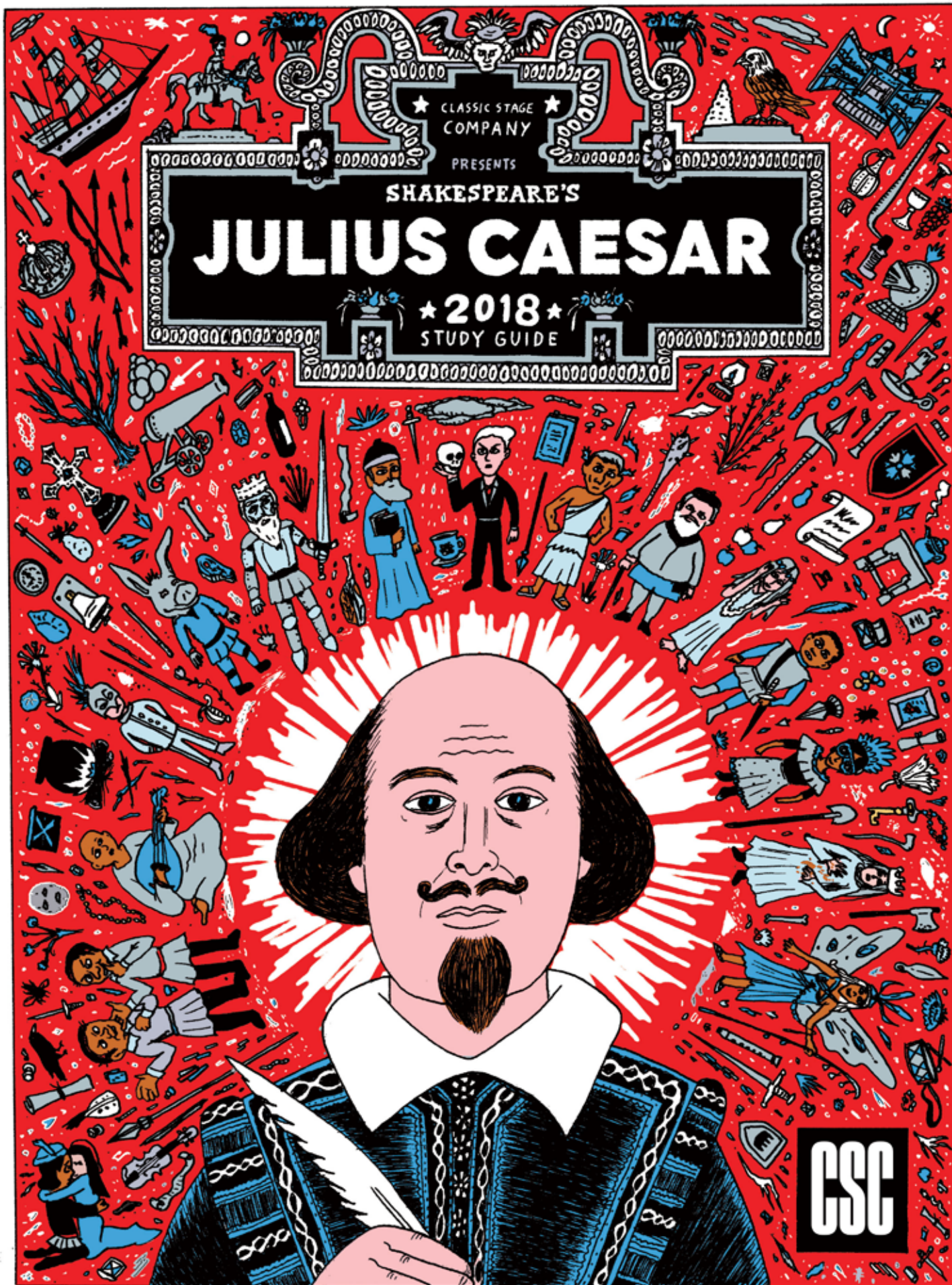


PRESENTS

JULIUS CAESAR

★ 2018 ★

STUDY GUIDE



DEAR TEACHERS,

This study guide from the CSC archives was created by Alice Renier, former CSC Education Associate. It's packed full of information about Shakespeare, his language, the play, and our 2018 production of *Julius Caesar*.

Feel free to photocopy pages for your students!

We've also included bonus lessons that correspond with each of our workshops. For more updates on CSC, we encourage you and your students to follow us on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook @classicstage.

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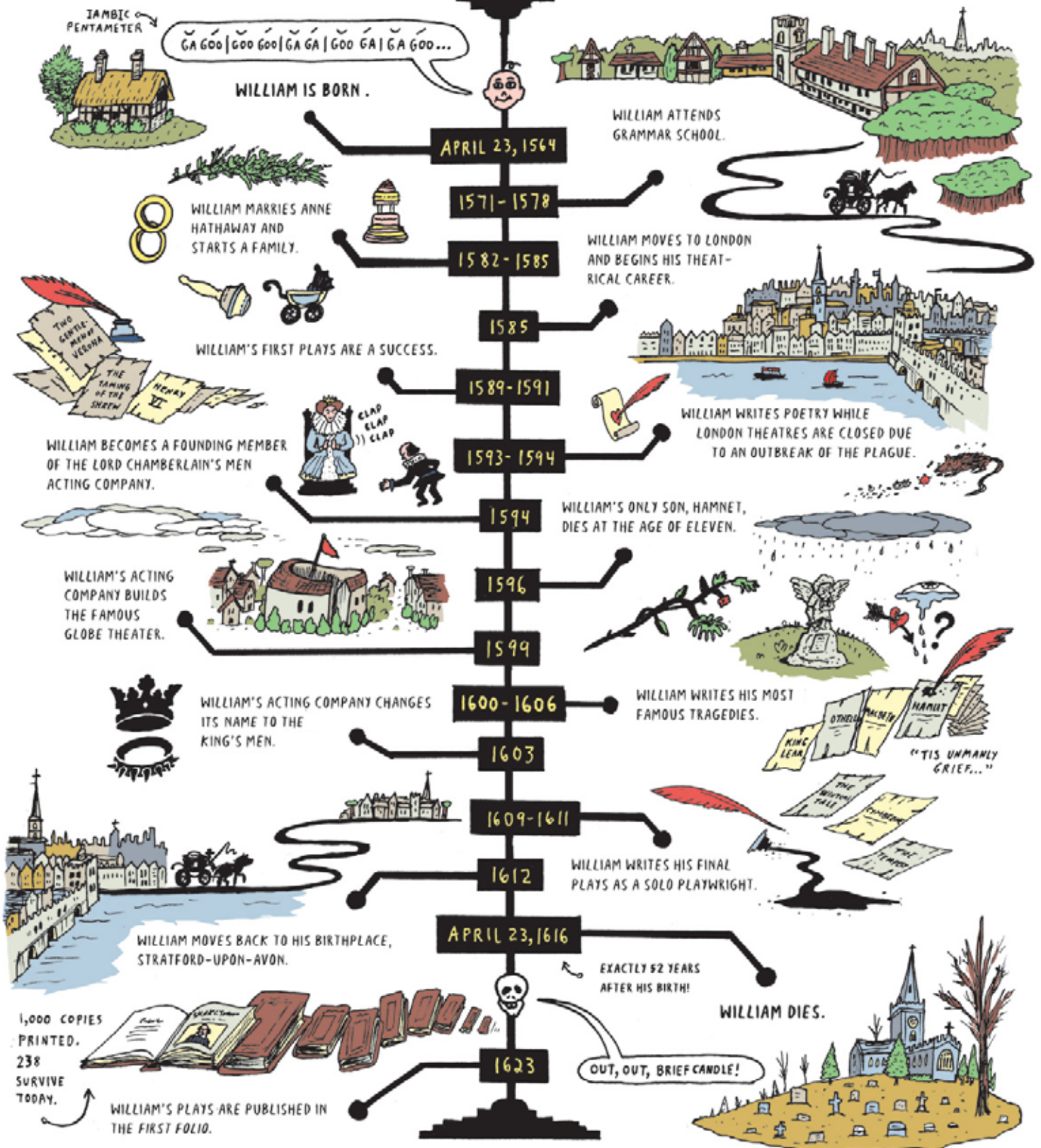
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PART ONE:
SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE AND THEATER

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE - AN ILLUSTRATED BIOGRAPHY

ILLUSTRATED BY DAVID HEATLEY



ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

IN 16TH CENTURY ENGLAND,

religion and politics were one and the same. People believed in the “divine right of kings”—that is, monarchs were given their right to rule directly from God, and were subject to no earthly authority. In 1534, King Henry VIII famously broke from the Catholic Church when they denied him the right to a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, who had not produced a male heir. He declared himself head of the new Anglican Church, which eventually became part of the Protestant Reformation. His actions resulted in a time of bitter and violent religious disputes in England, and the crown changed hands frequently in a short period of time.

BY THE TIME SHAKESPEARE WAS BORN IN 1564,

Queen Elizabeth—Henry VIII’s second eldest daughter, born to his second wife, Anne Boleyn—was in power. Her 44 years on the throne provided the kingdom with more stability than the previous short-lived reigns of her two half-siblings, Edward VI (crowned at age 9 and dead by age 16) and Mary Tudor (nicknamed “Bloody Mary” for the nearly 300 Protestants she had burned at the stake).

QUEEN ELIZABETH’S REIGN WAS A TIME OF THRIVING CULTURE.

