – even tyrannical – leader would be seen as necessary and vital to create stability. This “what if” has guided the context and look of our production, which is set in a past but recognizable America, during a short break between wars. The parallels between these four epochs - Rome, Shakespeare’s time, America post-Civil war and today - are inescapable.

-Rick Corely, Director

Uncanny Similarities

Julius Caesar & Abraham Lincoln

- Five months before Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, the Booth brothers (Junius Brutus Booth, Jr., Edwin Booth, and John Wilkes Booth) put on a benefit performance of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. John Wilkes played Marc Antony, Edwin played Junius Brutus, and Junius Brutus played Cassius. (Got that?) It was the only time that the brothers would appear together on the same stage.
- Julius Caesar had visited England in 55 and 54 BCE when he may have visited lands that later were conquered by Rome, called "Lindum"---subsequently changed to "Lincoln."
- Both Caesar and Lincoln were assassinated in theatres---Lincoln in Ford's Theatre and Caesar in Pompey's Theatre.
- Both had premonitions, dreams, or warnings of their own death.
- Abraham Lincoln was an admirer of Claudius's speeches in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.
- Both Caesar and Lincoln died at the age of 56.
- Both Lincoln and Caesar were "republicans", in countries that despised the idea of being ruled by a King. Both Booth and Brutus thought the men they assassinated were making themselves king.
- Both were assassinated as part of a conspiracy of eight and both sets of conspirators thought of themselves as "liberators"---.Caesar's assassins even called themselves "The Liberators."
- "Sic Semper tyrannis!" (Thus ever to tyrants) are the same words uttered by both assassins of Caesar and Lincoln.
- Both assassinations occurred following a Civil War.
- Both leaders set out ostensibly to save their republics, but ended up nearly destroying them.
- Both lost more of their own fellow citizens in bloody civil wars than anyone had ever done before them.
- Both were assassinated shortly after their final victories to a mixture of joy and horror.
- Both were elevated to near-divine status immediately after their deaths, a status which Caesar kept for 1,500 years until the fall of Byzantium, and which Lincoln still possesses to this day.



Anticipation and Reaction Guide

Part One: Before seeing or reading the play *Julius Caesar*, read the statements below. Write an “A” if you agree with the statement, a “D” if you disagree, or a “?” if you are unsure. Then write a brief explanation for each of your decisions.

Compare your answers with a partner and discuss your reasons for how you responded to each statement. After you have finished reading and/or seeing the play, revisit the statements and see if you would change your response. Discuss with your partner why you did or did not change your response for each statement.

A, D, or ? (BEFORE seeing/reading <i>Julius Caesar</i>)	Statement	A, D, or ? (AFTER seeing/reading <i>Julius Caesar</i>)
	No political leader should have absolute power. Explanation:	
	Money, power and ambition make good people make bad choices. Explanation:	
	Belief in omens and signs is silly and superstitious. There is a natural explanation for everything. Explanation:	
	It is right to hurt someone you love to serve the greater good. Explanation:	
	There are acceptable reasons to commit murder. Explanation:	
	It is not how long you live, but how well you live that matters. Explanation:	
	It is better to die in an act of bravery than live by cowardly means. Explanation:	
	Suicide is an honorable way to die. Explanation:	
	Trusting your friends, no matter what, always turns out well. Explanation:	

Part Two: What reactions would Caesar, Brutus or Mark Antony have to these same statements? After reading and/or seeing the play, respond to these statements from the viewpoint of one of these characters. Then, taking on the role of the character, debate these issues!

Acting Out

Staging the Storm: Act I Scene 3

Elizabethan theatre companies had access to only primitive sound and lighting effects, but relied heavily on the people in the troupe to help create large-scale effects. The storm scene in *Julius Caesar* lasts through an entire scene and is very important to the plot and dialogue on stage. Shakespearean sound effects would have been made with instruments (drums, wind whistles, etc.), large sheets of metal (to shake for thunder) and heavy balls (rolled across the floor or dropped from a height).

