

Caesar in the Hood

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Overview

“This is so boring! Why do we have to read it?”

“I don’t understand this! Why can’t it be written in regular English?”

These are the comments I heard daily during my first foray into teaching one of William Shakespeare’s plays to my tenth grade high school students. My heart was broken. Not only had Shakespeare’s words failed to capture them, so too, the traditional method of teaching the work. Adding to my dilemma was that I needed to teach the same students another of Shakespeare’s plays, *Julius Caesar*. There was no doubt in my mind; I had to drastically alter my strategy and methods. Lucky for me, and hopefully you, too, this unit’s work came along. While this unit is geared to teaching *Julius Caesar* to high school students, many of the activities such as lazy sonnets, writing death notices, postcards home, electric vocabulary, and student-generated video and WebQuests can readily be adapted to younger students.

Rationale

When I earlier taught a play of Shakespeare’s, I arranged my classroom seating into a semi-circle, cast the parts, and had the students view video clips of what they read that day. I tried showing the video clip first, but the students decided they absorbed the material better by reading first and then viewing the section. Their ultimate conclusion, though, was that they did not readily understand it and hated the play.

In overhauling my instruction, I decided to heavily embrace technology for several reasons. The first is most students are much more tech-savvy and energized through it, especially as they seldom have the opportunity to fully utilize any technical expertise in a classroom.

Secondly, students not as technically oriented would benefit from this demand upon them too, as long as the teacher could ensure adequate access and time to teach the necessary skills and complete the work. Finally, I wanted to become more tech-oriented in this unit in order to learn along with my students. This would encourage a more student-oriented atmosphere by allowing them to take the lead and demonstrate what they could do. I, in turn, could learn with them and adjust according to their needs.

The majority of the activities in this unit have been tested and refined with student input and assessment outcome. An Internet WebQuest handbook and guide are sourced to aid in the development of this project. A note of caution, website addresses are not often stable. Therefore, warn students that every time their WebQuest is going to be used, the sites must be checked in advance.

Other activities in this unit are: PowerPoint presentations on The Globe Theatre and biographies of Julius Caesar and Shakespeare, lessons on how to read Shakespeare, writing exercises including lazy sonnets and letters to Brutus, rhetoric exercise, writing death notices, postcards home, use of video clips, electric vocabulary exercises, and student-generated video and WebQuests. Whew! Put on your Ray-bans and let's roll!

Background—The Globe and *Julius Caesar*

Julius Caesar is thought by Shakespearean historians to be the play written to inaugurate The Globe Theatre in 1599. The Globe was owned by Shakespeare and the acting troupe to which he belonged, the Lord Chamberlain's Men (later the King's Men), and the Burbage brothers, Richard and Cuthbert. The troupe's original theatre, The Theatre, was the first public playhouse in London. The Theatre had been built in 1576 by James Burbage, Richard and Cuthbert's father. Upon James's death in February of 1597, the lease on the land expired and the land's owner, Giles Allen, claimed the building, which was within his right.

For almost two years the troupe battled over the right to the building and during this time was forced to rent other theatres to perform. In December of 1598 they circumvented Allen's claim of possession by secretly dismantling the wooden structure and floating the pieces down the Thames to a new home less than a mile away and outside the city limits (Brandenburg 25).

The distance from the city afforded the theatre owners two additional benefits besides possession of a pile of wood. The first was now they owned the land and the building; and second, the theatre was outside the city's Puritan and City Council censorship. While the religious and civic factions in England were often at odds with each other, they did agree on one thing—the immorality of plays and actors. A city law passed in 1572 classified actors as criminals and subject to arrest and being whipped or branded if not in the service of an aristocrat and liveried. Being liveried meant the noble would allow the theatre company to wear his/her coat of arms and thus be protected from the law, but little else (Mullaney 1). Few patrons, including Queen Elizabeth I gave money or other assistance to their troupe.

Companies were constantly under siege by the censors with petitions to shut them down, while other forms of entertainment also held in the same playhouses, such as the inhumane sport of bearbaiting, were seldom bothered. Luckily for the theatre world, their strongest ally was Queen Elizabeth I, who seldom allowed playhouses to be closed for long (the plague years were an exception) as she relished well-written and acted works. She also enjoyed the political game of supporting plays and actors at the expense of the city of London. London had become its own political entity and Elizabeth's support against the laws the city council dictated kept them "off-

balance and properly subordinate to her own will and...in its place” (Mullaney 2). Thus, while the benefits of dismantling and moving The Theatre afforded greater profits for the theatre owners’ pockets, their gain of a more conducive atmosphere for producing and performing plays was a giant boon as well.

General Notes on the Play

Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* is a spectacular work fit for an opening, even though it is roughly half the length of Shakespeare’s other tragedies. The play has 37 speaking parts along with crowds of citizens, fighting scenes, and thunder. The use of sustained thunder was an innovative sound effect for Shakespeare in this play. The sky rumbles with it for over 200 lines; whereas earlier works such as *Henry VI, Part Two* have approximately 20 lines of thunder sound effects (Daniell 3). The majority of Act II, Scene I in *Julius Caesar* depends upon a background of thunder rumbling to heighten the import of the violent storm and the report of portentous signs occurring.

Opening of the Play and the Lupercalia Feast

The play opens with the dual celebration of Caesar’s triumph into Rome and the feast of the Lupercalia. He has defeated Pompey, well sort of. Pompey had been married to Caesar’s only legitimate child, Julia. She died during childbirth. When the first Civil War of Rome erupted due to Caesar’s actions, Caesar fought and soundly defeated first the city of Marseille and then Pompey’s legions in Pharsalus. Pompey attempted to sail to Egypt to regroup. While aboard a boat, he was killed and beheaded by the order of Egyptian co-ruler King Ptolemy XIII. Caesar was said to have wept and moaned upon receiving the head and gold equite ring of Pompey’s. King Ptolemy XIII’s deed was an attempt at winning favor with Caesar. Ptolemy wanted Caesar to side with him as he was having a power struggle with his sister. It didn’t work, though, as Ptolemy XIII’s sister happened to be Cleopatra. This in-fighting of Roman leaders produced nothing in the way of funds flowing back to Rome and its citizens. This is what Marullus and Flavius complain about in Act I, Scene I.

The Feast of Lupercalia, or Lupercal was held on February 15th. The feast was in honor of the she-wolf that suckled the mythical founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus. As part of the celebration, two naked male celebrants, each wrapped in a sacrificed goat’s skin, ran round the markings of the old Palatine city. The runners carried a small thong of the sacrificed goat’s skin with which they would strike the crowd. Superstition held that any women touched by the thongs were bestowed with the gift of fertility or would have an easier childbirth (Schmitz). Thus, in Act I, Scene II, lines 4-5 Caesar commands Calpurnia to be touched by the thong as he needs a male heir.

Imagery in the Play

The storm is not just a wonderful theatrical effect employed by Shakespeare for the first time. David Daniell, in his introduction to the Arden edition of the play, notes the storm and the other two imagery devices used in the play of blood and fire illustrates a growth in Shakespeare’s writing as “purely verbal images in earlier plays now work, often unobserved, in the very struts and spars of the structure” (45). The three imagery devices become not just words, but themes and symbols in the play.

The storm mirrors the drive of the play—the evilness of Caesar’s reign and the conspirators’ plot to kill Caesar (45). The storm can also be a harbinger of the upheaval about to

occur in the Great Chain of Being or *scala naturae*. A lower stratum, the Senators—mere mortals, are rising up against the god-appointed king, Caesar.

The other two images, blood and fire, can be taken together as symbols of civil strife and purifying. There is a sense of urgency about both causing a need for action versus remaining inert (45). The blood imagery can be taken further as it conjures thoughts of lineage and nobleness. But Daniell feels that in the case of *Julius Caesar* blood is used as a symbol of reinvigorating and nourishing the Romans. The conspirators bathe in Caesar's blood to symbolize a banding together. An idea Brutus refused in the Garden Scene (Act II, Scene I, line 114), but now that his violent emotional state has erupted, he feels necessary.

Division of the Play

Julius Caesar is commonly divided into two parts: before and after Caesar's death. However, Antony's speech to the mob is at the exact halfway point of the play. Daniell mentions that historically the play is also seen to be divided into three parts according to the quarrels. Interestingly, only Brutus appears in each of these scenes. The first division is Caesar's death scene and the quarrel is between Caesar and the conspirators. The second takes place in Act IV, Scenes II and III, which is referred to as the Quarrel Scene; it is between Cassius and Brutus. The final division occurs at Brutus' death and the quarrel is between him and Caesar's ghost (5).