English citizens loved her, nicknaming her “Good Queen Bess”. Because she remained unmarried throughout her rule and did not give birth to an heir, a distant relative, King James VI of Scotland, was named as her successor. Both Elizabeth and James were great patrons of the theater, and enjoyed Shakespeare’s plays. In fact, King James honored Shakespeare’s company of actors with the title of “The King’s Men”, and they performed at court regularly.



ELIZABETHAN TWITTER FEED

A CSC exclusive! We went back in time and got the scoop from the Royals themselves (plus Shakespeare, and his dad!) via Twitter.



King Henry VIII @VIIIKING · 1531

@CatAra you are outta here. This king needs a #maleheir. #kingsgreatmatter



Anne Boleyn @AnnieB · January 25, 1533

@CatAra check me out!!!. You better recognize, I AM THE NEW QUEEN! #cinderellastory



Catherine of Aragon @CatAra · December 1535

The #kingsgreatmatter is literally killing me. Missing my daughter @BloodyMary.



Edward VI @Eddie_the_KING · January 28, 1547

I’m the King of the world!!!! RIP, Dad @VIIIKING #kidsrule #9yearsold #winning



Mary Tudor @BloodyMary · July 19, 1553

Turn down 4 Protestantism. Turn up 4 Catholicism! This one’s for my mom, @CatAra, RIP. #sorrynotsorry



Queen Elizabeth @GoodQueenB · 1560

Philip II, Eric XIV of Sweden, Henry of Anjou...So many suitors. So little time. #singleNready2mingle (i/k I have work to do) #swiperight



John Shakespeare @Stratfor_Dad · April 26, 1564

Baptized my son William today @HolyTrinityChurch! #blessed



William Shakespeare @BillyShakes · 1589

Working on my 1st play! RT with title suggestions. It’s a comedy w/ a lot of errors.



Queen Elizabeth @GoodQueenB · April 23, 1597

Saw a HYSTERICAL play by @BillyShakes! Check out Merry Wives of Windsor! #LoveMeSomeFalstaff #ChamberlainsMen



King James I @Scotty · March 24, 1603

RIP @GoodQueenB, thanks 4 the throne! #transformationtuesday #JacobeanEra



King James I @Scotty · May 19, 1603

Congrats to my boy @BillyShakes and his players. #thekingsmen #royalpatent #Othello #MeasureForMeasure



Anne Hathaway @ShakesWife · April 23, 1616

RIP/Happy birthday @BillyShakes. Thanks 4 the bed. @HolyTrinityChurch



GROWING UP SHAKESPEARE:

Fun, Games, and School

BOYS AND GIRLS began “petty school” around the age of four in order to learn how to read. Girls left school at age six to be taught at home by their mothers, or, if they were rich, a private tutor. If boys belonged to a middle class or wealthy family, they could continue on to “grammar school” after leaving petty school, or they were sent to work in some sort of trade, such as farming. At grammar school boys would study Latin, drama, poetry, and history for long hours with no desks. Learning Latin was important for any boy wanting to enter a career in law, medicine, or the Church. Because Shakespeare’s father made a sustainable living in public and government jobs, Shakespeare was able to attend grammar school where he likely picked up his love of drama and writing.



FOOTBALL—or soccer, as we know it—was a popular sport for people in the countryside around Shakespeare’s hometown. The balls were made from inflated pigs’ bladders! **(LEFT)** Shakespeare makes mention of this sport in *THE COMEDY OF ERRORS*: “Am I so round with you as you with me, that like a football you do spurn me thus?” Other popular sports of the day Shakespeare mentions in his works include tennis, bowling, wrestling, rugby, billiards, and archery.



FESTIVALS occurred at various times of the year. One of the most popular was on May 1st, May Day, the celebration of the arrival of summer! Columns were erected (maypoles) and adorned with ribbons and flowers, traditionally as part of a dance **(RIGHT)**. This tradition is reflected in *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM*: “They rose early to observe the rite of May.”

RIGHT: Children learned to read using “hornbooks” like these – a piece of wood covered with printed-paper, protected by a transparent sheet of horn.



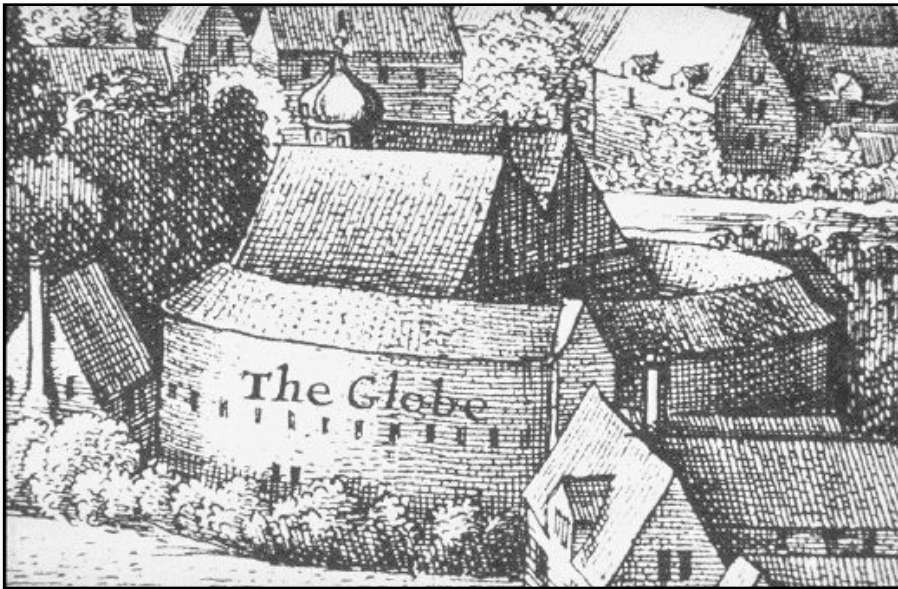
LONDON CITY LIVING:

Filth, Fashion, and Fighting

IF YOU LIVED IN LONDON during Shakespeare's time, you would have encountered overly crowded streets, heaps of trash on the sidewalk, and the heads of executed criminals placed on poles for all to see. But amidst the grime, there were also beautiful churches and large mansions filled with nobles and wealthy merchants. Most items you needed would have been purchased from street vendors, including vegetables, fruits, toys, books and clothing.



ABOVE: Like New York City today, space was tight. Many buildings were designed with vertical living in mind, as London quickly became the epicenter of culture in England.



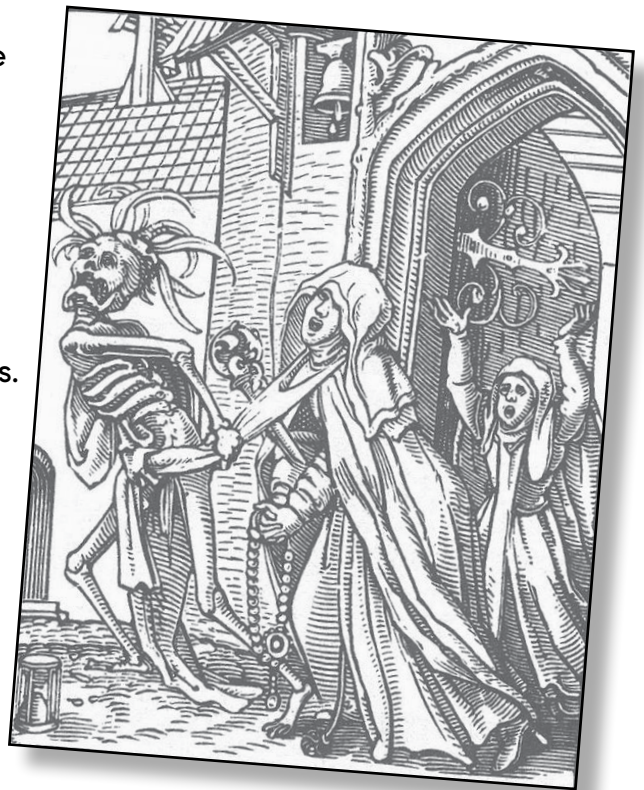
SHAKESPEARE MOVED TO LONDON to work in the theater. But theater wasn't the only cultural event happening in London. You could also view bloody tournaments between animals, and public executions! Gambling was also popular.

The first theater was built in 1576. Its shape, like The Globe (**ABOVE**), was influenced by bear fighting-rings (**RIGHT**), which were popular in London at the time. Shakespeare referenced this Elizabethan sport in Macbeth when Macbeth states, "They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly, but bear-like I must fight the course."



OUTBREAKS OF THE PLAGUE were common in Elizabethan London. Many Londoners believed the plague was caused by the various smells throughout the city, so they carried containers filled with herbs to combat the stench. What they didn't know was that the plague was actually spread by fleas that lived on rats, which were rampant on the dirty streets.

In 1592, the plague forced London theaters to shut their doors for two whole years. 12,000 Londoners lost their lives. With no playhouses to produce his works, Shakespeare focused his attention on writing narrative poems and sonnets for wealthy patrons.



CLOTHING WAS A SIGN OF ONE'S RANK so there were strict rules dictating what citizens could and could not wear. Those dressing above their status could be arrested! Exceptions were made for actors as they often played nobles on stage.



ABOVE: As a rule, the less practical the outfit, the higher the rank of its wearer. Wealthy men often wore hats with ostrich feathers for decoration, and huge "ruff" collars. Wealthy women wore wide padded dresses with puffy sleeves.

RIGHT: The less wealthy wore practical clothing conducive to labor. While the wealthy were wearing luxurious fabrics such as silk and velvet, the lower-status citizens often wore rough wool.



THE COURT



ABOVE: The procession of Queen Elizabeth I. She is surrounded by her courtiers, ladies maids, and favored knights.