Students will have a lot of fun making their own storm and learn a lot about staging from the challenges these types of sound effects produce. First, divide up into equal teams (playing companies) and set your parameters: What are the students allowed to use in the room? Can the readers participate in creating the storm, or must they remain focused on the dialogue? Second, let the teams break off and put a staging together. After 5-10 minutes (depending on your time constraints and group dynamic) have them show each other what they came up with. Lastly, talk about what worked, what they had the hardest time creating and what they would change. Could you hear the speaker? Were the effects believable? If not, were the performances entertaining?

Depending on the time left, either have the groups revise their performance or have them all perform simultaneously. The latter is my favorite exercise and a lot of fun for the person/people watching!

Silent Movie Assassination: Act 3 Scene 1

Have your students stage Caesar's death as a silent film (make it a slow-motion silent film if you have a particularly boisterous group of students). Go through the text and write on the board all of the requirements the text lays out for the death: setting, moment before, who stabs first, who last. Find these things together by reading the text of the scene aloud. Next, divide into groups, assign roles, set parameters (weapon use, safety, length) and then send the groups off to work on their own. After 5-10 minutes, reconvene and have each group present. After all the groups have performed, talk about choices that were interesting. Did Caesar fight back in any of the scenes? If not, why did he not? If so, were any of the conspirators injured? If you have time and the group has done particularly well with this exercise, break off again and let them tweak their performances.

Rhetoric and Figures of Speech

Rhetoric[ret-er-ik], n. 1. The art or science of all specialized literary uses of language in prose or verse, including the figures of speech. 2. The study of the effective use of language. 3. The ability to use language effectively.

During Caesar's funeral both Brutus and Mark Antony give speeches. At one point Mark Antony says that he is "not an orator, as Brutus is," yet his speech actually contains far more rhetoric than Brutus' speech. Antony's speech is also in blank verse while Brutus speaks in prose. Take a look at the two speeches and compare the use of the following basic rhetorical devices:

Iambic Pentameter- Using ten syllables in a line in unstressed and stressed pairs:

If **you** have **tears** pre-**pare** to **shed** them **now**

Deviations from the pattern can be used for emotional effect:

Friends, Ro-mans, Coun-try-men, lend me your **ears**

Alliteration: The repetition of consonants through a line, sentence or monologue:

For I have neither **wit**, nor **words**, nor **worth**
Or
Through this the well-**be**loved **B**rutus **s**tabbed

Assonance: The repetition of vowels through a line, sentence or monologue:

But were I Brutus
And Brutus **Antony**, there were **an Antony**
(this line contains BOTH assonance and alliteration)

Repetition: There are many figures of repetition, but for this exercise we will focus on repetition in a general sense. Antony often repeats words, concepts and sentences:

For Brutus is an **honorable** man
So are they **all, all honorable** men
(Antony repeats this first sentence in its entirety twice and with slight variation a third time)

Activity 1:

Take a look, either as a whole class or in small groups at the following funeral speeches and find all the rhetorical terms above used by each character, compare Brutus and Antony's rhetoric and discuss as a group.

BRUTUS

Then none have I offended. I have done no more to Caesar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of

his death is enrolled in the Capitol; his glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy, nor his offences enforced, for which he suffered death.

Enter ANTONY and others, with CAESAR's body

Here comes his body, mourned by Mark Antony: who, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth; as which of you shall not? With this I depart,—that, as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need my death.

ANTONY

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears; I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him. The evil that men do lives after them; The good is oft interred with their bones; So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus Hath told you Caesar was ambitious: If it were so, it was a grievous fault, And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it. Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest— For Brutus is an honourable man; So are they all, all honourable men— Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral. He was my friend, faithful and just to me: But Brutus says he was ambitious; And Brutus is an honourable man. He hath brought many captives home to Rome Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill: Did this in Caesar seem ambitious? When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept: Ambition should be made of sterner stuff: Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; And Brutus is an honourable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal I thrice presented him a kingly crown, Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition? Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; And, sure, he is an honourable man. I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke, But here I am to speak what I do know. You all did love him once, not without cause: What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him? O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts, And men have lost their reason. Bear with me; My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar, And I must pause till it come back to me.

