Study Guide

for

The Tragedy of Julius Caesar

by William Shakespeare

McGraw-Hill
To the Teacher

The Glencoe Literature Library presents full-length novels and plays bound together with shorter selections of various genres that relate by theme or topic to the main reading. Each work in the Library has a two-part Study Guide that contains a variety of resources for both you and your students. Use the guide to plan your instruction of the work and enrich your classroom presentations.

In For the Teacher you will find these time-saving instructional aids:

- About the Work: pertinent background information on the work, including a character list, a synopsis, major themes, and an annotated bibliography
- Media Links: annotated listings of audio, visual, electronic, and print resources related to the work
- Teaching Options: high-interest activities for introducing the work and individualizing instruction
- Assessment Options: alternative assessment activities for greater flexibility in evaluating students' understanding of the work
- Options for Using Related Readings: suggested approaches to the Related Readings included with the work
- Answer Key and Assessment Rubrics: detailed answers to all questions and reading activities and evaluation for alternative assessment activities

For the Student consists of these reproducible blackline masters:

- Meet the Author: a lively overview of the author's life
- Introducing the Work: background information that provides a meaningful context in which to read the work
- Before You Read and Responding pages: pre- and postreading questions and activities
- Active Reading: graphic organizers for students to complete as they read
- Test: a comprehensive two-part test of the work

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NOTE: This classic play deals with ambition, politics, betrayal, and murder. Certain words, phrases, references, or situations may offend some readers.
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About the Work

**JULIUS CAESAR BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**

William Shakespeare is believed to have written *Julius Caesar* in 1599. The play was the first to be performed at his new artistic home, the Globe Theater. The drama is set during Rome's transition from a republic to an empire. A tragedy, *Julius Caesar* focuses on the ambition and ethical dilemmas of its protagonists.

Shakespeare's chief source in writing the play was Parallel Lives, a collection of biographies written by the Greek writer Plutarch, who lived between A.D. 46 and A.D. 120. Although Shakespeare followed Plutarch's account closely, he infused the material with more excitement. Like Plutarch, Shakespeare presents Caesar as an impressive but flawed leader whose virtues are balanced against vanity and excessive ambition.

Surprisingly, the title character appears in only a few scenes. This has led some critics to argue that the real hero of the play is Brutus, a leader of the conspiracy against Caesar. Yet Caesar is never far from the other characters' thoughts, and his spirit dominates the play.

Compared to Shakespeare's other works, *Julius Caesar* contains relatively little figurative language. However, its eloquent speeches have helped to make it very popular with audiences. Even those who have never read *Julius Caesar* may be familiar with some of its lines, such as the opening of Mark Antony's famous speech at Caesar's funeral that begins: "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears."

**CHARACTERS**

The character list appears on pages vi and vii of the Glencoe Literature Library edition of *Julius Caesar* with Related Readings.

**SYNOPSIS**

Julius Caesar returns to Rome to a triumphant celebration after having defeated rival leader Pompey. When offered a crown, Caesar refuses it three times. However, some fear that his power and popularity will lead to tyranny. To prevent this, a band of conspiring noblemen persuade Brutus, Caesar's friend and an officer in his council, to join in a plot to overthrow him. The conspirators plan to act on the ides of March, when Caesar visits the Senate. He has been forewarned of possible trouble by his soothsayer but dismisses the warning.

On the fateful day, Caesar's wife, Calphurnia, pleads with him to stay home because she has dreamed of bad omens. He agrees reluctantly, but after a conspiring spin doctor reinterprets the dream and casts it in a favorable light, Caesar changes his mind. He ignores yet another warning on his way to the Senate. After he arrives, he is stabbed by the conspirators. He is especially shocked by Brutus's betrayal.

At Caesar's funeral, Brutus explains that he murdered Caesar for the public good. Against Cassius's advice, Brutus allows Mark Antony to deliver an impassioned speech that praises Caesar's nobility and questions the honor of Brutus and his fellow conspirators. The speech inspires a mob to attack the conspirators, who flee Rome.

Antony, Octavius Caesar, and M. Aemilius Lepidus agree to avenge their fallen leader. Cassius wishes to remain in Sardis, but Brutus convinces him to march against their enemies. One night, the ghost of Julius Caesar visits Brutus in his tent and promises to see Brutus again at Philippi, the site of battle. The opposing forces meet there, and Brutus leads a successful attack against Octavius's troops. Cassius, mistakenly believing that the battle has been lost, commits suicide with the help of his slave. His suicide is followed by that of Titinius,
an officer in his army. After Brutus loses the second fight, he kills himself rather than become Antony's captive. When Antony learns of Brutus's death, he declares that Brutus was the only conspirator who had worthy motives, and Octavius orders an honorable burial for him.

MAJOR THEMES IN THE PLAY

- The fear of the absolute power of a monarch: Act 1 opens with Flavius's resentment of Caesar's authority. He pledges to prevent public displays of Caesar's greatness and vows to disperse the crowd of common people who revere Caesar. Flavius thus anticipates the motives of Caesar's conspirators, who, envious of Caesar's power, murder him.
- Violence begets violence: The conspirators assassinate Caesar to prevent him from wielding absolute power over Rome. Yet this act of violence spawns the suicides of Cassius, Titinius, and ultimately Brutus, suggesting the futility of violence in achieving one's goals.
- The power of rhetoric in shaping public opinion: In Act 3, Brutus justifies Caesar's murder in a speech that appeals to the Romans' love of freedom. The speech wins the audience over to his side. When Antony follows Brutus's speech with a eulogy that recalls Caesar's greatness and generosity, public opinion shifts in favor of Antony and the people demand revenge.

APPROACHES TO TEACHING THE PLAY

- Teach students the elements of rhetorical discourse. Define rhetoric as the art of using language to present facts and ideas to persuade. Introduce the devices of rhetorical discourse: invention, the advancement of logical, ethical, and emotional arguments; arrangement, the structure of these arguments; style, the selection of original words and phrases to express arguments; memory, a system of committing the text to the speaker's mind; and delivery, the manner of presentation in a speech that includes tone of voice, gesture, and expression. For analysis, use as examples of rhetorical speech Brutus's speech (page 83) and Antony's eulogy of Caesar (page 87).
- Teach students how to distinguish between external and internal conflict. Before they read, explain to students that an external conflict exists when a character struggles against some outside force, such as another person, nature, society, or fate. An internal conflict is a struggle that takes place within the mind of a character who is torn between opposing feelings or goals. When students have finished reading, have them identify the main external conflicts in the play.
- Teach students how to identify instances of foreshadowing throughout the play. Before they read, define foreshadowing as the use of hints or clues by the author to prepare the reader for events that will happen later in the play. For example, the soothsayer warns Caesar to "Beware the ides of March," predicting Caesar's betrayal (page 7). Caesar's distrust of Cassius is expressed by the line "Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look, He thinks too much; such men are dangerous" (page 15). Have students, as they read, note examples of foreshadowing in the play and tell what the examples might predict.