FOOLS AND JESTERS were a familiar sight at court. They traditionally wore motley, a colorful patchwork costume, and functioned like resident stand-up comedians or clowns. There were two types of fools: natural, and artificial. In Elizabethan England, mental and learning disabilities weren't understood, but those who had one of these disabilities could earn a living for themselves if they could make people laugh. Fools of this kind were called natural, meaning they were born "foolish." Artificial fools were deliberately foolish or eccentric for the purposes of entertainment, much like the comedians of today.

CHIVALRY, a code of ethics that glorified warfare and armed conflict as well as the pursuit of courtly ladies, was revered by Elizabethan society. They believed that honor was something you attained through physical prowess rather than moral integrity. Some of these values still exist in our culture today—superheroes are often heroic because they have incredible combat abilities. Legendary knights were the superheroes of the Renaissance!



THE COURT OF QUEEN

ELIZABETH I was made up of courtiers, people who were of a higher class that were invited to attend the queen as a companion or advisor. The number of courtiers that attended Elizabeth ranged from one thousand to fifteen hundred, and they were housed at the palace or in nearby lodging. They were paid a small amount of money, but could make themselves quite wealthy through accepting bribes from people who required favors from them. As such, the court was full of corruption and the queen had to be discerning about whose advice she heeded. However, it was a statement of the queen's popularity and wealth that she travelled with such a large entourage.



ABOVE: A motley fool! Notice that this fool's motley costume has ass's ears attached, a common symbol of foolishness. He also carries a "ninny stick," a rod with a carved imitation of his own face at the end.

LEFT: One of the most important figures in the history of chivalry was Saint George who, according to legend, tamed and killed a dragon to save a damsel in distress and convert a city to Christianity.



WELCOME TO THE GLOBE THEATRE

LET ME TELL YOU A LITTLE ABOUT "THIS WOODEN O."

THE COMPANY WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY RENEWING THE LEASE ON OUR FIRST THEATER, SO IN 1599 WE TOOK IT DOWN AND MOVED ITS TIMBERS ACROSS THE THAMES RIVER TO THE BANKSIDE AND BUILT THE GLOBE.

THE BANKSIDE IS GREAT—IT'S JUST OUTSIDE THE JURISDICTION OF THE CITY OF LONDON, SO WE'RE SAFE FROM CITY OFFICIALS WHO THINK THAT THE THEATER IS IMMORAL AND WANT TO ABOLISH IT.

THE ORIGINAL GLOBE BURNED DOWN IN 1613 WHEN CANNON FIRE—PART OF A PERFORMANCE OF HENRY VIII—ACCIDENTALLY SET THE THATCHED ROOF AFLAME! OOPS!

WE BUILT A SECOND, MORE ELABORATE GLOBE ON THE SAME SITE, AND IT REMAINED IN USE UNTIL CIVIL WAR BROKE OUT IN ENGLAND IN 1642.

THE FLAG IS FLYING! THAT MEANS WE'VE GOT A PERFORMANCE TODAY.

MY TICKET COST TWICE AS MUCH AS WHAT THAT GENTLEMAN PAID FOR HIS CUSHIONED SEAT. I'M RIGHT ABOVE ALL THE ACTION! EVERYONE CAN SEE THAT I'M A VIP.

THE STAGE ROOF PROTECTS THE ACTORS FROM THE WEATHER, AND ALSO ACTS AS A SET PIECE WE CALL THE "HEAVENS." SEE THE STARRY SKY WE PAINTED?

THE BALCONY IS GREAT FOR WINDOW SCENES.

O ROMEO, ROMEO, WHEREFORE ART THOU ROMEO?

DID YOU KNOW JULIET WAS PLAYED BY A BOY? NO GIRLS ALLOWED!

THIS IS A "THRUST" STAGE, MEANING WE HAVE AUDIENCE MEMBERS ON THREE SIDES. JUST LIKE AT CSC!

THIS TRAP DOOR LEADS TO "HELL," THE SPACE BENEATH THE STAGE. IT MAKES A GREAT GRAVE, TOO!

ALAS, POOR YORICK. I KNEW HIM...

MY TICKET COST TWICE AS MUCH AS WHAT THOSE "GROUNDLINGS" PAID TO STAND IN THE YARD BELOW. AND FOR AN EXTRA PENCE, I GET TO SIT ON A CUSHION!

THE GLOBE CAN ACCOMMODATE NEARLY 3,000 AUDIENCE MEMBERS. CSC'S HOUSE ONLY SEATS ABOUT 200.

CHEAPEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE! WELL, IT'S NOT A SEAT, EXACTLY. AT LEAST I GET TO SEE THE SHOW!

THE "GROUNDLINGS" SOMETIMES THREW FRUIT AT THE ACTORS IF THEY DIDN'T LIKE A PERFORMANCE!

Joseph B. Redman

DAVID HEATEY



PART TWO: THE PLAY

JULIUS CAESAR



PLOT SYNOPSIS
BY DAVID HEATLEY

TODAY IS A CELEBRATION – THE GREAT POLITICIAN AND MILITARY GENERAL, **JULIUS CAESAR**, HAS RETURNED VICTORIOUS FROM WAR. POMPEY THE GREAT HAS BEEN DEFEATED!

WE MAKE HOLIDAY, TO SEE CAESAR AND TO REJOICE IN HIS TRIUMPH.

AMID THE FESTIVITIES, A **SOOTHSAYER** APPROACHES CAESAR WITH A DIRE WARNING ABOUT THE DATE OF MARCH 15... BUT CAESAR DOES NOT TAKE HIM SERIOUSLY.

BEWARE THE IDES OF MARCH.

HE IS A DREAMER, LET US LEAVE HIM.

NOT EVERYONE IS CELEBRATING. MANY PROMINENT ROMANS, INCLUDING **CASSIUS**, WORRY THAT CAESAR HAS TOO MUCH POWER, AND POSES A THREAT TO THE GOVERNMENT.

HE SUSPECTS HIS FRIEND **BRUTUS** SHARES HIS CONCERN, AND SPEAKS WITH HIM IN SECRET, HOPING TO DRAW HIM INTO A PLAN TO OVERTHROW CAESAR.

I DO FEAR THE PEOPLE CHOOSE CAESAR FOR THEIR KING.

THEN MUST I THINK YOU WOULD NOT HAVE IT SO.

I WOULD NOT, CASSIUS; YET I LOVE HIM WELL.

JUST THEN, THEIR FRIEND **CASCA** WANDERS BY AND EXPLAINS WHAT THEY MISSED WHILE THEY WERE TALKING: **MARK ANTONY**, A FRIEND AND SUPPORTER OF CAESAR'S, OFFERED HIM A CROWN – THREE TIMES!

EACH TIME CAESAR REFUSED IT, AND IN THE END HE FAINTED AS THE CROWD CHEERED WILDLY FOR HIM.

BUT FOR ALL THAT, TO MY THINKING, HE WOULD FAIN HAVE HAD IT.

AS THE IDES OF MARCH APPROACHES, A TERRIBLE STORM RAGES. MANY SUPER-NATURAL EVENTS TAKE PLACE.

CASSIUS DECIDES IT IS TIME TO BRING HIS GROUP OF CONSPIRATORS TOGETHER. BUT WILL BRUTUS DECIDE TO JOIN THEM? ALL OF ROME RESPECTS HIM, AND HIS PARTICIPATION WOULD BRING HONOR TO THE DEED...

THEY SAY THE SENATORS TOMORROW MEAN TO ESTABLISH CAESAR AS A KING.

O CASSIUS, IF YOU COULD BUT WIN THE NOBLE BRUTUS TO OUR PARTY...

CASSIUS KNOWS BRUTUS NEEDS MORE CONVINCING, SO HE FORGES AND DELIVERS LETTERS TO HIM FROM ROMAN CITIZENS, VOICING THEIR FEAR OF CAESAR'S AMBITION.

CAESAR IS HIS FRIEND, BUT BRUTUS WANTS WHAT IS BEST FOR THE REPUBLIC. EVENTUALLY, HE RESOLVES TO JOIN THE CONSPIRATORS FOR ROME'S SAKE.

IT MUST BE BY HIS DEATH.

BRUTUS WELCOMES CASSIUS AND THE OTHER CONSPIRATORS INTO HIS GARDEN TO PLAN THE ASSASSINATION.

GIVE ME YOUR HANDS ALL OVER, ONE BY ONE. WE SHALL BE CALL'D PURGERS, NOT MURDERERS.

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, CAESAR'S WIFE **CALPURNIA** WAS HAVING A HORRIBLE NIGHTMARE ABOUT HIS MURDER. THE NEXT MORNING, SHE BEGS HER HUSBAND NOT TO GO TO THE CAPITOL.

YOU SHALL NOT STIR OUT OF YOUR HOUSE TODAY.

BUT ONE OF THE CONSPIRATORS TEMPTS CAESAR WITH THE RUMOR OF A CROWN BEING OFFERED TO HIM, AND HE DECIDES TO GO ANYWAY.

THE SENATE HAVE CONCLUDED TO GIVE THIS DAY A CROWN TO MIGHTY CAESAR.

HOW FOOLISH DO YOUR FEARS SEEM NOW, CALPURNIA!

WHEN CAESAR ARRIVES AT THE CAPITOL, THE SOOTHSAYER REMINDS HIM TO BE WARY.

THE IDES OF MARCH ARE COME.

AY, CAESAR; BUT NOT GONE.

BUT CAESAR HEEDLESSLY PASSES ON TO THE SENATE HOUSE, WHERE HE IS MET WITH A PETITION FROM THE CONSPIRATORS.

