

Kentucky Shakespeare Presents

Julius Caesar - Spring Tour

Study Guide

Grades 6 - 12



Hear it. See it. Do it!



Dear Educator,

Thank you for choosing Kentucky Shakespeare to enrich your students' lives with Art Education! We know that the arts are essential to a child's educational experience and development. It is our object to keep the arts alive and thriving in our schools and communities.

This comprehensive Study Guide includes essential background information on the Bard and his life, his written works, pre/post performance activities, and a list of applicable Academic Standards that are met with this performance of *Julius Caesar*. While giving additional arts related experiences, these teacher-led activities are intended to broaden students' understanding of the play as well as how Shakespeare can relate to our own lives.

Please contact us with any questions or need for further assistance. Thank you for supporting the Commonwealth's largest in-school arts provider and the United States' oldest, free Shakespeare festival!

All Our Best to You,

Kyle Ware
Director of Education

Hannah Pruitt
Education Programs Manager

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Academic Standards

TH:RE7.1.6-8, TH:RE8.1.6-8, TH:RE9.1.6-8,
TH:CN10.1.6-8, TH:CN11.1.6-8, TH:CN11.2.6-8,
TH:RE7.1.I-III, TH:RE8.1.I-III, TH:RE9.1.I-III,
CN10.1.I-III, TH:CN11.1.I-III

RL.6.3, RI.6.4, SL.6.1B, RL.6.7, RL.7.3, RL.7.4,
RL.7.5, SL.7.1C, RL.8.3, RL.8.4, RL.9-10.3, SL.9-
10.1C, SL.9-10.1D, RL.9-10.4, RL.9-10.6, RL.9-
10.1, RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.7

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Spring Tour Synopsis

In this 90-minute production of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, our professional actors are able to create a rapport with your students in order to keep Shakespeare relevant and accessible. It is a wonderful opportunity for Shakespeare-lovers and those not as well acquainted to experience the Bard's language and see a live performance of his words. This tour emphasizes conflict resolution, interpersonal relationships, and Shakespeare's universal themes.

How can we both make this be the most efficient and successful performance?

- We ask that you create an environment conducive to a positive interaction with your students including an **open space** for our Artist Educators to perform and seating students on bleachers or to where they can easily see the performance.
- For your use, we have provided these activities for both **pre- and post-workshop discussion**. They are a fun and an engaging way to enhance learning and allow students to make the most of their arts experience with us.
- It is of utmost importance not only to your students but to our Artist Educators as well that there are **adult school staff members present in the room** throughout the workshop. Students tend to have less distractions and are more encouraged to engage in the performance with familiar adult presences in the room.

William Shakespeare

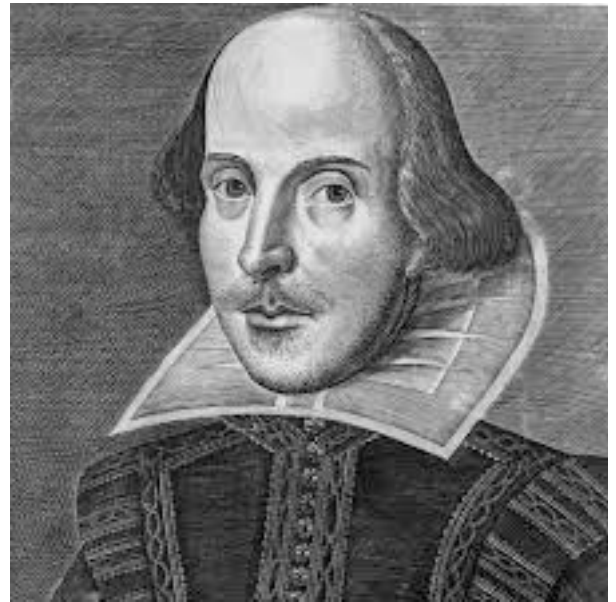
(April 23, 1564 – April 23, 1616)

His Life

- Born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon
- Attended grammar school in central Stratford where he learned Latin, grammar, and literature
- Married Anne Hathaway at the age of 18 and had three children: Susanna and twins Hamnet and Judith
- Between 1585 and 1592, he began a successful career in London as an actor, writer, and part owner of the playing company the Lord Chamberlain's Men, later known as the King's Men
- Appears to have retired to Stratford around 1613, where he died three years later