...
But yesterday the word of Caesar might Have stood against the world; now lies he there. And none so poor to do him reverence. O masters, if I were disposed to stir Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage, I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong, Who, you all know, are honourable men: I will not do them wrong; I rather choose To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you, Than I will wrong such honourable men. But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar; I found it in his closet, 'tis his will: Let but the commons hear this testament— Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read— And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's wounds And dip their napkins in his sacred blood, Yea, beg a hair of him for memory, And, dying, mention it within their wills, Bequeathing it as a rich legacy Unto their issue.

Activity 2:

Look at the way the plebeians speak in between each section of Antony's speeches. Remember that pentameter can be split between two or more speakers:

4 Pleb. **O traitors, villains!**

1 Pleb. **O most bloody sight!**

Which of the speakers, Antony or Brutus, does the rhetoric of the plebeians emulate? What does this tell us about who understands the people and how to persuade them best?

Activity 3:

Take a look at Lincoln's inaugural address below (or any other of Lincoln's speeches) and find the same rhetorical devices Shakespeare used in Antony's speech. Discuss the importance of a public or political figure being "well-spoken." Find speeches by Obama and look for rhetorical content. Can you think of politicians who you feel speak well or poorly? Take a look at their rhetoric; is there a correlation between their use of rhetoric and your opinion of them?

Act-by-Act Discussion Topics

Act I

- "Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed."- Abraham Lincoln. Public sentiment and the desire to secure the empathy of the people of Rome is a huge part to *Julius Caesar* from the very first lines spoken. The idea that "Public sentiment is everything," is an age old and enduring idea. Discuss current events in American History (i.e. Public Health Care or the War in Afghanistan) and the efforts made by politicians, media, etc. to sway public opinion to one side or the other.
- Cassius is fearful of Caesar's power, but he also seems to covet the power Caesar has. Does Cassius really have the interest of the republic at heart or is he just jealous? If Cassius were asked to be King would he refuse the way Caesar does or give into his lust for greatness? Talk about jealousies that are common in your peer groups. How often do people you know pretend to dislike something when they are really just jealous?
- Omens, premonitions and dreams play an important role in *Julius Caesar*, especially the scenes leading up to Caesar's death. Take a look at the soothsayers' predictions in Act 1 Scene 1, Casca's description of the unnatural occurrences in Rome the night before the assassination and Calphuriana's dream in Act 2, scene 2. What common themes run through them? Can you find other references to dreams and omens in the play? Have you ever had a dream that came true or do you know someone who has? What beliefs do you hold about omens or other spiritual revelations?
- In Act 1, Scene 2, Casca describes Caesar's refusal of the crown. What is Casca's attitude as he describes the scene? How do you think Brutus and Cassius feel as they hear Casca's tale? Could you refuse a crown even if you believed it was the right thing to do for the good of your country?
- In Act 1, Scene 2, Casca describes a moment when Caesar falters, falls and apologizes. Many scholars believe that Julius Caesar suffered from epilepsy. Why do you think Shakespeare exposes this weakness? Does it change your opinion of him as a leader? Do you think it changed the opinion of other prominent Romans (i.e. Brutus)? Should we judge people on their weaknesses? What if those weaknesses might put your life or the good of your country in peril?
- At the end of Act 1 a storm begins to rage in Rome. What effect does the storm have on the characters of the play? Look at the language Casca uses to describe the storm. In what way does Casca's description of the storm mirror what is happening in Rome? Cassius reacts very differently to the storm. What language imagery does he use and how does it differ from Casca's language and imagery?

Act II

- Everyone seems terrified of how Caesar will act once crowned, but Brutus himself says "and, to speak truth of Caesar, I have not known when his affections sway'd More than his reason." Does anyone have a real basis for these fears? Is there anything in Caesar's actions that indicate he is power-hungry or would make a bad leader?

