University at Buffalo Department of Theatre and Dance

Presents
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A Note from the Director

Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* is a play that examines a government which no longer serves its people. It’s a timely play; a piece that reminds us of the duties we have as active citizens in a democratic state. It’s a piece that incites conversation about how far a citizenry must go to ensure the ideas upon which it is built, and the strength of these ideas in the face of adversity.

In this packet, you will find lesson plans assembled by my student dramaturges (Shaun Nowicki, Mikaela Schulz, and Ryan Stevers) which, we hope, will help to prepare your students for our production of *Julius Caesar*. These lessons cover everything from Roman history, to Elizabethan history, to modern interpretations of Shakespeare’s play. We believe they make a wonderful foundation for discussion of the piece, and some of the choices you will see in our production.

We hope you enjoy these lessons with your students, and that you enjoy the play to come. We look forward to hosting you at UB, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on our show.

Danielle Rosvally, Ph.D.
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Department of Theatre and Dance, University at Buffalo
Lesson Plan: Roman Culture and History

Objective:
Provide the necessary cultural context for Julius Caesar, mainly class division and superstitious practices, while also providing some context about the political situation in Rome that led to the rise of figures like the Gracchi, Marius, Sulla, and finally Julius Caesar. The goal is not to familiarize the students with all of these figures or exactly what they did but to outline the events leading to the fall of the Republic.

Reference Material for Teachers:
Cultural terms and practices will be described, such as….

- Triumphs
- Proscription
- Voting Practices and the Campus Martius
- Plebeian/Patrician

The timeline provided for students will serve as something that students can dig into and explore as part of the activity.

Materials Needed:

- Vanilla and chocolate cookies (enough for one of each type for all members of the class)
- Worksheet A and Worksheet B (attached as appendices to this lesson); copies for all members of the class.

Assessment/Activity:
To open the class there will be a demonstration of how unfair the voting practices were in Rome and why poor citizens might not have had the same idea of what freedom was when compared to senators like Brutus and Cassius. The first row will be divided into two or three groups while the rest of the class will comprise one group. The distribution should be made so that the smaller “higher class” groups will always outvote the larger ones. These groups will vote on how cookies should be dispersed throughout the class with each group counting as one vote, their options will be…

1. Everyone in the class gets a vanilla cookie
2. Everyone in the class gets a chocolate cookie

3. Everyone in the front row gets two cookies of their choice

“Indeed, equality under the law, a right which free people cherish, cannot in fact be maintained.” – Cicero, *About the Republic*

The intention of this exercise is to show that, in Rome, a minority of people made decisions that benefitted themselves simply because they had more of a say in government. Read the class the above quotation from Cicero and remind them that the Roman aristocracy actually believed this. In their eyes, there will always be the haves and the have-nots, and both sides should accept this fact. If the class’ higher class group still votes in favor of everyone either due to comradery (or out of indifference to cookies), congratulations! Everyone gets cookies, but remind them that this is a modern conception of consensus rather than a Roman ideal.

After this exercise is completed: The students should be given timelines adhering to their class, with the Patricians in the front receiving worksheet “1.A” and the Plebeians in the back and middle of the room getting worksheet “1.B”. The students will search for terms and upon completion they should present the teacher with their work. The first group to have the correct configuration of letters will get a cookie of their choice.

Distribute the worksheets to the students; those who were part of the “lower classes” in the cookie vote should get Worksheet 1.B (the shorter term; partially to relieve them of their lack of cookies). The “upper class” students should get Worksheet 1.A, a longer hunt and more work. Explain to the students that power has its privileges, but also comes with more responsibility to the society.

Have the students work through the word hunt. There is a glossary, a timeline, and a riddle for each worksheet. The glossary is meant to help students hunt through the timelines to solve the riddles. When the students have finished and present the appropriate code words, explain what these words mean:

- **Worksheet 1.A:** The answer to this hunt will be “Venus”
  - The Roman Goddess of love, who the Julii could claim descendancy from, Julius Caesar exploited this to emphasize his link to the divine for propaganda purposes. All classes partook in superstitions in a variety of forms but it was especially frowned upon to make such an assertion because it could be viewed as a transgression against Rome’s gods. Rome’s senators believed they should steer the ship not out of divine authority, but because they had more property and higher stakes.
Worksheet 1.B: The answer to this hunt will be “Rex”

- Rex is the Latin word for king. Anyone asserting themself as a king was viewed as an enemy of Rome. The Republic was formed to ensure that no one man would hold too much power and as it shifted into a system of monarchic rule, the culturally detested term “Rex” was avoided by politicians who wished to consolidate more power into one position.
Hunt for Context: Term Search

By searching through the timeline you will find key terms/names in a linear order. Within these terms/names will be specific letters that form another important term.

1. Something citizens without property were not able to legally do:______  
   a. First letter:__
2. Important Roman orator who thwarted a conspiracy:______  
   a. Fourth letter:__
3. Highest political position in Rome in peaceful or stable times:______  
   a. Third letter:__
4. Region comprising modern day France, Belgium, and parts of the Netherlands, that was conquered by the Romans:______  
   a. Third letter:__
5. Key battle in the Roman civil war:______  
   a. Last letter:__

_Senator:_ Members of the extremely powerful senate of Rome which acted as the main governing apparatus. Senators were given lifelong admission into the senate upon completing one year of service in a public office.

_Patrician:_ Specially designated ancestors of the men chosen by Romulus to be the leading men, priests, and lawyers of Rome. The word “patrician” is now used synonymously with “aristocrat.”

_Equites:_ Modern root for the word “Knight.” These men owned copious amounts of property, but not enough to qualify for the senate.

_Populares:_ Men in government who sought votes through catering to popular policies.

_Triumph:_ After a particularly great victory, the general responsible for victory was welcomed back into the city with a parade and fanfare. This was one of the highest honors a Roman could achieve.

_Augury:_ Practice in which the movement of birds was interpreted for predictions of the future

_Eextispicium:_ Process where after a sacrifice, the entrails were “read” in order to determine some aspect of the future.

_Campus Martius:_ Romans would come here to vote and assemble for military operations outside of the city. When voting or on campaign, all of the citizens gathered were divided into “centuries” based upon the wealth of said citizens. Members of the centuries would vote for public officials and
legislation and the majority decided which way that particular century would vote. There were 375 centuries, but the wealthier ones counted for far more because their centuries were comprised of less men; often the election would be decided before poor men even got to vote.

**Roman Timeline**

509 BCE-The Roman Republic is established by throwing out King Tarquin “the Proud”, a movement spearheaded by Lucius Junius Brutus, ancestor of Marcus Brutus.

107 BCE- Gaius Marius lifts property qualifications for the army finally allowing poor citizens to serve. However, this did not allow those without property to vote.

81 BCE- Sulla becomes the first “Dictator Perpetuo” or dictator in perpetuity with the excuse of utilizing his new powers to restore the Republic.

63 BCE- After issuing massive amounts of bribes (which he openly bragged about) Caesar is elected to the priesthood of Pontifex Maximus. Bribery was the norm in politics but Caesar sparked the ire of his colleagues for being so open about his conduct.

