

**GREAT  
LAKES  
THEATER**



# TEACHER PREPARATION GUIDE

# JULIUS CAESAR



By WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Directed by SARA BRUNER

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Cleveland's Classic Company  
at Playhouse Square

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Fall 2019

Dear Educator,

Thank you for your student matinee ticket order to Great Lakes Theater's production *Julius Caesar*, which will be performed in repertory with *The Music Man* in the beautiful Hanna Theatre at Playhouse Square from September 27th through November 10th.

A timeless drama of intrigue, allegiance and conspiracy, *Julius Caesar* is the ultimate political thriller. Caesar's triumphant return from war causes concern about one person's pursuit of too much power. Machiavellian machinations result in resounding consequences and throw an empire into turmoil. Shakespeare's politically-charged play reverberates through the ages and poses questions that we still seek answers to centuries later.

This guide is designed – through essays, discussion questions and classroom activities – to give students both an introduction to, and a point of entry for, a personal exploration of *Julius Caesar*. We offer special thanks to retired teacher Cheryl Kleps for her outstanding contributions to this guide.

Great Lakes Theater is proud to provide you with the finest in classic theater and the necessary educational resources to support your work in the classroom. We are thrilled that you will be coming to see us and we welcome your input on how best to support your classroom preparation for our work. Please let us know what you think!

Sincerely,

Kelly Schaffer Florian  
Director of Educational Services  
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The mission of Great Lakes Theater, through its mainstage productions and its educational programming, is to bring the pleasure, power and relevance of classic theater to the widest possible audience.

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# A NOTE TO STUDENTS: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE THEATER

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You may or may not have attended a live theater performance before. To increase your enjoyment, it might be helpful to look at the unique qualities of this art form — because it is so different from movies or video.

The live theatrical performance not only involves the actors on the stage; it is meant to involve you, the audience, in ways that film and television cannot. In truth, although you are sitting in an auditorium and the actors are on stage, there is very little separating the audience from the performers. How you react to the play *deeply affects* the actors. Something as seemingly trivial as whispering or unwrapping a candy bar can distract them and disrupt the mood and tone of their performance. Due to the important relationship between actors and audience members, there are certain, perhaps obvious, provisions of live theater we wish to call to your attention.

In the Hanna Theatre, it is important to know that the taking of pictures, either with or without a flash, is strictly prohibited. Also, it is essential that all electronic equipment, including cell phones, music players (even with headphones), alarm watches, etc., be completely powered off once you have entered the theatre. Even the glow from a silent cell phone (used for text messaging, or posting social network updates, for example) can be very distracting to fellow audience members, even if you try to mask it under your hand or an article of clothing. Our goal is to provide every person in the audience with

the best possible theatrical experience, so we appreciate your respectful cooperation during the performance.

Other differences live theater provides: in film or video, the camera and editing define what we will see. In the theater, however, each of us works as a camera and editor, choosing his or her personal points of focus. And in the Hanna Theatre, you should know that often we do not use microphones. As audience members you'll need to actively listen and "tune in" to the sound of the unamplified human voice.

As for our lighting and scenery, it might surprise you to know that these are not necessarily meant to be realistic. In this production, for example, there are design elements that are abstract or metaphorical.

The theater's ability to focus on human experience — distilled through the dialogue and behavior of people on stage and enhanced by the scenery, costumes, lighting, music and dance — is a centuries-old tradition. Being part of the communal magic when performer and audience connect — whether at a baseball game, music concert or theater performance — cannot be duplicated.

The performance you will see at Great Lakes Theater will happen only once. It is unique and personal. Though this play will be performed more than a dozen times, the performance you see belongs only to you.

We hope you enjoy it, and we'd like you to share your response with us.



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# GLT: OUR HISTORY, OUR FUTURE

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Tom Hanks and fellow company member Bert Goldstein.



The beautifully renovated Hanna Theatre.

Since 1962, Great Lakes Theater (GLT) has brought the world's greatest plays to life for all of Cleveland. In 1961, the Lakewood Board of Education president persuaded a Shakespeare troupe, led by Arthur Lithgow, to make Lakewood Civic Auditorium its home. The theater that opened its doors on July 11, 1962 as Great Lakes Shakespeare Festival presented six Shakespeare plays in rotating repertory. In exchange for free rent, the company provided student matinee productions. The repertory was expanded in 1965 to include non-Shakespearean classics as a result of an exchange of productions with Princeton's McCarter Theater. The Company outgrew its original home at Lakewood Civic Auditorium and, in 1982, made the move to the Ohio Theatre in Playhouse Square, launching the revitalization of downtown Cleveland's Theatre District.

In 2001 the company was searching for a new Producing Artistic Director, and the Board sought a candidate with well-established business skills as well as artistic leadership. Charles Fee was selected for his commitment to Shakespeare and his reputation for building Idaho Shakespeare Festival into a highly successful regional theater. GLT recommitted itself to its founding core values: Shakespeare, rotating repertory and an acting company of the highest caliber. During Fee's tenure, the company has been recognized for its artistic excellence, winning the *Northern Ohio Live Magazine Award* for excellence in Theater in 2005 after three years of being a finalist, as well as *The Free Times Reader's Choice Award* for Best Performing Arts Group in 2006, and for eliminating the inherited accumulated net deficit of over one million dollars.

The company has also been a revolutionary producing model unlike any other in America to create cost efficiency and enhance our artistic product. We now exchange our repertory productions with Idaho Shakespeare Festival (ISF) in Boise, Idaho and Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival (LTSF) in Nevada. This deep collaboration between independent producing organizations is a first in American theater. With this visionary model now fully in place, GLT, ISF, and LTSF are able to deepen the artistic quality of the work on our stages, share our production costs, maximize our resources, and provide nearly year-round employment to our resident company of artists.

Now, GLT has entered into a new phase, making the historic Hanna Theatre in Playhouse Square its home. The renovation of the Hanna Theatre, as well as the creation of GLT's first endowment fund, is part of our *Re-Imagine A Classic* Campaign to ensure GLT's future. Our new home in the Hanna features a hydraulically operated thrust stage, a first for this region, and innovative and intimate seating where no seat is farther than eleven rows from the stage. We believe that this extraordinary theater experience will revolutionize the way Northern Ohio experiences classic theater.

Great Lakes Theater is one of only a handful of American theaters that have stayed the course as a classic theater. With a plucky history of bucking economic trends to strive for and nurture the highest artistic quality, it remains a distinctive and significant cultural resource in an extraordinary American city.

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# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

BY SARA BRUNER

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Shakespeare's work remains relevant because it poses central questions about humanity. What makes us tick? What motivates us? Are we operating on intuition or fear? Can we separate what's good for us individually, from what's good for us as a nation? How easily persuaded are we, and why? How much sacrifice is too much?

Consider the climate in which this play was first performed: London, 1599. England has a succession problem. There is no heir apparent and, Elizabeth I is getting on in years. This breeds fear in the country because uncertainty, when it comes to leadership, could (and has historically) create civil war. Shakespeare did not have the luxury of writing directly about politics at the time - his stories had to be more coded, more suggestive, and ultimately more poetic. So, to address England's fear of the impending succession, he adapted the history of Julius Caesar from Plutarch and gave us a tale of an ancient leader's fall, and the subsequent crumbling of the Roman republic. This retelling of Caesar, no doubt, had resonance for a country that was anxiously anticipating change.

The function of *Julius Caesar* is the same for us today as it was for Shakespeare's audiences. It gives us perspective on our own social and political situations while offering us a little distance, and space for reflection. In this devastating tale of Rome, and its people, we are able to see glimpses of our selves, our leaders, our history and our potential future. We see that violence begets violence and that sometimes, we can inadvertently destroy something we love in the pursuit of preserving it.

## SUMMARY

Julius Caesar enters Rome on the Feast of Lupercal as a hero beloved by the populace having triumphed first over the Gauls, then over the army of Pompey. When the senators see Mark Antony attempting three times to crown Caesar—some take this as a threat to Rome. Cassius in particular has serious misgivings about Caesar's ambition. To offset Caesar's support base, Cassius makes overtures to Brutus, a nobleman known for his integrity and idealism; if Brutus were to support it, a conspiracy would seem more palatable to the citizens of Rome. Brutus is also a close friend of Caesar, which adds to the moral dilemma presented in the play.

As a metaphor for the coming action, a great storm besets Rome. Brutus ponders his course of action, realizing that the conspiracy may well have to contemplate assassination. Eventually, with the prodding of Cassius and others, Brutus comes to rationalize such an act as necessary for a greater good. Brutus dissuades the conspirators from slaying Antony as well. Caesar, warned by a soothsayer, ignores advice to the contrary and pays a visit to the Senate and is stabbed to death by Brutus, Cassius, and the rest of the conspirators.

Mark Antony strikes a truce with the conspirators, asking to accompany Caesar’s body and speak the funeral. Brutus agrees, and at the funeral delivers an oratory that explains the reasoning for the assassination. Antony follows with the well-known “Friends, Romans, countrymen” speech, commonly a soliloquy, and through his masterful use of irony stirs the crowd—which to this point had been solidly behind the conspirators—to call for the blood of Cassius, Brutus, and anyone else associated with Caesar’s death.

Antony then plots with Octavius (nephew to Julius Caesar) and Lepidus to wrest control of Rome by force. Their ruthlessness exterminates many of the original conspirators, as well as other perceived enemies. Brutus and Cassius meanwhile raise armies against them. In a final battle, Brutus initially has success against the forces of Octavius; Cassius however, chooses to end her life when bested by Antony’s army. Faced with both Antony and Octavius, Brutus’ army is defeated, and Brutus takes his own life rather than be taken captive. Upon discovering the body, Antony laments the tragic fall of Brutus, calling him the noblest of them all.

## Dramatis Personae

Julius Caesar .....	Carole Healey*
Brutus .....	Lynn Robert Berg*
Cassius .....	Laura Welsh Berg*
Mark Antony .....	Nick Steen*
Portia/Poet .....	Jillian Kates*
Casca/Messala .....	Alex Syiek*
Calphurnius/Strato .....	M.A. Taylor*
Decius Brutus/Pindarus .....	David Anthony Smith*
Metellus Cimber/Lucilius .....	Mack Shirilla*
Cicero/Lepidus .....	Aled Davies*
Cinna the Conspirator/Titinius .....	Marcus Martin
Trebonius .....	Jessie Cope Miller*
Octavius Caesar .....	Delius Doherty*
Lucius .....	Jahir Hipps
Cinna the Poet/Cato .....	Elijah Dawson
Soothsayer .....	Jodi Dominick*

### Citizens and Soldiers:

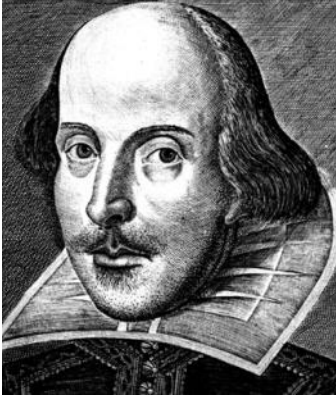
Laura Welsh Berg\*, Lynn Robert Berg\*, Aled Davies\*, Elijah Dawson, Delius Doherty\*, Jodi Dominick\*, Carole Healey\*, Jillian Kates\*, Jahir Hipps, Marcus Martin\*, Jessie Cope Miller\*, Mack Shirilla\*, David Anthony Smith\*, Nick Steen\*, Alex Syiek\*, M.A. Taylor\*

**Scene:** Rome

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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William Shakespeare (1564-1616), English playwright and poet, is recognized in much of the world as the greatest of all dramatists. Shakespeare's plays communicate a profound knowledge of the wellsprings of human behavior, revealed through portrayals of a wide variety of characters. His use of poetic and dramatic means to create a unified aesthetic effect out of a multiplicity of vocal expressions and actions is recognized as a singular achievement, and his use of poetry within his plays to express the deepest levels of human motivation in individual, social, and universal situations is considered one of the greatest accomplishments in literary history.

A complete, authoritative account of Shakespeare's life is lacking, and thus much supposition surrounds relatively few facts. It is commonly accepted that he was born in 1564, and it is known that he was baptized in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. The third of eight children, he was probably educated at the local grammar school. As the eldest son, Shakespeare ordinarily would have been apprenticed to his father's shop so that he could learn and eventually take over the

business, but according to one account he was apprenticed to a butcher because of declines in his father's financial situation. According to another account, he became a schoolmaster. In 1582 Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a farmer. He is supposed to have left Stratford after he was caught poaching in the deer park of Sir Thomas Lucy, a local justice of the peace. Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway had a daughter, Susanna, in 1583 and twins—Hamnet and Judith—in 1585. Hamnet did not survive childhood.

Shakespeare apparently arrived in London about 1588 and by 1592 had attained success as an actor and a playwright. Shortly thereafter he secured the patronage of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton. The publication of Shakespeare's two fashionably erotic narrative poems *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) and of his *Sonnets* (published 1609, but circulated previously in manuscript form) established his reputation as a gifted and popular poet of the Renaissance (14th century to 17th century). The *Sonnets* describe the devotion of a character, often identified as the poet himself, to a young man whose beauty and virtue he praises and to a mysterious and faithless dark lady with whom the poet is infatuated. The ensuing triangular situation, resulting from the attraction of the poet's friend to the dark lady, is treated with passionate intensity and psychological insight. Shakespeare's modern reputation, however, is based primarily on the 38 plays that he apparently wrote, modified, or collaborated on. Although generally popular in his time, these plays were frequently little esteemed by his educated contemporaries, who considered English plays of their own day to be only vulgar entertainment.

Shakespeare's professional life in London was marked by a number of financially advantageous arrangements that permitted him to share in the profits of his acting company, the Chamberlain's Men, later called the King's Men, and its two theaters, the Globe Theatre and the Blackfriars. His plays were given special presentation at the courts of Queen Elizabeth I and King James more frequently than those of any other contemporary dramatist. It is known that he risked losing royal favor only once, in 1599, when his company performed "the play of the deposing and killing of King Richard II" at the request of a group of conspirators against Elizabeth. In the subsequent inquiry, Shakespeare's company was absolved of complicity in the conspiracy.

After about 1608, Shakespeare's dramatic production lessened and it seems that he spent more time in Stratford, where he had established his family in an imposing house called New Place and had become a leading local citizen. He died in 1616, and was buried in the Stratford church.

Until the 18th century, Shakespeare was generally thought to have been no more than a rough and untutored genius. Theories were advanced that his plays had actually been written by someone more educated, perhaps statesman and philosopher Sir Francis Bacon or the Earl of Southampton, who was Shakespeare's patron. However, he was celebrated in his own time by English writer Ben Johnson and others who saw in him a brilliance that would endure. Since the 19th century, Shakespeare's achievements have been more consistently recognized, and throughout the Western world he has come to be regarded as the greatest dramatist ever.

*Shakespeare, William*, Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2001

**Contributed By:** A. Kent Heatt, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of English, University of Western Ontario. Author of *Chaucer, Spenser, Milton: Mythopoetic Continuities and Transformations*.



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# PLAYNOTES BY MARGARET LYNCH

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While writing a Roman history play, Shakespeare worked toward a particularly potent hybrid of history, revenge, and tragedy.

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Imagine a crisp autumn afternoon in 1599--September 21, to be exact, at 2 pm. Visiting a thatched-roof theatre that day, south of the River Thames, in London, England, were two Swiss travelers, sons of a classical scholar. One of the visitors, Thomas Platter the Younger, a sometime medical student and diarist, recorded that the brothers “witnessed an excellent performance of the tragedy of the first Emperor Julius Caesar, with a cast of some fifteen people.” And so Shakespeare’s play, *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, received its first notice.

The play would have been new when Platter saw it. And the theatre house that Platter visited, the Globe, was also new that summer. The playwright, at age 35, was a seasoned London theater hand. In 1599 William Shakespeare (1564-1616) was a leading shareholder in the theater company known at the time as The Lord Chamberlain’s Men. The company enjoyed the patronage and protection of Henry Carey and Carey’s son George, who followed his father’s footsteps as Lord Chamberlain, in charge of entertainment at the court of Queen Elizabeth.

Aristocratic patronage was crucial to a London theater company’s survival in Shakespeare’s day, but ticket revenue from a public audience was also necessary. Until 1599 Shakespeare’s company had been performing for the public in a house that was simply called The Theatre. The Theatre was operated by James Burbage, father of Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, who were also actors and shareholders in The Lord Chamberlain’s Men. Though Burbage owned The Theatre structure, he did not own the land beneath it. When the landlord raised the rent, the company broke the wooden building down, plank by plank, in the middle of the night. They signed a new lease, south of the Thames, in February 1599 and repurposed the used lumber for a new playhouse there. Though Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* may not have been the first production in The Globe Theatre—as some scholars once argued—it was undoubtedly a highlight of the first season.

