

insight SHAKESPEARE PLAYS



Julius Caesar

William Shakespeare



Aidan Coleman & Abbie Thomas

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First published in 2011, reprinted in 2016

This second edition published in 2017, reprinted in 2024

Insight Publications Pty Ltd

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Cheltenham Victoria 3192

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the National Library of Australia

ISBNs:

9781925485479 (bundle: print + digital)

9781925485462 (digital)

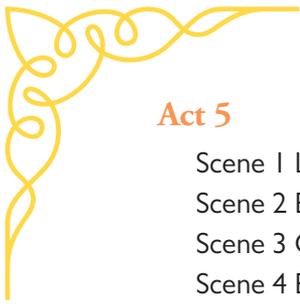
Cover and internal design: Gisela Beer

Printed by Markono Print Media Pte Ltd



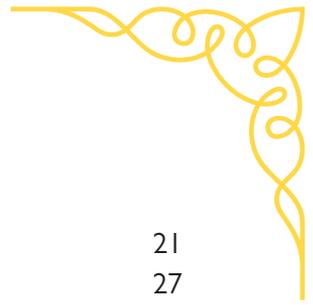
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Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the following people:

Leana Coleman, Tess Coleman, James McCann, Stephen McInerney and John Miller for their valuable feedback on various aspects of the book and for their typing skills.

Jacqui Clarke, Eoghan Moloney and Han Baltussen from the University of Adelaide Department of Classics for their valuable feedback on the historical components of the text.

The South Australian English Teachers' Association for their ongoing support.

The staff at Insight Publications for their sound advice and willingness to listen to our ideas.

Our families, for their infinite patience, understanding, excitement and support.

Introduction

Who was Shakespeare?



The Chandos Portrait of William Shakespeare

Shakespeare was neither a king nor a lord, and this is the reason we know little about him. While historians and writers made an effort to record the details of the lives of those born into noble families (kings, queens, ladies and lords), they were not generally interested in the important details of other people's lives. In his time Shakespeare was a famous playwright, but perhaps no more famous than some other London playwrights such as Ben Jonson or Christopher Marlowe. Little effort was made to record the details of Shakespeare's life until some 50 years after his death.

Did Shakespeare write Shakespeare?

Nearly all scholars agree that we have enough evidence to confirm that William Shakespeare, the man born in Stratford-upon-Avon, was the author of the plays and poems attributed to him. However, a few other theories exist as to who wrote the plays. Some authors who have been suggested include Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford; Christopher Marlowe (a talented playwright who died in 1593 but who conspiracy theorists claim may have faked his own death); Francis Bacon (a philosopher and scientist); and even Queen Elizabeth I.

There are a number of problems with all of these theories and very little evidence to support them. No-one doubted Shakespeare was the author of the plays and poems until 200 years after his death and these theories are usually based on the argument that Shakespeare was not university-educated.



1564	William Shakespeare was baptised on 26 April 1564; it is likely that he was born three days before this on 23 April (St George's Day).
1560s	<p>William's parents, John and Anne, were possibly both illiterate (they couldn't read or write). His father, John Shakespeare, was a glove maker and was involved in a number of other business activities. He became a member of the town council when Shakespeare was very young.</p> <p>Shakespeare was John and Anne's third child. He had seven brothers and sisters but only five of them survived to adulthood.</p>
1571	It is believed that Shakespeare entered the King's New Grammar School in Stratford around the age of seven. School days would have begun at six in the morning in summer and seven in winter and they would have finished at five in the evening (Monday to Saturday). The school would have been very strict and students could have expected to be beaten for misbehaving or showing any signs of laziness.
1578	Shakespeare probably left school at 14 or 15. His father owed quite a few people money by this time, and, for this reason, William was unable to attend university.
1582	At age 18, he married 26-year-old Anne Hathaway. They had three children – Susanna, and twins Judith and Hamnet (Hamnet died when he was only 11).
1590s	<p>We are unsure what Shakespeare did in his early twenties. There are stories of his being employed by a rich landowner in the north of England. It is possible that he joined a travelling company of actors. We do know that by the early 1590s he was a popular playwright in London; in 1594 he invested in the acting company of which he was a member (the Lord Chamberlain's Men), becoming a part-owner.</p> <p>Through the 1590s Shakespeare wrote a number of poems and many of his most popular plays, including <i>Richard III</i>, <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> and <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>. He acted in some of his own plays and those of other playwrights.</p> <p>In 1596 Shakespeare obtained a coat of arms for his father, which meant that he would be officially regarded as a gentleman. In the following year, Shakespeare bought New Place, the second-largest house in Stratford-upon-Avon.</p>
1600s	<p>The first decade of the 1600s was his most productive period, when he wrote most of his greatest plays, including <i>Hamlet</i>, <i>Othello</i>, <i>Macbeth</i> and <i>King Lear</i>.</p> <p>In 1603 Shakespeare's company became the King's Men and regularly performed at Court before King James from this time. During this decade he bought more properties around London and the Stratford area and became very wealthy.</p>
1613	In 1613 Shakespeare returned to Stratford-upon-Avon but still travelled to London occasionally to look after his business interests.
1616	He died on his 52nd birthday (23 April 1616) and was buried at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford.

Elizabethan England

Shakespeare arrived in London sometime between 1585 and 1592. The city had a population of about 200 000 and was growing fast. It was an exciting time to live there as the city was full of foreign merchants and explorers, who were returning with spices and stories of exotic countries. It was also a time when the modern scientific method was being developed and many new discoveries were made, particularly in the areas of anatomy, mathematics and astronomy.

Unlike today, when the people of England vote for a government, England was ruled by a monarch, Elizabeth I, and her advisers. She had been Queen since 1558, six years before Shakespeare's birth. She was very popular with the people and was celebrated for her knowledge of literature and art.

Elizabethan society was divided into two broad groups: the 'gentle' population who governed the country (including earls, lords, ladies and gentlemen), and the 'base' or 'knaves' who made up most of the population. People were born into a certain class and marriages between people of different classes were reasonably rare. Occasionally the Queen knighted or even ennobled a person of lesser rank. While the 'gentle' were generally wealthy, some businessmen of lower rank were also beginning to make their fortunes during this time.

In the 1500s, virtually everyone believed in a God who created and controlled the universe. Elizabethans believed in a divine order called the Great Chain of Being. In this way of seeing the world, God ruled the universe and below Him were a number of angels. The Queen was the highest earthly rank in the Chain of Being; beneath her were nobles and lesser lords, and below them the rest of the population. This chain



The Darnley Portrait of Elizabeth I, c. 1570



Illustration from 1579 of the Great Chain of Being

extended further to the animal and then the plant kingdoms. Such an idea was used to reinforce the class system: everything had its place in the chain and people believed that upsetting this order in any way would cause chaos. People's class was even made clear through the clothing they wore, which was governed by strict laws.

Elizabethans were quite superstitious. Many of them believed in fairies and witches whom they blamed for unexplained mishaps. Elizabethans would worry if a black cat crossed their path, and avoid walking beneath ladders because this was considered bad luck. It was generally believed that the Earth was the centre of the universe and that, in their motion around the Earth, the planets made musical notes that together formed a perfect harmony. Elizabethans believed that the constellations and other heavenly bodies, including the moon, influenced human events and held clues

for the future. Even Queen Elizabeth I consulted an astrologer before deciding on the date for her coronation.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, England, like most other European countries, was Roman Catholic. Under Queen Elizabeth's father, King Henry VIII, the country broke away from the Roman Catholic Church and formed the Protestant Church of England. Although England briefly became Catholic again under Queen Mary, the country remained Protestant from the time of Elizabeth onwards. This meant Elizabeth I, instead of the Pope, ruled over the English Church. English priests were allowed to marry and services were carried out in English rather than Latin.

In the early 1500s the English people had very little confidence in the English language. Latin, the language of the Roman Catholic Church, was used for scholarship and most serious literature. However, as the century progressed, there emerged a new confidence that the English language could express important thoughts and feelings. A translation of the Bible into English by William Tyndale became a bestseller and was widely distributed, thanks to the reasonably recent technology of the printing press. There was also a rise in patriotism as England became an important world power. In 1588 the Royal Navy won a famous victory over the Spanish Armada, which was regarded as the greatest naval power in the world at the time.



The New Globe Theatre

This period in history is often described as the English Renaissance (rebirth) because it was a time not only of great advances in science, but also of great achievements in art. At the centre of this achievement was the growth of the English theatres. Before 1570, acting companies had toured the country, looking for work where they could find it and performing in marketplaces or the inn yards at local taverns. However, during the latter part of the sixteenth century, a number of theatres were built across London to service a new population that was hungry for entertainment. By the time Shakespeare arrived in London, there were numerous theatres catering to audiences of thousands. If he had arrived in London at a different time, he might never have become the famous playwright we know him as today.

A day at the theatre, London 1600

Imagine you could go back to London on a Saturday afternoon in September 1600. It is a warm sunny day with a slight breeze blowing in from the country. You decide to avoid the crowds flowing over London Bridge, choosing instead to be rowed across the River Thames (pronounced *Temz*) in one of the many water taxis. There are dozens of similar boats making their way across the river from the main city to Southwark (pronounced *Suth-uk*).

Southwark is a poor, overcrowded suburb filled with hastily built houses and flats. This is where immigrants from other parts of England or overseas come to live when they first arrive in London because it's cheap and no-one asks questions. It is full of workshops and young apprentices and you notice a large number of beggars. It is also the location of five of London's prisons, including that most notorious prison: the Clink.



A panorama of London by Claes Van Visscher, 1616

More importantly, Southwark is London's entertainment district. This is largely because it is outside the control of the city officials and their strict laws. The streets are packed with bowling alleys, brothels and taverns, where you can drink, or gamble illegally on dice, backgammon or cards. Here you can see all sorts of professional entertainers, from acrobats and clowns to musicians and puppeteers. You can also see some sickeningly violent entertainment. In the bear-baiting rings you are likely to see a bear or bull being attacked by vicious dogs. But you haven't crossed the river to see any of these things. You are here to see a play.

As you near the theatre, it is the smells you notice: roasting meats and pies mingle with the ever-present stench of horse dung, human sweat and sewage. Then you turn a corner, and there it is, standing 30 metres high: the Globe Theatre. The building is almost round in shape and white, crisscrossed with timbers. Above the brown thatched roof a white flag ripples in the breeze.

Today's play is *Julius Caesar*. It costs just a penny to enter. This is about a tenth of the average worker's daily wage, which makes it cheaper than a movie today. As you pass beneath the entrance you read the words *Totus mundus agit histrionem*: the whole world is a playhouse.

Inside, three tiers of gallery seating wrap around the stage. If you pay another penny, you can buy yourself a seat in one of



Interior of the New Globe Theatre

the lower tiers, or for sixpence you can purchase one of the best seats in the upper galleries. This is where the upper classes sit: the gentlemen, lords and ladies.

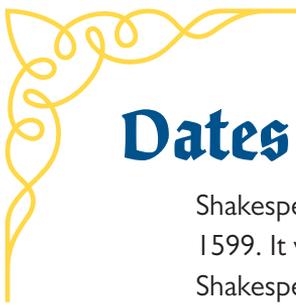
The stage is raised about 1.5 metres above the ground. Like the seats in the galleries, the performance area is covered. The ceiling, which they call the heavens, is painted with stars. You notice there are very few props of any sort and no backdrops or scenery: just a curtain at the back of the stage and, above this, three balcony areas that face the audience. These are the most expensive seats in the house, where people sit to be seen.

The Globe is now almost full with 3000 noisy people. You find a place off to the side of the stage. You'll have to stand for two or three hours but you've done that before at plenty of concerts. There are no toilets, and you will need to keep a careful eye on your bag.

The audience around you are poorer Londoners, the groundlings. You'll find they're a lot like a crowd at the football, but rougher. They will eat, drink and talk throughout the performance and will shout out or boo if they don't like what's happening.

When the actors come on you'll find they speak very quickly, but you'll be able to hear them clearly where you are. If you look very closely you may even notice something strange about the female characters. All of the parts are played by men, and female characters, such as Portia and Calpurnia, are played by boys whose voices have not yet broken. Theatre companies are considered too dangerous for women, and they won't be permitted onstage for another 60 years.

Anyway, it's almost 2 o'clock and the performance is about to begin ...



Dates and sources

Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* was written and performed at the Globe Theatre in 1599. It was not published, however, until 1623, when it was one of 36 plays by Shakespeare included in a book now known as the First Folio.

Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, translated by Sir Thomas North in 1579, was Shakespeare's primary source for the play. It is likely that Shakespeare, along with other educated Elizabethans, would have studied this book at school. As Plutarch was such a detailed biographer, Shakespeare had a significant amount of material to draw on in creating the characters for his play; he closely followed the details of the main historical figures, such as Caesar, Cassius, Brutus and Mark Antony, as they are described in Plutarch's history.

Although Shakespeare's play follows an original historical account, it is worthwhile remembering that his aim was always to create a compelling stage production. Closer study of history reveals that Shakespeare has simplified and condensed time and events. For example, Shakespeare combines Caesar's triumph of October 45 BCE (Before the Common Era) with the feast of Lupercal of the following February, and manipulates time so that the Ides of March (15 March) immediately follows this celebration. He compresses time even further following the assassination of Caesar: the election of the triumvirate of Antony, Octavius and Lepidus was actually 18 months after the death of Caesar, and it was another year again before the Battle of Philippi (which was actually two battles separated by 20 days) was fought.

Setting

Julius Caesar begins in Rome (still the capital of modern-day Italy) in February 44 BCE. At this time Rome was a powerful city with a population of over a million people. The centre of the city was the impressive Capitol building where much of the political drama in *Julius Caesar* takes place. From Act 4 Scene 2 onwards the play moves east to Sardis (present-day Turkey) and the military camp of the conspirators, where Brutus and Cassius argue and discuss their preparation for war. The final battle consisting of two engagements is fought on the plain west of the ancient city of Philippi.

Shakespeare's language

Shakespeare wrote with an astonishing command of the English language. His lines are packed with puns, metaphors and ironies. He often uses words and phrases that sound strange to a modern reader, some of which have shifted in their meaning since he wrote them. Sometimes he uses a different word order from ours, and his characters often speak in poetry. Shakespeare's language can, at times, be challenging, but the reward is in the challenge.

Below are some tips on how to read the text and some of the main features to look out for. Don't worry too much at first about terms such as **iambic pentameter** and **rhyming couplet**. At this stage, practise reading the text aloud and enjoy the sound of the language.

Tips for reading

It is vital not to pause at the end of a line if a thought or an idea continues on to the next line. The following example from *Julius Caesar* illustrates this point. Try reading it aloud, pausing at the end of each line.

[Context: Cassius expresses his concerns that Mark Antony may be dangerous.]

CASSIUS I wish we may: but yet have I a mind
 That fears him much; and my misgiving still
 Falls shrewdly to the purpose. (Act 3 Scene 1)

The most natural place to pause in these lines is where you see a punctuation mark such as a semicolon (;) or colon (:). In this case, it is natural to pause at the colon after 'may', and the semicolon after 'much'. Read the lines again, this time pausing at the punctuation marks rather than at the end of each line. You will notice that the lines flow much more smoothly and naturally now, and that their meaning is clearer. The key point to remember is to pause in your reading only at punctuation marks, the same way you would when reading a novel.

The following sections explain the main features of Shakespeare's language. Understanding these features will also help you to read the play more confidently and fluently.



At other times, Shakespeare *adds* a syllable or a beat to a word, again to make it fit the iambic pentameter. This is indicated in the text by an accent mark to create an extra syllable:

touchèd [TOUCH-ed] (two beats instead of one)
vanquishèd [van-QUISH-ed] (three beats instead of two)

Essential vocabulary

Shakespeare's works include an immense vocabulary; some scholars have estimated that his plays and poems make use of up to 15 000 different words. You can enjoy Shakespeare without understanding every word, but it is still a good idea to learn the words that are used regularly throughout the play. Some words, such as 'civil' and 'servile', are still used today; but others, for example 'ere' or 'wherefore', are not used often. You might like to begin a vocabulary list of your own. Here are some examples of words that occur frequently throughout *Julius Caesar*.

Aught: Anything
Ay (pronounced eye): Yes
Beseech: Strongly request (entreat)
Ere (pronounced <i>air</i>): Before
Hither: Here (to this place)
Ides of March: The 15th day of March (the day Caesar is assassinated)
Meet: Appropriate or fitting
Sirrah: Term used to address people of a lower rank
Soothsayer: Fortune-teller or religious prophet
Thither: To (or towards that place)
Thou: You
Thy: Your
Wherefore: Why
Yond / Yonder: Over there

The characters



THE DICTATOR

JULIUS CAESAR: The most powerful man in Rome; the **GHOST OF CAESAR** also appears

THE TRIUMVIRS AFTER THE DEATH OF JULIUS CAESAR

MARK ANTONY: Close friend and supporter of Caesar who turns the people of Rome against the conspirators and defeats Brutus and Cassius at the Battle of Philippi

OCTAVIUS: Caesar's nephew and heir

LEPIDUS: A powerful Roman who becomes the third member of the Triumvirate

CONSPIRATORS AGAINST JULIUS CAESAR

MARCUS BRUTUS: A leading member of the Senate

CAIUS CASSIUS: Close friend of Brutus and also a Senator

CASCA

TREBONIUS

DECIUS

METELLUS CIMBER

CINNA

CAIUS LIGARIUS

THE WOMEN

CALPURNIA: Caesar's wife

PORTIA: Brutus' wife

SENATORS AND TRIBUNES

CICERO, PUBLIUS and POPILIUS: Senators who are not part of the conspiracy

FLAVIUS and MARULLUS: Tribunes

OTHER FIGURES

ARTEMIDORUS

SOOTHSAYER

CINNA: Poet killed by the mob because he has the same name as a conspirator

Another Poet

FOLLOWERS OF BRUTUS AND CASSIUS

Lucilius, Young Cato, Titinius, Clitus, Dardanius, Lucius, Messala, Volumnius, Varro, Claudius, Pindarus and Strato

ROMAN CITIZENS

Carpenter, Cobbler, Servant of Antony, Servant of Octavius, Servant of Caesar, other Soldiers and Roman Citizens



Act summaries

Act 1

It is the feast of Lupercal and there is excitement in the streets of ancient Rome following Julius Caesar's recent defeat of Pompey. Because two Tribunes, Flavius and Marullus, dislike Caesar and do not want him to become king they criticise and dismiss the crowd. A soothsayer warns Caesar of a dangerous event that will occur on the Ides of March. Strongly believing in the security of his political position and his own strength of character, Caesar ignores this warning.

Meanwhile, Cassius, who is jealous of Caesar and suspicious of his ambition, seeks to obtain the support of his friend, the highly respected politician Brutus, in a conspiracy to prevent Caesar from gaining absolute power in Rome. Casca, the first of the senators to commit to the conspiracy, is highly superstitious whereas Cassius is not. This is shown later that night when the weather, people and animals behave strangely, suggesting that the earth is perhaps affected on many levels by this secret uprising against the leader of Rome.

Act 2

Brutus stays up late thinking about the dilemma of Caesar's presumed ambition. He reads a letter that Cassius has sent anonymously and is persuaded to join the conspiracy. Cassius arrives and introduces Brutus to the other conspirators. They decide to murder Caesar. Brutus disagrees with Cassius' suggestions that Antony should also be killed, so they agree that he be allowed to live. The group decides to meet at Caesar's home, with Decius assuring them that he can persuade Caesar to be present at the Capitol.

The next morning Portia is worried about her husband, Brutus, and begs him to tell her what is troubling him. Brutus promises to tell her later. Caius Ligarius arrives and pledges his support to the conspiracy.

In a separate household, Calpurnia urges Caesar not to attend the Senate because of her distressing dream. After Decius interprets the dream positively, Caesar ignores his wife's warning. The conspirators arrive and privately make plans while Caesar greets them as friends. Artemidorus has prepared a written warning for Caesar that fails to reach him. Portia continues to worry about Brutus and asks her servant, Lucius, to check on him. The soothsayer then adds to her fears when he tells her that he predicts danger for Caesar.

Act 3

Caesar walks through the crowds and, ignoring the warnings of the soothsayer and Artemidorus, proceeds to the Capitol where he hears Metellus' case. After Caesar dismisses Metellus' pleas, the other conspirators gather around. Casca is the first to stab Caesar; the others follow and Caesar is killed. The citizens flee, despite Brutus' attempts to reassure them there will be no more killing. Brutus tells the conspirators to cover their hands and arms in Caesar's blood as a sign that his death has brought about peace, freedom and victory over tyranny.

After giving consent for Antony to speak at Caesar's funeral, despite Cassius' opposition, Brutus addresses the crowd. He then allows Antony to begin. Alone before the people, Antony proclaims his real feelings about the conspirators. He then leaves the pulpit to stand next to the body and holds up Caesar's bloodied clothes and the body itself. Upon the crowd's insistence, Antony reveals the contents of Caesar's will and they discover Caesar has been generous to them. Although stirred by Brutus, the crowd responds with greater passion to Antony, prompting Brutus and Cassius to flee. Having turned wild, members of the crowd seize a poet and murder him because he has the same name – Cinna – as one of the conspirators. There is also news that Octavius, who is Caesar's nephew and heir, is in communication with Antony.

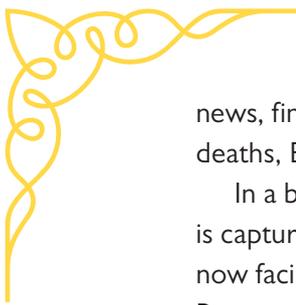
Act 4

In Rome, Antony, Octavius and Lepidus have formed a triumvirate (a rule of three people). In preparation for war they have prepared a list of names of those who must die, including some of their own relatives.

Meanwhile, Cassius and Brutus meet in Brutus' tent, near Sardis, after some time apart. They argue, with Brutus accusing Cassius of withholding battle funds from him and taking bribes. Cassius behaves irrationally by asking Brutus to kill him; and Brutus, reminded of Cassius' quick temper, is reconciled with him. They reflect mournfully that Portia has committed suicide, then join Titinius and Messala to discuss plans for the war. That night, the ghost of Caesar appears to Brutus in his tent, telling him that he will see him at the battle at Philippi.

Act 5

On the plains of Philippi, the four generals, Antony, Octavius, Cassius and Brutus, meet and exchange insults before the battle begins. The possibility of defeat looms large to the once-confident Cassius. While Brutus' army defeats Octavius' men, Cassius' soldiers are in trouble. Admitting defeat, Cassius commits suicide upon hearing that Titinius has been captured. When Titinius, returning with good



news, finds Cassius dead, he also takes his own life. Deeply shocked by their deaths, Brutus is convinced that the ghost of Caesar has been present.

In a battle later that day, Cato is killed and Lucilius, pretending to be Brutus, is captured. Impressed by Lucilius' brave actions, Antony spares his life. Brutus, now facing defeat, asks his followers to kill him, but only Strato agrees to assist Brutus to fall on his sword. Antony and Octavius arrive to declare victory and Antony praises Brutus' character.

Quick questions!



Spend a few minutes answering these questions in pairs or as a class.

- 1 What is the name of the feast the Romans are celebrating in Act 1?
- 2 What special date is Caesar warned about?
- 3 Who sends Brutus anonymous letters to encourage him to turn against Caesar?
- 4 Who does Cassius want to kill in addition to Caesar?
- 5 Who is Brutus' wife?
- 6 Why doesn't Calpurnia want Caesar to go to the Capitol?
- 7 In addition to his wife, who also tries to warn Caesar about the Ides of March?
- 8 Who strikes the first blow against Caesar?
- 9 What does Brutus tell the conspirators to do after they kill Caesar?
- 10 What does Antony request of Brutus after Caesar's death?
- 11 What does Antony show the crowd?
- 12 Why does the crowd turn on the poet Cinna?
- 13 Who is in the Triumvirate?
- 14 What do the Triumvirate do in their first meeting?
- 15 Why do Cassius and Brutus fight when they see each other again after time apart?
- 16 Who does Brutus see in his tent later that night?
- 17 Why does Cassius take his own life?
- 18 Who pretends to be Brutus during a battle?
- 19 Why does Titinius take his own life?
- 20 How does Brutus die?

Freeze-frames

The recommended time allocation for this task (preparation and performance) is approximately 50–60 minutes in total.

Present the play in five freeze-frames (one for each act) in groups of five to seven students.

Instructions

- Read carefully through the act summaries.
- Work out how you will present the action of each act in a single ‘frozen’ pose.
- You may choose to represent a character, an event or even an idea. You may strike a pose in which you are doing two things at once.
- When instructed, present Act 1. Your teacher will then ask you to CHANGE and then FREEZE for your representation of Act 2. This will continue until you have represented all five acts.
- You shouldn’t take longer than 15 seconds between acts, so make sure you practise your changeovers before you present your freeze-frames to the class.
- Make sure you can explain what you represent, who you are or what you are doing when you present your freeze-frames.

Optional

- Use a digital camera to photograph your five freeze-frames. Print the photographs and write a caption to be placed below each photograph explaining which act is being presented. These can be displayed in your classroom.
- Alternatively, print your photographs but do not label them. Display them in your classroom and ask students from other groups to organise your photographs into what they think is the correct order of the five-act play.

Act 1

Act 1 Scene 1

CHARACTERS

Marullus
Flavius
Cobbler
Carpenter



IN A NUTSHELL

It is the feast of Lupercal and the common people are celebrating in the streets in praise of their leader, Caesar, who has returned victorious from war with Pompey. The Tribunes Marullus and Flavius are angry that the commoners are glorifying Caesar rather than being at work. The commoners crack jokes and then leave after being harshly criticised by the Tribunes. Marullus and Flavius decide to remove any decorations that have been placed on Caesar's statues.

Before you read

- Marullus and Flavius are Tribunes and are therefore responsible for representing the interests of the common people (the plebs); in this scene, however, they look to keep the people in line. Marullus complains that the people are celebrating Caesar's recent victory over Pompey (lines 31–54). While it was common for Romans to celebrate great triumphs over other peoples, which brought them prestige and wealth, Caesar's conquest of Pompey is different. Pompey was himself a successful Roman general who, as Marullus points out, masterminded many victories that these same people had celebrated in the past. For more information about tribunes see page 22.
- Apart from the Tribunes, the other characters in this scene are plebeian tradesmen (mechanicals), a carpenter and a cobbler (someone who repairs shoes). Flavius complains that the day is a 'labouring day' and therefore they should be at work. It was a common complaint in Shakespeare's day that tradesmen missed work to attend the theatre and it is likely that many in the audience were skipping work to see a performance of *Julius Caesar*. This was a key reason why many businessmen and council members called for theatres such as the Globe (where *Julius Caesar* was performed) to be closed.



Apparel:	Clothes
Knave:	Rogue; servant
Naughty:	Worthless (far harsher than in modern usage)
Beseech:	Request forcefully
Saucy:	Cheeky
Wherefore:	Why
Tributaries:	Rulers who pay tribute (financial or otherwise)
Capitol:	The walled area of the city (of Rome)



For the good of Rome ...

Society and government of Republican Rome

The period known as the Roman Republic began when the Romans expelled King Tarquin, in 509 BCE, and effectively ended under the rule of Julius Caesar's nephew, Augustus Caesar (Octavius in this play). Unlike today's governments in Australia, the UK and the United States, the government of the Roman Republic wasn't based on a constitution – its system of government evolved over hundreds of years and became incredibly complex, but ancient Romans who grew up with this system understood how it worked.

Members of a wealthy elite, called **Patricians**, largely wielded power in the Roman Republic. All the conspirators we meet in the play, including Cassius and Brutus, are **Patricians** or of the **senatorial class**.

Ultimate power rested in the hands of two **Consuls**. These men, who were elected by the Senate, ruled jointly for one year, after which they had to wait a further ten before standing for re-election. The **Senate**, which began as a temporary body of about 100 men but grew to a standing or permanent body of 600 men, acted as an advisory body to the Consuls. While the Senate could not make decisions, it could vote to recommend certain courses of action and its advice was usually followed. The Consuls submitted all their decisions to the Senate but were free to disregard its advice. The system was meant to ensure that no single man could amass too much power. The Senate could at times be a rough place, with Senators or Consuls intimidated by mobs of commoners or even by soldiers.

The majority of the people of the Roman Republic were known as **plebeians** or **plebs**. The plebeians could exercise their power through the **Assembly of the Plebs** and the **People's Assembly** and on rare occasions the Consuls passed legislation or laws through these assemblies. We meet some plebeian characters in the opening scene of *Julius Caesar* and they make up the majority of the people in the crowd scenes.

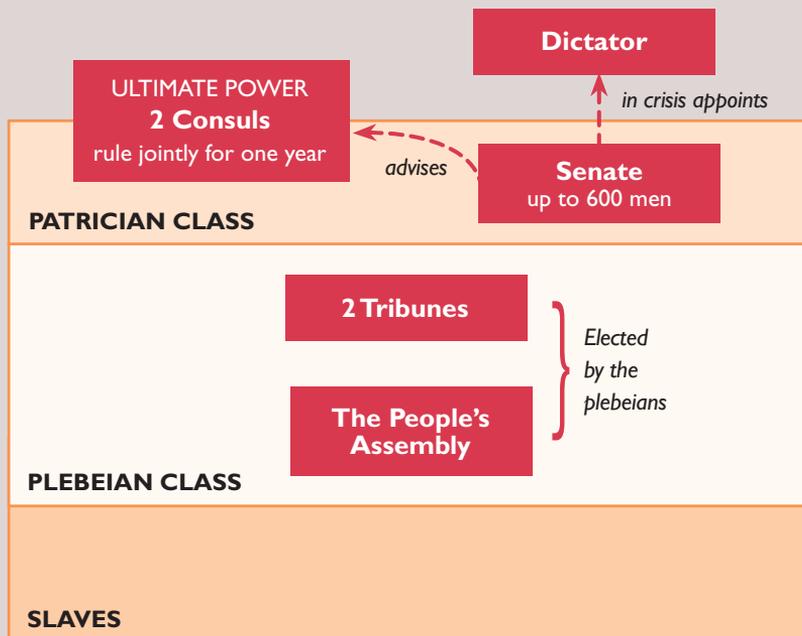


The plebeians also elected two men called **Tribunes** to represent their interests. In the opening scene of *Julius Caesar* we meet the Tribunes, Marullus and Flavius. The Tribunes could veto or reject anything proposed that they believed wasn't in the interest of the people. Their power, however, could cut both ways and they had the right to shut down the People's Assembly.

In times of crisis, the Senate could make a single man **Dictator**. The Dictator was usually given a specific task, such as dealing with a foreign enemy or restoring order. When we meet Caesar, in Act I, he is at the height of his political power. After the defeat of his rival, Pompey, in the Roman Civil War, the Senate voted him many honours, including Dictator and **Sole-Consul**. This meant that Caesar could largely ignore the Republican system of government and its traditions.

About a third of the Roman Republic's population were slaves, often prisoners of war. These men and women had no say in the way the Roman Republic was governed. Life could be incredibly harsh for a slave forced to work in the mines, in the rowing galley of trade ships or in the fields. Some slaves, however, were treated well. Many male Greek slaves, for example, tutored children of the wealthy and these men were often treated with more respect and ate better than many poor free men. Slaves were sometimes released on their master's death and a few slaves managed to buy their freedom. In Act 5 of *Julius Caesar*, Cassius releases his slave, Pindarus, before committing suicide.

You might find the diagram below helpful in understanding how the Roman Republic worked.



STRUCTURE OF ROMAN SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT

Following the death of Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, Caesar's nephew Octavius emerged as a powerful figure; after sharing power for a time he defeated his enemies to become Dictator. Octavius' rule saw the erosion of the power of the Senate, which eventually voted him Dictator for Life. He became, in effect, the first emperor – Augustus Caesar – beginning a pattern of government that was to continue until the fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century, and into the fifteenth century in the Eastern Roman (or Byzantine) Empire.

Rome. A street.

[Enter FLAVIUS, MARULLUS and certain Commoners]

FLAVIUS	Hence! Home, you idle creatures; get you home. Is this a holiday? What! Know you not, Being mechanical, you ought not walk Upon a labouring day without the sign Of your profession? Speak, what trade art thou?	5
CARPENTER	Why, sir, a carpenter.	
MARULLUS	Where is thy leather apron and thy rule? What dost thou with thy best apparel on? You, sir, what trade are you?	
COBBLER	Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman, I am but, as you would say, a cobbler.	10
MARULLUS	But what trade art thou? Answer me directly.	
COBBLER	A trade, sir, that, I hope, I may use with a safe conscience; which is, indeed, sir, a mender of bad soles.	
MARULLUS	What trade, thou knave? Thou naughty knave, what trade?	15
COBBLER	Nay, I beseech you, sir, be not out with me: yet, if you be out, sir, I can mend you.	
MARULLUS	What meanest thou by that? Mend me, thou saucy fellow!	
COBBLER	Why, sir, cobble you.	
FLAVIUS	Thou art a cobbler, art thou?	20
COBBLER	Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the awl. I meddle with no tradesman's matters, nor women's matters, but withal I am, indeed, sir, a surgeon to old shoes; when they are in great	

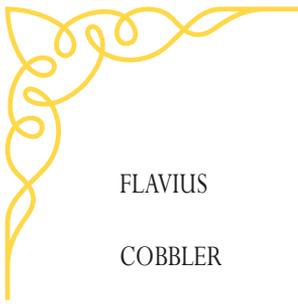
16 **Be not out with me:** Don't get angry or talk to me in an insulting way.

17 **I can mend you:** 1. Set you straight, or 2. Improve your shoes.

21 **Awl:** Tool for piercing leather.

22 **Withal:** In addition; a pun on 'with awl'.





danger, I recover them. As proper men as ever trod upon neat's
leather have gone upon my handiwork. 25

FLAVIUS But wherefore art not in thy shop today?
Why dost thou lead these men about the streets?

COBBLER Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes, to get myself into more
work. But, indeed, sir, we make holiday, to see Caesar and
to rejoice in his triumph. 30

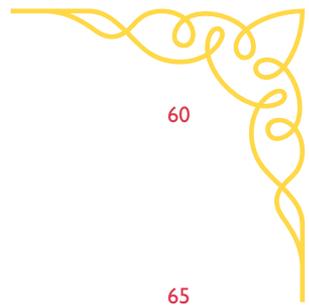
MARULLUS Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?
What tributaries follow him to Rome,
To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?
You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!
O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome, 35
Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft
Have you climbed up to walls and battlements,
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat
The livelong day, with patient expectation, 40
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome:
And when you saw his chariot but appear,
Have you not made an universal shout,
That Tiber trembled underneath her banks,
To hear the replication of your sounds 45
Made in her concave shores?
And do you now put on your best attire?
And do you now cull out a holiday?
And do you now strew flowers in his way
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood? 50
Be gone!
Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
That needs must light on this ingratitude.

FLAVIUS Go, go, good countrymen, and, for this fault, 55
Assemble all the poor men of your sort;
Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears
Into the channel, till the lowest stream
Do kiss the most exalted shores of all.

[Exit all the Commoners]



53–54 Pray to the gods ... light on this ingratitude: Pray that the gods will stop the plague that is inevitably coming to punish your lack of thankfulness (gratitude) towards Pompey.



See where their basest mettle be not moved;
 They vanish tongue-tied in their guiltiness.
 Go you down that way towards the Capitol;
 This way will I. Disrobe the images,
 If you do find them decked with ceremonies.

60

MARULLUS

May we do so?
 You know it is the feast of Lupercal.

65

FLAVIUS

It is no matter; let no images
 Be hung with Caesar's trophies. I'll about,
 And drive away the vulgar from the streets.
 So do you too, where you perceive them thick.
 These growing feathers plucked from Caesar's wing
 Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
 Who else would soar above the view of men
 And keep us all in servile fearfulness.

70

[All exit]



-
- 60 **Their basest mettle be not moved:** Alchemy involves converting base metals such as lead into gold. Mettle also means spirit and Flavius asserts that the commoners' spirits are easily shaped (in the same way that lead is).
 - 63–64 **Disrobe the images ... decked with ceremonies:** Take the decorations from the statues.
 - 66 **Feast of Lupercal:** The feast of Lupercal was originally a farming festival to discourage wolves from attacking livestock but evolved into a festival to honour the god of fertility, Pan.
 - 69 **Vulgar:** Common, working people.
 - 71–74 **These growing feathers plucked ... in servile fearfulness:** A paraphrase might read: If we address this situation now we will prevent Caesar from growing too strong.