63 BCE- Rome is shocked to the core by the Catiline Conspiracy, which saw many disgruntled powerful men implicated in a conspiracy to overthrow the Republic that was uncovered by Cicero.

59 BCE- Caesar completes the (traditional) rise up the political ladder by becoming Consul. The year has become jokingly referred to as the “Consulship of Julius and Caesar” after his co-consul, Bibulus, refused to leave his house for the rest of his term after a mob dumped feces on him for opposing Caesar’s populist policies.

52 BCE- Caesar subjugates all of Gaul by defeating a revolt leader, Vercingetorix at Alesia making him massively popular due to the slaves and loot brought in from victory.

49 BCE- Facing legal ramifications for bribery and starting an illegal war, Caesar leads troops across the Rubicon river igniting a civil war and catching Rome completely off guard. Pompey and the Senate evacuate Rome. Caesar is elected dictator by the few remaining officials.

48 BCE- Caesar defeats Pompey the Great at the battle of Pharsalus, causing senators to scatter or surrender to Caesar. Pompey flees to Egypt. When Caesar arrived in Egypt later that year he was presented Pompey’s head in a basket, the Egyptians intended to please him but only enraged him.
Worksheet 1.B

Hunt for Context: Term Search

1. Politician who established the Republic:_______
   a. Second letter:__
2. Politician whose name is taken from a river that ran through Rome:_______
   a. Fourth letter:__
3. Non-Roman who fought against Caesar:_______
   a. Last letter:__

Senator-Members of the extremely powerful senate of Rome which acted as the main governing apparatus. Senators were given lifelong admission into the senate upon completing one year of service in a public office.

Patrician- Specially designated ancestors of the men chosen by Romulus to be the leading men, priests, and lawyers of Rome. The word patrician is now used synonymously with aristocrat.

Populares- Men in government who sought votes through catering to popular policies, although some of these people may have truly cared about the people.

Equites- Modern root for the word “Knight” these were the men who owned copious amounts of property but not enough to qualify for the senate.

Triumph- After a particularly great victory, the general responsible for victory was welcomed back into the city with a parade and fanfare. This was one of the highest honors a Roman could achieve.

Augury- Practice in which the movement of birds was interpreted for predictions of the future

Extispicium-Process where after a sacrifice, the entrails were “read” in order to determine some aspect of the future.

Campus Martius-Romans would come here to vote and assemble for military operations outside of the city. When voting or on campaign, all of the citizens gathered were divided into “centuries” based upon the wealth of said citizens. Members of the centuries would vote for public officials and legislation and the majority decided which way that particular century would vote, there were 375 centuries but the wealthier ones counted for far more because their centuries were comprised of less men; often the election would be decided before poor men even had to vote.
Roman Timeline

753 BCE-The city of Rome is founded by its first king, Romulus, who in legends, founded the city on the site where he was abandoned as a baby near the Tiber River.

509 BCE-The Roman Republic is established by throwing out King Tarquin “the Proud”, a movement spearheaded by Lucius Junius Brutus, ancestor of Marcus Brutus.

133 BCE- Tiberius Gracchus becomes tribune and is murdered by senators and dumped in the Tiber River to set an example politicians pushing populist policies.

59 BCE- Caesar completes the (traditional) rise up the political ladder by becoming Consul. The year has since become jokingly referred to as the “Consulship of Julius and Caesar” after his co-consul, Bibulus, refused to leave his house for the rest of his term after a mob dumped feces on him for supporting conservative policies.

58 BCE- Caesar is given governorship over Gaul and begins campaigning against a migrating Germanic tribe.

55 BCE- Caesar leads a military expedition into the unexplored (by Romans) British Isles for publicity. Rome’s first permanent theatre is built by Pompey.

52 BCE- Caesar subjugates all of Gaul by defeating a revolt leader, Vercingetorix at Alesia making him massively popular due to the slaves and loot brought in from victory.

49 BCE- Facing legal ramifications from wary senators for bribery and starting an illegal war in Gaul, Caesar leads troops across the Rubicon river igniting a civil war and catching Rome completely off guard. Pompey and the Senate evacuate Rome. Caesar is elected dictator by the few remaining officials.

46 BCE- Caesar defeats yet another Roman army under the command of Scipio. The staunch conservative Cato, who was in every way Caesar’s greatest political enemy commits suicide instead of accepting Caesar’s rule. Caesar celebrates four triumphs in which there were depictions of “enemy” Roman statesmen.

44 BCE- Caesar is appointed dictator perpetuo, or dictator in perpetuity.
Lesson Plan for Julius Caesar: Early Modern England

Note: The material below is extensive, and is meant to help teachers curate what they might need to assist their students in grappling with the issues of Julius Caesar. The major activity, Early Elizabethan Role Play, will help illustrate the points touched upon below.

For the instructor

While ostensibly about ancient Rome, Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar is also steeped in the politics and society of Early Modern England. One might understand the play without a firm grasp of Early Modern English history, but studying this history does shed light on why Shakespeare’s characters act in the way they do, as well as why their class differences matter so much.

Two resources that we believe are useful to setting the stage are both images. First, there is the Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth (attributed to Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger), which will be used in this lesson’s Activity. The piece illustrates the centrality of the Queen for English political life, as well as the importance of her spy network in English politics. The second is DeWitt’s image of the Swan as it demonstrates the rigid stratification of English society.

Instructions: Using the information below, go over the basics of Early Modern England. This lesson is designed to be tailored to your classrooms, but all the information is pertinent to the relationship between Shakespeare’s urban England and Julius Caesar’s Rome.

Setting the Stage - History of Early Modern England

- Tudor Dynasty - 1485 to 1603
- From Henry VII to Elizabeth I
  - The Tudor’s reigns were fraught with controversy, insurrections, and radical ideas. This was a period of great change in England, change that Shakespeare often wrote into his plays.
  - Under Henry VIII, England broke away from the Catholic Church and formed its own religion, Anglicanism.
  - After the death of Henry VIII, his son (Edward VI) took the throne at just nine years old. Six years later, he would die and attempt to change the whole structure

The Rainbow Portrait (1600)*
of ascendancy. He almost prevented his sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, from becoming queens of England.

- **Elizabeth I**
  - The reign of Elizabeth I was tumultuous. She fought the invading Spanish against long odds and won, organized expeditions to the New World, and had her Navy conduct missions of piracy all over the Atlantic.
  - Elizabeth’s reign brought stability to the kingdom nonetheless, partially because of how much she utilized her network of spies. The portrait above shows Elizabeth late in her life, and features a representation of her spy network. Look specifically at the orange part of her dress (the image may need to expanded, and is available through Wikicommons) Her dress is covered in eyes and ears, representing how she had eyes and ears all over the kingdom.
    Wikicommons Link: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Elizabeth_I_Rainbow_Portrait.jpg

**Shakespeare’s London - 1599**

- *Julius Caesar* was first performed in 1599. At this point, Shakespeare was an established playwright, and was going on to write his great tragedies, including *Caesar*.