Genre

The play is also the bridge work between Shakespeare's history plays and his great tragedies such as *Hamlet* and *Othello*. However, slotting *Julius Caesar* neatly in a category is difficult as evidenced by the criticisms read for this unit. *Julius Caesar* is placed by some in the tragedy genre, by others as one of Shakespeare's four Roman plays (the other Roman plays are *Titus Andronicus*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus*), and it is also labeled as a revenge tragedy.

In Harold Bloom's collection of criticisms on *Julius Caesar* titled *William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar*, scholar Vivian Thomas attempts to answer the genre placement of the play in her essay, "On the Genre of *Julius Caesar*. She reasons, "If the question of genre had troubled the minds of Shakespeare's audience, they would probably have felt that it was a Roman play and that it was a tragedy. Its stain of revenge tragedy would almost certainly have struck a chord. But it is doubtful whether they would have been troubled further" (62). In the essay, Thomas examines all angles of the play—historical, story line, setting, and acting, but she is still unable to fit the play into any one category. She finally nestles the play between two categories--tragedy and a Roman play. Thomas's placement is a necessary compromise in the light of one other factor—irrefutably identifying the protagonist of the play.

Protagonist Dilemma and Main Character Analysis

Moving past the genre question of *Julius Caesar* there is a more pressing dilemma--who is the protagonist of the play? Julius Caesar, who the play is named for, dies before the first half of the play leading some critics to dub the play a problem play (qtd. in Daniell 4). Plus, the character with the most lines is not Caesar, but Brutus. The line count then is: second place goes to Antony, third is Cassius, and in fourth place, Caesar. Thomas adds to this dilemma by noting that the culture in which the play is performed, the actors chosen for the parts, and what scenes are kept in the production will sway how the play and its main characters are perceived. This means a strong actor playing Antony would push him to the forefront. If the society in which the

play is performed feels that Caesar was a tyrant, then Brutus is considered righteous and a hero (63). But if Caesar is admired as a military man and politician, then the conspirators were evil. This jockeying of right and wrong is possible because Shakespeare's script is ambivalent (Daniell 2). The script on paper remains neutral. Why did Shakespeare do this?

The first thought that comes to mind is how skillful a writer Shakespeare was in presenting the myriad human interactions leading up to Caesar's death. The play appears to run as if it is being told by an omniscient narrator. There are the evil revelations of Cassius in Act I, Scene II, the interrupted soliloquy of Brutus in the garden as he ponders what decision to make, Antony's thoughts as he mourns over Caesar's body, and glimpses of each sides' camp before they meet on the battlefield are examples of an omniscient narrator. This multi-individual view is responsible for making it difficult to label one individual as the protagonist.

Caesar as Protagonist?

Caesar speaks little, dies early, but his spirit (literally in ghost form to Brutus) pervades the play. Dieter Mehl states that "it is especially during his [Caesar's] absence that the dialogue is concerned with him" (135). Caesar is so little portrayed in his namesake play that a character analysis based only on his scenes would yield a comic caricature versus a full length portrait. Often he is referred to as only a titular character. Caesar postures and has little substance as he enters accompanied by a flourish of trumpets, gives commands, and refers to himself, not with a "me" or "I" or even the royal "we," but in the third person. He is Caesar even to himself as if always trying to maintain an image.

Shakespeare's depiction of Caesar as having the falling sickness or epilepsy is historically accurate, but Shakespeare's Caesar is also going deaf—not historically accurate. Why did Shakespeare give Caesar this additional ailment? First, becoming hard-of-hearing is associated with age and at his death, Caesar was 55-57 years old. Two, even with these ailments Caesar is still the great Caesar. Mehl concludes that it exemplifies the "extraordinary force of his presence" (135). Daniell classifies Caesar as remaining "hubristically arrogant" (36). This is the Caesar, whose *Gallic Wars* was a standard textbook for every student in Shakespeare's time (Brown 109). Shakespeare, and much of his audience, knew of Caesar and had no difficulty in identifying his character and place in history.

In the play, moments before his death Caesar boasts of being more resolute in his stance than Mt. Olympus, home of the gods. Caesar is comparing himself to the Roman gods (Mehl 136), and Bloom reiterates that Caesar's reference to the Roman gods implies much more as, "Some critics have suggested that the Julius Caesar of Shakespeare is cunningly less interested in an earthly crown than he is in his metamorphosis into a god. He already rules Rome; all that he can gain by provoking the conspirators is a martyr's death that ensures his status as a god and that guarantees the Roman Empire that will be inaugurated by his nephew Octavius Caesar" (5).

While being stabbed, he moves little, and utters only three controversial words. Controversial as Daniell notes because Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, historian and author of *The Twelve Caesars* written in approximately 100 A.D., records Caesar's dying words to Brutus as, 'and thou, my child,' and not Plutarch's 'Eu tu, Brute?'" (58). The former is powerful when it is remembered that Caesar had an affair with Brutus' mother, Servilia around the time of Brutus' conception. Plutarch mentions this as well in his biographies of Brutus and Caesar (57-58). Therefore, there has always been speculation that Brutus was Caesar's illegitimate son. Shakespeare does not allude to this relationship and sticks with Plutarch's words of "Et tu, Brute?". The words are Caesar's only response as he dies. Northrop Frye comments that,

“Shakespeare’s Caesar, so thoroughly disciplined in his views of death in general, still finds his actual death a surprise” (109). Caesar is not given a dramatic death speech (Mehl 144) as might befit his dramatic persona. Shakespeare follows the recorded history of the scene and allows it to be taken over by the conspirators frenzied stabbing of Caesar. Caesar’s death, though, is not the climax of the play. The climax of the play is with Cassius’ and Brutus’ deaths.

Were the conspirators right in killing Caesar? Daniell notes that Caesar has been historically admired and hated. He cites two famous references in particular. The first is from Cicero, a Roman politician, political ally of Caesar’s, and a prodigious letter writer of which the majority have survived through the centuries. After Caesar’s death, Cicero writes praising Caesar for his many accomplishments and strategies and then applauds his assassination as a correct and needed action. The second reference is from Suetonius’ *Twelve Caesars*.

Suetonius lists all the grievances the senators held against Caesar (40-42), many of them direct insults to their honor and power. Then Suetonius states, “Yet other deeds and sayings of Caesar’s may be set to the debit account, and justify the conclusion that he deserved assassination. Not only did he accept excessive honours...but took other honours which, as a mere mortal, he should certainly have refused” (40). Suetonius then writes that he, and most authorities, feel Caesar purposely exposed himself to the conspirators as he wanted to die. Echoes of what Bloom reiterated earlier.

Caesar was old, ill, and in pain. He is quoted as saying he did not want a lingering end, but a quick and sudden one (Suetonius 45). While Caesar may have had a sudden end, whether his death was a necessary act or not and an action he craved still lingers in history as does the question of who is the protagonist of the play.

Brutus as the protagonist?

Brutus is most often thought of as the protagonist and the tragic hero of the play. Bloom even suggests that the play should be called *The Tragedy of Marcus Brutus* (5). The simple definition of a tragic hero according to Aristotle is a man of noble stature who is admired by society, but flawed. As the following reveals, the character of Brutus fulfills this definition.

Brutus is often called a Stoic, meaning he aspires to the Stoicism school of philosophy that promotes a detachment of emotions and being indifferent to pain or pleasure in order to be more virtuous, gain wisdom, and achieve integrity in character. One of the most important traits for a Stoic, though, was self-control. For the vast majority of the play, Brutus’ presents a Stoic persona. However, the times he breaks free of this emotional confinement have him react violently. More importantly, though, his emotions are often repressed. There is only the shell of a noble man. This lack of ability to show emotion or feel is detrimental to his character.

This emptiness of character is what ultimately Cassius, who is a brother-in-law to Brutus, is able to use to his advantage in turning Brutus to the side of the conspirators. In Act I, Scene II Cassius cons Brutus into re-examining himself. He tells Brutus, the man who felt all his emotions were contained within him, that it is clear Brutus is unhappy. Cassius then refers to Brutus’ shadow, meaning mirror or reflection which Daniell notes is a less used definition of the word. Cassius deftly turns this to mean not Brutus’ inner self, but Brutus’ outer self. Then Cassius proceeds to tell Brutus that Brutus’ reputation is highly regarded among the best of Rome. Daniell calls this image building (49). Cassius is flattering Brutus and in so doing proves

that Brutus can be easily swayed. It also proves that Brutus does not adhere to the strict principles of Stoicism as much as he thinks he does if flattery can so easily alter his principles.