QUESTIONS

- 1 Why are Marullus and Flavius angry with the citizens?
- 2 What does the cobbler confess is his real reason for not being at work?
- 3 The Tribunes' role or duty was to stand up for the common people.
 - a How well do Marullus and Flavius perform this duty?
 - b How would you describe the Tribunes' attitude towards the citizens?
- 4 Consider how the opening scene reflects the political situation in Rome. Does Shakespeare present it as peaceful and harmonious, or as a place of conflict?



EXTEND

- 1 Read the second point in **Before you read** on page 20. Which characters do you think Shakespeare's original audience would be sympathetic towards? Why?

- 2 Copy and complete the table below to show how Shakespeare presents Marullus and Flavius' dialogue as arrogant or condescending towards the common people of Rome (lines 31–59).

Technique or stylistic feature	Examples	Effect
Adjectives	Idle	
Insults		Insulting the crowd directly shows the Tribunes' low opinion of those in it.
Questions		
Commands (imperatives)	Get you home	

- 3 Marullus calls the commoners 'blocks' and 'stones' (line 34). What connotations do these words have and what qualities does Marullus therefore suggest the commoners lack?
- 4 Julius Caesar has been mentioned frequently in this scene but has not yet appeared. Why do you think Shakespeare delays his entrance?

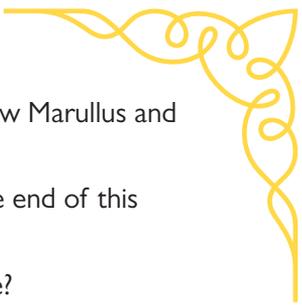
Introducing puns

A **pun** is a play on words. It may play on the fact that a word has a double meaning ('lie' as in lying down or 'lie' as in not telling the truth) or it may play on the fact that two words sound like each other, such as 'made' and 'marred' (meaning ruined). The cobbler's dialogue plays on the words 'all' and 'awl' (meaning a tool for piercing leather) and jokes that he hopes he may practise his trade 'with a safe conscience' because he is 'a mender of bad soles'. Here, the cobbler alludes to the word 'soul' as well as the 'soles' of shoes. The Tribunes Flavius and Marullus also pun on the word 'mettle', which means metal in the modern sense but also spirit in Shakespeare's time. There are fewer puns in *Julius Caesar* than in other Shakespearean plays.

Joseph Mankiewicz: DVD Chapter 2 (The crowd and the Tribunes)



- 1 The film opens with a close-up of a statue of Caesar covered with decorations. What mood does this establish for the opening of the film?
- 2 How does Joseph Mankiewicz use camera shots and framing to give the impression of a big crowd?
- 3 How does Mankiewicz use camera angles and blocking to make Marullus and Flavius appear more powerful than the crowd?

- 
- 4 How is the statue of Caesar used in the opening scene to show Marullus and Flavius' opposition towards him?
 - 5 What do the Roman soldiers do to Marullus and Flavius at the end of this scene and what do you think is the significance of this?
 - 6 How is music used to introduce Caesar as an important figure?
 - 7 What camera shots are used to show Caesar's power?
 - 8 How does Mankiewicz use costume, actions and blocking to portray the character of the soothsayer?
 - 9 Why do you think Mankiewicz has the soothsayer touch Brutus at the end of this scene?



I do fear the people choose Caesar for their king ...

Republic or monarchy?

Republican Rome's system of government is described in the box on page 21. In this system all free men, in theory, had a voice in determining how they were governed. By the first century BCE, the political system of the Roman Republic looked particularly fragile and the power of the Senate was coming under increasing attack. A generation before the assassination of Caesar, Rome was ruled by Sulla, who had marched his army into the centre of Rome and hunted down those who opposed him. Following this period, Rome saw the rise of powerful generals who ignored the Senate, and for a time it was unofficially ruled by Pompey, Caesar and Crassus in what is called the First Triumvirate (the rule of three).

At the time in which the play is set, Patricians of the senatorial class such as Brutus and Cassius still had considerable influence in political matters, but feared that Caesar (already a dictator) would disregard the Roman Republican traditions and law if he became too powerful. In Act 1 Scene 2, they discuss their fear that Caesar's popularity with the common people, and his desire to be king, will threaten the Republic. For the Romans the word for king, *rex*, was considered a curse word. Kings ruled the Romans before the Roman Republic was established in 509 BCE. The final king 'Tarquin the proud' was notorious for being a tyrant and was driven out of Rome by Brutus' ancestor, Lucius Junius Brutus. Since that time, Romans saw it as their patriotic duty to defend the Republic.



▶ Brutus sees (or is coming to see) Caesar as a tyrant: not for what he has done but for what he may become. To preserve the Roman system of government, he is prepared to commit murder. He would agree with the founding father and American revolutionary Thomas Jefferson that ‘the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants’.

Julius Caesar was topical in Shakespeare’s day and the arguments for and against Caesar’s assassination were often debated in universities. Elizabethan England was a monarchy but the Queen, Elizabeth I, was without an heir and always in danger of assassination. James I, who came to the throne a few years after *Julius Caesar* was written, greatly feared assassination and wore a special padded coat to avoid the same fate as Caesar. In 1605, King James survived an audacious terrorist attack, when Catholic radicals attempted to blow up the Houses of Parliament. A generation after Shakespeare’s death, the parliamentarians (Members of Parliament) won a civil war against the English King, Charles I, and executed him as a tyrant.

Questions for discussion

- 1 Is the murder of a tyrant (tyrannicide) justifiable?
- 2 Is the murder of someone who could become a tyrant ever justified?



Section of the Ara Pacis procession frieze showing Roman Senators

Act 1 Scene 2 (Part 1)



CHARACTERS

Cassius
Brutus
Caesar
Antony
Casca
Soothsayer
Calpurnia



IN A NUTSHELL

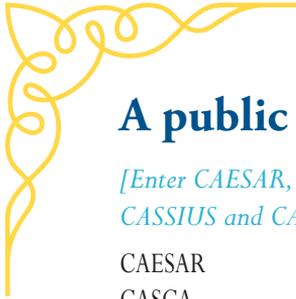
After instructing Calpurnia to position herself so that Antony can touch her during the race, Caesar is warned by a soothsayer (a kind of fortune-teller) to beware the Ides of March. Caesar and his followers exit, leaving Brutus and Cassius alone on the stage. Cassius accuses Brutus of being unfriendly towards him, but Brutus assures him it is nothing personal, and later confesses his fear that Caesar will be made king. Cassius deepens Brutus' fears by arguing that a man who is no greater than they are should not rule Rome with absolute power. Brutus promises to further consider what Cassius has said.

Before you read

- A few of the longer scenes in this play – such as Act 1 Scene 2 – are split into two parts to help you follow the action. You may choose to ignore these divisions and read the two parts together.
- In this scene Cassius compares himself to Aeneas, a Trojan prince from classical mythology. When the Greeks burned Troy to the ground, Aeneas carried his father, Anchises, to safety. Aeneas was associated with the founding of Rome and was the central character of the *Aeneid*, an epic poem written by the Roman poet Virgil a generation after Caesar's death. Although Aeneas was probably a fictional or legendary character, most Romans believed him to be a historical figure.



Barren:	Sterile; unable to become pregnant
Flourish:	Showy display of horns or trumpets (stage direction)
Press:	Crowd
Ides of March:	15 March
Sennet:	Trumpet call signalling a ceremonial exit (stage direction)
Gamesome:	Playful (keen on sport)
Countenance:	Appearance, facial expression



A public place.

[Enter CAESAR, ANTONY for the course, CALPURNIA, PORTIA, DECIUS, BRUTUS, CICERO, CASSIUS and CASCA; a great crowd following, among them a SOOTHSAYER]

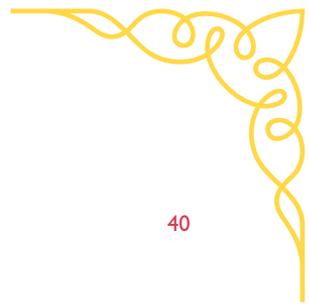
CAESAR Calpurnia!
CASCA Peace, ho! Caesar speaks.
CAESAR Calpurnia!
CALPURNIA Here, my lord.
CAESAR Stand you directly in Antonius' way, 5
When he doth run his course. Antonius!
ANTONY Caesar, my lord?
CAESAR Forget not, in your speed, Antonius,
To touch Calpurnia; for our elders say,
The barren touchèd in this holy chase, 10
Shake off their sterile curse.
ANTONY I shall remember:
When Caesar says, 'Do this', it is performed.
CAESAR Set on; and leave no ceremony out.

[Flourish]

SOOTHSAYER Caesar! 15
CAESAR Ha! Who calls?
CASCA Bid every noise be still. Peace yet again!
CAESAR Who is it in the press that calls on me?
I hear a tongue, shriller than all the music,
Cry 'Caesar!' Speak; Caesar is turned to hear. 20
SOOTHSAYER Beware the Ides of March.
CAESAR What man is that?
BRUTUS A soothsayer bids you beware the Ides of March.
CAESAR Set him before me. Let me see his face.
CASSIUS Fellow, come from the throng; look upon Caesar. 25
CAESAR What say'st thou to me now? Speak once again.
SOOTHSAYER Beware the Ides of March.
CAESAR He is a dreamer. Let us leave him. Pass.

[Sennet. All exit except BRUTUS and CASSIUS]

CASSIUS Will you go see the order of the course? 30
BRUTUS Not I.
CASSIUS I pray you, do.
BRUTUS I am not gamesome: I do lack some part
Of that quick spirit that is in Antony.
Let me not hinder, Cassius, your desires;
I'll leave you. 35
CASSIUS Brutus, I do observe you now of late:
I have not from your eyes that gentleness



And show of love as I was wont to have.
 You bear too stubborn and too strange a hand
 Over your friend that loves you.

BRUTUS

Cassius,

40

Be not deceived: if I have veiled my look,
 I turn the trouble of my countenance
 Merely upon myself. Vexèd I am
 Of late with passions of some difference,
 Conceptions only proper to myself,
 Which give some soil perhaps to my behaviours.
 But let not therefore my good friends be grieved,
 Among which number, Cassius, be you one,
 Nor construe any further my neglect,
 Than that poor Brutus, with himself at war,
 Forgets the shows of love to other men.

45

50

CASSIUS

Then, Brutus, I have much mistook your passion;
 By means whereof this breast of mine hath buried
 Thoughts of great value, worthy cogitations.
 Tell me, good Brutus, can you see your face?

55

BRUTUS

No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself,
 But by reflection, by some other things.

CASSIUS

'Tis just;
 And it is very much lamented, Brutus,
 That you have no such mirrors as will turn
 Your hidden worthiness into your eye,
 That you might see your shadow. I have heard,
 Where many of the best respect in Rome,
 Except immortal Caesar, speaking of Brutus
 And groaning underneath this age's yoke,
 Have wished that noble Brutus had his eyes.

60

65



38 **As I was wont to have:** As I have in the past.

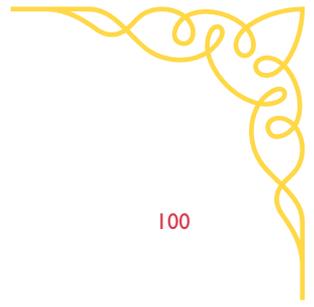
43–46 **Vexèd I am ... to my behaviours:** Brutus is troubled and has concerns that he is unwilling to share. He thinks that this might explain his behaviour.

49 **Construe:** Interpret.

52–54 **I have much mistook ... worthy cogitations:** Cassius says that because he had mistaken Brutus' moods, he refrained from telling him some important thoughts he has about Caesar. He proceeds to reveal these thoughts to Brutus as their dialogue continues ('cogitations' = reflections, thoughts).

56–57 **For the eye sees not ... by some other things:** Brutus points out that no person can see themselves directly; they can only see their reflection in a mirror. Mirrors in the ancient world gave back very poor, imperfect reflections.

62–66 **I have heard ... noble Brutus had his eyes:** Cassius claims that many upper-class Romans (except for Caesar), who are feeling the burden of Caesar's rule, wish that Brutus could see the situation for what it is. Cassius is being sarcastic when he refers to Caesar as 'immortal'.



I cannot tell what you and other men
 Think of this life; but, for my single self,
 I had as lief not be as live to be
 In awe of such a thing as I myself. 100

I was born free as Caesar; so were you;
 We both have fed as well, and we can both
 Endure the winter's cold as well as he:
 For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
 The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores, 105
 Caesar said to me 'Darest thou, Cassius, now
 Leap in with me into this angry flood,
 And swim to yonder point?' Upon the word,
 Accoutred as I was, I plungèd in
 And bade him follow; so indeed he did. 110
 The torrent roared, and we did buffet it
 With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
 And stemming it with hearts of controversy.
 But ere we could arrive the point proposed,
 Caesar cried 'Help me, Cassius, or I sink!' 115
 I, as Aeneas, our great ancestor,
 Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
 The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber
 Did I the tired Caesar. And this man
 Is now become a god, and Cassius is 120
 A wretched creature and must bend his body,
 If Caesar carelessly but nod on him.
 He had a fever when he was in Spain,
 And when the fit was on him, I did mark
 How he did shake. 'Tis true, this god did shake; 125
 His coward lips did from their colour fly,
 And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world
 Did lose his lustre. I did hear him groan.



98–100 **For my single self ... as I myself:** I would rather not live to fear, serve, or even worship a mere man such as myself.

105 **The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores:** In stormy weather, the River Tiber was almost overflowing its banks. The Tiber runs through the centre of Rome.

108 **Yonder:** Over there.

109 **Accoutred:** Dressed or attired.

111–13 **We did buffet it ... with hearts of controversy:** We struggled against it with strong muscles and defied it with all the courage of our hearts.

114 **Ere:** Before.

116–19 **I, as Aeneas ... the tired Caesar:** Cassius had to save Caesar's life and drag him to shore. This comparison to Aeneas presents Cassius as heroic and contrasts him to Caesar. See **Before you read** on page 29 for further information about Aeneas.

128 **Lustre:** Brightness.



Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans
 Mark him and write his speeches in their books, 130
 ‘Alas’, it cried, ‘Give me some drink, Titinius’,
 As a sick girl. Ye gods, it doth amaze me
 A man of such a feeble temper should
 So get the start of the majestic world
 And bear the palm alone.

[Shout. Flourish]

BRUTUS Another general shout! 135

I do believe that these applauses are
 For some new honours that are heaped on Caesar.

CASSIUS Why, man, he doth bstride the narrow world
 Like a Colossus, and we petty men 140

Walk under his huge legs and peep about
 To find ourselves dishonourable graves.

Men at some time are masters of their fates:

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,

But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

Brutus and Caesar. What should be in that ‘Caesar’? 145

Why should that name be sounded more than yours?

Write them together, yours is as fair a name;

Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;

Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with ‘em,

‘Brutus’ will start a spirit as soon as ‘Caesar’. 150

Now, in the names of all the gods at once,

Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed,

That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed!

Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!

When went there by an age, since the great flood, 155



133–35 **A man of such feeble ... bear the palm alone:** Cassius presents Caesar as a wimp and asserts that such a man is unfit to rule Rome and its vast territories. The palm leaf to which Cassius refers is the sign of victory.

139 **Colossus:** A massive bronze statue in Rhodes; one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

142–44 **Men at some time ... that we are underlings:** Cassius doesn’t believe in fate or the effects of the stars (astrology). He asserts that men need to take charge of their own circumstances. Currently, as Cassius sees it, they are merely ‘underlings’ taking orders from somebody no better than themselves.

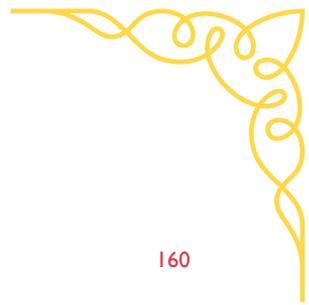
146 **Sounded:** Proclaimed (something that people make a big deal of).

149–50 **Conjure with ‘em ... as soon as ‘Caesar’:** Cassius suggests either Brutus or Caesar’s name will raise spirits equally well or, alternatively, will fire men’s spirits equally well.

153 **Age:** The present time.

154 **Noble bloods:** Brave and honourable men.

155 **The great flood:** Many cultures have a story about the world being flooded in some past age. The Romans believed that Zeus once flooded the world because of the immoral behaviour of mankind. Shakespeare’s audience would know the Biblical story of Noah, in Genesis.



But it was famed with more than with one man?
 When could they say, till now, that talked of Rome,
 That her wide walks encompassed but one man?
 Now is it Rome indeed and room enough,
 When there is in it but one only man. 160

O, you and I have heard our fathers say,
 There was a Brutus once that would have brooked
 The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
 As easily as a king.

BRUTUS That you do love me, I am nothing jealous; 165
 What you would work me to, I have some aim.

How I have thought of this and of these times,
 I shall recount hereafter; for this present,
 I would not, so with love I might entreat you,
 Be any further moved. What you have said 170

I will consider; what you have to say
 I will with patience hear, and find a time
 Both meet to hear and answer such high things.
 Till then, my noble friend, chew upon this:

Brutus had rather be a villager 175
 Than to repute himself a son of Rome

Under these hard conditions as this time
 Is like to lay upon us.

CASSIUS I am glad
 That my weak words have struck but thus much show
 of fire from Brutus. 180



161–63 **O, you and I have heard ... his state in Rome:** Cassius asserts that they have both heard it said that Brutus' ancestor Lucius Junius Brutus would have tolerated ('brooked') the devil ruling Rome as much as he would a king. Cassius hopes Brutus will feel the same about Caesar ruling Rome.

165 **I am nothing jealous:** I don't doubt.

166 **Work:** Persuade.

168–70 **For this present ... any further moved:** Brutus requests that Cassius not attempt to move or persuade him further at this time.

173 **Meet:** Fitting or appropriate.

178 **Like:** Likely.



QUESTIONS

- 1 What does Caesar want Antony to do when he runs in celebration of the feast of Lupercal? Why does he want him to do this?
- 2 What do Antony's words 'When Caesar says, "Do this", it is performed' (line 13) tell us about Caesar's power or position?
- 3 The phrase 'Beware the Ides of March' is repeated three times in this scene. What effect do you think Shakespeare was looking to create through this repetition?

- 
- 4 What do you think Brutus means when he says he is ‘with himself at war’ (line 50)?
 - 5 What do you think are Cassius’ feelings towards Caesar?
 - 6 Copy and complete the table below to show how Cassius presents Caesar as merely human and less than admirable.

Caesar’s character traits	Quotations that support this
Suffers from sickness	
Physical weakness	



- 1 Explain what Cassius means when he complains that he must ‘bend his body’ (lines 119–22).
- 2 Copy and complete the table below to show your understanding of how Cassius uses language to persuade Brutus to conspire against Caesar.

Cassius’ language	Effect of this persuasive language on Brutus
Flattery	



What are your first impressions of Cassius?



For always I am Caesar ...

Introducing Julius Caesar

The general and politician Julius Gaius Caesar (100–44 BCE) is by far the most famous figure of the period known as the Roman Republic. Although his was one of the poorer Patrician families, according to legend he boasted the heroic Aeneas and the goddess Venus among his ancestors.

After serving in Spain with the army, Caesar returned to Rome and rose quickly to a position of political power. He became the Chief Priest of Rome in 63 BCE and then was elected Consul in 59 BCE. In addition to his expertise in public speaking (oratory),

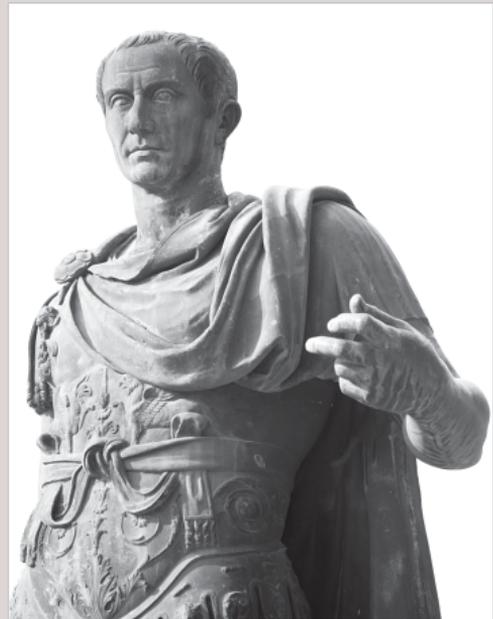
Caesar was famous for his use of intimidation and mob tactics in the Senate. On one occasion he had his fellow Consul, Biblicus, beaten and pelted with dung. Biblicus was eventually forced to stay at home and some Romans joked that the year 59 BCE saw the rule of the Consuls 'Julius' and 'Caesar'.

In 58 BCE, as Governor of the adjoining lands, Caesar set out to subdue the people of Northern Gaul (modern-day France). In the next ten years he conquered and pacified a vast territory in this area and also led a less successful military expedition to Britain. In the field, Caesar showed himself to be an inspirational leader and an excellent organiser who was clear-sighted and determined. He wrote about his time in Gaul in a series of books in which he described himself in the third person as 'Caesar'.

His conquests in Gaul made Caesar arguably the most powerful man in the Roman Republic. As well as his vast wealth, he now commanded a loyal, battle-hardened army, and the glory he won in Gaul made him popular with the Roman people. Wary of the threat he posed, the Senate ordered him to hand over command of his legions and return to Rome. Caesar famously crossed a stream called the Rubicon (which marked the Italian border) and marched his army into Rome, while his enemies in the Senate fled mainland Italy.

In the two-year civil war that followed, Caesar defeated his main opponent, the general Pompey. After a nine-month stay in Egypt, where he had a child with Cleopatra, he returned to Rome in 46 BCE, celebrating his arrival with a huge military procession (a triumph). Caesar famously forgave his surviving enemies from the civil war, including Brutus and Cassius.

The Senate soon voted him Dictator for ten years but in February 44 BCE (one month before the events of Shakespeare's play), he was voted Dictator for Life. The Senate gave Caesar permission to sit on a golden throne in Senate meetings and also allowed him to wear a purple garment that victorious generals wore for their march (or triumph) through the streets of Rome. Shakespeare introduces us to Caesar at this point in history. He is at the height of his power and many in the Senate are fearful or resentful of this exceptional leader.



Statue of Julius Caesar

Act 1 Scene 2 (Part 2)

CHARACTERS

Casca
Cassius
Brutus
Caesar
Antony

IN A NUTSHELL

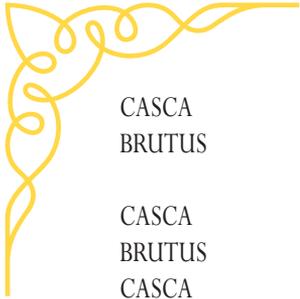
Brutus and Cassius remain onstage when Caesar enters with his attendants. Caesar warns Antony about men like Cassius who think a lot and never seem content, but Antony reassures him that Cassius isn't dangerous. Later Casca tells Brutus and Cassius that Caesar refused the crown Antony presented him with three times before fainting in the market place. When alone onstage, Cassius closes the scene with a speech (soliloquy) about the need to bring down the ambitious Caesar.

Before you read

- This scene introduces Casca, who is intensely sarcastic. While he only has around 60 lines in this scene, Shakespeare clearly establishes his character.
- You will notice that Caesar speaks about himself in the third person (e.g. 'Caesar is turned to hear' and 'Caesar shall go forth'). Cassius and Brutus also talk about themselves in the third person as if they were heroic characters in a novel. To a modern audience this makes them sound egotistical, but it is worth remembering that these are Rome's elite. It is also worth remembering that humility only became a virtue (or something to aim for) in the post-pagan Christian world.
- Stage directions in this scene will show you that Shakespeare often has more than one group onstage at any given time. Be prepared to follow the dialogue as it switches from group to group.

V

Chidden: Scolded or told off
Yond: Over there
Thrice: Three times
Coronet: Small crown
Fain: Gladly
Swound: Faint



CASCA You pulled me by the cloak; would you speak with me?
 BRUTUS Ay, Casca; tell us what hath chanced today,
 That Caesar looks so sad. 220

CASCA Why, you were with him, were you not?
 BRUTUS I should not then ask Casca what had chanced.
 CASCA Why, there was a crown offered him: and being offered him,
 he put it by with the back of his hand, thus; and then the people
 fell a-shouting. 225

BRUTUS What was the second noise for?
 CASCA Why, for that too.
 CASSIUS They shouted thrice: what was the last cry for?
 CASCA Why, for that too.
 BRUTUS Was the crown offered him thrice? 230
 CASCA Ay, marry, was't, and he put it by thrice, every time gentler than
 other, and at every putting-by mine honest neighbours shouted.
 CASSIUS Who offered him the crown?
 CASCA Why, Antony.
 BRUTUS Tell us the manner of it, gentle Casca. 235
 CASCA I can as well be hanged as tell the manner of it: it was mere
 foolery; I did not mark it. I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown –
 yet 'twas not a crown neither, 'twas one of these coronets – and, as
 I told you, he put it by once: but, for all that, to my thinking, he
 would fain have had it. Then he offered it to him again; then he
 put it by again: but, to my thinking, he was very loath to lay his
 fingers off it. And then he offered it the third time; he put it the
 third time by; and still as he refused it, the rabblement hooted,
 and clapped their chapped hands, and threw up their sweaty night-caps,
 and uttered such a deal of stinking breath because Caesar refused 240
 the crown, that it had almost choked Caesar, for he swounded and
 fell down at it. And for mine own part, I durst not laugh, for fear of
 opening my lips and receiving the bad air. 245

CASSIUS But, soft, I pray you: what, did Caesar swoond?
 CASCA He fell down in the market-place, and foamed at mouth, and was
 speechless. 250

BRUTUS 'Tis very like; he hath the falling sickness.
 CASSIUS No, Caesar hath it not; but you and I,
 And honest Casca, we have the falling sickness.

231 **Ay marry was't:** I'll say it was.

232 **Honest:** Casca is being ironic or cynical.

241–42 **Was very loath to lay his / fingers off it:** Caesar didn't want to let go of the crown.

243 **Rabblement:** An insulting term for the crowd.

244 **Night-caps:** Caps made of soft material often worn in the daytime as well.

247 **Durst:** Dared.

254 **The falling sickness:** Epilepsy.



CASCA I know not what you mean by that; but, I am sure, Caesar fell down 255
 If the tag-rag people did not clap him and hiss him, according as he
 pleased and displeased them, as they use to do the players in the
 theatre, I am no true man.

BRUTUS What said he when he came unto himself?

CASCA Marry, before he fell down, when he perceived the common herd 260
 was glad he refused the crown, he plucked me ope his doublet and
 offered them his throat to cut. An I had been a man of any occupation,
 if I would not have taken him at a word, I would I might go to hell
 among the rogues. And so he fell. When he came to himself again,
 he said, if he had done or said any thing amiss, he desired their 265
 worships to think it was his infirmity. Three or four wenches, where
 I stood, cried 'Alas, good soul!' and forgave him with all their hearts.
 But there's no heed to be taken of them; if Caesar had stabbed their
 mothers, they would have done no less.

BRUTUS And after that, he came, thus sad, away? 270

CASCA Ay.

CASSIUS Did Cicero say any thing?

CASCA Ay, he spoke Greek.

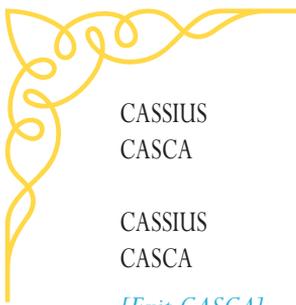
CASSIUS To what effect?

CASCA Nay, an I tell you that, I'll ne'er look you i' the face again. But those 275
 that understood him smiled at one another and shook their heads; but,
 for mine own part, it was Greek to me. I could tell you more news too:
 Marullus and Flavius, for pulling scarves off Caesar's images, are put to
 silence. Fare you well. There was more foolery yet, if I could remember it.

CASSIUS Will you sup with me tonight, Casca? 280

CASCA No, I am promised forth.

-
- 260 **Marry:** An expression of surprise or frustration, meaning: 'By the virgin Mary'. Because the play is set in pre-Christian times, the expression is an anachronism (historically out of place).
- 261 **Plucked me ope his doublet:** He opened his jacket then and there. The word 'me' emphasises Casca's contempt.
- 262–64 **An I had been a man ... among the rogues:** Casca suggests that if he were a working man (like those in the crowd) he would have done what Caesar asked (i.e. cut Caesar's throat) and so go to hell – perhaps after being killed by the crowd ('an' = if).
- 265 **Amiss:** Wrong.
- 266 **Their worships:** Probably not Caesar's actual words. Casca suggests that Caesar was flattering the crowd.
- 266 **Infirmity:** Illness.
- 266 **Wenches:** Women.
- 273 **Greek:** The Romans saw themselves as the inheritors of the Greek cultural and intellectual legacy. Many Romans were taught by Greek tutors and the Greek language had a respected place in Roman society as the language of high culture.
- 280 **Sup:** Have supper.
- 281 **I am promised forth:** I have promised to be somewhere else.



CASSIUS Will you dine with me tomorrow?
 CASCA Ay, if I be alive, and your mind hold, and your dinner worth
 the eating.
 CASSIUS Good; I will expect you. 285
 CASCA Do so. Farewell, both.

[Exit CASCA]

BRUTUS What a blunt fellow is this grown to be!
 He was quick mettle when he went to school.
 CASSIUS So is he now in execution 290
 Of any bold or noble enterprise,
 However he puts on this tardy form.
 This rudeness is a sauce to his good wit,
 Which gives men stomach to digest his words
 With better appetite.

BRUTUS And so it is. For this time I will leave you. 295
 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.
 CASSIUS I will do so. Till then, think of the world.

[Exit BRUTUS]

Well, Brutus, thou art noble; yet, I see, 300
 Thy honourable metal may be wrought
 From that it is disposed. Therefore it is meet
 That noble minds keep ever with their likes;
 For who so firm that cannot be seduced?
 Caesar doth bear me hard; but he loves Brutus. 305
 If I were Brutus now, and he were Cassius,
 He should not humour me. I will this night,
 In several hands, in at his windows throw,
 As if they came from several citizens,

288 **Quick mettle:** Quick-witted or lively.

290 **Enterprise:** Scheme.

291 **Tardy form:** Appearance of being slow-witted.

292–94 **This rudeness is a sauce ... better appetite:** His rudeness allows people to swallow his cleverness. Cassius uses a poetic conceit involving food to explain this opinion.

301–02 **Thy honourable metal ... that it is disposed:** Your honourable spirit can be worked ('wrought') into a new shape (the shape of a conspirator).

302–04 **Therefore it is meet ... cannot be seduced:** It is therefore appropriate that men of noble character associate with similar characters who also are incorruptible.

305 **Bear me hard:** Treat me harshly.

306–07 **If I were Brutus ... not humour me:** If our roles were reversed (that is, if I were in Brutus' position and he were in mine) I would not be listening to him.

308 **In several hands:** In different kinds of handwriting.



Writings all tending to the great opinion
That Rome holds of his name; wherein obscurely
Caesar's ambition shall be glanced at.
And after this let Caesar seat him sure;
For we will shake him, or worse days endure.

[Exit CASSIUS]



313 **Seat him sure:** Brace himself.



QUESTIONS

- 1 What is Caesar's impression of Cassius (lines 195–98 and 201–15)?
- 2 What is Antony's impression of Cassius (lines 199–200)?
- 3 What do you think is Casca's attitude to:
 - a Caesar?
 - b the common citizens of Rome?
- 4 Copy and complete the table below to show how Shakespeare shapes our understanding of Caesar's power. Refer to the whole of Act 1 Scene 2 for this.

Character	Quotation	Effect
Cassius	... he doth bestride the narrow world / Like a Colossus (lines 139–40)	
Antony	When Caesar says, 'Do this', it is performed (line 13)	
Casca	Peace ho! Caesar speaks (line 2)	
Caesar	... for always I am Caesar (line 215)	

- 5 Explain the plan Cassius outlines at the end of this scene.
- 6 What strengths and weaknesses does Caesar show in this scene?
- 7 Copy and complete the following table on Brutus.

Brutus' character traits	Examples / quotations illustrating the trait
Thoughtful, not rash	
Honourable and/or patriotic	
Loving, or having a strong friendship with Cassius	



- 1 Explain what you think Caesar means when he tells Antony that Cassius has a 'lean and hungry look' (line 197).
- 2 What do you think Cassius means when he says 'we have the falling-sickness' (line 254)?
- 3 What does the news that Marullus and Flavius have been 'put to silence' (line 278) tell you about the way the Roman government operates under Caesar?
- 4 Copy and complete the table below to demonstrate how Casca's use of adjectives shows contempt (or dislike) for the common people.

Adjectives	How this word shows contempt
Sweaty	
Tag-rag	



The audience is introduced to Caesar in this scene. What are your first impressions of this character?

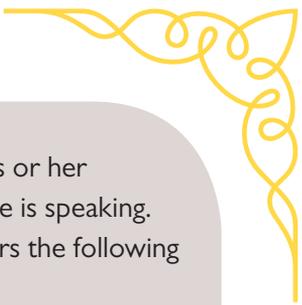
A word about soliloquy and asides

You are probably familiar with television soap operas, with their predictable plots and abundance of plastic surgery. You might have noticed that the characters on these sorts of shows sometimes express their thoughts aloud to themselves when nobody else is around! Actually, this is not as strange as it sounds – Shakespeare had his characters doing this hundreds of years ago and it is known as **soliloquy** (*so-li-lo-kwee*).

A soliloquy involves a character talking when he or she is alone. Shakespeare uses this device to help the audience understand the mind of the character who is speaking, and the motivation for what he or she is doing, or plans to do. We talk to ourselves all the time (try thinking without language) and soliloquies reflect this.

The device was used by some playwrights before Shakespeare but he is generally considered the first writer to genuinely capture the inner workings of the human mind. Cassius has the play's first soliloquy, in Act 1 Scene 2, in which he reflects upon Brutus' character and the prospects of the conspiracy. When Brutus is alone in Act 2, he expresses his nervous state before his fellow conspirators arrive. There are fewer soliloquies in *Julius Caesar* than in most of Shakespeare's major plays, such as *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Othello*.

Similar in some ways to soliloquies, **asides** are often indicated by [*Aside*] in the stage directions. Whereas soliloquies are quite lengthy and are delivered with no-one else on



the stage, asides are usually quite brief and allow a character to reveal his or her thoughts without the other characters onstage being aware that he or she is speaking. For example, in Act 2 Scene 2 one of the conspirators, Trebonius, delivers the following aside in his conversation with Caesar:

CAESAR Be near me, that I may remember you.
TREBONIUS Caesar, I will: *[Aside]* And so near will I be,
 That your best friends shall wish I had been further.

While Caesar only hears Trebonius' polite response, the aside allows the audience to hear his murderous intentions.

Act 1 Scene 3

CHARACTERS

Cassius
Casca
Cicero
Cinna

IN A NUTSHELL



On a wild, stormy night in Rome, Casca tells Cicero of freakish and disturbing events that have taken place. After Cicero departs, Cassius arrives and interprets the supernatural events as a warning that the Senators intend to crown Caesar king the following day. He reveals plans to form a conspiracy against Caesar and both Casca and Cinna agree to join. Upon instruction from Cassius, Cinna is to deliver anonymous letters to Brutus as a way of persuading this popular figure to join them in the plot. The three conspirators agree to meet at Pompey's Porch along with the other members of the group: Decius, Trebonius and Metellus Cimber.

Before you read

- When weather conditions reflect the emotions of characters this is known as **pathetic fallacy**. The thunder and lightning in this scene could be seen to represent the turmoil surrounding Caesar and those conspiring against him, such as Cassius. The storm could also be an example of **foreshadowing** because it hints at the chaos to come. For more on foreshadowing see the box on page 112.

- Shakespeare's theatre had to rely largely on dialogue to create special effects. In the opening of this scene the characters' dialogue quickly establishes that it is dark through their failure to recognise one another, and they are equally quick to establish the severity of the storm.