- This is at the tail end of Elizabeth I’s reign, and there was a crisis looming because of this. Elizabeth had no heir, was unmarried, and there was a question as to who would succeed her.

- London at this time was growing in terms of size and population. Men were growing rich from trading with the colonies, and the city welcomed an influx of foreigners (typically from Germany or Holland).

- A useful resource for exploring what London would have looked like around 1599 is the ongoing digital project, Map of Early Modern London. It takes a map from the period, The Agas Map, and provides labels to many major locales. [https://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/](https://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/)

**Class Difference: The Court and the Town**

- Early Modern London was a place of immense social change, especially in the development of social classes beyond the typical medieval relationship of serf and lord.

- London had many laborers, but also was home to merchants, artisans, and nobility of all ranks.
**Instructions:** After covering major points about the history and culture of Early Modern England, students should be divided into five roughly equivalent sized groups for the activity Early Elizabethan Role Play.

**Activity: Early Elizabethan Role Play**

**Note regarding the activity:** This activity is meant to show the breadth of activities occurring around London, as well as the interconnectedness that was involved with being a city dweller. As such, the three tasks are designed to appeal to different types of thought. For example, students who are mathematically minded and enjoy logic puzzles are best suited to work in the Merchant or Petty Noble groups.

This activity is meant to show students how ordinary Londoners would have interacted with their city, as well as their fellow citizens. The list of roles below highlights several key peoples and industries of London. As a note, the Queen should not be a playable character, but should be a role assumed by the teacher.

**The Roles**

- **Artisan** - Any maker of goods and purveyor of services in Early Modern England would have been considered an artisan. Many would also be a member of one of London’s guilds (similar to modern day union membership). These tasks often required a great deal of skill, and would have been essential to the smooth running of London’s economy. Different artisan crafts include shoemakers, apothecaries (this included selling tobacco), fishmongers, carpenters, blacksmiths, and masons.

- **Merchant** - One of London’s growing merchant class, these individuals were at the forefront of international trade. Many would deal with spices, goods manufactured on the Continent, importing of goods from the New World, and the export of slaves from Africa. Many merchants were more wealthy than the old aristocracy, but tended not to have much in the way of land. Urban dwelling merchants would have had access to great networks of trade and a diverse population to employ and negotiate with.

- **Actor** - One of the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, the official name for Shakespeare’s acting troupe. Actors would often have a repertoire of plays at their disposal, and be cast in types. Someone who played Macbeth in one production would play Othello and King Lear in others. Women were not allowed on the stage at this time, so young boys would play the tragic female roles, like Juliet and Portia. Plays were often heavily improvised, and the theatres would shut down during times of plague. Actors had to be flexible, and
had to play to their audience. They were in it for the money just as much as a merchant or a shoemaker.

- **Petty Noble** - Typically a member of a family of some wealth and land. This could include the sons of knights, dukes, earls, or other figures in the Elizabethan court. These were individuals who would spend money on European fashions or smoke tobacco at a druggists shop. Even though they are of noble descent, they could still be seen at the public playhouses.

- **Court Official** - This term varies widely, and includes various noblemen that advised Queen Elizabeth in matters of state. This would include her spymaster, Sir Francis Walsingham. These court officials would typically attend command performances of dramas, but it is unlikely that they would have attended the public theatre with any frequency.

  - **Master of the Revels** - The official in Elizabeth I’s court that would oversee the production of plays, as well as the selection of dramas for command performance at court. During most of Shakespeare’s career, this was Sir Edmund Tilney. During the later periods of Elizabeth’s reign, the Master of the Revels would also have been responsible for censoring stage performances.

- **Non-Playable Characters** (teacher)

  - **Queen Elizabeth** - The head of the English monarchy, and a highly controversial figure. Known as the Virgin Queen, Queen Elizabeth was a stabilizing force during her time, even though her long reign was sometimes marred by wars and insurrections. Elizabeth I would not have gone to see Shakespeare’s plays in the public theatre, but would most assuredly have been at command performances at court.

- **The Setup**

  - Divide students into five groups, (artisans, merchants, petty nobles, actors, court officials) and have them gather with their groups in three different parts of the classroom.

  - These three parts of the classroom are different parts of London (*The Druggist Shop, The Guild, The Court*). Certain classes can only be in certain parts of London.

    - The artisans start in the Guild.
- The merchants and the petty nobles start in the Druggist’s Shop.
- The actors and the court officials start in the Court.

○ **Rules of Movement**
  - The petty nobles can move to the Court
  - The actors can move to the Druggist’s Shop
  - The artisans can move to the Druggist’s Shop

**Diagram of Movement Rules**

- **The Task**
  - Each location has a different puzzle that students must piece together to find out who is plotting the Queen’s assassination.
○ **The Guild** - The artisans of the guild have been tasked with making, framing, and delivering a painting in tribute to Queen Elizabeth. No one knows who placed the order, only that it must be delivered with haste.

- Students will be given a jigsaw version of the Rainbow Portrait (Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger) [Worksheet C.1 in Appendix II]. On the back, there will be some lines of Shakespeare that will lead them to the next clue [Worksheet C.2 in Appendix II]. **Note for instructor: when you print Worksheet 2.B.i, ensure that Worksheet 2.B.ii is on the back of it.**

○ **The Druggist’s Shop** - The druggist’s shop is alive with tobacco smoking merchants and the sons of rich gentlemen. This is the heart of trade in London, but there are some troubles with the transactions. Help sort out some purchases in honor of the Queen.

- Students will be given a logic puzzle based on *Julius Caesar*, and must solve it in order to get one step closer to deciphering the plot against Elizabeth.

- The logic puzzle will produce a word that corresponds to a line in the portrait. The possible words are wish, tree, tears, and shout.

○ **The Court** - Shakespeare’s troupe has come to get their most recent play approved for performance. In reading over the letter of introduction from the author, the court officials notice some inconsistencies, and fetch their spymaster.

- These lines of poetry portend more than they seem. Students can scan their lines for inconsistencies placed by Elizabeth’s spy network. Using a codex and the letter of introduction, students will decipher another clue in the plot against Elizabeth.

- Scansion activity will produce a number that corresponds to which word in the particular line is the clue. That word is an encoded version of the name of the assassin!

● **Putting the Clues Together**

- This will turn into an act of movement around the city. The artisans will have to get their painting to the court by way of the druggists shop, while the petty noble must get their goods back to court. Each of these clues will combine to reveal who is plotting the assassination of Queen Elizabeth.
○ Using the lines on the back of the painting, students will be able to piece together the identity of the plotter

**The Solutions:**

**Piecing Together the Puzzle**

- These are the permutations for the lines. The **bolded** words indicate possible culprits for the plot against Elizabeth. The current puzzles indicate that Mary is the culprit, but through revision these puzzles can be used to reflect other possibilities.