His Works

- An English poet and playwright widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's preeminent dramatist
- Often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon" (or simply "The Bard")
- His surviving works consist 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and several poems
- Plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more than those of any other playwright
- Few records of his private life survive and there has been considerable speculation about his religious beliefs and whether the works attributed to him were written by others
- Produced most of his known work between 1590 and 1613
- Early plays were comedies and histories, genres he raised to the peak of style and artistry
- Next, he wrote primarily tragedies until about 1608, including *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*
- Lastly, he wrote tragicomedies also known as romances and collaborated with other playwrights
- In 1623, two of his former theatrical colleagues published the First Folio, a collected edition of his dramatic works that included all but two of the plays now recognized as Shakespeare's
- Reputation did not rise to its present heights until the nineteenth century



William Shakespeare



The Original Globe Theatre circa 1612

Shakespeare's Three Styles of Plays

Tragedy

Shakespearean tragedies were formulaic in style and used traditional conventions. These tenets included:

- A hero(ine) who seeks to avenge a crime committed against a family member or a personal injustice
- A tragic character whose own flaw leads to their downfall
- An end that contains a revelation of self-knowledge by the tragic hero about how his own frailty brought on his and others' downfall

Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Hamlet, Julius Caesar, King Lear, Macbeth, Othello, Romeo & Juliet, Timon of Athens, Titus Andronicus

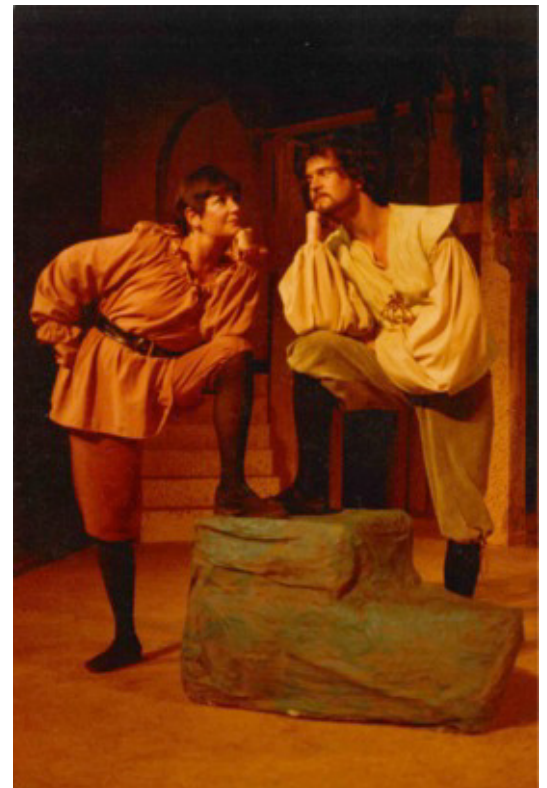


Comedy

"Comedy" in its Elizabethan usage had a very different meaning from modern comedy. A Shakespearean comedy is one that has a happy ending, usually involving marriage, and a lighthearted tone and style. Shakespearean comedies tend to have:

- A struggle of young lovers to overcome a difficulty often presented by elders
- Separation and unification
- Mistaken identities
- A clever servant
- Heightened tensions, often within a family
- Multiple, intertwining plots
- Frequent use of puns

All's Well That Ends Well, As You Like It, The Comedy of Errors, Cymbeline, Love's Labours Lost, Measure for Measure, The Merry Wives of Windsor, The Merchant of Venice, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Much Ado About Nothing, Pericles- Prince of Tyre, Taming of the Shrew, The Tempest, Troilus and Cressida, Twelfth Night, Two Gentleman of Verona, Winter's Tale



History

Shakespeare's "history" plays are based on the lives of English kings and brought massive audiences to the theatre. These plays are based only loosely on historical figures rather than actual events in history. The 10 plays that are categorized as histories cover English history from the twelfth to the sixteenth century particularly 1399-1485. The histories usually include elements of comedy and tragedy.