- Cassius recommends the conspirators also kill Mark Antony and Brutus refuses. What are Brutus' reasons, are they sensible or emotion reasons? Do you agree with Brutus or Cassius?
- Portia knows a lot more than she tells Brutus right away. What are her tactics to get the truth out of Brutus? Which ones work and which fail? Is it the fact that she saw the conspirators, and did not tell Brutus about them right away, that changes his mind about telling her about the conspiracy before they are interrupted?
- Calphurnia convinces Caesar to believe in her dream and stay away from the Senate. What is it that finally convinces Caesar to stay? Once he agrees to stay, however, he quickly changes his mind because of what Decius Brutus says to him. Why is he so easily swayed?
- The boy Lucius is fast asleep throughout most of the scene. What does that indicate? The nation's disinterest in the fear of Caesar? A reminder for the audience that this scene is at night? What does sleep (with or without dreams) represent in the play?

Act III

- After the conspirators kill Caesar they dip their hands in Caesar's blood. What does this gesture suggest to the conspirators, to the Romans, to you today? What is the symbolic meaning behind blood? Where else in the play is there talk of blood?
- Antony is asked to speak at Caesar's funeral. Cassius tries to persuade Brutus against it, yet Brutus ignores Cassius' warning. Why does Cassius not want to allow Antony to speak? Does he know Antony better than Brutus does? Cassius often makes the right suggestions but gets cut off by Brutus. Is Cassius better at reading people than Brutus?
- Brutus makes a simple, deliberate speech over Caesar's dead body. Why does he use prose? Who else speaks prose in the play? Who is Brutus' intended audience, the plebeians or the senators? How does what he say influence the people? Why?
- Antony also gives a speech, but how is his speech different? Why does Antony interrupt his own speech throughout? What does he accomplish by this? Why does he use verse? Who else speaks verse in this play? Look at the imbedded stage directions in the speech. What movements do they indicate for Antony? How does getting physically closer to the plebeians help Antony appeal to them?
- Antony is a brilliant speaker because he knows his audience. He appeals to his audience by planting, but not forcing, his own ideas and making the people believe what he wants is what they want. How is Antony similar to today's politicians? Which politician can you think of, who knows his audience and can make his speeches fit to today's audience? When does a speech like that become propaganda? What can be achieved with propaganda? Why does Antony use propaganda?
- The Romans are so enraged after Antony's speech that they kill everyone with the names of the conspirators. How does the scene of killing the wrong Cinna fit into the play? How does the rage of the plebeians honor or dishonor the memory of Caesar? How does Cinna's murder glorify or defile what the conspirators did in assassinating Caesar?

Act IV

- Act 4 opens with Antony making the decision to prosecute a conspirator, who is part of his family. Why does Antony make this grave decision? How does this decision show the difference between Antony and Brutus, who decided not to kill Antony? Which decision turns actually out to be smarter?
- In the argument between Antony and Octavius, what do you learn about Octavius' character? Octavius is much younger than Antony; does he value Antony's experienced voice? What kind of person ignores all well meant advice and goes forward in their own opinion? Is this the sort of leader you would want for your own country? Why or why not?
- Octavius' ruthless character traits become apparent in the Act following Julius Caesar's death. Can you spot regrets in the other characters in the play about the new tyrant or are these regrets and opinion reserved to the audience? How does the play's outcome affect the realization that Octavius is much worse than Julius Caesar could ever have been? The conspirators removed a supposed tyrant but implanted a much worse tyrant; do you think they realize this grievous mistake?
- How do the different characters react to the news of Portia's death? Why does Brutus hardly react at all? What Roman ideals does he uphold by reacting the way he does? Why does Cassius react the way he does?
- Caesar's ghost appears to Brutus. How does Brutus react to the ghost? Why is he not as frightened as you would expect? Why does Brutus wake the soldiers and ask them for their dreams and screams? Would you include screams? Or would you stick to the non-existing stage directions, and not have them scream but Brutus make up the screams in order to wake them and find out if they have also seen the ghost?