FURTHER READING FOR THE TEACHER

- Julius Caesar, by Michael Grant, 1969, offers a complex view of Caesar's life and career by a prominent historian of the ancient world.
- Shakespeare: A Life, by Park Honan, 1998, incorporates new research into a thorough and well-written biography.
Media Links

Videos

Students might enjoy watching one of the following adaptations of Julius Caesar and comparing it with the drama:

- Julius Caesar (Ambrose Video, 1987, 161 minutes), a BBC Television production that originally aired in 1978, with Richard Pasco, Keith Michell, Charles Grey, and David Collings
- Julius Caesar (Republic Pictures Home Video, 1989, 116 minutes), a 1970 motion picture starring Charlton Heston, Jason Robards, and Sir John Gielgud

The following videos provide background information that students might find helpful:

- Shakespeare and the Globe (Films for the Humanities, 1993, 32 minutes), a program about Shakespeare's life, Elizabethan theatrical traditions, and the Globe Theatre, with excerpts from performances of Shakespeare's plays
- Shakespeare's Globe Theatre Restored (TMW Media Group, 1997, 30 minutes), a program about the reconstruction of the Globe Theatre on its original site

Audiocassettes

The following recordings can increase students' appreciation of Shakespearean English:

- Julius Caesar (Listening Library, 1998, 120 minutes), features the voices of Richard Dreyfuss, Kelsey Grammer, Stacy Keach, and JoBeth Williams.
- A Fully-Dramatized Recording of William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar (Arkangel Productions, 1998, 150 minutes), featuring John Bowe, Adrian Lester, Michael Feast, and Clive Brill

Internet Connections

The following Web sites provide information about topics related to the play or its author:

- The Julius Caesar Site, part of the Perseus Project, offers electronic texts of various editions of the play, criticism, and texts of Shakespeare's sources. [http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/JC/](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/JC/)
- The Shakespeare's Stratford on the Web site includes information on Shakespeare's life and his birthplace. [http://www.stratford-upon-avon.co.uk/index.htm](http://www.stratford-upon-avon.co.uk/index.htm)
- The Shakespeare Illustrated site has an extensive collection of nineteenth-century paintings inspired by Shakespeare's plays. [http://www.cc.emory.edu/ENGLISH/classes/Shakespeare_Illustrated/Shakspeare.html](http://www.cc.emory.edu/ENGLISH/classes/Shakespeare_Illustrated/Shakspeare.html)

At the time this study guide went to press, the sites were in operation. Before assigning students to visit them, check to ensure that the sites still exist.

Further Reading for the Student

- The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays by Kenneth Muir, 1978, provides sources that Shakespeare used for the plots of his plays and discusses the use he made of them.

Be sure to preview all media links to determine whether the material is appropriate for your class.
Teaching Options

Options for Motivating Students

The Crown vs the People
Prepare students for the political conflict that the play introduces.
• Write the words monarchy and democracy on the board. Ask students to provide attributes of each and list responses on the board.
• Discuss with students the advantages and disadvantages of each form of government. Explain that the plot of Julius Caesar addresses the type of government and leadership that the Romans believe is best for them.
• Ask students to list the qualities that they look for in a leader. Can some people born with the ability to lead? Can one acquire the skills necessary to become a leader? What problems can arise from poor leadership?
• Tell students that Julius Caesar rose to power during a time of civil unrest and that a civil war broke out after his assassination. Have them discuss incidents of civil unrest in the United States. In what ways did citizens challenge the government’s authority? How did our leaders respond?

On My Honor
Encourage students to examine a concept that plays an important role in the play.
• Write the word honor on the board and invite students to create a web of words that they associate with this concept. Encourage them to add words to the web as they read Julius Caesar.
• Tell students that codes of honor have influenced human relations in many different ways throughout history. Ask them to discuss the role that honor plays in our society today. Have them give examples of people behaving honorably or failing to do so. Ask students to consider how this behavior affects the general population.

Divided Loyalties
Have students relate their own experiences to those of the characters in the play.
• Ask students to record in their journals a time when their loyalty to one person conflicted with their values or with their loyalty to another person. How did they resolve this conflict? Do they think that they made the right decision? Why or why not?
• As students read Julius Caesar, encourage them to look for instances in which a character’s loyalty is tested and to pay attention to how the character responds.
Meeting Individual Needs

The direct style of Julius Caesar makes it appropriate for average readers. The activities that follow will help you present the play in ways that meet the needs and interests of all students.

Less-Proficient Readers
Help students understand Shakespearean English.
• Shakespeare used many words that are now obsolete or have acquired different meanings. These words are defined in the notes that appear on the left-hand pages of the text. Encourage students to consult the notes whenever they see a small degree symbol at the end of a word. Suggest that they use their fingers, an index card, or a ruler to keep their place in the text while they read the note.
• Point out the use of apostrophes to show where letters have been omitted from a word (for example, “perform’d”).
• Explain that Shakespeare often placed words in an unusual order within a sentence. Tell students that if they find a sentence confusing, they should try rearranging the words to create a familiar sentence structure.
• Have students meet in small groups after they read each act to discuss difficult passages. Encourage them to take turns paraphrasing passages of dialogue. By restating dialogue in their own words, they can help make the meaning clearer for other students.

English-Language Learners
Help students follow events in the play.
• Prepare students for the first act before they begin reading it. Go over the list of characters together and review the background information on pages 14–16. Make sure students understand that at the opening of the play, Rome’s citizens are celebrating Caesar’s military victory over the sons of Pompey, his rival.

Gifted and Talented
Tap students’ talents and interests
• Have groups of students research and present to the class one aspect or accomplishment of ancient Roman culture, such as art, literature, architecture, engineering, or government. Encourage them to use maps, drawings, and photographs to enhance their presentations.
• Invite students who play musical instruments to compose and perform a piece of music for a scene that moved them. The piece should faithfully express the mood of the scene. (Interdisciplinary: Music)
• Invite student artists to research the mode of dress in ancient Rome and to design costumes for a production of Julius Caesar. The costumes should reflect the character’s social position. Display the finished designs in the classroom.
**Assessment Options**

**Writing**

**Mixed Motives**
- At the end of the play, Antony says that Brutus was the only conspirator who took action because he cared about the public rather than because he envied Caesar. Have students respond to this statement by writing essays in which they compare the motives of Brutus and one other conspirator. Students should use quotes from the text and specific references to support their analyses.

**Dear Portia**
- When Brutus flees Rome, he is forced to abandon his wife. Ask students to write a letter in which Brutus explains to Portia why he had to leave Rome. The letter should include words of encouragement that are based on Brutus’s philosophical beliefs.

**A Troubled Republic**
- Julius Caesar rose to power at a time when the republic was already shaken by civil disorder. Ask students to research political and social conditions during the last one hundred years of the republic. Then have them write a report based on their findings.

**Listening and Speaking**

**The Ghost of Caesar**
- Have students to work in pairs and role-play an interview with Caesar’s ghost. The interviewers might ask him for his opinions about the conspiracy, his friendship with Brutus, or the actions of Antony and Octavius. The students who perform the role of Caesar’s ghost should offer responses that are consistent with Caesar’s character and speaking style.

**The Art of Rhetoric**
- Have students memorize the famous introduction to Mark Antony’s eulogy of Julius Caesar (Act 3, Scene 2, lines 71-105). Invite them to perform the speech before the class, using appropriate expression and gestures. They may dress in costume if they wish.

**Viewing and Representing**

**Famed Words**
- Have students find memorable lines and phrases from the play that are part of the everyday vernacular. Then have them create colorful posters displaying the famous words. Students may consult Bartlett’s Familiar Quotations as a reference and may incorporate humor into the posters if they wish. Display the artwork on a bulletin board.

**Cover It!**
- Have students design book covers for Julius Caesar. Each cover should include artwork, such as a character’s portrait, an illustration of an important scene, or an abstract image inspired by one of the play’s themes. Set up a classroom display of the completed book covers.

**Interdisciplinary Connection**

**Dying a Political Death**
- The conspiracy against Julius Caesar was probably the most famous assassination in ancient times. Have students research a modern political assassination. They should investigate the motives of the assassins and describe the way in which the act was carried out and the effect the assassination had on the nation’s government.
- Have students share their findings with the class in oral reports. Encourage them to use different types of media in their presentations, such as photos, maps, and audio recordings.