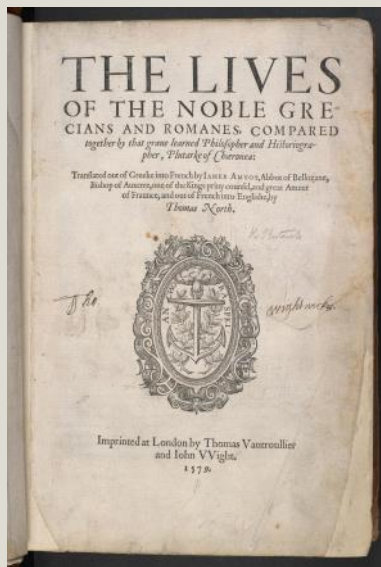
The Swiss traveler, Thomas Platter, observed the intense competition between London theater companies, remarking, “those which play best obtain most spectators.” Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* was one of those plays that “played best.” A rival theater manager, Philip Henslowe, commissioned a competing Julius Caesar for his Admiral’s Men in 1602. Leonard Digges, who oversaw Shakespeare’s will, singled out *Julius Caesar* in a eulogy of Shakespeare that was memorialized in the First Folio edition of Shakespeare’s works in 1623: “So have I seen when Caesar would appear,/ And on the stage at half-sword parley were/ Brutus and Cassius; O, how the audience/ Were ravished, with what wonder they went thence . . .”

Keenly aware of what “played best,” Shakespeare fed his audience’s appetite for history stories. In one of his “breakout” plays in 1590—prosaically titled *Henry VI, Part 2* by the First Folio compilers—he had turned for material to the epic dynastic struggles between the Houses of Lancaster and Tudor in the 15<sup>th</sup> century—



Thomas Platter the Younger, son of a Swiss humanist, kept a diary while traveling in England and mentioned seeing a production of what was presumably Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* at the Globe Theatre, on September 21, 1599.

Thomas North published the first edition of Plutarch's *Lives*, which he dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, in 1579. The release of subsequent editions in 1595 and 1603, each of which contained new entries, brought the book before the public eye again during Shakespeare's peak writing years.



material he would continue to mine, with great success, in the ensuing decade. He hadn't yet thought of scouring the history of ancient England and Scotland as he would for *King Lear* and *Macbeth*. But he found another source for a different kind of history. In 1579, Thomas North published his influential English translation of Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*, which had been compiled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD to illustrate the virtues and failings of famous men. English poets and playwrights read North's translations avidly, perhaps none to greater effect than Shakespeare.

While writing a Roman history play, Shakespeare worked toward a particularly potent hybrid of history, revenge, and tragedy. Shakespeare often borrows North's word choices and sentence structures but he makes the material his own. Though the life of Caesar was his starting point, he also read the lives of Brutus and Antony and wrote a play where Caesar is killed half way through. Most modern commentators regard Brutus, who led the attack on Caesar, as the play's protagonist. Shakespeare adapted his source material for dramatic purposes. Events that actually took place over the course of three years are now compressed into five days. Two battles at Philippi are collapsed into one. Shakespeare heightens the idealism of Brutus and sets him apart from his fellow conspirators. And yet he also introduces more ambiguity. In dispatching one tyrant, Brutus unleashes a dangerous round of civil unrest and



No images of the Globe Theatre survive from Shakespeare's day. The theatre was destroyed by fire on June 29, 1613, during a performance of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. It was, however, rebuilt the following year. Engraver Wenceslaus Hollar sketched it from life in 1644 for his panoramic etching, *Long View of London from Bankside*, which was published in 1647.

paves the way for a more complete autocrat, Octavius, who abandons the pretense of democracy for an empire.

Questions of succession and power were rife in Shakespeare's England. There was a queen on the throne who had refused to marry and, in advancing age, silenced talk of succession. There were powerful aristocrats, such as the Earl of Essex, backed by Shakespeare's patron, the Earl of Southampton, who were ready to pounce and would launch a short-lived rebellion against Elizabeth in 1601. There was a rising middle class, which Shakespeare, with a glove-maker for a father, was part of, who wanted a place for themselves in the country's power structure. Such topics couldn't be addressed directly; fellow playwrights Thomas Nashe and Ben Jonson had been arrested in 1597 because their play *The Isle of Dogs* was deemed "seditious." More politick than Nashe and Jonson, Shakespeare doesn't tackle such developments head on in *Julius Caesar* but they're part of the play's context.

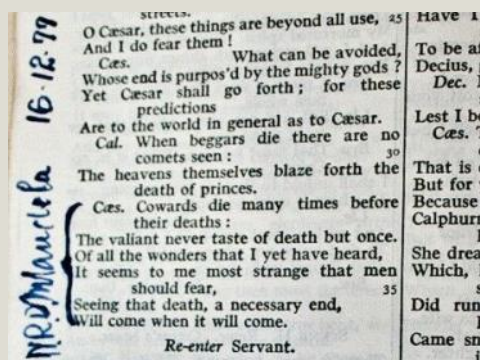
Shakespeare himself foresaw the universality of this story, when his Cassius says "How many ages hence/ Shall this our lofty scene be acted over/ In states unborn and accents yet unknown!" While Nelson Mandela and other leaders of South Africa's Anti-Apartheid movement were imprisoned on Robben Island, the prisoners shared a smuggled volume of Shakespeare among themselves. Each prisoner put his name next to passages that spoke to him. *Julius Caesar* was one of the most heavily annotated. Mandela took comfort from Caesar's fatalism about his coming death: "Cowards die many times before their deaths;/ The valiant never taste of death but once./ Of all the wonders that I yet have heard./ It seems to me most strange that men should fear;/ Seeing that death, a necessary end,/ Will come when it will come." Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* is a profound meditation on the meaning of life in the face of death that will continue to speak for generations to come.



Robert Devereaux, 2nd Earl of Essex, was one of Queen Elizabeth's favorites at court. But he was also ambitious and a potential rival for power. In early 1599, he had been sent to Ireland to accomplish the final subjugation of the Irish people—a task he failed at—and he returned from Ireland in fall 1599 in a contentious frame of mind. He was executed after leading a rebellion against the Queen in 1601.



While imprisoned on Robben Island for 27 years, Nelson Mandela and other South African apartheid leaders passed among themselves a contraband edition of Shakespeare's plays. One of the prisoners, Sonny Venkatrathnam, smuggled the volume into prison by covering it with colorful cards made to celebrate Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights.



On December 16, 1979, Nelson Mandela marked a passage from *Julius Caesar* to share with his fellow prisoners—about facing death with courage.

# JULIUS CAESAR

## THROUGH THE AGES

- After Shakespeare’s lifetime, questions of power and succession became even more acute in England as a Puritan faction, led by Oliver Cromwell, deposed and executed King Charles I in 1649. In the new Commonwealth, theaters were banned. With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, theaters reopened. Rights to perform Shakespeare’s plays were split between two London theater companies, managed respectively by William Davenant and Thomas Killigrew. Killigrew was



After the restoration of the monarchy and the theaters in 1660, theater manager Thomas Killigrew received the rights to, and produced, *Julius Caesar*.



English actor William Charles Macready (1793- 1873) in the role of Brutus.

granted the rights to 20 plays by Shakespeare but only produced four. Along with *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *1 Henry IV*, and *Othello*, *Julius Caesar*

- Although the title of the play forefronts the character of Julius Caesar, actors, directors, and scholars alike have regarded Brutus as the play’s protagonist. From the 17<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, all of the great English actors played Brutus, from Thomas Betterton to John Philip Kemble and William Charles Macready.

- In America, Edwin Booth emerged from the pack in a theatrical family and found fame playing Shakespeare. In one benefit performance in 1864, he and his

The three Booth brothers in a 1864 production of *Julius Caesar*—John Wilkes as Antony, Edwin as Brutus,



two brothers appeared on stage together for the first and only time. Edwin played Brutus, Junius played Cassius, and John Wilkes—the future assassin of Abraham Lincoln—played Marc Antony.

- Herbert Beerbohm Tree broke with tradition for leading men in 1898 and cast himself as Antony instead of Brutus. Tree had recently renovated Her Majesty’s Theatre in honor of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee, and his production of *Julius Caesar* celebrated empire and its trappings. He hired Dutch-born landscape artist, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, to paint three monumental backdrops and shaped the production to highlight Antony’s stirring rhetoric.



The scenic painting of landscape artist Lawrence Alma-Tadema brought a dimension of epic grandeur to Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s 1898 production of *Julius Caesar*.



Orson Welles' 1937 Mercury Theatre production pitted a band of noble idealists, led by himself as Brutus, against a fascist regime.

- With the rise of fascism before and during WWII, overtly political interpretations of the play proliferated in the twentieth century. Orson Welles created a riveting adaptation for his inaugural Mercury Theatre production in 1937. Welles cast Caesar as a dictator in the mold of Mussolini and featured himself as a noble idealist in the role of Brutus.



- The poster for a star-studded 1953 MGM movie adaptation shows Marlon Brando, as Marc Antony, standing above James Mason, John Gielgud, Greer Garson, and Deborah Kerr.
- In 2012, for the Royal Shakespeare Company, Artistic Director Gregory Doran fielded an African-born cast in a production that likened Caesar to such African dictators as Idi Amin and Robert Mugabe.



The 2012 RSC production fielded an African-born cast, including Paterson Joseph as Brutus and Theo Ogundipe as the Soothsayer.



John Milligan (Brutus), Keith Mackey (Caesar), Kermit Brown (Casca), Robert Allman (Cassius), and William McLucky (Cimber) in the 1970 production at Great Lakes Theater.



Scott Plate (Strato), Dougfred Miller (Cassius) and Richard Klouxxx (Brutus) in the 2004 production directed by Risa Brainin.

- Great Lakes Theater has presented *Julius Caesar* four times. The 1963 production was directed by Donald Moffat, who would later find success in Hollywood as a character actor. Artistic Director Larry Carra depicted the Roman senators as “establishment types” in 1970, and the angry mob as hippies. In 2004, during the early days of the Iraq War, guest director Risa Brainin used contemporary camouflage uniforms to evoke the conflicts of the day.

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# FROM PAGE TO STAGE

BY MARGARET LYNCH

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As written and originally performed, *Julius Caesar* is a very male-centric exploration of power. Commentators have often observed that the play has multiple strong roles for men—Caesar, Cassius, and Antony, in addition to Brutus—and have further noted that the “leading ladies” of the 19<sup>th</sup> century shunned the play because it lacked roles of similar scope for women. But how to approach it at a time in American life when questions of women and political ambition and power are highly topical—and fraught?

Guest director Sara Bruner decided to cast women in the roles of Caesar and Cassius in order to examine what happens when women gain access to power in a male-dominated world. Bruner reframed both roles in order to create an environment where both women and men are questioning a woman’s ambition. In the play, Caesar hides a sickness. Casting a woman in the role of someone who is determined not to show weakness “tunes the issue more poignantly,” says Bruner. In this production, a female Cassius puts into bolder relief the struggle of Shakespeare’s Cassius for

attention and respect.

Bruner intended her casting decisions to foreground the play’s relevance, but she did not want to invite one-to-one comparisons between Shakespeare’s play and today’s political environment and players. Just as Shakespeare’s play did not correlate neatly with the events of his own day, “a direct calibration,” she felt, “would minimize both history and the contemporary moment.” Instead she kept the setting in Rome, but a universalized version of Rome that could encompass a contemporary slant.

Responding to Bruner’s vision, scenic designer Russell Metheny said he “had in mind an abstraction of a classical space – a forum.” But instead of using marble columns and arches, he relied on steel sheets and scaffolding. The resulting physical space, said Metheny, “forces the action downstage, spilling into the audience as much as possible.” It provides levels for movement and opportunities for bold lighting and other atmospheric effects that could assist Bruner in conveying “the fog and confusion of war.”



As this view of the set model suggests, scenic designer Russel Metheny wanted to evoke a public space akin to the Roman Forum.



A top down view of the model reveals how the scenic design pushes the actors downstage, in close communication with the audience.

Costume designer Leah Piehl similarly sought to imbue classical Roman styles with a contemporary sensibility. Costuming choices needed to convey class signifiers. While the chief players belong to Rome’s governing elite, a crowd of common citizens insistently reminds those who govern that those who are governed need to be satisfied as well. Hence the senators are draped in togas, while the Roman citizens wear roughly textured shawls, headscarves, and breeches. When the armies of Brutus and Cassius, on the one hand, and Antony and Octavius, on the other, clash in the second half of the play, costuming choices help the audience to track the sides. The forces of Brutus and Cassius wear ornate breastplates, while those of Antony and Octavius present as soldiers in a more contemporary vein. They are the “new men” who will create the empire that Brutus and Cassius worked in vain to thwart.

Renderings for clothing worn by Calphurnius and Portia, sketched by costume designer Leah Piehl, capture the fabric draping that creates a silhouette that’s both “Roman” and contemporary for both the male and female members of the Roman elite..



*Handwritten note:* The double shawl effect



Dressed in the rough-hewn fabrics and shawled class-markers of the peasants in this production, the Soothsayer emerges from the mob to warn Caesar, “Beware the Ides of March!”

Breast-plated armor is a marker for the forces who follow Brutus and Cassius.

# IDAHO SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL'S PRODUCTION OF *JULIUS CAESAR*



Clockwise from top: Jillian Kates; Jodi Dominick; M.A. Taylor & Carole Healey; Lynn Robert Berg, David Anthony Smith, Alex Syiek, Carole Healey, Mack Shirilla & Laura Welsh Berg; Jillian Kates, Elijah Dawson, Shelby Griswold & Boe Wank; Nick Steen & Lynn Robert Berg; David Anthony Smith, Alex Syiek, Carole Healey, Mack Shirilla, Lynn Robert Berg & Laura Welsh Berg. Photos by DNK Photography.





Clockwise from top: Lynn Robery Berg & ensemble; Nick Steen; Aled Davies, Jahir Hipps & Nick Steen; Laura Welsh Berg & Marcus Martin; Marcus Martin, Laura Welsh Berg & Lynn Robert Berg; Jahir Hipps & Nick Steen; Marcus Martin, Laura Welsh Berg & David Anthony Smith; Lynn Robert Berg & Jahir Hipps; company of *Julius Caesar*. Photos by DNK Photography.



# COSTUME DESIGN

BY LEAH PIEHL





Anthony  
N.1



Decius



Lucius  
(Fritinus,  
Messala,  
Cato,  
Strabo,  
Pepidius)



CAMP  
STAVUS



CASSIUS  
F.2



CASSIUS



should easily  
transform to a  
more neutral  
character

SOOTH

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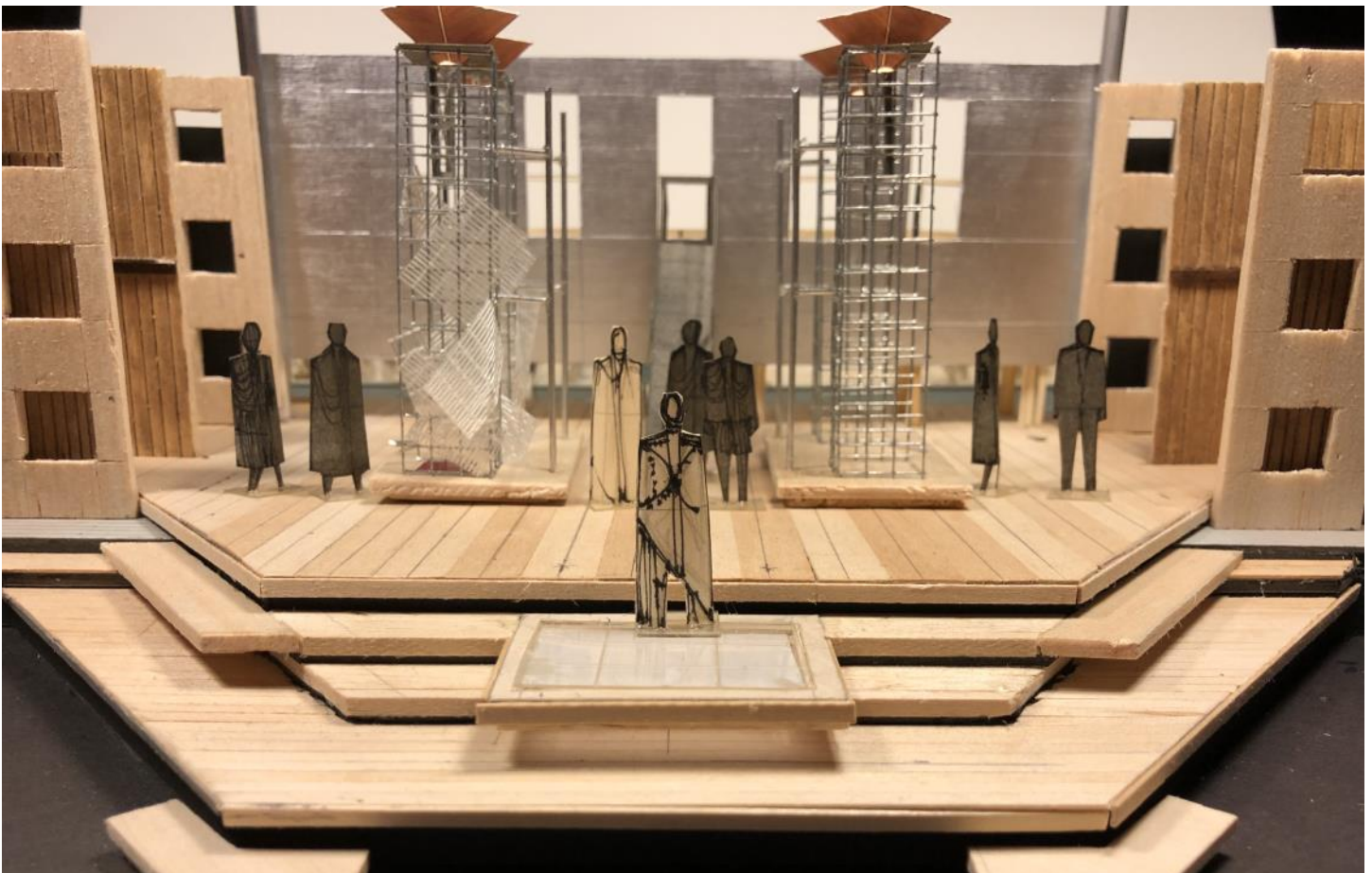
# SCENIC INSPIRATION & DESIGN