Act V

- Cassius and Brutus have a huge argument. What are the human traits of arguments in Shakespeare's text? Look how long it takes Brutus to refer to Cassius' "better soldier" argument. How often have you witnessed arguments when something smolders under the words, and finally breaks out, like Cassius' "better soldier" line? Brutus also misunderstands what Cassius' is saying. How often does that happen in arguments?
- What does the argument between Cassius and Brutus reveal about their relationship? How close do friends need to be to get into such an argument? What does the argument reveal about the character of two men?
- How does the misinformation of characters in the play have influence of the outcome of the play? Do you think Pindarus just really cannot exactly see what happens to Titinus or is he lying to Cassius?
- Why can Brutus not find anyone who is willing to assist him with his suicide? Why is it different for Cassius who asks one person and gets help? Is Brutus asking the wrong people or is he better respected?
- What are examples of an honorable Roman? What is the most honorable way to die? The most dishonorable? Do you agree with these Roman ideals? Why is suicide more honorable than being taken

prisoner? How is Cassius' death different from Brutus'? What is the difference in their references to Caesar's death in their moment of dying?

- Do you agree with Antony's and Octavius' opinion of Brutus in comparison to Cassius? What is their opinion of the rest of the conspirators? Do you agree? Does this still happen today, that one figure comes to represent a whole event or conspiracy? Can you mention such a contemporary figure?

Journal Writing

At the beginning of each class, give students a list of quotes from which to choose one to write a personal response for five to seven minutes. After writing, students can share their responses in pairs, small groups, or with the class. Or, one day each week can be set aside for students to choose their best response and share it in small groups or with the class. Their responses can take many forms.

- Write a three-part response: 1) indicate the meaning of the quote, 2) connect the quote with other parts of the play, other literature, or personal experiences, and 3) discuss your personal feelings about the quote, the character, or the action.
- Write a completely personal expression. Take off from the quote and free-write wherever your thoughts may take you: into fantasy; reflections on your day; problems you are experiencing or have experienced; or people you care about.
- Write a poetic response. Write your own feelings to the quote or continue the dialogue using Shakespeare's style or write a poem reflecting a theme or idea suggested by the quote.
- Copy the quote and illustrate it. Instead of writing, draw the characters or illustrate the action in whatever detail you like from symbolic representation to realistic characterization.
- Reply to the character. Write a letter to the character, either from your point of view or from the point of view of another character in the play.

Directions adapted from *A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classic Edition of William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing*.

Act I

1. "Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs and peep about
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
Men at some time are masters of their fates:
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
Brutus and Caesar: what should be in that 'Caesar'?" – Cassius

2. "Men at some time are masters of their fates: The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings." - Cassius

3. "Brutus had rather be a villager
Than to repute himself a son of Rome
Under these hard conditions as this time

Is like to lay upon us.." - Brutus

4. "But wherefore did you so much tempt the heavens?
It is the part of men to fear and tremble,
When the most mighty gods by tokens send
Such dreadful heralds to astonish us." -Caska

Act II

1. "It must be by his death: and for my part,
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general. He would be crown'd:
How that might change his nature, there's the question.
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder;
And that craves wary walking. Crown him?--that;--
And then, I grant, we put a sting in him,
That at his will he may do danger with.
The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
Remorse from power: and, to speak truth of Caesar,
I have not known when his affections sway'd
More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof,
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
But when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend. So Caesar may.
Then, lest he may, prevent. And, since the quarrel
Will bear no colour for the thing he is,
Fashion it thus; that what he is, augmented,
Would run to these and these extremities:
And therefore think him as a serpent's egg
Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
And kill him in the shell.." - Brutus

2. "Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream."-Brutus

3. "Cowards die many times before their deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once."-Caesar

Act III

1. "Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more."-Brutus

2."As he was valiant, I honour him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him." -Brutus

3. "When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept: Ambition should be made of sterner stuff." - Antony

Act IV

1. "Good reason must force give place to better." – Brutus

2. "When love begins to sicken and decay,
It useth an enforced ceremony.
There are no tricks in plain and simple faith." -Brutus

3. There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life Is
bound in shallows and in miseries. "-Brutus

Act V

1. "This day I breathèd first: time is come round,
And where I did begin, there shall I end;
My life is run his compass" - Cassius