King John, Richard II, Henry IV Parts I and II, Henry V, Henry VI Parts I, II and III, Richard III, Henry VIII



BASIC THEATRE VOCABULARY

Actor- Individual who pretends to be a character in a play; who represents a character in a play.

Blocking- The pattern of movement the actors follow while on stage.

Characters- The personalities or parts actors become in a play; roles played by actors in a play.

Climax- The point of highest dramatic tension or a major turning point in the action of a play.

Conflict- The opposition of persons, forces, or ideas that gives rise to the dramatic action.

Costumes- The clothing worn by the actors to play the characters.

Dialogue- The words spoken by the actors during a play.

Empathy- The capacity to relate to the feelings of another.

Exposition- The part of a play that introduces the theme, main characters and circumstances.

Falling Action- The action after the climax of the plot.

Interpretation- To explain or tell the meaning of something; to present in understandable terms.

Monologue- A speech made by a single character; often when a character is “thinking out loud.”

Motivation- An incentive or an inducement for further action for a character.

Playwright- The individual who writes a play.

Plot- What happens in a play; the order of events, the story as opposed to the theme; what happens rather than what it means.

Resolution- The solution to the problem after the climax in a play.

Rising Action- The portion of the play from the beginning to the climax, where the action increases in intensity and excitement.

Role- Part/ character/ person written by a playwright.

Setting- Where a play takes place in time, space, or location

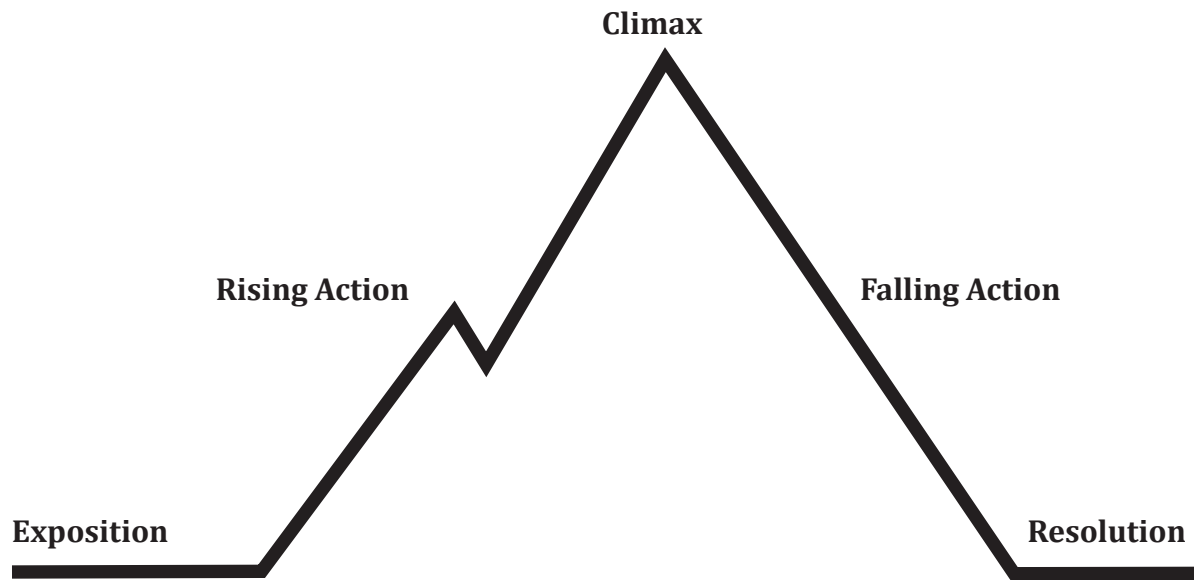
Script- The play in written form.

Stage- The area where the actors perform the play.

Theme- What the play means as opposed to what happens; the main idea or message within the play.

Turning Point- The moment in a play when events can go either way; the moment of decision; the crisis.