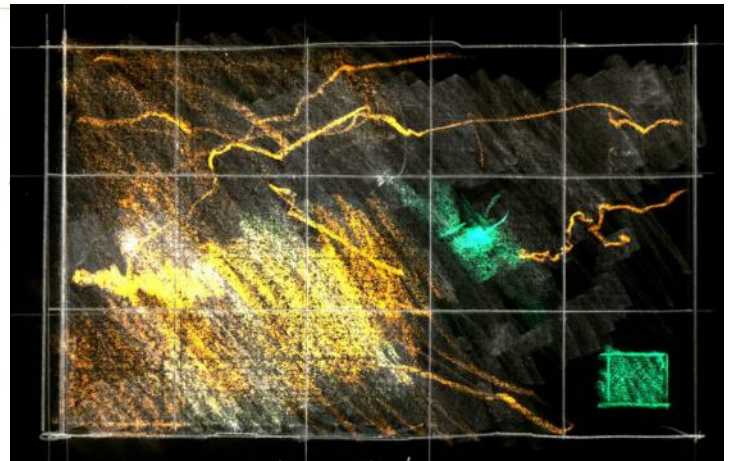
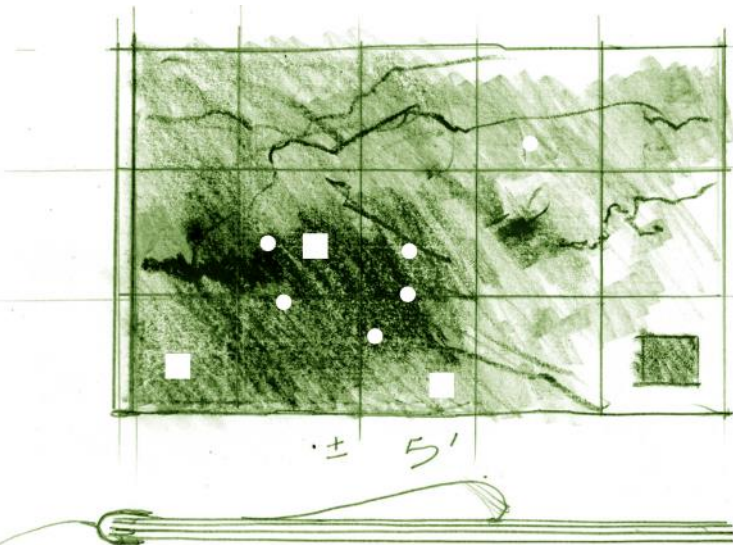
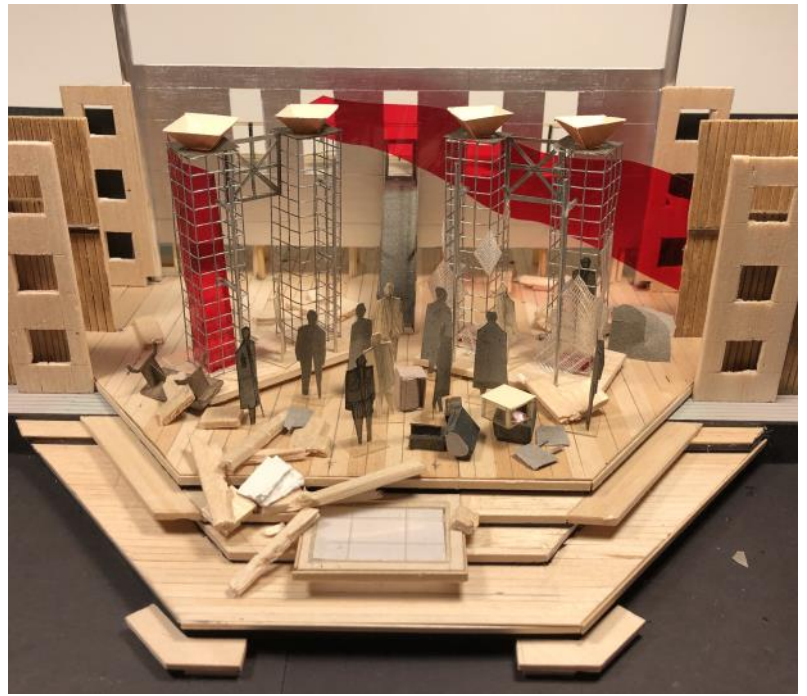
BY RUSSELL METHENY



Rendering

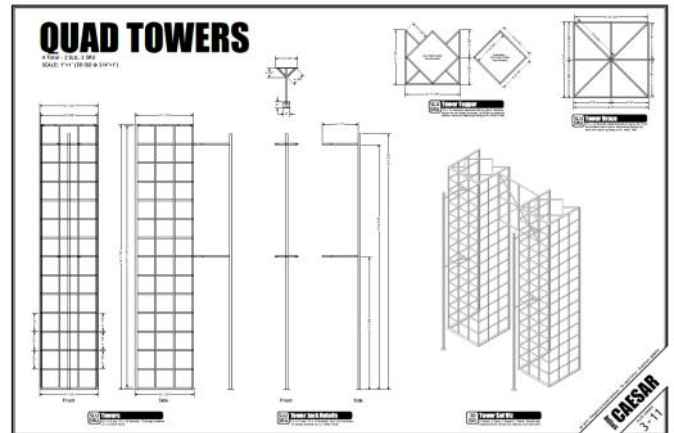
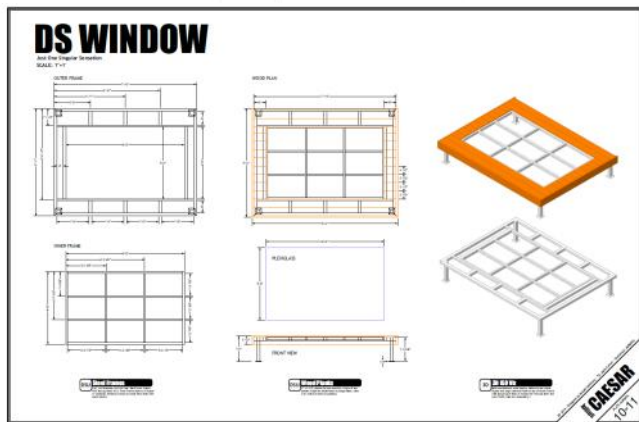
Photo of the scenic model.





Rendering of prop maps.

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# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

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Shakespeare's audience would have been aware of Roman history. They would have understood the turmoil caused by years of civil war, for in the not-so-distant past, England had experienced the tumultuous years of civil war that had taken place following the deposition of Richard II. In the immediate memories of many in Shakespeare's audience was the bloody aftermath of Henry VIII's divorce of his Catholic queen and the years of religious upheaval that followed.

Rome experienced a similar civil war. Prior to the events in *Julius Caesar*, Rome endured years of bloodshed during the conflicts between Marius and Sulla. After Sulla's death, Rome then experienced more turmoil during the power struggle between Pompey and Caesar.

Since the founding of the republic, plebeians sought representation and reform. They were opposed by the conservative senate, dominated by the patricians. Those patricians like Caesar and the brothers Gracchi were seen by the members of the senate as traitors to their class, for Caesar and the Gracchi brothers wanted reforms.

## A Brief Timeline of Events Prior to the Play:

B.C.E.

- ⇒ 753 Rome is founded. First legendary king is Romulus, who builds a city on the Palatine Hill.
- ⇒ 715-509 Rome is ruled by six kings. The last tyrant, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, is overthrown. The leader of the patricians is Lucius Junius Brutus, ancestor of Marcus Brutus. Brutus is one of the praetors, the chief magistrates of the republic. The office of consul is established later. The Republic of Rome – SPQR- lasts until the establishment of the empire under Caesar's nephew Octavius.
- ⇒ 494-464 Plebeians gain a voice in the government through two tribunes and two aediles. Later plebeians are granted land ownership. The struggle between the reformers and the conservative senators begins in earnest.
- ⇒ 477-350 Assembly of the People is created; two quaestors are added. In the following years, plebeians gain the right to marry patricians and hold important offices in the government.
- ⇒ 390 Gauls sack Rome.
- ⇒ 343-290 Three Samnite Wars – Rome dominates all Italy.
- ⇒ 264-146 Three Punic Wars – Rome eventually defeats Carthage thus dominates Mediterranean. Hannibal and Scipio Africanus achieve fame during this period.
- ⇒ 123-121 The brothers Gracchi brothers tackle the power of the aristocratic senate. Land reform gives the civilian poor the public owned lands. The Gracchi are grandsons of the famous patrician general, Scipio Africanus. The elder brother Tiberius Sempronius is clubbed to death on the Capitol. The younger brother Gaius was able to establish wider reforms of the ultra-conservative Rome. However, his reforms were abolished after he left the office of tribune of the plebs. His violent protest resulted in the Senate's passage of the first ultimate decree. Thousands of his supporters were put to death. Gaius Gracchus

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committed suicide.

- ⇒ 107-86 Gaius Marius is elected to the first of seven consulships. He is married to Julia, the daughter of Gaius Julius Caesar. A remarkable general, Marius effectively deals with the barbarian threats to the republic. He is often at odds with the senate.
- ⇒ 106 Cicero is born. He later becomes a Pompey supporter.
- ⇒ 100 Gaius Julius Caesar is born; related to Marius and Sulla.
- ⇒ 98-91 Italian War — Italian cities revolt against Roman rule. Sulla, a patrician general and brother-in-law of Marius, distinguishes himself in the war. At first Sulla and Marius are friends and allies; however, Sulla is a conservative patrician. He objects to the reforms proposed by Marius.
- ⇒ 88-82 Civil War between Marius and Sulla. Cato the Consul is murdered by Marius' son. Lucius Cornelius Cinna and Old Brutus follow the leadership of Marius. Riots occur in the Forum. Sulla leads his army into Rome; drives Marius and his supporters out. Carnage follows. The rostra is littered with the heads of Marius' supporters. However, once Sulla leaves Rome to deal with problems in the Eastern provinces, Marius and his supporters return. The army of Pompey's father, Pompey Strabo, defends the city against the forces of Marius and Cinna. Unfortunately, Pompey Strabo dies during an epidemic. When his corpse is abused by poor of Rome, an enraged Pompey (later the Great) with his friend Cicero leave Rome to take the body of Pompey Strabo back to his country estate. With the army of Pompey gone, Rome can no longer resist Marius' forces. Marius orders reprisals; the heads of Marius' enemies decorate the rostra. Marius orders a marriage between Julius Caesar and Cinna's daughter Cinnilla, the mother of Julius Caesar's daughter Julia. Marius' death ends this turbulent period.
- ⇒ 82-79 Sulla returns, Cinna is ousted from power. Sulla's dictatorship is established. He repeals all reforms; restores power to the senate — the ultra-conservative patricians rule with Sulla as dictator. Spartacus leads the gladiator and slave revolt.
- ⇒ 70 Pompey and Crassus serve as consuls
- ⇒ 63 Cicero serves as a consul; puts down the conspiracy of Catilina. Octavius is born. The First triumvirate — Caesar, Crassus, and Pompey is formed. Pompey marries Caesar's daughter, Julia.
- ⇒ 59 Caesar serves as consul
- ⇒ 58-54 Caesar conquers Gaul; invades Britain
- ⇒ 53-52 Crassus killed in Parthia. Pompey serves as sole consul.
- ⇒ 49-45 Civil War between Pompey and Caesar. Senate and Pompey fear the growing power of Caesar. He is ordered to renounce the office of consul and is forbidden to bring his army into Italy. Caesar agrees with the condition that Pompey also renounces the consulship. Pompey refuses to give up power. Caesar crosses the Rubicon on January 10 and enters Italy. Pompey marches his army to Greece. Cicero joins Pompey.
- ⇒ 48 August 9, Caesar defeats Pompey at the battle of Pharsalus. Pompey flees to Egypt where he is murdered by Cleopatra's brother Ptolemy XIII. Caesar defeats Ptolemy and makes Cleopatra his mistress

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and queen. Cicero returns to Italy.

- ⇒ 48-44 Caesar becomes dictator. He pardons Cicero and other Pompey supporters, including Brutus. Caesar begins massive administrative reforms, which angered conservative patricians who wanted a return to a Republic dominated by the Senate.
- ⇒ 46 Suicide of Portia's father, Marcus Porcius Cato; he was a supporter of Pompey.
- ⇒ 45 In March, Caesar defeats Pompey's sons. Although the older Cnaeus is killed, the younger Sextus escapes. He celebrates his victory with a Triumph in October.
- ⇒ 44 January – Mark Antony becomes co-Consul with Caesar
- ⇒ January 30 – February 15 Caesar assumes the office of Dictator for Life
- ⇒ February 15 – feast of Lupercalia
- ⇒ February 16 – March 14 Caesar prepares for his military campaign against the Parthians, who had killed Crassus. Caesar planned to leave Rome on March 18. He had made provisions for governors in his absence.
- ⇒ March 15 - Caesar assassinated by sixty conspirators. That night Calpurnia gives Antony Caesar's papers and the large sum of money, which would have been used in the military campaign. As Consul, Antony calls the Senate into session on March 17.
- ⇒ March 16 – Brutus addresses the crowd at the Capitol.
- ⇒ March 17 – Senate meets and approves all of Caesar's official acts, including making Brutus the governor of Macedonia, Cassius of Asia, and Decius of Gaul. Not only would the conspirators not be punished, they now controlled vast armies and territories. The contents of Caesar's will revealed that public would receive Caesar's gardens. Each Roman citizen received 300 sesterces. Octavius named as Caesar's heir; Antony sees Octavius as a threat to his own political future. He is not pleased.
- ⇒ March 20 – Caesar's funeral scheduled to be held on the Field of Mars. Caesar's body brought first to the Forum. Antony delivers his oration. A wax effigy of Caesar's body, complete with the wounds, is displayed to the crowd. Crowd goes berserk; Caesar is cremated in the Forum.
- ⇒ April – the conspirators leave. Brutus settles in Macedonia; Cassius is in Asia. Antony consolidates his power as Consul. Cleopatra and her son Caesarion return to Egypt. Cicero suspicious of Antony leaves Rome.
- ⇒ End of April – Octavius comes to Rome. He is popular with the people and the army. He demands the funds from Caesar's will to settle the bequests. Antony refuses. Octavius raises the money himself. Antony's popularity slips; Octavius and Antony are in conflict. Cicero befriends Octavius.
- ⇒ 43 January – Antony is no longer Consul; in fact, with Cicero running the government, Antony is declared a public enemy. Civil war has broken out again, and the two new consuls die in battle. The power



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balance shifts. By August, Cicero is out of favor; new elections are held. Caesar's assassination is declared a crime. Antony's condemnation is reversed. The conspirators and Republican senators are in danger.

- ⇒ November 27 - Second Triumvirate is formed. Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus meet at Bononia. To fund their armies, they decide on the proscriptions. About 300 Senators and 2000 equites are marked for execution. Their property was confiscated. Octavius fights for two days to spare Cicero; Antony insists.
- ⇒ December 7 – sixty-three-year old Cicero killed.
- ⇒ 42 January – Antony and Octavius set up winter quarters in Amphipolis.
- ⇒ October 3 – Cassius and Brutus occupy the high hills of Philippi. Brutus overrules Cassius and advocates an attack. In the first battle at Philippi, Brutus is successful against Octavius. Because Brutus does not stop his soldiers from looting, he does not come to the aid of Cassius, who is overwhelmed by Antony. The battle would have been a draw. Cassius commits suicide.
- ⇒ October 23 Second battle of Philippi – Brutus is defeated. He commits suicide.