**Save your work for your portfolio.**
Options for Using Related Readings

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<thead>
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<th>Related Readings</th>
<th>Making Connections to Julius Caesar</th>
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| **from *The Life of Caesar* by Plutarch (BLM page 32)** | This excerpt from Plutarch’s *Life of Caesar* gives students insight into Shakespeare’s creative process in writing *Julius Caesar*.  
- This selection would work well as a prereading activity, especially for less-proficient students and English-language learners, to provide background for understanding the play. It also would work well as a postreading activity to show how Shakespeare took creative liberties in writing the play.  
- Before they read, tell students that Shakespeare used many sources for his dramas, including historical works and fictional narratives by other authors.  
- Explain that Shakespeare based *Julius Caesar* on Plutarch’s biographies of Caesar, Brutus, and Antony. Point out that the excerpt includes most of the important information in Plutarch’s biography of Caesar.  
- Have students note down instances where Shakespeare altered details in Plutarch’s biography. Ask them to consider how these changes affect our impression of the characters and their actions. They should also consider whether the changes made it easier for Shakespeare to adapt the story to the stage. Finally, ask which version of Caesar’s downfall is the most compelling.  
- This sketch is a parody that pokes fun at Shakespeare’s play.  
- You might wish to use this sketch as a postreading activity for Act 3, which describes Caesar’s stabbing and its aftermath.  
- Before they begin, ask students to imagine how a modern-day journalist might have reported Caesar’s assassination.  
- Explain that a parody is a literary work that imitates the style of an author or work for comic effect. Mark Twain’s sketch imitates the style that was characteristic of newspaper articles written in the mid-nineteenth century. Ask students whether contemporary journalists still write in this way.  
- Have students note instances in which Twain alters details in Shakespeare’s drama or adds new ones about Caesar’s assassination. Ask them to discuss how Twain updates the story to reflect the mores of his own time.  
- A Eulogy to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by Robert F. Kennedy (BLM page 34)  
- Like Mark Antony, Robert F. Kennedy made a public address immediately after the assassination of a great leader. However, his goal was to console the audience members, not to inflame their anger.  
- This speech would work well as a postreading activity for Act 3, in which Caesar is assassinated and Brutus and Mark Antony speak to the public after the act.  
- Before students read, ask them what they know about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy. Lead a discussion about important events and trends in 1968, such as the civil rights movement.  
- Explain that Kennedy ran for president in 1968. On the day of King’s assassination, he was scheduled to give a speech to a group of African Americans. The audience members were unaware that King had been killed until Kennedy began speaking.  
- Ask students what Kennedy and Antony wanted to accomplish with their speeches. Have them compare the rhetorical style of the speeches. Which speech is more polished? Which seems more sincere? Why might the tone of these speeches have differed? |
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<tr>
<th>Related Readings</th>
<th>Making Connections to <em>Julius Caesar</em></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Voter</strong> by Chinua Achebe (BLM page 35)</td>
<td>Like <em>Julius Caesar</em>, this story portrays a leader who is determined to hold onto political power by whatever means is necessary.</td>
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<td>• This selection would work well as a postreading activity for Act 1 or Act 2, in which the conspirators voice their objections to Caesar.</td>
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<td>• Before they read, ask students to brainstorm to create a list of legal and illegal campaign tactics.</td>
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<td>• Ask students whether the government Achebe describes in his story is really democratic. Ask them if they think the opposition party wants to fight injustice or merely secure power for itself.</td>
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<td>• Have students compare the main characters of “The Voter” to those in Shakespeare’s play.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Legend</strong> by Garrett Hongo</td>
<td>In these selections, the speaker, or narrator, reacts to the sudden death of a person who is not well known.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Geraldo No Last Name</strong> by Sandra Cisneros (BLM page 36)</td>
<td>• You may wish to use them as postreading activities for <em>Julius Caesar</em> to compare the reaction to the death of a famous person to that of one who is anonymous.</td>
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<td>• Before they read, ask students whether they have known anyone who died suddenly. How did they try to make sense of this person’s death?</td>
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<td>• Have students discuss how death is portrayed in these selections. How do the narrators react? What do the narrators suggest about the reactions of others?</td>
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|                                                      | • Ask students to compare the narrators’ reflections with Brutus’s speech about Cassius’s death and Antony’s speech about Brutus’s death in Act 5. Which literary work comes closest to reflecting the students’ own feelings about death?
ACTIVE READING

Act 1
Possible answers: Caesar: powerful, proud, ambitious, insight-ful, confident; Brutus: strong sense of honor, serious attitude, patriotic; Cassius: strong-willed, single-minded, manipulative; Antony: loyal, obedient; Casca: blunt, crude, cynical.

Act 2
Decision: The conspirators decide not to include Cicero.
Reason: Cicero isn’t a loyal follower.
Possible consequence: They lack a gifted orator to convince Romans that their cause is just.
Decision: The conspirators decide to spare Antony.
Reason: Brutus feels that Antony will be rendered harmless upon Caesar’s death.
Possible consequence: Antony might rouse the people against them.
Decision: Caesar decides to go to the Senate House despite the bad omens.
Reason: He doesn’t want to appear afraid and lose an opportunity to be crowned.
Possible consequence: He might be murdered.

Act 3
Effect: The conspirators attack Caesar. Cause: The conspira
tors kill Caesar. Effect: Antony turns the public against Brutus.
Effect: The crowd grows enraged at the conspirators. Cause: Cinna tells the crowd his name, which is also the name of a con-
spirator.
Acts 4 and 5
Actual outcomes:
Act 4, Scene 1: By the end of the play, Octavius takes charge.
Act 4, Scene 2: They resolve their differences. Act 4, Scene 3: Brutus’s plan ends in failure. Act 5, Scene 2: Brutus kills himself rather than submit to Antony.

RESPONDING ACT 1
Recall and Interpret
1. They scold the commoners and remove Caesar’s trophies out of fear that he will become too powerful.
2. Cassius feels that Caesar’s position is unmerited and that he has become like a king because the people failed to stop him. Brutus agrees that Caesar has grown too powerful, but unlike Cassius, he is still loyal to him.
3. Caesar refuses the crown three times after it is offered. The crowd’s support for Caesar increases because of his apparent modesty.
4. Casca is afraid of the storm, but Cassius welcomes it as a bad omen. Both offer supernatural explanations of the storm, but Casca is revealed to be naive and is easily swayed, whereas Cassius is revealed to be cool and manipulative.
5. He leaves anonymous letters praising Brutus and asks for Casca’s help in convincing him. Brutus’ prestige will lend legitimacy to the conspiracy.
6. Students will probably agree with Cassius’ arguments against one-man rule, but they may object to his suggestion that Caesar is unfit to rule because of his physical limitations.
7. Students may say that Caesar is not sincere in his refusal to be crowned because he kills Flavius and Murellus for removing scarves from statues erected in his honor.

RESPONDING ACT 2
Recall and Interpret
1. He says that power will change Caesar, so he must be killed to prevent his becoming a tyrant. Brutus values the public good more than personal loyalty or friendship.
2. Were they to kill Antony, they would appear to be too ruth-
less. He thinks that Antony will be weakened by Caesar’s death and will not be a threat to them.
3. She cut herself on the thigh to prove her strength of charac-
ter to him. They respect and love each other.
4. She has had a frightening dream about him and has heard reports of bad omens. Caesar doesn’t seem to be afraid; he agrees to stay home only to appease her.
5. He says that Calphurnia’s dream is really a favorable sign and that Caesar risks losing the opportunity to be crowned if he stays home. Caesar’s pride and ambition make him vulnerable.

RESPONDING ACT 3
Recall and Interpret
1. Caesar refuses their request. The conspirators probably wanted an excuse to kill him.
2. Brutus’s participation in the plot surprises him the most. He felt close to Brutus and trusted him.
3. He offers to cooperate with them. He hides his true feel-
ings to protect himself and to gain an opportunity for revenge.
4. He feels that granting Antony’s request will show that the conspirators are honorable. He assumes that Antony will keep his word and not speak out against the conspirators.
5. After Brutus speaks, they want to crown him king, but Antony’s speech makes them want to kill Brutus and the other conspirators. They can be easily manipulated.