V

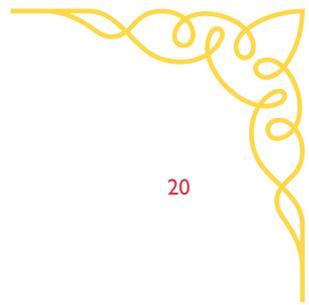
Tempest:	Storm
Saucy:	Cheeky or rude
Surly:	Angry
Portentous:	Serious, a sign that something bad is going to happen
Wherefore:	Why
Heralds:	Messengers
Hind:	Female deer
Gait:	Style of walking
Ere:	Before

Rome. A street.

[Thunder and lightning. Enter from opposite sides, CASCA, with his sword drawn, and CICERO]

CICERO	Good even, Casca: brought you Caesar home? Why are you breathless? And why stare you so?	
CASCA	Are not you moved, when all the sway of earth Shakes like a thing unfirm? O Cicero, I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds Have rived the knotty oaks, and I have seen The ambitious ocean swell and rage and foam, To be exalted with the threatening clouds: But never till tonight, never till now, Did I go through a tempest dropping fire. Either there is a civil strife in heaven, Or else the world, too saucy with the gods, Incenses them to send destruction.	5
CICERO	Why, saw you anything more wonderful?	
CASCA	A common slave – you know him well by sight – Held up his left hand, which did flame and burn Like twenty torches joined, and yet his hand,	10 15

- 1 **Brought you Caesar home:** Did you walk home with Caesar?
- 6 **Rived the knotty oaks:** Split the oak trees.
- 8 **To be exulted with the threatening clouds:** (The ocean is) trying to lift itself up to the storm clouds.
- 11 **Civil strife:** Conflict (between the inhabitants of heaven).
- 13 **Incenses them:** Angers them.



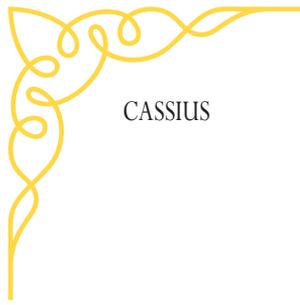
Not sensible of fire, remained unscorched.
 Besides – I ha’ not since put up my sword –
 Against the Capitol I met a lion, 20
 Who glazed upon me, and went surly by,
 Without annoying me. And there were drawn
 Upon a heap a hundred ghastly women,
 Transformed with their fear, who swore they saw
 Men all in fire walk up and down the streets. 25
 And yesterday the bird of night did sit
 Even at noon-day upon the market-place,
 Hooting and shrieking. When these prodigies
 Do so conjointly meet, let not men say
 ‘These are their reasons; they are natural’; 30
 For, I believe, they are portentous things
 Unto the climate that they point upon.
 CICERO Indeed, it is a strange-disposed time.
 But men may construe things after their fashion,
 Clean from the purpose of the things themselves. 35
 Comes Caesar to the Capitol tomorrow?
 CASCA He doth; for he did bid Antonius
 Send word to you he would be there tomorrow.
 CICERO Good night then, Casca: this disturbèd sky
 Is not to walk in.
 CASCA Farewell, Cicero. 40

[Exit CICERO; enter CASSIUS]

CASSIUS Who’s there?
 CASCA A Roman.
 CASSIUS Casca, by your voice.
 CASCA Your ear is good. Cassius, what night is this!
 CASSIUS A very pleasing night to honest men.
 CASCA Who ever knew the heavens menace so?



- 18 **Not sensible of fire:** Not feeling the effects of being burned by fire.
- 19 **I ha’ not since put up my sword:** Casca hasn’t yet put away his sword (because he is so fearful).
- 21 **Glazed:** Glared or stared fixedly.
- 22 **Annoying me:** Bothering me.
- 22–23 **Drawn / Upon ... ghastly women:** Casca saw a hundred women, who looked like ghosts, gathered in the crowd.
- 28–32 **When these prodigies ... that they point upon:** When these horrible events occur at the same time, people should not dismiss them as natural for I believe they show something terrible is going to happen in the country (‘climate’) in which they occur.
- 34–35 **But men may construe ... the things themselves:** Cicero points out that people will interpret events such as the storm in different ways. This point is proven by Cassius’ interpretation of the storm later in the scene.



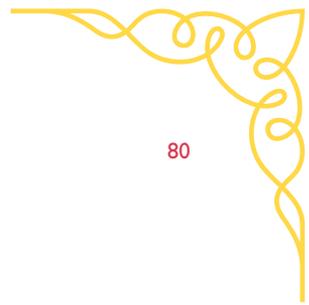
CASSIUS Those that have known the earth so full of faults. 45
 For my part, I have walked about the streets,
 Submitting me unto the perilous night,
 And, thus unbracèd, Casca, as you see,
 Have bared my bosom to the thunderstone.
 And when the cross blue lightning seemed to open 50
 The breast of heaven, I did present myself
 Even in the aim and very flash of it.

CASCA But wherefore did you so much tempt the heavens?
 It is the part of men to fear and tremble,
 When the most mighty gods by tokens send 55
 Such dreadful heralds to astonish us.

CASSIUS You are dull, Casca, and those sparks of life
 That should be in a Roman you do want,
 Or else you use not. You look pale, and gaze,
 And put on fear, and cast yourself in wonder, 60
 To see the strange impatience of the heavens.
 But if you would consider the true cause
 Why all these fires, why all these gliding ghosts,
 Why birds and beasts from quality and kind,
 Why old men, fools and children calculate, 65
 Why all these things change from their ordinance
 Their natures and preformèd faculties
 To monstrous quality, why, you shall find
 That heaven hath infused them with these spirits,
 To make them instruments of fear and warning 70
 Unto some monstrous state.
 Now could I, Casca, name to thee a man
 Most like this dreadful night,
 That thunders, lightens, opens graves, and roars
 As doth the lion in the Capitol, 75
 A man no mightier than thyself or me
 In personal action, yet prodigious grown
 And fearful, as these strange eruptions are.



-
- 46–52 **For my part ... very flash of it:** Cassius suggests that he purposely went out into the storm and placed himself in the aim of the lightning so that if the gods were displeased with him they might end his life. Cassius takes the fact that he is still alive as the approval (or vindication) of the gods ('thunderstone' = thunderbolt).
- 58 **Want:** Lack.
- 65 **Calculate:** Prophecy.
- 66–68 **Why all these things ... monstrous quality:** Why all these events contradict the natural order of things in hideous or 'monstrous' ways.
- 68–71 **You shall find ... some monstrous state:** Cassius argues that heaven (or the gods) are causing these disturbances to make people fearful or to warn them of what Rome could become.
- 77 **Prodigious:** Amazing or monstrous; appalling.



CASCA 'Tis Caesar that you mean; is it not, Cassius?
 CASSIUS Let it be who it is: for Romans now 80
 Have thews and limbs like to their ancestors'.
 But, woe the while! Our fathers' minds are dead,
 And we are governed with our mothers' spirits;
 Our yoke and sufferance show us womanish.
 CASCA Indeed, they say the senators tomorrow 85
 Mean to establish Caesar as a king;
 And he shall wear his crown by sea and land,
 In every place, save here in Italy.
 CASSIUS I know where I will wear this dagger then;
 Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius. 90
 Therein, ye gods, you make the weak most strong;
 Therein, ye gods, you tyrants do defeat:
 Nor stony tower, nor walls of beaten brass,
 Nor airless dungeon, nor strong links of iron,
 Can be retentive to the strength of spirit. 95
 But life, being weary of these worldly bars,
 Never lacks power to dismiss itself.
 If I know this, know all the world besides,
 That part of tyranny that I do bear
 I can shake off at pleasure.

[Thunder still]

CASCA So can I; 100
 So every bondman in his own hand bears
 The power to cancel his captivity.
 CASSIUS And why should Caesar be a tyrant then?
 Poor man! I know he would not be a wolf,
 But that he sees the Romans are but sheep. 105
 He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.
 Those that with haste will make a mighty fire
 Begin it with weak straws. What trash is Rome,
 What rubbish and what offal, when it serves
 For the base matter to illuminate 110
 So vile a thing as Caesar! But, O grief,



80–84 Romans now ... show us womanish: Romans of today have sinews ('thews') and limbs similar to their forefathers but their minds and spirits are more like their mothers, as they tolerate being oppressed.

91–100 Therein, ye gods ... off at pleasure: This refers to suicide. Cassius asserts that whatever power a tyrant may have, people are still free to commit suicide to escape tyranny. Cassius goes on to reflect that this is always an option for him.

101–02 So every bondman ... cancel his captivity: Casca states that any slave has the power to escape his circumstances through suicide.

108–11 What trash ... thing as Caesar: Cassius presents Rome as fuel that is set alight to glorify Caesar ('trash' = twigs and brushwood; 'offal' = chips of wood).



Where hast thou led me? I perhaps speak this
 Before a willing bondman; then I know
 My answer must be made. But I am armed,
 And dangers are to me indifferent. 115

CASCA
 You speak to Casca, and to such a man
 That is no fleering tell-tale. Hold, my hand:
 Be factious for redress of all these griefs,
 And I will set this foot of mine as far
 As who goes farthest.

CASSIUS
 There's a bargain made. 120
 Now know you, Casca, I have moved already
 Some certain of the noblest-minded Romans
 To undergo with me an enterprise
 Of honourable dangerous consequence;
 And I do know, by this, they stay for me 125
 In Pompey's Porch. For now, this fearful night,
 There is no stir or walking in the streets;
 And the complexion of the element
 In favour's like the work we have in hand,
 Most bloody, fiery, and most terrible. 130

CASCA
 Stand close awhile, for here comes one in haste.
 CASSIUS
 'Tis Cinna; I do know him by his gait;
 He is a friend.

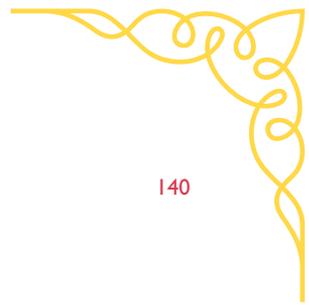
[Enter CINNA]

Cinna, where haste you so?

CINNA
 To find out you. Who's that? Metellus Cimber?
 CASSIUS
 No, it is Casca; one incorporate 135
 To our attempts. Am I not stayed for, Cinna?
 CINNA
 I am glad on't. What a fearful night is this!
 There's two or three of us have seen strange sights.



-
- 113 **Willing bondman:** Someone who is willing to be a slave.
 - 115 **Dangers are to me indifferent:** I don't care about danger.
 - 117 **No fleering tell-tale:** Casca asserts that he will not reveal the details of their plan to anyone ('fleering' = scornful).
 - 118 **Be factious for redress of all these griefs:** Form a movement or party to address these problems or set them right.
 - 125 **Stay for me:** Wait for me.
 - 126 **In Pompey's Porch:** The entrance to the theatre built by Caesar's rival, Pompey.
 - 128–30 **The complexion ... most terrible:** The condition of the sky resembles the work we will do, in being fiery or blood-red and generally frightening.
 - 135 **Incorporate:** United.



CASSIUS Am I not stayed for? Tell me.
 CINNA Yes, you are.

O Cassius, if you could 140

CASSIUS But win the noble Brutus to our party –
 Be you content: good Cinna, take this paper,
 And look you lay it in the praetor’s chair,
 Where Brutus may but find it; and throw this
 In at his window; set this up with wax 145
 Upon old Brutus’ statue. All this done,
 Repair to Pompey’s Porch, where you shall find us.
 Is Decius Brutus and Trebonius there?

CINNA All but Metellus Cimber; and he’s gone
 To seek you at your house. Well, I will hie, 150
 And so bestow these papers as you bade me.

CASSIUS That done, repair to Pompey’s Theatre.

[Exit CINNA]

Come, Casca, you and I will yet, ere day,
 See Brutus at his house: three parts of him
 Is ours already, and the man entire 155
 Upon the next encounter yields him ours.

CASCA O, he sits high in all the people’s hearts:
 And that which would appear offence in us,
 His countenance, like richest alchemy,
 Will change to virtue and to worthiness. 160

CASSIUS Him and his worth and our great need of him
 You have right well conceited. Let us go,
 For it is after midnight; and ere day
 We will awake him and be sure of him.

[All exit]



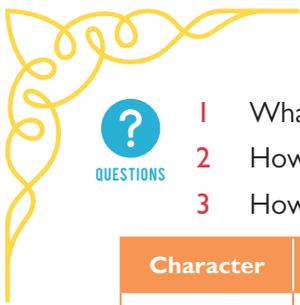
143 **Praetor’s chair:** Magistrate’s chair.

147 **Repair to:** Get to.

150 **Hie:** Hurry.

159 **Alchemy:** The process whereby metals of little value are transformed into gold. It was believed in Shakespeare’s day that this was possible through science.

162 **Conceited:** Thought (of).



QUESTIONS

- 1 What unnatural events are listed in this scene?
- 2 How does Cassius respond to Casca's fear?
- 3 How do the following characters react to the storm?

Character	Reactions to the storm	What this says about the character
Cassius		
Casca		
Cicero		
Cinna		

- 4 Why are the conspirators so keen to have Brutus join them?



EXTEND

- 1 How does Cassius manipulate or use the other characters' sense of patriotism in this scene?
- 2 What changes do you see in Casca from the previous scene?
- 3 Why do you think Shakespeare chooses to have Casca, who spoke in prose in Act 1 Scene 2, now use blank verse in Scene 3?



DISCUSS

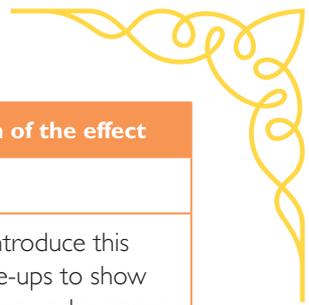
- 1 Do you trust everything Cassius says in this scene?
- 2 How would you present the storm if you were directing this scene? Would you use special effects? If so, which ones? Remember that the characters have to be understood and heard by the audience. How would you instruct the characters to act?

Joseph Mankiewicz: DVD from 20:33 (Cassius and the storm)



PRESS PLAY

- 1 How are camera shots and angles used to show Cassius plotting in his soliloquy?
- 2 Cassius' soliloquy shows him plotting against Caesar. How do the film techniques listed in the table on the next page complement Cassius' thinking?



Film technique	Description of the technique	Explanation of the effect
Music		
Camera shot	Mid-shots and close-ups of Cassius	Mid-shots to introduce this character; close-ups to show his determination and purpose
Cassius' gait (walk)		
Cassius' voice and rhythm of speech		
Image that has symbolic meaning	Shot of Caesar's statue in the gathering storm	Symbolic of events to come

- 3 Describe the *mise en scène* in the storm scene. (*Mise en scène* is all the visual elements included in the frame.) For example, comment on lighting, leaves blowing and Caesar's statue to portray the foreboding atmosphere.
- 4 How does Casca behave to show fear? In particular, consider facial expression and blocking.
- 5 Contrast Cassius' character with that of Casca in this scene. How do facial expressions, blocking and camera angles highlight their differences?
- 6 How are sound and music used to convey the violence of the storm?

Act 2

Act 2 Scene 1 (Part 1)

CHARACTERS

Brutus
Cassius
Lucius
Decius
Metellus
Cinna
Casca
Trebonius
Narrator (optional)

IN A NUTSHELL

The scene opens with Brutus, alone in his orchard, thinking aloud about the idea of Caesar being crowned king. Lucius gives Brutus a letter that Cassius has anonymously written. This letter reinforces Brutus' feelings towards Caesar. Cassius arrives with the other conspirators and Brutus joins their cause but insists they should not take an oath, as their motives alone are sufficient justification for action. As various details are discussed, Cassius raises fears about Mark Antony's power and suggests that he should be killed alongside Caesar. Brutus persuades the conspirators that this will seem too bloody and asks them to consider the murder of Caesar a noble sacrifice. Cassius is concerned that Caesar has grown too superstitious to attend the Senate but Decius says he will arrange for him to be present. The conspirators organise to meet at Caesar's house.

Before you read

- An **anachronism** is something or someone that is not in its correct historical or chronological time. If you had a male teacher who wore a top hat and tails to school you might describe his fashion sense as 'anachronistic'. The clock that strikes in this scene is an anachronism because the clock itself had not yet been invented. Shakespeare's use of the clock, despite being historically inaccurate, works for dramatic purposes in that the repeated references to time create dramatic tension.
- There are records of fireworks being used in Elizabethan theatre. It's possible that Shakespeare used fireworks for the meteors ('exhalations') Brutus mentions in the next scene.



Taper:	Candle
Augmented:	Added to
Closet:	Study
Flint:	A small hard rock used to create a spark to make fire
Redress:	Set right
Entreat:	Request

Introducing similes, metaphors and conceits

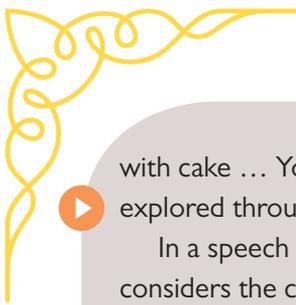
If you have ever called someone hot, a pig, a gun, a dog or even a legend, then you have used a **metaphor**. A metaphor is not literally true but it makes a powerful comparison that is true in a deeper sense. If, for example, you call your brother a *pig*, you know that he is not literally a pig, but you might be communicating something about his manners or perhaps how much he eats. If you describe a shot on the soccer pitch as a *rocket*, you know it's not literally a rocket, but you are saying something about the shot's speed and power. Again, you might describe someone attractive as *hot*. Clearly, you are not discussing their temperature!

Similes work in much the same way but where a metaphor is a direct statement of equivalence (my brother *is* a pig), similes make clear that one thing is being compared to another (my brother *is like* a pig). Similes make the nature of the comparison clear but are less direct than metaphors.

In Act 1 Scene 2 Cassius uses a simile to make Caesar seem cowardly when he accuses him of crying 'as a sick girl' (line 132); he also highlights Caesar's power and fame through a simile: 'he doth bstride the narrow world / like a Colossus [a gigantic statue]' (lines 138–39). In the opening scene of the play, Marullus uses metaphors when he addresses the common citizens of Rome: 'You blocks, you stones' (line 34). These descriptions are not literally true but metaphors. Marullus could have used similes here, e.g. 'It's as if you are stones' or 'you are like blocks', but this may have taken the sting out of his insults. The fact that Marullus uses metaphor makes his insults more direct and powerful.

Conceits are extended metaphors, and these were very popular with poets and playwrights in Shakespeare's time. Shakespeare regularly employs them in his plays and sonnets. Metaphysical poets such as John Donne, whose career began towards the end of Shakespeare's, filled their poetry with conceits, and the device remains popular with contemporary poets and songwriters. The Ben Lee song 'Cigarettes Will Kill You' is a contemporary example. The song compares a bad relationship to cookery: 'You throw me in a pan / You cook me in a can ... You love to watch me bake / You serve me up





with cake ... You left me burned and seared'. This extended metaphor, or conceit, is explored throughout the entire song.

In a speech near the beginning of Act 2 Scene 1, Brutus uses a conceit when he considers the current political situation in Rome. Brutus compares Caesar's current status to a serpent's egg but worries that just as bright weather brings snakes out into the sunshine, the right political weather might bring out Caesar's serpent-like or dangerous qualities.

Rome. Brutus' orchard.

[Enter BRUTUS]

BRUTUS What, Lucius, ho!
I cannot, by the progress of the stars,
Give guess how near to day. Lucius, I say!
I would it were my fault to sleep so soundly.
When, Lucius, when? Awake, I say! What, Lucius!

5

[Enter LUCIUS]

LUCIUS Called you, my lord?
BRUTUS Get me a taper in my study, Lucius.
When it is lighted, come and call me here.
LUCIUS I will, my lord.

[Exit LUCIUS]

BRUTUS It must be by his death; and for my part,
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general. He would be crowned.
How that might change his nature, there's the question.
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder,
And that craves wary walking. Crown him that,
And then, I grant, we put a sting in him,
That at his will he may do danger with.

10

15

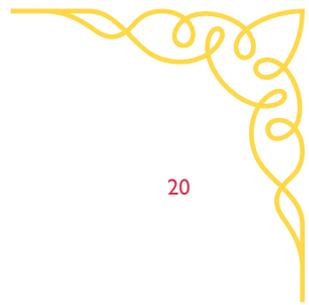


2-3 **I cannot, by the progress ... near to day:** Brutus is unable to tell the time by the positions of the stars. This may be due to the storm clouds.

11 **Spurn at:** Kick at.

12 **For the general:** Brutus' reasons are not personal but philosophical, i.e. he is not opposed to Julius Caesar personally but to the idea of him as a king or emperor.

14-17 **It is the bright day ... do danger with:** As snakes come out when the sun is shining, Caesar might behave as a tyrant or be a power-hungry ruler once he is made king; crowning him might make him dangerous ('put a sting in him').



The abuse of greatness is when it disjoins
 Remorse from power; and, to speak truth of Caesar,
 I have not known when his affections swayed 20
 More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof,
 That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
 Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
 But when he once attains the upmost round,
 He then unto the ladder turns his back, 25
 Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
 By which he did ascend. So Caesar may;
 Then, lest he may, prevent. And, since the quarrel
 Will bear no colour for the thing he is,
 Fashion it thus: that what he is, augmented, 30
 Would run to these and these extremities.
 And therefore think him as a serpent's egg
 Which, hatched, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
 And kill him in the shell.

[Re-enter LUCIUS]

LUCIUS The taper burneth in your closet, sir. 35
 Searching the window for a flint, I found
 This paper, thus sealed up; and, I am sure,
 It did not lie there when I went to bed.

[Gives him the letter]

BRUTUS Get you to bed again; it is not day.
 Is not tomorrow, boy, the Ides of March? 40
 LUCIUS I know not, sir.
 BRUTUS Look in the calendar and bring me word.
 LUCIUS I will, sir.

[Exit LUCIUS]

BRUTUS The exhalations whizzing in the air
 Give so much light that I may read by them. 45

[Opens the letter and reads]



18–21 **The abuse of greatness ... than his reason:** Tyrants or harsh rulers usually separate their feelings of compassion ('remorse') from their actions but Brutus cannot think of a time when Caesar's emotions have got the better of his judgement.

21–27 **But 'tis a common proof ... he did ascend:** But it is widely known that ambitious people use humility to attain power and, once they have attained power, reject humility in favour of pride.

28–30 **Since the quarrel ... Fashion it thus:** Since I can only speculate about the way things might be, I will choose to think of the situation this way.

33 **Mischievous:** Harmful.

44 **Exhalations:** Meteors.



*'Brutus, thou sleep'st: awake, and see thyself.
Shall Rome, etc. Speak, strike, redress!'
'Brutus, thou sleep'st: awake.'*

Such instigations have been often dropped
Where I have took them up. 50

'Shall Rome, etc.' Thus must I piece it out:
Shall Rome stand under one man's awe? What, Rome?
My ancestors did from the streets of Rome
The Tarquin drive, when he was called a king.

'Speak, strike, redress!' Am I entreated 55
To speak and strike? O Rome, I make thee promise:
If the redress will follow, thou receivest
Thy full petition at the hand of Brutus.

[Re-enter LUCIUS]

LUCIUS Sir, March is wasted fourteen days.

[Knocking within]

BRUTUS 'Tis good. Go to the gate; somebody knocks. 60

[Exit LUCIUS]

Since Cassius first did whet me against Caesar,
I have not slept.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream: 65
The genius and the mortal instruments
Are then in council; and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.

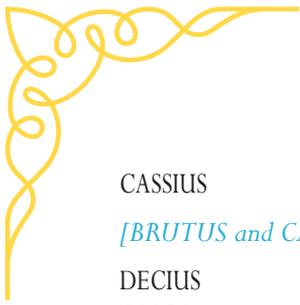
[Re-enter LUCIUS]

LUCIUS Sir, 'tis your brother Cassius at the door, 70
Who doth desire to see you.

BRUTUS Is he alone?



-
- 49 **Such instigations:** Such urgings to take action.
 - 51–52 **Shall Rome ... one man's awe:** The note Brutus reads seems to break off, so Brutus 'pieces out' what he thinks is the intended meaning.
 - 58 **Thy full petition:** Brutus pledges to do all he can.
 - 61 **Whet:** Sharpen.
 - 63–65 **Between the acting ... or a hideous dream:** The interval between the first impulse towards a dreadful act and the actual performance of that act is like a nightmare.
 - 66–69 **The genius ... nature of an insurrection:** It was common for Elizabethan authors to compare the individual to a kingdom. Here, the spirit ('genius') disputes with the moral faculties ('mortal instruments') as would happen in a political council. And so a person suffers a civil war (or 'insurrection').



What watchful cares do interpose themselves 100
 Betwixt your eyes and night?
 CASSIUS Shall I entreat a word?
 [*BRUTUS and CASSIUS whisper*]
 DECIUS Here lies the east: doth not the day break here?
 CASCA No.
 CINNA O pardon, sir, it doth; and yon grey lines 105
 That fret the clouds are messengers of day.
 CASCA You shall confess that you are both deceived.
 Here, as I point my sword, the sun arises,
 Which is a great way growing on the south,
 Weighing the youthful season of the year. 110
 Some two months hence, up higher toward the north
 He first presents his fire; and the high east
 Stands, as the Capitol, directly here.
 BRUTUS Give me your hands all over, one by one.
 CASSIUS And let us swear our resolution. 115
 BRUTUS No, not an oath. If not the face of men,
 The sufferance of our souls, the time's abuse;
 If these be motives weak, break off betimes,
 And every man hence to his idle bed;
 So let high-sighted tyranny range on, 120
 Till each man drop by lottery. But if these,
 As I am sure they do, bear fire enough
 To kindle cowards and to steel with valour
 The melting spirits of women, then, countrymen,
 What need we any spur but our own cause, 125
 To prick us to redress? What other bond
 Than secret Romans, that have spoke the word,
 And will not palter? And what other oath
 Than honesty to honesty engaged,
 That this shall be, or we will fall for it? 130



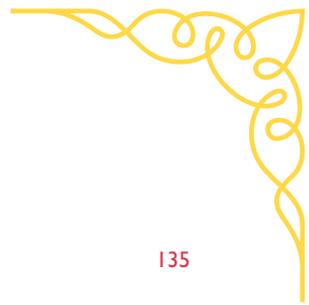
100–01 What watchful cares ... your eyes and night: What is keeping you awake and preventing you from closing your eyes?

107–13 You shall confess ... directly here: Casca points out why it is not yet day. It seems all the atmospheric effects deceived Decius and Cinna. Some critics read this passage metaphorically, with the first streaks of dawn and 'high east' symbolising hope, this being reinforced by Casca pointing his sword towards the place where Caesar is to be murdered.

115 Resolution: Determination or intention (to kill Caesar).

116–21 If not the face of men ... drop by lottery: Brutus sees their reasons as good enough already without swearing an oath. If their motives are too weak, they should return to their currently 'idle' or unused beds, and so give tyranny more scope to rule. They would then die by chance, according to the unpredictable desires of a tyrant.

126–30 What other bond ... we will fall for it: Brutus points out that Romans don't need a bond or oath to hold their tongues and will not deceive ('palter').



Swear priests and cowards and men cautelous,
 Old feeble carrions and such suffering souls
 That welcome wrongs. Unto bad causes swear
 Such creatures as men doubt; but do not stain
 The even virtue of our enterprise, 135
 Nor the insuppressive mettle of our spirits,
 To think that or our cause or our performance
 Did need an oath; when every drop of blood
 That every Roman bears, and nobly bears,
 Is guilty of a several bastardy, 140
 If he do break the smallest particle
 Of any promise that hath passed from him.
 CASSIUS But what of Cicero? Shall we sound him?
 I think he will stand very strong with us.
 CASCA Let us not leave him out.
 CINNA No, by no means. 145
 METELLUS O, let us have him, for his silver hairs
 Will purchase us a good opinion
 And buy men's voices to commend our deeds.
 It shall be said, his judgement ruled our hands;
 Our youths and wildness shall no whit appear, 150
 But all be buried in his gravity.
 BRUTUS O, name him not: let us not break with him,
 For he will never follow anything
 That other men begin.
 CASSIUS Then leave him out.
 CASCA Indeed he is not fit. 155
 DECIUS Shall no man else be touched but only Caesar?
 CASSIUS Decius, well urged. I think it is not meet,
 Mark Antony, so well beloved of Caesar,
 Should outlive Caesar. We shall find of him
 A shrewd contriver; and, you know, his means, 160



-
- 131–33 Swear priests ... welcome wrongs:** Brutus says the following types of people swear oaths: priests (soothsayers), cowards and cautious ('cautelous') men, old corpses ('carrion') and those who are so tolerant they welcome injuries.
 - 135 Even virtue:** Steadfast or consistent virtue.
 - 136 Insuppressive mettle:** Impressive determination.
 - 138–42 When every drop of blood ... passed from him:** When every drop of our blood would be proven not truly Roman (therefore bastard's blood) if any of us break the most insignificant part of the promise that we had made.
 - 143 Sound him:** Test his views and/or hear what he thinks.
 - 151 Gravity:** Seriousness, or the respect he commands.
 - 152 Let us not break with him:** Let's not tell him.
 - 160 A shrewd contriver:** A crafty plotter.



BRUTUS

If he improve them, may well stretch so far
 As to annoy us all: which to prevent,
 Let Antony and Caesar fall together.
 Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,
 To cut the head off and then hack the limbs, 165
 Like wrath in death and envy afterwards;
 For Antony is but a limb of Caesar.
 Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.
 We all stand up against the spirit of Caesar;
 And in the spirit of men there is no blood. 170
 O, that we then could come by Caesar's spirit,
 And not dismember Caesar! But, alas,
 Caesar must bleed for it. And, gentle friends,
 Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully;
 Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods, 175
 Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds.
 And let our hearts, as subtle masters do,
 Stir up their servants to an act of rage,
 And after seem to chide 'em. This shall make
 Our purpose necessary and not envious: 180
 Which so appearing to the common eyes,
 We shall be called purgers, not murderers.
 And for Mark Antony, think not of him;
 For he can do no more than Caesar's arm
 When Caesar's head is off.

CASSIUS

Yet I fear him; 185

BRUTUS

For in the ingrafted love he bears to Caesar –
 Alas, good Cassius, do not think of him.
 If he love Caesar, all that he can do
 Is to himself, take thought and die for Caesar;
 And that were much he should; for he is given 190
 To sports, to wildness, and much company.



160–62 His means ... to annoy us all: If he improves his resources he may have the power to harm us all.

169 Stand up against the spirit of Caesar: Oppose what Caesar represents.

175 A dish fit for the gods: That is, as someone would prepare a sacrifice.

176 Hew: Rough cutting or hacking.

177–79 Let our hearts ... after seem to chide 'em: Let our hearts incite our limbs to commit murder, but after this show regret by appearing to criticise our limbs for having committed the murder.

182 Purgers: Doctors who cure Rome of her political disease.

186 Ingrafted: Deeply rooted.

190–91 And that were much ... and much company: Brutus presents Antony as someone who is interested only in sports and parties, and therefore should not be feared.



TREBONIUS There is no fear in him; let him not die;
For he will live, and laugh at this hereafter.

[Clock strikes]

BRUTUS Peace, count the clock.

CASSIUS The clock hath stricken three.

TREBONIUS 'Tis time to part.

CASSIUS But it is doubtful yet, 195

Whether Caesar will come forth today or no;
For he is superstitious grown of late,
Quite from the main opinion he held once
Of fantasy, of dreams and ceremonies.

It may be, these apparent prodigies, 200

The unaccustomed terror of this night,
And the persuasion of his augurers,
May hold him from the Capitol today.

DECIUS Never fear that. If he be so resolved, 205

I can o'ersway him; for he loves to hear
That unicorns may be betrayed with trees,
And bears with glasses, elephants with holes,
Lions with toils and men with flatterers.

But when I tell him he hates flatterers,
He says he does, being then most flatterèd. 210

Let me work;

For I can give his humour the true bent,
And I will bring him to the Capitol.

CASSIUS Nay, we will all of us be there to fetch him.

BRUTUS By the eighth hour: is that the uttermost? 215

CINNA Be that the uttermost, and fail not then.

METELLUS Caius Ligarius doth bear Caesar hard,
Who rated him for speaking well of Pompey;
I wonder none of you have thought of him.



197–99 For he is superstitious ... dreams and ceremonies: Cassius points out that Caesar has recently become very superstitious and trusts in things such as dreams and sacrificial ceremonies (things he was sceptical of in the past).

202 Augurers: Priests (the soothsayers who interpret omens).

204 If he be so resolved: If he is thinking that way.

205–10 For he loves to hear ... most flatterèd: Decius asserts how easily he can manipulate Caesar. He tells Caesar that as creatures are snared through various means, so flatterers snare men. He goes on to point out the irony of the situation, that when he tells Caesar that Caesar hates flatterers, this flatters him.

212 Humour: Mood.

218 Rated him: Strongly criticised him.

BRUTUS Now, good Metellus, go along by him. 220
 He loves me well, and I have given him reasons.
 Send him but hither, and I'll fashion him.

CASSIUS The morning comes upon's: we'll leave you, Brutus.
 And, friends, disperse yourselves; but all remember 225
 What you have said, and show yourselves true Romans.

BRUTUS Good gentlemen, look fresh and merrily;
 Let not our looks put on our purposes,
 But bear it as our Roman actors do,
 With untired spirits and formal constancy.
 And so good morrow to you every one. 230

[Exit all but BRUTUS]

Boy! Lucius! Fast asleep? It is no matter;
 Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber.
 Thou hast no figures nor no fantasies,
 Which busy care draws in the brains of men;
 Therefore thou sleep'st so sound. 235



- 222 **Fashion him:** Work on him (to make him our ally).
 229 **Formal constancy:** A consistently calm appearance.
 233 **Thou hast no figures nor no fantasies:** You don't have shapes or illusion (haunting your sleep).



QUESTIONS

- 1 How would you describe the atmosphere at the opening of this scene?
- 2 How does this setting contrast with the settings in Act 1?
- 3 What seems to be Brutus' attitude towards assassinating Caesar?
- 4 Why does Brutus not want to swear an oath?
- 5 In what way do Brutus and Cassius differ in their approach to the proposed assassination?
- 6 What does Brutus' line: 'For Antony is but a limb of Caesar' (line 167) tell you about Brutus' thoughts about Mark Antony?
- 7 What do you think Brutus means when, in explaining how they will kill Caesar, he says: 'Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers' (line 168)?



EXTEND

- 1 What evidence does Brutus provide to establish that Caesar will be a tyrant?
- 2 Consider the language Brutus uses in lines 61–65, especially 'phantasma' and 'hideous dream'. What does this language suggest about his state of mind?
- 3 Compare Cassius' soliloquy at the end of Act 1 Scene 2 to that of Brutus at the beginning of this scene (lines 10–34). Which one causes you to engage more with the character? Why?
- 4 How does Shakespeare establish Brutus as a respected figure in this scene?



DISCUSS

- 1 The audience does not hear Brutus and Cassius when they whisper in this scene. What do you think they might be saying in this secret conversation?
- 2 This scene presents Brutus as a complicated man who has decided it is right to kill his friend for the common good. Do you agree with his decision?

Joseph Mankiewicz: DVD Chapter 7 (Brutus and the conspirators)



PRESS PLAY

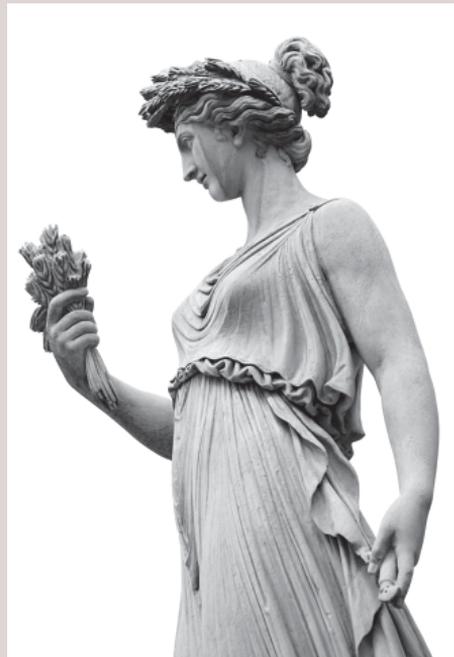
- 1 Describe the atmosphere of Brutus' orchard. In your response, consider diegetic sound (sound that occurs within the world of the film), lighting and shadow.
- 2 Shadows feature prominently in Brutus' garden. Why do you think they are particularly appropriate, given the content of this scene?
- 3 Why do you think Mankiewicz does not use music in this scene?
- 4 How does Mankiewicz use blocking and height to show the hierarchy among the conspirators?
- 5 How does the actor playing Brutus (James Mason) portray him as dignified and noble (a figure worthy of respect)?
- 6 How does Mankiewicz use costume to show the conspirators are of one mind and spirit?