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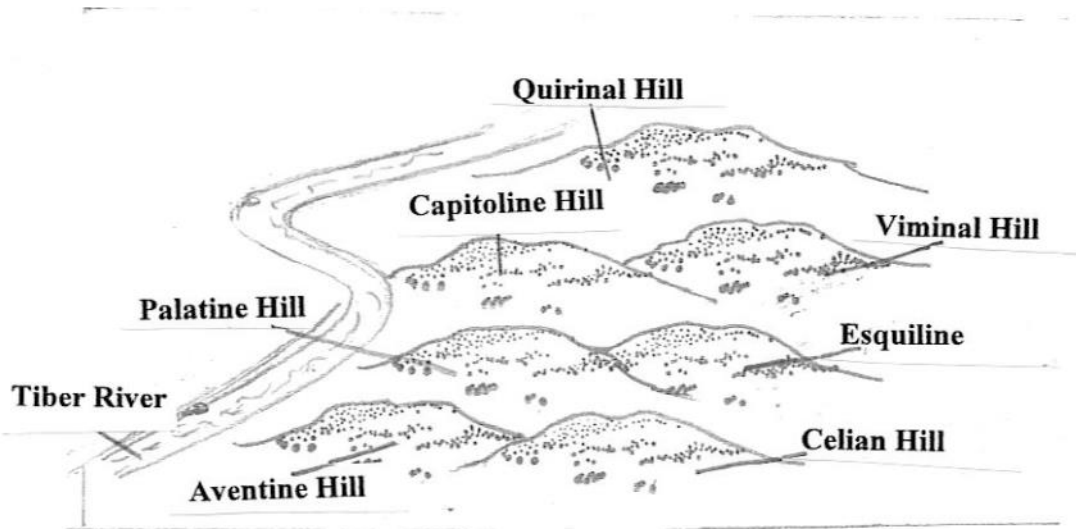
# SETTING OF JULIUS CAESAR

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## Seven Hills of Rome

*Historically:* About 3000 years ago, the Latins built small settlements on the seven hills above the Tiber River. By the eighth century B.C., the towns merged to form the city of Rome. The Latins were surrounded by other groups—the Etruscans in the north, the Greeks in the south, and the Sabines in the nearby west. About 600 B.C., the Etruscans took control of Rome; Rome was ruled by a king who was selected and advised by a council of elders (*senes*—the forerunner of the senate). The Romans especially resented the last Etruscan king, Tarquinius Superbus or “Tarquin the Proud.” He was a tyrant who had come to power by murdering the previous king. In 509 B.C. Lucius Junius Brutus (the ancestor of Brutus in the play), drove Tarquin out and established the republic of Rome. Brutus became the first consul of the new republic (SPQR or *Senatus populusque Romanus*, the Senate and People of Rome).

*Mythologically:* After the Trojan War, Prince Aeneas escapes from the burning city with his father Anchises and his son Ascanius (also known as Iulus.) Aeneas, whose mother was the goddess Venus, wandered the ancient world until he came to Italy. He married a local princess and established a new line of kings. Two of his descendants were Romulus and Remus. The new city of Rome was named after him. Gaius Julius Caesar claimed direct decent from Iulus (hence the Julii family). So Caesar believed he was descended from kings and the Olympian gods.



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## SETTINGS OF *JULIUS CAESAR*: FORUM ROMANUM

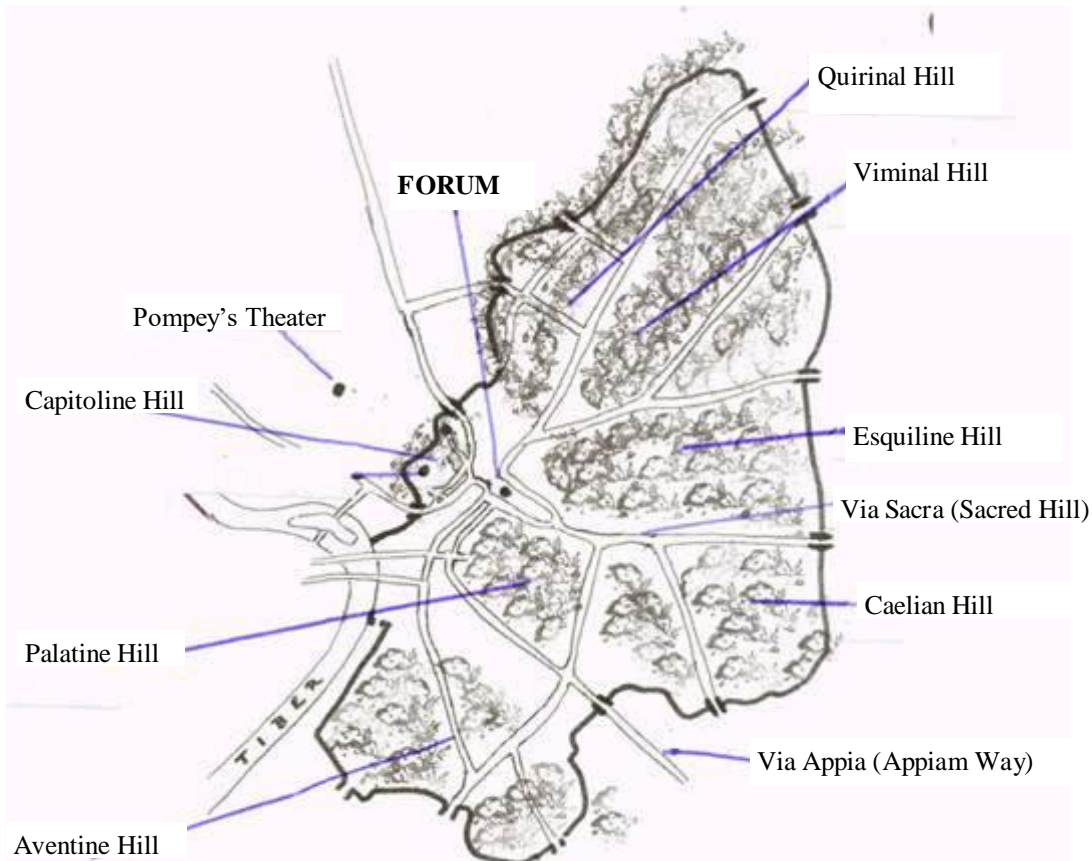
Ides of March 44 B.C. Julius Caesar was assassinated.

In Shakespeare's play, the conspirators attack and kill Julius Caesar in the Senate House (the Curia) at the base of Pompey's statue. Later the conspirators address the crowd in the Forum. After Antony's speech, the crowd burns Caesar's body on an impromptu funeral pyre situated on the Forum. Later a temple, dedicated to the deified Caesar, was erected over the spot where his remains were cremated.

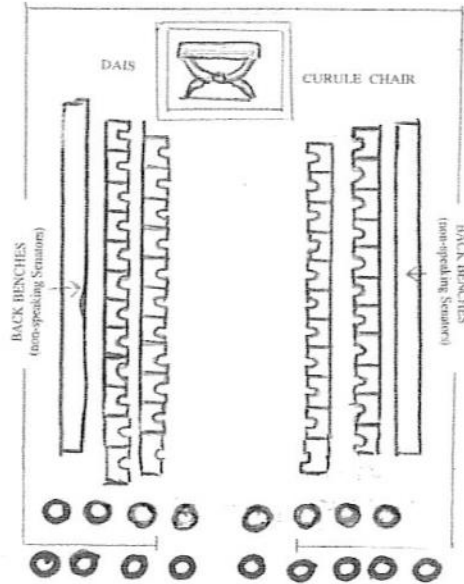
Historically, Julius Caesar was assassinated in a meeting room at Pompey's Theater. The Curia, the Roman Senate meeting house, was under reconstruction at the time of Caesar's death. It had been destroyed in a fire after the death of Clodius eight years before. The Senate had ordered Pompey to restore civil order and rebuild the Curia.

The complex at Pompey's Theater was located in the Campus Martius, an area that is outside the sacred pomerium or the city's official boundary. The Forum and Palatine Hill are located within the pomerium. According to Roman law, no concealed weapons were allowed within the pomerium. Therefore, the conspirators chose an excellent place to assassinate Caesar.

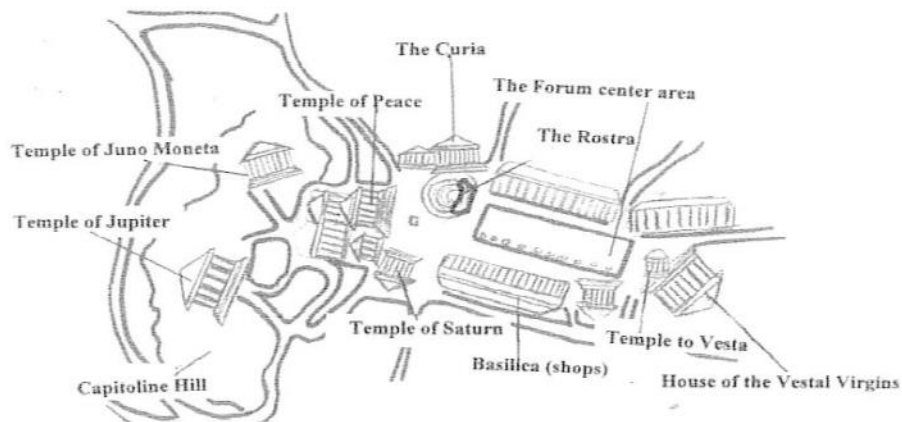
Ancient Rome was a walled city; it had several gates. Two of the most important roads were the Appian Way and the Sacred Way. Sacrifices were often performed at the Temple of Jupiter Capitoline and at the altar to Saturn. This altar was located near the temples of Saturn and Peace. Most of the patrician families lived on the Palatine Hill.



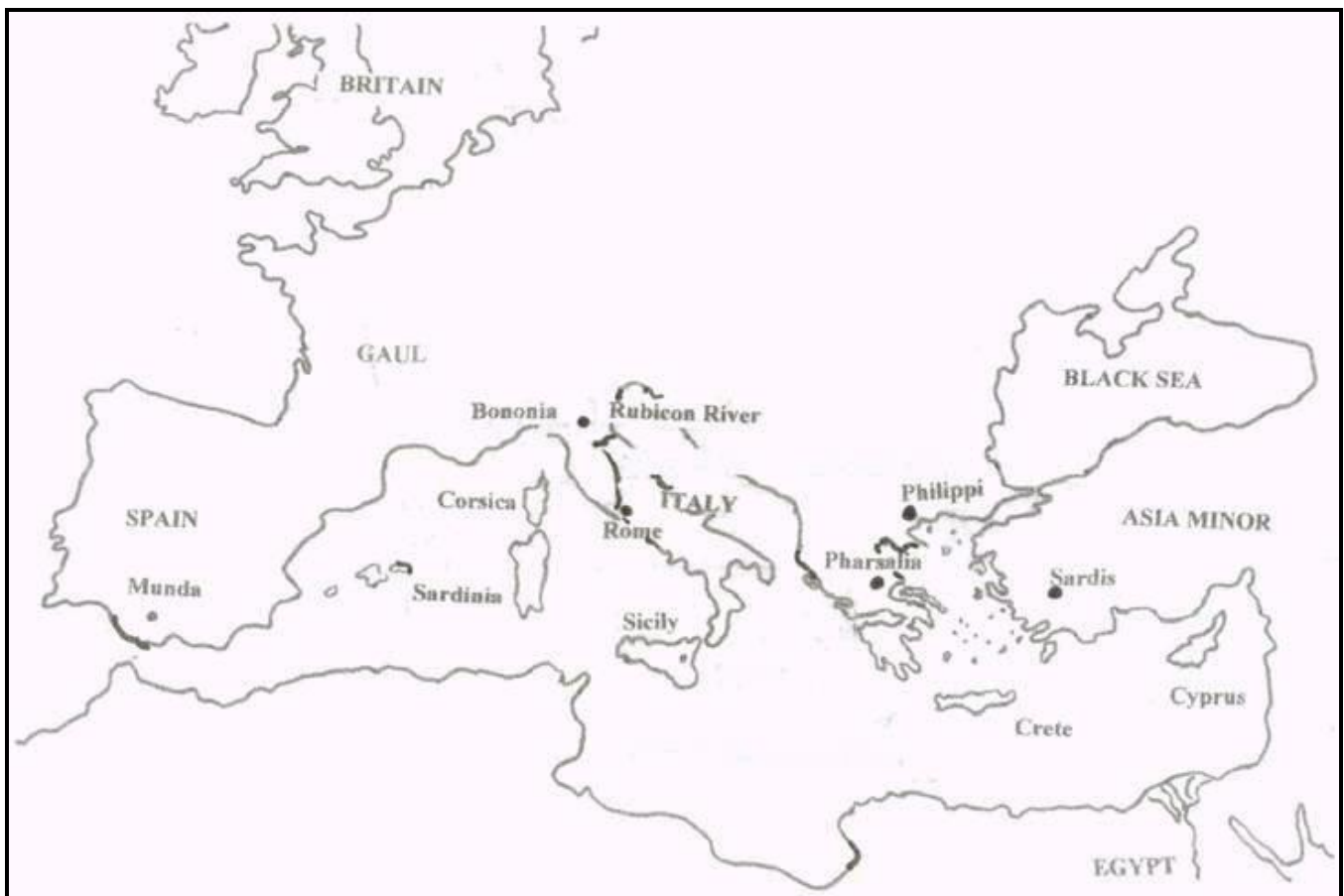
The Senate met in a square room. There was a rigid order to the senators. The chief senator was called the *Principes Senatus*, the Leader of the House. He was a patrician of great morals and was elected for a five-year term. Less prominent senators, who did not have the right to speak at the meeting but had the right to vote, occupied the benches along the wall. They were called the backbenchers. Important Senators sat in the front seats. The consuls sat in a *curule chair*, an ivory chair which had carved, curved legs that crossed in a broad X.



After the assassination, the conspirators went to the Forum to address the crowds. Caesar's body was carried back into the city on the *Via Sacra* (the Sacred Way) and placed on the *Rostra*. It would be at the *Rostra*, where Brutus and then Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony) would have spoken their famous Act III speeches over the body of Caesar.



After Mark Antony's speech to the Roman citizens, the conspirators fled from Rome, The great orator Cicero made several speeches against Mark Antony, which lessened Antony's popularity. Antony then left Rome to battle with Peeius, and the Senate proclaimed Octavius as Caesar's heir. The army of Octavius captured Decius, who was then executed. The triumvirate of Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus is formed to battle Cassius and Brutus. In the proscriptions that follow, Antony demands the life of Cicero. Octavius, who had been befriended by Cicero when Octavius had first come to Rome, agrees to Antony's demands. Cicero is captured near his country estate; he is beheaded. His hands are also cut off. The grisly trophies are taken to Rome and nailed to the Rostra. Antony's wife, who was very bitter about Cicero's comments about her husband, rips out Cicero's tongue. Cicero was sixty-three. Cassius and Brutus first meet in Sardis. Later their armies confront the armies of Octavius and Antony at Philippi in Macedonia. In October 42 B.C., the armies of Octavius and Antony are victorious. Cassius and Brutus commit suicide.



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# QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

## PRIOR TO ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE

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1. The policy of the United States has been not to use assassination of a head of state to affect a change in a foreign government. In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* a band of prominent Roman citizens, using a "preemptive strike," decide to kill Julius Caesar before he is offered the kingship of Rome. Is it ever right (morally or politically) to remove a head of state from power by assassination? (Consider modern examples from the use of a declaration of war to revolution.)
2. Can good ever emerge from evil? Give examples.
3. How do public figures (politicians, celebrities, etc.) create a persona that appeals to the general population?
4. Consider the character of the "mob" psychology. Can you give examples of the bandwagon technique that can be found in politics, advertisement, or sports? What makes an individual want to be part of the crowd? How can the home team advantage affect a game?
5. Does the end ever justify the means? Give an example from modern life which illustrates that the end did justify the means or that the end did not justify the means.
6. Can you give any examples where politicians have set the scene before appearing at speeches, rallies, interviews? What is the purpose of these types of props and what is the effect upon the audience?
7. Prior to the setting of *Julius Caesar*, Rome has experienced about one hundred years of civil war. Two outstanding popular heroic generals, Pompey and Caesar, battle for supreme power. Caesar defeats Pompey. Who was Pompey? What type of government did he fight and die for? Who were his associates that survived Pompey's death and people this play? What was Pompey's various connections to Caesar? What did Pompey have in common with Julius Caesar?
8. Have you ever been faced with a crucial decision that would affect your life and the lives of your family? Have you ever been in a situation in which you had to face/confront an important person? How did you behave in the hours and days prior to making the decision or confronting this person? Was there a point when you decided that it might be easier to walk away from the situation? How did you feel?
9. Brutus decides to kill a person he loves to secure a belief he holds. What is the hardest thing you've ever had to do to stand up for a personal belief? How did you come to your decision? What obstacles did you face? How did you overcome them?