After Brutus leaves, the scene becomes sinister as Cassius in a soliloquy reveals himself as a villain. Cassius reacts like a weasel strutting and preening after catching a chicken. He has already stated how he hates Caesar and finds it reprehensible to have Caesar elevated to such a high status, when Caesar is weak and only a man. Cassius envies Caesar and feels slighted by him. He covets Caesar's power and position, which is quite unlike Brutus' motive for removing Caesar from power. Brutus sees Caesar as a threat to the Roman republic. He is the only conspirator credited with such a motive by Shakespeare. At the end of the soliloquy Cassius demonstrates more of his evil nature by telling of his plot to send fake letters to Brutus urging him to take action against Caesar for the sake of the republic.

Two of the three pivotal scenes in which Brutus breaks free from his emotional confinement concern Caesar's death. In the planning of Caesar's death with the other conspirators, Brutus uses the language of a butcher. He talks of cutting off the head, hacking the limbs, dismembering, killing him [Caesar] boldly, "carve him as a dish," "Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds," and "When Caesar's head is off" (Act II, Scene I, lines 162-183). This is not the language of a Stoic, but of someone eagerly anticipating the violent act they are about to perform. Immediately after Caesar's assassination, the conspirators are told of panic occurring in the street at the news of Caesar's death. Brutus again violently breaks out of his stoic mold by leading the others to bathe in Caesar's blood up to their elbows and cover their swords in it as well. He then commands the conspirators to run through the streets crying, "Peace, freedom, and liberty!" (Act III, Scene I, lines 103-110). Brutus' idea is to spread the word through the streets that the killing of Caesar is something in which the conspirators are united and proud of and will not hide. The image of a man with his sword and arms covered in blood running through the streets would not present a balm to the mayhem, but provoke more panic and fear.

The third incident in which Brutus breaks his Stoic façade is in the Quarrel Scene. Brutus and Cassius have a heated argument in which Brutus accuses Cassius of corruption. Brutus' behavior is decidedly not Stoic as he angrily shouts and repeatedly insults Cassius to the point that Cassius extends his knife to Brutus, not in hostility, but in an act of submission. Cassius is giving Brutus the choice to slay Cassius. This action calms Brutus. Then Cassius and Brutus share a light moment, one of comic relief, in which they ridicule a poet who has burst into their meeting bidding them to end their disagreement. After throwing the poet out, Brutus reveals to Cassius that Portia is dead. Cassius is stunned and sorry. Brutus reports the manner of her death—eating a coal of fire.

Brutus physically abandoned Portia in Rome after Antony's speech in Act III, Scene II, but he had abandoned her in his emotions long before. In their only scene together, Act II, Scene I, Brutus is unable to reveal his emotions to Portia even after she shows him the wound she made in her thigh to show she is strong. Daniell states that Portia attempts to reach Brutus by demonstrating a more masculine image. He also notes that by choosing her thigh area to stab herself, she shows an intimacy between the two of them that is underscored by her coming to him in her nightgown (Act II, Scene I). Unfortunately, Stoic Brutus is unable to reciprocate much beyond telling her that he is unworthy of her.

It is important to realize that at some point off-stage between Act II, Scene III, the garden scene, and Act II, Scene IV, when Portia sends Lucius to the Senate House to learn of any news, that Brutus has confided in her about the conspiracy. This demonstrates that Portia is a confidante to Brutus, which was uncommon, but true to their relationship according to Plutarch.

Portia, daughter of Cato who sided with Pompey against Caesar, had been married to Bibulus, also an enemy of Caesar's. Caesar was not happy when Brutus married her (Daniell 65-67).

Daniell states Portia dies alone and as a woman. He then examines Brutus' words on her death to conclude that Portia could not take Brutus' absence especially as she saw the power and forces Octavius and Antony had mustered. Portia knew that a woman was not needed in this new man's world (67). Daniell elaborates later on her death saying that Portia's death begins a disintegration of Brutus and that Brutus begins to feel a sense of doom (142). Bloom only concludes that Portia dies in despair at the size of the force gathering to battle with Brutus (22). No mention is made that Portia's choice of death—eating a burning coal, brings the play's imagery device of fire to the forefront. Portia's death is certainly a purging act. She is silencing herself as she can no longer reach Brutus as a wife, companion, and intimate.

Three times Brutus makes fatal wrong choices. Each time Cassius attempts to influence Brutus into making the correct choice, but Brutus remains resolute. The first time is in not killing Antony, the second in allowing Antony to speak at Caesar's funeral, and the third is when to battle the triumvirate of Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus. Brutus' undoing in making these bad choices is his absolute belief in his own virtue and his inability to see where "he ends and where Rome begins" (Bloom 6). Brutus makes himself beyond reproach and all-knowing like a quasi-dictator. This is evidence of a flawed character.

Brutus and Cassius die by assisted suicide. They do not want to be captured and paraded into Rome. Both are unable to solely kill themselves but for different reasons. Cassius is not brave enough and Brutus feels it would be dishonorable. Each dies uttering identical sentiments that now Caesar is avenged. Brutus, however, adds that Caesar among all men was the only one that was true to him. Bloom notes that Brutus does not see the irony in his statement, because it is he, Brutus, that was the most faithless to Caesar as Caesar loved Brutus as a son (7).

Upon discovering Brutus' and Cassius' bodies, Cassius is ignored. Brutus, however, is treated like a fallen hero. Antony recalls Brutus' nobleness and states that among all the conspirators only Brutus was motivated by the good of Rome and not envy. Octavius orders Brutus to be given an honorable or good soldier/hero's funeral. Shakespeare has allowed Brutus to command the play as a tragic hero. He has also kept Brutus central to the story throughout the play, while Antony and Caesar have had only spotlights. According to the Benet's Reader Encyclopedia, the Greek definition of protagonist denotes the main character of a play and is often interchangeable with the hero (Siepmann 793).

Finally, there is one historical fact concerning Brutus' ancestor, Lucius Junius Brutus, that is especially interesting to the play. Lucius was one of the founders of the Republic of Rome in 509 B.C. He helped overthrow the last king of Rome, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus or Tarquin, who was a despot. Lucius began his campaign to overthrow Tarquin by feigning stupidity in order to gain Tarquin's trust. Intertwined through this history is the rape of Lucretia by Tarquin's son, Sextus. Lucretia was a relative of Lucius. She committed suicide due to the dishonor cast upon her family by the rape. Lucius was outraged by the crime committed against Lucretia and her subsequent suicide. He immediately began the successful battle to rid Rome of Tarquin. Shakespeare wrote a poem concerning this bit of history titled, "The Rape of Lucretia." Finally, note the reference to his ancestor, Lucius, Brutus makes in Act II, Scene I, line 54 after he receives one of Cassius' fake letters. Brutus states, "The Tarquin drive when he was called a king." Brutus feels he is in the same position as Lucius 400 years earlier and has been called to dispose of a tyrannical king.

Antony as protagonist?

Antony's character is slow to distinguish itself in the play beyond being a yes-man to Caesar. Once given the stage, he deviously takes command (See language of the play for amplification). His character is also the only one imbued with demonstrating true emotion in *Julius Caesar* (Daniell 68). This is particularly due to his soliloquy over Caesar's body in Act III, Scene I, lines 254-75, which is also credited with being the first soliloquy of grief for Shakespeare. Shakespeare will also extend this soliloquy of grief into a full-length play titled, *Hamlet*. The play he begins while completing *Julius Caesar* (71). Portia, in the garden scene with Brutus, is the only other character in *Julius Caesar* that could have approached Antony's emotional range, but her character is never given a chance to develop further.

Antony in the play, as he was in life, is charismatic. Of all of Plutarch's biographies, Antony or Marcus Antonius is the longest. Plutarch describes Antony thus, "He used a manner of phrase in his speech, called Asiatic, which carried the best grace and estimation at that time, and was much like to his manners and life: for it was full of ostentation, foolish bravery, and vain ambition (3). As far as his looks, Plutarch likens Antony to Hercules, who the family claims as a descendant. Plutarch adds that Antony was also well-liked by most everyone (5-6). This makes it easy to understand that when a stage production is able to have the actor playing Antony incorporate all these elements, then Antony is in contention to be the protagonist.