I grant I am a woman, but ...

Roman women

The fortunes of women in ancient Rome could differ vastly. While Patrician women would enjoy a very comfortable life, others endured the harsh conditions of slavery and were always in danger of sexual exploitation. Although Roman women experienced a greater degree of freedom than women in other ancient Mediterranean societies, the Roman world appears sexist when judged by modern Western standards. Female children were considered less valuable than males and were more likely to be abandoned at birth. Women were considered the weaker sex in body and mind, beliefs that Portia echoes in Act 2.



Statue of a Roman woman in the Piazza del Popolo, Rome





▶ Families were patriarchal, meaning that the father's rule was absolute. His word was always to be obeyed and Roman law backed his authority. A woman's status or social position depended on her husband or father. In the next scene you will notice how Portia asserts that she is trustworthy by reminding her husband of the high social rank of her father, Marcus Cato.

Roman literature often presented women as (and encouraged them to be) obedient, modest and chaste (sexually faithful). This latter virtue was considered particularly important in upper-class families who were keen to guard against illegitimate children. This meant that women were closely observed and greatly restricted in their behaviour. Noble women could be severely punished, and even exiled, for sexual promiscuity.

While women couldn't vote and were excluded from positions of political power, many wives of the senatorial class would have an indirect influence on events through their husbands. Unlike the women of other Mediterranean societies, Roman women could own property and inherit money. A bride could retain part of her dowry (the payment made by her father to her husband when she married), giving her a degree of financial independence. This part of the dowry was retained or sometimes repaid if the marriage was dissolved. The financial independence of some women is evident from inscriptions that indicate that women had paid for a number of buildings and statues. There are also statues erected by town councils in honour of various women.

Act 2 Scene 1 (Part 2)

CHARACTERS

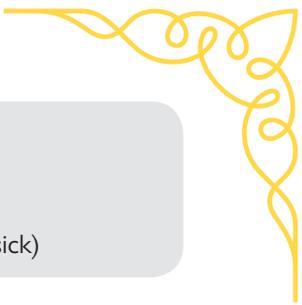
Portia
Brutus
Ligarius
Lucius

IN A NUTSHELL

Portia is worried about Brutus because she knows something is troubling her husband. He tells his wife not to worry but she begs him to reveal what is disturbing him. After a long conversation in which Portia persuades Brutus of her trustworthiness, he promises to tell her what the problem is, in time. Ligarius arrives and, despite being sick, pledges his support for the conspiracy because Brutus is leading it.

Before you read

- Although Portia and Calpurnia don't have large parts in this play, the female characters offer the audience private perspectives of a story that unfolds publicly.



V

Wherefore: Why
Harlot: Prostitute
Vouchsafe: Allow
Kerchief: A cloth around the head (commonly worn by the sick)

Rome. Brutus' orchard.

[Enter PORTIA]

PORTIA	Brutus, my lord!	235
BRUTUS	Portia, what mean you? Wherefore rise you now? It is not for your health thus to commit Your weak condition to the raw cold morning.	
PORTIA	Nor for yours neither. You've ungently, Brutus, Stole from my bed; and yesternight, at supper, You suddenly arose and walked about, Musing and sighing, with your arms across, And when I asked you what the matter was, You stared upon me with ungentle looks. I urged you further, then you scratched your head, And too impatiently stamped with your foot; Yet I insisted, yet you answered not, But, with an angry wafture of your hand, Gave sign for me to leave you. So I did, Fearing to strengthen that impatience Which seemed too much enkindled, and withal Hoping it was but an effect of humour, Which sometime hath his hour with every man. It will not let you eat, nor talk, nor sleep, And could it work so much upon your shape As it hath much prevailed on your condition, I should not know you Brutus. Dear my lord, Make me acquainted with your cause of grief.	240 245 250 255
BRUTUS	I am not well in health, and that is all.	
PORTIA	Brutus is wise, and, were he not in health, He would embrace the means to come by it.	260

248 **Wafture:** Wave.

249–53 **So I did ... with every man:** Portia left because she did not want to further exacerbate Brutus' mood; and she acknowledges that these sorts of moods can affect every man.

254–58 **It will not let you ... cause of grief:** Brutus' condition will not let him eat, talk or sleep; Portia comments that if it had affected Brutus' outward appearance as much as it has his mental state, he would be unrecognisable to her.





BRUTUS
PORTIA

Why, so I do. Good Portia, go to bed.
 Is Brutus sick? And is it physical
 To walk unbracèd and suck up the humours
 Of the dank morning? What, is Brutus sick, 265
 And will he steal out of his wholesome bed,
 To dare the vile contagion of the night
 And tempt the rheumy and unpurgèd air
 To add unto his sickness? No, my Brutus;
 You have some sick offence within your mind, 270
 Which, by the right and virtue of my place,
 I ought to know of; and, upon my knees,
 I charm you, by my once-commended beauty,
 By all your vows of love and that great vow
 Which did incorporate and make us one, 275
 That you unfold to me, your self, your half,
 Why you are heavy, and what men tonight
 Have had resort to you; for here have been
 Some six or seven, who did hide their faces
 Even from darkness.

BRUTUS
PORTIA

Kneel not, gentle Portia. 280
 I should not need, if you were gentle Brutus.
 Within the bond of marriage, tell me, Brutus,
 Is it excepted I should know no secrets
 That appertain to you? Am I your self
 But, as it were, in sort or limitation, 285
 To keep with you at meals, comfort your bed,
 And talk to you sometimes? Dwell I but in the suburbs
 Of your good pleasure? If it be no more,
 Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife.

BRUTUS

You are my true and honourable wife, 290
 As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
 That visit my sad heart.



262 Why, so I do: Brutus is referring to the fact that he is resolved to kill Caesar. This will purge Rome of the disease that makes it unwell.

263–69 Is Brutus sick ... unto his sickness: Portia questions why Brutus, if ill, would be out in the cold night air without his cloak ('unbracèd') rather than in bed where he could recover. Portia's concerns are in keeping with Elizabethan beliefs about the sun purifying the air or purging it of sickness and disease. She is concerned that if Brutus is sick, he is likely to make himself worse.

275 Incorporate: Unite.

278 Have had resort to you: Have come to you.

284 Appertain to you: Apply to you.

284–85 Am I your self ... in sort or limitation: Portia questions how complete their unity in marriage is.

291 Ruddy: Red.

LIGARIUS I am not sick, if Brutus have in hand
Any exploit worthy the name of honour.

BRUTUS Such an exploit have I in hand, Ligarius, 320
Had you a healthful ear to hear of it.

LIGARIUS By all the gods that Romans bow before,
I here discard my sickness!

[He throws off the kerchief]

Soul of Rome!

Brave son, derived from honourable loins!
Thou, like an exorcist, hast conjured up 325
My mortified spirit. Now bid me run,
And I will strive with things impossible;
Yea, get the better of them. What's to do?

BRUTUS A piece of work that will make sick men whole.

LIGARIUS But are not some whole that we must make sick? 330

BRUTUS That must we also. What it is, my Caius,
I shall unfold to thee, as we are going
To whom it must be done.

LIGARIUS Set on your foot,
And with a heart new-fired I follow you,
To do I know not what: but it sufficeth 335
That Brutus leads me on.

BRUTUS Follow me then.

[All exit]



325–26 Thou, like an exorcist ... mortified spirit: Ligarius suggests that Brutus has raised his spirit from the dead; Brutus' involvement in the plan has inspired him.



QUESTIONS

- 1 Why do you think Brutus keeps the conspiracy a secret from Portia?
- 2 What does this scene tell you about Brutus and Portia's marriage?
- 3 What is Ligarius' reason for joining the conspiracy?
- 4 What seems to be Ligarius' opinion of Brutus?



EXTEND

- 1 In what ways do Portia's speeches suggest that Rome is not a place of gender equality?
- 2 Why do you think Shakespeare omits (leaves out) Brutus explaining the conspiracy to Portia?
- 3 What strategies does Portia employ to persuade Brutus to reveal his thoughts to her?
- 4 Who do you think Ligarius is talking about when he tells Brutus that there are some men who are 'whole that we must make sick' (line 330)?



DISCUSS

Why do you think Shakespeare has Ligarius arrive at Brutus' house at the end of this scene rather than in an earlier or later scene?

Introducing dramatic irony

Imagine your friends are making fun of someone and do not know (but you do!) that your teacher is standing right behind them! How would you feel? Tense? Like diving across in slow motion and shouting, 'Nooooo!?' This is what **dramatic irony** is all about. Sometimes while viewing a play, we are placed in the position of knowing more than the characters onstage. For example, we might know that around the corner is someone with a gun, but the characters are unaware of this and continue to walk around the corner. This creates dramatic tension between the characters' limited knowledge and our greater knowledge.

Shakespeare's tragedies, such as *Julius Caesar*, contain a great deal of dramatic irony. We (the audience) often know things that the characters don't and this can create a sense of tension, as well as a desire to stop the characters from saying or doing things that might lead to harm.

Sometimes though, dramatic irony can be harmless or even humorous and we experience mild amusement rather than tension. The television show *The Simpsons* often employs this kind of humorous irony. For example, in the 'Brother from Another Planet' episode, we know that Homer has been told to pick up Bart. While he struggles to remember what he has forgotten to do, the family dog, Santa's Little Helper, makes the barking sound 'Bart, Bart!' and Maggie's burp sounds just like the word 'Bart'. Meanwhile, the television screen that Homer is watching flashes the word 'BART' for a retiring football player and fans roll out a banner with the words 'We'll never forget you, Bart' written in huge letters. Finally, in response to all of these reminders, Homer shouts, 'I can't think with all this noise!' Here, the fact that we know what Homer is supposed to be remembering creates comedy.

Act 2 Scene 2 is charged with dramatic irony. As Caesar and Calpurnia discuss the various omens, and Calpurnia attempts to persuade Caesar to stay at home, the audience knows the danger that awaits him. Many of the lines the conspirators and Caesar speak are charged with a similar dramatic irony. The tension or irony is further heightened by the audience's knowledge of history. Most people in the audience will know that the conspirators' plot is going to succeed.

Act 2 Scene 2

CHARACTERS

Caesar
Calpurnia
Decius
Servant
Brutus
Trebonius
Publius
Antony
Narrator (optional)

IN A NUTSHELL

Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, urges her husband to stay at home because of her disturbing dream and the unnatural events that have taken place overnight. A servant returns with information that the priests could not find a heart in a sacrificed beast: another sign that Caesar should not go to the Capitol. Soon after Caesar reluctantly gives in to Calpurnia's pleading, Decius (one of the conspirators) arrives and convinces Caesar to think differently about Calpurnia's dream. Persuaded by Decius, Caesar decides to go to the Capitol. The scene closes with the conspirators making plans.

Before you read

- In Roman culture, people made sacrifices to please the gods and sometimes to determine the future. When Caesar directs his servant to consult the gods in this way he discovers that the sacrificed beast is without a heart; this is considered to be an ill omen. Augurers, who also feature in this scene, were priests in ancient Rome who conducted ceremonies to discern the will of the gods by studying the flight of birds.

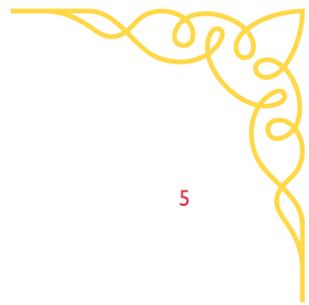
V

Ho:	An exclamation or call (like 'hey')
Valiant:	Brave
Humour:	Mood
Imminent:	About to happen
Expounded:	Explained or interpreted
Ague:	Fever
Revels:	Parties

Caesar's house.

[Thunder and lightning. Enter CAESAR in his nightgown]

CAESAR Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace tonight;
 Thrice hath Calpurnia in her sleep cried out,
 'Help, ho! They murder Caesar!' Who's within?



[Enter a SERVANT]

SERVANT My lord?

CAESAR Go bid the priests do present sacrifice
And bring me their opinions of success.

5

SERVANT I will, my lord.

[Exit SERVANT and enter CALPURNIA]

CALPURNIA What mean you, Caesar? Think you to walk forth?
You shall not stir out of your house today.

CAESAR 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 vanishèd.

10

CALPURNIA Caesar, I never stood on ceremonies,
Yet now they fright me. There is one within,
Besides the things that we have heard and seen,
Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
A lioness hath whelpèd in the streets;
And graves have yawned, and yielded up their dead.
Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan,
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.
O Caesar, these things are beyond all use,
And I do fear them.

15

20

25

CAESAR What can be avoided
Whose end is purposed by the mighty gods?
Yet Caesar shall go forth; for these predictions
Are to the world in general as to Caesar.

CALPURNIA When beggars die, there are no comets seen;
The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

30

CAESAR 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,

35



10–12 **The things that threatened me ... they are vanishèd:** Caesar says that no-one dares to threaten him to his face, only behind his back. This is particularly ironic considering the conspiracy against him.

13 **Never stood on ceremonies:** Never based my decisions on ceremonies (the predictions of augurers).

14–16 **There is one within ... seen by the watch:** Calpurnia says that there is somebody in another part of the house, on the night watch, who saw more terrible things.



Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.

[*Re-enter SERVANT*]

What say the augurers?

SERVANT They would not have you to stir forth today.
Plucking the entrails of an offering forth,
They could not find a heart within the beast. 40

CAESAR The gods do this in shame of cowardice:
Caesar should be a beast without a heart,
If he should stay at home today for fear.
No, Caesar shall not. Danger knows full well
That Caesar is more dangerous than he. 45
We are two lions littered in one day,
And I the elder and more terrible;
And Caesar shall go forth.

CALPURNIA Alas, my lord,
Your wisdom is consumed in confidence.
Do not go forth today: call it my fear 50
That keeps you in the house, and not your own.
We'll send Mark Antony to the Senate House,
And he shall say you are not well today.
Let me, upon my knee, prevail in this.

CAESAR Mark Antony shall say I am not well, 55
And, for thy humour, I will stay at home.

[*Enter DECIUS*]

DECIUS Here's Decius Brutus, he shall tell them so.
Caesar, all hail! Good morrow, worthy Caesar.
I come to fetch you to the Senate House.

CAESAR And you are come in very happy time, 60
To bear my greeting to the senators,
And tell them that I will not come today.
Cannot, is false, and that I dare not, falsen.
I will not come today: tell them so, Decius.

CALPURNIA Say he is sick.
CAESAR Shall Caesar send a lie? 65

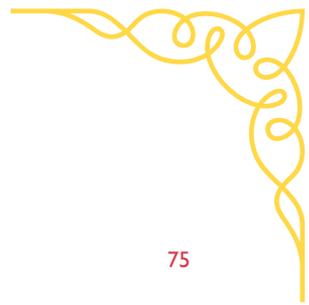
Have I in conquest stretched mine arm so far,
To be afraid to tell greybeards the truth?
Decius, go tell them Caesar will not come.
DECIUS Most mighty Caesar, let me know some cause, 70
Lest I be laughed at when I tell them so.



46 **Littered:** Born in the same litter, therefore similar.

66 **Stretched mine arm so far:** Fought (and conquered) in far-off lands.

67 **Greybeards:** The old men of the Senate.



CAESAR The cause is in my will: I will not come;
 That is enough to satisfy the Senate.
 But for your private satisfaction,
 Because I love you, I will let you know:
 Calpurnia here, my wife, stays me at home. 75
 She dreamt tonight she saw my statue,
 Which, like a fountain with an hundred spouts,
 Did run pure blood; and many lusty Romans
 Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it.
 And these does she apply for warnings and portents 80
 And evils imminent; and on her knee
 Hath begged that I will stay at home today.

DECIUS This dream is all amiss interpreted;
 It was a vision fair and fortunate:
 Your statue spouting blood in many pipes, 85
 In which so many smiling Romans bathed,
 Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck
 Reviving blood, and that great men shall press
 For tinctures, stains, relics and cognisance.
 This by Calpurnia's dream is signified. 90

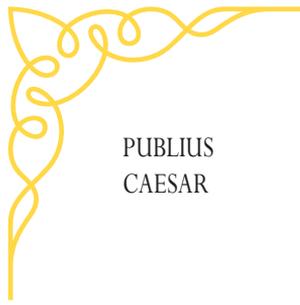
CAESAR And this way have you well expounded it.
 DECIUS I have, when you have heard what I can say:
 And know it now. The Senate have concluded
 To give this day a crown to mighty Caesar.
 If you shall send them word you will not come, 95
 Their minds may change. Besides, it were a mock
 Apt to be rendered, for someone to say
 'Break up the Senate till another time,
 When Caesar's wife shall meet with better dreams.'
 If Caesar hide himself, shall they not whisper 100
 'Lo, Caesar is afraid?'
 Pardon me, Caesar; for my dear dear love
 To your proceeding bids me tell you this;
 And reason to my love is liable.

CAESAR How foolish do your fears seem now, Calpurnia! 105
 I am ashamed I did yield to them.
 Give me my robe, for I will go.

[Enter PUBLIUS, BRUTUS, LIGARIUS, METELLUS, CASCA, TREBONIUS and CINNA]



-
- 78 **Lusty:** Strong and perhaps happy.
 - 80 **Portents:** Omens; marvels.
 - 88–89 **And that great men ... relics and cognisance:** A great crowd of people shall try to get something stained with Caesar's blood. (This would remind Shakespeare's audience of holy relics.)
 - 96–97 **It were a mock ... be rendered:** It would be a joke that's likely to be told.



PUBLIUS
CAESAR
And look where Publius is come to fetch me.
Good morrow, Caesar.
Welcome, Publius.
What, Brutus, are you stirred so early too? 110
Good morrow, Casca. Caius Ligarius,
Caesar was ne'er so much your enemy
As that same ague which hath made you lean.
What is't o'clock?

BRUTUS
CAESAR
Caesar, 'tis stricken eight.
I thank you for your pains and courtesy. 115

[Enter ANTONY]

ANTONY
CAESAR
See! Antony, that revels long o' nights,
Is notwithstanding up. Good morrow, Antony.
So to most noble Caesar.

Bid them prepare within:
I am to blame to be thus waited for.
Now, Cinna; now, Metellus; what, Trebonius! 120
I have an hour's talk in store for you;
Remember that you call on me today;
Be near me, that I may remember you.

TREBONIUS
Caesar, I will. [Aside] And so near will I be,
That your best friends shall wish I had been further. 125

CAESAR
Good friends, go in, and taste some wine with me;
And we, like friends, will straightway go together.

BRUTUS
[Aside] That every like is not the same, O Caesar,
The heart of Brutus earns to think upon.

[All exit]



-
- 115 **Your pains:** Your trouble.
 - 127 **Straightway:** Straight away.
 - 128–29 **That every like ... earns to think upon:** Brutus is saddened when he reflects that being like a friend is not the same thing as being a true friend.
 - 129 **Earns:** Grieves, yearns.



QUESTIONS

- 1 Find three strange events that Calpurnia recalls took place in the night (lines 17–24).
- 2 What does Calpurnia dream about, and how does Caesar respond?
- 3 Why does Caesar change his mind about going to the Senate?
- 4 Compare the relationship of Caesar and Calpurnia with that of Brutus and Portia.

- 5 Besides Decius' interpretation of Calpurnia's dream, what other tactics do the conspirators use to get Caesar to the Senate?
- 6 Copy and complete the table below to help you recognise the different characteristics Caesar exhibits in this scene.

Caesar's behaviour	Lines or examples which reflect this
Superstitious	
Vulnerable to flattery	
Hospitable; warm host to his 'friends'	
Arrogant	



- 1 Explain what you think is the most ironic statement in this scene and why.
- 2 'Cowards die many times before their deaths; / The valiant never taste of death but once' (lines 32–33). What does Caesar mean by this statement? Do you agree?
- 3 How does Decius present blood imagery positively?
- 4 How does Shakespeare create a friendly, jovial atmosphere at the end of the scene? What might have been his dramatic purpose in doing this?

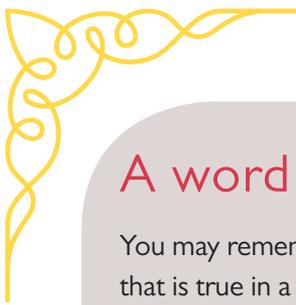


The actor playing Calpurnia doesn't speak after Caesar decides to go to the Senate. What should she be doing after Caesar resolves 'I will go' (line 107)? Consider blocking, actions and facial expressions.

Joseph Mankiewicz: DVD Chapter 10 (Calpurnia's dream)



- 1 How is Caesar presented as fearful or superstitious in the opening of this scene?
- 2 How does Mankiewicz use camera work to portray the relationship between Calpurnia and Caesar when she begs him not to go to the Capitol?
- 3 How does the actor playing Decius, on being told of Calpurnia's dream, convey the behaviour of someone who is initially put on the spot before recovering to interpret the dream?
- 4 How does the director show tension between the conspirators and Caesar when they first come into Caesar's home?
- 5 Why do you think Mankiewicz chose to have Calpurnia walk alone into the room, closing the doors behind her?



A word about personification

You may remember that a metaphor is not literally true but makes a powerful comparison that is true in a deeper sense: for example, ‘my brother is a pig’. **Personification** is a particular kind of metaphor in which human feelings or qualities are given to unconscious or inanimate things. Personification is often used by poets: for example, Sylvia Plath’s poem ‘Mushrooms’ gives mushrooms human features such as ‘toes’ and ‘noses’. Jemal Sharah writes in her poem ‘Motorbike Accident’: ‘the road // slapped up like a violent hand’. Here, Sharah gives the inanimate or lifeless road the human feature of a slapping hand to capture the shock and the shattering impact of coming off a motorbike at high speed. Kevin Hart begins his poem ‘Storm’ with the following lines:

My garden falls quiet, falls into the darkest of moods,
Not wanting me around this afternoon.

Here Hart attributes the human quality of mood, more specifically bad temper, to his non-human garden.

We often use personification in everyday speech; perhaps you have heard such phrases as ‘a lonely road’, ‘a biting wind’ or ‘a welcoming fire’ and never considered the metaphorical strangeness of these expressions.

Personification is employed regularly in *Julius Caesar*. In the opening act, Shakespeare attributes human characteristics to the natural world. In Act 1 Scene 2, for example, Cassius describes the flooded river as ‘angry’ and in the next scene, when the storm is raging, Casca describes the winds as ‘scolding’ and the ocean as ‘ambitious’. When Cassius arrives he describes the heavens as ‘impatient’.

In Act 2 Scene 2 (lines 44–45) Caesar personifies danger when he says:

Danger knows full well
that Caesar is more dangerous than he.

Here, Caesar describes the abstract noun of danger as if it were a person who could fear him. Look out for examples of personification as you continue your reading.

Act 2 Scene 3



CHARACTERS

Artemidorus



IN A NUTSHELL

Artemidorus waits in the street to warn Caesar with a message that explains the dangerous intentions of the conspirators.



- Take heed:** Beware
- Mark well:** Pay attention to
- Immortal:** Invulnerable to death
- Suitor:** Someone bringing a request (in this case a warning)
- Thou:** You

A street near the Capitol.

[Enter ARTEMIDORUS, reading a paper]

ARTEMIDORUS *Caesar, beware of Brutus; take heed of Cassius; come not near Casca; have an eye to Cinna; trust not Trebonius; mark well Metellus Cimber; Decius Brutus loves thee not; thou hast wronged Caius Ligarius. There is but one mind in all these men, and it is bent against Caesar. If thou beest not immortal, look about you. Security gives way to conspiracy. The mighty gods defend thee.*

*Thy lover,
ARTEMIDORUS.*

Here will I stand till Caesar pass along,
And as a suitor will I give him this. 10
My heart laments that virtue cannot live
Out of the teeth of emulation.
If thou read this, O Caesar, thou mayst live;
If not, the Fates with traitors do contrive.

[Exit ARTEMIDORUS]



11–12 My heart laments ... teeth of emulation: Artemidorus is sorry that goodness cannot live on without being torn to pieces by its rivals.

14 The Fates with traitors do contrive: Fate conspires with traitors.



QUESTIONS

What is Artemidorus' warning in this scene?



DISCUSS

How would you present Artemidorus in this scene? Consider first the atmosphere you want to create, then such aspects as lighting, costume and acting style.

Act 2 Scene 4

CHARACTERS

Portia
Lucius
Soothsayer
Narrator (optional)



IN A NUTSHELL

In the street outside her home, an anxious Portia instructs her servant Lucius to report to the Capitol. A soothsayer then tells Portia that he plans to find a less crowded place so he can warn Caesar of danger. Greatly agitated, Portia instructs Lucius to send her greetings to Brutus and return quickly with news of her husband.

Before you read

- You will notice this scene, like the last, is a short one and falls in the middle of much larger ones. Shakespeare often constructs his plays in this way to build and relieve dramatic tension. This also means that the plot unfolds from a variety of character perspectives.



Prithee:	A polite term used to introduce a request
Errand:	Task or duty
Ere:	Before
Suitors:	Those bringing suits (requests)
Fray / Throng:	Crowd
Hither:	Here

Another part of the same street, before the house of Brutus.



[Enter PORTIA and LUCIUS]

PORTIA I prithee, boy, run to the Senate House.
Stay not to answer me, but get thee gone.
Why dost thou stay?

LUCIUS To know my errand, madam.

PORTIA I would have had thee there, and here again,
Ere I can tell thee what thou shouldst do there. 5
O constancy, be strong upon my side,
Set a huge mountain 'tween my heart and tongue!
I have a man's mind, but a woman's might.
How hard it is for women to keep counsel!
Art thou here yet?

LUCIUS Madam, what should I do? 10
Run to the Capitol, and nothing else?
And so return to you, and nothing else?

PORTIA Yes, bring me word, boy, if thy lord look well,
For he went sickly forth. And take good note
What Caesar doth, what suitors press to him. 15
Hark, boy! What noise is that?

LUCIUS I hear none, madam.

PORTIA Prithee, listen well.
I heard a bustling rumour, like a fray,
And the wind brings it from the Capitol.

LUCIUS Sooth, madam, I hear nothing. 20

[Enter the SOOTHSAYER]

PORTIA Come hither, fellow. Which way hast thou been?

SOOTHSAYER At mine own house, good lady.

PORTIA What is't o'clock?

SOOTHSAYER About the ninth hour, lady.

PORTIA Is Caesar yet gone to the Capitol?

SOOTHSAYER Madam, not yet. I go to take my stand, 25
To see him pass on to the Capitol.

PORTIA Thou hast some suit to Caesar, hast thou not?



- 6-7 **O, constancy ... my heart and tongue:** Portia wants to be firm and take control of her emotion in case it causes her to give away her secret.
- 9 **Keep counsel:** Keep a secret.
- 18 **Bustling rumour:** The noise of the crowd.



SOOTHSAYER That I have, lady: if it will please Caesar
To be so good to Caesar as to hear me,
I shall beseech him to befriend himself. 30

PORTIA Why, know'st thou any harm's intended towards him?
SOOTHSAYER None that I know will be, much that I fear may chance.
Good morrow to you. Here the street is narrow:
The throng that follows Caesar at the heels,
Of senators, of praetors, common suitors, 35
Will crowd a feeble man almost to death.
I'll get me to a place more void, and there
Speak to great Caesar as he comes along.

[Exit SOOTHSAYER]

PORTIA *[Aside]* I must go in. Ay me, how weak a thing
The heart of woman is! O Brutus, 40
The heavens speed thee in thine enterprise.
Sure, the boy heard me. *[To LUCIUS]* Brutus hath a suit
That Caesar will not grant. *[Aside]* O, I grow faint –
Run, Lucius, and commend me to my lord;
Say I am merry. Come to me again, 45
And bring me word what he doth say to thee.

[Exit in different directions]



30 **I shall beseech him to befriend himself:** I shall beg him to look after himself, i.e. be wary and so keep safe.

35 **Praetors:** Magistrates.

39 **Ay me:** An exclamation of anguish.

42–43 **Sure, the boy ... will not grant:** Fearful that Lucius has guessed that something underhanded is going on, Portia explains that Brutus has a request that he is bringing before Caesar.

45 **Merry:** Cheerful.



QUESTIONS

- 1 What is Portia's state of mind in this scene?
- 2 How does Shakespeare use dialogue to suggest the excitement of a gathering crowd?



EXTEND

How does Shakespeare capture Portia's anxiety in the dialogue?

Act 3

Act 3 Scene 1 (Part 1)

CHARACTERS

Brutus
Cassius
Caesar
Metellus
Cinna
Decius
Casca
Artemidorus
Trebinius
Popilius
Soothsayer
Publius
Narrator (optional)

IN A NUTSHELL

As Caesar heads through a crowd of people, Artemidorus tries to warn him about the approaching danger but Caesar disregards his concerns. In the Senate-house, Metellus then pleads with Caesar for his brother's return from exile but Caesar is not persuaded. Brutus and Cassius urge Caesar to consent to Metellus' request, and then they and the other conspirators surround him and stab him to death. Brutus tells the conspirators to bathe their hands and swords in Caesar's blood and parade through the streets of Rome declaring Romans to be free.

Before you read

- At the moment of his death Caesar speaks the famous words: 'Et tu, Brutè?' which translates roughly as 'You too, Brutus?' This line is very famous and because it is in Latin – the language Caesar spoke – people often believe it to be historical. In fact, the oldest record we have of this line is in Shakespeare's play. The young William Shakespeare would have studied Latin as part of his grammar-school education.
- Cassius and Brutus both agree that in killing Caesar they have taken part in a momentous event and they predict that their deeds will be acted out in foreign lands and languages in the future. This is a kind of dramatic irony because the people delivering these lines in the original performances were Englishmen, acting on an English stage, and delivering their lines in English (a tongue foreign to the Romans).

**V**

Sirrah:	Equivalent to sir but used to address someone of a lower rank
Puissant:	Powerful
Fond:	Foolish
Base:	Lowly
Fawn:	Grovel or flatter
Spurn:	Kick
Cur:	Dog
Bootless:	Useless
Pulpit:	Platform for public speaking

An introduction to imagery: blood, animal and apocalyptic imagery

When writers use words to form pictures in our minds this is known as **imagery**. Apocalyptic, animal and blood imagery are particularly prominent in *Julius Caesar* and it is worthwhile giving close attention to these devices in order to gain a greater understanding of the characters and themes in Shakespeare's play.

Apocalyptic imagery

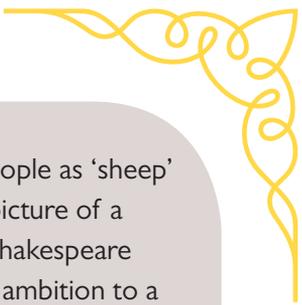
When images are apocalyptic it means they are referring to an 'End Time' or 'Doomsday'. These scenarios describe the end of the world as experienced through dreams and visions, such as those recorded in the book of Revelation in the New Testament; for example: 'the sun became black as sackcloth, the moon became like blood and the stars of the sky fell to the earth'.

Like Revelation and other apocalyptic literature and art, *Julius Caesar* captures an end-of-the-world, chaotic experience through the character Calpurnia. Caesar's wife is understandably terrified when she interprets the bizarre and disturbing events, reported to her by 'one within', as a personal sign of 'end times' for her husband. Calpurnia is told that graves 'yawned, and yielded up their dead' and that 'fiery warriors fought upon the clouds' and 'drizzled blood upon the Capitol' (Act 2 Scene 2, lines 14–24).

Like Calpurnia, Casca responds passionately to the strange, unnatural events he has witnessed (Act 1 Scene 3, lines 15–32) but Caesar is more likely to dismiss this superstitious, impressionable behaviour as a sign of weakness. However, given the violent chaos that follows as a result of Caesar's murder, it was no doubt Shakespeare's intention to use apocalyptic imagery as a way of foreshadowing the destruction and chaos to come.

Animal imagery

Shakespeare uses imagery of intimidating and dangerous creatures, such as wolves and snakes, to convey the impression of Caesar as a powerful and unpredictable leader.



When Cassius refers to Caesar as a ‘wolf’ and a ‘lion’ and the Roman people as ‘sheep’ and ‘hinds’ (deer), in Act 1 Scene 3 (lines 104–06), he creates a striking picture of a voiceless people who are powerless in the hands of a tyrannical leader. Shakespeare carries animal imagery further when, in Act 2 Scene 1, he aligns Caesar’s ambition to a poisonous snake which ‘hatched, would, as his kind, grow mischievous’ and should, therefore, be killed ‘in the shell’ (lines 33–34).

Overwhelmed with grief, Antony describes Caesar as a ‘brave hart’ (deer) who was ‘bayed’ (trapped) by ‘hunters’ (Act 3 Scene 1, lines 205–06), offering the audience a stark contrast to the portrayal of Caesar given by the conspirators. The audience is thus encouraged to sympathise with Antony when he speaks of a man previously described as a terrifying predator, as being, in fact, helpless and vulnerable prey.

Canine imagery is used in *Julius Caesar* for different purposes. Moments before his death, Caesar warns Metellus that he will ‘spurn thee like a cur’ (a dog of mixed breed) if he begs for his brother’s pardon (Act 3 Scene 1, lines 45–46). This derogatory image differs from Antony’s violent instruction to ‘let slip the dogs of war’ (Act 3 Scene 1, line 274) to avenge Caesar’s death. Here Antony uses canine imagery as a way of describing the violent civil strife that he invokes to take over Rome.

Blood imagery

Interestingly, the blood imagery used in *Julius Caesar* is not associated with a tyrant, unlike in *Macbeth* where Shakespeare associates blood with the violence, guilt and retribution that accompanies Macbeth’s murdering of King Duncan and others. In contrast, the idealistic Brutus of *Julius Caesar* considers the death of Caesar as a ‘sacrifice’ rather than a murder.

But when, in Act 3 Scene 1, the conspirators ‘carve’ Caesar as a ‘dish fit for the gods’ their bloody act is judged as butchery by Antony. The blood is emphasised by him shaking the ‘bloody hand’ of each of the conspirators (lines 185–90) and referring to their ‘bloody fingers’ (line 199). Here the repetition of ‘bloody’ reinforces not only the visual mess of Caesar’s blood but the metaphorical idea that, to Antony, Caesar’s blood is a powerful display of the brutality committed by the conspirators.

Alone with Caesar’s body, Antony personifies the dead Caesar as ‘thou bleeding piece of earth’ (Act 3 Scene 1, line 255). Unlike the conspirators, who consider Caesar as a mere human who should not be made a king, Antony regards Caesar as royal and his symbolic descriptions of Caesar’s blood depict him as such. He refers to the conspirators, in line 159, as having ‘purpled hands’ (purple being the colour of royalty) and laments the shedding of his ‘costly blood’ (line 259). Antony later declares Caesar’s blood as ‘sacred’ (Act 3 Scene 2, line 127); thus the blood imagery conveys the idea that Caesar has been transformed from a man to a king, and finally to a god.



Rome. Before the Capitol; the Senate sitting above.

[Flourish. A crowd of people; among them ARTEMIDORUS and the SOOTHSAYER. Enter CAESAR, BRUTUS, CASSIUS, CASCA, DECIUS, METELLUS CIMBER, TREBONIUS, CINNA, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, POPILIUS, PUBLIUS and others]

CAESAR *[To the SOOTHSAYER]* The Ides of March are come.
SOOTHSAYER Ay, Caesar, but not gone.
ARTEMIDORUS Hail, Caesar! Read this schedule.
DECIUS Trebonius doth desire you to o'er-read,
At your best leisure, this his humble suit. 5
ARTEMIDORUS O Caesar, read mine first; for mine's a suit
That touches Caesar nearer. Read it, great Caesar.
CAESAR What touches us ourself shall be last served.
ARTEMIDORUS Delay not, Caesar. Read it instantly.
CAESAR What, is the fellow mad?
PUBLIUS Sirrah, give place. 10
CASSIUS What, urge you your petitions in the street?
Come to the Capitol.

[CAESAR and the rest enter the Senate-house]

POPILIUS I wish your enterprise today may thrive.
CASSIUS What enterprise, Popilius?
POPILIUS Fare you well.