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# VOCABULARY

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## ACT I

1. cobbler – a shoemaker
2. awl – a tool for piercing leather
3. tribute – money and goods that conquered nations paid to Rome
4. tributaries – captives who must pay the ransom (tribute)
5. triumph – a victory parade through Rome that was granted by the Senate to a victorious general.
6. basest metal – lowly spirit (with a pun on metal/mettle). Lead is the basest metal, inert but malleable. (What is the implication of the pun?)
7. images – statues of Caesar
8. Feast of Lupercal – feast of purification, Februa – thus the derivation of February, which honored Pan (half-man, half-goat god of shepherds). Lupercalia was celebrated on the ides of February. The celebrants dressed themselves in goatskin and ran a race around Palatine Hill and the Circus. They carried thongs of goatskin with which they struck those who came in their way. According to tradition, if a woman was lashed she would be cured of her barrenness.
9. pitch – the highest point in the flight of a bird
10. Ides of March – March 15. The Ides were the fifteenth day of March, May, July, and October. It is the thirteenth day of all the other months. The ides occur during a full moon, an unlucky time. Romans did not do business during the time of the waning moon which followed.
11. sennet – sound of the trumpet, indicating the arrival or departure of a dignitary.
12. construe – interpret
13. cogitations – thoughts
14. shadow – reflection; inner self
15. stale – common, cheapen
16. scandal – slander
17. accoutred – dressed
18. flood – reference to the Great Flood; classical survivors Deucalion and Pyrrha (Noah in the Bible)
19. crossed – opposed
20. ferret – small rodent with red eyes
21. marry – an oath meaning “indeed” It is a reference to the Virgin Mary.
22. falling sickness – epilepsy. Cassius probably means “falling into slavery”
23. doublet – Elizabethan jacket (Romans wore a tunic which was topped with a toga.)
24. prodigies – abnormalities, wonders
25. monstrous – abnormal
26. portentous – very important
27. praetor – Roman official ranking just below the consul. In Rome, there were eight praetors or chief justices.
28. alchemy – pseudo-science with the aim of turning base metals into gold

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29. virtue – ultimate aim of alchemy

## **ACT II**

1. taper – candle
2. closet – small room
3. exhalations – meteors
4. phantasma – hallucination
5. palter – say one thing and mean another
6. cautelous – deceitful; cautious
7. carrion – men who are half dead
8. augurers – group of state officials who decided whether a day was lucky or unlucky to conduct business
9. humor – one of the four dispositions; whim  
    humours- unhealthy mists
10. wafture – waving
11. stood on ceremonies – giving importance to omens
12. tinctures – handkerchiefs dipped in the blood of martyrs, thus possessing healing powers
13. cognizance – heraldic emblems worn by a nobleman’s followers
14. ague – fever
15. security – overconfidence
16. suitor – petitioner
17. sooth – truly

## **ACT III**

1. schedule – a document
2. puissant – powerful
3. enfranchisement – freedom
4. bootless – without effect
5. common pulpits– places to voice controversial opinions without penalty; similar to Speaker’s Corner in Hyde Park
6. doomsday – Judgment Day
7. rank – rotten or diseased
8. purpled – bloody; Caesar’s blood is purple, the color of royalty
9. reek and smoke – steam; comparison to the hands of a priest who has just killed a sacrificial animal
10. marketplace – Forum
11. conceit – think; judge
12. bayed – trapped
13. hart – deer
14. cumber – trouble or load down
15. havoc – a signal for uncontrolled massacre and pillage



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16. seven leagues – twenty-one miles
  17. extenuated – belittled
  18. general coffers – chests of money
  19. napkins – handkerchiefs
  20. issues – heirs
  21. griefs – grievances
  22. vesture – clothing
  23. drachma – silver coins
  24. brands - torches

#### **ACT IV**

1. pricked – marked down for death
2. cut off some charge in legacies – pay expenses from Caesar’s will
3. meet – suitable
4. three-fold world – Europe, Africa, and Asia; each section ruled by a member of the  
Triumvirate of Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus
5. proscription – death penalty (300 of the 900 senators and 2,000 equites (or the aristocratic knights in Rome)  
were purged by Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus in the bloodbath that followed Caesar’s death.
6. provender – food
7. covert –hidden
8. instances – signs of friendship
9. jades – broken-down horse; worthless or fickle woman
10. noted – publically disgraced
11. nice – trivial; petty
12. go to – nonsense
13. choler – anger
14. vaunting – boasting
15. honesty – honorable reputation
16. rived – torn
17. braved – threatened
18. checked – corrected
19. rote – learned by heart
20. humor – mood: one of the four humors
21. chides – angry
22. meet – right
23. cynic – one who scoffs
24. your philosophy – Brutus was a Stoic, one who accepted life’s trials without emotion.
25. swallow’d fire – Portia committed suicide by swallowing burning coals
26. tenor - effect

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27. outlawry – exile
  28. mace – a heavy staff of office

### **ACT V**

1. bloody sign of battle – a red flag; or according to Plutarch a red cape
2. exigent – crisis
3. masker – one who participated in masques  
    masque – a form of entertainment, popular in Elizabethan times. It involved music, dance, and masquerades
4. presage – foretell as omens
5. ensign – both the standard /flag and the man who carried it
6. light – dismount
7. apt – prone to deception
8. misconstrued - misinterpreted
9. smatch – smack; taste

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# ACTIVITIES

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## ALLUSIONS IN *JULIUS CAESAR*

Shakespeare used many allusions to classical mythology and classical history. Identify the allusion and then describe its use in the play.

<u>Allusion</u>	<u>Original Meaning</u>	<u>Use in <i>Julius Caesar</i></u>
(Act, scene, line)		
Pompey (I, 1, 35)		
Tiber (I, 1, 44)		
Capitol (I, 1, 62)		
Aeneas (I, 1, 112)		
Troy (I, 1, 113)		
Anchises (I, 1, 114)		
Colossus (I, 1, 136)		
Lucius Junius, Brutus (I, 1, 159)		
Cicero (I, 1, 185)		
Pompey's Porch (I, 3, 126)		
Tarquin (II, 1, 54)		
Erebus (II, 1, 84)		
Cato (II, 1, 295)		
Senate House (II, 4, 1)		
Olympus (III, 1, 73)		
Pompey's basis (III, 1, 115)		
Lethe (III, 1, 206)		
Ate (III, 1, 271)		
Octavius Caesar (III, 1, 296)		
Plebeians (III, 2)		
Nervii (III, 2, 163)		
Sardis (IV, 2, 28)		
Thunderbolt (IV, 3, 81)		
Pluto (IV, 3, 102)		
Plutus		
Cynic (IV, 3, 133)		
Philippi (IV, 3, 170)		
Hybla bees (V, 1, 36)		
Epicurus (V, 1, 76)		
Cato (V, 1, 101)		
Ides of March (V, 1, 113)		
Parthia (V, 3, 37)		

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## IMAGERY TOGA

Directions: Divide the class into five groups. Each group will concentrate on one piece of imagery in the play. The members of the group will write down the lines from the play, which illustrate assigned imagery. Include the person who spoke the quote, act, scene, and line. At the completion of the play, the groups will get together and decide which images were the most important within their choice. Each person in the group will then create a section for the toga. In each block, the student will have an illustration for the quotation, quotation, speaker, act and scene, and the type of imagery.

After all blocks have been completed, students will then arrange the blocks to form a paper toga that will illustrate the imagery in the play. If the number of blocks is uneven, fill in the spaces with blocks that represent the characters or settings from the play. The teacher can mount this visual as a teaching tool in the classroom. The background for the toga can be either white or purple. The purple toga was worn by the emperor. A white toga with a wide purple stripe was worn by the senators.

Imagery: BLOOD; SUPERNATURAL/OMEN/PROPHECY/DREAMS; STORM, NATURE;  
SICKNESS/ ILL HEALTH/DEATH; WAR/BATTLE/STRATEGY/WEAPONS

## IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE!

Imagine that Rome is a jungle, populated with animals rather than people. Make a list of the characters in the play. Then assign an animal to each character. Find an illustration of each animal and create a collage to represent this aspect of a character's personality. Identify the character and include a brief statement why this animal best represents this character. The animals/character identification can be mounted on a picture of Rome, temples, or columns. This activity can be either an individual activity or a group activity. If a group activity, the character names can be divided among the groups.

## MISSING SCENES


Divide the class into four or five groups. Shakespeare did not write a scene in which the audience sees Antony offering Caesar a crown. Using Casca's description of Antony offering the crown to Caesar, students will construct this scene. Supply the words that Antony might have used in his thrice presentation of the crown, Caesar's words and actions, asides by Calphurnia, Cicero, Casca, and various members of the crowd. Students can use the devices of asides or bits of dialogue. Consider whether everyone in the crowd would have been pleased by Antony's proposal. Also, students can include the reactions of the spectators to Caesar's faint. (Consider the situation today. Would you as a voter, want to vote for a candidate who falls in such a manner while delivering a speech to the public?)

A good resource for assigning identities to the crowd can be found in *Teaching Shakespeare Into the Twenty-First Century*, pp. 18-25.

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## “VENI, VIDI, VICI” (I CAME, I SAW, I CONQUERED)

Directions: Construct a portrait of Julius Caesar, using quotations from the play that describe Caesar. Put the quotations that Caesar made about himself below the middle circle. Then write descriptions of Caesar made by other characters in the appropriate sections. When you have completed your selections, you will have a characterization portrait of Caesar.



BRUTUS

DECIUS

CASCA

ANTONY

CASSIUS

TRIBUNES

ROMAN CITIZENS

Caesar Sum  
“I am Caesar”

Each of the seven circles contains five horizontal lines for writing.

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## **MONEY MATTERS**

Before the Empire, Roman generals paid their troops from their personal funds. They minted coins with their own images and memorable deeds from their lives. Later, the Emperor issued coins in his image.

In Act IV the leaders discuss funding their military exploits. Design coins that Antony, Lepidus, Octavius, Cassius, and Brutus would have issued. On the head side, would have been an image of the man; on the tail side would have been a design that symbolized an important event.

## **THE ROAD NOT TAKEN**

Many characters face choices as they travel down the highways of the plot. Select a character of your choice. Create a map of the choices that he/she made. What alternative paths could have been taken? What would have been the change in outcome. To give your map a Roman flavor use “Via” for road; “mons” for mountain (could represent a hurdle); “mare” for sea(of troubles); “flumen” for stream or river; pons (bridge).

## **THE FIFTEEN-MINUTE *JULIUS CAESAR***

Divide the class into five groups. Each group will select an act for their presentation. Using their plays, the group will construct a three-minute version of their act. They must use lines from the act. Students will prepare their scripts. (Give a day of classroom time for group work.)

On the following day, the groups perform their scripts. Within fifteen minutes, an abridged version will be performed. After the conclusion of Act V, have each group explain what events they chose to include and those events which they chose to ignore.

## **POSTERS! POSTERS! POSTERS!**

Have the students produce a poster or a collage that represents the images in Calpurnia’s dreams, the terrible storm that occurs in Rome, or Antony’s “dogs of war” soliloquy.

The class can also choose a series of 10 – 15 important quotations from the play. Students can then create a poster around the quotation. When all the posters are displayed, a visual presentation of the plot is possible. Students can also create posters about a given character. Choose quotations that represent the character.

## ANATOMY OF ASSASSINATIONS

Unfortunately, the world has been plagued by political assassination as a means of affecting political change. The assassination of Julius Caesar was not unique. Research the following assassinations/forced suicide of famous leaders. Teachers can decide whether the activity is an individual, small group, or class assignment. (Students may choose to research others.) *Adapted from Curriculum Unit Julius Caesar – The Center for Learning.*

<u>Target</u>	<u>Assassin(s)</u>	<u>Assassin's Reason</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Actual Outcome</u>
Julius Caesar	Brutus, Cassius	Fear Caesar would be a tyrant; take absolute	Prevent Caesar from becoming king	Civil War; proscription of many Senators; death of Republic; creation of Empire
Socrates				
Abraham Lincoln, United States President				
Francis Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria				
Gandi, Indian Religious leader				
John F. Kennedy, United States President				
Martin Luther King Jr., Civil Rights leader				
Anwar Sadat, Pres. of Egypt				
Menachem Begin, Prime Minister of Israel				

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## PUTTING THE CONSPIRATORS ON TRIAL FOR THE MURDER OF JULIUS CAESAR

Time frame: two periods. One period is the preparation period; the second period is the staging of the trial. In the first period, decide upon the roles. Then break into groups.

Those who are playing the parts of the judges, defense team, and prosecuting team should divide into groups and formulate the questions that will be put to the witness. The prosecuting team/or the judges will question the members of the conspiracy.

Those who are witnesses will also group together and formulate their testimony about the events leading to the assassination. Other witnesses need to formulate their testimony about what happened in the Capitol.

The foreman of the jury and the members of the jury need to decide how they will find in the matter of the conspirators. This group needs to formulate their verdict statement. If more parts are needed, the trial coverage can be expanded to include the Roman news media. The reporters can then meet as a group and decide which characters to approach with questions. Decide the questions in advance.

Props: water clock (research this ancient time device), togas for the civilians; military dress for soldiers, scrolls, quills, statues, bloody clothing, knives, swords

Characters: Adapt the characters to the number of students in the class. Everyone should have a role.

- Judge or judges (a panel of three can be used)
- Prosecuting team
- Defense team (including the famous Cicero)
- Defendants: the conspirators in the play
- Witnesses: Senators, Mark Antony, Portia, Calpurnia, various servants, Artemidorus, Soothsayer, soldiers, commoners, etc.
- Jury: some members of the class may serve as witnesses and then take their places in the jury box

On the second day, stage the Trial of the Conspirators.



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# WRITING PROMPTS

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Note: The following questions and writing prompts reflect your experience with the Great Lakes Theater production of *Julius Caesar*. These questions and writing prompts use female pronouns to describe both Julius Caesar and Cassius, as well as male pronouns to describe Calphurnius.

1. During Cassius' initial conversation with Brutus, Cassius describes the swimming match with Caesar. Imagine that Cassius has written to her family about this incident. Create this letter. Caesar was a great writer; therefore, now imagine that you are a younger Caesar. Create Caesar's journal entry for the same swimming match. Your two versions should reflect the different viewpoints of the same incident.
2. In Act IV, scene iii, Brutus tells Cassius that Portia committed suicide. Write Portia's suicide note that was sent to Brutus. Also, include a cover letter from the person who found Portia and her note. Have Portia relate what drove her to this desperate act. Explain why she chose this method of death. Have her relate her feelings about her father (Cato), her brother (young Cato), her husband, and Caesar's death.
3. Shakespeare wrote a scene in which Brutus is visited by Caesar's ghost. Brutus tells Volumnius that the ghost of Caesar appeared to him at Philippi. Write this short scene involving Brutus' second encounter with Caesar's ghost. What questions would Brutus have for the ghost? How would the ghost answer him? Brutus says that "I know my hour is come." What did the ghost tell Brutus to give him this feeling?
4. In April, 44 B.C., Cicero said, "A pity you didn't invite me to dinner on the Ides of March! Let me tell you, there would have been no leftovers." Brutus made at least six mistakes in the course of the play. Imagine that Brutus had written to Cicero for advice. Construct a letter from Cicero to Brutus. In this letter, Cicero gives Brutus the benefit of his many years on the political scene. What arguments and advice would Cicero give to Brutus that had he taken it, Brutus' life and the course of history would have been different.
5. Assume the identity of Petronius Albinus, a Roman centurion, who is on duty in the Forum on the day of Mark Antony's speech. Vainly, you attempt to contain the fury of the mob after Antony enflames them with his speech about Caesar. Write a report to your superior officer. Describe Antony's speech, the crowd's reaction, the impromptu cremation of Caesar's remains, the march toward the conspirators' homes, the report you received about Cinna the poet, and your feelings about the anarchy that has erupted in Rome.
6. In Act IV, scene 3, Lucius sings a song to Brutus, Varrus, and Claudio. Write the song that Lucius sang. You may choose to put your words to suitable music and present your version to the class.
7. In Act I, sc 2, Cassius says to Brutus:

"And since you know you cannot see yourself  
So well as by reflection, I, your glass,  
Will modestly discover to yourself  
That of yourself which you yet know not of."

Discuss how Brutus tailors his actions and his speeches to conform to the image that is expected from Brutus. Support your opinions with examples from the play.

8. The original script by William Shakespeare of *Julius Caesar* has two women's parts — Portia and Calpurnia. Research the role of the Roman matron. Describe whether these two women accurately portray

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the roles and expectations of a patrician Roman woman. Why are these two female characters important in understanding Julius Caesar and Brutus? How would the play have changed if their parts had been omitted from the script?

9. Brutus says that he wishes he could kill the spirit of Caesar and not the person (“O, that we then could come by Caesar’s spirit/And not dismember Caesar!”). Describe how irony of this statement is developed through the remainder of the play.
10. Describe how the characters of Cassius and Brutus change in the play. Both are conspirators, but do they remain cold-blooded conspirators? Explain.
11. Caesar’s assassination produced an aftermath. Rome and her citizens were never the same. Not only did Caesar die, but other things died as well: peace and harmony in Rome and the world, SPQR (the Roman republic), the conspirators, the influence of the Senate, and freedom. Write a sonnet about losses or death that occurred in the aftermath of Caesar’s assassination. A sonnet is a fourteen line poem with a rhyme scheme of abab cdcd efef gg. Each line is written in iambic pentameter (ten syllables – unstressed / stressed).