- The lines
  - That unicorns **may** be betray'd with trees (2.1.221) (May)
  - He comes upon a wish. Fortune is **merry** (3.2.282) (Mary)
  - Have you not made **an** universal shout (1.1.49) (Anne)
  - There is tears for his love, **joy** for his fortune (3.2.29) (Joy)

- **Early Modern Logic Puzzle**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Barn Tree</th>
<th>King's Tears</th>
<th>New World Wish</th>
<th>Shouting English</th>
<th>Edward</th>
<th>James</th>
<th>Thomas</th>
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- Edward imported New World **Wish**.
  - The word wish corresponds to the line “He comes upon a wish. Fortune is merry”. This information is meant only to single out which line the students should be looking at.

- **Early Modern Codex**
  - The Codex is meant to point students to the Capital letters in the passage.
○ The code reads THELASTWORDISSHESAVINGANAFORANE or “The last word is she, saving an A for an E”, directing students to the last word of the line “merry” and telling them to substitute the letter E for A, or “Marry/Mary”

**The Globe: A Microcosm**

After the **Early Elizabethan Role Play** activity, we recommend a lesson on the structure of the Globe to tie this all together. The Globe allows the class to enter into the realm of theatre while also showing how the class stratification of the period existed in practice.

**Background:**

Shakespeare’s Globe has been recreated in London today, but where you sit is not longer based on your class. Displaying images of the modern Globe will show the overall structure of the historical theatre. There is also a sequence in the 1998 film “Shakespeare in Love” that features a full sweeping view of the Shakespearean theatre. This film is available through various mediums, including for purchase and rental through many online outlets. Images of the Globe and/or clips from this film can help enhance student understanding just how prevalent the class structures in Early Modern England were.

● The problems of class that are so ubiquitous in both **Julius Caesar** and Shakespeare’s England can be summarized by looking at the theaters of the time.

● Shakespeare’s Globe featured several levels for several different types of customers.
  
  ○ The Pit - The cheapest area in the Globe and other outdoor theaters. This was the area directly in front of the stage, where theatergoers would stand and watch the performance. This area was also exposed to weather.

  ○ The Balconies - Wealthier theatergoers could purchase a seat in the covered balconies and see the play from relative ease. Often there were cushions or other comforts available for purchase as well. Typically merchants or members of the aristocracy would occupy these seats

  ○ The Palace - While not part of the public outdoor theater, command performances by Royals were ran important source of income for Shakespeare. Here, the highest Royals would pay Shakespeare's acting troupe directly, and the group would
travel to the a Royal’s home. This was how Queen Elizabeth would have seen Shakespeare’s plays.

How is Caesar’s Rome Like Shakespeare’s London?

*This question should be the master question for the whole lesson*, as it gets to the heart of why an understanding of Early Modern England is important for understanding the nuances of Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*. It is also imperative that a lesson on Julius Caesar’s Rome is taught before and in conjunction with this one. We provide a lesson on Roman History and Society in this series of lesson plans.

- After discussing some of the key elements of Shakespeare’s world, have students compare how Julius Caesar’s Rome is like Shakespeare’s London. Mainly, there are growing populous’ at moments of great change, but what are some of the specifics?

- This can be done individually or as a class. It may be easier to pull out the big similarities if it is discussed as a class however.

- The big question at the end of this is, why is Rome in the play, like London in Shakespeare’s time? When Shakespeare writes about Rome, is he always talking about Rome, or is there something of his, or our, own time in it?

*All images are from and available through Wikimedia commons.*
**Piecing Together the Puzzle**

Queen Elizabeth’s portrait has been commissioned for the celebration of her many years of rule. This portrait, to be delivered by the Guild Artisans, is also carrying the code to uncovering a plot on her life.

**Directions:** Assemble the puzzle below to reveal the lines from *Julius Caesar* on the back. One of these lines contains the identity of a conspirator against Elizabeth. Once the portrait has been pieced together, it must be delivered to the court, via the Druggist’s shop.

**Background:** Queen Elizabeth had an extensive spy network in order to shore up her power. The painting being delivered is called “The Rainbow Portrait”, because it depicts Elizabeth holding up a rainbow to represent peace and prosperity. Also in this portrait is the representation of Elizabeth’s notorious spy network. Look in the orange parts of her dress and you will see eyes and ears embroidered all over. This was meant to show how Elizabeth had “eyes and ears” all over the kingdom, and she wielded significant power because of these spies.

The artisans who are delivering the portrait were a major part of the London economy. While they would not have all been painters, they would have had specialized crafts such as cobbling, glassmaking, stonemaking, really any sort of trade that involved some degree of physical skill. Guild membership was determined by the skill of an individual, as well as the individual’s allegiance and willingness to follow guild regulations. Because of this, the guilds were selective, and held a certain amount of authority within the city itself. They even had voting rights in the City of London (the district at the heart of modern day London), which they maintain to this day.
A poem for her Majesty

There is tears for his love, joy for his fortune.

He comes upon a wish. Fortune is merry

That unicorns may be betray’d with trees

Have you not made an universal shout?
Worksheet 2.C

Early Modern Logic Puzzle

**Directions:** Using the series of clues below, determine which merchant owns which tobacco and in what quantity.

**Background:** Some enterprising merchants have been selling their imported tobacco around London, and, unbeknownst to them, the Queen’s spies have been slipping clues into their shipments! The spies have hidden their clues in the names of the tobacco shipments, using a keyword to disguise their efforts. Uncover some of the clues in order to help uncover the who is orchestrating this plot against the Queen.

1) Shouting English Tobacco weighs either 20 pounds or 40 pounds.
2) Thomas imported the tobacco that weighs 40 pounds.
3) King’s Tears weighs 20 pounds less than the tobacco Edward imported weighs.
4) Burnt Tree was imported by Thomas.
5) King’s Tears weighs less than the tobacco imported by William.

What tobacco did Edward import?
Early Modern Codebreaking

**Directions:** There seems to be a secret message within the “letter of introduction”. Pay careful attention to inconsistencies within the text.

**Background:**

There is something peculiar about this letter received by the Master of the Revels and other court officials. The letter is addressed from the author, one William Shakespeare, concerning his company’s newest play *Julius Caesar*. There are, however some inconsistencies within the letter. This seems to be the work of the spy network. What is the letter really saying, how does it help uncover the plot against Queen Elizabeth?

*This play before you, little though it may be, call forth for Her majesty. Excepting Lewdness And Sour Tongues, this play Will enclose wisdom, Of a tyrant born and dead. Right or wrong may we be, on power is writ in this Deed, and the rancor of Idle minds Set against reason. Surely not a moral of our times, Here is a warning for kings and queens. Even though they be loved, Set A watchful for Vexed devils lurking In your sight. Now this play, neither too festive nor too Great an Audience craves; an hour or two to settle in the mind. Never we hope to offed, And as players we Forego all but Our patrons joy. Rest Assured, Not this play, nor our next will to violence give over to Excess.*
**Lesson Plan: Julius Caesar: Philosophy**

**Key Points**

*Philosophy* - A way of seeing the world that impacts the way one interprets events, ethical issues, feelings, etc.

*Stoicism* - Brutus’ philosophy, which is based on the idea of interrelated purpose, honesty, and doing what is right by a process that is fair.