SPEAK HANDS, FOR ME!

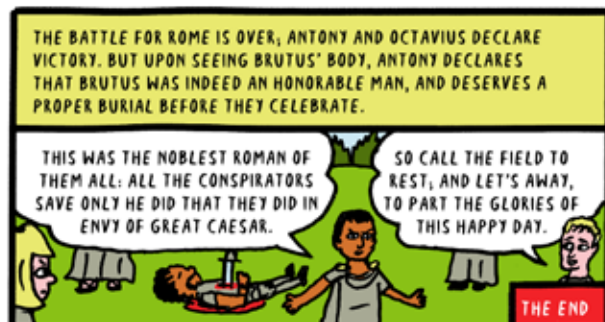
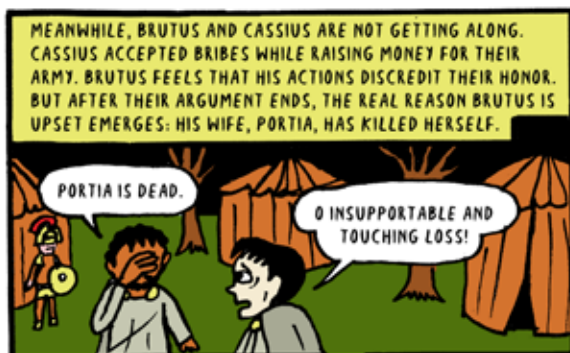
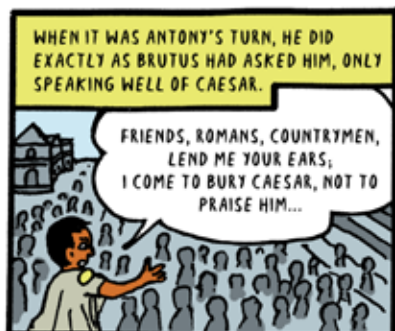
SLOWLY THEY SURROUND HIM, THEN SUDDENLY, THEY DRAW THEIR DAGGERS AND STAB HIM.

ET TU, BRUTE? THEN FALL, CAESAR.

LIBERTY! FREEDOM! TYRANNY IS DEAD!

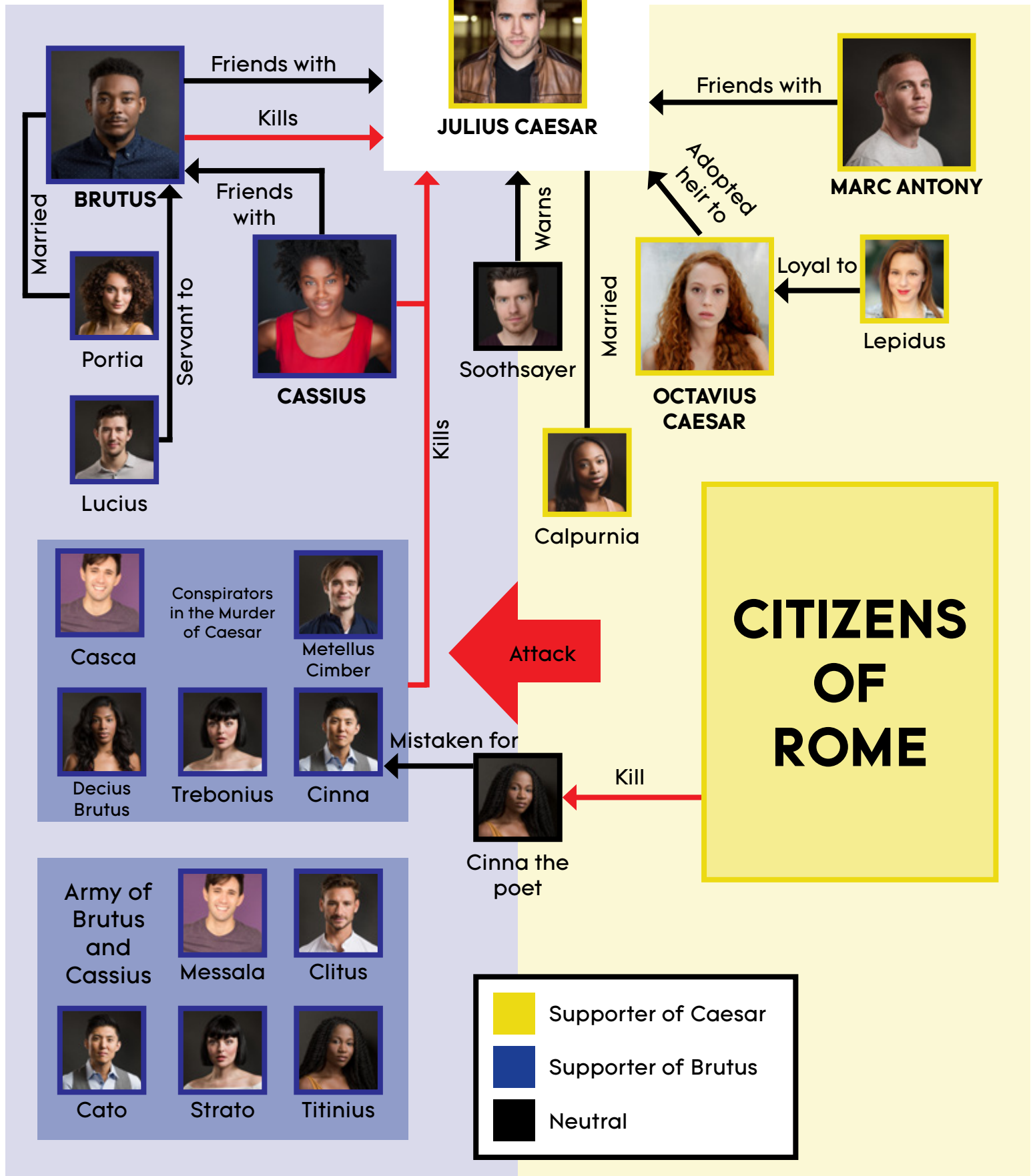
CAESAR LIES DEAD AS THE SENATORS FLEE IN TERROR.





WHO'S WHO

from CSC's 2018 Production



NOTES ON THE PLAY

O, MIGHTY CAESAR!

When someone rules a country with total power, they are called a dictator. The first Roman dictator, Julius Caesar, was killed on the Ides of March (March 15th) more than 1600 years before Shakespeare wrote his play. His assassination is one of the most famous events in Western history outside of the Bible. Today, we still debate whether or not he deserved it.

Before Julius Caesar came to power, the Roman government was a republic, a government where representatives were elected to rule on behalf of the citizens who elected them. As he was growing up, the Roman republic had destabilized: the rich had become more and more wealthy, while the less fortunate were more and more often forced into slavery. When Caesar became a general in the Roman army, he gained the support of his soldiers and the people through his many military successes.

Eventually, Caesar formed an alliance between himself, Pompey the Great (another Roman general), and a wealthy aristocrat named Crassus. Together they dominated Roman politics as what historians have since called "The First Triumvirate." Unfortunately, Crassus was eventually killed in battle, and Pompey turned on Caesar in an attempt to seize power. Rome was thrown into civil war, and Julius Caesar pursued Pompey and his army into Egypt where Pompey was defeated and executed. When Caesar returned to Rome, he was the unchallenged dictator and welcomed with celebration.

Julius Caesar only ruled for one year, and during that time he transformed what would become the Roman Empire. He relieved debt, reformed the Senate, reorganized local government, invited some of his defeated rivals to join him, and even reformed the Roman calendar. As he did this, he also worked hard to solidify his rule, demanding that the Senate name him dictator for life. This angered his former rivals, Gaius Cassius Longinus and Marcus Junius Brutus who had both served under Pompey. They lead an attack on Caesar in the senate, assassinating him and calling themselves "the liberators." This event again plunged Rome into civil war, and resulted in Octavius, Caesar's great-grand nephew and adopted heir, becoming the first Roman emperor.

Julius Caesar's rule effectively transformed the Roman government for all time. He was the first Roman ruler to be seen as a god, the "Divine Caesar."



This marble bust of Julius Caesar is the oldest one that exists. It was made around 46 B.C., and was found at the bottom of a river. Most likely, it was thrown in the river after Caesar's assassination since "it would have been dangerous at the time to be considered a follower of his." – Luc Long, archeologist

Shakespeare's play, *JULIUS CAESAR*, is not entirely historically accurate. What changes did he make? Why do you think he chose to make those changes?



PEACE! COUNT THE CLOCK!

JULIUS CAESAR was written in a very important year for Shakespeare's theater company, The Chamberlain's Men. 1599 was the year that their famous Globe Theater was built, and this play was probably intended to be the first play they produced there. The story of Julius Caesar was already ancient history by this time, and the Elizabethans would have come to the Globe knowing the plot, but excited to hear Shakespeare's version of it.

In 1599, Queen Elizabeth I ruled England. For most of her reign, she was beloved of her subjects, but by 1599, she was aging and did not have an heir to take her place. She did not command the love of her people as she once had, and many were imprisoned or executed for speaking out against the crown. In fact, less than two years after *JULIUS CAESAR* was written, the Earl of Essex would lead a rebellion against Elizabeth, resulting in his public execution.

Does any of this sound familiar? The Elizabethan people would have seen many parallels between their queen and the legendary dictator. Even today, the play is often produced when a society falls into political turmoil. Throughout the play, Shakespeare finds ways to make it feel like the action is happening today, not in 44 BC. For example, when the conspirators meet in secret and officially make the decision to murder Caesar, a clock ominously strikes. It must have been unsettling when the audience realized that there were no striking clocks in Caesar's time.