Once Antony takes on the task of avenging Caesar, his character undergoes a rapid transformation. After Caesar's death scene, Antony meekly returns to the Senate to meet with the conspirators. He seemingly numbly shakes their bloodstained hands giving the appearance he will continue his low-key role. However, Bloom notes that this is the "first demonstration of Antony's immense capacity for duplicity. He shakes the bloody hands of each of the assassins, at the same time eloquently lamenting the death of his leader (20). Mehl terms it "raw emotion" (145). Granted permission to speak over Caesar's body, Antony becomes a force that Brutus and the other conspirators can not match.

Act IV, Scene I opens with Antony callously ticking off the names of enemies to be killed, including his nephew. At first it appears he has taken command over Octavius and Lepidus, who are his co-triumvirates. He soon dispatches Lepidus on a minor errand, which ironically, Antony and Octavius to dispense with him as a member of the triumvirate. Octavius has the final word in the scene. He states he is distrustful of those around him.

In Act V, Scene I, it becomes apparent there will be a duel as to who will take control—Octavius or Antony. Antony makes a battle plan in lines 16-17 and Octavius immediately contradicts it. When Antony, the more experienced soldier of the two, protests about being crossed or discounted, Octavius retorts that he has not crossed Antony, but he will have no problem doing so. Interrupted by the arrival of Brutus and Cassius, Antony says nothing in return. However, in a lull in the fanfare of Brutus' and Cassius' entry, Octavius asks Antony if they should indicate they mean to do battle. Antony addresses Octavius as Caesar (line 24). With Antony's subconscious switch to calling Octavius, Caesar, Antony has not only allowed Octavius to take command, but acknowledged him as the ruler.

At the end of the play, Antony again gives a superb eulogy; this time it is for Brutus. Brown says of this eulogy, that after the scene in which Antony has callously checked off the people to die (Act IV, Scene I), this speech does not seem sincere. Antony's words are more "politically convenient" (121). Again, though, Octavius takes charge. He orders Brutus' body be removed and prepared for a state funeral.

Antony is the only character in the play that is dynamic. He changes from a mere errand boy—to an avenger able to start an uprising—to a leader. With the changes he is able to demonstrate true feelings of grief, ruthlessness, leadership, scorn, and political acumen. Does this make Antony the protagonist? More often than Caesar or Brutus, Antony is dismissed as not being the protagonist or tragic hero in *Julius Caesar* due to another Shakespeare play titled, *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Julius Caesar a test trial for Hamlet?

Overwhelmingly the pieces read for this unit concur that *Julius Caesar* is a prototype for *Hamlet*. The parallels are astonishing. Those most often cited are: Brutus is an underdeveloped Hamlet and both are considered tragic heroes, the tragic story revolves around three main characters (Frye 118), “the hero’s tragic dilemma which, in the last resort, claims more of our attention and sympathy than the political fate of [the country] (Mehl 134), each has a ghost, and Dane Hamlet’s nightmare is similar to Calpurnia’s.

Additionally, there are many writing and staging techniques Shakespeare experimented with in *Julius Caesar* that he used and expanded upon in *Hamlet*. Daniell notes evidence of one of these developing techniques with Antony’s grief soliloquy over Caesar’s body (Act III, Scene I). This scene “has obvious significance for the making of *Hamlet*. The traditional icon of Hamlet has been the young man in mourning black, holding a skull: Shakespeare makes an entire play, as it were, out of grief. The play of *Hamlet* has a powerful drive: the thrust of the action never pauses, and can be overwhelming in performance. In Antony’s soliloquy and his funeral oration is that same combination of linguistic release and onward drive” (71). While it is easy to make connections between the two plays simply because *Hamlet* was written immediately after or while Shakespeare was finishing *Julius Caesar*, there are too many coincidences to not consider *Julius Caesar* as a prototype for *Hamlet*.

The majority of researchers, writers, and critics of Shakespeare are loath to call *Julius Caesar* the bridge play between Shakespeare’s histories and tragedies. However, it is difficult not to, as Shakespeare was obviously trying out the form of tragedy and will soon produce some of his greatest works—*The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, and *Othello*. Shakespeare was becoming the most influential and unequalled writer in history, but then again, he was already an acclaimed one.

Main Source for the Play

Historians have universally credited Sir Thomas North’s translation of Plutarch’s *Lives of Noble Grecians and Romanes* translated from Jacques Amyots’ French version of the work titled *Parallel Lives* as the main source. Amyot was a skilled translator and writer as was North. Both took liberties and enlivened their translations (Daniell 84). Five editions of North’s work were printed from 1576 to 1626. Elizabethan and even Jacobean England read North and there is no doubt Shakespeare did, too.

Shakespeare generously borrowed from North even using some phrases such as: “worthy of this noble wife” which Brutus speaks of Portia in Act II, Scene I (Daniell 81). Yes, Shakespeare can be accused of plagiarism, but during this time no one cared or had any idea what plagiarism constituted. Like other playwrights in his time, Shakespeare had to produce plays quickly in order to keep attracting the paying public while keeping the censors at bay. Shakespeare may have used some of North’s words, but overwhelmingly the play is

Shakespeare's work according to notable critics such as Harold Bloom, David Daniell, John Russell Brown, and Dieter Mehl. A 1909 two-book series titled, *Shakespeare's Plutarch* edited by C. F. Tucker Brooke, which examines in great detail what Shakespeare used from Plutarch's accounts in all the Roman plays, notes:

It is highly probable that he [Shakespeare] read much more of Plutarch than he ever openly used...if so, the matter seems entirely devoid of interest or importance...there...[is] no great reason for crediting North with a much higher sort of influence over Shakespeare than that exerted by Holinshed, Painter, Whetstone, Harsnet, and the many other authors whose matter the poet appropriated without reserve and whose manner, save for a phrase here and there, he seems utterly to have repudiated" (2: x). Shakespeare used North for the basis of the story, but created and adapted so much more. As Brown writes,

The main lines of the plot of this tragedy and many incidental details of its action stemmed from Shakespeare's use of Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* in Sir Thomas North's translation...even the verse dialogue is often remarkably close to North's prose. Such fidelity was so unusual in Shakespeare's work that both departures from this source and adherence to it are important indications of how the play was meant to work in performance (119).

For example, Antony's speech to the mob is wholly Shakespeare's. Plutarch and Suetonius state that Antony spoke very little at Caesar's funeral. Suetonius states that Antony asked to have a recently passed herald giving Caesar divine and human honors and a decree of safety for Caesar that the Senate had issued before his death read to the people (45). Historically, Antony's famous oration never occurred. The greatness associated with the play remains in Shakespeare's hands.

Finally, during this time publishing a play did not yield any benefits—financial or literary; it only facilitated other troupes in stealing and performing the work. There were several other plays written about Julius Caesar at this time and a few years earlier. Some only remain as mentions in other works or only sections survived (Daniell 93). Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* was printed in the 1623 Folio and probably from his fair papers (fair papers are a clean copy of a play made by either the playwright or a scribe under the playwright's direction) as it is one of the cleanest scripts in the Folio (125). These two points are significant because Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* was a money maker for the troupe and thus, continually acted. There are no recorded quarrels, written cries of foul, or lawsuits concerning the script, because it simply is Shakespeare's.

Political Ramifications of the Play

The year 1599 is pegged as the year *Julius Caesar* was performed for several historic reasons. One, was the calendar was seriously out of kilter again just as it had been prior to Caesar's correcting it. Queen Elizabeth adopted Pope Gregory's correction of the calendar; however, the corrected calendar in English territory was not addressed as Gregory's, but as the Queen's. Some historians site Caesar's intervention and command to adjust the calendar as resulting in a huge anti-Caesar sentiment contributing to his assassination (Daniell 17). There are several instances in the play where Shakespeare has characters unsure of the day, such as Brutus asking Lucius to fetch a calendar to check on what day it is in Act II, Scene I, line 42. These references would be inside jokes to an Elizabethan audience. There is also the direct affront to the Great Chain of Being, with man and nature being seriously out of step, and the need to right it.

Another important reason history helps attach the year 1599 to the opening of *Julius Caesar* is the rebellion of the Earl of Essex, who at one time was an intimate of Queen Elizabeth I. The Queen's popularity was waning. Her subjects began whispering about abuses of absolute monarchical rule and her right to the throne.

In March of 1599, John Hayward's book, *The First Part of the Life and Reign of Henry the Fourth*, was published with 84 of its 149 pages concerning the life of King Richard II. King Richard II, who ruled from 1377-99, was dethroned by Henry Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke became King Henry IV, Queen Elizabeth I's ancestor. Hayward's book treated King Henry VI as a usurper. Even more threatening, the book contained a page length dedication to the Earl of Essex with the line, "Indeed you are great, both in present judgment and in the expectation of time to come" (Daniell 23). Hayward's choice of language propelled Essex to a higher level in the Great Chain of Being of ruler versus man.