[Advances to CAESAR]

BRUTUS What said Popilius Lena? 15
CASSIUS He wished today our enterprise might thrive.
I fear our purpose is discoverèd.
BRUTUS Look how he makes to Caesar; mark him.
CASSIUS Casca, be sudden, for we fear prevention.
Brutus, what shall be done? If this be known, 20
Cassius or Caesar never shall turn back,
For I will slay myself.
BRUTUS Cassius, be constant:
Popilius Lena speaks not of our purposes;
For, look, he smiles, and Caesar doth not change.
CASSIUS Trebonius knows his time; for, look you, Brutus, 25
He draws Mark Antony out of the way.

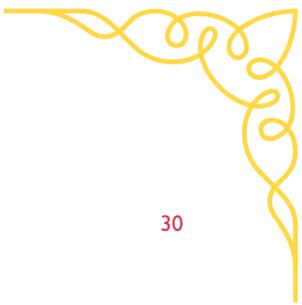
[Exit ANTONY and TREBONIUS]



4 **O'er-read:** Read over.

6–7 **For mine's a suit ... Caesar nearer:** Mine is a plea that applies to Caesar in a more personal way.

22 **Constant:** Steady.



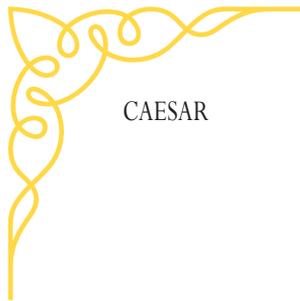
DECIUS Where is Metellus Cimber? Let him go,
 And presently prefer his suit to Caesar.
 BRUTUS He is addressed. Press near and second him.
 CINNA Casca, you are the first that rears your hand. 30
 CAESAR Are we all ready? What is now amiss
 That Caesar and his Senate must redress?
 METELLUS [*Kneeling*] Most high, most mighty, and most puissant Caesar,
 Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat
 An humble heart –
 CAESAR I must prevent thee, Cimber. 35
 These couchings and these lowly courtesies
 Might fire the blood of ordinary men,
 And turn pre-ordinance and first decree
 Into the law of children. Be not fond,
 To think that Caesar bears such rebel blood 40
 That will be thawed from the true quality
 With that which melteth fools; I mean, sweet words,
 Low-crookèd curtsies and base spaniel-fawning.
 Thy brother by decree is banishèd:
 If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him, 45
 I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
 Know, Caesar doth not wrong, nor without cause
 Will he be satisfied.
 METELLUS Is there no voice more worthy than my own
 To sound more sweetly in great Caesar's ear 50
 For the repealing of my banished brother?
 BRUTUS I kiss thy hand, but not in flattery, Caesar,
 Desiring thee that Publius Cimber may
 Have an immediate freedom of repeal.
 CAESAR What, Brutus! 55
 CASSIUS [*Kneeling*] Pardon, Caesar; Caesar, pardon;
 As low as to thy foot doth Cassius fall,
 To beg enfranchisement for Publius Cimber.



36–39 **These couchings and these lowly ... law of children:** This sort of grovelling might move ordinary men and alter previous decisions, turning the law into a game played by children.

40 **Rebel blood:** Impassioned blood.

54 **Freedom of repeal:** Permission to return.



CAESAR I could be well moved, if I were as you;
 If I could pray to move, prayers would move me. 60
 But I am constant as the northern star,
 Of whose true-fixed and resting quality
 There is no fellow in the firmament.
 The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks,
 They are all fire and every one doth shine, 65
 But there's but one in all doth hold his place.
 So in the world: 'tis furnished well with men,
 And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
 Yet in the number I do know but one
 That unassailable holds on his rank, 70
 Unshaked of motion; and that I am he,
 Let me a little show it, even in this,
 That I was constant Cimber should be banished,
 And constant do remain to keep him so.

CINNA O Caesar –

CAESAR Hence! Wilt thou lift up Olympus? 75

DECIUS Great Caesar –

CAESAR Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?

CASCA Speak hands for me!

[They stab CAESAR]

CAESAR *Et tu, Brutè?* – Then fall, Caesar!

[CAESAR dies]

CINNA Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!
 Run hence, proclaim, cry it about the streets. 80

CASSIUS Some to the common pulpits, and cry out:
 'Liberty, freedom, and enfranchisement!'

BRUTUS People and senators, be not affrighted.
 Fly not, stand still. Ambition's debt is paid.

CASCA Go to the pulpit, Brutus.

DECIUS And Cassius too. 85

BRUTUS Where's Publius?



59–74 I could be well moved ... to keep him so: In this speech Caesar again asserts that he is not like ordinary men because he answers to no greater authority. He states that unlike other men (including those in the Senate) he will not contradict (or repeal) any decision he has previously made. He illustrates this point by comparing himself to the northern star or pole star, by which sailors plot their course, and contrasting this fixed star with the unnumbered sparks that move about in the sky ('firmament'). In short, he is 'constant' and will not change his mind about Cimber's banishment.

75 Olympus: A great mountain in Greece that was believed to be home to the gods.

76 Bootless: Useless.

82 Enfranchisement: The right to vote and be a free citizen.

84 Fly not: Don't run away.

87 Confounded: Amazed.

CINNA Here, quite confounded with this mutiny.
 METELLUS Stand fast together, lest some friend of Caesar's
 Should chance –

BRUTUS Talk not of standing. Publius, good cheer; 90
 There is no harm intended to your person,
 Nor to no Roman else. So tell them, Publius.

CASSIUS And leave us, Publius, lest that the people,
 Rushing on us, should do your age some mischief.

BRUTUS Do so; and let no man abide this deed 95
 But we the doers.

[Enter TREBONIUS]

CASSIUS Where is Antony?
 TREBONIUS Fled to his house amazed.
 Men, wives and children stare, cry out and run
 As it were doomsday.

BRUTUS Fates, we will know your pleasures. 100
 That we shall die, we know; 'tis but the time
 And drawing days out, that men stand upon.

CASCA Why, he that cuts off twenty years of life
 Cuts off so many years of fearing death.

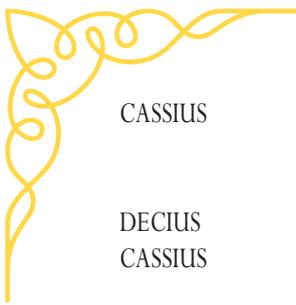
BRUTUS Grant that, and then is death a benefit: 105
 So are we Caesar's friends, that have abridged
 His time of fearing death. Stoop, Romans, stoop,
 And let us bathe our hands in Caesar's blood
 Up to the elbows, and besmear our swords.
 Then walk we forth, even to the market-place,
 And, waving our red weapons o'er our heads, 110
 Let's all cry: 'Peace, freedom and liberty!'

CASSIUS Stoop, then, and wash. How many ages hence
 Shall this our lofty scene be acted over
 In states unborn and accents yet unknown!

BRUTUS How many times shall Caesar bleed in sport, 115
 That now on Pompey's basis lies along
 No worthier than the dust!



-
- 94 **Do your age some mischief:** Cassius advises Publius to leave them, fearing that, because he is old, he might be in greater danger of the violence that may follow.
- 95 **Abide this deed:** Suffer the consequences of this deed.
- 99 **Doomsday:** The end of the world.
- 99–101 **Fates, we will know ... that men stand upon:** We would all like to know the future. We know we have to die at some point but we wonder when it will happen and how long we have left to live.
- 105 **Abridged:** Shortened.
- 112–15 **How many ages hence ... Caesar bleed in sport:** See the second dot point in **Before you read** on page 83.
- 116 **Basis:** The base (of Pompey's statue).



CASSIUS

So oft as that shall be,

So often shall the knot of us be called
The men that gave their country liberty.

DECIUS

What, shall we forth?

CASSIUS

Ay, every man away

120

Brutus shall lead, and we will grace his heels
With the most boldest and best hearts of Rome.



118 **Knot:** Group.

121 **We shall grace his heels:** We will follow him.



QUESTIONS

- 1 What does Cassius fear after his conversation with Popilius?
- 2 How does Cassius behave before Caesar's death? What does this tell us about his character?
- 3 How is Caesar presented as supremely confident in this scene?
- 4 How would you describe Caesar's attitude to the conspirators before they murder him?
- 5 What does Trebonius' line: 'Men, wives, and children stare, cry out, and, run / As it were doomsday' (lines 98–99) suggest about the response of the common people (the crowd) to Caesar's death?
- 6 Re-read Brutus' speech ending, 'Waving our red weapons o'er our heads, / Let's all cry: "Peace, freedom and liberty!"' (lines 104–11).
 - a What does this tell us about Brutus' opinion of the murder they have just committed?
 - b Do you think these words, accompanied by their actions, will have the effect Brutus intends?
- 7 How does Shakespeare employ dramatic irony in this scene? Include evidence from the text in your answer.



EXTEND

- 1 Shakespeare makes Caesar appear arrogant (hubristic) from his opening lines onwards. Copy and complete the following table that details Caesar's behaviour in the moments before his death.

Caesar's behaviour	Example or quotation that displays this
Compares himself with the conspirators	
Interrupts others	
Uses insults, dismissive and contemptuous language	
Refers to himself in the third person	

- 2 Is Caesar's final speech rendered ironic by his death, or should it be considered poignant in the context of the entire play?
- 3 What does Caesar's final line '*Et tu, Brutè?* – Then fall, Caesar!' (line 78) tell us about his character and his relationship with Brutus?
- 4 In what way or ways do the conspirators seem deluded or out of touch with reality?



DISCUSS

- 1 What do you think of the conspirators' actions? Has this scene changed your mind about whether the murder of Caesar was justified?
- 2 How would you choose to stage the assassination of Caesar, in your own production of the play, to create the most dramatic effect? Consider blocking, costume, props, lighting etc.

Joseph Mankiewicz: DVD Chapter 13 (The assassination of Caesar)



PRESS PLAY

- 1 How is the mood at the Capitol established in the opening minute of this scene by:
 - a music?
 - b the conspirators' actions and facial expressions?
- 2 How does Mankiewicz establish tension and anxiety among the conspirators?
- 3 Copy and complete the following table to show how Mankiewicz uses film techniques to reinforce Caesar's arrogance and power.

Film technique reinforcing Caesar's arrogance and power	Example and effect of this technique
Action	
Movement and blocking	
Facial expressions	
Costume	
Camera shots and angles	

- 4 Did you find the killing of Caesar effective? Did you expect it to be more, or less, brutal?
- 5 How does Mankiewicz portray Brutus' shock and hesitation immediately after Caesar's murder?
- 6 How does Mankiewicz use camera shots and blocking with Caesar and Brutus in Caesar's final moments?



Thinking about idealism, politics and personality

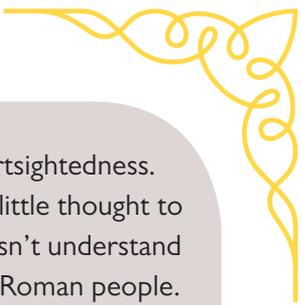
Any politician, of today or from a past age, will have ideals, beliefs and convictions. It is rarely the case that they can realise these ideals without making compromises and this is particularly the case in democracies. It might be that the ideal is not realistic in the political climate: maybe what a leader thinks is best is too unpopular within the electorate; maybe there are powerful lobby groups working against him or her; or perhaps the leader has to make a compromise with those within the party or with those in other parties.

Through idealism humankind has achieved incredible things: political idealists such as William Wilberforce fighting against the slave trade, Mahatma Gandhi striving for Indian independence and Martin Luther King campaigning against the injustices of segregation have been responsible for positive social change. Conversely, there have been leaders whose uncompromising idealism made them dangerous: Lenin and Stalin in Russia, Hitler in Germany, Mao in China, and Pol Pot in Cambodia. Unchecked by a free press, and stifling any protests with the forces at their disposal, these men practised their brand of idealism with horrifying consequences.

Brutus is an uncompromising Republican. He is opposed to monarchy, to the idea of a king or an emperor. This is, firstly, because monarchy contradicts Rome's republican tradition and, secondly, because he thinks monarchies cause tyranny. Without checks and balances, such as those of a Senate, a single person would have too much power and could come to see themselves as above the law. In the soliloquy in Act 2 Scene 1, we see that Brutus believes that human nature is corrupt and, without individual power being held in check, a ruler could develop from 'a serpent's egg' (a potential tyrant) into a 'serpent' or an actual tyrant (lines 32–34). Brutus believes that power is corrupting – 'the bright day brings forth the adder' (line 14) – and that this applies to anyone, regardless of personality, even a close friend like Caesar.

You might have noticed that Brutus never provides any specific evidence that Caesar could become a tyrant. Brutus admits 'I know no personal cause to spurn at him / But for the general' (Act 2 Scene 1, lines 11–12). Historically there was some evidence that Caesar behaved tyrannically when he was Consul but Shakespeare chose to omit these details from Brutus' dialogue. In doing this, Shakespeare emphasises Brutus' idealism.

Like Brutus, Cassius is a Republican but whereas Brutus is rational and idealistic, Cassius is driven by personal feelings. Cassius' speeches in Act 1 don't so much express concerns about tyranny as concentrate on Caesar's weaknesses. Cassius is convinced that a mere human, someone who once cried when he had a fever and needed to be rescued from drowning, shouldn't rule as king. Ultimately, Cassius is motivated by jealousy.



Brutus' obsessive idealism and Cassius' obsessive jealousy cause shortsightedness. Because of their fixations, they focus only on the assassination and give little thought to what course the conspirators should take after the murder. Cassius doesn't understand that Caesar, whom he views with disdain, could be so well loved by the Roman people. Brutus' obsessive idealism also blinds him to political realities. Brutus presents the killing of Caesar abstractly, as a 'sacrifice' to preserve the Republic. For Brutus the conspirators' actions should be pure and idealistic, and he refuses to allow the deed to be compromised by the killing of Mark Antony. He expects the crowd to understand and sympathise with the complicated message that, despite being a good ruler and Brutus' friend, Caesar was killed for the sake of 'freedom and liberty'. Mark Antony, who is unhampered by idealism, understands the crowd's love of Caesar and sells them a far more simple and powerful message.

Act 3 Scene 1 (Part 2)

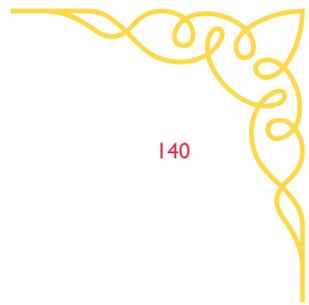
CHARACTERS

Antony
Brutus
Cassius
Servant

IN A NUTSHELL



Antony's servant arrives to ask that no harm come to his master and Brutus guarantees Antony's safe conduct. Cassius, however, is mistrustful of Antony and fears what he could do now that Caesar is dead. When Antony arrives he says that he wants to die alongside Caesar if the conspirators intend to kill him, but Brutus reassures him that this isn't the case. After shaking hands with each of the conspirators Antony swears his friendship and requests to speak at Caesar's funeral and Brutus, despite Cassius' objections, consents. Alone before Caesar's body, Antony grieves and vows to avenge Caesar's death. He informs Octavius' servant that Rome may become a dangerous place and urges him to stay until he (Antony) has spoken at Caesar's funeral where he can test the mood of the crowd. Then he will know what course of action he and Octavius should take.



BRUTUS Thy master is a wise and valiant Roman;
I never thought him worse. 140
Tell him, so please him come unto this place,
He shall be satisfied; and, by my honour,
Depart untouched.

SERVANT I'll fetch him presently.

[Exit SERVANT]

BRUTUS I know that we shall have him well to friend.
CASSIUS I wish we may: but yet have I a mind 145
That fears him much; and my misgiving still
Falls shrewdly to the purpose.

[Enter ANTONY]

BRUTUS But here comes Antony. Welcome, Mark Antony.
ANTONY O mighty Caesar! Dost thou lie so low? 150
Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils,
Shrunk to this little measure? Fare thee well.

I know not, gentlemen, what you intend,
Who else must be let blood, who else is rank;
If I myself, there is no hour so fit
As Caesar's death hour, nor no instrument 155

Of half that worth as those your swords, made rich
With the most noble blood of all this world.
I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard,

Now, whilst your purpled hands do reek and smoke,
Fulfil your pleasure. Live a thousand years, 160
I shall not find myself so apt to die:

No place will please me so, no mean of death,
As here by Caesar, and by you cut off,
The choice and master spirits of this age.

BRUTUS O Antony, beg not your death of us. 165
Though now we must appear bloody and cruel,
As, by our hands and this our present act,
You see we do, yet see you but our hands
And this the bleeding business they have done.
Our hearts you see not; they are pitiful; 170
And pity to the general wrong of Rome –



146–47 **My misgiving still ... to the purpose:** Cassius still has reservations about Antony's trustworthiness.

150 **Spoils:** The treasures acquired in a war.

153 **Let blood:** Killed (made to bleed).

159 **Purpled:** Purple is the colour of royalty. Antony suggests that Caesar's blood was royal.

163–64 **By you cut off ... spirits of this age:** Antony appeals to the conspirators' pride by calling them the best men of their generation. To be killed by them, alongside Caesar, would be a noble death.



As fire drives out fire, so pity pity –
 Hath done this deed on Caesar. For your part,
 To you our swords have leaden points, Mark Antony;
 Our arms, in strength of malice, and our hearts 175
 Of brothers' temper, do receive you in
 With all kind love, good thoughts, and reverence.

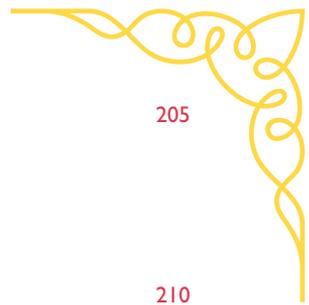
CASSIUS Your voice shall be as strong as any man's
 In the disposing of new dignities.

BRUTUS Only be patient till we have appeased 180
 The multitude, beside themselves with fear,
 And then we will deliver you the cause
 Why I, that did love Caesar when I struck him,
 Have thus proceeded.

ANTONY I doubt not of your wisdom. 185
 Let each man render me his bloody hand.
 First, Marcus Brutus, will I shake with you;
 Next, Caius Cassius, do I take your hand;
 Now, Decius Brutus, yours: now yours, Metellus;
 Yours, Cinna; and, my valiant Casca, yours;
 Though last, not least in love, yours, good Trebonius. 190
 Gentlemen all: alas, what shall I say?
 My credit now stands on such slippery ground,
 That one of two bad ways you must conceit me,
 Either a coward or a flatterer.
 That I did love thee, Caesar, O, 'tis true: 195
 If then thy spirit look upon us now,
 Shall it not grieve thee dearer than thy death,
 To see thy Antony making his peace,
 Shaking the bloody fingers of thy foes,
 Most noble, in the presence of thy corse? 200
 Had I as many eyes as thou hast wounds,
 Weeping as fast as they stream forth thy blood,
 It would become me better than to close
 In terms of friendship with thine enemies.



-
- 172 **As fire drives out fire, so pity pity:** 'Fire drives out fire' was a common Elizabethan expression. So it is that the conspirators' pity (or sympathy) for Rome had driven out, or destroyed, any pity they would have had for Caesar.
- 174 **Leaden points:** Are blunt as lead.
- 178–79 **Your voice shall ... new dignities:** You shall have as much say as anyone in allocating titles and positions in the new order.
- 185 **Render:** Give.
- 191 **Gentleman all:** Antony is probably being ironic.
- 192 **Credit:** Creditability.
- 193 **Conceit me:** Think me or consider me.



Pardon me, Julius! Here wast thou bayed, brave hart 205
 Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
 Signed in thy spoil, and crimsoned in thy Lethe.
 O world, thou wast the forest to this hart;
 And this, indeed, O world, the heart of thee.
 How like a deer, stricken by many princes, 210
 Dost thou here lie!

CASSIUS Mark Antony –
 ANTONY Pardon me, Caius Cassius:
 The enemies of Caesar shall say this;
 Then, in a friend, it is cold modesty.

CASSIUS I blame you not for praising Caesar so; 215
 But what compact mean you to have with us?
 Will you be pricked in number of our friends;
 Or shall we on, and not depend on you?

ANTONY Therefore I took your hands, but was, indeed,
 Swayed from the point, by looking down on Caesar. 220
 Friends am I with you all, and love you all,
 Upon this hope, that you shall give me reasons
 Why and wherein Caesar was dangerous.

BRUTUS Or else were this a savage spectacle.
 Our reasons are so full of good regard 225
 That were you, Antony, the son of Caesar,
 You should be satisfied.

ANTONY That's all I seek;
 And am, moreover, suitor that I may
 Produce his body to the market-place,
 And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend, 230
 Speak in the order of his funeral.

BRUTUS You shall, Mark Antony.

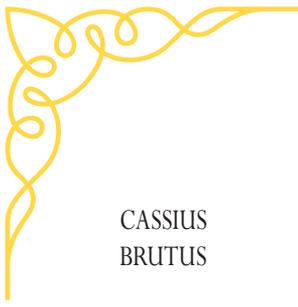
CASSIUS Brutus, a word with you.
[Aside to BRUTUS] You know not what you do. Do not consent
 That Antony speak in his funeral.
 Know you how much the people may be moved 235
 By that which he will utter?

BRUTUS *[Aside to CASSIUS]* By your pardon:
 I will myself into the pulpit first,
 And show the reason of our Caesar's death.
 What Antony shall speak, I will protest
 He speaks by leave and by permission; 240



205–07 **Here wast thou bayed ... in thy Lethe:** Antony compares Caesar to a deer trapped in the woods and compares the conspirators to hunters covered in a river of life-giving blood (Lethe = a river of the underworld).

217 **Pricked:** Marked as.



And that we are contented Caesar shall
 Have all true rites and lawful ceremonies.
 It shall advantage more than do us wrong.
 CASSIUS *[Aside to BRUTUS]* I know not what may fall; I like it not. 245
 BRUTUS Mark Antony, here, take you Caesar's body.
 You shall not in your funeral speech blame us,
 But speak all good you can devise of Caesar,
 And say you do it by our permission;
 Else shall you not have any hand at all
 About his funeral. And you shall speak 250
 In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
 After my speech is ended.

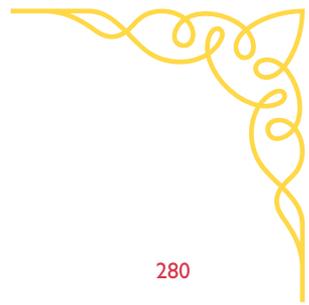
ANTONY Be it so.
 I do desire no more.

BRUTUS Prepare the body then, and follow us.
[Exit all but ANTONY]

ANTONY O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth, 255
 That I am meek and gentle with these butchers.
 Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
 That ever livèd in the tide of times.
 Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!
 Over thy wounds now do I prophesy, 260
 Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips,
 To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue,
 A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
 Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
 Shall cumber all the parts of Italy; 265
 Blood and destruction shall be so in use
 And dreadful objects so familiar
 That mothers shall but smile when they behold
 Their infants quartered with the hands of war;
 All pity choked with custom of fell deeds: 270
 And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
 With Atè by his side come hot from hell,
 Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice
 Cry 'Havoc', and let slip the dogs of war,
 That this foul deed shall smell above the earth 275
 With carrion men, groaning for burial.



-
- 249–50 **Else shall you ... his funeral:** If you don't do this, you cannot be involved in his funeral.
 - 255 **Piece of earth:** Body.
 - 264–65 **Domestic fury ... parts of Italy:** Antony predicts that a ferocious civil war shall engulf all Italy.
 - 269 **Quartered:** Torn to pieces.
 - 272 **Atè:** Roman goddess of vengeance.
 - 276 **Carrion men:** Dead men or men that are almost corpses.



[Enter a SERVANT]

You serve Octavius Caesar, do you not?
 SERVANT I do, Mark Antony.
 ANTONY Caesar did write for him to come to Rome.
 SERVANT He did receive his letters, and is coming; 280
 And bid me say to you by word of mouth –
 O Caesar!
 ANTONY Thy heart is big, get thee apart and weep.
 Passion, I see, is catching, for mine eyes,
 Seeing those beads of sorrow stand in thine, 285
 Began to water. Is thy master coming?
 SERVANT He lies tonight within seven leagues of Rome.
 ANTONY Post back with speed, and tell him what hath chanced.
 Here is a mourning Rome, a dangerous Rome,
 No Rome of safety for Octavius yet. 290
 Hie hence, and tell him so. Yet, stay awhile;
 Thou shalt not back till I have borne this corpse
 Into the market-place. There shall I try
 In my oration, how the people take
 The cruel issue of these bloody men; 295
 According to the which, thou shalt discourse
 To young Octavius of the state of things.
 Lend me your hand.

[Exit with CAESAR's body]



- 287 **Seven leagues:** Roughly 30 kilometres.
- 288 **Post back with speed:** Ride quickly.
- 291 **Hie hence:** Hurry away.
- 291–97 **Yet, stay awhile ... state of things:** Antony tells Octavius' servant to stay until Antony has finished his speech and they can see the reaction of the crowd ('oration' = speech; 'discourse' = describe).



QUESTIONS

- 1 What do Cassius and Brutus disagree about in this scene?
- 2 How do Cassius and Brutus compare in their assessment of Antony and the danger he poses?
- 3 How would Antony's shaking of the conspirators' hands make them feel particularly uncomfortable?
- 4 What animal does Antony liken Caesar to? What is the effect of this comparison?
- 5 What feelings does Antony reveal in his soliloquy at the end of this scene?
- 6 What does Antony prophesy is going to take place in Italy as a result of Caesar's death?
- 7 What is Antony's advice to Octavius (through his servant)?



- 1 In what ways does Antony exercise caution in this scene?
- 2 What reasons might the conspirators have to distrust Antony?
- 3 What does the decision to allow Antony to speak at Caesar's funeral tell us about:
 - a Brutus' character?
 - b Brutus' view of Antony?
- 4 Why do you think Shakespeare has Antony use a soliloquy in this scene? Do you think it works to draw the audience closer to his character? Give reasons for your answer.

A word about repetition

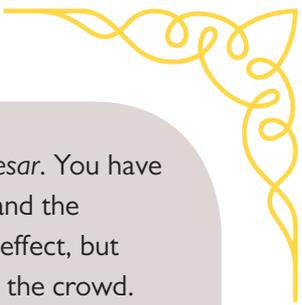
Arguably, the best way to learn something (times tables, a musical instrument, a foreign language or even how to drive a car) is by repetition, repetition, repetition. And sometimes the best way for an author to emphasise the central themes and important aspects of character in a text is by repetition of key words, phrases and ideas.

Repetition is a key element in great speeches. Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister during most of the Second World War, gave some of the most famous speeches of all time and these used repetition to great effect: '... we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender ...' In another speech Churchill states: 'You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs – victory in spite of all terrors – victory, however long and hard the road may be, for without victory there is no survival.' The British people found comfort and hope in Churchill's speeches in the face of overwhelming hardship and a seemingly impossible situation.

Arguably the best speechmaker of the twentieth century was the African-American minister, Dr Martin Luther King Jr. In his most famous speech, he repeated the phrase, 'I have a dream'. The speech also repeated the phrase, 'Let freedom ring' and concludes:

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring ... all God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, 'Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.'

The repetition in King's speeches inspired millions and was a great catalyst for social change. Beyond the prophetic books of the Old Testament, Shakespeare's writing had a profound effect on the speeches of both of these men. In our own time, the American president, Barack Obama, repeated the slogan 'Yes we can' to great effect in his 2008 election campaign.



Repetition is a prominent or salient feature of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. You have already witnessed repetition being used in Cassius' persuasive speeches and the Soothsayer's warnings. In the next scene, Brutus uses repetition to good effect, but Mark Antony is masterful in his use of the device and his manipulation of the crowd. Note in particular his employment of the word 'honourable'; he uses it plainly at first, but inflects it with increasingly ironic effect as his speech continues.

Certain words are repeated throughout *Julius Caesar*. The repetition of terms such as 'honour', 'valour', 'fate' and 'nobility' has a cumulative effect, which we call **cumulation**. These terms are explored and questioned throughout the play.

Act 3 Scene 2

CHARACTERS

Antony
Brutus
1ST Citizen
2ND Citizen
4TH Citizen
3RD Citizen
Servant
All (the Citizens)
Narrator (optional)

IN A NUTSHELL



Brutus and Cassius split up to speak to different parts of the crowd. At the Forum, Brutus explains that he killed Caesar because of his love for Rome, and that Caesar's death was necessary for Rome's continuing freedom. The crowd cheers him and he leaves after introducing Antony, who has already entered with Caesar's body. Antony addresses the people in a powerful speech, using many rhetorical devices. He speaks of Caesar's noble qualities and claims to have the document of Caesar's will. Through his speech, Antony quickly gains the sympathy of the people who are roused to a passionate support for him and opposition to Brutus and Cassius – who have since fled from Rome. The scene ends with a servant of Octavius informing Antony that his master is already at Caesar's house in Rome.

Before you read

- Antony and Brutus both speak persuasively, demonstrating the art of rhetoric. A key element of public speaking, **rhetoric** relies on the quality and delivery of a speech's content as well as the use of devices such as repetition, imagery, and rhetorical questions that add to the effect of the subject matter.

- **Antithesis** is the opposition of one word or phrase against another to create an effect. Such word conflict is seen when Antony says, ‘But yesterday the word of Caesar might / Have stood against the world; now lies he there’ (Act 3 Scene 2, lines 112–13). Here the words ‘now’ and ‘stood’ are in conflict with ‘yesterday’ and ‘lies’. Antithesis can thus be seen as a powerful technique, one that Shakespeare uses to increase dramatic tension.



Rendered:	Given
Censure:	Judge
Valour:	Bravery
Bondman:	Slave
Commonwealth:	The free society or republic
Clamours:	Noise
Mutiny:	Rebellion against authority
Treason:	Betrayal of one’s country

The Forum.

[Enter BRUTUS and CASSIUS and a crowd of Citizens]

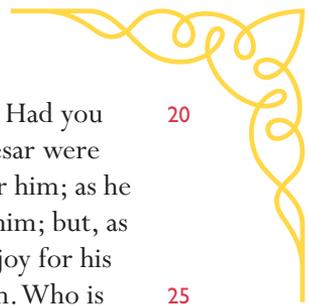
CITIZENS	We will be satisfied; let us be satisfied.	
BRUTUS	Then follow me, and give me audience, friends. Cassius, go you into the other street, And part the numbers. Those that will hear me speak, let ’em stay here; Those that will follow Cassius, go with him; And public reasons shall be rendered Of Caesar’s death.	5
1 ST CITIZEN	I will hear Brutus speak.	
2 ND CITIZEN	I will hear Cassius, and compare their reasons, When severally we hear them rendered.	10

[Exit CASSIUS with some of the Citizens. BRUTUS goes into the pulpit]

3 RD CITIZEN	The noble Brutus is ascended. Silence!	
BRUTUS	Be patient till the last. Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear. Believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe. Censure me in your wisdom and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar’s, to him I say, that Brutus’ love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer:	15



10 **Severally:** Separately.



not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

20

25

30

ALL CITIZENS
BRUTUS

None, Brutus, none.

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

30

[Enter ANTONY and others, with CAESAR's body]

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

35

ALL CITIZENS
1ST CITIZEN
2ND CITIZEN
3RD CITIZEN
4TH CITIZEN

Live, Brutus! Live, live!

Bring him with triumph home unto his house.

Give him a statue with his ancestors.

Let him be Caesar.

Caesar's better parts

Shall be crowned in Brutus.

40

1ST CITIZEN
BRUTUS
2ND CITIZEN
1ST CITIZEN
BRUTUS

We'll bring him to his house with shouts and clamours.

My countrymen –

Peace! Silence! Brutus speaks.

Peace, ho!

Good countrymen, let me depart alone,

45

And, for my sake, stay here with Antony.

Do grace to Caesar's corpse, and grace his speech

Tending to Caesar's glories; which Mark Antony,

By our permission, is allowed to make.

I do entreat you, not a man depart,

Save I alone, till Antony have spoke.

50

55

[Exit BRUTUS]



33–34 **His glory not ... he suffered death:** His virtues not exaggerated; and his faults, for which he was killed, not stated too strongly.

51 **Grace:** Respect or honour (in this context).



1ST CITIZEN Stay, ho! And let us hear Mark Antony.
 3RD CITIZEN Let him go up into the public chair;
 We'll hear him. Noble Antony, go up.
 ANTONY For Brutus' sake, I am beholding to you.

[Goes into the pulpit]

4TH CITIZEN What does he say of Brutus?
 3RD CITIZEN He says, for Brutus' sake, 60

He finds himself beholding to us all.
 4TH CITIZEN 'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here.

1ST CITIZEN This Caesar was a tyrant.

3RD CITIZEN Nay, that's certain.

We are blest that Rome is rid of him.

2ND CITIZEN Peace! Let us hear what Antony can say. 65

ANTONY You gentle Romans –

ALL CITIZENS Peace, ho! Let us hear him.

ANTONY Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them;

The good is oft interrèd with their bones; 70

So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus

Hath told you Caesar was ambitious.

If it were so, it was a grievous fault,

And grievously hath Caesar answered it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest – 75

For Brutus is an honourable man;

So are they all, all honourable men –

Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me;

But Brutus says he was ambitious; 80

And Brutus is an honourable man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome

Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:

Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?

When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept; 85

Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,

And Brutus is an honourable man.

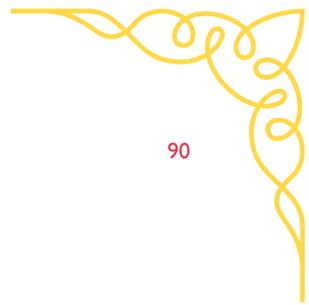
57 **Public chair:** Speaker's chair.

70 **Interrèd:** Buried.

83 **General coffers:** The treasury.

86 **Sterner stuff:** Less compassionate material.





You all did see that on the Lupercal
 I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
 Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
 Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
 And, sure, he is an honourable man.
 I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
 But here I am to speak what I do know. 90
 You all did love him once, not without cause: 95
 What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him?
 – O judgement! Thou art fled to brutish beasts,
 And men have lost their reason. – Bear with me;
 My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
 And I must pause till it come back to me. 100

1ST CITIZEN Methinks there is much reason in his sayings.
 2ND CITIZEN If thou consider rightly of the matter,
 Caesar has had great wrong.
 3RD CITIZEN Has he, masters?
 I fear there will a worse come in his place. 105
 4TH CITIZEN Marked ye his words? He would not take the crown;
 Therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious.
 1ST CITIZEN If it be found so, some will dear abide it.
 2ND CITIZEN Poor soul! His eyes are red as fire with weeping.
 3RD CITIZEN There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony. 110
 4TH CITIZEN Now mark him, he begins again to speak.
 ANTONY But yesterday the word of Caesar might
 Have stood against the world; now lies he there,
 And none so poor to do him reverence.
 O masters, if I were disposed to stir 115
 Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
 I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,
 Who, you all know, are honourable men.
 I will not do them wrong; I rather choose
 To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you, 120
 Than I will wrong such honourable men.
 But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar;
 I found it in his closet, 'tis his will.
 Let but the commons hear this testament –
 Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read – 125



- 108 **Some will dear abide it:** Some will pay a heavy price.
- 123 **Closet:** Study.
- 124 **Testament:** The will.



And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's wounds
 And dip their napkins in his sacred blood,
 Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
 And, dying, mention it within their wills,
 Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
 Unto their issue. 130

4TH CITIZEN We'll hear the will. Read it, Mark Antony.
 ALL CITIZENS The will, the will! We will hear Caesar's will.
 ANTONY Have patience, gentle friends, I must not read it.

It is not meet you know how Caesar loved you. 135
 You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;
 And, being men, hearing the will of Caesar,
 It will inflame you, it will make you mad.
 'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs;

4TH CITIZEN For, if you should, O, what would come of it? 140

Read the will! We'll hear it, Antony!
 You shall read us the will, Caesar's will!
 ANTONY Will you be patient? Will you stay awhile?

I have o'ershot myself to tell you of it.
 I fear I wrong the honourable men 145
 Whose daggers have stabbed Caesar; I do fear it.

4TH CITIZEN They were traitors. Honourable men!
 ALL CITIZENS The will! The testament!
 2ND CITIZEN They were villains, murderers! The will! Read the will.

ANTONY You will compel me, then, to read the will? 150
 Then make a ring about the corpse of Caesar,
 And let me show you him that made the will.
 Shall I descend? And will you give me leave?

ALL CITIZENS Come down.
 2ND CITIZEN Descend. 155
 3RD CITIZEN You shall have leave.

[ANTONY comes down]

4TH CITIZEN A ring; stand round.