Dramatic Structure of a Play's Plot

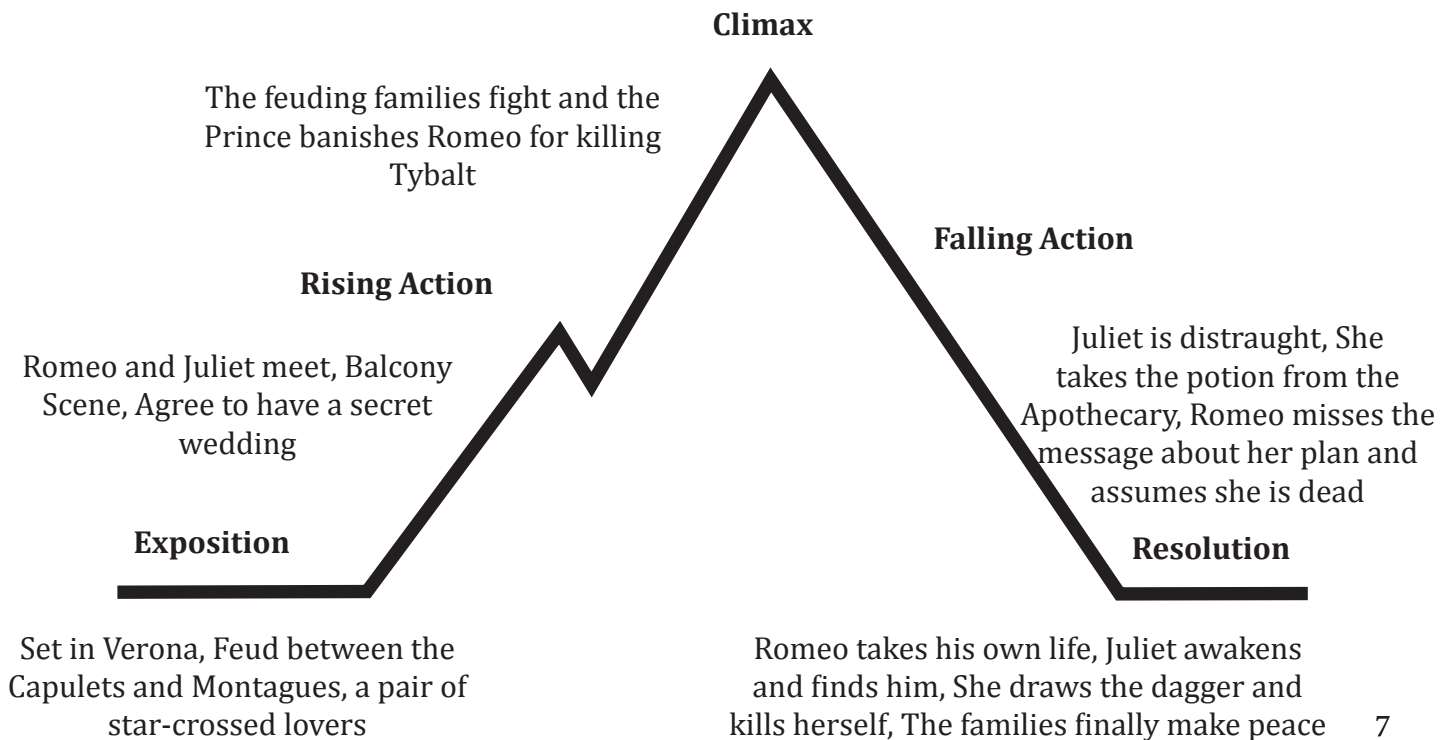


Freytag's Pyramid

Freytag's Pyramid illustrates the five parts of the classic dramatic plot: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. This pattern was suggested by Gustav Freytag in 1863 as means to explain the plot of many works such as Shakespeare's collection.

Please have students use the vocabulary from the previous page to fill out their own Plot Diagram for the plot of *Julius Caesar*.

An example Answer Key for *Romeo & Juliet* is provided below:



Director's Questions

Shakespeare used very few stage directions, which are clues in the script for the actors and director to follow during productions. An example would be, "*Actor crosses downstage right to table.*" The way that Shakespeare handled stage directions is that he left clues about the characters and scenery in the lines of the play.

