

William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*

Study Guide

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Julius Caesar

Welcome to *Julius Caesar*. We hope that this study guide will help navigate you through one of Shakespeare's most famous tragedies. The Orlando-UCF Shakespeare Festival has a strong belief in the relationship between the actor and the audience because, without either one, there is no theatre. It is our hope that this study guide will give you a better understanding of the text, help you to enjoy the theatrical experience, and eliminate any "Shakes-fear" you may have regarding this complex yet beautiful orchestration of Shakespeare's heightened dialogue.

Table of Contents

page 3	Meet the Characters
page 4	Characters continued & Plot Summary at a Glance
page 5	Full Plot Summary
page 6	Tools for the Text: Paraphrase
page 7	Tools for the Text: Imagery
page 8	Tools for the Text: Iambic Pentameter
page 9	Tools for the Text: Variations to Iambic lines
page 10	Discussion Questions
page 11	History and Influences
page 12-17	2 Complete Learning Plans

This guide was written to correspond to the following Sunshine State Standards:

THE ARTS

Skills and Techniques-- the student understands and applies arts techniques, media and processes

Creation and Communication-- the student creates and communicates a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas using knowledge of the structures and functions of the arts

Culture and Historical Connections-- the student understands the arts in relation to history and culture

Aesthetic and Critical Analysis-- the student analyzes, evaluates and responds to characteristics of works of art.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Writing-- the student uses the writing processes effectively.

Listening, Viewing & Speaking-- The student uses listening strategies effectively.

Language-- The student understands the nature and power of language.

SOCIAL STUDIES

History-- The student understands historical chronology and the historical perspective

Government and the Citizen—The student understands the role of the citizen in American Democracy

Meet the Characters

The Supporters of Caesar

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.

Mark Antony (Senator and loyal friend of Caesar)- He uses reverse psychology to turn the Romans against the conspirators during his famous funeral speech. He is a member of the ruling Triumvirate after Caesar's death.

Octavius Caesar (Caesar's adopted son)- He is a member of the ruling Triumvirate after Caesar's death and convinces Mark Antony to begin the war against the conspirators.

Aemilius Lepidus (A general in Caesar's army and Caesar's ally)- He is a member of the ruling Triumvirate after Caesar's death but holds less power than the other members.

The 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.

Metellus Cimber (A Roman Senator)- He distracts Caesar so the others can attack him.

Caius Ligarius (A Roman Senator)- At first he hesitates in joining the conspiracy against Caesar, but joins once he knows Brutus is also convinced.

Family and Followers of the Conspirators

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

Lucius (Brutus' servant)

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.

Other Romans

Cicero (A Roman senator and well known orator)

Publius (A Roman senator)- He travels with Caesar to the Senate House the day of the assassination. He also tries to calm the angry crowd.

Popilius Lena (A Roman senator)- He frightens Cassius by wishing him well on his "enterprises" just before Caesar enters the Senate House on the day of Caesar's assassination.

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

Artemidorus (A Roman writer and philosopher)- He presents Caesar with a letter warning him about the assassination. Caesar does not heed this warning.

Flavius (A commoner of Rome)- He is skeptical of Caesar's power.

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

Carpenter (A commoner of Rome)

Cobbler (A commoner of Rome)- He teases the other commoners with word play.

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.

Plot Summary at a Glance

Julius Caesar is a highly successful leader of Rome whose popularity seems to model that of a king's. Although Caesar is loved and supported by his citizens, some begin to grow wary of his increase in power. Soon, these wary citizens conspire to assassinate Caesar before he becomes king thus turning their republic government into a monarchy. Cassius, the leader of the conspirators, convinces Marcus Brutus, Caesar's most trusted friend, to join the conspiracy. During a celebration, Caesar is warned by the Soothsayer that he must "beware the Ides of March". The next morning, despite his wife Calpurnia's pleas, Caesar travels to the Senate House where the conspirators assassinate him. Caesar's friend Mark Antony provides the famous funeral oration and incites the crowd to riot leading to a civil war. Antony and Octavius, Caesar's heirs, join the fight against the conspirators. Antony and Octavius defeat the conspirators avenging Caesar's death and restoring order to Rome.