*Epicureanism* - Cassius’ philosophy, which is focused on happiness through moderation and simplicity, largely through things such as friendship and learning.

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<tr>
<th>Objective:</th>
<th>Materials:</th>
<th>Activity:</th>
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| • Familiarize students with basic components of Stoicism and Epicureanism and how they are embodied by Brutus and Cassius.  
• **Main Question:** How do these philosophies impact the relationship between the two characters throughout the play? | • Excerpt from Seneca the Younger’s *Letters From a Stoic*  
• Excerpt from Lucretius’ *On the Nature of Things*  
• Cassius and Brutus’ interaction at the festival of Lupercal  
• Cassius and Brutus’ interaction at the tent before battle. | • Begin with discussing major themes in the writings, ensuring students have a basic competency of the two philosophies before beginning the activity.  
• Continue on to the ethical problem, having students take part in a small debate via role-playing. Encourage them to stay true to the personality traits of their characters. Once the exercise is complete, ask them how it relates to the play and if they found themselves relating to one character more than another. |
Activity

Consider discussing the different philosophies in a more in-depth way with students. Use the handout 3.B found on page 30 for various readings addressed here.

**Stoicism** believes in the interconnectedness and purpose of every person and his or her actions, seen heavily in Brutus. It holds to some sort of force/god being at the center of all life and working it towards a given end. It places a strong value on:

- the process by which things are done
- integrity
- honesty
- being willing to stand alone when necessary

Stoic philosophy is well personified as a steadfast judge. The text from Seneca the Younger focuses on being led away from values and the slippery slope found therein. This is a fantastic passage to use when discussing the dialogue between Cassius and Brutus seen in the appendix. The students should be encouraged to discuss the connections they find between these two texts.

Next, encourage thee to examine the ways in which Seneca’s work relates to how Brutus and Cassius’ relationship changes between Text C and Text D (discussed at further length below).

There is also a discussion to be had surrounding the ways in which Brutus’s assistance in the assassination compromises his Stoic values. He acts without verifiable proof because he is able to convince himself that this is what is best for Rome. The impact of both killing Caesar and of departing from his values leaves him a rather shattered man, haunted by images of Caesar’s ghost and ultimately committing suicide. In these ways, Brutus arguably compromises his Stoicism.
Stoicism is heavily contrasted by Epicureanism, which is more focused on moderation. It rejects religion and sees any potential god as being far away and irrelevant to human existence. Therefore, according to Epicureanism, humans are all in existence because of chance and have no interconnected purpose beyond day-to-day living. It is the philosophy embodied by Cassius, and works to be the crux of the disagreements between him and Brutus.

While Epicureanism is focused on finding happiness in this life, it does not take a materialistic route to this pursuit. It views many things culturally considered sources of pleasure to also be sources of pain and instead sees minimalism as the route to true happiness. Because of these things, Epicureanism values:

- Simplicity
- Personal reflection
- Friendship
- Lifelong learning

A comparison to an idealized, studious college student can be made here, given that many college students do not have much money and are often living in an environment filled with their peers. Another frequent example is that of a monk--while this is potentially more accurate, the analogy is complicated by Epicurean’s views towards religion.

Text B is from Lucretius, one of the key writers on the paradigm. It discusses the futility of seeking wealth and renown and instead appeals for simple pleasures. This gives a very clear-cut reason as to why Cassius is so worried about Caesar’s ambition: he views it as not only dangerous and consuming, but as a threat to what he sees as true joy. This is where some similarity between Cassius and Brutus can be found. Brutus’ desire to live with honor and belief in interconnected purpose provide insight for why the would also be cautious about someone with great levels of ambition rising to significant levels of power. Text C shows the struggle between the two men in dealing with Caesar and demonstrates a lot of the differences between them. The conversation shapes their actions for the rest of the play.
When observing Text C, guide students towards seeing the ways Brutus tries to mask his initial opinions about Caesar, as well as how Cassius eventually gets Brutus to admit he is not fond of Caesar’s ambition. Text D is from a disagreement the two men have far later in the play as they deal with the ramifications of assassinating Caesar. Point students towards the ways both men fall short of their philosophical paradigms. The strife between the two men breaks their fraternal bond and therefore deprives Cassius of one of his greatest Epicurean principles.

In the beginning of the dialogue in Text D, Cassius is accused of taking bribes; while this is not central to the rest of the plot, it is a departure from his ethics and compromises his well-being. While his suicide is tragic, there is some sentiment of it allowing him to return to his philosophy by dying in solidarity with his comrades. Though Cassius and Brutus do so differently, both men end up compromising their values significantly by the time the play is over.

While discussing these motifs with students, encourage them to answer questions about the text on their own, but be prepared to stimulate conversation if necessary. An ability to discuss the general motifs of this lesson will help the students as they move on to the worksheet.

Key questions could include:

-What words does Brutus use that reveal his Stoicism?

-How is Cassius an Epicurean?

-How are the two philosophies different?

-Why might both frown on ambition?

-Do they remain true to their philosophies throughout the play?

-Why or why not?

After reviewing some of these questions, turn to the worksheet 3.A on page 28. It contains an ethical dilemma with two sides which can be taken, both having merit, and each holding loosely to either Stoicism and Epicureanism. Underneath the problem, there is a list of the characteristics informing each person’s view. Have students pair up with a copy of the worksheet and take sides on the problem against each other.
Once it appears they have gotten through the issue, have them discuss the activity. Encourage them to consider questions such as:

- How does the other person’s position conflict with your character’s ideology?
- What would you do about this if it happened to you in real life?
- Are there any ways you deviated from your character’s ideology in the exercise?
- Which character did you find yourself relating to more, and why?

**Assessment**

Have students write out an example from a time in which they or someone else experienced conflict about what to do in a situation because of different worldviews, ensuring they connect the information to the play and the struggles seen between Cassius and Brutus. Have students consider the consequences of their actions, as well as how the incident shaped their values. Responses should show a working knowledge of the roles between the characters and be at least one page in length.

*All images taken from Wiki Commons.*
Worksheet 3.A

Underneath, you will find an ethical example of a modern-day conflict that could cause two friends to expose their different ideologies. Both positions have merit and neither is intended to be the “right” position. You and another person should each take on a role of one of the characters and argue about it as if you are talking to each other just after the dialogue lets off. As you complete this exercise, consider if you relate to one character or another more, and why. You should also consider how their different values, listed beneath the scenario, complicate the problem.

Steve and Joey are both in Professor Johnson’s Psychology 101 class in their first year at university. They have been best friends since their parents dropped them off at kindergarten. Both were automatically enrolled in the class by their academic advisor and were terrified to see the following reviews on Rate My Professor, a website which allows college students to access reviews of potential professors written by other students:

“She is merciless and so unfair. I am a 4.0 student, but because I missed one assignment by a day, she dropped my final grade to a C.”

“Johnson kills your grade and offers no extra credit opportunities to get them back.”

“Prof. Johnson is never even in her office for office hours and doesn’t answer emails. Terrible communicator.”