2. "O hateful error, melancholy's child!
Why dost thou show, to the apt thoughts of men,
The things that are not?"- Messala

3. "I had rather have
Such men my friends than enemies."- Antony

4. "This was the noblest Roman of them all;
All the conspirators save only he
Did that they did in envy of great Caesar." -Brutus

Additional Journal Entry Activities:

- Search out a passage or a line in the play that holds great power for you. Using writing, an illustration, or music, to explore what this character is saying in relation to the play. What does he/she say that strikes a chord with you?
- Pick a favorite character of yours from *Julius Caesar*. Do you know anyone who reminds you of this character? Write down a description of the person's similarity to the character, as well as, their differences to the character. Does comparing this person and the character help you to understand either of them any better? In what way?
- Based on quotes and events from the play, create a scrapbook using current pictures, headlines, news articles, advertisements, cartoons, etc. that bring to mind the play's themes for you.
- Write a diary from the perspective of one of the main characters from the play. The diary may be from the time frame before, during, or after the play's events. You will need several entries, and you

may want to include personal keepsakes. Remember that thoughts and feelings are very important in a diary.

- Create a movie poster for the play using two or more of the following media: paint, crayons, chalk, colored pencils, ink, markers, etc. You may want to choose modern-day actors to star in the movie and include their names and/or pictures on the poster. Look at current movie posters to help you determine what information to include on your poster.
- Create a comic strip that depicts a few scenes from the play. You may draw, use computer graphics, use photos from magazines, or any other way you wish to graphically create your comic strip.

What's in a name?

Juliet's Speech in Act 2 Scene 2 of *Romeo and Juliet* is one of Shakespeare's most famous speeches. In *Julius Caesar*, Cassius muses on the very point Juliet does: What's in a name? The two characters, however, come to very opposite conclusions. Cassius poses that no matter his name Caesar is no better than any other man while Juliet argues that despite his name Romeo is better than all other men.

Compare the speeches below. What is the common argument? Where do they differ? Do you suppose Shakespeare had Juliet's speech in mind when he wrote Cassius' in *Julius Caesar*? If so, why would he seemingly contradict his own argument?

CASSIUS

Act 1 Scene 2

Brutus and Caesar: what should be in that 'Caesar'?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with 'em,
Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Caesar.
Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed,
That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed!

JULIET

Act 2 Scene 2

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for that name which is no part of thee
Take all myself.

Performing a Monologue

Presentation skills are becoming more and more important in today's society. The ability to speak well, whether it is with one person or in front of a large group, is a skill that people use everyday. By encouraging your students to memorize and perform a monologue written by William Shakespeare, you will be immersing them in great thoughts and language.

Although your students may be initially nervous about performing in front of their classmates, you can make the experience non-threatening by participating in it yourself ... you will show your students that even you can do it, and probably provide them with some good laughs!

1. Ask students to choose a monologue from the play to memorize. Each student can choose one of the provided monologues or choose another one from the play after checking with the teacher.
2. The teacher can model both effective and ineffective monologues (you can have fun with this, especially when modeling the "ineffective" monologue!). Then ask students to point out which elements of the performance were successful and which were not. On the board, write down a list of bad habits that distract the audience or take away from the performance, such as fidgeting, monotone voice, inaudible volume, mispronunciations, and speaking too quickly. Then write down a list of elements that a successful performance should contain: eye contact with the audience, voice inflection, sufficient volume, evidence of understanding, pronunciation, and appropriate speed with the proper pauses.
3. Allow some time in class for students to practice their monologues. Pair students together (rotating with different partners at each practice session). Have students practice with their partners; the partners should offer constructive criticism, using the included checklist to help them make helpful suggestions

Due to the nature of *Julius Caesar* you will need to encourage the girls in your class to take on male monologues. This is a great opportunity for them to do a piece from Shakespeare they might otherwise never be able to perform! Also, cross-gender casting (in the other direction) was a common Elizabethan practice!