An example of an opening quatrain:  
Death stalked its prey down streets of ancient Rome,  
For omens had warned dire times would begin.  
Those who feared that Caesar would rule alone  
Saw his/her death as salvation, not a sin.

12. As Portia sends Lucius to the Capitol to report on the events that are to come, she says to him:

“...hear a bustling rumour,  
...And the wind brings it from the Capitol.”

Write a poem about the events that occur in the Capitol, as the sounds are carried on the breath of the wind as it blows through the streets of Rome.

Suggested beginnings:  
Listen to the wind. It brings sounds of life dying.  
Stop! Can you hear it? A life is gone.  
Hush! What is that I hear?

13. Cassius is the author of several letters to Brutus. In Act II, Brutus reads a fragment of one of these letters. According to Brutus, he has received several letters during the previous month. Compose two letters that Cassius would have written to Brutus that urge Brutus to join the conspiracy. Remember that Cassius is a clever person; she would not want these letters read by those loyal to Caesar. Therefore, she would be circumspect with details and names.
14. Brutus personifies the conspiracy in Act II, scene i. Make this personification visual by creating a picture that portrays the qualities of conspiracy and then writing an extended metaphor poem about conspiracy. To illustrate the concept consider how justice is portrayed as blind, death is portrayed as the grim reaper, time is portrayed as an old man, or the new year is portrayed as a baby.
15. According to Plutarch, Artemidorus was a Greek teacher of rhetoric, who taught several of the conspirators in the art of speech making. Since he possesses very specific details about the conspiracy, it is reasonable to assume that perhaps he overheard snatches of the conspirators’ conversations and then made logical conclusions.

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16. Imagine that after Caesar's death, Artemidorus meets Mark Antony and Octavius. In this meeting Artemidorus reveals how he came to possess the names of the conspirators. What other facts about the assassination did Artemidorus possess? In the aftermath of the assassination, what does Artemidorus wish that he had done differently? How do Antony and Octavius react to Artemidorus? What do they plan to do now? Create this missing scene involving Artemidorus, Antony, and Octavius.
17. Brutus' reflections by the end of Act IV, the eve of the battle at Philippi has arrived.

Brutus says,  
"The deep of night is crept upon our talk,  
And nature must obey necessity,  
Which we will niggard with a little rest.  
There is no more to say?"

As Cassius leaves, Brutus tries to sleep. But sleep does not come to him. Imagine that after Lucius' song and before the arrival of the ghost, Brutus has the time to write his thoughts. Compose either a letter or diary entry that Brutus would have written at this point in the play. Consider the following for his reflection: his decision to join Cassius, the killing of Caesar, his decision to allow Antony to speak, the deaths of Cicero and Cinna the poet, the suicide of Portia, his feelings about Cassius and Antony, his concerns for the upcoming battle, his assessment of the Republic's future, and the possibility of his own death.

18. Shakespeare did not include a scene that showed either of the characters – Calphurnius or Portia - receiving the news from the Forum. Write and then perform the missing scenes. Imagine after Publius and Popilius Lena leave the Capitol, they hurry to Caesar's home and tell Calphurnius the terrible news. What would be Calphurnius's reaction to Caesar's brutal death? What would he say about Brutus and Cassius? Would she inquire about Mark Antony? How would he begin mourning her wife? What orders would he give? What questions would he have asked? Remember that his dream foreshadowed this very happening. Write a scene consisting of about 35-45 lines.
19. In Act II, scene iv Portia sent Lucius to the Capitol. Write the scene as Lucius returns to Portia with the news from the Capitol that Caesar is dead. Lucius would not have been an eyewitness to the killing, since he was not a senator. But news would have traveled rapidly to the Forum. Lucius could report to Portia the reaction by the senators who were not directly involved. He could have seen Brutus and the other conspirators emerge from the Capitol displaying their bloody hands and weapons. He was in a good position to hear the reaction of the crowd to the news. How would Portia react? Would she feel that she is in danger from the crowd? What security measures might she have ordered to prevent the burning of her home? Would she have stayed in the house, or would she order an immediate evacuation to safer location? Write this scene and perform it for the class.
20. In Act IV, scene iii, Messala and Titinius bring Brutus the news that Portia is dead. Imagine that Shakespeare had included a scene prior to this one. Messala receives the news that Portia, Cicero, and other prominent leaders are dead. He discusses with Titinius the pros and cons of telling Brutus and Cassius this disastrous news. In this missing scene, the two soldiers discuss the possible impact that this news will have and how to best tell Brutus that his wife has committed a terrible suicide.
21. Cicero wrote in 42 B.C. the following:

"A nation can survive its fools, and even the ambitious. But it cannot survive treason from within. An enemy at the gates is less formidable, for he is known and carries his banner openly. But the traitor moves amongst those within the gate freely, for his sly whispers rustling through the alleys, heard in the very halls of government itself. For the traitor appears not as a traitor; he speaks in accents familiar to his victims, and he wears their face and their arguments, he appeals to the baseness that lies deep in the hearts of all men. He rots the soul of a nation, he works secretly and unknown in the night to

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undermine the pillars of the city, he infects the body politic so that it can no longer resist. A murderer is less to fear.”

In an essay, discuss how this quotation describes the characters and events of *Julius Caesar*.

22. Historically, Cicero delivered a masterful speech in the Senate concerning the assassination of Julius Caesar and the roles of the conspirators. As a result, the Senate voted to give the conspirators amnesty. Cicero was a master rhetorician. He would have composed his speech in this order:
- a) introduction (exordium)- Cicero would have wanted to gain the instant attention of the senators and win their approval of his cause.
  - b) development (narratio). Here Cicero would have prepared the topic that he wanted his audience to understand fully.
  - c) presentation of the evidence (confirmatio). In the body part of the speech, Cicero would have given a logical presentation of the proofs, arguments, and reasons for the conspirators’ actions. He might have strengthened his argument with quotations, analogies, and anecdotes.
  - d) refuting objections (confutation) – Any good speaker anticipates the questions that his listeners are forming. Cicero would have listed all the objections to the conspirators and their assassination of Caesar and he would have answered all these objections. When he would have finished his part of the speech, his audience would have agreed with his position.
  - e) summary (conclusio) – Cicero would have briefly restated his argument.

Cicero would have probably used some of these name-calling and glittering generalities. The list on the following page was developed by Newt Gingrich for his pamphlet Language, “A Key Mechanism of Control.” You may incorporate some of these words in the article on page 45 in your speech.

## Language: A Key Mechanism of Control Newt Gingrich's 1996 GOPAC memo

As you know, one of the key points in the GOPAC tapes is that "language matters." In the video "We are a Majority," Language is listed as a key mechanism of control used by a majority party, along with Agenda, Rules, Attitude and Learning. As the tapes have been used in training sessions across the country and mailed to candidates we have heard a plaintive plea: "I wish I could speak like Newt."

That takes years of practice. But, we believe that you could have a significant impact on your campaign and the way you communicate if we help a little. That is why we have created this list of words and phrases.

This list is prepared so that you might have a directory of words to use in writing literature and mail, in preparing speeches, and in producing electronic media. The words and phrases are powerful. Read them. Memorize as many as possible. And remember that like any tool, these words will not help if they are not used.

While the list could be the size of the latest "College Edition" dictionary, we have attempted to keep it small enough to be readily useful yet large enough to be broadly functional. The list is divided into two sections: Optimistic Positive Governing words and phrases to help describe your vision for the future of your community (your message) and Contrasting words to help you clearly define the policies and record of your opponent and the Democratic party.

Please let us know if you have any other suggestions or additions. We would also like to know how you use the list. Call us at GOPAC or write with your suggestions and comments. We may include them in the next tape mailing so that others can benefit from your knowledge and experience.

### Contrasting Words

Often we search hard for words to define our opponents. Sometimes we are hesitant to use contrast. Remember that creating a difference helps you. These are powerful words that can create a clear and easily understood contrast. Apply these to the opponent, their record, proposals and their party.

- abuse of power
- anti- (issue): flag, family, child, jobs
- betray
- bizarre
- bosses
- bureaucracy
- cheat
- coercion
- "compassion" is not enough
- collapse(ing)
- consequences
- corrupt
- corruption
- criminal rights
- crisis
- cynicism
- decay
- deeper
- destroy
- destructive
- devour
- disgrace
- endanger
- excuses
- failure (fail)
- greed
- hypocrisy
- ideological
- impose
- incompetent
- Insecure
- insensitive
- intolerant
- liberal
- lie
- limit(s)
- machine
- mandate(s)
- obsolete
- pathetic
- patronage
- permissive attitude
- pessimistic
- punish (poor ...)
- radical
- red tape
- self-serving
- selfish
- sensationalists
- shallow
- shame
- sick
- spend(ing)
- stagnation
- status quo
- steal
- taxes
- they/them
- threaten
- traitors
- unionized
- urgent (cy)
- waste
- welfare

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# QUESTIONS WHILE YOU READ

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Note: The following questions reflect your experience with William Shakespeare's text of *Julius Caesar*. These questions use male pronouns to describe both Julius Caesar and Cassius, as well as female pronouns to describe Calphurnia.

## ACT I

1. As the play opens, two tribunes confront members of the working class. How does the dress and demeanor of tradesmen reflect the growing instability in Roman society? Would you answer a government official – policemen, mayor, congressmen, etc. in the manner that the tradesmen responded to the tribunes? Why or why not?
2. Why do the tribunes dislike the celebratory attitude of the tradesmen? What is the advice of the tribunes to the tradesmen? Who would have decorated the statues of Caesar? What do the tribunes decide to do after the tradesmen depart? Why could this action be dangerous? By the end of the act, what is the consequence of their action?
3. These two men were Tribunes of the People (tribuni plebes). They were the elected leaders of the popular party. Their fate has serious implications. What does their fate tell you about the Roman state? Why would their fate cause concern among the members of the Senate?
4. A Triumph was led by senators. They were followed by the treasures captured in battle; the white oxen which would be sacrificed at the temple of Jupiter on Capitoline Hill; the prisoners of war; the victorious general, who with his face painted red and who carried an olive branch, rode in a golden chariot. Just behind the general stood a slave holding a laurel wreath over the general's head. The slave's job was to repeat in the general's ear, "Remember, you are just a man." Finally, the victorious Roman legions followed the general. According to Marullus, how does Caesar's triumph differ from the norm?

Flavius says, "These growing feathers pluck'd from Caesar's wing  
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,  
Who else would soar above the view of men  
And keep us in servile fearfulness."  
Why is the comparison of Caesar to a falcon especially good?

5. How does Caesar show conflicting attitudes toward omens, superstitions, and prophecies?
6. The soothsayer says, "Beware the Ides of March." Why is it ironic that Brutus repeats the warning to Caesar? Why is the warning stated three times?
7. After Caesar leaves, Cassius asks Brutus why Brutus has been acting so unfriendly. What is the problem with Brutus? How is Brutus' problem an example of the technique of microcosm/ macrocosm?
8. Cassius begins his seduction of Brutus. Describe Cassius's technique- how does he probe for Brutus' feelings concerning Caesar? What flattery does Cassius use? How far is Cassius willing to go in order to obtain Brutus as an ally? Why does Cassius feel that he needs Brutus?
9. Brutus says, "...for the eye sees not itself/ But by reflection, by some other things." Later, he says, "Into what dangers would you lead me, Cassius?" Does Brutus have a blind spot? Does Caesar? Does Cassius?

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Does Antony? Explain.

10. What is Brutus' fear concerning the popularity of Caesar?
11. Why is it more effective to have the "crown-offering scene" offstage while Cassius conducts his seduction of Brutus on stage? How does Cassius's comments change subtly each time the roar of the crowd is heard?
12. Cassius relates two stories about Caesar. What is the point of these two stories?

Cassius says, "Why, man, he (Caesar) 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."

13. Why is the comparison of Caesar to the Colossus of Rhodes (one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World) appropriate? What is ironic about the phrase "dishonourable graves?"
14. Why does Cassius so bitterly resent Caesar?
15. Caesar would never have been a successful general had he not been a good judge of character. What is his assessment of Cassius? However, Caesar has a flaw in his character as expressed in his statement of hubris. What is that statement?
16. As Caesar leaves, he reveals that he has a physical problem. What is this problem? Notice where he directs Mark Antony to stand. What is the significance of this direction?
17. Casca gives his report on the meeting of Caesar before the populace. What is the tone of Casca's description? How did Caesar miscalculate the reaction of the common people? What was Caesar's reaction to the people's cheers? How does the people's reaction underscore the concept of the fickleness of a mob?
18. A famous expression is "it's Greek to me." To whom does this comment refer? What did the expression mean in the context of the play; what does the expression mean now?
19. Casca promises to dine with Cassius tomorrow. What was Cassius's purpose in inviting Casca to supper? What is Brutus' assessment of Casca?

Brutus says, "Tomorrow, if you please to speak with me,  
I will come home to you; or if you will,  
Come home to me, and I will wait for you."

How has Brutus changed after hearing Casca's report? Why would that account have alter Brutus' mind?

20. At the end of scene ii, Cassius makes almost an Iago-esque soliloquy (however, unlike Iago, Cassius will lose total control). What is Cassius's plan of devious action? In this speech, Cassius says:

"Well, Brutus, thou art noble. Yet I see  
Thy honourable mettle may be wrought  
From that it is disposed...."

Explain the elaborate pun and irony that Cassius is using. What is Cassius proposing to do with Brutus? Remember "mettle" and "metal" are often linked. "Honourable mettle (metal)" was the aim of the alchemist, that is, gold. Base metal could be wrought or transmuted; gold cannot be transmuted into a

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base substance.

21. Scene iii opens with a storm. Often in Shakespeare's plays the storm will illustrate upheaval and conflict present in society. Examples include *King Lear*, *The Tempest*, and *Macbeth*. What does this storm symbolize (consider viewing the storm as a macrocosm to the microcosm existing in Rome)?

22. What strange happenings does Casca report to Cicero? What is Casca's conclusion?

Cicero says, "...men may onstrue things, after their fashion,  
Clean from the purpose of the things themselves."

Give examples of how Cicero's statement proves true later in the play. How does Cassius view this terrible storm? Symbolically, how does Cassius view the sky (lines 133-135)? What is revealed by the following exchange?

Cassius: Who's there?  
Casca: A Roman.

23. What new danger to the freedom of Rome is posed by the Senate's proposed action tomorrow? Interestingly, what limit does the Senate intend to impose? Why or why not would this limit be successful?

24. Cassius compares Caesar to two more animals. Why are these animals appropriate comparisons for Cassius's views about Caesar's ambitions?

25. How does Cassius contemptuously describe the plebians? How could the attitude of Cassius, a patrician, explain the popularity among the plebians toward the other patrician – Caesar? Why would the patricians view Caesar as a traitor to his own class? Furthermore, how could his treachery explain the extreme measures that patrician conspirators are willing to adopt in order to stop Caesar's march toward ultimate power?

26. How does Cassius use the propaganda technique of bandwagon with Casca?

27. Thus far, who are the members of the conspiracy against Caesar? Where do they plan to meet? Why is the place of meeting significant? Why do both Cinna and Casca want Brutus to join the conspiracy?

28. What office does Brutus hold in the hierarchy of power?

29. What is the plan to involve Brutus?

30. As Act I ends, what is the time?

## ACT II

1. As Act II opens, a month has passed since the feast of Lupercalia. Brutus ponders the implications of Caesar's ambitions. Why does Brutus have trouble sleeping? What are his reasons for joining the conspiracy against Caesar? What are his reasons against joining the conspiracy?

2. Why is the arrival of the cryptic letter crucial at this point in the play? Why doesn't Brutus question the authorship of these notes?

3. Name the conspirators in the plot against Caesar. Whom do they wish to include in the conspiracy? Whom do they decide not to include? Why? Describe the behavior and dress of the conspirators. What time does the meeting of the conspirators occur? When will they move against Caesar? Why do they decide the time



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is ripe to carry out the assassination of Caesar?

4. At what point does the leadership of the conspiracy against Caesar shift from Cassius to Brutus? How does Brutus differ from Cassius in the role of leader? What other suggestions does Cassius make that Brutus ignores? Why are the decisions of Brutus bad ones? How could following the advice of Cassius produced a different result? How could Cassius have manipulated Brutus to agree to his two key proposals?
5. In today's political climate, the term "spin-doctors" has been used to describe the tactics used by advisors to politicians who put a favorable impression upon policies, opinions, and actions which could be interpreted as undesirable. Metellus realizes that the assassination of Caesar could be seen in a negative way. How does Brutus propose to convince the conspirators that their cause is noble and right? Does Brutus form a plan to convince the general public that their cause is noble and right? What does this reveal about the leadership qualities of Brutus?
6. Brutus states "No, not an oath!" Are oaths important? Why does Brutus insist that an oath is not important? If not, why then in a court of law are witnesses sworn to take an oath?
7. What plans do the conspirators make in order to have their plan be successful?
8. What is the purpose of showing Brutus with Portia at home? What is revealed about the character of Brutus in this exchange with his wife? What is revealed about Portia via her words and actions? What is suggested about Romans and their ability to withstand torture?
9. How has the storm of turmoil—which has been seen in the heavens, in the mind of Brutus, and in the political scene of Rome—disrupted the peace and harmony of the Brutus/Portia home?
10. What is symbolic about the letter that Lucius gives to his master, the knock at the gate of the conspirators, and the knock at the gate of Ligarius? Explain how these three events affect the home of Brutus? How would the events of the play been different if these three things had not occurred?
11. Why has Caius Ligarius called upon Brutus at this early morning hour?
12. As Brutus exits with Ligarius, a sound of thunder is heard? What is the symbolism reflected by that a rumble of thunder occurring at this precise moment? What then is foreshadowed by Brutus' comment, "Follow me then."
13. Why is Caesar's remark, "Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace tonight" so apt at this point in the play?
14. Why is the following remark by Caesar an example of hubris? Caesar accurately characterized Cassius? How is Caesar blind to the dangers that surround him?