Plot Summary

Act I

Having defeated his archenemy, Pompey the Great, Julius Caesar returns to Rome in triumph. Before Caesar arrives for his celebration, some Roman commoners discuss Caesar's growing power in the streets. When Caesar arrives in the town, the Soothsayer stops him and warns him to "Beware the Ides of March." Caesar disregards the Soothsayer's warnings and continues to celebrate his victory.

Act II

Cassius and some other Roman senators, known collectively as the Conspirators, are wary of Caesar's popularity and have begun to plot against him. They aim to recruit Caesar's good friend, Marcus Brutus, as a member of their group in order to reinforce their cause. After much deliberation, Brutus decides to join the conspirators in order to protect Rome and its citizens from Caesar's ambitions to become king. They decide to assassinate Caesar on March 15th. After the meeting, Brutus' wife, Portia, tries to get her husband to tell her what is happening. Brutus will not answer her.

The next morning, Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, awakes from terrible nightmares about his death and civil war. She pleads with Caesar to stay home. Caesar ignores her warnings and departs to the Senate House with Decius Brutus, one of the conspirators. In the streets, Portia and the Soothsayer speak about their feelings of impending danger as they wait for Caesar to pass by on his way to the Senate House.

Act III

As Caesar proceeds to the Senate House, he passes by the Soothsayer. He addresses her by saying, "The Ides of March are come." The Soothsayer responds with, "Ay, but not gone." Caesar disregards this final warning and steps inside the Senate House where the conspirators surround him and stab him to death. Brutus delivers the final blow. When Caesar recognizes Brutus he utters-- in total disbelief-- the famous phrase, "Et tu, Brute?" (i.e. "You too, Brutus?"). Caesar dies. Mark Antony, Caesar's close friend, witnesses the assassination, but manages to remain calm. He requests to speak at Caesar's funeral. The Conspirators agree and run into the streets crying, "Liberty, Freedom, Tyranny is dead!" Alone, Mark Antony swears to avenge Caesar's death. At Caesar's funeral, Brutus speaks first, telling the citizens that Caesar was killed because his ambition threatened their liberties. Brutus is pleased with the approving reaction of the crowd and steps down for Antony to give his eulogy. Antony subtly incites the crowd to turn against the conspirators, reminding them of Caesar's goodness. By the end of his speech, Antony manipulates the citizens to riot and the conspirators flee the city.

Act IV

Mark Antony, Octavius, and Aemilius Lepidus become allies. The three men declare themselves the Second Triumvirate of Rome and propose to jointly rule. They also declare a civil war against Brutus, Cassius, and the Conspirators. Brutus and Cassius become generals of their army, but struggle with sharing their joint power. Late one night, Brutus is visited by Caesar's ghost who warns him that they will meet again at the battle of Phillippi.

Act V

Cassius, worn down by Mark Antony's army, sends his soldier and friend, Titinius, across the field to learn the identity of some nearby troops. When Cassius' slave, Pindarus, mistakenly reports that Titinius has been captured, Cassius loses all hope of victory. He 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, Strato, to hold the sword while Brutus runs on it. Upon finding the body, Antony expresses his admiration for the fallen Brutus, saying, "This was the noblest Roman of them all." With Cassius and Brutus dead, the Triumvirate takes control of Rome and order is restored.

Tools for The Text: Paraphrase

Reading a Shakespeare play can be a daunting task. Whether it is a class requirement or a personal project, Shakespeare's language can make it difficult to lose yourself within its pages. However, there are a few tools you can use to help break down the text into something more understandable and enjoyable.

The first tool is called 'Paraphrasing'. This is when you take the text and put it into your own words. This is not only a useful tool for reading the language, but it is the primary method of deconstructing the text by the Shakespeare Festival's artists. Although the words used 400 years ago are similar, their meaning was quite different. Examine the following lines, when Brutus tries to convince Cassius to spare Mark Antony's life.

Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,
To cut the head off and then hack the limbs--
Like wrath in death and envy afterwards--
For Antony is but a limb of Caesar.
Let's be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.
This shall make our purpose necessary, and not envious;
Which so appearing to the common eyes,
We shall be called purgers, not murderers.
And for Mark Antony, think not of him,
For he can do no more than Caesar's arm
When Caesar's head is off.