Grading Sheets provided on Next Page.

Suggested monologues begin on page 25.

Julius Caesar Monologue Performance

Name: _____ Character: _____

The following requirements are graded on a scale of **1 to 5** (1 being lowest and 5 being highest):

- _____ **knowledge of lines** (did not miss any lines; very few awkward pauses)
 - _____ **stage presence** (commands the audience's attention; use of eye contact; not constantly looking at the floor or shifting feet; did not stand in one spot without moving)
 - _____ **body movement** (movements seem natural; no forced or unmotivated movements; movements fit the character)
 - _____ **use of voice** (use of pauses; easy to hear and understand words)
 - _____ **use of space** (did not stand in one spot)
 - _____ **rehearsal is obvious** (actually took time to rehearse; everything flows)
-

Julius Caesar Monologue Performance

Name: _____ Character: _____

The following requirements are graded on a scale of **1 to 5** (1 being lowest and 5 being highest):

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- _____ **use of voice** (use of pauses; easy to hear and understand words)
- _____ **use of space** (did not stand in one spot)
- _____ **rehearsal is obvious** (actually took time to rehearse; everything flows)

MARULLUS

Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?
 What tributaries follow him to Rome
 To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?
 You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless
 things!

O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,
 Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft
 Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,
 To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,
 Your infants in your arms, and there have sat
 The livelong day, with patient expectation,
 To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome:
 And when you saw his chariot but appear,
 Have you not made an universal shout,
 That Tiber trembled underneath her banks,
 To hear the replication of your sounds
 Made in her concave shores?
 And do you now put on your best attire?
 And do you now cull out a holiday?
 And do you now strew flowers in his way
 That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?
 Be gone!
 Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
 Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
 That needs must light on this ingratitude.

BRUTUS

Then none have I offended. I have done no more to
 Caesar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of
 his death is enrolled in the Capitol; his glory not
 extenuated, wherein he was worthy, nor his offences
 enforced, for which he suffered death.

Enter ANTONY and others, with CAESAR's body

Here comes his body, mourned by Mark Antony: who,
 though he had no hand in his death, shall receive
 the benefit of his dying, a place in the
 commonwealth; as which of you shall not? With this
 I depart,—that, as I slew my best lover for the
 good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself,
 when it shall please my country to need my death

CASSIUS

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
 Like a Colossus, and we petty men
 Walk under his huge legs and peep about
 To find ourselves dishonorable graves.
 Men at some time are masters of their fates.
 The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
 But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
 “Brutus” and “Caesar.” What should be in that ‘Caesar’?
 Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
 Write them together: yours is as fair a name.
 Sound them: it doth become the mouth as well.
 Weigh them: it is as heavy; conjure with ‘em:
 “Brutus” will start a spirit as soon as Caesar.
 Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
 Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed,
 That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed!
 Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
 When went there by an age, since the great flood,
 But it was famed with more than with one man?
 When could they say till now, that talk'd of Rome,
 That her wide walls encompass'd but one man?
 Now is it Rome indeed and room enough,
 When there is in it but one only man.
 O, you and I have heard our fathers say,
 There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
 The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
 As easily as a king.

PORTIA

Is Brutus sick? and is it physical
 To walk unbraced and suck up the humours
 Of the dank morning? What, is Brutus sick,
 And will he steal out of his wholesome bed,
 To dare the vile contagion of the night
 And tempt the rheumy and unpurged air
 To add unto his sickness? No, my Brutus;
 You have some sick offence within your mind,
 Which, by the right and virtue of my place,
 I ought to know of: and, upon my knees,
 I charm you, by my once-commended beauty,
 By all your vows of love and that great vow
 Which did incorporate and make us one,
 That you unfold to me, yourself, your half,
 Why you are heavy, and what men to-night
 Have had to resort to you: for here have been
 Some six or seven, who did hide their faces
 Even from darkness.