1ST CITIZEN Stand from the hearse, stand from the body.

2ND CITIZEN Room for Antony, most noble Antony.

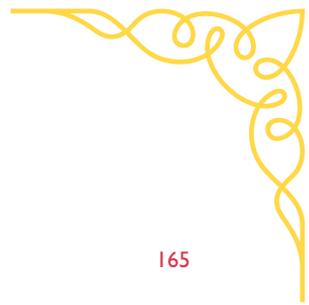
ANTONY Nay, press not so upon me; stand far off. 160

126–31 **And they would go ... their issue:** Antony suggests that if the crowd were to hear Caesar's will they would have complete and enduring devotion to Caesar, even to the point of wanting to obtain a piece of his hair and leave it to their children ('issue') in their own wills. Alternatively, these lines could be interpreted as Antony commenting on the way in which the conspirators wish to be remembered. In this reading, Antony presents the conspirators as scrabbling for relics in much the same way as the people do in Decius' interpretation of Caesar's dream.

143 **Stay:** Wait.

150 **Compel:** Force.



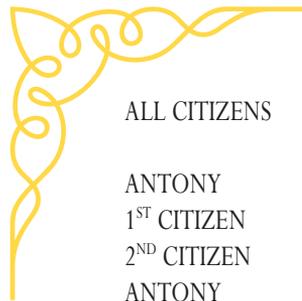


ALL CITIZENS Stand back! Room! Bear back!
 ANTONY If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.
 You all do know this mantle. I remember
 The first time ever Caesar put it on;
 'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent, 165
 That day he overcame the Nervii.
 Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through;
 See what a rent the envious Casca made;
 Through this the well-belovèd Brutus stabbed,
 And as he plucked his cursèd steel away, 170
 Mark how the blood of Caesar followed it,
 As rushing out of doors, to be resolved
 If Brutus so unkindly knocked, or no;
 For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel. 175
 Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him!
 This was the most unkindest cut of all;
 For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,
 Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
 Quite vanquished him. Then burst his mighty heart;
 And, in his mantle muffling up his face, 180
 Even at the base of Pompey's statue,
 Which all the while ran blood, great Caesar fell.
 O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
 Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,
 Whilst bloody treason flourished over us. 185
 O, now you weep; and, I perceive, you feel
 The dint of pity. These are gracious drops.
 Kind souls, what, weep you when you but behold
 Our Caesar's vesture wounded? Look you here,
 Here is himself, marred, as you see, with traitors. 190

1ST CITIZEN O piteous spectacle!
 2ND CITIZEN O noble Caesar!
 3RD CITIZEN O woeful day!
 4TH CITIZEN O traitors! Villains!
 1ST CITIZEN O most bloody sight! 195
 2ND CITIZEN We will be revenged.



-
- 163 **Mantle:** Cloak.
 - 166 **The Nervii:** A tribe Rome was at war with.
 - 174 **Caesar's angel:** Possibly Caesar's favourite; someone for whom Caesar displayed considerable affection.
 - 178 **Ingratitude:** Thanklessness.
 - 189 **Vesture:** Clothing.
 - 190 **Marred:** Ruined.



ALL CITIZENS Revenge! About! Seek! Burn! Fire! Kill! Slay!
 Let not a traitor live!

ANTONY Stay, countrymen.

1ST CITIZEN Peace there! Hear the noble Antony. 200

2ND CITIZEN We'll hear him, we'll follow him, we'll die with him.

ANTONY Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up
 To such a sudden flood of mutiny.
 They that have done this deed are honourable.
 What private griefs they have, alas, I know not, 205
 That made them do it. They are wise and honourable,
 And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.
 I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:
 I am no orator, as Brutus is;
 But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man, 210
 That love my friend; and that they know full well
 That gave me public leave to speak of him;
 For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
 Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
 To stir men's blood: I only speak right on. 215
 I tell you that which you yourselves do know;
 Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor, poor dumb mouths,
 And bid them speak for me. But were I Brutus,
 And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
 Would ruffle up your spirits and put a tongue 220
 In every wound of Caesar that should move
 The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

ALL CITIZENS We'll mutiny.

1ST CITIZEN We'll burn the house of Brutus.

3RD CITIZEN Away, then! Come, seek the conspirators. 225

ANTONY Yet hear me, countrymen; yet hear me speak.

ALL CITIZENS Peace, ho! Hear Antony. Most noble Antony!

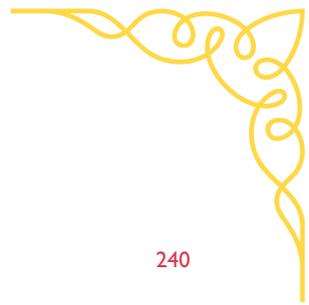
ANTONY Why, friends, you go to do you know not what.
 Wherein hath Caesar thus deserved your loves?
 Alas, you know not. I must tell you then: 230
 You have forgot the will I told you of.

ALL CITIZENS Most true. The will! Let's stay and hear the will.

ANTONY Here is the will, and under Caesar's seal.
 To every Roman citizen he gives,
 To every several man, seventy-five drachmas. 235



-
- 209 **Orator:** Public speaker.
 213 **Wit:** Intelligence.
 215 **Right on:** How things are.
 235 **Drachmas:** Silver coins.



2ND CITIZEN Most noble Caesar! We'll revenge his death.
 3RD CITIZEN O royal Caesar!
 ANTONY Hear me with patience.
 ALL CITIZENS Peace, ho!
 ANTONY Moreover, he hath left you all his walks, 240
 His private arbours and new-planted orchards,
 On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,
 And to your heirs for ever, common pleasures,
 To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.
 Here was a Caesar! When comes such another? 245
 1ST CITIZEN Never, never. Come, away, away!
 We'll burn his body in the holy place,
 And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.
 Take up the body.
 2ND CITIZEN Go fetch fire. 250
 3RD CITIZEN Pluck down benches.
 4TH CITIZEN Pluck down forms, windows, anything.

[Exit Citizens with the body]

ANTONY Now let it work. Mischief, thou art afoot,
 Take thou what course thou wilt!

[Enter a SERVANT]

How now, fellow! 255

SERVANT Sir, Octavius is already come to Rome.
 ANTONY Where is he?
 SERVANT He and Lepidus are at Caesar's house.
 ANTONY And thither will I straight to visit him.
 He comes upon a wish. Fortune is merry,
 And in this mood will give us anything. 260
 SERVANT I heard him say, Brutus and Cassius
 Are rid like madmen through the gates of Rome.
 ANTONY Belike they had some notice of the people,
 How I had moved them. Bring me to Octavius.

[Exit ANTONY]



-
- 240 **Walks:** Gardens.
 - 241 **Arbours:** Summer houses.
 - 244 **Abroad:** About the place.
 - 247 **The holy place:** The Roman Forum.
 - 248 **Brands:** The burning wood from the funeral pyre.
 - 253 **Mischief:** Chaos and destruction.
 - 262 **Rid:** Run off.
 - 263–64 **Belike they had some ... had moved them:** It is likely they were warned how I had stirred up the people.



QUESTIONS

- 1 While Brutus' view does not win out, his speech is powerful in many ways.
 - a What are the strengths of Brutus' speech?
 - b What mistakes do you think Brutus makes in this speech?
- 2 Copy and complete the table below to show how Antony presents each of the conspirators negatively.

Conspirator	Quotation	Representation of the conspirator
Casca		
Cassius		
Brutus		

- 3 What is the effect of Antony coming down to stand next to Caesar's body in order to read the will?
- 4 How does the crowd react to Antony's speech? How is this contrary to their reaction to Brutus' speech?
- 5 Antony compares himself to Brutus when (in lines 209–10) he says, 'I am no orator, as Brutus is / But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man'. What effect do you think he intends this to have on the crowd?
- 6 Why is Antony's reading of the will a clever way to end his address?
- 7 How does Shakespeare create an atmosphere of chaos towards the end of this scene (lines 223–64)?
- 8 What ideas do you think Shakespeare was looking to convey about mobs or crowds through this scene?



EXTEND

- 1 How is it an ominous (or bad) sign for the conspirators that a member of the crowd wants to crown Brutus?
- 2 How does Antony use inclusive language effectively in his speech? Give some examples.
- 3 How is it ironic that Antony complains of men losing their reason (line 99) in his address to the crowd? Hint: You might consider Antony's aims.
- 4 Antony addresses the crowd with the statement: 'You are not wood, you are not stones' (line 136). Marullus used a similar rhetorical device in the opening scene (Act I Scene 1, line 34). How is the contrast between these speeches ironic?

- 5 Antony is a powerful orator, and a close analysis of his lines reveals a rich use of literary devices. Copy and complete the following table to demonstrate Antony's use of rhetorical devices in his famous speech. (This could be repeated for Brutus' speech as an exercise to compare the two orations.)

Rhetorical / literary device	Example	Effect of device
Repetition		
Reference to Brutus' speech		
Rhetorical questions		
Inclusive speech	'Then I, and you, and all of us fell down' (line 184)	
Antithesis		
Storytelling / anecdotal evidence	Tells the story of the first time Caesar wore the mantle	Causes sympathy
Emotive imagery		
Flattery		
False humility		
Even-handedness or balance (superficial)	'Honourable men' (line 77 and following); 'I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts' (line 208)	

- 6 In light of Antony's advice to Octavius' servant at the end of the previous scene, how do Octavius' actions suggest that he perhaps distrusts Antony?



DISCUSS

- 1 If you were in Brutus' position, what steps would you have taken to avoid the situation the conspirators find themselves in at the end of this scene?
- 2 After carrying Caesar's body onto the stage, Antony is silent for over 20 lines until Brutus exits. What should the actor playing Antony be doing during this time?
- 3 Do you think Caesar's will is genuine or a convenient fictional creation of Antony's? Why?



Joseph Mankiewicz: DVD Chapter 17 (Brutus vs Antony)

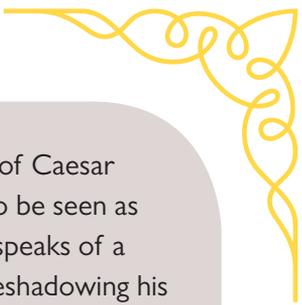


- 1 Why do you think Mankiewicz cuts frequently between Brutus and the crowd?
- 2 Comment on the body language and gestures used by the actor (James Mason) when Brutus is before the crowd. Given that directors will make a decision about how persuasive they want Brutus to be, what do you think is his most effective gesture and what do you think he could improve?
- 3 How does Mankiewicz emphasise the horror that the crowd feels upon seeing Caesar's body?
- 4 Comment on the body language used by the actor playing Mark Antony (Marlon Brando) while Brutus is speaking. What does this convey?
- 5 In what ways, other than dialogue, does Mankiewicz show that the crowd is more persuaded by Antony than Brutus?
- 6 In what ways, in addition to dialogue, does Mankiewicz show Antony to be manipulative?
- 7 What do you think are the limitations of this scene being shot in black and white? What do you think are the strengths?
- 8 How does Mankiewicz use panning effectively in this scene?
- 9 Antony's line, 'Mischief thou art afoot, / Take thou what course thou wilt!' (lines 253–54), is omitted from the end of this scene.
 - a Do you agree with Mankiewicz's decision to omit this line?
 - b How does the director achieve the effect of these words using visual means?

A word about foreshadowing

When the creepy music starts in a movie you know something frightening or terrible is about to happen. It is as if the music is sending out a warning or a signal. In a similar way, authors give us hints or warnings about what will happen later in the text and this is known as **foreshadowing**.

For example, in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the appearance of rats in the central character's apartment not only creates a feeling of tension or unease, but it hints at events later in the novel, when rats are used to torture him. In Frank Darabont's film *The Shawshank Redemption*, the evil prison warden crushes a cigarette beneath his foot a moment before he has a prisoner shot. Likewise, in TS Eliot's poem 'Journey of the Magi', when Eliot describes how the three wise men, on their way to visit the newborn Jesus, see 'three trees on the low sky' this foreshadows Jesus' death on the cross between two criminals.



The storm in Act 1 Scene 3 can be said to foreshadow the violent death of Caesar and the wars that will follow the assassination. Calpurnia's dream can also be seen as foreshadowing Caesar's bloody death. In Act 3 Scene 3, the poet Cinna speaks of a dream he had in which he dined with Caesar, who he knows is dead, foreshadowing his own death at the end of the scene. Look out for more foreshadowing signs or omens in the final two acts of the play.

Act 3 Scene 3

CHARACTERS

Cinna
1ST Citizen
2ND Citizen
3RD Citizen
4TH Citizen



IN A NUTSHELL

The crowd questions Cinna the poet, mistaking him for Cinna the conspirator. The citizens have been incited to a powerful fury and rage against the conspirators after hearing Antony speak; this provokes them to turn on Cinna and take him away to be murdered.

Before you read

- You would have noticed in the previous scenes how the crowd can be like a powerful character, in the sense that it behaves with one mind and spirit, swayed first by Brutus and then more violently by Antony. Shakespeare depicts the crowd in this way so that the audience can witness the dramatic effects of mass hysteria arising from a mob or herd mentality.
- This is the first of two scenes in which poets are presented as bumbling or ineffectual. Shakespeare was, of course, a poet himself and he made a living writing poetry when the theatres were closed due to an outbreak of the plague. It's likely that Shakespeare was enjoying a joke at his own expense or maybe at the expense of some of his colleagues in literary London.



Whither: Where
Bachelor: Single man
Ay: Yes



A street.

[Enter CINNA the poet]

CINNA THE POET I dreamt tonight that I did feast with Caesar,
And things unluckily charge my fantasy.
I have no will to wander forth of doors,
Yet something leads me forth.

[Enter Citizens]

1ST CITIZEN What is your name? 5
2ND CITIZEN Whither are you going?
3RD CITIZEN Where do you dwell?
4TH CITIZEN Are you a married man or a bachelor?
2ND CITIZEN Answer every man directly.
1ST CITIZEN Ay, and briefly. 10
4TH CITIZEN Ay, and wisely.
3RD CITIZEN Ay, and truly, you were best.
CINNA THE POET What is my name? Whither am I going? Where do I dwell? Am I
a married man or a bachelor? Then, to answer every man directly,
briefly and wisely and truly; wisely I say, I am a bachelor. 15
2ND CITIZEN That's as much as to say, they are fools that marry. You'll bear me
a bang for that, I fear. Proceed, directly.
CINNA THE POET Directly, I am going to Caesar's funeral.
1ST CITIZEN As a friend or an enemy?
CINNA THE POET As a friend. 20
2ND CITIZEN That matter is answered directly.
4TH CITIZEN For your dwelling, briefly.
CINNA THE POET Briefly, I dwell by the Capitol.
3RD CITIZEN Your name, sir, truly.
CINNA THE POET Truly, my name is Cinna. 25
1ST CITIZEN Tear him to pieces! He's a conspirator.
CINNA THE POET I am Cinna the poet; I am Cinna the poet.
4TH CITIZEN Tear him for his bad verses! Tear him for his bad verses!
CINNA THE POET I am not Cinna the conspirator.

- 
-
- 1 **Tonight:** (Possibly means) last night.
2 **Charge my fantasy:** Haunt my imagination.
3 **Will:** Desire.
3 **Forth of doors:** Outside.
9 **Directly:** Could be immediately (Cinna's understanding) or plainly (the mob's understanding).
12 **You were best:** You would be advised.
17 **Bang:** Blow or hit.
28 **Bad verses:** Bad poetry.

4TH CITIZEN It is no matter, his name's Cinna; pluck but his name out of his heart, and turn him going. 30

3RD CITIZEN Tear him! Tear him!

[Citizens attack CINNA]

Come, brands, ho, firebrands! To Brutus', to Cassius'; burn all!
Some to Decius' house, and some to Casca's; some to Ligarius'.
Away, go! 35

[Exit all with CINNA]



30-31 **Pluck but his ... turn him going:** Just pull his name out of his heart and then send him away.



QUESTIONS

- 1 Why does the crowd attack Cinna?
- 2 What does this scene show you about the justice the rioting mob will achieve?



Ruins of the Roman Forum, where Mark Antony gave his famous funeral oration for Julius Caesar

Act 4

Act 4 Scene 1

CHARACTERS

Antony
Octavius
Lepidus



IN A NUTSHELL

Antony, Octavius and Lepidus have assumed power and have compiled a list of names of those who must die, including members of their own families. Antony sends Lepidus to Caesar's house to fetch the will. After Lepidus leaves, Antony reveals his frustration that he and Octavius have to share power with such an unremarkable man. Octavius and Antony discuss preparations for war against Brutus and Cassius.

Before you read

- Antony, Octavius and Lepidus now rule Rome. They are referred to as a triumvirate (the rule of three) – historically, they are known as the Second Triumvirate. You will notice that Antony and Octavius seem to wield the real power; Lepidus plays no further part in the action after this scene. Also note that the first activity we see the Triumvirate engaged in is deciding who will be put to death. This is in stark contrast with Brutus' reluctance to shed blood.
- Octavius, Caesar's nephew and legal heir, is introduced to us as an 18-year-old. He will eventually mature to become one of the most celebrated emperors of Roman history, Augustus Caesar. Although Shakespeare presents him as still finding his political feet, his determination and cold, calculating nature are already evident.

V

Pricked:	Marked down
Consent:	Permit or allow
Hither:	Here
Unmeritable:	Without merit; unremarkable
Ass:	Donkey
Tried:	Experienced
Covert:	Secret

A house in Rome.

[ANTONY, OCTAVIUS and LEPIDUS, seated at a table]

ANTONY These many, then, shall die; their names are pricked.

OCTAVIUS Your brother too must die. Consent you, Lepidus?

LEPIDUS I do consent.

OCTAVIUS Prick him down, Antony.

LEPIDUS Upon condition Publius shall not live,
Who is your sister's son, Mark Antony. 5

ANTONY He shall not live. Look, with a spot I damn him.

But, Lepidus, go you to Caesar's house;
Fetch the will hither, and we shall determine
How to cut off some charge in legacies.

LEPIDUS What, shall I find you here? 10

OCTAVIUS Or here, or at the Capitol.

[Exit LEPIDUS]

ANTONY This is a slight unmeritable man,
Meet to be sent on errands. Is it fit,
The three-fold world divided, he should stand
One of the three to share it?

OCTAVIUS So you thought him; 15
And took his voice who should be pricked to die,
In our black sentence and proscription.

ANTONY Octavius, I have seen more days than you:
And though we lay these honours on this man,
To ease ourselves of divers slanderous loads, 20

He shall but bear them as the ass bears gold,
To groan and sweat under the business,
Either led or driven, as we point the way;
And having brought our treasure where we will,
Then take we down his load, and turn him off, 25

Like to the empty ass, to shake his ears
And graze in commons.

8–9 **We shall determine ... charge in legacies:** See how we can pay for some of our expenses with finances left in Caesar's will.

14 **Three-fold world:** Europe, Africa and Asia.

15–17 **So you thought ... sentence and proscription:** Octavius reminds Antony that he considered Lepidus worthy of deciding who should be killed. In saying this Octavius is commenting on Antony's contradictory behaviour.

20 **Divers slanderous loads:** Different, menial tasks (the dirty work that Antony and Octavius don't want to perform themselves).

21–27 **He shall but bear ... graze in commons:** Antony makes it clear that they will use Lepidus for their own purposes and then get rid of him. He compares Lepidus to a donkey that will struggle to carry gold but which will be put out to pasture or retired when it is no longer useful. (Gold is a metaphor for the short-term honours they give to Lepidus.)



3 Who is included in the list of those to be killed? What does this tell you about the Triumvirate's rule?



1 Shakespeare's audience would have known that, in the future, there would be conflict between Antony and Octavius. Is this conflict suggested or foreshadowed in this scene?

2 Copy and complete the table below to show how Antony presents Lepidus as unfit to govern.

Antony's language portraying Lepidus	Examples	How this use of language portrays Lepidus as unfit to govern
Adjectives used		
Animal imagery used		
Commands issued to him		

3 How does Antony's use of Caesar's will differ in this scene from the way he employed it in Act 3 Scene 2?



What sort of government do you think the Triumvirate will deliver for Rome?

Act 4 Scene 2

CHARACTERS

Brutus
Lucilius
Cassius
Pindarus
1ST Soldier
2ND Soldier
3RD Soldier



IN A NUTSHELL

The action shifts east to where Brutus is stationed with his army. Lucilius tells Brutus that Cassius, who is coming to meet him, is not as friendly as he once was. When Cassius arrives he expresses his anger but, as Brutus insists they should not argue publicly, they go to Brutus' tent to continue the dispute.

Before you read

- The action now shifts to another part of the empire, Philippi (Macedonia) in Greece. While it seems that the events following Caesar's assassination unfold in quick succession, history tells us that this battle actually took place two and a half years after Caesar's death. It is common for Shakespeare to manipulate time for dramatic purposes.



V

- Salutation:** Greeting
- Quartered:** Housed
- Hark:** Listen
- Ho:** A call (like 'hey' or 'oi')
- Softly:** Quietly

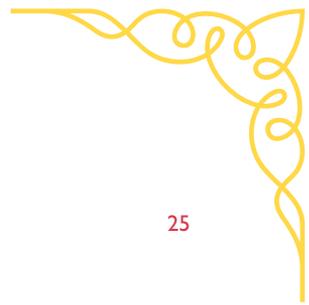
Camp near Sardis. Before Brutus' tent.

[*Drum. Enter BRUTUS, LUCILIUS, LUCIUS and Soldiers. TITINIUS and PINDARUS meet them*]

BRUTUS	Stand, ho!	
LUCILIUS	Give the word, ho! And stand.	
BRUTUS	What now, Lucilius! Is Cassius near?	
LUCILIUS	He is at hand; and Pindarus is come To do you salutation from his master.	5
BRUTUS	He greets me well. Your master, Pindarus, In his own change, or by ill officers, Hath given me some worthy cause to wish Things done undone; but, if he be at hand, I shall be satisfied.	
PINDARUS	I do not doubt	10
	But that my noble master will appear Such as he is, full of regard and honour.	
BRUTUS	He is not doubted. A word, Lucilius; How he received you, let me be resolved.	
LUCILIUS	With courtesy and with respect enough, But not with such familiar instances, Nor with such free and friendly conference, As he hath used of old.	15
BRUTUS	Thou hast described A hot friend cooling. Ever note, Lucilius, When love begins to sicken and decay, It useth an enforced ceremony.	20



-
- 7–10 **In his own change ... I shall be satisfied:** Brutus states his concern that Cassius, or the officers under his command, have behaved dishonourably or corruptly; as Cassius is arriving soon, Brutus is content to wait and discuss these matters with him when he arrives.
 - 10–12 **I do not doubt ... regard and honour:** Pindarus defends Cassius, noting his honourable qualities.
 - 14 **Be resolved:** Hear about it.
 - 16 **Familiar instances:** The courtesies of close friendship.
 - 21 **Enforced ceremony:** Strained or forced manners.



There are no tricks in plain and simple faith;
 But hollow men, like horses hot at hand,
 Make gallant show and promise of their mettle;
 But when they should endure the bloody spur,
 They fall their crests, and, like deceitful jades,
 Sink in the trial. Comes his army on?

25

LUCILIUS They mean this night in Sardis to be quartered;
 The greater part, the horse in general,
 Are come with Cassius.

30

BRUTUS Hark! He is arrived.
 March gently on to meet him.

[Enter CASSIUS and his powers]

CASSIUS Stand, ho!

BRUTUS Stand, ho! Speak the word along.

1ST SOLDIER Stand!

35

2ND SOLDIER Stand!

3RD SOLDIER Stand!

CASSIUS Most noble brother, you have done me wrong.

BRUTUS Judge me, you gods; wrong I mine enemies?
 And if not so, how should I wrong a brother?

40

CASSIUS Brutus, this sober form of yours hides wrongs;
 And when you do them –

BRUTUS Cassius, be content.

Speak your griefs softly; I do know you well.
 Before the eyes of both our armies here,
 Which should perceive nothing but love from us,
 Let us not wrangle. Bid them move away;
 Then in my tent, Cassius, enlarge your griefs,
 And I will give you audience.

45



22–27 **There are no tricks ... in the trial:** Trustworthy men are straightforward and honest in their manners, whereas shallow, untrustworthy men put on a great or spirited show of friendship but cannot be relied upon. Brutus compares such men to horses who appear eager for battle when they are being restrained but, when the time comes for them to gallop hard into the thick of the fighting, let their heads sink and fail the test ('jades' = worthless horses).

29 **Horse in general:** Main part of the cavalry.

39–40 **Judge me, you gods ... wrong a brother:** Brutus asserts that he doesn't wrong his enemies and asks how, if this is the case, could he mistreat a close friend ('a brother') such as Cassius.

41 **Sober form:** Calm appearance.

47 **Enlarge:** Expand upon or tell me about.

48 **I will give you audience:** I'll listen to you.

CASSIUS

Pindarus,

Bid our commanders lead their charges off
A little from this ground.

BRUTUS

Lucius, do you the like; and let no man
Come to our tent till we have done our conference.
Let Lucius and Titinius guard our door.

50

[Exit all]



49

Lead their charges off: Lead away the forces under their command.

51

Do you the like: You do likewise.



QUESTIONS

- 1 Why is Brutus angry with Cassius?
- 2 Why do you think Brutus does not want to argue in public?



DISCUSS

If you were directing *Julius Caesar* for the stage, how would you make the change in the setting clear?

Act 4 Scene 3 (Part 1)

CHARACTERS

Brutus
Cassius
Poet
Lucilius



IN A NUTSHELL

Brutus accuses Cassius of corruption and is also angry with Cassius for withholding money to pay his army. Cassius denies the charges, and harsh insults fly between them. Cassius becomes extremely upset and asks Brutus to kill him. Finally they are reconciled and Brutus says that in future he will take into account Cassius' quick temper. A poet comes to stop the two generals arguing but he is mocked and thrown out.

Before you read

- It is interesting to contrast Brutus and Cassius' relationship in this scene with that presented in Act 1, where they are first introduced. What was once a friendship of wise words and careful conversations is now tested by their dire situation and dissolves into bitter feuding. Following the death of Caesar they are now confronted by encroaching war and the likelihood of their own deaths.



V	Meet:	Fitting or appropriate
	Offices:	(Important) positions
	Chastisement:	Punishment or criticism
	Base:	Unworthy; low-born
	Bay:	Howl
	Bait:	Harass
	Go to:	Get moving
	Choler:	Anger
Bondmen:	Servants or slaves	
Mirth:	Amusement	

Brutus' tent.

[Enter BRUTUS and CASSIUS]

CASSIUS	That you have wronged me doth appear in this: You have condemned and noted Lucius Pella For taking bribes here of the Sardians; Wherein my letters, praying on his side, Because I knew the man, were slighted off.	5
BRUTUS	You wronged yourself to write in such a case.	
CASSIUS	In such a time as this it is not meet That every nice offence should bear his comment.	
BRUTUS	Let me tell you, Cassius, you yourself Are much condemned to have an itching palm, To sell and mart your offices for gold To undeservers.	10
CASSIUS	I an itching palm! You know that you are Brutus that speak this, Or, by the gods, this speech were else your last.	
BRUTUS	The name of Cassius honours this corruption, And chastisement doth therefore hide his head.	15
CASSIUS	Chastisement!	
BRUTUS	Remember March, the Ides of March remember: Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake?	



-
- 2–5 **You have condemned ... were slighted off:** Cassius is angry that Brutus has been critical of one of his allies for taking bribes, disregarding the letters Cassius had written in support of this friend.
 - 7–8 **In such a time ... bear his comment:** Cassius warns Brutus that it is not the time to be making enemies by commenting on every trivial ('nice') matter.
 - 10 **Itching palm:** Take bribes.
 - 11 **Mart:** Trade.
 - 12 **Undeservers:** People who don't deserve (these offices).



What villain touched his body, that did stab, 20
 And not for justice? What, shall one of us
 That struck the foremost man of all this world
 But for supporting robbers, shall we now
 Contaminate our fingers with base bribes,
 And sell the mighty space of our large honours 25
 For so much trash as may be graspèd thus?
 I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon,
 Than such a Roman.

CASSIUS Brutus, bait not me;
 I'll not endure it. You forget yourself,
 To hedge me in. I am a soldier, I, 30
 Older in practice, abler than yourself
 To make conditions.

BRUTUS Go to; you are not, Cassius.

CASSIUS I am.

BRUTUS I say you are not.

CASSIUS Urge me no more, I shall forget myself; 35
 Have mind upon your health, tempt me no further.

BRUTUS Away, slight man!

CASSIUS Is't possible?

BRUTUS Hear me, for I will speak.
 Must I give way and room to your rash choler?
 Shall I be frightened when a madman stares? 40

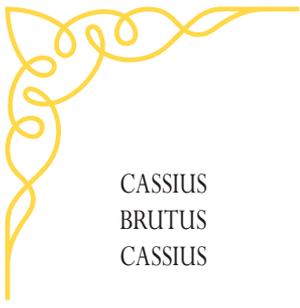
CASSIUS O ye gods, ye gods! Must I endure all this?

BRUTUS All this! Ay, more: fret till your proud heart break;
 Go show your slaves how choleric you are,
 And make your bondmen tremble. Must I budge?
 Must I observe you? Must I stand and crouch 45
 Under your testy humour? By the gods
 You shall digest the venom of your spleen,
 Though it do split you; for, from this day forth,
 I'll use you for my mirth, yea, for my laughter,
 When you are waspish.

CASSIUS Is it come to this? 50



-
- 26 **For so much trash as may be graspèd thus:** To gain so much dirty or corrupt money.
 - 35 **I shall forget myself:** Cassius suggests that in rage he will forget who he is (and perhaps also their friendship) and behave violently towards Brutus.
 - 46 **Testy humour:** Volatile or unpredictable temper.
 - 47–48 **You shall digest ... it do split you:** Brutus mocks Cassius, suggesting that he will make him swallow or digest his anger ('spleen') even if it makes him burst. Elizabethans believed that the emotions originated in the spleen.
 - 49 **Waspish:** Bad-tempered.



Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts,
Dash him to pieces!

CASSIUS I denied you not.

BRUTUS You did.

CASSIUS I did not. He was but a fool that brought 85
My answer back. Brutus hath rived my heart.
A friend should bear his friend's infirmities,
But Brutus makes mine greater than they are.

BRUTUS I do not, till you practise them on me.

CASSIUS You love me not.

BRUTUS I do not like your faults. 90

CASSIUS A friendly eye could never see such faults.

BRUTUS A flatterer's would not, though they do appear
As huge as high Olympus.

CASSIUS Come, Antony, and young Octavius, come, 95
Revenge yourselves alone on Cassius,

For Cassius is awearry of the world;
Hated by one he loves; braved by his brother;
Checked like a bondman; all his faults observed,
Set in a note-book, learned, and conned by rote,
To cast into my teeth. O, I could weep 100

My spirit from mine eyes! There is my dagger,
And here my naked breast; within, a heart
Dearer than Plutus' mine, richer than gold:
If that thou be'st a Roman, take it forth.

I, that denied thee gold, will give my heart: 105

Strike, as thou didst at Caesar; for, I know,
When thou didst hate him worst, thou loved'st him better
Than ever thou loved'st Cassius.

BRUTUS Sheathe your dagger:

Be angry when you will, it shall have scope;

Do what you will, dishonour shall be humour. 110



86 **Rived:** Torn.

87 **Infirmities:** Weaknesses or faults.

98 **Checked:** Corrected.

99 **Conned by rote:** Learned by heart.

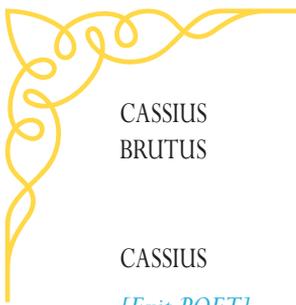
100 **To cast into my teeth:** To speak to my face.

102–03 **A heart / Dearer than Plutus' mine:** A heart that loves you more than the god of riches ('Plutus').

108 **Sheathe your dagger:** Put away your dagger (into its sheath).

109 **Scope:** Free rein or expression.

110 **Dishonour shall be humour:** When you are insulting, I will just consider it your mood.



CASSIUS Bear with him, Brutus; 'tis his fashion. 135
BRUTUS I'll know his humour, when he knows his time.
What should the wars do with these jiggling fools?
Companion, hence!

CASSIUS Away, away! Be gone.

[Exit POET]

BRUTUS Lucilius and Titinius, bid the commanders 140
Prepare to lodge their companies tonight.
CASSIUS And come yourselves, and bring Messala with you
Immediately to us.

[Exit LUCILIUS and TITINIUS]

- 
-
- 135 **Fashion:** Way of speaking.
136 **I'll know his humour, when he knows his time:** I will tolerate him (or this sort of thing) when he recognises that there is a proper time and place for this behaviour.
137 **What should the wars do with these jiggling fools:** What use is a rhyming fool like this in a time of war?
140 **Lodge their companies tonight:** Set up camp with their soldiers tonight.



QUESTIONS

- 1 What matters do Cassius and Brutus argue over?
- 2 In what ways is Cassius melodramatic or over the top in this scene?
- 3 What aspects of Brutus' personality are emphasised in this scene?



EXTEND

- 1 At one stage in their argument Brutus says that the gods should 'with all [their] thunderbolts / Dash him to pieces!' (lines 82–83) were he to become covetous or greedy. What does Brutus' language suggest about how he views himself?
- 2 Why do you think Shakespeare includes the character of the poet in this scene?
- 3 Copy and complete the table on the opposite page to demonstrate your understanding of three quotations.

Speaker	Quotation	Paraphrase or meaning
	In such a time as this it is not meet / That every nice offence should bear his comment (lines 7–8)	
Brutus	... you yourself / Are much condemned to have an itching palm (lines 9–10)	
	Do not presume too much upon my love; / I may do that I shall be sorry for (lines 64–65)	



DISCUSS

To whom are you more sympathetic in this scene, Brutus or Cassius? Why?



Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil ...

Beliefs about ghosts

The ancient Romans told ghost stories much as we do today; ghosts appear in some of their epics and dramas and many festivals were held to honour and appease the dead. It was believed that houses could be haunted but that people had less to fear from the dead who had received a proper burial. There was also widely held belief in necromancy, the prediction of the future through communication with spirits raised from the dead.

We can't know what Shakespeare actually believed about ghosts but he uses them in some of his plays for dramatic purposes. These ghosts are not generally consistent in their qualities. Two of the most famous examples are the ghosts in *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*. Banquo's ghost, in *Macbeth*, speaks no lines, is only seen by Macbeth and appears as a recently murdered bloody corpse. In contrast, the ghost of Hamlet's father is initially seen wearing a suit of armour that he wasn't wearing at the time of his death. This ghost is witnessed by many characters, including Hamlet, and delivers some long, revealing speeches. Caesar's ghost is different again. It speaks only a few lines and makes no grand predictions, but its effect on the audience and Brutus can be chilling. Whatever the playwright's beliefs, ghosts were popular with the audience in Shakespeare's day and beyond, and their appearance was eagerly anticipated.





There were many different attitudes to ghosts in Elizabethan England. A Protestant belief held that ghosts were demons sent to tempt people into sins that would endanger their souls, while Catholic attitudes concerning ghosts were affected by a belief in purgatory (a place people would go after death to be purged or cleansed of their sins in preparation for heaven). Many Catholics believed that ghosts could return from purgatory, especially in situations where something needed to be corrected or rectified. Other Protestants and Catholics were more sceptical about ghosts and some suggested they could be hallucinations induced by melancholy or extreme sadness.

Act 4 Scene 3 (Part 2)

CHARACTERS

Brutus
Cassius
Messala
Lucius
Varro
Lucilius
Claudius
Ghost of Caesar
Titinius
Narrator (optional)

IN A NUTSHELL

Brutus tells Cassius that Portia has committed suicide by swallowing fire. They later discuss plans for war and end their conversation on good terms. Messala reports that Antony, Octavius and Lepidus have put to death a hundred senators, including Cicero. Later that night Brutus bids Lucius play him some music. After Lucius falls asleep, the ghost of Caesar appears to Brutus and tells him that he shall see him at Philippi. A shaken Brutus commands his men to inform Cassius to prepare for battle.