Choose a scene from *Julius Caesar*, read it aloud, and use the Director's Questions below to explore the possibilities of the text. Based on your discoveries from the Director's Questions, make decisions about what the set, scenery, and costumes might look like.

DIRECTOR'S QUESTIONS

1. WHO AM I?

How old am I? Am I rich or poor?

What is my job? Am I in school?

What is my family like? Where am I from (country, state, etc.)?

Am I nice? Funny? Smart? Mean? What is my personality?

2. WHERE AM I?

County - State - City - Neighborhood - Building - Room

What does the place look like? Do I like it or not?

3. WHAT TIME IS IT?

Century - Year - Month - Week - Day - Time

4. WHAT ARE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS IN THE SCENE?

People in the scene?

People mentioned in the scene?

The place where they are?

The objects around them?

5. WHAT IS WRONG IN THIS SCENE? IS THERE A PROBLEM? A CONFLICT?

6. WHAT DO THE CHARACTERS WANT IN THIS SCENE? WHY CAN'T THEY HAVE IT?

7. WHAT DO THE CHARACTERS NEED TO DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare

Synopsis

At the beginning of the play, Julius Caesar returns to Rome after many military successes. Caesar is very popular with the people of Rome, and this makes the senators nervous. Cassius, one of Caesar's longtime friends, spreads the idea that Caesar wants to turn the republican government in Rome into a monarchy, where he would be the only person in charge. Cassius spreads this idea by writing fake letters in different handwritings in support of Caesar. Brutus, another friend of Caesar, hears this rumor and is very conflicted. Brutus argues with Cassius and himself about what he should do. He loves Caesar as a friend, but he worries that if Caesar gets more power it will be bad for Rome.

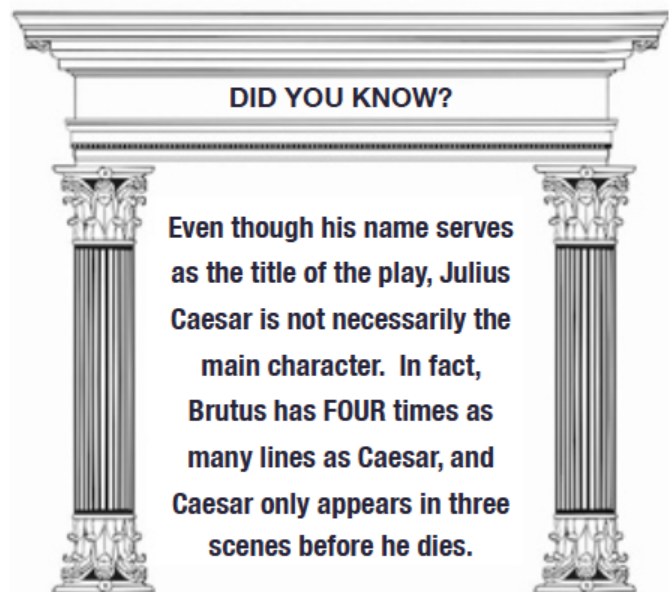
Meanwhile, a soothsayer (fortune-teller) warns Caesar to "Beware the Ides of March," and Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, warns him of the bad omens she has witnessed. Caesar decides to go to the Senate anyway.

At the Senate, the people plotting against Caesar present him with a petition. Caesar rejects the petition, and the conspiring senators use this as a reason to attack him. The senators all stab him, with Brutus stabbing him last. Caesar sees this and says, "Et tu, Brute?"

The senators make it known that they assassinated Caesar for the good of Rome. Brutus defends their actions in a long speech and the Roman people are on his side, but then Mark Anthony makes an emotional speech that turns the crowd against the conspirators. The mob drives the conspirators from Rome, and in the confusion they kill an innocent poet that they confuse with one of the conspiring senators.

In Act Four, Brutus attacks Cassius for ruining their noble act by accepting bribes to kill Caesar. Brutus and Cassius make up and then prepare for war against the new leaders of Rome, a group of three people including Mark Anthony. Before they go to battle, Caesar's ghost warns Brutus they they will be defeated. In the battle, Cassius and Brutus realize they will probably both die. Cassius asks Pindarus to stab him and Pindarus consents, killing Cassius with the same sword Cassius used to stab Caesar. In another part of the battlefield, Brutus continues to fight until his troops are defeated. He despairs and asks his servant to hold the sword while Brutus runs on it.