What parallels do you see between our current events and what happens in *JULIUS CAESAR*?

Are there any "Caesars" living today?



*Like Julius Caesar, it was important to Queen Elizabeth I that her people perceive her as all powerful and majestic. She commissioned this portrait of herself the year after *JULIUS CAESAR* was written, when she was in her late sixties. In it, she is shown to be eternally young. She is holding a rainbow, which indicates to the viewer that she is the sun, a goddess.*



The ghost of Caesar appears to Brutus in an artist's depiction from 1802.

ART THOU SOME GOD?

According to legend, Rome had not had a king for 500 years before Caesar was made dictator. In Shakespeare's play, Julius Caesar is a physically weak man although the public sees him as a god.

What the conspirators discover is that killing Caesar is easier said than done. Sure, they are able to kill the flesh and blood man, but the spirit of Caesar lives on. Marc Antony is able to incite a riot under the name of dead Caesar, and Caesar's name is preserved when Octavius Caesar seizes power. When the ghost of Caesar appears to Brutus, he insists that he is Brutus' "evil spirit," alive in Brutus' guilt.

Caesar is presented as ambitious, overconfident, and inflexible, but he is also benevolent and loved by the people. Brutus is a leader of a bloody assassination, but also believes he is working for the good of his country. Instead of reestablishing order in Rome as Brutus hopes, Caesar's death allows chaos to reign.



Throughout the play, Shakespeare challenges the audience's perception of who is the "good guy."
What do you think he believed about the role of good and evil in society?



This painting by Vincenzo Camuccini shows the conspirators murdering Caesar. Notice how chaotic the scene is compared with the order of the architecture? Camuccini painted this around 200 years after JULIUS CAESAR was written.

behind and observes. We immediately see them as two sides of the same coin: order and chaos, rule and misrule. When Caesar is murdered, the balance between the two is broken and Rome is thrown into civil war. In one of the most famous scenes in the play, the riotous plebeians mistake a poet named Cinna for one of the conspirators who killed Caesar and murder him in the street. Regardless of whether or not the conspirators were justified in killing Caesar, Shakespeare leaves us in no doubt that Rome is no longer a safe place for anyone, including poets like himself.

CRY, HAVOC!

Our play begins during the festival of the Lupercalia upon Caesar's return to Rome after defeating Pompey. The Lupercalia was an ancient festival that occurred in Rome on February 15th (a full month before the "Ides of March"). It was intended to rid the city of evil spirits and bring in health and fertility. It was a wild party, and in the opening scene, it feels as though the only thing keeping the chaos at bay is the presence of Caesar.

At the festival, Marc Antony revels in the chaos of the celebration while Brutus stays

Why do you think Shakespeare chose to show us the murder of an artist like Cinna the Poet?
What do you think Shakespeare believed about an artist's role in society and politics?

THE NOBLEST ROMAN OF THEM ALL

Hundreds of years before Shakespeare, the philosopher Dante wrote an epic poem titled "The Divine Comedy" where he described the nature of Hell, placing Brutus and Cassius in its deepest circle. Their betrayal of Caesar was used as a morality lesson for children and adults, and an Elizabethan audience would have been surprised to find themselves sympathizing with Brutus when they came to see Shakespeare's play.

Although the play is titled *JULIUS CAESAR*, it quickly becomes clear that Brutus is our tragic hero. Above all, Brutus is driven by honor. Even when Cassius proposes to him that he would be a better ruler of Rome than Caesar, Brutus does not involve himself in the conspiracy until he is tricked by Cassius into believing the people of Rome wish him to rule. He is rational, unemotional, and mistakenly trusts others to live the same way. Even when he murders Caesar, he attempts to make it a ceremony, assuming divine approval of his actions.



Through the course of the play we learn that it is easier to die by honor than live by it. Brutus' scruples allow people to take advantage of him. He is unable to fund his army because he refuses to accept bribes. He misjudges Marc Antony, who is far more flexible with his morals, giving him the opportunity to turn the people of Rome against Brutus.

This image is from a manuscript of Dante's "Divine Comedy," and depicts the devil, Lucifer, devouring the bodies of the three famous betrayers: Brutus and Cassius who betrayed Caesar, and Judas who was known for betraying Jesus Christ. The manuscript dates from the 14th Century, 200 years before Shakespeare wrote JULIUS CAESAR.



Shakespeare's play could easily have been called "The Tragedy of Brutus." In what ways does Brutus' moral code lead to his own undoing? Is Brutus as honorable as he believes himself to be?



This illustration shows a medieval astrologer at his desk. At the time Shakespeare was writing, astrology (the interpretation of the movement of the stars as having an influence on human affairs) was regarded highly. Even Queen Elizabeth I consulted an astrologer before choosing the date of her coronation!

MASTERS OF THEIR FATES

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars. But in ourselves, that we are underlings," says Cassius in the very first scene of *JULIUS CAESAR*. Just before he speaks these words, a Soothsayer (someone who has ability to see the future) warns Caesar to beware the "Ides of March." Are our destinies the result of our own decisions, or have they been set out for us by some higher power, written in the patterns of the stars for the enlightened to read?

Shakespeare asks that very question. Would Caesar have died if he had listened to the Soothsayer and his wife, Calpurnia, and stayed away from the Capitol on March 15th? Was Caesar's death the result of destiny, or only the result of Brutus' and Cassius' decisions to murder him?

Brutus struggles to make the decision to murder Caesar, because he cannot in good conscience advocate the murder of someone who has not yet done anything wrong. It is not until he has convinced himself that Caesar will become a tyrant that he decides to join the conspiracy. No matter how he reasons it out, he always comes back to the conclusion that Caesar must die. Was it his destiny to kill Caesar? Or does Brutus have his own ambitions to lead Rome, regardless of destiny?

What do you think Shakespeare believed about fate?
Do you think the future is in our control, or are some things destined to happen?



QUIZ:

WHO ARE YOU IN JULIUS CAESAR?

1. You're at a party. You:

- A) Sit back and enjoy the entertainment!
- B) Watch the festivities from a distance. You're not much of a partier.
- C) Meet as many people as you can. It's important to have friends in high places.
- D) Are the center of attention. You love to have a good time.

2. When you have to make a big decision, you:

- A) Make it and stop worrying about it. Once you've made a decision, that decision is final.
- B) Stay up all night weighing the pros and cons. You like to keep emotion out of it and just look at the facts.
- C) Do whatever will benefit you the most. You've got to take care of yourself.
- D) Go with your gut and worry about the consequences later.

3. As a leader, what is your best quality?

- A) You never change. You are constant, like the northern star.
- B) You have very good judgment. You only look at the facts.
- C) You're persuasive. You can talk someone into almost anything.
- D) You're inspirational. You appeal to people's emotions to get what you want.

4. You are caught in a storm. You:

- A) Immediately look up your horoscope – this is a bad sign.
- B) Get an umbrella.
- C) Run out into the rain, getting as wet as possible. Surely this is a sign that good things are to come.
- D) Feel exhilarated. It's time to get some revenge.

5. A friend tells you to stay home from school – they believe something bad is about to happen to you. You:

- A) Do as they ask to make them feel better, not because you're afraid.
- B) Tell them to calm down. You're sure everything will be fine.
- C) Get to school early. No one is going to tell you what to do.
- D) Stay home, and demand that the friend report back to you at the end of the day.

6. Do you like to play by the rules?

- A) You make the rules.
- B) As much as possible. Without rules, life would be chaotic.
- C) It depends on who is making the rules.
- D) What rules?

7. Would you turn against a friend for the greater good?

- A) If your friends don't agree with you, they're not your friends.
- B) Absolutely. It's the right thing to do.
- C) You don't really worry about the greater good. It's you you're concerned about.
- D) Never. Unless they turned against you first.

8. How clean is your bedroom?

- A) Clean and luxurious. You have other people clean your room for you.
- B) Simple and tidy. Everything in its place.
- C) Somewhat messy, but you don't have a lot of stuff.
- D) Honestly... it's a disaster.

Turn the page to get your results!



JULIUS CAESAR

Mostly A's: You are JULIUS CAESAR. People are impressed by you. In fact, they like you so much, they're willing to give you almost anything you want. However, you tend to get swept up by your own popularity and ignore any criticism that comes your way.

BRUTUS

Mostly B's: You are BRUTUS. You are organized and honorable. You don't yield to peer pressure, and you are always working for the greater good. You make decisions using logic. Unfortunately, you tend to assume that everyone else thinks the same way as you do. This makes you easy to manipulate.

CASSIUS

Mostly C's: You are CASSIUS. You want to be in control of your own future, and you'll do what you have to in order to get what you want. You don't like being told what to do, and you have a short temper. People often underestimate you.

MARC ANTONY

Mostly D's: You are MARC ANTONY. Everyone loves you, it's always a good time when you're around. You love your friends, and would do anything to protect them. You may not be as classy as others, but you always speak from the heart. You revel in chaos, and live in the moment.



Julius Caesar Score Card:

Legend

Keep track of the fun like you would in a baseball game with this score card. Use the symbols below to mark the important actions of each scene. Adapted from *Shakespeare for Dummies* by CSC Artistic Director John Doyle.