“Stay on her good side and you’ll probably walk out with a B… if not, good luck.”

Professor Johnson allows you to skip the comprehensive final if you are happy with the average grade of your five other exams throughout the course. Steve has gotten a 95% average on the exams and, while he knows the material very well, plans to skip the final exam.

Joey’s father had a heart attack the morning of the fifth exam, held a week before the final. He left school to be there; he was the only family his father had and he needed to be there for him. His relationship with his father mattered a lot more to him than the exam. Joey tried to reach out to Professor Johnson and explain the situation, but he only got an email from a disgruntled TA saying that there was nothing they could do. His missed exam, which brought his grade down to a D in the class.

The day before the final, which begins at 8:00 o’clock in the morning, Joey’s dad took a turn for the worse. While he had a lot of medical attention, things were not looking good and Joey felt he really needed to be there. However, Joey also knew that he would lose his academic scholarship
to the school if he didn’t get at least a C in the class. Freaking out, he asked Steve to go into the exam and pretend to be him. Joey insisted that the two look relatively similar and that the class had hundreds of students anyway, making the odds of getting caught pretty slim. While Steve obviously sympathized with Joey, he feels it is against his moral compass to help Joey cheat, regardless of the circumstance. He initially told Joey no, but wrestles internally with it a lot.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steve cares about:</th>
<th>Joey cares about:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Honesty</td>
<td>- The learning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Integrity, even if it means standing alone</td>
<td>- Brotherhood-level friendship, which he sees as the key to happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Maintaining an honorable process</td>
<td>- Pursuing all in moderation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ensuring people are being treated in a way that is just and fair</td>
<td>- Simplicity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Text A:
The following is from Seneca the Younger’s *Letters from a Stoic* and paints a vivid image of how Stoicism handles morality.

“The natural desires are limited; but those which spring from false opinion can have no stopping-point. The false has no limits. When you are travelling on a road, there must be an end; but when astray, your wanderings are limitless. Recall your steps, therefore, from idle things, and when you would know whether that which you seek is based upon a natural or upon a misleading desire, consider whether it can stop at any definite point. If you find, after having travelled far, that there is a more distant goal always in view, you may be sure that this condition is contrary to nature.” (45).

Text B:
This is taken from Lucretius’ *On the Nature of Things* is a good example of the Epicurean desire to pursue happiness through simplicity and not through material ends.

“O wretched minds of men! O blinded hearts!
In how great perils, in what darks of life
Are spent the human years, however brief!–
O not to see that nature for herself
Barks after nothing, save that pain keep off,
Disjoined from the body, and that mind enjoy
Delightsome feeling, far from care and fear!” (Lucretius, 51).
Text C:

This text is from early in *Julius Caesar* [1.2.37-88] as Cassius and Brutus are discussing Caesar and his actions at Lupercal. It shows the beginnings of the conspiracy that spurs on the rest of the play and displays the conflicting natures of the two characters very well.

*Cassius:* Brutus, I do obserue you now of late:

I haue not from your eyes, that gentlenesse
And shew of Loue, as I was wont to haue:
You beare too stubborne, and too strange a hand
Ouer your Friend, that loues you.

*Brutus:* Cassius,

Be not deceiu'd: If I haue veyl'd my looke,
I turne the trouble of my Countenance
Meerely vpon my selfe. Vexed I am
Of late, with passions of some difference,
Conceptions onely proper to my selfe...

*Cassius:* Then Brutus, I haue much mistook your passion...

Tell me good Brutus, Can you see your face?

*Brutus:* No Cassius:

For the eye sees not it selfe but by reflection,
By some other things.

*Cassius:* 'Tis iust,

And it is very much lamented Brutus,
That you haue no such Mirrors, as will turne
Your hidden worthinesse into your eye,
That you might see your shadow:
I haue heard,
Where many of the best respect in Rome,
(Except immortall Caesar) speaking of Brutus,
And groaning vnderneath this Ages yoake,
Haue wish'd, that Noble Brutus had his eyes.

**Brutus:** Into what dangers, would you
Leade me Cassius?
That you would haue me seeke into my selfe,
For that which is not in me?  

Flourish, and Shout.

What meanes this Showting?
I do feare, the People choose Caesar
For their King.

**Cassius:** I, do you feare it?
Then must I thinke you would not haue it so.

**Text D:**
This last piece is much further on in the play [4.3.19-48], set after Caesar has already been assassinated. It demonstrates that the two men are still very much wrestling with each other about their actions and how they happened; in many ways, the tensions are stronger in this passage than they were at their first interaction.

**Brutus:** Remember March, the Ides of March remēber:
Did not great Iulius bleede for Iustice sake?
What Villaine touch'd his body, that did stab,
And not for Iustice? What? Shall one of Vs,
That strucke the Formost man of all this World,
But for supporting Robbers: shall we now,
Contaminate our fingers, with base Bribes?
And sell the mighty space of our large Honors
For so much trash, as may be grasped thus?
I had rather be a Dogge, and bay the Moone,
Then such a Roman.

**Cassius:** *Brutus*, baite not me,
Ile not indure it: you forget your selfe
To hedge me in. I am a Souldier, I,
Older in practice, Abler then your selfe
To make Conditions.

**Brutus:** Go too: you are not *Cassius*.

**Cassius:** I am.

**Brutus:** I say, you are not.

**Cassius:** Vrge me no more, I shall forget my selfe:
Haue minde vpon your health: Tempt me no farther...

**Brutus:** Heare me, for I will speake.
Must I giue way, and roome to your rash Choller?
Shall I be frighted, when a Madman stares?

**Cassius:** O ye Gods, ye Gods, Must I endure all this?

**Brutus:** All this? I more: Fret till your proud hart break.
Go shew your Slaues how Chollericke you are,
And make your Bondmen tremble....
Lesson Plan for Julius Caesar: Language and Verse

Prefatory Note:

Poetry can be intimidating for students because it can seem entirely inaccessible. Shakespeare’s language is so densely poetic that this can only amplify the apparent difficulty. Introduce your students to some key terms and ideas first to help give them a vocabulary for what to look for.

Key Terms: Some of these terms will be more familiar to your students than others. Make sure that students have a sufficient understanding of not only these more context specific terms, but also more general terms including structure, metaphor, simile, and rhythm.

Note: These terms are meant to serve as a guide for the instructor. We have provided a less in-depth version that can be distributed as a handout to students in the appendix of this lesson plan (Worksheet 4.B on 40).

Shakespeare’s English: Shakespeare’s English is our English! It is important to stress this to students. Sure, it can be very intimidating, and some of the words have fallen out of fashion, but Shakespeare is accessible. The language of the plays is integral, and glossing some words, or having students look them up is important to understanding the play.

Meter: The beat of a line of poetry. This can be explained like the beat of a song, but with specific names and structures that can be understood.