Evaluate and Connect
6. The warning suggests the power of Antony’s oratorical skills and a fear that he will arouse the public’s feeling against them. It foreshadows the effectiveness of Antony’s speech in achieving this goal.
7. The refrain is an example of verbal irony because Antony means the opposite of what he says. It is effective because it contrasts Brutus’ qualities with those of Caesar’s.

RESPONDING ACTS 4 AND 5
Recall and Interpret
1. Brutus accuses Cassius of protecting corrupt officials. Cassius responds by saying that Brutus is unfair and ungrateful. Some students might say that Cassius is more to blame because he behaved dishonorably; others might say that Brutus is wrong for scolding his most loyal ally.
2. Brutus wants to surprise their enemies at Philippi; Cassius wants to wait at Sardis and let the enemies come after them. Cassius’s yielding to Brutus’s judgment suggests that he is loyal to Brutus even when he disagrees with him.
3. He expresses his belief in the omens that had predicted he would be defeated. Because he had already fore-
seen his defeat, he may have been more apt to believe the mistaken report that Brutus had lost the battle.
4. He sees the ghost of Caesar. He believes that Caesar is directing the defeat of the conspirators to get revenge.
5. Antony praises Brutus as the only conspirator who had honor-
able motives, and Octavius orders a respectful funeral for

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Answer Key (continued from previous page)

**Evaluate and Connect**
1. Caesar was concerned because of his wife’s unusual dream, strange apparitions in Rome, and unfavorable omens from sacrifices. His pride, ambition, and rational beliefs may have led him to ignore his concern.
2. Caesar is killed despite the bad omens and attempts to warn him. The plot succeeded because one of the conspirators was able to manipulate Caesar by appealing to his vanity.
3. He puts up a fierce defense until he realizes that even Brutus is against him. The description gives an impression of courage and strength.
4. Cassius kills himself with the same dagger that he had used to kill Caesar. Plutarch may have wanted to emphasize Caesar’s power even after death.
5. Both writers portray the violence of the Roman citizens, but in the play, they seem to be more irrational and easily manipulated.

*The Killing of Julius Caesar “Localized”*
1. He would have interviewed Caesar. He makes fun of their insensitivity to crime victims.
2. He got it from the second edition of a Roman evening newspaper. Newspapers didn’t exist because the printing press hadn’t been invented yet.
3. Possible responses: verbose, stuffy, pompous. Contemporary articles typically begin with the straight facts, unembellished.
4. He wants to alert readers that he added details, words, and names that belong to his own time and place, not to ancient Rome.
5. His readers likely are familiar with the events and speeches in this popular play.

*A Eulogy to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*
1. He fears that their anger will lead them to hate all white people.
2. He recounts to the assassination of his brother, President John F. Kennedy.
3. Difficult experiences can eventually lead us to greater wisdom.
4. Paragraphs 7 and 9. He is appealing to the audience’s reason and ethical sense.
5. Although Kennedy’s use of repetition and personal tone may remind students of Antony’s speech, his goal is the opposite of Antony’s. He wants to calm and console his audience rather than inflame them.

**The Voter**
1. He is Marcus’s lead campaign worker, is popular and well respected, and understands the local people well.
2. He has become wealthy, and they want him to share some of it in exchange for their votes.
3. He wants to weaken Marcus’s power so that Marcus can be defeated in the next election. Roof is torn between his greed and his loyalty to Marcus.
4. He tears his ballot and puts half of it in each candidate’s box, thus nullifying his vote.

5. Both the villagers and the Roman citizens can be easily manipulated and are willing to overlook corruption in their government in exchange for money.

**The Legend and Geraldo No Last Name**
1. He has just finished doing his laundry for the week. His clothing reveals that he is poor, and because he does the wash by himself, he probably lives alone.
2. He feels removed from the man’s experience. Possible answer: The poem has reminded him that life is fleeting and that our lives are subject to unexpected events.
3. He can’t explain why Geraldo’s life was important. Possible answer: They are too far removed from the hard life of an immigrant worker.
4. It is written in plain, short sentences and fragments. The style suggests how a person with little information to offer might respond to questions from authorities.

**TEST**

**Recall and Interpret**
1. d 4. c
2. e 5. b
3. a
6. They feel that he has become too powerful and will soon rule over them.
7. They decide to spare Antony.
8. Antony’s funeral speech has turned the public against them.
9. He wants to attack Antony and Octavius before they have an opportunity to strengthen their forces.
10. He believes that Brutus has lost his battle, and he doesn’t want to be captured alive.

**Evaluate and Connect (any two)**
1. Antony’s statements about Lepidus and his rivalry with Octavius suggest that he seeks power. However, his expression of grief over Caesar’s murder and his courting public support suggest that revenge is the more important motive.
2. Shakespeare’s sympathy for the conspirators is suggested by his portrayal of Brutus’s idealism, the violence of the mob, and the harsh policies of Caesar’s supporters in Act 4. His sympathy for Caesar’s supporters is suggested by Brutus’s admission that Caesar has not misused his power and the fact that conditions worsen after Caesar dies.
3. Examples include Calphurnia’s dream and other omens before Caesar’s death, the appearance of Caesar’s ghost, and the omen that Cassius observes on the march to Philippi.
4. Although Brutus’s judgment is flawed, the conspirators remain loyal to him. However, Brutus’s involvement in the conspiracy is the ultimate act of disloyalty toward his friend Caesar.
5. Bloom’s opinion is supported by the many negative statements Cassius’s makes about Caesar throughout the play. Knight’s opinion is supported by Cassius’s devotion to Brutus even when Brutus displays a lack of sound judgment and also by the feelings of hurt Cassius expresses, caused by Brutus’s accusations against him.
Assessment Rubrics

Use these criteria as guidelines for evaluating students’ performance on Assessment Options activities presented in this Study Guide.

Writing

Mixed Motives In their comparison-contrast essays, students should
• identify clearly what is being compared and contrasted
• organize comparisons in a consistent manner and use transitional words to keep the relationships among ideas clear
• identify important points of comparison rather than superficial ones
• conclude essays with a well-reasoned assessment of Antony’s statement
• use quotes and specific references to support arguments
• demonstrate competency in grammar, mechanics, and usage

Dear Portia In their letters, students should
• write from Brutus’s point of view
• explain events that are dramatized or described in the play clearly and accurately
• be consistent with the character and speaking style of Brutus

A Troubled Republic In their research reports, students should
• focus on political and social conditions during the late republic
• identify specific problems and conflicts
• support general statements with quotations or examples

Listening and Speaking

The Ghost of Caesar In their interviews, the students should
• provide questions and answers about important events in the drama
• demonstrate an understanding of Caesar’s point of view
• hold the attention of the audience

The Art of Rhetoric In their performances, the students should
• use appropriate facial expressions, movements, and tone of voice
• pronounce words correctly and show an understanding of their meaning
• express emotions that are appropriate for the dialogue

Viewing and Representing

Famed Words In their posters, students should
• choose words and phrases that are memorable
• be able to explain why they chose the words and phrases
• demonstrate creativity in displaying the words and phrases

Cover It! In their book covers, the students should
• identify the title of the drama and the name of the author
• use eye-catching fonts and other graphic elements
• include an interesting illustration that relates to something important about the drama

Interdisciplinary Connection

Dying a Political Death In their reports, the students should
• provide a clear and accurate account of the assassination
• explain the motives of the assassins and how they affected history
• provide bibliographic sources for the information
• support the presentation with photos, maps, or other types of visual or audio media
• deliver the report in a way that engages the audience
others did not share this prejudice. Shakespeare seemed to have found patrons among the nobility, and in 1594 he joined the theater company the Lord Chamberlain’s Men. With Shakespeare as their principal dramatist, the company (later renamed the King’s Men) became England’s leading theater company.