At the end of the play, Mark Anthony proclaims Brutus "the noblest Roman of them all," because Brutus intended to only do what would be best for Rome.



Characters from *Julius Caesar*

Conspirators Against Caesar

Marcus Brutus (Caesar's closest friend)- He joins the conspiracy in killing Caesar because he strongly believes in keeping Rome a government ruled by the people.

Caius Cassius (An ambassador for Caesar and the instigator of the conspiracy against Caesar)- He and Brutus lead the army against the ruling Triumvirate in the civil war following Caesar's death.

Casca (A Roman Senator)- He is the first to stab Caesar. He does so from behind.

Decius Brutus (A Roman senator)- He is sent to accompany Caesar to the Senate on the day of Caesar's assassination.

Cinna (A Roman senator)- He assists Cassius' manipulation of Brutus by planting anonymous letters around Brutus' house.

Trebonius (A Roman senator)- He supports Brutus' decision to spare Mark Antony's life and is the only conspirator who doesn't stab Caesar.

Other Romans

Portia (The wife of Marcus Brutus)- She feels Brutus is hiding something from her and pleads with him to confide in her.

Flavius & Murellus (Commoners of Rome)- They are skeptical of Caesar's power and criticize other commoners for praising Caesar without enough reason.

Pindarus (A servant to Cassius)- He delivers an inaccurate report to Cassius regarding the death of one of his men.

Strato (A servant and friend to Brutus)- He holds the sword on Brutus' behalf so that Brutus may run upon the it.

Murellus (A commoner of Rome)- He criticizes the other commoners for praising Caesar without enough reason.

Cinna the Poet (A artisan of Rome)- He is killed during the crowd's riot when he is mistaken for the conspirator of the same name.

Soothsayer (A soothsayer is someone who foretells events or predicts the future)- She warns Caesar to "beware the Ides of March."

Caesar's Supporters

Julius Caesar (Ruler of Rome)- He has become so popular and powerful that some citizens fear that he will convince the public to make him a king, changing Rome's government from a republic to a monarchy.

Calpurnia (Caesar's wife)- She begs her husband not to go to the Senate on the day of his assassination because of a dream she had foretelling the event.

Marc Antony (Senator and loyal friend of Caesar)- He uses reverse psychology to turn the Romans against the conspirators during his famous funeral speech.

Vocabulary

Below are selected words from *Julius Caesar* that will assist in the comprehension and background knowledge for the production.

Conspiracy - an agreement to work together to perform an illegal act, especially with political motivation

Dictatorship - a form of government where one person has all of the power and authority

Ides of March - the date of March 15th; the Ides of a month were supposed to be determined by the full moon, reflecting the lunar origin of the Roman calendar; the Ides of March would have been the first full moon of the new year in Roman times

Republic - a form of government where citizens vote for leaders and/or representatives

Senator - a person of authority in government, sometimes a person in government who represents a larger group of people

Senate - a group of senators; a building where senators meet

Soothsayer - a person who claims to be able to predict the future

They Said What?!

Do these quotes from *Julius Caesar* sound familiar?
Can you think of phrases we use today that may be based on these quotes?

“Beware the Ides of March.”
Act 1 Scene 2

“Et tu, Brute?” (“And you, Brutus?”)
Act 3 Scene 1

“Cry ‘Havoc’, and let slip the dogs of war.”
Act 3 Scene 1

“Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.”
Act 3 Scene 2

Themes

One of the brilliant things about Shakespeare is that each of his plays is rich with themes that are central to the human experience. When a director approaches a Shakespearean text, they must choose which themes to emphasize. The following themes are important to this interpretation of *Julius Caesar*.

Public vs. Private Self

The idea of public self (i.e. who you would be at school, work, etc) versus the private self (i.e. who you would be at home) is one of the more relevant themes for this play and our lives today. Much of the play's tragedy stems from the neglect of private feelings and favors of what they believe to be the public good. Characters confuse their private selves with the public selves, which in turn hardens and dehumanizes them.