- **Foot (poetry)** - an individual unit of sound within a poetic meter. How many feet make up a line, as well as what type of foot, determine what kind of line it is. This also determines how the words flow when they are spoken aloud.
  - Iamb - type of poetic foot, composed of one unstressed (or short) syllable followed by one stressed (or long) syllable. Examples include: belong, exist, I can’t

- **Iambic Pentameter** - Shakespeare's favored verse type. Iambic Pentameter is made up of 5 feet called iambics. It mirrors the natural cadence of human speech, and is a feature of Renaissance playwriting. If Shakespeare ever uses a different or irregular version of this verse, it is for a reason, and can be easy to spot when read aloud.
  - Examples: Now is / the win / ter of / our dis / content  (Richard III I.i.1)
  - Trochaic Tetrameter example: Double, / double / toil and / trouble  (Macheth IV.i.10). Here the stress of the line is reversed.
Blank Verse - Unrhymed Iambic pentameter. This form runs throughout all of Shakespeare’s plays. It is meant to mimic human speech, but also provide a structure that is easier for actors to remember.

Shakespearean Sonnet - Form of poetry innovated by Shakespeare, often appearing inside of his plays. It also utilizes iambic pentameter, but contains a structured rhyme scheme of ABABCDCDEFEFGG. The fourteen lines are split up into three quatrains and one end couplet.

Rhetoric - The art of writing or speaking, usually with the intent to persuade. Rhetoric often employs multiple literary devices, including the three central strategies of pathos, logos, and ethos.

- **pathos** - an appeal to emotions. Here the speaker attempts to get an emotional response in order to win over their audience.

- **logos** - an appeal to logic or intellect. Here the speaker attempts to argue using logic, facts, or data in order to influence an audience.

- **ethos** - an appeal to authority. Here the speaker attempts to use their own position as an expert on an issue to convince an audience.

After looking at the list of terms above, here is the general schema to the goals we want to accomplish in order to help structure students readings of *Julius Caesar*. This can be tailored to more advanced students, but right now acts as a simple set of exercises and outcomes.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Acquaint students with the poetry of Shakespeare, including difficult language and difficult passages. - <strong>Main Question:</strong> Why does the language matter for the plot?</td>
<td>- Cassius and Brutus’ interaction at the festival of the Lupercal. - Brutus’ and Antony’s funeral oration.</td>
<td>- Sound out the language of a passage. Emphasize the beats and movements of the language to show the poetry of it. E.g. What is Brutus mindset? What is Cassius’ mindset? How do we know? - Compare and contrast the two funeral orations. E.g. How does Antony use irony and dramatic pauses? Which speaker is using blank verse? How do we know?</td>
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How to Read Shakespeare’s English

For instructors:

● An important feature of Shakespeare’s English is his prevalent usage of iambic pentameter, in this exercise, you can continually emphasize the rhythm of words by using the natural stresses of iambic pentameter.

● It is important to stress to students that Shakespeare’s works are meant to be read, aloud, in front of an audience. There is a rhythm to his writing, and it does not always end at the end of a metrical line. Take for example, the following lines from Brutus’ funeral oration:

Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause, and be silent that you may hear. Believe me (3.2.14-15)

Some students will pause at the ends of lines, or at every piece of punctuation. This stops the natural flow of the words, and tends to obscure the meaning. Students should instead be encouraged to pause at periods, exclamation points, question marks, semicolons, and colons, rather than at the end of the line. Commas can act as moments to take a breath for longer sections, but should not be considered a full stop.

Activity: Sound it Out

This activity is meant to instill confidence in students. Going slowly and carefully with the language in a way that involves every student makes the language less intimidating. Shakespeare becomes something other than long and winding speeches.

○ To give students a better understanding of how Shakespeare’s language works, as well as to enhance the meaning of the words, have them read it aloud.

○ First, pick a section of the text that goes on for several lines, and contains sufficiently difficult language. This will seem intimidating to some students, but breaking it down will help.

○ We recommend using either a section of Brutus’ and Cassius’ conversation during 1.2, or the beginning of Antony’s funeral oration (lines 3.2.82-3.2.113) *

○ Have students start reading aloud, one at a time. They should read one sentence at a time, stopping at the grammatical end, not the line break.

Note: Be sure to gloss any difficult or archaic words (some of the best resources for glossing Shakespeare include the Folger editions of *Julius Caesar*, and the Norton Critical Edition of *Julius Caesar*), but make sure students understand that getting a feel for the language is often
more important than knowing what every single word means. Often context clues are enough to ensure a basic understanding. It is also recommended to highlight metaphors, rhetorical techniques, and uses of irony. Reading the lines aloud helps to bring out the life of the language, but some uses are still oblique.

Assessment Questions

- Have students write a short compare and contrast essay on Antony and Brutus’ speeches at the funeral oration (See Text A and Text B in Worksheet 4.A). This should be very short and focus on the language as much as it does the content. Prompts should include questions as to how the lines are laid out, how difficult the language is in each speech, and what devices (metaphor, irony, etc.) are used in each. This assignment should be no more than 2 to 3 paragraphs.

- Alternatively, students can be divided up into two groups, each assigned with a different speech. After consulting, each group can talk about how each speech is laid out (line length, prose vs poetry, use of metaphor/simile/other literary devices) including which seems more convincing to them.

Sample Prompts

- Which of the speaker’s lines are longer? What does the length of their speeches and the length of their sentences show about how difficult their speeches are.

- How does Antony portray the Senators who assassinated Julius Caesar? Does he use irony or metaphor to support his views of the Senators.

- What literary devices does Brutus use in his speech? How does he convince the citizens of Rome that Caesar needed to die?

- What is the structure of Brutus’ speech? Does it have a specific meter or rhythm? What is the structure of Antony’s speech? Does it have a specific meter or rhythm?

*Note: The UB production of Julius Caesar uses a slightly different version of the funeral orations. These speeches have been edited for reasons of time and to further the specific goals of our production.
Text A

- Marc Antony’s Funeral Oration

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones.
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious.
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answered it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest
(For Brutus is an honorable man;
So are they all, all honorable men),
Come I to speak in Caesar’s funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me,
But Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honorable man.
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill.
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept;
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honorable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And sure he is an honorable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause.
What cause withholds you, then, to mourn for him?—
Brutus’ Funeral Oration

Be patient till the last.
Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause, and be silent that you may hear. Believe me for mine honor, and have respect to mine honor that you may believe. Censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar’s, to him I say that Brutus’ love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living, and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all freemen? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him. As he was fortunate, I rejoice at it. As he was valiant, I honor him. But, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love, joy for his fortune, honor for his valor, and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak, for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak, for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak, for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.
Julius Caesar Language and Verse Vocabulary:

**Shakespeare’s English** - Shakespeare’s English is the same as our own, because it uses many of the same words, sounds, and letters that we do. Some words have fallen out of the language, and some have come in since Shakespeare’s time, but overall it is very similar.

**Meter** - The rhythm of a line of poetry.

- **Foot (poetry)** - an individual unit of meter in a poem, usually made up of 2 to 3 syllables.
  - **Iamb** - type of poetic foot, composed of one unstressed (or short) syllable followed by one stressed (or long) syllable. Examples include: belong, exist, I can’t
  - **Iambic Pentameter** - Most common type of meter used by Shakespeare. It consists of five (penta-) iambs, making 10 syllables per line.