Immediately after publication, the dedication was ordered removed by the Queen's censors. However, over 1,000 copies had already been sold (Daniell 23). Hayward was jailed with Essex after Essex's failed rebellion. Hayward would eventually be released and in 1619 knighted by King James I. Essex, unfortunately, would lose his head for leading the failed 1601 rebellion. Shakespeare, though, wrote *Julius Caesar*—a play about a man, who attempted to seize the Roman crown and declare himself immortal.

England in the 1590s had a strong Italian artistic and intellectual community (Daniell 28). The opinion of the Italian historians of this time was that Caesar was a tyrant. Comparing Queen Elizabeth I, who now wished to be called the Faerie Queene or Gloriana and thought of as immortal, was a natural and safe bridge for the English. The tyranny of Queen Elizabeth could easily be condemned under guise of Julius Caesar's rule.

Language Structure and Rhetoric

Daniell notes that *Julius Caesar* is "rich with experiment" (4). The play has the least amount of prose of any of Shakespeare's plays five years before or after it. The language of the play is purposely stark or as Daniell terms it "patrician linguistic austerity" and states that only Antony breaks the pattern (5). Shakespeare's heavy use of iambic pentameter in the play adds to the atmosphere of "verbal artistry" (Bloom 20), which is a necessity in this work.

The play exhibits a benchmark for Shakespeare as it has the most short or shared lines of any of his plays. Shakespeare's use of short and shared lines is unprecedented by any of his colleagues at the time and an indication of Shakespeare's maturity as a writer (Daniell 4).

This work, more than any other of Shakespeare's plays, illustrates the power of rhetoric. Bloom notes that the "theme that preoccupies Shakespeare throughout his [this] work—the power of rhetoric" (21). Antony's speech to the crowd (Act III, Scene II) is a masterful example of rhetoric at work. Before his speech, Antony has spoken a total of 19 words (Daniell 68). Afterward, he has uttered almost 1,100 words compared to Brutus' speech of approximately 350 (72). Antony's speech is commonly divided into twenty-five prefixes with seven long sections. One of the long sections is broken by four different interruptions.

Daniell breaks the speech into three rhetorical parts. In the first part, Antony obeys Brutus' order not to blame the conspirators, but his ironic handling of the sensitive issue actually inflames the crowd. The final two sections of the speech are dominated by *negatio*, which is "a

refusal to do something which is expressed in such a manner that the audience is spurred to do it” (qtd. in Daniell 72) and again, irony. Finally, Mehl notes that Antony does not just speak, but “gestures, pauses and [uses] visual effects (holding up the blood-stained mantel), deliberately playing on the audience’s emotions” (148). Shakespeare has given Antony an oratory power unparalleled from any he has created before and which Bloom cites as being the most powerful in all of Shakespeare’s works (20).

Bloom notes that all of this rhetorical force illustrates a distinct “malleability of the crowd” held by the aristocrats in Shakespeare’s time. At first the crowd listens to Brutus and acquiesces to his side. Then Anthony speaks and the crowd becomes a mob and turns against Brutus and the other conspirators. This shifting of the crowd from one position quickly to the next is a condemnation of democracy. Ordinary people can not reasonably judge political issues. Additionally, though, Bloom feels that Shakespeare is stating that passion will always rule over reasoning in politics (21).

Clock Striking

After Brutus commits to assassinating Caesar (Act II, Scene I), a clock begins to strike or chime. Historians in the 18th and 19th centuries cried foul as Rome did not have striking clocks at that time. Many used it as an excuse to criticize Shakespeare. However, Daniell notes that Shakespeare used the striking clock as a symbol of Caesar’s ability to transcend time. Just at the point Brutus has committed to annihilating Caesar, the heavens and life are swinging into harmony. A harmony made possible by Caesar’s re-orienting the seasons and the calendar (22). The clock striking is also an anachronism, which is a term used to distinguish anything out of its proper time. In literature, anachronisms are often used to emphasize a point or as comic device.

Controversial Passage

In Act IV, Scene III lines 181-194 are believed to be lines that Shakespeare had in his foul papers or first draft and intended to cut them as he had added the earlier scene of Brutus revealing Portia’s death to Cassius. The controversial lines appear in the 1623 Folio, but many productions and edited reprints of the play cut them.

Death of Cinna the Poet

In Act III, Scene III the angry mob Antony has unleashed comes upon Cinna the Poet. At first they mistake him for Cinna the conspirator and want to kill him. When Cinna’s identity is clarified, the mob decides to kill Cinna anyway for all the bad verses he has ever written. This scene is noteworthy for two reasons. The first is the breakdown of Roman law and society. Another civil war is at the doorstep and this one will last thirteen years. When it ends, the Republic of Rome will exist in name only. The other important reason is that the play has been one of rhetoric, the art of language and now there is a complete destruction of what is often thought of as the optimal use of language—poetry.

All in a Name

The repetition of names through generations of Roman families makes it confusing as to which Caesar or Brutus did what? Using Gaius Julius Caesar as an example, a newborn male is given the first and last names of his father and grandfather. Gaius is the praenomen or first name. Julius is the nomen or name of the clan. Caesar is the cognomen or last name (Bernard 13).

The Real Timeline of Events

In many of his plays, Shakespeare had to compress time in order to meet the demands of a tight stage production. The action in the play, *Julius Caesar*, takes place in a little over a month, but historically the incidents are recorded as taking place in a little more than a four year period.

- ✓ **48 B.C.** Caesar battles Pompey at Pharsalus and defeats Pompey's forces. Pompey flees to Egypt where he is murdered by King Ptolemy III.
Caesar begins his affair with Cleopatra.
- ✓ **47 B.C.** Caesar defeats the Egyptian army
He swings into Asia and defeats the Pharnaces at Zela
Caesar returns to Rome and prepares to battle the last of Pompey's allies in Africa
- ✓ **46 B.C.** Caesar wins the African war
Returns to Rome and celebrates triumph
Departs for Spain to fight Pompey's son, Labienus
- ✓ **45 B.C.** Caesar wins in Spain—Labienus killed
Caesar returns to Rome
Establishes dictatorship
- ✓ **44 B.C.** Caesar plans Parthian expedition
- ✓ March 15th Caesar assassinated
Octavius arrives in Rome and rallies allies of Caesar
Antony commands in Cisalpine Gaul
- ✓ **43 B.C.** Octavius and Antony oppose each other on Senate's behalf
Later in year, Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus form Second Triumvirate
The Triumvirate captures Rome and execute large numbers
- ✓ **42 B.C.** Brutus and Cassius defeated at Philippi (Goldsworthy 12-13).

Objectives

Note that the following objectives are aligned and written with the Pennsylvania Academic Standard for Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening for High School Students. After completing this unit, students will be able to:

1. Identify the essential ideas of the play (1.1D).
2. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words (1.1E).
3. Compare and contrast themes, settings, characters, and imagery (1.1G).
4. Analyze the use of rhetorical devices such as: parallelism, verbal irony, and repetition (1.3C).
5. Analyze how a script writer's use of words creates tone and mood (1.3G).
6. Understand the history behind the play, of the play, and of the author (1.2B).
7. Analyze the unique features present in this play (1.1B).
8. Use traditional and electronic search tools (1.8B).
9. Create a WebQuest demonstrating their accumulated knowledge of various aspects of the play (1.4B).
10. Demonstrate their knowledge of a scene by casting, practicing, and then filming the scene for critique in the classroom (1.4A).

Strategies

The foremost strategy this unit depends upon is student participation. The more students are engaged—the greater chance that all will learn. There is an additional advantage to having all students engaged everyday in the classroom and that is better classroom behavior and no students sleeping! Group work, choral reading of parts (yes, have three students cast to read each part!), and heavy use of technology are essentials in this unit. I have programmed in an occasional quiet day, meaning a day in which students work independently, as the change in pace allows everyone to recharge.

Group work—I recommend selecting the group members unless the students are new to you and you do not know how well some do and do not interact. Also be firm, insist that all students must work in a group. Have all groups select timekeeper, recorder, and leader. The jobs can be rotated every meeting or every week in order to uphold a democratic atmosphere and ensure all students work.