One possible paraphrase might read:

Cassius, we will seem too nasty-- like killing an animal and then chopping off it's arms after it is dead. The arm can't hurt you. If we must kill Caesar, let's do it as a sacrifice, not a murder. Then our actions will look more noble and less treasonous. And when people hear about our actions, they will say we were martyrs, not murderers. So don't worry about Mark Antony, because he won't be any threat once Caesar is gone.

Tools for The Text: Imagery

Another tool to help with the words of Shakespeare is to use what comes into your mind as fuel for a scene of a character. Just as pictures come into your mind when you read a book, Shakespeare used even more profound words and phrases that create very powerful images. Let's look at the Brutus monologue again.

Our course will seem too **bloody**, Caius Cassius,
To **cut the head off** and then **hack the limbs**--
Like **wrath** in death and **envy** afterwards--
For Antony is but a **limb** of Caesar.
Let's be **sacrificers**, but not **butchers**, Caius.

Take a look at the words in bold. Step One is to write down the first few images that come into your mind:

Bloody: _____

Cut the head off: _____

Hack the limbs: _____

Wrath: _____

Envy: _____

Limb: _____

Sacrificers: _____

Butchers: _____

The next step is to ask yourself what those images might mean to you. What emotions do they produce? What actions do they make you want to do? You may find that certain words contain more powerful images than others.

Now that you are personally connected to the words, say the monologue out loud and allow the images to fill your mind, and your audience's mind, as you speak.

Tools for The Text: Iambic Pentameter

Take a look at the monologue used in the previous two examples. Do you notice anything about the way the lines are written? Why are the first letters of every line in capital letters? This is because Shakespeare chose to write much of his text in Iambic Pentameter. There are many definitions as to what this means, but the simplest way is to say that each line of text (from the beginning of the line to the end) contains 10 syllables, 5 of which are stressed, 5 are unstressed. Let's look at a line for an example:

To cut the head off and then hack the limbs

Count the syllables. You'll notice that there are 10 syllables. Let's break the line up into two syllable sections, which we call **feet**:

To cut the head off and then hack the limbs

Now within each foot, we decide on a strong stress and a weak stress. In Iambic Pentameter, the second syllable of the foot is the strong stress:

To **cut** the **head** off **and** then **hack** the **limbs**

Iambic Pentameter sounds as if you were saying "eye-**am**" five times. Try it:

I am I am I am I am I am

There are several reasons why Shakespeare wrote this way. One was because it has a beautiful sound and rhythm, similar to the beating of the human heart. Another was to give actors a choice as to what words were more important. Another still was that the meter helped actors learn their lines quickly, since 400 years ago, plays rehearsed for only a few days before performing. When an actor goes through his/her script to mark the feet and designate the strong stresses, it is called scanning the script. Here's a hint: sometimes the meter breaks up a word into two different feet (such as **bloo dy**). Try it yourself:

Our course will seem too bloo dy, Cai us Cass ius,

To cut the head off and then hack the limbs

Like wrath in death and en vy af terwards

For An tony is but a limb of Cae sar.

Did you make every other syllable strong? Or did you decide that some syllables were more important than others? This is what makes acting Shakespeare so much fun. The actor gets to choose what is more important to him or her.

Tools for The Text: Variations to Iambic Lines

Sometimes you may find that a line of text contains less than 10 syllables. If you look closely, you may find that there are two lines that combine to form 10 instead. For example, here are the Soothsayer and Caesar sharing a line:

Soothsayer: Beware the Ides of March

Caesar: What man is that?

This is an example of a **shared line**. The combination of the syllables suggests to the actors that these two lines should be treated as one. Thus the implied stage direction tells the actor playing Caesar not to pause before he speaks but to "jump on his cue."

Now, what about a line that contains more than 10 syllables. Look at one of the lines from the Brutus monologue again:

Brutus: Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,

A line with 11 syllables contains what we call a **feminine ending**. This suggests that the character is in a heightened emotional state because they are trying to cram extra words into their line.