P	Makes a Prophecy	C	Involved in a conspiracy	⚡	Visited by supernatural beings
F	Foul: Attacks someone	:)	Victorious in battle	•	Appears in a scene
S	Sacked: Victim of an Attack	:(Defeated in battle	"	Famous quote

Characters, in order of appearance

ACT		1			2			3			4			5		
SCENE	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	
Julius Caesar																
Casca, a conspirator																
Calpurnia, wife of Caesar																
Marc Antony																
Soothsayer																
Marcus Brutus, a conspirator																
Cassius, a conspirator																
Cicero, a senator																
Cinna, a conspirator																
Metellus, a conspirator																
Trebonius, a conspirator																
Decius Brutus, a conspirator																
Portia, wife of Brutus																
Cinna, a poet																
Octavius Caesar																
Ledipus																



TABLE WORK: Unpacking Shakespeare's Language

IS THIS REALLY WRITTEN IN ENGLISH? Yes, it is! But it's also poetry. Elizabethans used poetry for the same reason we still use it today: to express heightened states of emotion. So the language may be more densely packed with all those great rhetorical devices you learned in English class—metaphors, alliteration, irony—but it's definitely still English.

DID PEOPLE IN SHAKESPEARE'S DAY SPEAK IN VERSE? No, no more than we speak in rap today. But people both then and now enjoy the rhythm and rhyme of verse. It helps us tune in more immediately, more completely to the feelings and choices of the characters.

IS SHAKESPEARE HARDER FOR ACTORS TO PERFORM THAN REGULAR PLAYS? Actually, for most actors, Shakespeare is easier! The rhythm of the language makes it easy to memorize. (You know how song lyrics get stuck in your head, or how you can remember silly little rhymes from when you were a kid? It's like that.) And all those rhetorical devices act as clues to tell the actors how their character feels.

To find those clues, a company will begin their rehearsal process with table work.

Shakespeare invented many words and phrases that we use on a regular basis today. Below are some examples.



Table Work

To do table work means to read the script as a group, figuring out the meaning of every line and discussing the playwright's perspective on the story. Once everyone is on the same page, the actors get on their feet and begin staging the play.

When Shakespeare was writing his plays, there was no such thing as a director, and actors worked together with the playwright to stage the play. The rehearsal period for a play would be very short, and actors would often have to have a few plays memorized at once. To help the actors out, Shakespeare left clues in the way he wrote. Part of a company's table work today is to find these clues.

Let's focus on this speech from *JULIUS CAESAR*. Just after Caesar has been assassinated, Marc Antony says:

ACT III SCENE I

MARC ANTONY

O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived in the tide of times.
Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!
Over thy wounds now do I prophesy,—
Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips,
To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue—
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
Blood and destruction shall be so in use
And dreadful objects so familiar
That mothers shall but smile when they behold
Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war;
All pity choked with custom of fell deeds:
And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
With Ate by his side come hot from hell,
Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice
Cry 'Havoc,' and let slip the dogs of war;
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
With carrion men, groaning for burial.

That's a lot of text! But Shakespeare helps the actor playing Marc Antony out by leaving a ton of clues. The first thing an actor working on this speech would look at is whether or not the speech is in verse or prose.

Verse or Prose?

All of Shakespeare's language falls into one of two categories: verse or prose. Prose is what we think of as everyday speech, without specific rules regarding rhyme or rhythm. Verse, then, can be defined as giving order or form to the random stress patterns of prose. For actors, verse is often easier to memorize because of the rhythm. It's almost like memorizing lyrics to a song.

A quick way to tell verse from prose: lines of verse begin with capital letters, while prose will appear in paragraph form. Marc Antony's speech, then, is in verse!



Prose

Prose is the everyday language used then and now. Since verse was the conventional method of writing in Elizabethan England, Shakespeare was actually pushing the literary boundaries by including prose in his plays.

At first glance, it may seem that Shakespeare used verse and prose to indicate a character's status (rich, powerful, educated characters often speak in verse; poor, common, fools often speak in prose) but upon closer look, you'll find that many characters go back and forth between verse and prose, and they do so at very specific moments in the play. Often, characters speak in verse when they are sincere and speaking from the heart. They'll speak in prose when they are speaking from the head, their intelligence.

In *JULIUS CAESAR*, Brutus often speaks in prose, which tells the actor that he relies on his intelligence and logic. Take a look at his lines below, spoken at Caesar's funeral to the crowd:

BRUTUS

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... but as he was ambitious, I slew him.

In our speech from Marc Antony, he is upset and swearing to get revenge for Caesar's death. He speaks from the heart, so he speaks in verse.

Blank Verse

Blank Verse is the standard poetic form Shakespeare uses in his plays. It can also be defined as unrhymed iambic pentameter—that is, a line of poetry containing five ("penta" from the Greek prefix meaning five) iambic feet, not rhyming with any adjacent line. That's ten syllables all together. The pattern flows easily for speakers of English, because the stresses match the human heart beat:

ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM

or, a good way to remember the word "iamb" is to think of it as:

i AM, i AM, i AM, i AM, i AM

The stressed words tell an actor which words are the most important to the character. If you say, "We stress the words we want the world to hear," with natural inflection, you will have spoken a line of iambic pentameter.

we STRESS / the WORDS / we WANT / the WORLD / to HEAR

Now say a line from Marc Antony's speech:

MARC ANTONY

A curse shall light upon the limbs of men.
a CURSE / shall LIGHT / u PON / the LIMBS / of MEN

A repeating combination of stressed and unstressed syllables is known as a foot, which is the basic unit of verse. An iamb is a foot of poetry containing two syllables, with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable: ta DUM.

Where else do characters speak in verse in JULIUS CAESAR? If you were an actor in this play, what would this tell you about the character and the situation?



Irregular Verse

Shakespeare doesn't always write verse in perfect iambic pentameter—you may have already noticed this in Marc Antony's speech. The rhythmic patterns change, and so do the number of syllables. This was pretty innovative stuff in Shakespeare's day. He was one of the first writers to regularly break form. Just like a change from prose to verse is a clue for the actor, so is a variation in the verse pattern.

Trochees and Changes in Iambic Rhythm

Often, when Shakespeare wants to catch an audience's ear on a specific word or phrase, he'll switch up the iambic rhythmic pattern of unstressed/stressed syllables (ta DUM). One of these irregular meters is called a trochee. A trochee is the exact opposite of an iamb: TA dum.

Compared to an iamb, this feels surprisingly unnatural to speakers of the English language, so Shakespeare often uses trochees for his supernatural characters (the witches in *MACBETH*; Puck in *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*). He also inserts it into regular lines of iambic pentameter. This often happens when a character is attempting to seem particularly forceful or demanding.

For instance, take a look at this line from Marc Antony's speech:

MARC ANTONY

Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!

WOE to / the HAND/ that SHED/ this COST/ ly BLOOD

Marc Antony is cursing those who killed Caesar. The trochee at the beginning adds extra emphasis to his words. Trochees also create a sense of urgency and acceleration in the language. Marc Antony wants revenge, and he wants it now.

If you were delivering Marc Antony's speech onstage, how might your voice change when you came upon a trochee? How might this affect the staging of the scene?

Feminine Endings and Extra Syllables

A feminine ending is a line of verse that ends with an unstressed extra syllable. The result is that the rhythm of the verse is thrown off just enough to indicate that the character feels unsettled about something. Sometimes, Shakespeare will also throw in extra syllables within the line of verse to increase the effect. In Marc Antony's speech, there is a feminine ending at the beginning, when he is alone with Caesar's body for the first time:

MARC ANTONY

O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,

That I am meek and gentle with **these butchers!**

o PAR/ don ME/ thou BLEE/ ding PIECE/ of EARTH

that I/ am MEEK/ and GEN/ tle WITH/ **these BUT/ chers!**

Based on the feminine ending in these lines, how do you think Marc Antony is feeling at this moment?

Shared Lines and Split Lines

Shakespeare also uses verse to leave clues as to the rhythm of a dialogue. Often, he will split a line of verse, so that two characters share the ten syllables. This is called a shared line or split line, and it helps to show quick thinking or strong emotion, as well as creating a sense of accelerated action. Thus we have the effect of poetry AND of natural speech.



For example, in the scene just before Marc Antony's speech, he convinces Brutus to let him speak at Caesar's funeral in spite of the fact that the other conspirators do not trust him:

BRUTUS

Marc Antony, here, take you Caesar's body.
You shall not in your funeral speech blame us,
But speak all good you can devise of Caesar
In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
After my speech is ended.

MARC ANTONY

Be it so.

These lines scan as as:

mark AN / to NY/ here TAKE/ you CAE/ sar's BO/ dy
you SHALL/ not IN/ your FUN/'ral SPEECH/ blame US
but SPEAK/ all GOOD/ you CAN/ de VISE/ of CAE/ sar
IN the/ same PUL/ pit WHERE/ to I/ am GO/ ing
AF ter/ my SPEECH/ is EN/ ded BE/ it SO.

Shared lines create a realistic pattern of speech when emotions run especially high—notice how irregular Brutus' lines are? The feminine endings in his text tell the actor that Brutus is very unsettled about something, and Marc Antony's shared line tells the actor that Antony is responding quickly before Brutus can change his mind.

Where else in the play might you expect to find shared lines? How might shared lines create a sense of urgency in a scene?