**Literary Achievements** Shakespeare excelled in all forms of drama. At first, he mainly wrote comedies and English history plays. His early triumphs include *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Henry IV*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, a romantic tragedy that has remained especially popular with young people. Most critics agree that Shakespeare’s creative powers peaked between 1600 and 1607, when he wrote *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and other tragic masterpieces. During this period, his comedies grew darker and more complex. From 1608 to 1611, Shakespeare concentrated on “romances” such as *A Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*. These plays, with their fanciful plots, portray human suffering that leads to forgiveness and renewal. Shakespeare wrote two narrative poems and a book of sonnets in addition to his thirty-seven plays.

**Later Life and Reputation** Shakespeare’s share in his theater company and part-ownership of its theaters brought him wealth. He bought a large house for his family in Stratford, although he still lived in London for much of the year. Around 1610, he began spending more time in Stratford, where he eventually retired. Shakespeare died in 1616. In 1623, two theater colleagues published a collection of his plays. Known as the First Folio, this edition played an important role in preserving his work. The volume includes a commemorative poem by Ben Jonson, who declares that Shakespeare was “not of an age, but for all time.” His plays are performed throughout the world, and they continue to inspire writers, filmmakers, and other artists.

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William Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, a small market town about a hundred miles from London. His father, a glove maker and landowner, rose to the position of bailiff (equivalent to mayor) in 1568. His mother came from a prosperous farming family. Shakespeare probably attended Stratford’s grammar school, where he would have received a solid education in classical literature and Latin. At age eighteen, he married Ann Hathaway, who was eight years older than he. She bore a daughter, Susanna, in 1583, and twins, Judith and Hamnet, in 1585. Hamnet, Shakespeare’s only son, died in 1596.

“Upstart Crow” Sometime after 1585, Shakespeare moved to London and began his career as an actor and playwright. By 1592 he was already successful enough to arouse the jealousy of Robert Greene, a writer who denounced him as an “upstart crow.” Greene felt that an actor should not compete with university-trained writers, but
Perhaps more powerfully than in any of his previous plays, Shakespeare creates an intense sense of a social universe: we feel and smell this Rome; we understand its values and the power exerted by its social ethos on the main protagonists.

— Vivian Thomas, Julius Caesar

BACKGROUND
In 1599 the Lord Chamberlain’s Men built a new open-air playhouse called the Globe. Julius Caesar was one of the first plays performed there. Located south of London, the Globe was a circular building that held about three thousand people. Its large stage jutted out into an open yard, where “groundlings” could stand and watch for only a penny. Better-off theatergoers paid extra to sit in one of the covered galleries that extended around the theater.

The Globe had no lighting, so all performances took place in the afternoon. Shakespeare relied on language to establish the setting of his plays. For example, a character’s description of the moon told audiences that a scene was set at night. The only scenery consisted of props such as tables and chairs. Instead of being a handicap, the bare stage gave playwrights greater flexibility. Julius Caesar, like many of Shakespeare’s plays, shifts rapidly among a variety of locations.

Although theatergoers were willing to imagine the setting, they expected costumes to look realistic. Because women were banned from the public stages, boy actors played the female roles. Their high voices, along with wigs and gowns, helped create the illusion. Actors had to be prepared for many distractions. People commonly ate, drank, and talked during performances. The stage was surrounded by rowdy groundlings, and fights sometimes broke out. Yet audiences at the Globe had to have been fairly sophisticated to appreciate Shakespeare’s plays.

THE TIME AND PLACE
Julius Caesar depicts Rome’s transition from a republic to an empire. According to ancient historians, the republic dates back to 509 B.C., when the last Roman king was expelled and two consuls shared control of Rome’s military. Each year a new pair of consuls had to be elected. The Senate was the republic’s most important political institution. It was composed of several hundred members of Rome’s leading families, who could serve for life. Two citizen assemblies made laws and elected Rome’s magistrates, including consuls. Although the Senate was supposed only to advise the magistrates and the assemblies, it actually held most of the power.

Over several centuries, Rome greatly expanded its territories in a series of foreign wars, but these conquests created internal tensions. Some politicians began to challenge the Senate’s authority. Often they gained support from disgruntled veterans and other neglected members of society. Beginning in 133 B.C., Rome was plagued by widespread corruption and civil warfare.

In 60 B.C., Rome came under the control of the wealthy politician Crassus and two military leaders, Julius Caesar and Pompey. This coalition was known as the First Triumvirate. Crassus died in 53, and soon Pompey and Caesar were at odds with each other. After Pompey tried to strip Caesar of his powers in 49, Caesar crossed into Italy, forcing Pompey to flee. Pompey was killed the next year in Egypt. Caesar continued to meet resistance from Pompey’s sons. He finally defeated them in 45 and returned to Rome, where he had himself appointed dictator for life. Shakespeare’s play opens in 44 B.C., when it appeared that Caesar might topple the republic and reestablish a monarchy.
Julius Caesar was born in 100 B.C. He rose to prominence through military success and shrewd political maneuverings. He became wealthy and famous from his conquest of Gaul, a territory in western Europe. His books about the conquest and Rome's civil wars are literary classics.

Caesar gained complete control of Rome by 45 B.C., having defeated Pompey and his supporters. He quickly introduced new policies, such as reforming the Senate and extending Roman citizenship to residents of the provinces. He also established a new calendar, which is still used today in a revised form. Although these changes benefited many people, they angered members of the nobility, who also resented the loss of their power. A group of conspirators killed Caesar in 44 B.C.

CRITIC'S CORNER
The critic Ernest Schanzer commented on the paradoxes inherent in the play:

Julius Caesar is one of Shakespeare's most perplexing plays. Its stylistic simplicity, coupled with an absence of bawdy lines, has made it a favorite school text, and this has led some critics to believe that it ought to be a simple play, a belief which has easily ripened into the conviction that it is a simple play. Others have acknowledged its perplexities. . . . There is widespread disagreement among critics about who is the play's principal character or whether it has a principal character, on whether it is a tragedy and if so whose, on whether Shakespeare wants us to consider the assassination as damnable or praiseworthy, while of all the chief characters in the play violently contradictory interpretations have been offered.

—Ernest Schanzer, “The Problem of ‘Julius Caesar’”
FOCUS ACTIVITY
Think of effective leaders—either public figures or people whom you know. What qualities do they have in common?

Share Ideas
With a partner, brainstorm a list of qualities that are often found in successful leaders. Discuss why these qualities might help one become a successful leader.

Setting a Purpose
Read to discover different characters’ reactions to Julius Caesar’s leadership.

BACKGROUND
Did You Know?
In Act 1, Julius Caesar attends the feast of Lupercal, held yearly to honor a fertility god. It began with the sacrifice of goats and a dog at the Lupercal, a cave where Rome’s legendary founders, Romulus and Remus, allegedly were nursed by a she-wolf. Young men called “Luperci” would dress themselves in the goatskins and run around the Palatine Hill, one of the seven hills on which ancient Rome was built. They carried goat thongs that they used to strike people, especially women who could not have children. The ritual was said to help women become fertile. The Romans celebrated dozens of religious festivals, many involving games or spectacles. These events provided amusement for the poor and gave leaders an opportunity to interact with common people.

Shakespeare’s Soliloquies
In Shakespeare’s plays, characters sometimes make speeches when they are alone on stage. These soliloquies reveal a character’s private thoughts and are a means of providing important information to the audience. In Act 1, Scene 2, Cassius delivers a soliloquy that reveals a plot to influence Brutus to participate in the conspiracy to overthrow Caesar. It involves sending letters to Brutus that express the Romans’ high regard for him. Related to soliloquies are asides—comments made to the audience that cannot be heard by other characters present on stage. These asides appear in brackets. As you continue to read, look for other soliloquies and asides that impart important information to the audience.