"Caesar shall forth. The things that threatened me  
Ne'er looked but on my back; when they shall see  
The face of Caesar they are vanished."

15. Name all the omens that have frightened Calphurnia? Why does she feel strongly that Caesar must not go to the Capitol? What foreshadows Caesar's death?
16. Romans rarely did any important action without a sacrifice. Caesar asks the priests to perform a sacrifice, which is done while Caesar and Calphurnia converse. What was the outcome of the sacrifice? What is the symbolism of the priests' findings? What advice did the priests give to Caesar as a result of the sacrifice? What was Caesar's decision?

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17. What prophetic image occurred in Calphurnia's dream? What would be the thoughts of Decius as Caesar recounts Calphurnia's dream? How does Decius turn Calphurnia's dream to his purposes?
  18. How else does Decius manipulate Caesar into changing his mind and thus seal Caesar's fate? What aspects of Caesar's character does Decius use in his manipulation of the great Caesar? How are the fears of the conspirators about Caesar justified?
  19. Caesar invites the conspirators into his home for a glass of wine. Caesar illustrates the ancient code of hospitality. The ancients believed that Jupiter (Zeus) punished anyone who violated the ancient code. Notice, which conspirator is not there? What is the significance? How do the conspirators violate the code of hospitality? What is being suggested by this incident?
  20. What do you think Brutus is feeling at this moment (... "O Caesar, the heart of Brutus earns to think upon.")? Does Brutus still have some doubts or regrets about the proposed killing of Caesar? By accepting Caesar's hospitality at this point in the play, what is suggested about Brutus' character? How does this incident add to the impending atrocity?
  21. What is revealed about the Caesar/Calphurnia relationship in this scene? How does their marriage compare and contrast with the Brutus/Portia marriage? How do the characters of Calphurnia and Portia compare and contrast?
  22. What is the role of Artemidorus? Why is his letter so important? How does his information differ from the sacrifices of the priests and the dream of Calphurnia, and the vision of the soothsayer? How does Artemidorus plan to deliver his message? How might events have been altered if Artemidorus had passed his letter to Antony? If Caesar had read Artemidorus's letter, would he have acted differently? Why or why not?
  23. How do you know that Portia is now aware of the plot to kill Caesar? What are her fears? Why does she send Lucius to the Capitol? How could Portia have changed the course of tragic events?
  24. In what way could the conspirators have checked Caesar's ambitions without resorting to violence? In view of the history of Rome (death of the republic and birth of the empire), why would a non violent approach have been better for all concerned?

In an often-quoted passage, Caesar says:  
"Cowards die many times before their deaths,  
The valiant never taste of death but once.  
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard  
It seems to me most strange that men should fear,  
Seeing that death, a necessary end,  
Will come when it will come."

How does Caesar view death? Why would he have this attitude? Why would Romans admire Caesar's view? Does this passage apply to the conspirators? Explain.

### **ACT III, scene i**

1. How does the soothsayer (Spurinna) try to warn Caesar that danger still exists for him?
2. What reason does Caesar give for not reading Artemidorus' letter first? Ironically, how does his reason for his refusal contrast with the conspirators' belief that Caesar's assassination is necessary for the good of Rome?

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3. How does Popilius alarm Cassus? How does Brutus reassure Cassius that all will be well?
  4. What was the role of Trebonius Metellus Cimber in the assassination plot?
  5. How does Caesar demonstrate his arrogance in the first response to Cimber (line 48)? And, then again in his address to Cassius?
  6. How do the conspirators maneuver themselves into striking distance of Caesar? How does Caesar unwittingly aid the conspirators in their resolve to assassinate him? Who strikes the first blow? Who strikes the last blow? Why is the last blow the most devastating one to Caesar?
  7. As soon as Caesar dies, how do the conspirators attempt to reassure the general population and the members of the Senate?
  8. Why does Brutus urge Publius to return home?
  9. How are the attitudes of Brutus and Caesar toward fate and death similar? Compare Act II, scene ii and Act III, scene i.
  10. How do the conspirators convince themselves that the assassination was morally correct? Examine lines 83, 101-102, 103.
  11. What grisly action by the conspirators underscores their brutality and their belief that the assassination was for the good of Rome?

12. Explain the dramatic irony of the following passage:

“... How many ages hence  
Shall this our lofty scene be acted o’er,  
In states unborn and accents yet unknown!”

13. Explain the irony that Caesar died at the foot of Pompey’s statue? How did Calphurnia’s dream come true?
14. How do the conspirators organize their own Triumph?
15. Mark Antony realizes that his life could be in danger. How does Antony avoid slaughter at the hand so the conspirators? Why does Antony request a meeting with Brutus? What does this remark reveal about Antony’s character?

“Mark Antony shall not love Caesar dead,  
... but will follow the fortunes and affairs of noble Brutus.”

16. How does Brutus once again underestimate Antony? How does Cassius view Antony at this point in the play?
17. In the speeches by Brutus and Antony, Shakespeare uses several allusions. Identify and explain the following allusions: the medical practice of blood-letting, setting a back fire, and butchers.
18. What is the significance of the bloody handshake?
19. Explain this metaphor and pun. “...Here wast thou bay’d, brave hart,”

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20. If, according to Suetonius, Brutus was Caesar's natural son, what is the irony in the following lines: "Or else were this a savage spectacle.

Our reasons are so full of good regard  
That were you, Antony, the son of Caesar,  
You should be satisfied."

21. What special request does Antony ask of Brutus? What is Cassius's objection? Why does Brutus disagree? What conditions does Brutus impose upon Antony?

22. Cassius says,

"...You know not what you do.  
...I know not what may fall; I like it not."

How do these words haunt Brutus and Cassius throughout the play? Looking back on the play, what actions were ill-advised? As you progress through the remainder of the play, what actions do the conspirators take which are ill-fated?

23. Examine Antony's "dogs of war" soliloquy. What six outcomes does Antony predict will happen as a result of the power vacuum created by Caesar's assassination? Does Antony care about the welfare of the common people? Cite evidence for your answer. How does Antony compare/contrast with Caesar? Brutus? Cassius?

24. Who is Octavius Caesar? Where is he located at the end of Act III? What message does Antony send to Octavius? Why? What could be Antony's ulterior motive for this advice?

### **Act III, scene ii - Exercise in oratory**

1. At the very beginning of the scene what is the mood of the citizens of Rome?
2. Why do Brutus and Cassius separate?
3. What adjective is attributed to Brutus? Chart the development of this description as it evolves into an oxymoron by the end of the scene.
4. Examine Brutus' speech to the crowd.
  - A) What style of language did Brutus use to address the crowd?
  - B) What was Brutus' location in relation to the crowd?
  - C) What three words did he choose to address the crowd?
  - D) Why these three words? Why this particular order?
  - E) Is the crowd listening attentively to Brutus? Cite evidence to support your answer.
  - F) Why does Brutus say that the crowd must believe his reasons for assassinating Caesar?
  - G) How does Brutus attempt to form a connection with those in the crowd who were supporters of Caesar?
  - H) How does Brutus explain his "betrayal" of his friend Caesar?
  - I) How does Brutus carefully separate Caesar the worthy general from Caesar the ambitious politician? Why would this distinction be important to establish?
  - J) How does Brutus introduce and then set the stage for Antony's speech?
  - K) At the end of Brutus' speech, how does the crowd feel about Brutus?
  - L) Notice the comment by the Third Citizen. "Let him (Brutus) be Caesar." What do the common people want? How are their desires different from the conspirators' desires?

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5. Now examine the oration by Mark Antony.

- A) How does the crowd view Brutus, Caesar, and Antony at the beginning of Antony's speech?
- B) What is the general mood of the crowd?
- C) Is the crowd attentive to Mark Antony? Cite evidence to support your answer.
- D) What three words does Antony use to address the crowd? Why these words? Why this order?
- E) How does Antony's style of language differ from Brutus'?
- F) Where is Antony located as he addresses the crowd? At what point does he change his position? What is the reason for the position change?
- G) According to Antony what is his purpose in addressing the crowd? Why give this reason at this point in his speech?
- H) What adjective does Antony use to describe Brutus? What does Antony seem to imply about Brutus' character at this early point in his speech?
- I) Skillfully, Antony refutes the charge that Caesar was ambitious. What examples does he ask the crowd to recall which negates that charge?
- J) Brutus used parallel structure in his address. What refrain does Antony use that steers the crowd's sympathies away from Brutus and toward the slain Caesar?
- K) What choice of words does Antony use to suggest "the dogs of war" mentality to the hearts and minds of the mob so that they resolved to mutiny and rage?
- L) How does Antony suggest that Caesar is a "saint" with "holy relics" that the mob can worship?
- M) At what point has the mob begun to turn against the "honorable men" of the conspiracy? What words do the citizens use to describe Brutus and the conspirators?
- N) Antony is a remarkable actor on a very important stage. He uses visual props to bend the crowd to his will. What props does Antony use? How does he tantalize the crowd with the props?
- O) What is the importance of Antony's descent from the podium? Why couldn't the rest of the speech have been as effective had he stayed on the podium?
- P) How does the crowd change its position in relation to Antony and the body of Caesar? What is the significance?
- Q) What adjective is now added to Antony's name?
- R) Antony needs to make the crowd visualize the inanimate body of Caesar as a once living, breathing human being. As the crowd looks at the blood-stained toga-covered body of Caesar, how does Antony remind them of Caesar's glorious military career?
- S) How does Antony prove to be an imaginative and inventive speaker? What couldn't Antony possibly know or see? Why does he lie to the crowd?
- T) What words does Antony use to make the assassination brutally real to the crowd so that the mob can visualize the actual assassination?
- U) How does Antony portray the magnitude of Brutus' role in the assassination? What is the effect of Caesar's assassination on the statue of Pompey?
- V) When the conspirators bathed their hands and swords in Caesar's blood, they suggested that their bloody action was a moral necessity. How has Antony altered this image?
- W) Now that Antony has dramatically portrayed Caesar's wounds at the hands of the conspirators, what is the mood of the crowd?
- X) What connotative words does Antony use to contradict the conspirators' action as one of morally right and noble cause?
- Y) Antony is a master of reverse psychology and irony. He says one thing and then does the opposite or suggests the opposite. Find examples of this technique.
- Z) How does Antony personify Caesar's wounds? What do they demand from the mob? How does the mob react?
- AA) What is the final means that Antony uses to stir the frenzy of the mob into a blood

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lust?

BB) What did Caesar will to the citizens?

CC) What actions of the crowd end Antony's speech?

DD) What is Antony's reaction to the mob's actions? What does his attitude reveal about Antony the man and Antony the politician?

EE) Who has arrived in Rome? Where is he? Who has departed Rome? Why? What changes in the power structure have occurred in Act III?

FF) During his speech, Antony lists six rhetorical skills that he claims he lacks as a speaker. List the skills. Cite examples from the speech which illustrate that he does possess these skills.

GG) Notice the differences in the crowd responses. After Brutus' speech, crowd responds with complete sentences. After Antony's speech, the crowd responds with monosyllabic answers. What is Shakespeare's purpose in constructing the responses in this manner?

### **Act III, scene iii**

1. How does the brutal killing of Cinna the poet reflect the "dogs of war" speech by Antony? What kind of Rome now exists? How do you think Caesar would view this Rome?

### **ACT IV**

1. Who now controls Rome? What are they doing as the scene opens? What do their actions and attitudes reveal about these men?
2. How does Antony propose to use Caesar's legacy to the people of Rome? What does this reveal about Antony?
3. How does Antony feel about Lepidus? What is the purpose of this discussion about Lepidus? If you were Octavius, what would you be thinking as you listen to Antony's analysis of Lepidus?
4. What evidence exists that Antony and Octavius do not have the full support of the Roman population? What metaphor is used to describe their position in Rome? What do they propose to do?
5. Describe the personalities of Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus as portrayed in this scene.
6. How does this scene set the stage for the next scene with Cassius and Brutus?
7. Where are the armies of Brutus and Cassius located?
8. What is the first indication that tension exists between Brutus and Cassius?
9. How was Lucilius treated by Cassius?
10. What accusation does Cassius direct at Brutus?
11. Why does Brutus ask Cassius to join him in Brutus' tent? Why would this be a wise action?
12. Once alone with Brutus, what are Cassius' specific grievances against Brutus?
13. What is Brutus' response to Cassius' charges? How does he assume the high road of moral character? What character flaws does Brutus find in Cassius?

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14. How does Cassius respond to Brutus' assertions? What faults does Cassius find in Brutus? How do both characters reveal the same character traits that were evident in previous scenes? How do both act rather childish?
  15. What more significant grievance does Brutus have against Cassius? How does Cassius respond?
  16. What is the dramatic purpose of the quarrel? What theme is illustrated by this quarrel? What does Cassius ask Brutus to do? As a result, how does Brutus respond?
  17. How does Cassius explain his ill-temper?
  18. How does this vehement quarrel between two friends contrast with the previous scene involving the members of the new triumvirate? Which scene do you feel is more ominous? Explain.
  19. Why does Brutus become angry with the poet? What reason does Brutus give for his behavior?
  20. With the entrance of Titinius and Messala, Brutus and Cassius receive more dire news. What bad tidings are related to them? If you were Brutus and Cassius, what might you be thinking at this point in the play?
  21. Messala also brings news of Portia's death, which Brutus mentioned earlier to Cassius? Why did Shakespeare have two episodes in which news of Portia's suicide is related?
  22. What is Shakespeare suggesting about Brutus' character by the way Brutus reacts to Portia's death; the decision to march into battle; and his treatment of Lucius, Varro, and Claudius?
  23. What is the disagreement over the impending battle between Cassius and Brutus? What are the positions of Cassius and Brutus? Whose view prevails? Where has this pattern been seen previously? What was the result? What prediction about the outcome can be made?
  24. Why does the ghost of Caesar appear to Brutus? Describe the nature of the ghost. Why is it significant that the ghost appears at this particular point in the play? How would you stage the appearance of the ghost (bloody toga, battle dress, a head, etc.)?
  25. Brutus' asks, "...what thou art." Ghost replies, "Thy evil spirit, Brutus." What is the meaning of the Ghost's reply? Is this the ghost of Caesar or something else?
  26. Why is it significant that Lucius, Varro, and Claudius can sleep, and Brutus cannot?

## **ACT V**

1. How do Antony and Octavius disagree about the reason for the appearance of the armies of Brutus and Cassius? Why does Antony assert that he knows the reason for the Republicans' action?
2. The superior general always fought on the right of the line of battle. Antony tells Octavius to take the left side.  

Octavius:	Upon the right hand I, keep thou the left.
Antony:	Why do you cross me in this exigent?
Octavius:	I do not cross you, but I will do so.

What does this exchange reveal about the two men? Why would each man believe that he should fight on the right side? What does each man have to gain or lose from the position in the battle? Consider the following: military experience, age, personal honor and integrity, social status, relationship to Caesar, and ambitions.

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3. In the meeting between the Triumvirate leaders and the Republican leaders, there is an acknowledgement, trading of insults, the challenge to a duel (in this case a battle), and finally the acceptance to battle. What insults do the four generals trade? Identify the insults made by Brutus, Cassius, Antony, and Octavius. Identify who was targeted. Which general do you rate as the most effective? Why?
  4. In this scene, many animal images are used. Identify the animal imagery. What was the purpose of these particular images?
  5. How many wounds did Caesar suffer?
  6. How does Cassius remind Brutus that Brutus made a mistake by allowing Antony to live? Do you think that action made a difference? Explain.
  7. As Octavius and Antony walk back to their armies, Cassius invokes the storm image with “Why now blow wind, swell billow, and swim bark!/ The storm is up, and all is on the hazard.” Act I contained an actual tempest; Act V contains a metaphorical storm. Describe how this theme has come full circle.
  8. Another circle image appears as Cassius relates that today is his birthday. In Act I, Cassius interpreted certain omens. What omens has he noticed before the battle? What do all these omens suggest about the outcome? What is his mood before he goes into battle?
  9. Why do Cassius and Brutus vow to commit suicide if they lose the battle?
  10. How do the two leaders finally part?
  11. Why does Brutus order an attack on Octavius’ army?
  12. What physical handicap does Cassius reveal to Pindarus? What false reports does Cassius receive? What does Cassius believe about his own army? What is his precipitous action? How does his physical handicap symbolize this later reaction?
  13. Why does Cassius free Pindarus? Why would Pindarus flee the scene?
  14. Why would the ghost of Caesar be very satisfied with Cassius’ end? How does Cassius’ death foreshadow Brutus’?
  15. What is the status of the battle as reported by Messala to Titinius? Why do Messala and Titinius separate? Why does Titinius commit suicide?
  16. Cassius’ sword has done many bloody deeds. Who has died on the point of Cassius’ sword? Whom does Brutus believe actually wields the sword of Cassius?
  17. How does Brutus pay tribute to Cassius and Titinius? What are his orders concerning the body of Cassius? Why?
  18. What happens to young Cato and Lucilius? Why is Lucilius spared?
  19. What does Brutus tell his “poor remains of friends” about Caesar’s ghost?
  20. What disagreement does Brutus have with Volumnius?
  21. Who helps Brutus end his life? What are Brutus’ final words? How do his last words illustrate Brutus’ essential nobility?