Missing Feet and Silence

Shakespeare writes in iambic pentameter, which means there are five poetic feet per line: ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM. If a line is short, we say it is "missing feet". This interrupts the flow of the poetry, and forces the actors to find meaning in a moment of silence. Check out the next few lines in the scene following Brutus' decision to let Marc Antony speak at the funeral:

BRUTUS

Marc Antony, here, take you Caesar's body.
mark ANT/ to NY/ here TAKE/ you CAE/sar's BO/dy

You shall not in your funeral speech blame us,
you SHALL/ not IN/ your FUN/'ral SPEECH/ blame US

But speak all good you can devise of Caesar
but SPEAK/ all GOOD/ you CAN/ de VISE/ of CAE/ sar

In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
IN the/ same PUL/ pit WHERE/ to I/ am GO/ ing

After my speech is ended.
AF ter/ my SPEECH/ is EN/ ded



MARC ANTONY

Be it so.
BE/ it SO

I do desire no more.
i DO/ de SIRE/ no MORE/ - - / - -/

BRUTUS

Prepare the body, then, and follow us.
pre PARE/ the BO/ dy THEN/ and FOL/ low US.

What do you think is happening in the moment of silence at the end of Marc Antony's line? What clue does this give an actor about the situation?

Other Clues to Look For

- There are lots of other clues that Shakespeare leaves for his actors to help them in performance. Sometimes he will use the rhythm to elongate words to give them more emphasis. For instance, in Marc Antony's speech he elongates the word "lived" to LI-ved and the word "familiar" to fa-MI-li-AR. How might this change an actor's performance of the speech?
- In Shakespeare's time, there wasn't the technology to create a realistic portrayal of many of the things that happen in his plays. Instead, he uses language to create images in the imaginations of the audience.
 - o In Marc Antony's speech, notice how many words Shakespeare uses that relate to the body. As Marc Antony stands over the body of Caesar, he uses the image of the dead body to create an image of what his revenge will look like in Rome.
 - o In this scene, Marc Antony, the conspirators, and Caesar's body are covered in blood. Notice how often he uses blood imagery in his speech.
 - o Marc Antony also introduces supernatural imagery towards the end of his speech. What effect does this have on your perception of the situation as a member of the audience?
- One of the most important words in Shakespeare's plays is the word "O." When a character says "O," it is a signal to the actor that the character cannot find words for what they are feeling, and instead just make the sound "O." What clue is Shakespeare giving the actor in this speech when he has Marc Antony begin with saying "O?"
- Shakespeare also often uses repeated sounds to add color to a speech. Repeated sounds can be used to illustrate emotion, to make the audience listen closer, and sometimes just because it's nice to listen to. As an actor, how might you use repeated sounds to create a dynamic performance? What repeated sounds do you notice in Marc Antony's speech?

Now that we've done our table work, let's take a look at what an Actor's notes on this scene might look like. Turn the page!



Imagine this: Brutus and the conspirators have just stabbed Caesar, and they all have blood on their hands when Marc Antony arrives on the scene. To protect himself, Marc Antony shakes their hands (some of Caesar's blood wipes off on him) and pretends to support their cause. He asks Brutus to allow him to speak at Caesar's funeral, and Brutus hesitates.

BRUTUS

Marc Antony, here, take you Caesar's body.
You shall not in your funeral speech blame us,
But speak all good you can devise of Caesar
In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
After my speech is ended.

Trochees mean that Brutus is demanding something.

Lots of feminine endings!
Brutus is feeling unsettled.

MARC ANTONY

Be it so.
I do desire no more. **(MISSING FEET)**

BRUTUS

Prepare the **BODY**, then, and follow us.

Brutus and the conspirators leave,
and Marc Antony is alone with
Caesar's body.

MARC ANTONY

O, pardon me, thou **bleeding** piece of earth,
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived in the Tide of Times.
Woe to the **HAND** that shed this costly **blood**!
Over thy wounds now do I **prophecy**,—
Which, like dumb **MOUTHS**, do ope their **ruby LIPS**,
To beg the **VOICE** and utterance of my **TONGUE**—
A **curse** shall light upon the **LIMBS** of men;
Domestic Fury and Fierce civil strife
Shall cumber all the **PARTS** of Italy;
Blood and destruction shall be so in use
And dreadful objects so familiar
That mothers shall but smile when they behold
Their infants **quarter'd** with the **HANDS** of war;
All pity **CHOKED** with custom of fell deeds:
And Caesar's **spirit**, ranging for revenge,
With **Ate** by his side come hot from **hell**,
Shall in these confines with a monarch's **VOICE**
Cry 'Havoc,' and let slip the **dogs of war**;
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
With **carion** men, groaning for burial.

Marc Antony is letting
out some emotion.

Feminine ending
accentuates overflowing
emotion and makes these
words stronger.

Trochees make the
curse stronger.

Trochee means a
LOT of blood.

Elongated word
accentuate how awful life
will be.

Ew! Gross!

We just got so supernatural
with this curse.

FEMININE ENDINGS

TROCHEE

ELONGATED WORD

WORDS RELATING TO THE BODY

WORDS RELATING TO BLOOD

Words relating to the supernatural



WHAT TO WATCH FOR...

Questions and themes to consider as you study the play

OMENS

- An omen is an event that is believed to represent the future. For example, Calpurnia mentions that ghosts have been seen walking the streets the night before Caesar is murdered. What other omens do you notice in the play?
- Characters in *JULIUS CAESAR* often have different interpretations of what these omens predict. Whose interpretations are correct? Is there anyone who purposefully misinterprets these “portentous things”?
- What do you think Shakespeare believed about omens, based on how they are used in *JULIUS CAESAR*? Does anyone actually foretell the future? Or do they unintentionally set the future in motion when they attempt to read into the omens they come across?
- One of the many omens found in *JULIUS CAESAR* is weather, particularly a storm. What do characters believe the storm foretells?
- Shakespeare also uses weather to represent a character’s state of mind, particularly in the case of Brutus. How does Shakespeare use weather as a symbol for Brutus’ journey through the play?

PRIVATE VS. PUBLIC

- When it comes to politics, a person’s public image is often quite different from who they actually are. In *JULIUS CAESAR*, some characters are very good at maintaining a good public image, while others are not. As you read or watch the play, pay attention to how Caesar, Marc Antony, Brutus, and Cassius are perceived by the public. How does the public’s perception of them affect their ability to get what they want?
- According to an old saying, “a king’s left ear is for flattery and private favors, his right ear for truth and for public concerns.” As you read or watch the play, do you think Julius Caesar “hears” equally through both ears?

COMMUNICATION

- In the first scene of *JULIUS CAESAR*, Marc Antony offers a crown to Caesar three times. Surprisingly, this event happens offstage, and we learn about it through Casca’s retelling of it to Brutus and Cassius. How might Casca’s retelling affect our (and Brutus’) perspective on the event? Are there any other moments in the play where our perspective might be altered by who is telling the story?
- There are also many moments in *JULIUS CAESAR* where characters make decisions based on incorrect information, often leading to tragic outcomes. For example, Cinna the Poet is killed because his murderers mistakenly believe he is one of the conspirators who also happens to be named Cinna. What other moments of miscommunication do you notice in the play?
- Rhetoric, the art of using language to persuade and move others, is a skill that is essential to being successful as a politician. Which characters in *JULIUS CAESAR* speak the most effectively? How is your perspective as an audience member shaped by the language characters use?

For more ideas on what to watch for, see NOTES ON THE PLAY on page 15.



PART THREE:
BEHIND THE SCENES

AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR ASHLEY BROOKE MONROE

What is your concept for *JULIUS CAESAR*?

I'm directing a production that has superheroes. Caesar is a little bit like Superman, and Antony is a little bit like Batman. When you read the full text of *JULIUS CAESAR* there's a lot of supernatural elements. Calpurnia, Caesar's wife, has visions and she can see into the future. The Soothsayer can see into the future in a certain way. There's a lot of omens from the night sky, evil affecting them. It's this land that's a little bit different than realism, than the day to day, so I thought that was a helpful clue into what kind of world this could be for my production. It's also exciting to me because there's lots of talk of battles in *JULIUS CAESAR*. For me, if we're going to be talking about these epic battles, I wanted real, physical violence and combat between the characters. In a superhero world we can have some epic battles. They will be really satisfying, because they have not just traditional physical violence, but the ability to freeze someone, or to just shoot them with power out of their hand. I think that would be fun.

So if Julius Caesar and Marc Antony are Superman and Batman, who are Brutus and Cassius?

Brutus is Captain America inspired, because Captain America is so classic in some ways. Because he's from a previous time, he's a little bit a stick in the mud. He just has a more old fashioned sense of honor, which I think is very true to Brutus.

In this production, Cassius is played by a woman and is Black Widow inspired. Cassius has her own agenda, and she's a little sneaky. Black Widow was a spy and I think Cassius has some of those qualities, with the whispering and getting people on to her side as a conspirator.

Can you tell us about any special effects in *JULIUS CAESAR*?

Because we have blood in Caesar, he'll have to be rigged so that the blood comes out when he gets stabbed. And I'm thinking that because he's a superhero and not a mortal, his blood is going to be, like, bright metallic silver. So when the conspirators go to bathe their hands in the blood, it'll be non-traditional blood color.



"There will be capes. Not all of them wear capes, but Caesar does. If you've ever seen any of the movies with Thor in it, Thor has that really beautiful, super regal kind of cape that comes from his front. He is also Superman inspired, so I put a "C" on his chest. He's very about his own identity, he says his own name a lot in the play. I feel like that kind of person would want his own initial in their logo." – Ashley Brooke Monroe



Who else is collaborating with you to realize your vision for the show?

One of the things I like most about directing it is that it's a collaborative art form. So even though I'm the generator of a lot of the initial ideas, part of my job is to choose other exciting artists to come on board and help me make the vision a reality. I have a set designer - that was the first person I found. I usually like to go that way to start having another person thinking about the play on its feet, as a three dimensional thing. So I work with the set designer to think, "Okay we have this room, it's going to be in here. What do we want to put into this room to make it the most exciting space for me to stage the play in?"