VOCABULARY PREVIEW
amiss [ə mis’] adj. wrong, improper (p. 19)
battlement [bat’əl mant] n. a parapet having a series of indentations along its upper edge, used for defense (p. 3)
countenance [koun’ tə nans] n. face, features (p. 7)
encumber [en kum’ pas] v. to form a circle around (p. 13)
ere [ər] prep. before (p. 11)
fawn [fɔn] v. to seek notice or favor by acting in a servile manner (p. 9)
infirmity [in fur’mə tē] n. physical weakness; feebleness (p. 19)
mettle [met’əl] n. spirit and courage (p. 3)
Responding

*Julius Caesar* Act 1

**Personal Response**
Which character appeals to you the most so far? Why?

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**Analyzing Literature**

**Recall and Interpret**

1. How do Flavius and Mureullus respond when they meet commoners who are celebrating Caesar's triumph? What elicits this response?

   ---

2. What is Cassius's impression of Caesar in Scene 2? To what extent does Brutus agree with him?

   ---

3. What happens when Antony offers Caesar a crown? How does the crowd respond to Caesar's actions?

   ---

4. Describe Cassius's and Casca's reactions to the storm. What do their reactions reveal about their characters?

   ---

5. What action does Cassius take to win Brutus over? Why is it important for him to gain Brutus's support?

   ---
**Responding**

*Julius Caesar Act 1*

**Analyzing Literature (continued)**

**Evaluate and Connect**

1. Do you think that Cassius's assessment of Caesar is fair? Why or why not?

2. Did Caesar really not want to be crowned king, or was his refusal a ploy to win the public's allegiance? Why or why not?

**Literature and Writing**

**Evaluating Characters**

In the Focus Activity on page 16, you listed qualities that are often found in successful leaders. In your opinion, which character in *Julius Caesar* is best suited for leadership? Write one or two paragraphs in response to this question. Use the list you created and evidence from the play to support your opinion.

**Extending Your Response**

**Literature Groups**

Are the conspirators motivated by a sense of public duty, or do they care only about themselves? Discuss this question in your group. Afterward, share your conclusions with the class.

**Learning for Life**

Imagine that you are a television reporter in ancient Rome. Present a news report that covers both Julius Caesar's triumphant return to Rome after having defeated Pompey and his refusal to accept the Roman crown. To capture the mood of the people, include eyewitness interviews with Roman citizens in your report.

*Save your work for your portfolio.*
Before You Read

*Julius Caesar* Act 2

**FOCUS ACTIVITY**

What was the most difficult decision you have ever had to make in your life? Why was it difficult?

**Journal**

In your journal, describe how you arrived at the decision. Did you discuss it with friends or relatives? Do you feel that you made the right decision, or would you change it if you could?

**Setting a Purpose**

Read to find out how Brutus decides to join the conspiracy against Caesar.

**BACKGROUND**

**Did You Know?**

Marcus Brutus claimed to have descended from the founder of the Roman Republic. In 509 B.C., Lucius Junius Brutus led a revolt against Tarquinius Superbus, Rome’s seventh king. Ancient historians describe Tarquinius as a tyrant who killed many senators. Brutus supposedly expelled him and his family after Tarquinius’s son took advantage of a noblewoman. Brutus, one of the first consuls elected, made the Roman people swear never to accept another king. Much of the story may be legend, but it does reflect the Romans’ long-standing dislike of kings. Even the emperors avoided using the title.

**Anticipation and Anxiety**

**Suspense** is the anticipation of the outcome of events, especially as they affect a character for whom one has sympathy. Suspense produces an uncertainty that causes anxiety. For instance, Act 1 of *Julius Caesar* raises the question of whether Brutus will join Cassius’s conspiracy. As you read Act 2 of *Julius Caesar*, take note of the incidents that increase the level of suspense.

**VOCABULARY PREVIEW**

affability [afˈə bilˈi tē] n. easiness to approach and speak to (p. 37)

appertain [apˈər tānˈ] v. to relate to (p. 49)

augment [o⁄ment] adj. to make greater as in size or amount (p. 35)

faction [fakˈshan] n. a group of people within a larger group, esp. a dissenting one acting to promote its own ends (p. 37)

hew [hū] v. to make or shape with cutting blows, as from an ax (p. 43)

interpose [inˈtər pōzˈ] v. to place between; insert (p. 39)

portent [pərˈtent] n. warning or indication of what is to come; esp. of something momentous or calamitous (p. 57)

visage [vɪzˈaj] n. face or facial expression of a person (p. 37)
Active Reading

*Julius Caesar* Act 2

In Act 2, characters make decisions that affect the play’s outcome. Use the boxes below to record four important decisions from Act 2. Briefly explain the reason for each decision and predict its possible consequence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Possible consequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brutus decides to join the conspiracy.</td>
<td>He fears that Caesar will become a tyrant.</td>
<td>He could be punished for his actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>Possible consequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>Possible consequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>Possible consequence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Julius Caesar* Study Guide
Responding

*Julius Caesar* Act 2

**Personal Response**
What are your feelings toward Caesar at this point in the play?

**Analyzing Literature**

**Recall and Interpret**

1. How does Brutus justify the plot against Caesar? What does this justification suggest about Brutus's values?

2. Why does Brutus want to spare Antony's life? What is his opinion of Antony?

3. How does Portia convince Brutus to disclose his secret to her? What is your impression of their relationship?

4. Why is Calphurnia afraid to let Caesar go to the Senate House? Does Caesar seem to share her fear? Explain.

5. What arguments does Decius make to change Caesar's mind? Which of Caesar's personality traits make him vulnerable to Decius's arguments?
Responding

Julius Caesar Act 2

Analyzing Literature (continued)
Evaluate and Connect

6. Which of the two appears to have the better understanding of human nature, Brutus or Cassius? Explain.

7. Which three events in Act 2 serve to increase the level of suspense in the play? How?

Literature and Writing

Behind Every Great Man . . .
Shakespeare introduces Portia and Calphurnia in Act 2. How are these two women alike? How are they different? What do their relationships with their husbands reveal about Brutus and Caesar? Write one or two paragraphs comparing and contrasting these two women’s relationships with their husbands.

Extending Your Response

Literature Groups
In the Focus Activity on page 20, you recalled the most difficult decision you have had to make. With your group, discuss Brutus’s decision to join the conspiracy. Did his decision involve any of the same factors that affected your decision? If so, what factors? Do you think that he made the right choice? In your group, come to a consensus and share your conclusions with the class.

Music Connection
Write a rap verse or two based on the three warnings that Caesar receives on the ides of March. Perform the rap for the class. You may wish to have different students perform particular lines and to include a chorus as well as musical accompaniment. You may also wish to write Caesar’s response in the form of a rap.

Save your work for your portfolio.
FOCUS ACTIVITY

What is the most moving formal speech you have ever heard or read? Why did it make a lasting impression?

QuickWrite
Write a brief paragraph describing the speech and explaining why it made such an impression on you.

Setting a Purpose
Read to find out how important a speech is in influencing the outcome of *Julius Caesar*.

BACKGROUND

Did You Know?

Shakespeare based *Julius Caesar* on an English translation of Parallel Lives by the Greek writer Plutarch. This work contains paired biographies of Greek and Roman historical figures, including Caesar, Brutus, Antony, and Cicero. Plutarch was especially interested in his subjects' character and motives. In the play, Shakespeare generally followed Plutarch's portrayal of the historical figures, but he did make subtle changes. For example, Plutarch reveals that Cassius enjoyed making jokes and that Brutus hesitated to join the conspiracy because it would put so many lives in danger. In Shakespeare's play, Cassius is always serious; Brutus cares only about whether Caesar deserves to die. Antony's magnificent public speech in Act 3 is mainly Shakespeare's creation. In Plutarch's work, he describes it in a few sentences.