Before you read

- In including details of Portia's death Shakespeare follows his source, the historian Plutarch, who reported that she killed herself by 'swallowing burning coals'. As you will see in the following scenes, Brutus is stoic. Stoicism valued reason over the emotions and taught that people should endure pain patiently. For this reason Brutus refuses to get emotional or make a big deal about his wife's death.
- Brutus describes Caesar's ghost as a 'monstrous apparition'. Shakespeare is perhaps suggesting here that Caesar's character is as large in death as it was in life; alternatively, perhaps the term 'monstrous' alludes to the size and weight of grief that Brutus carries (albeit subconsciously) having murdered his friend.



V

'Scaped: Escaped
Tidings: News
Proscription: Condemnation of someone
Aught: Anything
Repose: Rest

Brutus' tent.

BRUTUS Lucius, a bowl of wine!

[Exit LUCIUS]

CASSIUS I did not think you could have been so angry.

BRUTUS O Cassius, I am sick of many griefs. 145

CASSIUS Of your philosophy you make no use,
If you give place to accidental evils.

BRUTUS No man bears sorrow better. Portia is dead.

CASSIUS Ha? Portia?

BRUTUS She is dead. 150

CASSIUS How 'scaped I killing when I crossed you so?
O insupportable and touching loss!
Upon what sickness?

BRUTUS Impatient of my absence,
And grief that young Octavius with Mark Antony
Have made themselves so strong; for with her death 155

That tidings came. With this she fell distract,
And, her attendants absent, swallowed fire.

CASSIUS And died so?

BRUTUS Even so.

CASSIUS O ye immortal gods!

[Re-enter LUCIUS with wine and taper]

BRUTUS Speak no more of her – Give me a bowl of wine –
In this I bury all unkindness, Cassius. 160

CASSIUS My heart is thirsty for that noble pledge.
Fill, Lucius, till the wine o'erswell the cup;
I cannot drink too much of Brutus' love.

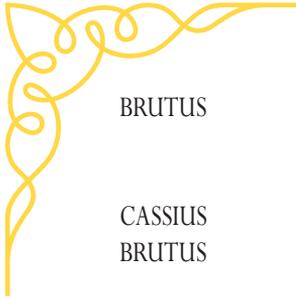
[Exit LUCIUS. Re-enter TITINIUS with MESSALA]

147 **Accidental evils:** Unfortunate events that happen by chance.

156 **Fell distract:** Fell to madness; or lapsed into depression.

161 **Pledge:** Vow or promise of friendship.





BRUTUS Come in, Titinius! Welcome, good Messala.
Now sit we close about this taper here, 165
And call in question our necessities.

CASSIUS Portia, art thou gone?
BRUTUS No more, I pray you.
Messala, I have here received letters,
That young Octavius and Mark Antony
Come down upon us with a mighty power, 170
Bending their expedition toward Philippi.

MESSALA Myself have letters of the selfsame tenor.
BRUTUS With what addition?
MESSALA That by proscription and bills of outlawry,
Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus, 175
Have put to death an hundred senators.

BRUTUS Therein our letters do not well agree.
Mine speak of seventy senators that died
By their proscriptions, Cicero being one.
CASSIUS Cicero one?
MESSALA Cicero is dead, 180
And by that order of proscription.
Had you your letters from your wife, my lord?

BRUTUS No, Messala.
MESSALA Nor nothing in your letters writ of her?
BRUTUS Nothing, Messala.
MESSALA That, methinks, is strange. 185
BRUTUS Why ask you? Hear you aught of her in yours?
MESSALA No, my lord.
BRUTUS Now, as you are a Roman, tell me true.
MESSALA Then like a Roman bear the truth I tell:
For certain she is dead, and by strange manner. 190

BRUTUS Why, farewell, Portia. We must die, Messala.
With meditating that she must die once,
I have the patience to endure it now.

MESSALA Even so great men great losses should endure.
CASSIUS I have as much of this in art as you, 195
But yet my nature could not bear it so.

166 **Call in question our necessities:** Work out our priorities.

170–71 **With a mighty power ... toward Philippi:** With a huge army turning toward Philippi.

172 **Selfsame tenor:** Same general opinion.

174 **By proscription and bills of outlawry:** Papers condemning some people to death and enforcing the banishment of others.

177 **Therein:** On that matter.

195–96 **I have as much ... could not bear it so:** I know the theory (Stoicism) as well as you but I could not contain this sort of grief.





BRUTUS Well, to our work alive. What do you think
Of marching to Philippi presently?

CASSIUS I do not think it good.

BRUTUS Your reason?

CASSIUS This it is:
 'Tis better that the enemy seek us: 200
 So shall he waste his means, weary his soldiers,
 Doing himself offence; whilst we, lying still,
 Are full of rest, defence, and nimbleness.

BRUTUS Good reasons must, of force, give place to better. 205
 The people 'twixt Philippi and this ground
 Do stand but in a forced affection;
 For they have grudged us contribution.
 The enemy, marching along by them,
 By them shall make a fuller number up,
 Come on refreshed, new-added, and encouraged; 210
 From which advantage shall we cut him off,
 If at Philippi we do face him there,
 These people at our back.

CASSIUS Hear me, good brother.

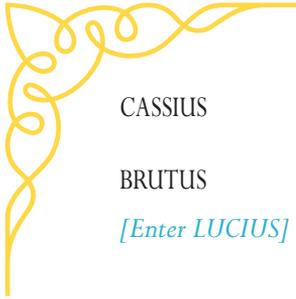
BRUTUS Under your pardon. You must note beside, 215
 That we have tried the utmost of our friends,
 Our legions are brim-full, our cause is ripe.
 The enemy increaseth every day;
 We, at the height, are ready to decline.
 There is a tide in the affairs of men,
 Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; 220
 Omitted, all the voyage of their life
 Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
 On such a full sea are we now afloat;
 And we must take the current when it serves,
 Or lose our ventures.

CASSIUS Then, with your will, go on; 225
 We'll along ourselves, and meet them at Philippi.

BRUTUS 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.



-
- 201 **Means:** Resources.
 - 206 **Do stand but in a forced affection:** Only seem to support us because they are forced into doing so.
 - 207 **Grudged us contribution:** They have only reluctantly contributed to the food supply for our army.
 - 228 **Nature must obey necessity:** Our nature requires that we sleep.
 - 229 **Niggard:** Satisfy economically.



CASSIUS No more. Good night: 230
Early tomorrow will we rise, and hence.

BRUTUS Lucius!

[Enter LUCIUS]

My gown.

[Exit LUCIUS]

Farewell, good Messala.
Good night, Titinius. Noble, noble Cassius,
Good night, and good repose.

CASSIUS O my dear brother!
This was an ill beginning of the night: 235
Never come such division 'tween our souls!
Let it not, Brutus.

BRUTUS Everything is well.

CASSIUS Good night, my lord.

BRUTUS Good night, good brother.

TITINIUS /
MESSALA Good night, Lord Brutus.

BRUTUS Farewell, every one.

[Exit all but BRUTUS. Re-enter LUCIUS with the gown]

LUCIUS Give me the gown. Where is thy instrument? 240
Here in the tent.

BRUTUS What, thou speak'st drowsily?
Poor knave, I blame thee not; thou art o'er-watched.
Call Claudius and some other of my men:
I'll have them sleep on cushions in my tent.

LUCIUS Varro and Claudius! 245

[Enter VARRO and CLAUDIUS]

VARRO Calls my lord?

BRUTUS I pray you, sirs, lie in my tent and sleep;
It may be I shall raise you by and by
On business to my brother Cassius.

VARRO So please you, we will stand and watch your pleasure. 250

BRUTUS I will not have it so: lie down, good sirs.
It may be I shall otherwise bethink me.
Look, Lucius, here's the book I sought for so;
I put it in the pocket of my gown.

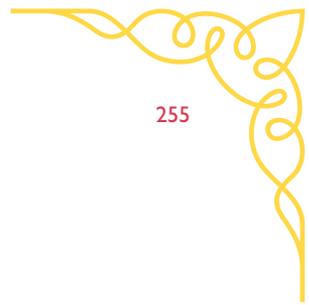
[VARRO and CLAUDIUS lie down]



240 **Instrument:** Probably a lute.

250 **Watch your pleasure:** Stay awake until you need us.

252 **It may be I shall otherwise bethink me:** I may decide to do otherwise.



LUCIUS I was sure your lordship did not give it me. 255
 BRUTUS Bear with me, good boy, I am much forgetful.
 Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
 And touch thy instrument a strain or two?

LUCIUS Ay, my lord, an't please you.
 BRUTUS It does, my boy.
 I trouble thee too much, but thou art willing. 260

LUCIUS It is my duty, sir.
 BRUTUS I should not urge thy duty past thy might;
 I know young bloods look for a time of rest.

LUCIUS I have slept, my lord, already.
 BRUTUS It was well done; and thou shalt sleep again; 265
 I will not hold thee long. If I do live,
 I will be good to thee.

[Music and a song. LUCIUS falls asleep]

This is a sleepy tune. O murderous slumber,
 Layst thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
 That plays thee music? Gentle knave, good night; 270
 I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee.

If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument;
 I'll take it from thee; and, good boy, good night.
 Let me see, let me see; is not the leaf turned down
 Where I left reading? Here it is, I think. 275

[BRUTUS sits and reads. Enter the GHOST OF CAESAR]

How ill this taper burns! Ha! Who comes here?
 I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
 That shapes this monstrous apparition.
 It comes upon me. Art thou any thing?
 Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil, 280
 That makest my blood cold and my hair to stare?
 Speak to me what thou art.

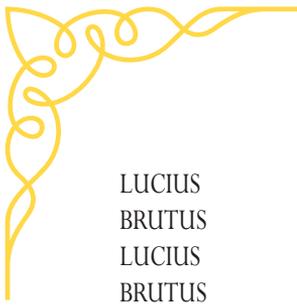
GHOST Thy evil spirit, Brutus.
 BRUTUS Why comest thou?
 GHOST To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi.
 BRUTUS Well; then I shall see thee again? 285

GHOST Ay, at Philippi.
 BRUTUS Why, I will see thee at Philippi, then.

[Exit GHOST]



- 270 **Knave:** Boy.
- 276 **How ill this taper burns:** The candle is almost burnt out.
- 281 **Hair to stare:** Brutus suggests that his hair is standing on end.



Now I have taken heart thou vanishest. Ill spirit, I would hold more talk with thee. Boy, Lucius! Varro! Claudius! Sirs, awake! Claudius!

LUCIUS The strings, my lord, are false. 290

BRUTUS He thinks he still is at his instrument. Lucius, awake!

LUCIUS My lord?

BRUTUS Didst thou dream, Lucius, that thou so cried'st out?

LUCIUS My lord, I do not know that I did cry.

BRUTUS Yes, that thou didst. Didst thou see any thing? 295

LUCIUS Nothing, my lord.

BRUTUS Sleep again, Lucius. Sirrah Claudius!

[To VARRO] Fellow thou, awake!

VARRO My lord?

CLAUDIUS My lord?

BRUTUS Why did you so cry out, sirs, in your sleep?

VARRO / Did we, my lord?

CLAUDIUS

BRUTUS Ay; saw you any thing? 300

VARRO No, my lord, I saw nothing.

CLAUDIUS Nor I, my lord.

BRUTUS Go and commend me to my brother Cassius. Bid him set on his powers betimes before, And we will follow.

VARRO / It shall be done, my lord.

CLAUDIUS

[Exit all]



- 288 **Taken heart:** Got up my courage.
- 303 **Set on his powers betimes before:** Order his army to advance before mine (early in the morning).



QUESTIONS

- 1 Explain how Cassius and Brutus differ in their views about the battle.
- 2 How would you describe the state of Brutus and Cassius' friendship when they part towards the end of this scene?
- 3 In what ways does Shakespeare present Brutus as affectionate towards his servant Lucius?
- 4 How would you describe Brutus' response to Caesar's ghost? How does Shakespeare convey this?



EXTEND

- 1 How does Shakespeare make Cassius' shock or surprise at the news of Portia's death believable?
- 2 Before disagreeing with Cassius' plan for the battle, Brutus states 'Good reasons must, of force, give place to better' (line 204). Do you see this statement as humble and conciliatory or pompous and presumptuous?
- 3 What does Brutus mean when he says 'there is a tide in the affairs of men, / Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune' (lines 219–20)?
- 4 Why do you think it is only Brutus who sees Caesar's ghost? What might Shakespeare's dramatic purpose be in doing this?
- 5 The Ghost's dialogue is minimal or sparse. Do you think this is more effective than a long speech? Why or why not?



DISCUSS

- 1 Why do you think Brutus doesn't tell Messala that he already knows about Portia's death?
- 2 How would you portray the presence of Caesar's ghost if you were directing a stage production of *Julius Caesar*? Consider any of the following: sound, lighting, voiceover, digital screen effects, make-up, costume and blocking.



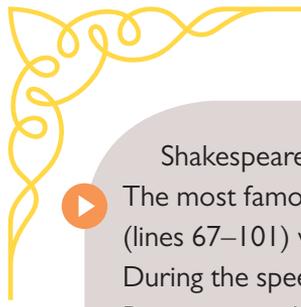
The noblest Roman of them all ...

Honour and patriotism

The theme of honour is explored and questioned throughout *Julius Caesar*. In the ancient Roman world, honour was associated with manliness, courage and excellence; it was displayed on the battlefield and to a lesser extent in the political arena. The central characters in *Julius Caesar* – Brutus, Cassius, Antony, Octavius and Caesar himself – undeniably demonstrate this kind of nobility.

In Roman times honour was a public virtue and Shakespeare emphasises this through the tone of the play. *Julius Caesar* has fewer soliloquies than most of Shakespeare's plays and the characters are intensely aware of their public reputations. This is reinforced by the characters' use of the third person when describing themselves: for example, 'Caesar shall go forth' (Act 2 Scene 2, line 28); 'Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius' Act 1 Scene 3, line 90); and 'Brutus had rather be a villager / Than to repute himself a son of Rome / Under these harsh conditions' (Act 1 Scene 2, line 175–77).





Shakespeare questions and interrogates the concept of honour throughout the play. The most famous example of this occurs in Mark Antony's eulogy in Act 3 Scene 2 (lines 67–101) where he repeats his description of the conspirators as 'honourable'. During the speech he points out the ingratitude of some of the conspirators, such as Brutus, towards Caesar and portrays the assassination as an act of cowardice. By the end of his eulogy it becomes evident that he is using the word 'honourable' ironically. He again presents the actions of the conspirators as dishonourable in Act 5 when he addresses Cassius and Brutus:

You showed your teeth like apes, and fawned like hounds,
And bowed like bondmen, kissing Caesar's feet;
Whilst damnèd Casca, like a cur, behind
Struck Caesar on the neck. (Act 5 Scene 1, lines 41–44)

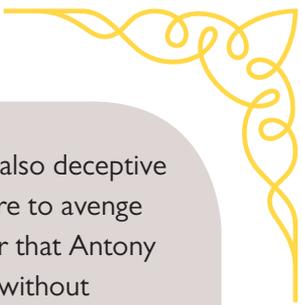
Antony deplores the deceptive and cowardly nature of the conspiracy, which he presents as anything but honourable.

Patriotism is a major theme in *Julius Caesar* and the play considers the conflict between love of country and personal ambition. From the outset, Brutus is concerned only with the fate of Rome and this leads him to participate in a conspiracy from which he has little to gain. Brutus' patriotism causes him to act against Caesar in spite of their close friendship. It could be argued that Brutus' patriotism is in tension with his sense of honour, and this clash is highlighted through Antony's speech. His public conversation with Cassius and his private thoughts, shown in soliloquies, focus only on the importance of preserving Roman freedoms. Despite this, Antony concedes Brutus' pure and selfless motivations at the end of the play, describing him as 'the noblest Roman of them all'.

Cassius is also patriotic but his patriotism is corrupted or clouded by personal envy. He deceives Brutus with false letters, and is prepared to shed not only Caesar's blood but also the blood of other innocent men such as Antony. While Brutus has nothing to gain from the conspiracy, it is clear that Caesar dislikes Cassius. Cassius' eagerness to assassinate him seems to arise from envy of the ruler and possibly a desire to improve his political fortunes. In his soliloquy he admits:

Caesar doth bear me hard; but he loves Brutus.
If I were Brutus now, and he were Cassius,
He should not humour me. (Act 1 Scene 2, lines 305–07)

The corruption that Brutus criticises him of engaging in is further evidence of Cassius' preference for personal gain over justice; such behaviour is ultimately unpatriotic.



While Mark Antony appears to be patriotic and loyal to Caesar, he is also deceptive and his behaviour could be described as morally questionable. In his desire to avenge Caesar's death, Antony is prepared to deceive the conspirators. It is clear that Antony values self-advancement over patriotism when he stirs the crowd to riot without concern for the consequences: 'Mischief, thou art afoot, / Take thou what course thou wilt' (Act 3 Scene 2, lines 253–54). He is not content sharing power with the other two members of the Triumvirate and, disregarding Rome's need for stable government, he moves to dispose of Lepidus (at the beginning of Act 4). It is clear that Antony values personal ambition over patriotism.

Many scholars of Roman history argue that the shift from the Roman Republic to an empire was inevitable. The imperial system reconciled the tension between personal glory or ambition on the one hand, and patriotism on the other, in the person of the emperor. Shakespeare presents this momentous movement towards the imperial system or 'the spirit of Caesar' to be almost predestined or fated.

Act 5

Act 5 Scene 1

CHARACTERS

Cassius
Brutus
Octavius
Antony
Messenger
Messala
Lucilius
Narrator (optional)



IN A NUTSHELL

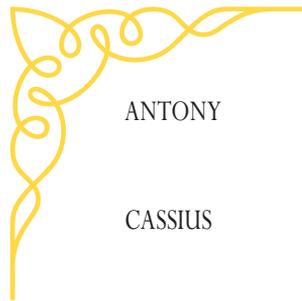
Upon learning of the approach of the armies of Brutus and Cassius, Octavius and Antony make plans for battle. The four meet and exchange insults before parting to fight. Cassius states that he has become superstitious and interprets the predatory birds that are circling above them as a sign that the battle will go badly. Brutus and Cassius discuss suicide as an option if they are defeated, before parting as good friends.

Before you read

- In their conversation before they part, Brutus and Cassius discuss suicide. In this detail Shakespeare is reflecting the beliefs of the pagan world, not those of Elizabethan England in which the act of suicide was almost unthinkable. Brutus adheres to Stoicism, a philosophy that teaches endurance in the face of suffering but accepts suicide as an act of last resort.

V

Tut:	Expression of irritation or disapproval
Wherefore:	Why
Gallant:	Brave or courageous
Softly:	Quietly or steadily
Exigent:	Emergency
Parley:	Talk
Blows:	Violence
Peevish:	Bad-tempered



ANTONY In your bad strokes, Brutus, you give good words; 30
Witness the hole you made in Caesar's heart,
Crying 'Long live! Hail, Caesar!'

CASSIUS Antony,
The posture of your blows are yet unknown;
But for your words, they rob the Hybla bees,
And leave them honeyless.

ANTONY Not stingless too? 35
BRUTUS O yes, and soundless too;
For you have stolen their buzzing, Antony,
And very wisely threat before you sting.

ANTONY Villains, you did not so, when your vile daggers 40
Hacked one another in the sides of Caesar:
You showed your teeth like apes, and fawned like hounds,
And bowed like bondmen, kissing Caesar's feet;
Whilst damnèd Casca, like a cur, behind
Struck Caesar on the neck. O you flatterers!

CASSIUS Flatterers! Now, Brutus, thank yourself: 45
This tongue had not offended so today,
If Cassius might have ruled.

OCTAVIUS Come, come, the cause. If arguing make us sweat,
The proof of it will turn to redder drops. Look;
I draw a sword against conspirators; 50
When think you that the sword goes up again?
Never, till Caesar's three and thirty wounds
Be well avenged; or till another Caesar
Have added slaughter to the sword of traitors.

BRUTUS Caesar, thou canst not die by traitors' hands, 55
Unless thou bring'st them with thee.

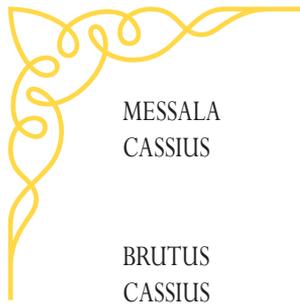
OCTAVIUS So I hope;
I was not born to die on Brutus' sword.

BRUTUS O, if thou wert the noblest of thy strain,
Young man, thou couldst not die more honourable.

CASSIUS A peevish schoolboy, worthless of such honour, 60
Joined with a masker and a reveller!



-
- 33 **The posture of your blows:** The nature of your blows.
- 34 **Hybla bees:** Sicilian bees famous for the quality of their honey.
- 49 **Proof of it:** Test or trial of it (i.e. the argument will be tested in battle).
- 53–54 **Till another Caesar ... sword of traitors:** Until another Caesar (Octavius Caesar) has also been killed by the swords of traitors.
- 55–56 **Caesar, thou canst ... them with thee:** Brutus insists that (even if he were killed by them) Octavius couldn't die at the hands of traitors unless there are some of them in his army.
- 61 **A masker and a reveller:** Cassius presents Antony as merely a party-goer. By this he is suggesting that Antony lacks moral depth or substance.



MESSALA Believe not so.

CASSIUS I but believe it partly;
For I am fresh of spirit and resolved 90
To meet all perils very constantly.

BRUTUS Even so, Lucilius. *[Advancing]*

CASSIUS Now, most noble Brutus,
The gods today stand friendly, that we may,
Lovers in peace, lead on our days to age.
But since the affairs of men rest still uncertain, 95
Let's reason with the worst that may befall.
If we do lose this battle, then is this
The very last time we shall speak together:
What are you then determinèd to do?

BRUTUS Even by the rule of that philosophy 100
By which I did blame Cato for the death
Which he did give himself. I know not how,
But I do find it cowardly and vile,
For fear of what might fall, so to prevent
The time of life, arming myself with patience 105
To stay the providence of some high powers
That govern us below.

CASSIUS Then, if we lose this battle,
You are contented to be led in triumph
Through the streets of Rome?

BRUTUS No, Cassius, no; think not, thou noble Roman, 110
That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome;
He bears too great a mind. But this same day
Must end that work the Ides of March begun;
And whether we shall meet again I know not.
Therefore our everlasting farewell take: 115
For ever and for ever, farewell, Cassius.
If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;
If not, why then, this parting was well made.

CASSIUS For ever and for ever, farewell, Brutus.
If we do meet again, we'll smile indeed; 120
If not, 'tis true this parting was well made.

BRUTUS Why, then, lead on. O, that a man might know
The end of this day's business ere it come.



88 **Give up the ghost:** Die.

89–91 **I but believe ... perils very constantly:** Cassius asserts that he only partly believes in this omen. He feels fresh (well rested) and full of courage to meet the dangers of the day.

100–07 **Even by the rule ... govern us below:** Brutus was critical of the suicide of Cato, his wife's father; following his belief in Stoicism, he intends to patiently endure whatever troubles they shall meet.

But it sufficeth that the day will end,
And then the end is known. Come ho! Away!

125

[Exit all]



QUESTIONS

- 1 What are the signs of tension between Antony and Octavius in this scene?
- 2 What are the similarities and differences between Antony and Octavius' relationship and the relationship between Cassius and Brutus?
- 3 How does Antony use similes in this scene to heighten his negative feelings towards the conspirators?
- 4 How does Shakespeare present Octavius as courageous or keen for action in this scene?
- 5 What kind of birds have replaced the eagles? Why is Cassius worried about their appearance?



EXTEND

- 1 How does the dialogue that begins this scene prove the tactics that Brutus insisted upon in the previous scene to have been misjudged?
- 2 How does the argument between the two sides (lines 27–65) reinforce some of the play's key themes?
- 3 What does Brutus mean when he tells Cassius 'this same day / Must end that work the Ides of March begun' (lines 112–13)?
- 4 What do you think is the effect of Brutus and Cassius' description of Octavius as a 'peevish schoolboy' (line 60)? What does Octavius' reaction to it tell us about his character?
- 5 How does Shakespeare show the reconciliation between Brutus and Cassius? Discuss language and literary devices.
- 6 How does Cassius' character appear to have changed since the beginning of the play?

Act 5 Scene 2

CHARACTER

Brutus

IN A NUTSHELL

Because Brutus sees signs of weakness in Octavius' army, he gives written orders for Messala to deliver to his troops, commanding them to attack.

V

Bills: Written orders
Legion: A group of 3000–6000 soldiers

The field of battle.

[Alarum. Enter BRUTUS and MESSALA]

BRUTUS Ride, ride, Messala, ride, and give these bills
 Unto the legions on the other side.

[Loud alarum]

Let them set on at once; for I perceive
But cold demeanor in Octavius' wing,
And sudden push gives them the overthrow.
Ride, ride, Messala, let them all come down.

5

[All exit]



- 3 **Set on:** Attack.
- 4 **Cold demeanor:** Lack of courage.
- 5 **Gives them the overthrow:** Will defeat them.



QUESTIONS

Do you think Brutus appears confident in this scene? Give reasons for your answer.



EXTEND

What do you think is Shakespeare's purpose in including such a short scene here? How does it contribute to the action?



The sun of Rome is set. Our day is gone ...

Julius Caesar as tragedy

What we now call the First Folio, a thick book entitled *Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*, was published in 1623. In writing *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare closely follows the historical record left by Plutarch, a classical historian, and for this reason the play could easily be defined as a history. But Shakespeare's colleagues, who prepared the First Folio, included *Julius Caesar* in the section marked 'Tragedies', along with such famous plays as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *King Lear*.

The First Folio did not offer a definition of tragedy; many of its histories contain tragic elements and many of the tragedies include plenty of historical detail, and all of Shakespeare's plays include some comic elements. So, what did the editors mean by tragedy?

The term tragedy generally suggests an unhappy ending, while comedy suggests all ends happily. In addition to this, there are some elements common to the majority of Shakespeare's tragedies:

- 1 Shakespeare's tragic heroes (generally men) are elevated above the common people by rank or ability.
- 2 The tragic hero is generally alienated from his own society through his experiences or through the choices that he has made.
- 3 The downfall of the hero affects the whole community.
- 4 The tragic hero comes to a recognition of his problematic choices or the consequences of his destructive actions, and from this he draws some meaning of potentially universal significance.

When you look at this list, you will probably see that *Julius Caesar* doesn't adhere perfectly to these criteria. One of the first questions critics ask is, 'who is the tragic hero of the play?' The title suggests it is Caesar, but he is killed in the middle of the play and Brutus, Cassius and Mark Antony appear in more scenes and speak a far greater number of lines than Caesar does. Despite this, some still see Caesar as the tragic hero, making the point that the action of the play revolves around him even after he dies. Other critics cast Brutus as the tragic hero of the play. He has more lines than any other character and his tragic suicide marks the climax of the play. Those arguing this would generally suggest that Shakespeare's title merely reflects that Julius Caesar is the most important character in the play.



Questions

- 1 Who do you think is the tragic hero of *Julius Caesar*? Why?
- 2 What is/are Brutus' flaw(s)?
- 3 What is/are Caesar's flaw(s)?
- 4 How is the whole community affected by the downfall of Brutus and Caesar?
- 5 Does Brutus seem to recognise his problematic choices and reflect on these?
- 6 For whom is the ending of *Julius Caesar* a tragedy and for whom does it end happily?

Act 5 Scene 3

CHARACTERS

Cassius
Titinius
Messala
Brutus
Pindarus
Cato
Narrator (optional)



IN A NUTSHELL

Brutus has ordered the attack too early and Cassius and his troops are under threat from Antony's army. After his troops flee, Cassius sends Titinius to check the progress of the battle and Pindarus mistakenly reports that Titinius has been seized and killed. This news causes Cassius to order Pindarus to kill him. On his return, discovering Cassius dead, Titinius kills himself. When Brutus arrives he mourns the loss of his friends and declares that he will continue to fight.

Before you read

- Cassius commits suicide because he acts on the false news of Titinius' death and believes his own defeat to be imminent. In some of his other tragedies, such as *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare also creates miscommunication among his characters that causes them to behave rashly, with tragic consequences.



Fly:	Run away
Ensign:	Standard bearer
Yond / Yonder:	Over there
Hilt:	The handle of a sword
Disconsolate:	Lacking in hope or sorrowful
Apace:	Quickly

Another part of the field.

[*Alarums. Enter CASSIUS and TITINIUS*]

CASSIUS O, look, Titinius, look, the villains fly.
Myself have to mine own turned enemy:
This ensign here of mine was turning back;
I slew the coward, and did take it from him.

TITINIUS O Cassius, Brutus gave the word too early;
Who, having some advantage on Octavius,
Took it too eagerly; his soldiers fell to spoil,
Whilst we by Antony are all enclosed.

5

[*Enter PINDARUS*]

PINDARUS Fly further off, my lord, fly further off!
Mark Antony is in your tents, my lord
Fly, therefore, noble Cassius, fly far off!

10

CASSIUS This hill is far enough. Look, look, Titinius;
Are those my tents where I perceive the fire?

TITINIUS They are, my lord.

CASSIUS Titinius, if thou lovest me,
Mount thou my horse, and hide thy spurs in him,
Till he have brought thee up to yonder troops,
And here again; that I may rest assured
Whether yond troops are friend or enemy.

15

TITINIUS I will be here again, even with a thought.

[*Exit TITINIUS*]

CASSIUS Go, Pindarus, get higher on that hill;
My sight was ever thick. Regard Titinius,
And tell me what thou notest about the field.

20

[*PINDARUS ascends the hill*]

This day I breathèd first. Time is come round,
And where I did begin, there shall I end;
My life is run his compass – Sirrah, what news?

25

PINDARUS [*Above*] O my lord!

CASSIUS What news?

2 **Myself have to mine own turned enemy:** My own men are running from me as if I were their enemy.

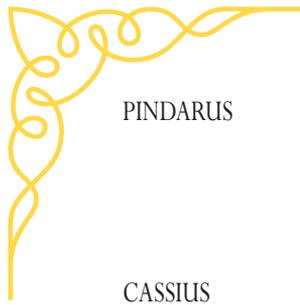
7–8 **His soldiers fell to spoil ... Antony are all enclosed:** Brutus' soldiers, when they had the advantage, were too concerned about the spoils of war (the loot) while Cassius' men (whom they should have been helping) were surrounded.

15 **Mount thou my horse, and hide thy spurs in him:** Get on my horse and dig your spurs into him (so that he gallops more quickly).

21 **My sight was ever thick:** Cassius says that he is short-sighted.

25 **My life is run his compass:** My life has come full circle (it is over).





PINDARUS *[Above]* Titinius is enclosed round about
 With horsemen, that make to him on the spur;
 Yet he spurs on. Now they are almost on him. 30
 Now, Titinius! Now some light. O, he lights too.
 He's ta'en. And, hark! They shout for joy.

CASSIUS
 Come down, behold no more.
 O, coward that I am, to live so long,
 To see my best friend ta'en before my face! 35

[PINDARUS descends]

Come hither, sirrah.
 In Parthia did I take thee prisoner;
 And then I swore thee, saving of thy life,
 That whatsoever I did bid thee do, 40
 Thou shouldst attempt it. Come now, keep thine oath.
 Now be a freeman, and with this good sword,
 That ran through Caesar's bowels, search this bosom.
 Stand not to answer. Here, take thou the hilts;
 And, when my face is covered, as 'tis now,
 Guide thou the sword.

[PINDARUS stabs him]

Caesar, thou art revenged, 45
 Even with the sword that killed thee.

[CASSIUS dies]

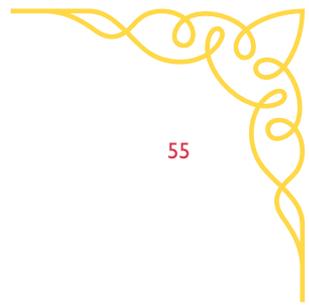
PINDARUS
 So, I am free; yet would not so have been,
 Durst I have done my will. O Cassius!
 Far from this country Pindarus shall run,
 Where never Roman shall take note of him. 50

[Exit PINDARUS. Re-enter TITINIUS with MESSALA]

MESSALA
 It is but change, Titinius; for Octavius
 Is overthrown by noble Brutus' power,
 As Cassius' legions are by Antony.
 TITINIUS
 These tidings will well comfort Cassius.



-
- 28 **Enclosed:** Surrounded.
 - 29 **That make to him on the spur:** Spurring their horses to gallop more quickly.
 - 31 **Light:** Dismount (get off a horse).
 - 37 **Parthia:** Territory to the east of the Roman Empire.
 - 41 **Now be a freeman:** Cassius releases Pindarus from being his bondman or slave.
 - 43 **Stand not to answer:** Do not pause to reply.
 - 47–48 **Yet would not ... have done my will:** Pindarus reflects that he wouldn't be free had he dared to follow his own desires and so refrained from killing his master.
 - 50 **Where never Roman shall take note of him:** Where no Roman will notice him.



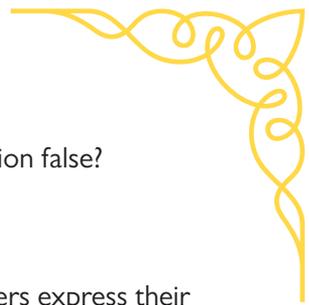
MESSALA Where did you leave him?
 TITINIUS All disconsolate, 55
 With Pindarus his bondman, on this hill.
 MESSALA Is not that he that lies upon the ground?
 TITINIUS He lies not like the living. O my heart!
 MESSALA Is not that he?
 TITINIUS No, this was he, Messala,
 But Cassius is no more. O setting sun, 60
 As in thy red rays thou dost sink to night,
 So in his red blood Cassius' day is set;
 The sun of Rome is set. Our day is gone;
 Clouds, dews, and dangers come; our deeds are done.
 Mistrust of my success hath done this deed. 65
 MESSALA Mistrust of good success hath done this deed.
 O hateful error, melancholy's child,
 Why dost thou show to the apt thoughts of men
 The things that are not? O error, soon conceived,
 Thou never comest unto a happy birth, 70
 But kill'st the mother that engendered thee.
 TITINIUS What, Pindarus! Where art thou, Pindarus?
 MESSALA Seek him, Titinius, whilst I go to meet
 The noble Brutus, thrusting this report
 Into his ears. I may say 'thrusting' it;
 For piercing steel and darts envenomèd 75
 Shall be as welcome to the ears of Brutus
 As tidings of this sight.
 TITINIUS Hie you, Messala,
 And I will seek for Pindarus the while.

[Exit MESSALA]

Why didst thou send me forth, brave Cassius? 80
 Did I not meet thy friends? And did not they
 Put on my brows this wreath of victory,
 And bid me give it thee? Didst thou not hear their shouts?
 Alas, thou hast misconstrued everything!
 But, hold thee, take this garland on thy brow; 85



- 64 **Dews:** The dew produced by night.
- 65 **Mistrust:** Lack of confidence or doubt.
- 67 **Melancholy's child:** The child of sadness.
- 69 **Error, soon conceived:** A mistake caused by rash or overhasty judgement. A pun on 'conceive' meaning to both imagine something and to give birth to a child.
- 70–71 **Thou never comest ... that engendered thee:** The birth of this error kills the person who gave birth to it. This finishes the poetic conceit about the suicide being the child of sadness.
- 76 **Darts envenomèd:** Poison arrows.
- 84 **Misconstrued:** Misinterpreted.



QUESTIONS

- 1 What is Cassius' complaint in the opening lines of this scene?
- 2 How is the report Pindarus gives to Cassius of Titinius' situation false?
- 3 In what way is the spirit of Caesar present in this scene?
- 4 Do you think Cassius' death is presented as dignified?
- 5 Copy and complete the following table to show how characters express their melancholy (extreme sadness) in defeat.

Characters	Examples of melancholy (Quotation)	Details of the language or literary devices	Effect of these
Cassius			
Brutus			



EXTEND

- 1 Cassius reveals that he is short-sighted in this scene.
 - a How does this physical flaw apply to his character in a metaphorical sense?
 - b How does this flaw render Cassius' earlier criticism of Caesar's physical flaws ironic?
- 2 Describe the tone of Brutus' speeches at the end of this scene. Do you believe him to be confident?
- 3 The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle suggested that tragedy should contain dramatic or ironical reversals. Can you see anything in this scene that fits this description?



DISCUSS

Given that this is an exciting battle scene, how would you choose to present it onstage to create a sense of action and anticipation?