CASSIUS

You are dull, Casca, and those sparks of life
 That should be in a Roman you do want,
 Or else you use not. You look pale and gaze,
 And put on fear, and cast yourself in wonder,
 To see the strange impatience of the heavens:
 But if you would consider the true cause
 Why all these fires, why all these gliding ghosts,
 Why birds and beasts from quality and kind,
 Why old men fool and children calculate,
 Why all these things change from their ordinance
 Their natures and preformed faculties
 To monstrous quality, why, you shall find
 That heaven hath infused them with these spirits,
 To make them instruments of fear and warning
 Unto some monstrous state.
 Now could I, Casca, name to thee a man
 Most like this dreadful night,
 That thunders, lightens, opens graves, and roars
 As doth the lion in the Capitol,
 A man no mightier than thyself or me
 In personal action, yet prodigious grown
 And fearful, as these strange eruptions are.

ANTONY

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
 I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
 The evil that men do lives after them;
 The good is oft interred with their bones;
 So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
 Hath told you Caesar was ambitious:
 If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
 And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.
 Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest--
 For Brutus is an honourable man;
 So are they all, all honourable men--
 Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
 He was my friend, faithful and just to me:
 But Brutus says he was ambitious;
 And Brutus is an honourable man.
 He hath brought many captives home to Rome
 Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
 Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
 When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
 Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:
 Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
 And Brutus is an honourable man.
 You all did see that on the Lupercal
 I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
(continues in top right column)

Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?
 Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
 And, sure, he is an honourable man.
 I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
 But here I am to speak what I do know.
 You all did love him once, not without cause:
 What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him?
 O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
 And men have lost their reason. Bear with me;
 My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
 And I must pause till it come back to me.

BRUTUS

It must be by his death: and for my part,
 I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
 But for the general. He would be crown'd:
 How that might change his nature, there's the question.
 It is the bright day that brings forth the adder;
 And that craves wary walking. Crown him?--that;--
 And then, I grant, we put a sting in him,
 That at his will he may do danger with.
 The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
 Remorse from power: and, to speak truth of Caesar,
 I have not known when his affections sway'd
 More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof,
 That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
 Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
 But when he once attains the upmost round,
 He then unto the ladder turns his back,
 Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
 By which he did ascend. So Caesar may.
 Then, lest he may, prevent. And, since the quarrel
 Will bear no colour for the thing he is,
 Fashion it thus; that what he is, augmented,
 Would run to these and these extremities:
 And therefore think him as a serpent's egg
 Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
 And kill him in the shell.

CAESAR

I must prevent thee, Cimber.
These couchings and these lowly courtesies
Might fire the blood of ordinary men,
And turn pre-ordinance and first decree
Into the law of children. Be not fond,
To think that Caesar bears such rebel blood
That will be thaw'd from the true quality
With that which melteth fools; I mean, sweet words,
Low-crooked court'sies and base spaniel-fawning.
Thy brother by decree is banished:
If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,
I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
Know, Caesar doth not wrong, nor without cause
Will he be satisfied.

BRUTUS

Farewell to you; and you; and you, Volumnius.
Strato, thou hast been all this while asleep;
Farewell to thee too, Strato. Countrymen,
My heart doth joy that yet in all my life
I found no man but he was true to me.
I shall have glory by this losing day
More than Octavius and Mark Antony
By this vile conquest shall attain unto.
So fare you well at once; for Brutus' tongue
Hath almost ended his life's history:
Night hangs upon mine eyes; my bones would rest,
That have but labour'd to attain this hour.

CASSIUS

Messala,
This is my birth-day; as this very day
Was Cassius born. Give me thy hand, Messala:
Be thou my witness that against my will,
As Pompey was, am I compell'd to set
Upon one battle all our liberties.
You know that I held Epicurus strong
And his opinion: now I change my mind,
And partly credit things that do presage.
Coming from Sardis, on our former ensign
Two mighty eagles fell, and there they perch'd,
Gorging and feeding from our soldiers' hands;
Who to Philippi here consorted us:
This morning are they fled away and gone;
And in their steads do ravens, crows and kites,
Fly o'er our heads and downward look on us,
As we were sickly prey: their shadows seem
A canopy most fatal, under which
Our army lies, ready to give up the ghost.

Educator Comments

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