Choral reading of parts works much like choral reading except there is a much smaller group. Instead of casting only one student to read a part, cast three or four. Also all actors cast for one part must stand together and try to put action with the words. At first, students will be awkward with this, but soon all the Caesars will be majestically sweeping in and the Cassiuses will be Captain Hooks, Voldemorts, or Snow White's Wicked Step-Mother. This works well for stopping and asking students questions such as what does X mean in this line, why are you moving this way and the other Caesar is moving that way or how do you think the character is behaving, and even just stop—what is going on?

Some mini-lessons and any lecture-type format for this unit are often PowerPoint presentations on a topic such as The Globe Theater and biographies of William Shakespeare and Julius Caesar. It is difficult to demand students embrace technology in this unit if the teacher does not. A teacher's use of any technology should first demonstrate the proper methods such as choosing large enough font sizes for optimum readability, use of backgrounds, etc. Increasingly we are a visual society and the use of PowerPoint with any type of lecture whether five minutes or 30 minutes allows for two learning modalities to be tapped. A five minute imparting of information is enhanced with technology by simply accessing an academic website. Always give students the web addresses of any site used. This encourages them to visit the site and it gives the teacher an additional assurance that students are accessing sound academic sites.

The major student project for this unit calls for students to prepare a WebQuest. This project should be done in groups of no more than three. Pairs are ideal. There are many excellent websites explaining how to create a WebQuest. The best I have found is Bernie Dodge's, the creator of WebQuests, website. The web address is listed in the "Work Cited" section and on Day Seventeen under the "Classroom Activities Section" of this paper.

The student videotaping of a scene from the play is not necessary for the unit and can be cut or moved to a homework assignment. The students do not need much time to fulfill this assignment as they are not writing the scene, merely acting and recording it.

Journal writing is a necessity in this unit as it is often used to assess what students know, work as the anticipatory set, and a springboard into discussions. As the classroom teacher, you can decide if you want to read the journals or not. I advise only checking for compliance and allowing students to read from them if they would like as part of a classroom discussion. Often students do not want them read and will be hesitant in their writing if they think it is going to be read.

Please note that all books, videos, and DVDs used for this lesson are available through the Pittsburgh branches of Carnegie Library. Also this unit uses the 10th grade anthology used by the Pittsburgh Public Schools titled, *The Language of Literature*. This edition has excellent line notes, scene summaries, and blocking cues. If this edition is not available, I recommend using a copy of Barnes and Nobles' *Julius Caesar Sparknotes*.

Finally, the lessons are planned as much as possible to utilize the Madeline Hunter Direct Instructional Model of anticipatory set, main lesson with input, modeling, and understanding assessment, guided practice, closure, and independent practice (generally homework).

Classroom Activities

Day One

Anticipatory Set: Have students write a journal entry on what they know about Julius Caesar. Discuss their responses. Provide a brief overview of play and outline the student work and responsibilities for the unit. Work includes completion of a Caesar packet. The packet includes the following sections (remember to leave room for students to write): iambic pentameter, biography of William Shakespeare, biography of Julius Caesar, The Globe Theatre, Feast of Lupercalia, character studies of Antony, Brutus, Caesar, and Cassius, miscellaneous information, and each scene of each act listed. The scene section is for the students to write the summaries of the scenes. The summaries can be copied from the tenth grade anthology, *The Language of Literature*, or be class composed. The packet can be turned in for credit at the completion of the unit. *Main Lesson:* review elements of iambic pentameter. *Model & guide:* write a line in iambic pentameter. Have students write their own lines in it and share with the class. *Assessment:* how well students were able to write their own lines. If time permits, cast parts for Act I. Remember can use three students per part for a choral read. I recommend the use of only one narrator. *Homework*—have students read Act I, Scene I and write a journal entry on their reactions to the scene. Ask them to look for a hidden sonnet in the scene. Note: Hidden sonnet is inserted in a response of Marullus's and runs from lines 34-48.

Note: Costumes are very simple for Roman plays as you can use bed sheets with rope belts. I recommend allowing students to bring in their own. Store them in your room in a bag with their name on it. Keep each class's separate in a milk crate or similar receptacle.

Day Two

Anticipatory Set: Discuss students' reaction to Act I, Scene I. Ask if anyone found the hidden sonnet. A Shakespearean sonnet has one central idea or theme, a rhyme scheme of a-b-a-b, c-d-c-d, e-f-e-f, g-g, and is written in iambic pentameter. Although the rhyme scheme breaks at the third stanza of the hidden sonnet, what other features of a sonnet does this section adhere to? *Answer is the central theme concerns Pompey and it is written in iambic pentameter.* *Main Lesson:* Review Feast of Lupercalia and the two reasons Flavius and Marullus are upset that crowd is cheering Caesar: Not too long ago the same crowd cheered Pompey, and Caesar's victory over Pompey has not brought any wealth for the city. Prepare your actors. Review some of Van Tassel's list of basic skills to play Shakespeare from his book, *Clues to Acting Shakespeare*. The best are: "Play your action and achieve your objective...Stay in the moment, listening, not thinking ahead...Support the thought all the way through the line...Breathe at the correct moments [at the end of the line, and] Love the imagery" (13). Begin student production of Act I, Scene I. Remember have students stand with their books, similar to a Reader's Theatre, and keep all Flaviuses and Marulluses together. *Assessment:* When finished, discuss scene. Do

they get the puns? Which group is inflexible? Which adaptable? *Homework:* Act I, Scene II is long. I recommend dividing it into two sections. Section one is from line one to line 177 or as Caesar and the others are about to come back on stage. This is the section students should read.

Day Three

Anticipatory Set: Discuss the connotation and denotation of the words “noble” and Stoic. Provide the meaning of a Stoic and Stoicism. Ask the question—Are they good traits or bad? What significance will they have in the play? *Main Lesson:* Begin student production of the rest of Act I, Scene I, from line 178. When finished, have students independently write brief descriptions of the personalities of Antony, Cassius, Caesar, and Brutus. Using four sheets of chart paper or poster board, write one of the characters’ names on each. Assign one student per paper/character to record the responses. Have the students list their thoughts on these characters in the section in their packets. To help prompt, you can use some of the writer’s characterization traits of—look for a physical description, what other characters say about that character, and what the character says and does. Make sure to discuss Cassius’ deviousness in sending Brutus the fake letters. *Assessment:* Weigh participation. This will help decide if the students understand the work. *Homework:* “Letters to Brutus” assignment. See appendix C. Review definitions of words. Explain assignment and ensure students’ understand it. Decide on a due date. Have students read Act I, Scene III.

Day Four

Anticipatory Set: Discuss if the students are enjoying reading the play in the group format. *Main Lesson:* 1. Give presentation on The Globe Theatre. 2. Review students’ thoughts on the scene read for homework. Explain who Cicero was—politician, philosopher, orator, lawyer. A prodigious letter writer, he captured much of the history of the time. Many of his letters have survived. Tell the students about the Great Chain of Being. 3. Have students read scene. At the end of the reading, have students write a journal entry on their understanding of it. *Assessment:* Responses to: Have students read from their journals. Discuss their responses. Good points to discuss—What do they think of Cassius baring his chest? What could the storm be indicating? Has their opinion of any of the four characters discussed yesterday changed? Why? *Homework:* Act II, Scene I is another long scene. Divide the scene into two parts. Part one is from the beginning of the scene to Portia’s entry on stage at line 234. Have students read the first section. Tell them to look for something that could not have happened during the play’s time period. Make sure students are writing the summaries for each scene.

Day Five

Anticipatory Set: Did anyone figure out what shouldn’t have happened in the scene? The clock striking. Discuss their answers and explain to them what the clock striking might signify. *Caesar’s influence through the ages—calendar adjustment.* Also explain that it is an anachronism. *Main lesson:* Before beginning to read the first part of the scene, have the students pay attention to the language Brutus uses after he commits to joining the conspiracy. How do we know Brutus has committed to joining. Begin reading the section. *Assessment:* The students are to write a journal entry as if they were Brutus. They are to explain why he joined and what he hopes to do by joining. The entries are to be finished as homework and turned in tomorrow. *Homework:* Complete journal entry. Assignment assessments should be length, choice of words (remind them of vocabulary words in the “Letters to Brutus” assignment), and voice—does the letter seem like Brutus could have written it. Reading assignment—students are to finish reading the scene.

Day Six

Anticipatory Set: What do you think about the two women in the play—Portia and Calpurnia? You can use two students to record the class’s responses on chart paper or poster board. *Main lesson:* Have students finish reading scene. Discuss additional thoughts about Portia. What do they think she intended by stabbing herself in the thigh? *Assessment:* Ask students what they feel about Brutus and his Stoicism. Add comments to the Brutus chart.