FYI: As a general rule, there are several different theories regarding iambic pentameter. Some scholars believe that there are **only** five strong stresses per iambic line. Many classical actors and directors believe that you can scan a line **however you want**, and throw away the rules. Basically, what it all comes down to is: what do **you** want to do? What helps you to enjoy Shakespeare the most? Hopefully, these guidelines will help to bridge the 400 year gap between Shakespeare's time and our own.

Discussion Questions

1. Throughout the play, Caesar receives warnings about his impending doom. Look through the first two acts and try to find as many signs as possible. Are all these signs just a coincidence? What do you think was behind all these events?

Hints: The Soothsayer's "beware the Ides of March" (I, 2)

Casca's account of the tempest, comets, man on fire, lion, and bird of night (I, 3)

Calpurnia's dream (II, 2)

Artemidorus's letter (II, 3)

Portia hears a commotion (fray) coming from the direction of the Capitol (II, 4)

2. Brutus agonizes over the decision to kill his best friend Caesar. In the end, he puts his love aside for the good of the country. Do you think Brutus is justified? Does assassinating a leader for the good of the people constitute bravery worthy of a tragic hero, or do the ends never justify the means?
3. Mark Antony uses his funeral speech to incite the crowd against the conspirators. Furthermore, he does it by focusing on Caesar's goodness, rather than saying anything negative about the conspirators. Can you think of other instances when crowds of people have been manipulated by a person's speech?
4. How powerful are words? Think of words that have power, such as hate, love, war, anger. What makes these words powerful? How careful should you be when using these words?

History and Influences

The Ides of March

One of the warnings in *Julius Caesar* comes from the Soothsayer, who utters the famous lines, "Beware the Ides of March." In the Roman calendar, the Ides of March falls on March 15. Derived from the languages of Middle English, Old French, and Latin, the word *ides* referred to a favorable day in the Roman calendar, kind of like a holiday. The *ides* fell on the 15th of March, May, July and October and on the 13th of the other months.

Second Triumvirate

When Caesar is killed, Mark Antony joins with two other men to become the new rulers of Rome, calling themselves the Second Triumvirate. In ancient Rome, a Triumvirate referred to a ruling board of three men. Triumvirates were common in the Roman republic. Each ruler had his own territory to govern, but they shared their power, and would aid each other in war. The First Triumvirate was the alliance of Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Marcus Licinius Crassus formed in 60 B.C. The Second Triumvirate was legally established in 43 B.C. and the members were Octavius Caesar, Marc Antony, and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. This group was granted enormous power by the senate. Lepidus was deposed in 36 B.C. and Antony was defeated in a battle at Actium in 31 B.C., leaving Octavius the head of the Roman Empire.

Influence of Plutarch

Julius Caesar is a play based on historical events. Shakespeare wrote this play based on the accounts of writers and biographers who documented these events in history. One of Shakespeare's primary resources was Plutarch, who is the most famous biographer of the ancient world.

Born in 46 A.D. in Greece, Plutarch was a writer and historian who wrote the famous collection of biographies now known as *Plutarch's Lives*. Plutarch's original title was *Parallel Lives of Famous Greeks and Romans*, and that describes his unique approach: the biographies were presented in pairs, the life of one Greek contrasted with that of a similar Roman. Plutarch's subjects were statesmen, generals and public figures including Alexander the Great, Solon, Pyrrhus, Julius Caesar, and Marc Antony, and together the biographies present a basic history of Greece and Rome up to Plutarch's life. Therefore, Plutarch has been a favorite of scholars and schoolteachers for centuries.

The Complete Learning Plans

This LEARNING PLAN is designed for grades: 7th-12th

Objectives: This lesson will connect the story and events of *Julius Caesar* with modern government and politics. The students will relate current political events to the events in *Julius Caesar* using research and writing skills.

Standards and Benchmarks:

Grades 6-8: LA.B.1.3, LA.D.2.3, LA.E.1.3, LA.E.2.3, SS.A.1.3, SS.C.2.3, TH.C.1.3, TH.D.1.3, TH.E.1.3

Grades 9-12: LA.B.1.4, LA.D.2.4, LA.E.1.4, LA.E.2.4, SS.A.1.4, SS.C.2.4 TH.C.1.4, TH.D.1.4, TH.E.1.4

Materials Needed: For an in-class or homework experience; newspapers, news magazines, the internet and the library will be needed for research.