Irony in *Julius Caesar*

*Julius Caesar* contains examples of the three types of irony. **Dramatic irony** occurs when the audience or reader knows something that a character does not know. For example, the reader knows that Cassius sent the letters to Brutus anonymously, but Brutus believes that they are from Roman citizens. **Situational irony** occurs when what actually happens is the opposite of what is expected or appropriate. For example, Caesar expects to be crowned king at the Senate, but instead he is assassinated. **Verbal irony** occurs when a writer or speaker says one thing but really means its opposite. For example, Antony says that, compared to Brutus, he is not an orator, but Antony's speech clearly shows that he is. Verbal irony is especially prominent in Antony's public speech in Act 3. Look for examples as you read the speech.

VOCABULARY PREVIEW

bequeath [bi kwēth] v. to give or leave (property) by a will (p. 89)
decree [di krē] n. decision or order issued by a court (p. 67)
legacy [leg′ə sē] n. property bequeathed by will (p. 89)
meet [mēt] adj. proper (p. 91)
prostrate [pros′trät] adj. face downward on the ground in humility, adoration, or submission (p. 73)
redress [ri dres′] v. to correct and compensate for (p. 67)
unassailable [un′ə sā′ə lā bāl] adj. that cannot be denied, disputed, or questioned (p. 69)
In a play events are often linked together by cause and effect. These causes and effects move the plot forward. Events can have more than one cause and more than one effect. The following graphic lists events in Act 3 of Julius Caesar. As you read, fill in the missing cause or effect of each event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caesar refuses to pardon Publius Cinber.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antony flees from the Senate.</td>
<td>Antony flees from the Senate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brutus lets Antony speak at Caesar’s funeral.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antony reads Caesar’s will to the public.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plebeians murder Cinna the poet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responding

*Julius Caesar* Act 3

Personal Response
Which incident in Act 3 affected you the most? Explain.

---

Analyzing Literature
Recall and Interpret
1. Describe Caesar’s response to the request to pardon Publius Cimber. Why did the conspirators make the request at that time?

   

2. What surprises Caesar most when he is attacked? Why was it so surprising to him?

   

3. How does Antony behave toward the conspirators immediately after Caesar’s murder? What motivates his behavior?

   

4. Why does Brutus allow Antony to speak at Caesar’s funeral? What assumption does he make about Antony?

   

5. How does the crowd react to Brutus’s and Antony’s funeral speeches? What do these reactions suggest about the people in the crowd?
Responding

*Julius Caesar* Act 3

Analyzing Literature (*continued*)

Evaluate and Connect

6. What does Cassius’s attempt to dissuade Brutus from letting Antony speak at Caesar’s funeral imply? What purpose does this warning serve in advancing the plot?

7. In Antony’s eulogy to Caesar, he repeats the refrain that “Brutus is an honorable man.” Of what literary device is this an example? Why is its use effective?

Literature and Writing

Cassius Speaks

As Brutus begins to explain his actions, part of the crowd goes off to hear Cassius speak. Write a formal speech for Cassius to deliver. Before you begin, review his earlier dialogue to get a sense of his speaking style. Notice how he justifies Caesar’s murder to Brutus and other members of the conspiracy.

Extending Your Response

Literature Groups

In the Focus Activity on page 24, you explained why a speech left a lasting impression on you. In your group, analyze Brutus’s speech on page 83 and Antony’s speech on page 87 according to the following devices:

- invention—advancing logical, ethical, and emotional arguments
- arrangement—the structure of the arguments
- style—the selection of original words and phrases to express the arguments

Then, as a group, decide which speech is more effective, giving your criteria for evaluation.

Listening and Speaking

Choose a partner and take turns reading Antony’s speech aloud. As your partner speaks, take note of his or her gestures, tone of voice, and expression. After discussing your observations together, create a list of speaking tips that would help someone deliver the speech effectively.

Save your work for your portfolio.

*Julius Caesar* Study Guide
FOCUS ACTIVITY

Can serious conflict ever be resolved without bloodshed? What are some of the ways in which warring factions can end their conflict?

Discuss

With your class, discuss ways in which the conflict between Antony and Brutus might be resolved. Then, arriving at a consensus, make a prediction as to how you think the play might end.

Setting a Purpose

Read to find out how the civil conflict in Julius Caesar ends.

BACKGROUND

Did You Know?

Antony used Caesar’s will as a tool to manipulate the public. Yet the will was a mixed blessing for him. Instead of naming Antony heir, Caesar chose Octavius, his great-nephew. The two men could hardly have been more different: Antony, a gregarious and imposing general, and Octavius, a delicate nineteen-year-old. The senators, led by Cicero, supported Octavius. Cicero did not join in the conspiracy, but he approved of Caesar’s assassination and called for Antony’s death also. Octavius turned out to be a shrewd politician. When the senators later turned against Octavius, he joined Antony and Lepidus. The alliance split control of Rome’s territory in three ways. To pay off troops, they confiscated the estates of many senators and knights, beginning a reign of terror in which thousands perished. Octavius later became Rome’s first emperor and assumed the name Augustus.

Tragedy and the Tragic Hero

A tragedy is a drama in which the main character, or tragic hero, suffers a downfall. Traditionally, the hero is a person of high rank. His or her downfall usually results from an error in judgment or a fatal weakness or flaw, such as excessive ambition. Critics have long debated whether Julius Caesar or Brutus is the tragic hero of Shakespeare’s play. Although Caesar is the title character, he appears only in a few scenes and is killed in Act 3, the middle of the play.

VOCABULARY PREVIEW

apparition [ap´ə rish´ən] n. ghost; specter; phantom (p. 127)
chastisement [chas tiz´ə ment] n. punishment or reprimand (p. 111)
disconsolate [dis kon´sa lit] adj. without cheer, hope, or comfort (p. 143)
misconstrue [mis´ kan ströō´ə] v. to mistake the meaning or intention of; misinterpret (p. 145)
repose [ri poz´ə] n. relaxation, as after exertion or activity; rest (p. 125)
tarry [tar´ē] v. to remain in a place; stay, especially longer than one expected (p. 151)
tidings [ti´ dingz] n. news; information (p. 119)
### Active Reading

**Julius Caesar Acts 4 and 5**

After you read each scene listed below, answer the question with a prediction about what will happen later in the play and write your reason for making the prediction. When you finish reading the play, write the actual outcome.

**Act 4, Scene 1**

**Question:** Will Antony or Octavius take charge of the campaign against their enemies?

**Prediction:**

**Reason for prediction:**

**Actual outcome:**

**Act 4, Scene 2**

**Question:** Will Brutus and Cassius be able to resolve their differences?

**Prediction:**

**Reason for prediction:**

**Actual outcome:**

**Act 4, Scene 3**

**Question:** Will Brutus’s plan to defeat Octavius and Antony at Philippi succeed?

**Prediction:**

**Reason for prediction:**

**Actual outcome:**

**Act 5, Scene 2**

**Question:** Will Brutus surrender peacefully to Octavius and Antony?

**Prediction:**

**Reason for prediction:**

**Actual outcome:**
Responding

Julius Caesar Acts 4 and 5

Personal Response
What thoughts went through your mind as you finished reading this play?

Analyzing Literature
Recall and Interpret

1. Why do Brutus and Cassius quarrel in Act 4? In your opinion, who is more at fault?

2. How do the battle plans of Cassius and Brutus differ? What does Cassius's yielding to Brutus's judgment suggest about Cassius's character?

3. What belief does Cassius express to Messala before the battle? How might this belief have influenced Cassius's later decision to take his own life?

4. What supernatural experiences does Brutus have in Sardis and Philippi? How does he interpret these experiences?

5. How do Antony and Octavius respond to Brutus's death at the end of the play? Why might they have responded that way?
Responding

Julius Caesar Acts 4 and 5

Analyzing Literature (continued)
Evaluate and Connect

6. Is the play mistitled, and should it have been called “The Tragedy of Brutus”? What is the most compelling argument for why the play is titled as it is?


7. In the Focus Activity on page 28, you discussed ways in which the conflict between Antony and Brutus might be resolved. What attributes of Brutus’s character made the outcome of the play inevitable?