Day Seven

*Note class should take place in a computer lab. *Anticipatory Set:* Discuss Shakespeare’s language structure in the play and his coining of words. What do the students know about it? *Main Lesson:* “Electric Vocabulary” Students should be given the web addresses of National Geographic.com (http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/04/0419_040419_Shakespeare.html) and Open Source Shakespeare.org (<http://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/concordance/>). At the National Geographic site, students will read the two page document and summarize it. They should have a thesis statement, at least two supports, and a conclusion. At the Open Source Shakespeare site, the students will investigate five words, tell how many times they appear, list the name of one place the word appears, and the line it appears in. *Assessment:* Work is due end of class. *Homework:* Students read Act II, Scene II. Scene summaries checked tomorrow.

Day Eight

Anticipatory Set: Discuss if students have noticed any imagery devices in play. Make sure they record under the miscellaneous section of their Shakespeare packet, the three images—fire, blood, and thunder in the play and how they operate. *Main Lesson:* Students perform the scene. What has happened in this scene? What do they think about Caesar? The latter can be added to their packet on the characterization of Caesar. Discuss the warnings given to Caesar. Why does he discard them? *Assessment:* Students write a journal entry on Caesar’s quote, “Cowards die many times before their deaths; The valiant never taste of death but once” (Shakespeare 727). Use their responses as the anticipatory set tomorrow. *Homework:* Students read Act II, Scene III and IV. Option to not perform scenes tomorrow, only highlight and discuss.

Day Nine

Anticipatory Set: Discuss student responses to Caesar’s quote. Do they think this is true? Provide students with main source Shakespeare used for the play. *Main Lesson:* 1. Present autobiography of Julius Caesar. Students should take notes in the appropriate section of their packet. 2. Discuss Act II, Scene III. Talk about Artemidorus’s salutation of “Thy Lover” (Shakespeare 732) and Cassius’ references of love to Brutus. Discuss content of Scene IV. Obviously, Brutus has confided in Portia. How does she react to waiting? What of the relationship between the two couples in the play? Note Soothsayer is the same from Act I, Scene II. *Assessment:* Student participation. *Homework:* Students to read all of Act III, Scene I and to write a journal entry upon completion of the scene.

Day Ten

Anticipatory Set: Students view clip of *Julius Caesar* in The Reduced Shakespeare Company's *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Discuss scene. Ask what they think of the company's dismissing the rest of the play after Caesar's death. *Main Lesson:* Note: Scene is long, so may want to stop at Brutus' welcoming Antony back—line 147. Discuss—Students' journal entries on scene. When the scene opens what are the conspirators alarmed about? Who stabs Caesar first? What do they think of how Caesar conducts himself when being stabbed? Note: Can read Plutarch's or Suetonius' accounts of Caesar's assassination. Both are available on line. Students can compare and contrast them. *Assessment:* Students' participation and responses. *Homework:* "The Lazy Sonnet" exercise. Students will write a sonnet using only one word per line. Only final two lines/words must rhyme. Subject is Caesar's death. Due Day Twelve. Warn students they will be viewing this scene from BBC Production and scene can be considered gruesome.

Day Eleven

Anticipatory Set: View video clip of Caesar's death scene from BBC/Time Life 1979 production. Discuss scene and behavior of the conspirators. *Main Lesson:* 1. Discuss how Antony acts in scene. Inform students that Antony's soliloquy over Caesar's body is first soliloquy of grief for Shakespeare. 2. Have students read scene. *Assessment:* Discuss the actions of conspirators. What did they do right and wrong? Had no plans other than kill Caesar. 3. Prepare students for homework. *Homework:* Show students several examples of a narrative obituary from a newspaper. Assignment is to write one for Julius Caesar. Assignment due Day Thirteen. Students read Act III, Scene II.

Day Twelve

Anticipatory Set: Ask for definitions of rhetoric. Discuss again Shakespeare's use of words. (Recaps Day Seven's work.) *Main lesson:* Introduce rhetorical devices of rhetorical questions, parallelism, repetition of words/sounds, and verbal irony. View clip of Brutus' and Anthony's speeches from the 1970 Hollywood production of *Julius Caesar* with Charlton Heston. Discuss showmanship—why is Brutus' so trusting and constrained? *Assessment:* All of Shakespeare's works are on line, cut and paste Brutus' and Anthony's speeches from one of the sites to make a worksheet. Have a section for the rhetorical devices' definition. Give examples of each. Have the students find examples of each in the speeches. *Assessment:* Weigh participation and completion of papers. *Homework:* Students complete the work and create own examples. Read Act IV, Scene I and II.

Day Thirteen

Anticipatory Set: Review students' rhetorical creations. *Main lesson:* 1. Before reading, discuss characters' personalities. Have any undergone a major transformation? Discuss dynamic and static characters. 2. Have students read the two scenes. Again discuss the characters' transformation. What about Octavius? *Assessment:* Student participation in discussion. *Homework:* Prepare students for reading the Quarrel Scene. Have them read scene.

Day Fourteen

Anticipatory Set: Ask the students to response to: If your spouse just died, how would you react? Discuss. Relate to Brutus' reaction. *Main lesson:* 1. Explain to students about controversial passage. 2. Read scene. Discuss if they were the director, what would they do with passage? 3. What role does the ghost of Caesar bring to the play? Beside his ghost, how else has

Caesar's presence continued in the play? *Assessment:* Short essay response question—Is Brutus a flawed character and why? *Homework:* Complete essay using previous outline from Day Eleven. Begin to prepare students for video taping of scene. Students can pick their own groups and scene they want to perform. They should meet before Day Sixteen and agree on actors, scene, etc. They can interpret as they want, but must use words as in the play. Read Act V, Scene I and II.

Day Fifteen

Anticipatory Set: Have students write a journal entry on what is a tragic hero. Discuss responses. Provide literary definition. Discuss mistakes Brutus has made. *Main lesson:* 1. Presentation on William Shakespeare. Students record notes in packet. 2. Read Act V, Scene I and II. Discuss. Look at relationships. Antony and Octavius and Brutus and Cassius. *Assessment:* Participation in discussions. *Homework:* Finish reading play. Remind students that tomorrow they must report their choice of scene and group members.

Day Sixteen

Anticipatory Set: Reveal actual timeline of events in the play. *Main lesson:* 1. Students should discuss and report on their group's choices. 2. Read end of play. Immediately have students write a response in their journals. How do they feel about the play, its end, Shakespeare's use of history, and who do they think is the protagonist and why. *Assessment:* Student participation in discussion and written responses. *Homework:* Students create a postcard, front and back, from either Antony or Octavius to their wife, parents, or friend on battle and deaths of Brutus and Cassius. Due Day Eighteen. Remember to show examples. *Final Project Plans:* Students will have class time to film their scenes. Must book their day for the camera. When not filming, will be working on WebQuests.

Day Seventeen-Day through Twenty-one

Classes must be in computer lab. Each student group will have one class period to film their scene. They can just about any place in the building, while the rest of the students are in the computer lab. When not filming, they should be paired and begin working on a WebQuest. The WebQuest is their final for the unit. The WebQuest must have at least ten pertinent hyperlinks—Shakespeare or Julius Caesar related. They must script the WebQuest—letter, story, etc; meaning that it would be enjoyable for anyone to want to go on their adventure. There are several examples of very good WebQuests, however, I recommend using, Bernie Dodge's, the creator of WebQuests' site at <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/>. This site provides all the basics and is very easy accessible. Good teaching and learning site.

Day Twenty-three

Movie day. Pass the popcorn. Class views student scenes.

Day Twenty-four

Class must be in the computer lab. Every student should take at least three different Webquests. Have an agreed-upon critique form for the Webquests. *Assessments for unit:* Caesar packets, Webquests, journals, short response essay, postcard, scene clips, and participation.

WORKS CITED

Bernard, Chalotte. *Caesar and Rome*. New York: Henry Holt, 1996.
Will find in the Children's section. Great tongue-in-cheek over-sized book of information on Caesar and Roman life during his time. Good to share with classroom.

Bloom, Harold, ed. *William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: Bloom's Notes*.
Broomall: Chelsea House, 1996.

A compilation of critical essays on the play dealing with subjects from the genius of Shakespeare to the idea of Caesar. Includes a thought-provoking introduction by Bloom and a brief breakdown of the scenes in the play.

Brandenberg, Alik. *William Shakespeare and the Globe*. New York: Harper
Collins, 1999.