*Questions: How can these types of environments make a person react differently to situations?
Can you think of specific situations where you would react differently if you were in private vs. in public?
How often do you make choices in reaction to the pressure of how others may perceive you?*

Friendship & Loyalty

Even though Brutus and Cassius are friends with Caesar, they question and debate whether or not one man should be the ruler of the Roman Empire. In the end, they decide friendship and their loyalty to one man isn't enough to support Caesar as a king or sole ruler of their government. Antony, however, chooses to remain loyal to Caesar even in after his death.

Questions: Compare and Contrast the three friendships that are illustrated with Caesar in this play (Brutus, Cassius, and Antony) with each other. Who was the most loyal and to what or whom were they loyal?

Conflict Resolution

The characters in *Julius Caesar* struggle to decide which side - for or against Caesar - is the right side. They are unable to positively find conflict resolution (where two people communicate their differences in order to find a way to resolve their issues). Instead, they turn to violence and doubting their instincts to determine by drastic means how to govern their people. Actions that do not lead to peace for everyone.

*Questions: What were some of the words, actions, and decisions that led to conflict in this play?
What are some ways that the Senators could have worked to resolve their issues?
Did Brutus do the right thing by betraying his friend for the greater good?*

Use the steps for Conflict Resolution to explain your choices.

Steps to Resolve Conflict:

- 1. Identify the Problem.**
- 2. Focus on the Problem.**
- 3. Attack the Problem, NOT the Person.**
- 4. Listen with an Open Mind.**
- 5. Treat a Person's Feelings with Respect.**

Pre-Show and Post-Show Activities for Exploration

Please complete the following activities before & after the performance.

Before the Performance

1. Familiarize your students with *Julius Caesar* and discuss with your class the parts of this play- characters, themes, plot, etc. What are their expectations of experiencing this performance?
2. There are many modern interpretations of Shakespeare's plays such as *Gnomeo & Juliet*, *The Lion King*, *West Side Story*, and *10 Things I Hate About You*. Why do playwrights and filmmakers update Shakespearean plays?
3. Examine the major themes of *Julius Caesar*. For each theme, have the students list examples from their own lives and from the modern world around them. Prepare the students to look for these themes in the workshop and discuss how they relate or do not relate to their own lives.
4. What types of technical theatre are needed for the performance including sets, props, costumes, sound, and lighting? Find specifics from the script and add some of your own to the list. How do these elements add to the experience? What do you expect from our Spring Tour of this show that has to adapt to many different locations?

After the Performance

5. Was Caesar a good ruler? Would he have made a good sole ruler of Roman? Who else could've taken his place? Use examples from the text and/or the performance to support your position.
6. Consider the two female roles in this play - Calpurnia and Portia. Compare and Contrast their relationships with their husbands. What kind of agency did they have as women in this male-dominant society?
7. If you were to be in charge of the technical element of sound for this performance, then what pieces of music, sound effects, etc would you choose? What period would the music come from in history? What point in the play would it be used in? What would you want it to make the audience feel or understand? How would this music help the play to tell the story or set the mood?
8. Compare the physical choices the actors made in the play to what their characters were saying in the scenes. Give three examples of how their physical choices- space, pace, levels, etc enhanced the impact of their performance. Is there a choice that you would've made differently? What would it have been and why?

Shakespeare Links & Resources

Type the word Shakespeare in a search engine and you will find a plethora of information on him, his works and his environment. Show your students that the internet can be a great way to research and gather valuable information - especially when you can't find it at your local library.

www.absoluteshakespeare.com
Comprehensive Resource of Works

www.folger.edu
The Folger Shakespeare Library

www.penguin.com/static/pdf/teachersguides/
The Penguin & Signet Classic's Teacher Guide

www.shakespeare.org.uk
Resources for understanding Shakespeare's works, life, and times



Classroom Challenge:

Write a letter to the Kentucky Shakespeare Professional Actors who performed in the *Julius Caesar* SPRING TOUR performance. Describe what you liked about the performance and how it helped to see Shakespeare be performed rather than just reading it. Describe what you did, saw, and heard.

What was your favorite part?

Mail to:
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