**Blank Verse** - Unrhymed Iambic Pentameter

**Shakespearean Sonnet** - Form of highly structured poetry that uses iambic pentameter, but contains a structured rhyme scheme of ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. The fourteen lines are split up into three quatrains and one end couplet.

**Rhetoric** - The art of persuasive speaking or writing. Typically uses three strategies as well as other literary devices.

**Three Main Rhetorical Strategies**

- **Pathos** - appeals to the emotions of a listener
- **Logos** - appeals to the thinking/logic of a listener
- **Ethos** - presents the speaker as an authority
Lesson Plan for Julius Caesar: Modern Renditions

Key Productions

Houseman-Mankiewicz

This is a 1953 film edition of Julius Caesar and reflects a traditional, historical rendering of the play. Its perception is heavily influenced by the surrounding sociopolitical conditions.

Shakespeare in the Park

A controversial performance of the play in the summer of 2017, depicting various characters as individuals from the Trump administration.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective:</th>
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<th>Activity:</th>
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<td>• Acquaint students with several prominent modern productions of Julius Caesar.</td>
<td>• Optional full screening of Houseman-Mankiewicz film.</td>
<td>• Discuss the two major productions.</td>
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<td>• <strong>Main Questions:</strong> How do these impact the way individuals should see themselves in the plot? How do the students feel they should respond to the play?</td>
<td>• Worksheet for creating a <em>Julius Caesar</em> production.</td>
<td>• Have students get into groups and plan out how they, influenced by both examples discussed here, would direct their own version of <em>Julius Caesar</em>. They should consider things like time period, historical and social schemas, overall message, costumes, and set design.</td>
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Activity

The *Houseman-Mankiewicz* film is available to rent inexpensively on Amazon and would make a wonderful addition to this lesson. There are also multiple clips on YouTube—some highlights include “Mark Antony’s Speech” ([https://youtu.be/7X9C55TkUP8](https://youtu.be/7X9C55TkUP8)) and “Julius Caesar - Act 2, Scene 1 Brutus Soliloquy” ([https://youtu.be/yR-SZheiTg](https://youtu.be/yR-SZheiTg)) . While these clips will not provide as full of an experience as screening the whole film, they will give students a good base to discuss from. It is all-in-all a rather traditional interpretation of the play, setting the scene in an ancient atmosphere with set and costume designs working towards creating as Roman-esque of an image
as possible. The significance of it, and its need to be brought up here, pertains to the surrounding socio-political development in the 1950s.

In this time, America was emerging from World War II into times of economic prosperity and as a world superpower. It arguably had more influence in the world than ever before, reminiscent of Rome’s own rise to glory and power. Cold War tensions also likely influenced how this film was perceived, especially given growing hostility towards and fear of communism. McCarthyism and the Witch Hunt are also potential items to be brought up. A brief discussion of some of these things may be beneficial before talking about the film with students.

The New York Shakespeare in the Park production is obviously the more controversial of the two adaptations discussed here, largely because it depicts Julius Caesar as President Trump. Some argue that it was inappropriate to depict the assassination scene with a look-alike of a president, while others point out that the play in fact works to be a cautionary tale against such violence, given the chaos that follows. Both sides have merit and are likely to be represented in any given classroom. The following resources provide multiple perspectives and have the potential to enhance class discussion over these issues:

- “New York theatre under fire for Julius Caesar’s resemblance to Trump” (https://youtu.be/LwMtncUeux8) is a YouTube clip from Al Jazeera English which discusses the corporate sponsors that pulled funding from the production as well as words from attendees and the director. It makes for a good, comprehensive guide.
- “Staging of Shakespeare's 'Julius Caesar' Features 'Trump' Getting Assassinated” (https://youtu.be/-qfzqBr1qh0) is a YouTube clip from Inside Edition. It is short and provides a good overview of the conflict, but does also discuss Kathy Griffin’s controversial images as well and should potentially be screened ahead of time before classroom use.
● “The truth about Shakespeare's ‘Julius Caesar’” ([https://youtu.be/pK7zLCc3ecE](https://youtu.be/pK7zLCc3ecE)) is a YouTube clip from CBS and is slanted towards approving of the play. It is composed of those involved in the play’s production defending it and its message.


● “Thoughts on that Shakespeare in the Park Controversy” ([https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/shakespeare-park-julius-caesar-controversy-new-york-overrated-cultural-institutions/](https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/shakespeare-park-julius-caesar-controversy-new-york-overrated-cultural-institutions/), found on the National Review and written by Kevin D. Williamson, is an example of backlash against the production, criticizing the organization as a whole of what the author considers inappropriate political motivations in recent years.

While the ethics around such use is a natural discussion point here, what is more pivotal is the understanding that Shakespeare’s plays are still very much capable of causing controversy and discussion about key ethical issues and current situations. The two plays provide excellent contrast for how something like Julius Caesar can be produced modernly and can be used to stimulate conversations regarding the choices directors must make about material.

After going over the productions, students should be broken up into groups of about 4-5 each and discuss how they would produce a modern day rendition of Julius Caesar, using the questions on the worksheet provided. It is recommended here to avoid ideas purely historical in nature, as this deviates from what the exercise is getting at. A “modern rendition” could be anything set after the turn of the 20th century and could include ties to the roaring twenties or the ‘80s. They
should be encouraged to give some kind of underlying message behind their specific “production” and give evidence for why their decisions support this intent.

**Assessment**

After students have discussed ideas for how they would create a modern production of *Julius Caesar*, have at least one person from each group explain the choices they made regarding the questions in their worksheet. They should also be prompted to relate this back to the motifs of the play as a whole. This should be a relatively simple assessment and is not intended to be burdensome, but rather to get students to consider various nuances to productions before they see the play themselves at UB.

*All images taken from Wiki Commons.*

**Make Your Own *Julius Caesar***

Modernization often alters how a play is viewed. The Shakespeare in the Park performance was not just controversial because it was especially political, but also because it brought its own message to the play at large. In this exercise, consider the choices a director must make when modernizing a play like *Julius Caesar*. With your group, use the following questions to create your own production of *Julius Caesar* around a modern historical theme and message.

- What decade would this take place in, and how would this influence other choices?
- What historical and social problems were people facing in that decade?
- How would those social problems impact perception?
- How can those things be made relevant to people today?
- What kind of costumes would characters wear?
- How would the set be designed?
- How bloody and/or violent would the play be?
- Is there a specific character you like and/or want to highlight? Explain.
- Is there any kind of social issue it would be organized around?
- What are you passionate about, and how can this be presented?
- What is the specific intention of the play’s design, and how would that be evidenced?
Bibliography

History and Culture

Elizabethan England
Oliver, Isaac, and Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger. *The Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I. between circa and circa 1602 1600*,

Philosophy

Language and Verse
**Modern Renditions**

https://youtu.be/LwMtncUeux8