Act 5 Scene 4

CHARACTERS

Lucilius
Antony
Cato
1ST Soldier
2ND Soldier
Brutus
Narrator (optional)



IN A NUTSHELL

Brutus encourages his men to fight. Cato dies after declaring his own bravery. Lucilius pretends to be Brutus and is soon captured. Antony spares his life, because he wants his future loyalty, then sends his soldiers off to find out whether Brutus is alive and to bring news back to Octavius' tent.

Before you read

- It is interesting to note Antony's generous behaviour in this scene. We see how kind he is towards Lucilius in letting him live, perhaps because he observes in Lucilius traits of his own brave character. Antony's generosity in the final scenes probably stems largely from being on the winning side.



Yield: Give in; surrender
Straight: Immediately

Another part of the field.

[Alarum. Enter fighting, Soldiers of both armies; then BRUTUS, CATO, LUCILIUS and others]

BRUTUS Yet, countrymen, O, yet hold up your heads.

[Exit BRUTUS]

CATO What bastard doth not? Who will go with me?
I will proclaim my name about the field.
I am the son of Marcus Cato, ho!
A foe to tyrants, and my country's friend.

LUCILIUS And I am Brutus, Marcus Brutus, I;
Brutus, my country's friend; know me for Brutus!

[YOUNG CATO is overpowered and falls]

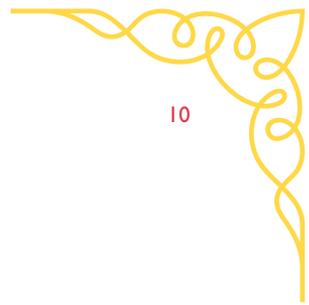
O young and noble Cato, art thou down?

5



2

What bastard doth not: Anyone who does not is not a true Roman.



Why, now thou diest as bravely as Titinius;
And mayst be honoured, being Cato's son. 10

1ST SOLDIER Yield, or thou diest.

LUCILIUS Only I yield to die:
There is so much that thou wilt kill me straight.
Kill Brutus, and be honoured in his death.

1ST SOLDIER We must not. A noble prisoner! 15

2ND SOLDIER Room, ho! Tell Antony, Brutus is ta'en.

1ST SOLDIER I'll tell the news. Here comes the general.

[Enter ANTONY]

Brutus is ta'en, Brutus is ta'en, my lord.

ANTONY Where is he?

LUCILIUS Safe, Antony; Brutus is safe enough. 20

I dare assure thee that no enemy
Shall ever take alive the noble Brutus;
The gods defend him from so great a shame!

When you do find him, or alive or dead,

He will be found like Brutus, like himself. 25

ANTONY This is not Brutus, friend; but, I assure you,

A prize no less in worth. Keep this man safe;

Give him all kindness. I had rather have

Such men my friends than enemies. Go on,

And see whether Brutus be alive or dead; 30

And bring us word unto Octavius' tent

How every thing is chanced.

[All exit]



23 **So great a shame:** It was shameful for a Roman to be taken alive.

25 **He will be found like Brutus, like himself:** He will be the same Brutus as he has always been.

32 **Chanced:** Happened (by chance).



QUESTIONS

1 What does the behaviour of Lucilius and Cato suggest about their feelings towards Brutus?

2 What does Antony's sparing of Lucilius tell us about Antony's character?



EXTEND

1 How does Shakespeare employ dialogue and stage directions to capture the fury of battle?

2 Are there any signs in this scene that Antony is already thinking of his political position beyond the battle and of the coming conflict with Octavius?



DISCUSS

This is the only scene in the play that involves a staged fight. How would you use blocking, sound effects and lighting to best capture the heroic behaviour of the young soldiers?



Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet ...

Fate, history and the spirit of Caesar

Julius Caesar is filled with omens, signs and various types of foreshadowing. From the storm and the bizarre occurrences witnessed on the streets of Rome to Calpurnia's dream and the unfortunate Cinna seeming to foresee his own death, much of the drama is concerned with fate. In the final acts of the play, Brutus and Cassius both experience events that fill them with a sense of foreboding: Caesar's ghost haunts Brutus and ill-omened birds that feed on corpses follow Cassius and his army.

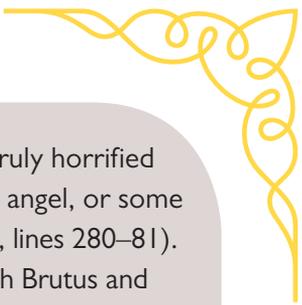
That *Julius Caesar* engages with famous historical material adds to the feeling that its main events are inevitable. The audience knows that Brutus will be persuaded by Cassius to join the conspiracy, that the Ides of March will come, that Caesar will be stabbed to death on the Senate-house floor, that Antony's life will be spared and that Antony and Octavius will ultimately be victorious. At times the characters seem conscious that they are playing out important roles on the stage of history. Caesar presents as a self-aware and theatrical figure through grandiose statements and reference to himself in the third person; the conspirators, too, are acutely aware that their actions are of tremendous historical importance – as Cassius says:

How many ages hence
Shall this our lofty scene be acted over,
In states unborn and accents yet unknown! (Act 3 Scene 1, lines 112–14)

Although Julius Caesar is the title character, he is killed in the middle of the play. His last speech presents him as a great historical figure seeming to transcend the boundaries of the play. Shortly before his death he states:

I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fixed and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament. (Act 3 Scene 1, lines 61–63)

He is murdered shortly after, but these words, which at first seem to be rendered ironic by his death, prove to be prophetic. The action of the play revolves around his death, after which his spirit (which Brutus wanted to destroy) becomes more powerful than the mortal Caesar. Indeed, shortly after Caesar's death, Mark Antony describes Caesar's blood as 'royal' and then as 'sacred': evidence that Caesar is already in the process of becoming a god.



The final two acts are haunted by the presence of Caesar. Brutus is truly horrified by his encounter with the ghost, questioning: 'Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil, / That makest my blood cold and my hair to stare?' (Act 4 Scene 3, lines 280–81). The ghost of Caesar promises to meet Brutus on the battlefield, and both Brutus and Cassius go on to acknowledge Caesar as the cause of their death. Cassius' dying words are: 'Caesar, thou art revenged, / Even with the sword that killed thee' (Act 5 Scene 3, lines 45–46). At his own death Brutus expresses a similar sentiment: 'Caesar, now be still: / I killed not thee with half so good a will' (Act 5 Scene 5, lines 50–51). But Caesar will not be 'still' even after Brutus' death, and lives on beyond the boundaries of the play.

Any audience brings a knowledge of history to the play and knows (or can easily find out) that Octavius will become Caesar Augustus, effectively the first Roman Emperor. Despite not being of Caesar's direct bloodline, Octavius is Caesar's nominated or adopted heir. Caesar's spirit is, in effect, transferred to Octavius. Some productions used doubling to emphasise this, with actors playing Caesar for the opening three acts and returning as Octavius in the two final acts. It is possible that the initial performances by Shakespeare's company used doubling for these two characters.

Although Octavius attains ultimate power after the close of the play, Shakespeare takes great pains to foreshadow future historical events. Octavius' dialogue with Antony shows the instability of the Triumvirate and foreshadows the conflict to come between him and Antony. Although only 18, Octavius is presented as cool-headed, courageous and assertive; as a man prepared to contradict the powerful, battle-hardened Antony. It is telling that his lines, and not Antony's, close the play. In him the spirit of Caesar lives on and this same spirit (not a bloodline) is reflected in the line of emperors ruling until the fall of the (Roman) Byzantine Empire in the 1400s.

Act 5 Scene 5

CHARACTERS

Brutus
Octavius
Antony
Clitus
Strato
Messala
Dardanius
Volumnius
Lucilius
Narrator (optional)

IN A NUTSHELL

Brutus' army has been defeated. His soldier Statilius has been sent out but has not returned, which makes Brutus think the worst. He asks Clitus to kill him but Clitus refuses. He asks the same of Dardanius and Volumnius, both of whom also decline. Battle alarms are raised and the soldiers prepare to flee. Brutus asks Strato to stay and hold up his sword so that he can run onto it and kill himself. Octavius and Antony arrive and the servants and soldiers' lives are spared so that they can serve the victors. Antony praises the dead Brutus, saying that he was the noblest Roman of them all. Octavius calls an end to the battle.

Before you read

- It is interesting to compare the speeches of Antony and Octavius at the end of this scene. Antony shows warmth of feeling and generosity when he describes Brutus, whereas Octavius' speech seems businesslike in comparison. You may question whether Octavius' desire to have Brutus' body lie in his tent is a politically motivated decision aimed at winning over the surviving allies of Brutus.



Slain: Killed
List: Listen to or hear
Tarry: Linger

Another part of the field.

[Enter BRUTUS, DARDANIUS, CLITUS, STRATO and VOLUMNIUS]

BRUTUS Come, poor remains of friends, rest on this rock.
CLITUS Statilius showed the torch-light, but, my lord,
 He came not back; he is or ta'en or slain.
BRUTUS Sit thee down, Clitus. Slaying is the word;



- Poor remains of friends:** Those few friends remaining.
- Showed the torch-light:** This seems to be a signal that was agreed upon.



I shall have glory by this losing day
 More than Octavius and Mark Antony
 By this vile conquest shall attain unto.
 So fare you well at once; for Brutus' tongue
 Hath almost ended his life's history. 40
 Night hangs upon mine eyes; my bones would rest,
 That have but laboured to attain this hour.

[Alarum. Cry within, 'Fly, fly, fly!']

CLITUS Fly, my lord, fly.
 BRUTUS Hence! I will follow.

[Exit CLITUS, DARDANIUS and VOLUMNIUS]

I prithee, Strato, stay thou by thy lord.
 Thou art a fellow of a good respect; 45
 Thy life hath had some smatch of honour in it.
 Hold then my sword, and turn away thy face,
 While I do run upon it. Wilt thou, Strato?
 STRATO Give me your hand first. Fare you well, my lord.
 BRUTUS Farewell, good Strato –

[Runs on his sword]

Caesar, now be still: 50
 I killed not thee with half so good a will.

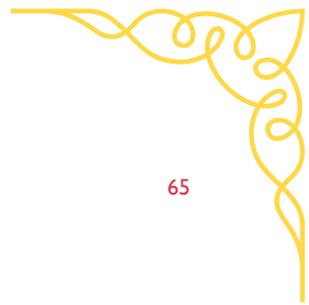
[BRUTUS dies]

[Alarum. Retreat. Enter OCTAVIUS, ANTONY, MESSALA, LUCILIUS and Soldiers]

OCTAVIUS What man is that?
 MESSALA My master's man. Strato, where is thy master?
 STRATO Free from the bondage you are in, Messala. 55
 The conquerors can but make a fire of him;
 For Brutus only overcame himself,
 And no man else hath honour by his death.
 LUCILIUS So Brutus should be found. I thank thee, Brutus,
 That thou hast proved Lucilius' saying true.
 OCTAVIUS All that served Brutus, I will entertain them. 60
 Fellow, wilt thou bestow thy time with me?
 STRATO Ay, if Messala will prefer me to you.



-
- 38 **Shall attain unto:** Shall gain or achieve.
 - 46 **Smatch:** Taste.
 - 55–57 **The conquerors can ... hath honour by his death:** The victors can burn his body on a funeral pyre but no more than this because Brutus committing suicide has robbed anyone else of the glory of killing him.
 - 60 **I will entertain them:** I will provide for them or have them follow me.
 - 62 **Prefer:** Recommend.



OCTAVIUS Do so, good Messala.
 MESSALA How died my master, Strato?
 STRATO I held the sword, and he did run on it. 65
 MESSALA Octavius, then take him to follow thee,
 That did the latest service to my master.
 ANTONY This was the noblest Roman of them all.
 All the conspirators, save only he,
 Did that they did in envy of great Caesar; 70
 He only, in a general honest thought
 And common good to all, made one of them.
 His life was gentle, and the elements
 So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
 And say to all the world 'This was a man!' 75
 OCTAVIUS According to his virtue let us use him,
 With all respect and rites of burial.
 Within my tent his bones tonight shall lie,
 Most like a soldier, ordered honourably.
 So call the field to rest; and let's away, 80
 To part the glories of this happy day.

[All exit]



- 67 **The latest service to my master:** Assisting Brutus (who was master to both of them) to commit suicide.
- 69 **Save only he:** Except for him.
- 70 **That they did:** What they did.
- 73 **Gentle:** Noble.
- 73 **Elements:** The Romans believed all things were made of four elements (earth, air, fire and water).
- 77 **All respect and rites of burial:** An honoured and dignified funeral.
- 81 **Part the glories:** Share the glories or spoils.



QUESTIONS

1 Copy and complete the table below to compare the deaths of Cassius and Brutus.

Similarities	Differences

- 2 How can you tell Brutus feels defeated in the opening lines of this scene?
- 3 Is Brutus' death presented as dignified and noble? Give reasons for your opinion.



- 1 How does Brutus' dialogue convey a sense of weariness at the end of this scene? You might like to construct your own table to answer this question.
- 2 How does the ending confirm the play as a tragedy?
- 3 How is Octavius presented in this scene? What are the hints that foreshadow his becoming the future Roman Emperor?



- 1 Do you agree with Antony's assessment of Brutus' character?
- 2 Have things been perfectly resolved in the end or are there suggestions of tension?

Joseph Mankiewicz: DVD Chapter 28 (Defeat and suicide)



- 1 Describe the choice of camera shot (the distance and angle) used to portray Antony after he has been victorious in battle. What does this shot suggest?
- 2 How does Mankiewicz show Cassius' situation to be desperate?
- 3 How does Mankiewicz emphasise the extent of the destruction after the battle?
- 4 How does Brutus discover Cassius has committed suicide? Do you think this is effective?
- 5 Do you find Mankiewicz's portrayal of Brutus emotive or moving in this scene? Why, or why not?
- 6 How does Mankiewicz portray the loyalty of Brutus' soldiers to him?
- 7 Do you think Mankiewicz portrays Brutus' death sympathetically? Give reasons for your answer.
- 8 Compare the deaths of Cassius and Brutus. Which scene do you find to be more successful in gaining your sympathy and why?
- 9 Why do you think Mankiewicz uses a close-up to focus on the instrument (now broken) that Lucius played in a previous scene? Why does he choose this type of shot? What is implied or suggested by these shots?
- 10 How does Mankiewicz use *mise en scène* (everything you see in the frame) and diegetic sound to show the power of Antony and Octavius and their armies in the final minutes of the film?
- 11 Do you think the final minute of Mankiewicz's film makes Shakespeare's play effectively *The Tragedy of Brutus* instead of *Julius Caesar*? Use evidence for your answer. (You may like to read the final 14 lines of Shakespeare's play and note what Mankiewicz does with them.)



Caesar shall go forth ...

Caesar forever

In the history that followed the events of the play, the alliance of the Triumvirate did not hold and the tensions between Mark Antony and Octavius grew. While Octavius based himself in Rome, Mark Antony began his famous affair with Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt. Octavius forced Lepidus to resign from the Triumvirate and, although the Senate gave him increasing power and honours, he set about blackening Antony's name. Roman law didn't recognise a marriage between a Roman citizen and a foreigner and it wasn't difficult to cast Antony as suspect and unpatriotic.

Octavius eventually defeated Antony in the naval battle of Actium in 31 BCE, and Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide shortly after. Around 1606, Shakespeare wrote of these events in his famous tragedy, *Antony and Cleopatra*. Octavius manipulated the Senate by offering to resign his power. The Senate responded by voting him Dictator and, as the years went by, bestowing more honours and privileges upon him. He became, in effect if not in name, the first Roman emperor – Augustus Caesar – and his rule is remembered as a time of peace and prosperity.

Michelangelo sculpted a famous statue of Brutus in celebration of republican values but others viewed the murder of Caesar as a hideous act. Perhaps most famously, the poet Dante, when he wrote *The Divine Comedy*, consigned Brutus and Cassius, together with Judas Iscariot (the disciple who betrayed Christ in the New Testament), to the mouth of Satan at the bottom of hell.

Julius Caesar was viewed as an inspirational figure by later generations and celebrated in art and literature. The chivalric culture of the Middle Ages cast him as a great hero who encapsulated the qualities of chivalry: especially courage, honour and justice. Roman emperors used the title Caesar from Augustus to Hadrian and, in subsequent ages, nations such as Germany and Russia adopted their own derivations (forms) of the name Caesar as formal titles – Kaiser and Tsar respectively.



Statue of Augustus Caesar



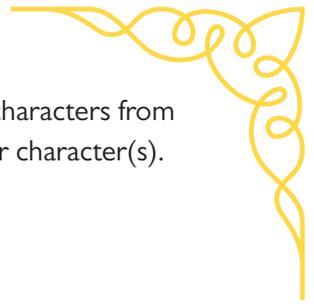
General activities

Oral presentations / performance

- 1 Make your own soundtrack for a film version of *Julius Caesar*. Choose at least eight songs that you feel are appropriate for different scenes (or excerpts from scenes) in the film. Specify which eight scenes you have chosen and write at least 50 words on each song to say why it is appropriate for the particular scene you have chosen. Include at least four of the following scenes:
 - Act 1 Scene 3 (The storm)
 - Act 2 Scene 1 (The conspiracy)
 - Act 2 Scene 2 (Caesar and Calpurnia)
 - Act 3 Scene 1 (The death of Caesar)
 - Act 3 Scene 3 (Cinna the poet)
 - Act 4 Scene 3 (Brutus and Cassius argue)
 - Act 4 Scene 3 (Enter ghost)
 - Act 5 Scene 5 (Brutus dies)
 - Act 5 Scene 5 (Octavius declares victory)

You may choose to perform this as an oral presentation, playing short excerpts from each song and explaining your choices.

- 2 Explain what your emphasis would be if you were given the opportunity to direct your own version of *Julius Caesar*. Cover, in particular, your choice of costume for five of the main characters. Explain what sort of atmosphere you would look to create through your set design.
- 3 Record a scene (or an excerpt from a scene) from the play as part of a radio play.
- 4 Perform a scene from the play as a group, or perform one of the soliloquies or monologues on your own.
- 5 Produce a one-minute trailer advertising your own film version of *Julius Caesar*. Make sure you consider music, sound effects and voiceover.



- 6 Set up a chat-show-style interview with one or more of the characters from the play, in which you discuss what happened to the particular character(s). Choose from these characters:
- Caesar
 - Antony
 - Cassius
 - Calpurnia
 - Brutus
 - Portia
 - Octavius

Make sure you stay in character for the entire length of the interview.

- 7 Cover one of the following scenes as a news report (minimum length of two minutes):
- the unrest between the Tribunes and the crowd (Act 1 Scene 1)
 - the storm (Act 1 Scene 3)
 - the murder of Caesar (Act 3 Scene 1)
 - Antony's speech at Caesar's funeral (Act 3 Scene 2)
 - the crowd out of control (Act 3 Scene 3)
 - the Triumvirate making plans (Act 4 Scene 1)
 - the Battle of Philippi (Act 5 Scenes 1–3).

This can take the form of either a video or a radio news story. Make sure you capture and maintain your audience's attention, and that you include some interviews.

- 8 Memorise a passage from *Julius Caesar* and perform it for your class. Briefly place it in context before you deliver the lines, and explain your interpretation after your performance.
- 9 Present a talk to your classmates entitled: 'What's so great about Shakespeare?' In your talk, you might like to discuss elements of *Julius Caesar* such as the characters, themes and language features.

Topics for debate

Debate one of the following topics. The Affirmative Team will agree with the statement, while the Negative Team will disagree. Both teams should consist of three members who each speak for two minutes.

- 1 *Julius Caesar* is a play with no real hero.
- 2 The play demonstrates that there is no place for idealism in politics.
- 3 Julius Caesar is the central character of this play.



Creative writing

- 1 Try writing part of a scene as a chapter from a modern novel. This will mean that you will have to fill in some of the details of setting, incorporate dialogue into the flow of your writing, and give some idea of what characters are thinking, even in places where they do not use a soliloquy. Make sure you use modern language, and that you keep elements such as narrative voice and verb tense consistent.
- 2 Write a letter, as Brutus, to Cassius at the end of Act 4, explaining your grievances. Make sure you use correct letter-writing conventions; you can use Shakespearean language or modern English.
- 3 Write a letter or an email, as a modern Portia, to Brutus at the conclusion of Act 3, detailing your thoughts. Make sure you use correct conventions.
- 4 Write a 300–500-word newspaper article on one of the events from the play using the list in number 7 of **Oral presentations / performance** on page 165. Make sure your headline and your opening sentence grab the reader's attention. Also, include some quotations from the actual play or fictitious interviews with characters. You could present this using ICT (PowerPoint, Flash or create a website).
- 5 Think of three alternative titles for *Julius Caesar* and write a few sentences (between 80 and 100 words on each) on why these titles would effectively market the play or film to a modern audience.
- 6 Script an additional conversation between Cassius and Brutus to take place at the beginning of Act 5, so that they have the opportunity to reflect on their actions in greater depth.
- 7 Script a conversation between Antony and Caesar's Ghost, to take place at the end of Act 5, with Antony explaining what he has done to avenge Caesar's death.
- 8 Give Caesar a dying speech or monologue (10–20 lines in length). Make sure you employ Shakespearean language and try to write in character.
- 9 Create a blog in which you write some entries from one character's point of view, at different stages in the play, responding to the events that have occurred. Add other characters' comments to your character's blog.
- 10 Working in groups, select one person to represent a character (male or female) from *Julius Caesar* who plans to run for federal election. Write the policies your character will propose and present a campaign speech to the class.

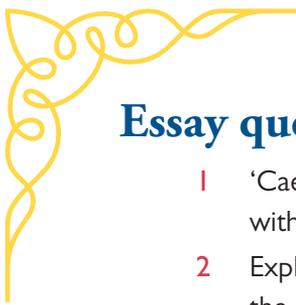
Illustration

- 1 Design a poster for your own film or stage version of *Julius Caesar*. Include quotations, some phrases that will catch the viewer's attention and a list of the cast for your film.
- 2 Present one of the scenes from *Julius Caesar* as a comic book or comic strip (e.g. manga).
- 3 Create a PowerPoint or Flash presentation of five characters in the play, using key quotations, a background that you feel is representative of each character, an appropriate symbol for them and some background music. Write 50 words on each character explaining why you made these creative choices.
- 4 Create a Facebook page for one of the characters in *Julius Caesar*. Make sure you include your character's interests, their interpretation of some of the events of the play, comments from friends and so on.

Questions for discussion

Discuss the following questions in a group or as a class.

- 1 Does Shakespeare portray Brutus sympathetically?
- 2 Does Shakespeare portray Caesar sympathetically?
- 3 'Antony is the real star of *Julius Caesar* and the play should be named after him.' Do you agree?
- 4 Does the play give any real evidence that Caesar has great qualities?
- 5 Why do you think Antony is so successful in his schemes?
- 6 Does the play sympathise with the aims of the conspirators?
- 7 '*Julius Caesar* should be compulsory reading for anyone wanting to go into politics.' Do you agree?
- 8 What can a modern-day audience learn from *Julius Caesar*?
- 9 Would *Julius Caesar* be described more accurately as a 'history' than as a 'tragedy'?



Essay questions

- 1 'Caesar and Brutus fall victim to their own vanity.' Discuss this statement with reference to *Julius Caesar*.
- 2 Explain how one scene of *Julius Caesar* is central to your understanding of the play as a whole.
- 3 'Shakespeare didn't have a favourite character in this play.' Discuss this statement with reference to *Julius Caesar*.
- 4 Discuss the importance of friendship in the play *Julius Caesar*.
- 5 'There are too many characters with mixed motives in this play to single out a hero.' Discuss this statement with reference to *Julius Caesar*.
- 6 '*Julius Caesar* is about power and its corrupting influence.' Discuss.
- 7 'All the characters in *Julius Caesar* are selfish and ambitious. None of them cares for the good of Rome.' Discuss.
- 8 Who do you think should govern Rome at the time the play is set? Make a case for each of the major characters, including Caesar.
- 9 How well does *Julius Caesar* correspond to the model of tragedy provided on page 147?
- 10 Explain how Shakespeare uses contrasts in character to present the central ideas of the play *Julius Caesar*.
- 11 Find three examples of dramatic irony in *Julius Caesar* and discuss their effect on the play as a whole.
- 12 How does Shakespeare use imagery to reinforce some of the major themes of the play?

APPENDIX 1



To the teacher

It will not be possible for your students to attempt every activity in this book, but we have given you a wide range of activities and questions so that you can determine what best suits the particular needs of your class. Listed below are some of the features of this edition of *Julius Caesar* and a brief explanation of how they might be useful in your lessons. We have used a range of icons to help you and your students identify different parts of the text.

1. Understanding the narrative

Before you begin reading the text, it is important that your students have a sound grasp of the story. It is a good idea for the class to read through the **Act summaries** on pages 16–18, and complete the **Quick questions** and the **Freeze-frames** activity on pages 18–19.

At the beginning of each scene we have given a brief outline of what happens, called **In a nutshell**.

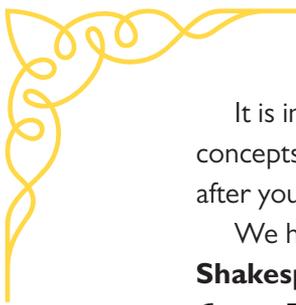
2. Reading the text

While it is likely you will read most of the play as a class, you should also read some scenes in smaller groups, and you might like to perform some as well.

At the beginning of each scene we have listed the characters in order of importance. It is advisable that, as the teacher, you take a major role and delegate the other major parts to your most confident readers. It is also helpful if one student reads the stage directions for some scenes. We have indicated the places where this is particularly important using the term ‘Narrator (*optional*)’ in the Characters section.

Where possible, try to allocate parts the day before you perform a scene so that students have an opportunity to look over, and perhaps practise, their parts. Encourage students to read loudly and clearly, and be forthcoming with your praise when you can.

Shakespeare’s language (see pages 9–14) provides some basic reading tips and explanations of key language features. We recommend that you look at the reading tips before you begin reading, and explain them to your class. This section also includes a list of key words that recur frequently throughout the play. You might like to familiarise your students with this before you begin reading the play.



It is important that you do not overwhelm your students with too many concepts in a short period of time. Introduce concepts such as iambic pentameter after your students have begun to gain an intuitive sense for the language.

We have also provided general introductions on **Elizabethan England**, **Shakespeare** himself, the **theatre** and the **sources and settings** for *Julius Caesar*. These will provide some background and a context in which to read the play. The notes on Elizabethan England and the theatre are the most important of these introductions. You could read these as a class or ask students to read them in their own time.

There is, of course, no substitute for seeing the text performed as a live production, and we recommend you have actors or performance companies visit your school.

3. Understanding the text



We have included a short **Vocabulary** list at the beginning of each scene. All of these words, plus some others from the text and the **Text notes**, are printed at the back of the book so that you can find a word without having to remember where it was first introduced.

The **Before you read** section at the beginning of every scene provides reading tips and anticipates problems students may have. Phrases and words that are more secondary to the understanding of a scene are printed as **Text notes** at the bottom of each page of the play script. In most cases, these notes provide an interpretation of a specific word or phrase and, in this way, can be limiting. We would encourage students not to make these their first point of reference but rather to use them, where necessary, after they have read through the scene and thought about it for themselves.



Finally, a number of **History boxes** provide useful historical information on Elizabethan England and Republican Rome. We have, of course, simplified some concepts and material, especially the model of the Roman Republic, which has been described by one historian as ‘an old man’s kitchen in which the old man knows where everything is, but no-one else knows how it works’. Most of this information we have included to give an historical context for specific scenes. Other information has been provided in order to fire the students’ curiosity.

We have provided a **Shakespeare reading list** on page 173 in case you wish to read more on Shakespeare and Elizabethan England.

4. Analysing the text



In ordering the **Questions**, we have attempted to balance chronology against degree of difficulty. For some scenes you might save time by dividing the questions among different groups in the class, or you may simply use them as a springboard for discussion. No teacher should attempt to use every question in the book.



We have also included more challenging **Extend** questions that will allow some students, or the entire class, to analyse a scene in greater depth. It is important that all students engage with the technical aspects of the play, and, for this reason, we have also included questions relating to technique among the general questions.



Finally, some questions have been designed for general discussion of personal responses to the text, as well as possible interpretations for performance. These are indicated by the **Discuss** icon.

A word about ...

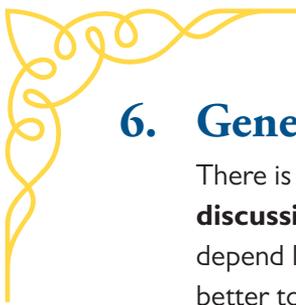
Shakespeare's **themes and techniques** highlight particular ideas and devices used by Shakespeare throughout this play. We recommend that students first read these boxes themselves and that you then explain the concept using the examples.

5. The films (Press play)



There is no high-budget film version of *Julius Caesar* and all the existing ones are hard to obtain. We have chosen to base film questions on the 1953 Joseph Mankiewicz version starring Marlon Brando because we think this is the best version to analyse and still the most engaging. We feel this film version can be successful in the classroom once students get over their aversion to black and white. There is a 1970 film version starring Charlton Heston, which you may find useful if you can obtain a copy. There is also a BBC version which, while not particularly engaging, might provide useful performances of some scenes.

It is useful to show excerpts from a film as your class studies the play to reinforce your students' understanding of key scenes, and it may serve as an alternative to reading some scenes. The **Press play** activities provide opportunities for further analysis and discussion.



6. General activities

There is deliberate overlap between the **Essay questions**, **Questions for discussion** and **Topics for debate** (pages 165–68). How you use these will depend largely on the type of class you have. We have generally found that it is better to read through the play in its entirety before beginning debates, essays or creative activities. Again, this will depend on your personal preference. You could break up your reading of the play after Act 2 or Act 3 with one of the **Oral presentations / performance** or **Creative writing** activities on pages 164–66.

7. A note about the text

We have based this edition of *Julius Caesar* on the First Folio text. Some of the stage directions and the spelling have been modernised, in line with standard editorial practices for preparing editions of Shakespeare's plays. Modern punctuation conventions are followed, with the exception of the dash (–), which we have used to indicate an interruption in the flow or the direction of the conversation; for example, when a character switches from soliloquising to addressing another character, or when a character switches from addressing one character to addressing another (see **Shakespeare's language** on pages 9–14 for a more detailed explanation).

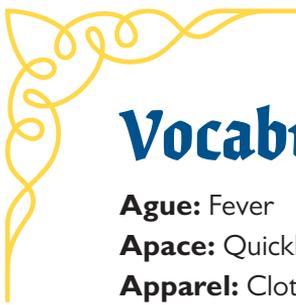
8. Finally ...

No-one could reasonably expect to understand every phrase or allusion in Shakespeare's plays and your students should not expect to either. Making this clear from the outset will foster the confidence in students to talk about what they do understand and what they do know: to see the text as a glass half full, rather than a glass half empty. Moreover, this will encourage students to appreciate the subtleties and resonances of the language and to truly understand that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our pedagogy.

APPENDIX 2

A Shakespeare reading list

- Alexander, Catherine MS, *Shakespeare: The Life, the Works, the Treasures*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2007.
- Bate, Jonathan, *The Genius of Shakespeare*, Picador, London, 1997.
- Crystal, David & Ben, *Shakespeare's Words*, Penguin, London, 2002.
- Greenblatt, Stephen, *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*, Norton, London, 2004.
- Greer, Germaine, *Shakespeare: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002.
- Gurr, Andrew, *The Shakespearean Stage*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992.
- Hussey, SS, *The Literary Language of Shakespeare*, Longman, Harlow, 1982.
- Kay, Dennis, *Shakespeare: His Life, Work and Era*, Sidgwick & Jackson, London, 1991.
- Kermode, Frank, *Shakespeare's Language*, Penguin, London, 2001.
- Kermode, Frank, *The Age of Shakespeare*, Phoenix, London, 2005.
- Rodenburg, Patsy, *Reading Shakespeare*, Methuen, London, 2002.
- Sandler, Robert (ed.), *Northrop Frye on Shakespeare*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1986.
- Shapiro, James, *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare*, Faber & Faber, London, 2005.
- Tillyard, EMW, *The Elizabethan World Picture*, Vintage Books, New York, 1960.
- Wells, Stanley, *A Dictionary of Shakespeare*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998.
- Wells, Stanley, *Shakespeare & Co.*, Penguin, London, 2007.
- Wilson, Jean, *The Shakespeare Legacy*, Bramley Books, Godalming, 1995.
- Wood, Michael, *In Search of Shakespeare*, directed by David Wallace, Maya Vision International, 2004.



Vocabulary list

Ague: Fever

Apace: Quickly

Apparel: Clothes

Art: Are

Ass: Donkey

Aught: Anything

Augmented: Added to

Ay: Yes

Bachelor: Single man

Bait: Harass

Barren: Sterile; unable to become pregnant

Base: Lowly; unworthy; low-born

Bay: Howl

Beseech: Request forcefully

Bills: Written orders

Blows: Violence

Bondman: Slave

Bootless: Useless

Capitol: The walled area of the city (of Rome)

Censure: Judge

Chastisement: Punishment or criticism

Chidden: Scolded or told off

Choler: Anger

Clamours: Noise

Closet: Study

Commonwealth: The free society or republic

Compact: Agreement or bond

Consent: Permit or allow

Coronet: Small crown

Corse: Corpse

Countenance: Appearance, facial expression

Covert: Secret

Cur: Dog

Dire: Disastrous

Disconsolate: Lacking in hope or sorrowful

Ensign: Standard-bearer

Entreat: Request

Ere: Before

Errand: Task or duty

Exigent: Emergency

Expounded: Explained or interpreted

Fain: Gladly

Fawn: Grovel or flatter

Fell: Evil

Flint: A small hard rock used to make fire

Flourish: Showy display of horns or trumpets (stage direction)

Fly: Run away

Fond: Foolish

Fray: Crowd

Gait: Style of walking

Gallant: Brave or courageous

Gamesome: Playful (keen on sport)

Go to: Get moving; come on

Hark: Listen

Harlot: Prostitute

Hart: Male deer

Heralds: Messengers

Hilt: The handle of a sword

Hind: Female deer

Hither: Here

Ho: An exclamation or call (like 'hey')

Humour: Mood

Ides of March: The 15th day of March

Imminent: About to happen

Immortal: Invulnerable to death

Kerchief: A cloth worn around the head
(for sickness)

Knave: Rogue; servant

Legion: A group of 3000–6000 soldiers

List: Listen to or hear

Mark well: Pay attention to

Meet: Fitting or appropriate

Mirth: Amusement

Multitude: The mass of citizens

Mutiny: Rebellion against authority

Naughty: Worthless

Nought: Nothing

Offices: (Important) positions

Parley: Talk

Peevish: Bad-tempered

Portentous: Serious, a sign that
something bad is going to happen

Press: Crowd

Pricked: Marked down

Prithee: A polite term used to introduce
a request

Proscription: Condemnation of
someone (generally to death)

Prostrate: Lying face downwards

Puissant: Powerful

Pulpit: Platform for public speaking

Quartered: Housed

Redress: Set right

Rendered: Given

Repose: Rest

Revels: Parties

Reverence: Respect

Salutation: Greeting

Saucy: Cheeky, rude, defiant

'Scaped: Escaped

Sennet: Trumpet call signalling a
ceremonial exit (stage direction)

Sirrah: Equivalent to sir but used to
address someone of a lower rank

Slain: Killed

Soft: Wait

Softly: Quietly or steadily

Soothsayer: Fortune-teller or religious
prophet

Spurn: Kick

Straight: Immediately

Suitors: Those bringing suits (requests)

Surly: Angry

Swound: Faint

Take heed: Beware

Taper: Candle

Tarry: Linger

Tempest: Storm

Thine: Yours (something belonging to you)

Thither: To or towards that place

Thou: You

Thrice: Three times

Throng: Crowd

Thy: Your

Tiding: News

Treason: Betrayal of one's country

Tributaries: Rulers who pay tribute
(financial or otherwise)

Tried: Experienced

Tut: Expression of irritation or disapproval

Unmeritable: Without merit;
unremarkable

Valiant: Brave

Valour: Bravery

Vouchsafe: Allow

Wherefore: Why

Whither: Where

Yield: Give in; surrender

Yond / Yonder: Over there



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Page 28 section of the *Ara Pacis* processional frieze (9 BCE), photograph © istockphoto/udokant

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Page 115 ruins in the Roman Forum, photograph © istockphoto/ROMAOSLO

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