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22. How did Octavius treat the captured followers of Brutus? What does this reveal about his character? How does Octavius resemble Brutus in his treatment of his fallen enemy's corpse?
  23. Why does Antony eulogize Brutus as “the noblest Roman of them all”?
  24. Brutus dominates the action of the play. Why is the play entitled *Julius Caesar*?
  25. What impact did the contemporary setting of the play have on your experience?

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# QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION: AFTER ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE

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Note: The following questions reflect your experience with Great Lakes Theater's production of *Julius Caesar*. These questions use female pronouns to describe both Julius Caesar and Cassius, as well as male pronouns to describe Calphurnius.

1. How does casting Cassius as a woman change the way we perceive her relationship with Brutus? How does a female Julius Caesar change the way we see Brutus, Cassius, Mark Antony?
2. Are we more or less likely to perceive a leader who is a woman as corrupt?
3. Do we recognize ambition the same in women as in men?
4. How does society perceive man's ambition as opposed to woman's? When women have ambition, what do we call that?
5. Can the removal of a leader be an entirely selfless act? Can the removal of a corrupt leader bring an end to the corruption?
6. Whose responsibility is it to ferret out corruption? Who has the right to say when a leader should be removed from office?
7. How does costuming affect the way we perceive these characters?
8. What is the difference between the reasons Brutus and Cassius have for murdering Caesar?
9. From where does Caesar derive her power? How does she use the populace? From where does Antony derive his power? How does he use the populace? What is populism? Why does it hold sway in the popular imagination?
10. What is the difference between mob mentality and critical thinking? Could you be swayed by a mob?
11. Can you change a mind through persuasion? Could Cassius's mind be changed?

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# SUGGESTED RESOURCES

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Asimov, Isaac. *Asimov's Guide to Shakespeare*. Wings Books. 1970 (Interesting passage by passage analysis. It also contains some good maps.)

Barrett, Lou. *Julius Caesar: A Parallel Text Teacher Workbook*. Perfection Learning. 2004 (This workbook contains very useful worksheets that can be adapted for the classroom.)

Bloom, Harold. *Bloom's Notes on Julius Caesar*. Chelsea House Publishers. 1996

Costello, Mary Enda, Stephen L. Jacobs, and Mary Neelan. *Julius Caesar: Curriculum Unit*. The Center for Learning. 1998 (Super activity book for the play. It contains many interesting ideas to adapt to the classroom.)

Everitt, Anthony. *Cicero*. Random House, 2001 (Wonderful biography of Cicero. It contains a historical account of the period in question.)

Gibson, Rex. *Teaching Shakespeare*. Cambridge University Press 1998. (Part of the Cambridge School Series, this 200+ page volume contains many creative activities for teaching Shakespeare.)

Gibson, Rex and Janet Field-Pickering. *Discovering Shakespeare's Language*. Cambridge University Press. 1998 (This activity book contains 150 exercises on Shakespeare's use of language techniques.)

Grant, Michael. *The Twelve Caesars*. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1975 (Michael Grant is an expert in the field. The first chapter on Julius Caesar contains great background to the man and the events.)

Harris, Robert. *Pompeii*. Random House. 2002 (This novel contains great maps and background material for the Imperial period of Rome.)

Leggatt, Alexander. *Shakespeare's Political Drama*. Rutledge. 1988

McCullough, Colleen. *The Masters of Rome* series. William Morrow. (The entire series concerns the events from Marius's ascent to power to the death of Brutus. Interesting maps and glossary of terms.)

Roberts, John Maddox. *SPQR* series. St. Martin's Minotaur Press. (Another fictional series (up to eight books now) set in the Republic of Rome. Good maps and storylines involving the characters can be found in this series. Better detail of Roman society is found in Steven Saylor's series.)

Salomone, Ronald and James E. Davis. *Teaching Shakespeare into the Twenty-first Century*. Ohio University Press. 1997 (Very help source of practical ways to teach Shakespeare)

Saylor, Steven. *Roma Sub Rosa* series. St. Martin's Minotaur Press. (Fictional detective series set in Rome at the time of the Republic. Many of the characters in Shakespeare's play are also in this series.)

Thomas, Vivian. *Julius Caesar: Twayne's New Critical Introductions to Shakespeare*. Twayne Publishers. 1992 (Contains several interesting essays on plot, character, themes, and sources.)

## Helpful Internet Sites:

Ancient Rome: Daily Life  
[members.aol.com/donnclass/Romelife.html](http://members.aol.com/donnclass/Romelife.html)

Ancient Rome by History Link 101  
[www.historylink101.com/ancient\\_rome.html](http://www.historylink101.com/ancient_rome.html)

[www.puzzlemakers.com](http://www.puzzlemakers.com)  
Great site to aid teachers in constructing word puzzles

[www.datanation.com/fallacies/index.htm](http://www.datanation.com/fallacies/index.htm)  
This site contains useful information about persuasion techniques

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# HOW TO WRITE A REVIEW

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## MORE HOW AND LESS WHAT

A theater review is not a book review, you do not need to summarize what happens. Provide the necessary background so the reader knows the name of the play and the basics of what kind of play it is, and then move into your commentary. You do not need to explain WHAT the play is, instead write about HOW successfully it was presented.

## THE ACTOR NOT THE CHARACTER

You can disapprove of the decisions a character makes, but how well did the ACTOR perform the role? Was their behavior appropriate to the part as written? Feel free to share your opinions, comparing or contrasting their work with other actors with whom you are familiar.

## WHAT IS DIRECTION?

Maybe you have heard of a “director” in theater or film, but do you know what they do? It is not a director’s job to tell the actors how to say every line, but they are the person responsible for creating the general mood and concept for the production. What was your impression of the production as a whole? Was it too funny for a serious play? Or not amusing enough for a comic play? Use words to reflect back to the director how successful the production is as a whole.

## DON’T FORGET THE DESIGN

The set you see and the sounds you hear are also unique to this one production of this play. Describe what you see and hear, but also be sure to make clear how successful these designs are in telling the story of the play.

## IN CONCLUSION ...

While it is not necessary to give a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” your concluding sentence should summarize your impression of the production as a whole.

## THEATER REVIEWS IN THE NEW MEDIA

Reviews in news websites may be 1000 words, they may be as brief as 300 words. Can you write a one-page review? Can you write a 100 word review, to post on Facebook? Do you think you could create a 140-character review that sums up the production for posting on Twitter?

A sample review written by a student follows this page.

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# A SAMPLE REVIEW WRITTEN BY A STUDENT

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## "Gambit": More Poetry Than History — Mark Wood

If Aristotle was correct when he said that poetry “is a higher thing than history,” then “Royal Gambit,” which opened Friday night at Pentacle Theater, is, I suppose, on the right track.

For those who were expecting a representational treatment of the life of England’s Henry VIII, “Royal Gambit” was a shock, if not a disappointment. Those who sought poetry got it, although of a very dogmatic and simplistic sort.

This unusual, highly presentational play by Hermann Gressieker, directed by Ed Classen, is an indictment of modern man as a ruthless opportunist. The Tudor king is a representative of a rationalizing, shifty society which has become “superior to the highest” while “wallowing in the depths.”

As Henry uses the banners of “reason” and “humanism” to obtain then dispose of his six wives, so modern man uses them for his own pleasure and glorification, uses them to wage war in the name of peace, to hate in the name of love.

Such is the grim theme pleasingly presented by a company of seven actors, who performed their roles energetically, if unevenly. The presentational acting style employed here is difficult to perfect. It should be theatrical, yet believable; aimed at the head, yet acceptable to the heart.

Louise Larsen was a standout as Catherine of Aragon, Largely because she utilized this presentational approach and was not afraid of open theatricality. Her flamboyant stage presence, which needed to be toned down in her recent role in “Last of the Red Hot Lovers,” found full vent here.

Henry's fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, was portrayed by Gale Rieder, who quickly became an audience favorite. Her thick accent was letter-perfect and her direct humor was a welcome contrast to the bitter satire of the rest of the play.

The other four actresses—Kathy Stratton, Marcia Engblom, Polly Bond and Patricia Sloan—each had their exceptional moments. However, they generally seemed tied to more conventional, representational acting styles.

Ron Fox was superb in the role of Henry. Tuxedoed, leering with the look of a demonic marionette, the vacant stare of a deranged orator, Fox dominated the stage fully, commanding both in voice and stage presence.

The technical elements of the play were more than adequate. Musical accompaniment was appropriately sparse and simple.

At one point the play, King Henry roared, “In my realm I decide what constitutes tragedy!” Ironically, Gressieker strips modern man not only of his possibilities as a tragic figure worthy of any sympathies at all. In the final moments of the play, Catherine of Aragon announces the death of modern man and the birth of a new era. It is a scene of great hope, but it is not as profound as her earlier pronouncement to her husband that “the ways of the world are not so cut and dried!”

For my own part, I wish that “Royal Gambit’s” statement were not so cut and dried. By making man out to be such a simple monster the play defeats its own purposes and turns poetry into scathing dogma, which is probably even less interesting than, say, history.

*<http://faculty.chemeketa.edu/jrupert3/eng105/Annrev.html>*

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# A BRIEF GLOSSARY OF THEATER TERMS

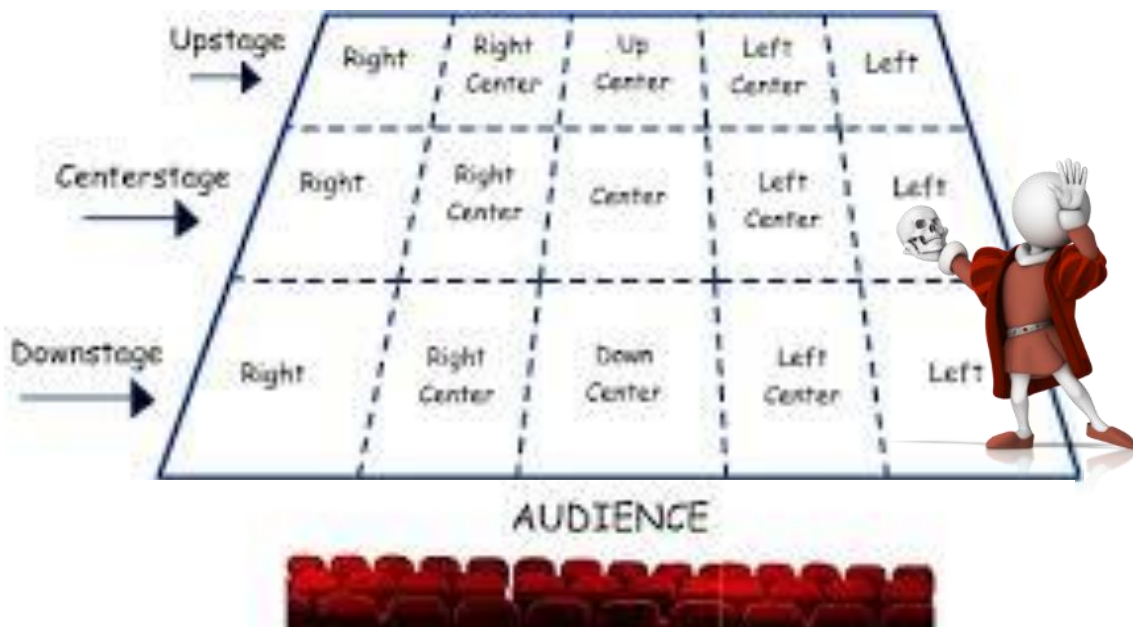
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<b>Apron</b>	The part of the stage in front of the curtain
<b>Auditorium or House</b>	Where the audience sits
<b>Beam Spread</b>	The area a single light covers
<b>Blackout</b>	Turning off all the lights in the theatre at once
<b>Board</b>	The control center for lights, sound, or both
<b>Book (The)</b>	A copy of the script containing all notes and blocking
<b>Box Office</b>	Where the audience buys tickets
<b>Box Set</b>	A set in a proscenium with three walls
<b>Call</b>	The time certain members of the production need to be at the theatre
<b>Cheat</b>	When an actor takes a realistic action and modifies it for the audience to see
<b>Cloth</b>	Scenery painted on fabric
<b>Cue</b>	A line or action that immediately leads to another action by the actor (for them to speak) designer or stage manager (to change the lights or sound)
<b>Curtain Call</b>	The bows at the end of the show
<b>Dimmer</b>	Equipment that controls the brightness of a light
<b>Director</b>	The creative head of a production. They create a vision for the show and work with actors, designers, and crew to bring that vision to life
<b>Flat</b>	A frame covered with canvas, cardboard, or some other light material which is then painted as part of the set
<b>Floodlight</b>	A light that has a wide unfocused beam covering most of the stage
<b>Fly</b>	A system used to raise set backgrounds, set pieces, or potentially actors
<b>Follow-spot</b>	A spotlight that can follow an actor as they move across around the stage
<b>Footlights</b>	Floodlights on the floor at the front of the stage.
<b>Gel</b>	A piece of plastic placed over the light to change its color
<b>Greenroom</b>	A room where the company can relax, eat, or potentially watch the show if a TV and a camera has been rigged
<b>Notes</b>	The director's notes on the performance or rehearsal
<b>Pit</b>	An area between the stage and the audience where an orchestra can sit (typically below audience level)
<b>Producer</b>	The person responsible for all logistical and financial aspects of a production (as opposed to the creative head, the director).
<b>Properties or Props</b>	Items used by actors in a show (such as swords, plates, watches, etc.)
<b>Proscenium</b>	A type of stage defined by a proscenium arch. Proscenium theatres typically

distinctly separate the audience and stage by a window (defined by the proscenium arch). The stage typically will not go far past the proscenium arch (the Ohio Theatre, for example).

<b>Raked Stage</b>	A stage that is angled (upstage is the top of the hill and downstage the bottom) so that the audience can see the action more clearly
<b>Set</b>	The scenery used in a scene or throughout the play
<b>Set Dressing</b>	Parts of the set that don't serve a practical function but make the set look realistic.
<b>Spotlight</b>	A type of light that is focused so that it can light a very specific area
<b>Strike</b>	Taking apart and removing a set from the theatre
<b>Thrust</b>	A stage that goes beyond the proscenium arch so that the audience is sitting on three sides of the set - in front, and on either side (the Hanna Theatre, for example).
<b>Tracks</b>	The rails on which curtains (tabs) run.
<b>Trap</b>	A hole in the stage covered by a door where actors or set pieces can exit or enter
<b>Understudy</b>	An actor who learns all of the lines and blocking of another actor (typically one of the actors in a lead role) who can perform in case the main actor cannot go on
<b>Upstage</b>	The rear of the stage
<b>Wings</b>	The sides of the stage typically blocked off by curtains where actors and crew can stand and wait for their cues

## STAGE DIRECTIONS



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# NOTES

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# ABOUT GREAT LAKES THEATER

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## **Charles Fee, Producing Artistic Director**

The mission of Great Lakes Theater, through its main stage productions and its education programs, is to bring the pleasure, power and relevance of classic theater to the widest possible audience.

Since the company's inception in 1962, programming has been rooted in Shakespeare, but the company's commitment to great plays spans the breadth of all cultures, forms of theater and time periods including the 20th century, and provides for the occasional mounting of new works that complement the classical repertoire.

Classic theater holds the capacity to illuminate truth and enduring values, celebrate and challenge human nature and actions, revel in eloquent language, preserve the traditions of diverse cultures and generate communal spirit. On its mainstage and through its education program, the company seeks to create visceral, immediate experiences for participants, asserting theater's historic role as a vehicle for advancing the common good, and helping people make the most joyful and meaningful connections between classic plays and their own lives. This Cleveland theater company wishes to share such vibrant experiences with people across all age groups, creeds, racial and ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

The company's commitment to classic theater is magnified in the educational programs (for both adults and students) that surround its productions. Great Lakes Theater has a strong presence in area schools, offering an annual series of student matinees and, for over 30 years, an acclaimed school residency program led by teams of specially trained actor-teachers.

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