Literature and Writing
Write a Review of Julius Caesar
Write a review of Julius Caesar, discussing the play’s strengths and weaknesses. How well did Shakespeare organize his plot? Are the characters vivid and believable? Is the dialogue interesting? Support your analysis with quotations from the play and references to specific scenes.

Extending Your Response

Literature Groups
Which character is the real hero of Julius Caesar? Does the play have more than one hero? Review the definitions of tragedy and tragic hero on page 28 before you discuss these questions with your group. You might also compare Shakespeare’s characters with the heroes of other plays you have read. Share your conclusions with the class.

Interdisciplinary Activity: History
With a partner, create a multimedia exhibit on some aspect of Julius Caesar’s life and career. You might wish to focus on his military exploits, the calendar he introduced, his political reforms, the conspiracy to murder him, or daily life in Rome during his rule. Include photographs, maps, time lines, or other visual media in your exhibit.

Save your work for your portfolio.
Julius Caesar Study Guide

Plutarch

Before You Read
Focus Question
Have you ever had a bad feeling about an upcoming event in your life? How did it affect your behavior?

Background
Plutarch, a Greek writer, was born about a century after Julius Caesar's assassination. His most famous work is Parallel Lives. It includes the biographies of Caesar, Brutus, Antony, and Cicero. Plutarch arranged his biographical portraits in pairs, emphasizing similarities between Greek and Roman historical figures.

Responding to the Reading
1. What strange occurrences led Caesar to be concerned for his safety? Which personality traits may have influenced him to put aside his concern?

2. Why does Plutarch say that Caesar's fate seems to have been unavoidable? What evidence in the selection would contradict this view?

3. How does Caesar react to the attack on him? What impression of Caesar do you get from Plutarch's description of the attack?

4. According to Plutarch, what is the most remarkable “human” coincidence that occurred after Caesar's death? Why might Plutarch have chosen to emphasize such a coincidence?

5. Making Connections Compare and contrast Plutarch's and Shakespeare's accounts of the reaction of Rome's citizens to Caesar's assassination. How are they alike? How are they different?

Literature Groups
Does Plutarch seem to be more sympathetic to Caesar or the conspirators, or are his feelings toward them neutral? Discuss this question in your group. Share your conclusions with the class.
The Killing of Julius Caesar “Localized”

Mark Twain

Before You Read
Focus Question
In your opinion, are newspaper accounts free of bias? Why or why not?

Background
Mark Twain was the pen name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1835–1910), one of the most popular American authors. In this sketch, he parodies nineteenth-century newspaper articles.

Responding to the Reading
1. What does Twain say he would have done had he seen the dying Caesar? At what fault of reporters is he poking fun?

2. What source does Twain claim for the report of Caesar’s assassination? Why is this unrealistic?

3. Describe the style of the report’s opening paragraph. How does this paragraph differ from a typical opening paragraph in a contemporary crime report?

4. Why would Twain have added the word “localized” to the title of this sketch?

5. Making Connections Why might Twain have chosen to base his parody of journalism on Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar?

Speaking and Listening
With a partner, write a TV news broadcast that parodies Caesar’s assassination or another significant event in the play. Announce the news in the style typical of today’s newscasters. You may videotape the performance, if you wish.
A Eulogy to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Before You Read

Focus Question
What are some possible consequences of the assassination of an important political leader?

Background
Robert F. Kennedy, the brother of President John F. Kennedy, was running for president at the time of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination. Robert Kennedy himself was assassinated in June 1968, two months after King died.

Responding to the Reading
1. What effect does Kennedy fear the assassination of King will have on his audience?

2. What personal experience does Kennedy recount to convince his audience that he understands their feelings?

3. What message did Kennedy seek to convey by the quote from Aeschylus?

4. Which paragraphs of the speech feature the use of repetition? To what is Kennedy appealing in the use of this technique?

5. Does Kennedy's speech remind you more of Brutus’s or Antony's in Act 5? Explain.

Learning For Life
Interview someone you know who remembers King's assassination. Ask him or her how he or she reacted to the news and the lessons he or she learned during this turbulent period in our nation's history.
Before You Read

Focus Question
How are ordinary citizens affected by corrupt elections?

Background
Chinua Achebe is one of Africa’s most distinguished writers. Born in 1930, he grew up in a village in eastern Nigeria. His first novel, Things Fall Apart, published in 1958, has been highly acclaimed as a classic.

Responding to the Reading
1. What services does Roof provide for Marcus Ibe? Why is Roof valuable to Marcus?

2. How has Marcus changed since he gained political office? How do the villagers respond to this change?

3. Why does a worker from the rival campaign offer Roof five pounds to vote against Marcus? What internal conflict does Roof experience?

4. How does Roof resolve the conflict at the end of the story?

5. In what way are the villagers in Achebe’s story and the Roman citizens portrayed in Julius Caesar alike?

Writing a Dialogue
Imagine that Ibe lost the election by one vote and that he suspects that Roof’s nullified vote caused the loss. Write a brief dialogue based on a heated encounter between the two men that occurs after the election.
TEST: *Julius Caesar*

Recall and Interpret (40 points total; 5 points each)

**A. Matching**  Next to each character's name, write the letter of the detail that matches the character.

1. Julius Caesar  a. is said to have a “lean and hungry look”
2. Marcus Brutus  b. loses a battle at Philippi, but ends up victorious
3. Caius Cassius  c. is described as “but a limb of Caesar”
4. Mark Antony  d. refuses to grant a pardon, claiming that he is as “constant as the northern star”
5. Octavius Caesar  e. fears that Caesar will change if he assumes too much power

**B. Write a short answer for each question below.**

6. What is the conspirators' main grievance against Julius Caesar?

7. As the conspirators plan to kill Caesar, what decision do they make that helps bring about their downfall?

8. Why are the conspirators forced to flee Rome after they kill Caesar?

9. Why does Brutus decide to march toward Philippi instead of staying at Sardis?

10. Why does Cassius order a slave to kill him at Philippi?
The Legend and
Geraldo No Last Name

Before You Read

Focus Question
Why do many people feel it is important to be remembered after they are gone?

Background
Garrett Hongo and Sandra Cisneros have both written extensively about their ethnic origins. Hongo, a Japanese American poet and editor, was born in Hawaii. Sandra Cisneros is a Mexican American poet and fiction writer who writes about growing up in Chicago.

Responding to the Reading

1. In “The Legend,” what has the old man just finished doing before he is shot? What does the poem suggest about the circumstances of his life?

2. Why is the speaker of “The Legend” ashamed? How has the man’s death affected the speaker?

3. What can’t the narrator of “Geraldo No Last Name” explain to the authorities? Why wouldn’t they understand?

4. How would you describe the style of “Geraldo No Last Name”? Why might Cisneros have chosen this style for her story?

5. Compare and contrast the victims in these selections with the title character of Shakespeare’s drama.

Personal Writing
Write a paragraph about a relative or friend who has died. How do your memories of this person enrich your life? What would you like others to know about him or her?
TEST: *Julius Caesar* (continued)

Evaluate and Connect (60 points total; 30 points each)

C. Answer two of the following essay questions on a separate sheet of paper. Support your response with examples from the play.

1. Is Antony motivated more by the desire for power or the desire to avenge Caesar’s death?
2. How does Shakespeare show his sympathy both for the conspirators and for Caesar and his supporters?
3. What role does the supernatural play in the drama?
4. Before dying, Brutus says “I have found no man but he was true to me.” How does this statement relate to his actions in the play?
5. The main characters of *Julius Caesar* have inspired contradictory interpretations. Below are two quotes from literary critics. Which statement is closest to your own views? Explain why the statement is valid.
   - Harold Bloom: “Cassius . . . embodies the spirit of resentment, unhappy as he is at contemplating a greatness beyond him.”
   - G. Wilson Knight: “Cassius has profound understanding, a rich personality. It is clear that he possesses singleness of purpose, and a sense of integrity which renders him fearless.”