Introductory Information: Although Shakespeare wrote *Julius Caesar* over 400 years ago, thousands of scholars, writers, and audiences still find the themes and events in the play to be important and meaningful. *Julius Caesar* is based on real events that happened in history-- events from which we can still learn.

Discussion Questions: *Julius Caesar* tells a tragic story about politics and government that can still be relevant to people today. Many of the events in *Julius Caesar* even seem like they could happen in America in 2005. For example, Julius Caesar is the ruler of the most powerful country in the world. Although he is the leader, the power of the country's government is held by the people. Doesn't that sound like America's Democratic government?

Now, just like any political leader, Caesar has both supporters and enemies. Each group has a very different view of Caesar. Depending upon who is talking, Caesar might sound like two very different people. Does this happen in politics today? Do Democrats have different views on the President than Republicans do?

What do you think would happen in America today if our President became so popular that many people wanted to give up all of their power as citizens to make the President of the United States the *King* of the United States? What would be some repercussions of this event ?

Lesson Process:

Day 1

1. Read the Introductory Information and talk about the Discussion Questions.
2. Read Handout # 1 and notice how different Cassius, an enemy of Caesar, and Mark Antony, a supporter of Caesar, speak about their leader.
3. For homework, have the students find two contrasting media articles discussing the President of the United States. This can be anything from last year's election to articles discussing current legislation. Explain that one article should describe the President or his actions in a positive light, and the other should describe him negatively.

Day 2

1. Discuss the articles in class and have students explain why they chose the article. Encourage a discussion on the journalist's or politician's opinions.
2. Read Handout #2 in class. In this scene, Casca tells Brutus and some others about Caesar's refusal of the crown (Act I Scene 2). Caesar is offered the crown three times and refuses it three times, the last time having a seizure and fainting.
3. Discuss the different ways a journalist could view this event. For example, a journalist writing from an enemy's perspective may report that Caesar has gone crazy; causing him to have a seizure and then faint. A journalist writing from a supporter's perspective may report that Caesar was so overwhelmed by love for the people that he fainted.

4. Using their chosen articles as a guide, have students write their own newspaper article about this event. They should choose whether or not they support Caesar and write from this perspective.
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Assessment:

*Teachers may grade students on the depth of contrast in the articles they chose. How well did the articles show differences of opinion and bias?

*Teachers may also grade students on the quality of their own newspaper article:

How well did they parallel the telling of the event in *Julius Caesar* to an event in modern politics?

How well did they use composition skills to sound like a journalist rather than a teenager?

How well did they write their article from a certain perspective? Was it clear how they felt about Caesar through the article?

*While watching the play, students can take notes about the different characters' opinions of Caesar, and how their actions effected the country. (i.e. how the conspirator's assassination caused a civil war)

HANDOUT #1

CASSIUS (ENEMY OF CAESAR)

I was born free as Caesar; so were you:
We both have fed as well, and we can both
Endure the winter's cold as well as he:
And this man
Is now become a god, and Cassius is
A wretched creature and must bend his body,
If Caesar carelessly but nod on him.
He had a fever when he was in Spain,
And when the fit was on him, I did mark
How he did shake: 'tis true, this god did shake;
His coward lips did from their color fly,
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world
Did lose his luster: I did hear him groan:
Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans
Mark him and write his speeches in their books,
Alas, it cried 'Give me some drink, Titinius,'
As a sick girl. Ye gods, it doth amaze me
A man of such a feeble temper should
So get the start of the majestic world
And bear the palm alone.

ANTONY (SUPPORTER OF CAESAR) *excerpts from Antony's speech to the citizens*

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me:
He hath brought many captives home to Rome
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?
But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar;
I found it in his closet, 'tis his will:
Let but the commons hear this testament--
Here is the will, and under Caesar's seal.
To every Roman citizen he gives,
To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.
Moreover, he hath left you all his walks
His private arbors and new-planted orchards,
On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,
And to your heirs for ever, common pleasures,
To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.
Here was a Caesar! when comes such another?

HANDOUT #2

BRUTUS

Ay, Casca; tell us what hath chanced to-day,
That Caesar looks so sad.