Large-sized picture book of art and text highlighting Shakespeare's life, work, and historical setting of time.

Brooke, C.F. Tucker. *Shakespeare's Plutarch*. 2 vols. New York: Duffield, 1909.
Wonderful find; copy of North's translation of Plutarch that Shakespeare probably used for play.

Brown, John Russell. *Shakespeare: The Tragedies*. New York: PALGRAVE,
2001.

Brown examines the atmosphere in England that made tragedies popular during Shakespeare's time, then he critiques each of Shakespeare's tragedies.

Complete Works of William Shakespeare. Dir. Paul Kafno. Perf. Adam Long, Reed
Martin, and Austin Tichenor. Acorn, 2001.

Vaudeville-type production of all of Shakespeare's plays in 90 minutes.

Crisp, Peter. *Shakespeare*. London: Dorling Kindersley, 2002.

Great large-size picture book of general facts and interesting information on all you ever wanted to know about Shakespeare and his world. Good classroom book as well.

Daniell, David, ed. *The Arden Shakespeare: Julius Caesar*. Surrey: Nelson,
1998.

The book includes an excellent edited version of the play and an excellent comprehensive introduction to the work. This examination of the play includes historical perception, structure, character analysis, and pictures of various theatre productions and artworks of the major characters.

Julius Caesar. Dir. Stuart Burge. Perf. Charlton Heston, Jason Robards, and Richard
Chamberlain. Republic, 1970.

Splashy Hollywood production of the play, but not faithful to Shakespeare's play.

Julius Caesar. Dir. Herber Wise. Perf. Richard Pasco, Keith Mitchell, and Charles Gray.
BBC/Time Life, 1979.

Production is very true to Shakespeare's words, but the acting bland for a classroom.

Mullaney, Steven. "Shakespeare and the Liberties." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*,
Inc. 2006 June 3, 2006 <<http://www.britannica.com/Shakespeare/article-9396031>>.

Discusses censorship in Shakespeare's time.

“North, Sir Thomas.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2006. Encyclopædia Britannica Premium Service. 2006 4 June 2006 <<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9056167>>.

Short and concise reporting of North’s life and achievements in writing.

Platt, Richard. *Julius Caesar: Great Dictator of Rome*. London: Dorling Kindersley, 2001.

Oversized picture book of Caesar’s life and times that is well-written and crammed with illustrations. Good for use in the classroom as well.

Shakespeare, William. *Julius Caesar*. Ed. Arthur Applebee et al. *The Language of Literature*. Evanston: McDougal, 2002.

Anthology edition commonly used for tenth graders in the Pittsburgh Public Schools.

Siepmann, Katherine Baker, ed. *Benet’s Reader’s Encyclopedia*. 3rd ed. 1987.

A wonderful encyclopedia of literature including definitions, brief biographies, and synopses.

Smith, William. “Lupercalia” *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*. Com. Leonard Schmitz. <http://Penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA*/Lupercalia.html>.

Thomas, Vivian. “Vivian Thomas on The Genre of Julius Caesar.” *William Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar*. Ed. Harold Bloom. Broomall: Chelsea House, 1996.

The essay looks at many of the literary aspects associated with the play in order to decide on its genre placement.

Suetonius, Gaius Tranquillus. *The Twelve Caesars*. Trans. Robert Graves. New York: Viking, 1986. Trans. of *De vita Caesarum*.

Translation of original text of Suetonius from approximately 100 A.D.--very readable, but be careful as some sections not suitable for classroom use. Text accompanied by numerous pictures of mosaics, sculptures, etc.

Van Tassel, Wesley. *Clues to Acting Shakespeare*. New York: Allworth, 2000.

Good for helping students act and/or recite only or help an inexperienced teacher “wing” it through coaching students in reading. Tips include—never pause in a line and support the thought all the way through the line.

ANNOTATED READING LIST FOR STUDENTS

Bernard, Charlotte. *Caesar and Rome*. New York: Henry Holt, 1996.

Will find in the Children’s section. Great tongue-in-cheek style over-sized book of information on Caesar and Roman life during his time. Good to share with classroom

Brandenberg, Alik. *William Shakespeare and the Globe*. New York: Harper Collins, 1999.

Large-sized picture book of art and text highlighting Shakespeare’s life, work, and historical setting of time.

Crisp, Peter. *Shakespeare*. London: Dorling Kindersley, 2002.
Great large-size picture book of general facts and interesting information of all you ever wanted to know about Shakespeare and his world. Good classroom book as well.

Folger Shakespeare Library. 4 March 2005 5 March 2006 <<http://www.folger.edu/education/teaching.htm>>.

The site is part of Washington, D.C. center dedicated to everything Shakespeare. Good to encourage students' to access.

Goldsworthy, Adrian. *Caesar's Civil War: 49-44 B.C.* New York, Routledge, 2003.
Simple, but indepth coverage of Caesar's military battles and maneuvers in his pivotal final years, includes many maps, illustrations, and pictures.

Green, Robert. *Julius Caesar*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1996.
Simple history text of Julius Caesar's life and times. Illustrated.

Morley, Jacqueline. *A Shakespearean Theater*. Columbus: Peter Bedrick, 2003.
Oversized picture book of facts and stories surrounding the theatre in Shakespeare's time with majority of focus on The Globe Theatre and many wonderful reproduction drawings.

Platt, Richard. *Julius Caesar: Great Dictator of Rome*. London: Dorling Kindersley, 2001.

Oversized picture book of Caesar's life and times that is well-written and crammed with illustrations. Good for illustrating points in the classroom as well.

ANNOTATED READING LIST FOR TEACHERS

Burke, Jim. *The English Teacher's Companion*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003.

A wonderful reference work filled with ideas and strategies for teaching anything that falls in the English class range.

Clark, Sandra. *A Dictionary of Who, What, and Where in Shakespeare*. Chicago: NTC, 1997.

A marvelous who's who to Shakespeare's plays, characters, and contemporaries includes a short biography of Shakespeare, his major poetry pieces, and selected bibliography.

Dodge, Bernie. *The WebQuest Page*. 28 Feb., 1998 San Diego State University. 2 June 2006 <<http://webquest.sdsu.edu/>>.

Site created by the originator of WebQuest and provides a great tutorial on the basics of WebQuests.

Ehrlich, Jeremy. "Teaching Shakespeare with Technology." 2003. Public Broadcasting Service. 5 March 2006 <<http://www.pbs.org/Shakespeare/educators/technology/indepth.html>>.

Wonderful site of ideas and exercises to use in the classroom particularly dealing with *Julius Caesar*.

Folger Shakespeare Library. 4 March 2005 5 March 2006 <<http://www.folger.edu/education/teaching.htm>>.

The site is part of Washington, D.C. center dedicated to everything Shakespeare. Good to encourage students to access.

Fuller, John Frederick Charles. *Julius Caesar: Man, Soldier, and Tyrant*. New Brunswick, Rutgers, 1965.

A different perspective of Caesar, not as a superman, but as a bumbling, power hungry man.

Grabsky, Phil. *I, Caesar: Ruling the Roman Empire*. London: BBC Books, 1997.

Companion to TV series that aired on PBS; looks at the lives and deaths of the twelve Caesars of Rome with many photographs of sculptures, buildings, and reproductions of ancient sites.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*. New York: Norton, 2004.

Fictionalized, but thought provoking account of Shakespeare's life.

McQuain, Jeffrey and Malless, Stanley. *Coined by Shakespeare*. Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 1998.

Wonderful text on all the words Shakespeare brought into use in the English language.

Content Standards

1. Identify, describe, evaluate and synthesize the essential ideas in text. Assess those reading strategies that were most effective in learning from a variety of texts. (1.1D).
2. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference (1.1E).
3. Demonstrate after reading understanding and interpretation of both fiction and nonfiction text, including public documents. Compare and contrast themes, settings, characters, and imagery (1.1.G).
4. Analyze the effectiveness in terms of literary quality, of the author's use of literary devices (1.3C).
5. Analyze how a script writer's use of words creates tone and mood, and how choice of words advances the theme or purpose of the work (1.3G).
6. Use, read, and understand essential content of informational texts and documents in all academic areas (1.2B).
7. Analyze the structure of informational materials explaining how authors used these to achieve their purposes (1.1B).
8. Locate information using appropriate sources and strategies (1.8B).
9. Write complex informational pieces (e.g., research papers, analyses, evaluations, essays (1.4B).
10. Write short stories, poems, and plays (1.4A).