CASCA

Why, there was a crown offered him: and being
offered him, he put it by with the back of his hand,
thus; and then the people fell a-shouting.

BRUTUS

What was the second noise for?

CASCA

Why, for that too.

CASSIUS

They shouted thrice:
Was the crown offered him thrice?

CASCA

Ay, marry, was't, and he put it by thrice, every
time gentler than other, and at every putting-by
mine honest neighbors shouted.

BRUTUS

Tell us the manner of it, gentle Casca.

CASCA

I can as well be hanged as tell the manner of it:
it was mere foolery; I did not mark it. I saw Mark
Antony offer him a crown; and, as I told
you, he put it by once: but, for all that, to my
thinking, he would fain have had it. Then he
offered it to him again; then he put it by again:
but, to my thinking, he was very loath to lay his
fingers off it. And then he offered it the third
time; he put it the third time by: and still as he
refused it, the rabblement hooted and clapped their
chapped hands and threw up their sweaty night-caps
and uttered such a deal of stinking breath because
Caesar refused the crown that it had almost choked
Caesar; for he swooned and fell down at it: and

for mine own part, I durst not laugh, for fear of
opening my lips and receiving the bad air.

CASSIUS

But, soft, I pray you: what, did Caesar swoond?

CASCA

He fell down in the market-place, and foamed at
mouth, and was speechless.

BRUTUS

'Tis very like: he hath the failing sickness.

CASCA

I am sure Caesar fell down. If the tag-rag people did
not clap him and hiss him, according as he pleased
and displeased them, as they use to do the players in
the theatre, I am no true man.

BRUTUS

What said he when he came unto himself?

CASCA

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

BRUTUS

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

CASCA

Ay.

This LEARNING PLAN is designed for Grades: 7th-12th

Objectives: This lesson encourages students to notice and enjoy the images in Shakespeare's poetry. They will use his words to inspire their own creative writing.

Standards and Benchmarks:

Grades 6-8: LA.B.1.3, LA.C.3.3, LA.D.1.3, LA.D.2.3, TH.B.1.3, TH.C.1.3, TH.D.1.3, TH.E.1.3

Grades 9-12: LA.B.1.4, LA.C.3.4, LA.D.1.4, LA.D.2.4, TH.B.1.4, TH.C.1.4, TH.D.1.4, TH.E.1.4

Materials Needed: Handout #3, pencils and paper

Introductory Information for Teacher and Students: Although Shakespeare was a playwright, he was also a poet, and his plays reflect that poetry. Shakespeare used language as a painter uses a paint brush, creating vivid and colorful pictures with his words. But Shakespeare's beautiful words weren't just meant to be read on the page-- they were meant to be *heard*. The audience would hear the actors speak these words with excitement and emotion, and the pictures would come to life.

Lesson Process:

1. Read and discuss the Introductory Information with your students.
2. Pass out Handout #3 and ask students to pick one passage.
3. Have the students use the Tools for the Text of Paraphrase, Imagery, and Iambic Pentameter, with their chosen passage so they can become familiar with the meaning and excitement of the language. They can write their notes about the passage on the right column of Handout #3.
4. For homework, assign the students to write a poem, song lyrics, or a short story using the images in their chosen Shakespeare passage.
5. The next day, the students will present their material in class, first reading the Shakespeare passage, then their own writing.
6. Assign students to listen for their selected passage while watching the play. After seeing the show, have them identify who said the line, who they said it to, and what it meant in the full context of the play.

Assessment:

*Teachers may grade on the quality of the student's writing-- how creatively they used the Shakespeare passage to write their own piece, and how well they were able to bring both passages to life.

Handout #3

PARAPHRASE AND IMAGES

1. Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully;
Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,
Not hue him as a carcass fit for hounds.

2. And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
With carrion men groaning for burial.

3. I have seen tempests when the scolding winds
Have rived the knotty oaks, and I have seen
The ambitious ocean swell, and rage, and foam,
To be exalted with the threatening clouds;
But never till tonight, never till now,
Did I go through a tempest dropping fire.

4. There is one within,
Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
A lioness hath whelped in the streets;
And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead;
Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan,
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.