I have a lighting designer who's going to do the same thing. I barely understand what lighting designers do. To me they're wizards, they have so much technical knowledge. Then I have a sound designer. They're really influential even though you don't see their work. There's a really big thunderstorm in *JULIUS CAESAR*, there's multiple scenes that all take place in it. It's going to be the sound designer's job to build a realistic, interesting, cool thunderstorm that goes under all that action.

I also have a stage manager who helps me with all of the logistics of making the play. The stage manager has a bunch of different roles. During rehearsal, and before rehearsals start, they're basically the main organizer for everything, so they manage the schedule. Then when the show starts, the stage manager calls the show. They tell the actors when they need to be at places, and then during the show they're on headset with the people who run lights and sound, and they tell them when the cues should happen. Their job is very hard, they have a lot of different things on their plate. They have to be super organized.

I also have a props designer, a costume designer, and I have an assistant director who will help me with the things I'm doing. You have producers, the fight director, and a whole company of actors.

How did you become a director?

I decided I was going to be a director when I was in middle school. It was because I had the rare opportunity to assistant direct something, and I was like "yeah, this is what I think I should do." I had been into theater and dance since I was a really little kid. I've been on a very straight path. I did a lot in high school, I directed in college, and then I moved to New York about ten

JULIUS CAESAR - CSC - 2018

CASSIUS



C.D. 10299
COSTUME DESIGNER

SIGNATURE
1/12/2018

Design rendering for Cassius.



JULIUS CAESAR - CSC-2018

CALPURNIA



C.D. 10299
COSTUME DESIGNER

Design rendering for Calpurnia.

years ago after college and I was like "hire me to direct!" I knew that's what I wanted, so I just made it happen. You just direct for free enough, and direct your own projects and get all your actor friends together with a playwright friend, and make a play. Then if people come to see that play, they might ask you to do another play, and it kind of all builds off of relationships like most careers.

What's exciting about working in a space like CSC versus on Broadway?

My favorite part of working in a space like CSC is that the audience is so close to the action, and you're able to be much more intimate. I also always prefer working in a thrust like CSC or in the round with audience on all four sides as opposed to proscenium where the audience is on one side because you do feel like you're immersed in the world of the play. I think it gives you a much more interesting perspective if you have to look over one character's shoulder to see another character. You just visualize the whole world in a very dimensional way. I think we're going to use this space very wholly. I think the action will feel very in the face of the audience, which I'm really excited about.



Ashley Brooke Monroe with CSC's NextGen Students



PART FOUR:
POST-WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES
FOR TEACHERS

A TEACHER'S GUIDE

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS: LEARNING STANDARDS

For more details, visit:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/teachlearn/arts/blueprints/theater-blueprint.html>

& www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/R

NYC Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts: Theater

1. Theater Making: Acting, Playwriting/Play Making, Design and Technical Theater, and Directing. Students learn to use their minds, bodies, voices and emotions to examine the world and its meaning.
2. Developing Theater Literacy: Students explore theater history, use theater vocabulary, and develop critical, analytical and writing skills through observing, discussing and responding to live theater and dramatic literature.
3. Making Connections: Students make connections to theater by developing an understanding of self. They respond to theater by identifying personal issues, and apply learning in other disciplines to their inclusive understanding of theater.
4. Working with Community and Cultural Resources: Community resources that support Theater Making, theater literacy, theater connections and career exploration expand students' opportunities for learning.
5. Exploring Careers and Life Long Learning: Students develop audience skills and a connection to theater that allows them to value theater throughout their lives. They explore the scope and variety of theater careers.

Common Core ELA Standards (College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards)

Reading:

- Key Ideas and Details (Strands 1–3)
- Craft and Structure (Strands 4–6)
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Strands 7–9)
- Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity (Strand 10)

Writing:

- Text Types and Purposes (Strands 1–3)
- Production and Distribution of Writing (Strands 4–6)
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge (Strands 7–9)
- Range of Writing (Strand 10)

Speaking and Listening:

- Comprehension and Collaboration (Strands 1–3)
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas (Strands 4–6)

Language:

- Conventions of Standard English (Strands 1–2)
- Knowledge of Language (Strand 3)
- Vocabulary Acquisition and Use (Strands 4–6)



ACTIVITIES

AFTER WORKSHOP 1: Celebrity Casting

Based on what your students know about the characters in *JULIUS CAESAR* from the story WOOSH, have your class choose their own celebrity cast (actors, singers, politicians, television stars, etc.) for the play. Put up a list of all the characters and/or hand out lists to the class:

- BRUTUS
- MARC ANTONY
- JULIUS CAESAR
- OCTAVIUS CAESAR
- CASSIUS
- SOOTHSAYER
- PORTIA
- CALPURNIA
- CASCA
- DECIUS BRUTUS

Go through the characters one at a time and talk about who they are, and what celebrity could be cast as that character.

Example: PORTIA is a very strong woman who isn't afraid to stand up to her husband. She goes to extreme lengths to convince her husband that she is trustworthy. Lupita Nyong'o is an actress who often plays strong women.

Blueprint Strand 3: Making Connections

Common Core Strands: R.1 & W.9 (have your students cite specific passages from the play to support their choices); SL.1 (have your students work in pairs or small groups); SL.4 (have students present their casting choices to the class – you can even do this in roll, as a casting director making a pitch to the artistic director!)

AFTER WORKSHOP 2: "Shakespeare" It!

Today your students worked on paraphrasing Shakespeare into modern speech. Altering Shakespeare's words – the very thing that makes Shakespeare "Shakespeare" – may have felt irreverent, but the truth is: Shakespeare LOVED word-play, inventing new words, and paraphrasing well-known stories into his own works!

Shakespeare hyphenated words, added prefixes (un-, be-, en-, de-, dis-), turned adjectives into verbs, and made up new words entirely. Come up with your own list of words with the class. (Examples: unstaple, belight, ensleep, destart, dismark)

When you have a variety of examples, have your students step into the role of Shakespeare writing his next play. Give them ten minutes to write the first few lines of a story – or even a play! (Example: I belit the room to unstaple my paper – he was ensleep'd and I woke him up...)

Then have a few volunteers read their work aloud. If doing a scene, students can cast their play within "the ensemble" (the class) and do a reading of the scene.

Blueprint Strand 1: Theater Making: Playwriting

Common Core Strands: R.4 (pair and share: have students evaluate each other's work); W.3, W.4, W.5 (particularly if you have time to make this assignment into a longer story/scene); SL.4 & SL.6 (have the class listen to and evaluate the structure and clarity of the story/scenes); L.1 & L.2 (a strong command on language structure will provide context clues for the newly invented



words; understanding of prefixes and suffixes also important!); L.4, L.5, L.6 (more pair and share evaluation)

AFTER WORKSHOP 3: Collage Sonnets

Today your class learned about sonnet structure; they also created a collage (a “mood board”) to get a visual idea of the play, and compiled a list of ideas/themes/elements from that collage. Ask students to choose five-ten words from the list and use them to write a sonnet – on their own, in small groups, or as a class.

Remind them that a sonnet must have:

- 14 lines
- ABAB CDCD EFEF GG rhyme scheme
- 5 iambs (unstressed STRESSED) for a total of 10 syllables in each line

Blueprint Strand 2: Developing Theater Literacy

Common Core Strands: R.9 (compare the sonnets written by students to Shakespeare’s *JULIUS CAESAR* – how did these different authors explore similar themes?); W.5 (particularly if you have time to revisit/edit); SL.2 (reference the “mood board”); SL.3 (pair and share: have students evaluate each other’s work); SL.5 (again, if you revisit this/turn it into a larger project); L.1, L.2, L.3 (the sonnet as a poetic form; knowing the rules of the English language and when/how to break them for effect in poetry)

AFTER WORKSHOP 4: Role on the Wall

Your students are rehearsing their scenes now – this activity will help them develop their characters!

Split students into groups based on the role they are playing (all the BRUTUSs together, all the MARC ANTONYs together, etc.) Pass out giant pieces of paper and have one student in the group lay down on the paper while another traces his or her outline. (Note that this activity can also be done independently on regular sheets of paper – simply have the student trace the outline of their own hand.)

Ask the groups to write things that their character thinks/feels/says about himself or herself on the INSIDE of the outline; they should write things other characters think/feel/say about their character on the OUTSIDE. Encourage groups to search through the text of *JULIUS CAESAR* for actual quotes!

When groups are finished brainstorming, hang your “role on the wall” and whip around to each group to allow them to share their findings. What did they learn about their character? How will they incorporate this knowledge into their scene presentations? How might actors benefit from this exercise?

Blueprint Strand 2: Developing Theater Literacy

Common Core Strands: R.1 (pulling specific quotes from the text); R.2 & R.3 (look at the relationship between two or more characters and the themes that emerge); R.4, R.5, R.6 (for a broader look at the play that can begin with this activity; potential reflection questions/essay topics to approach through the lens of this activity); W.9 (again with specific quotes); SL.1 (if



working in groups or pair/share); SL.3 (determine context and a character's tone before citing evidence); SL.4 (present to class); L.3, L.4, L.5 (when searching the text for evidence)

AFTER WORKSHOP 5: Compared to Whom?

Now take advantage of their knowledge of the characters in the play to analyze relationships and status.

Print out pieces of paper with character names on them or have students make the papers.

- BRUTUS
- MARC ANTONY
- JULIUS CAESAR
- OCTAVIUS CAESAR
- CASSIUS
- SOOTHSAYER
- PORTIA
- CALPURNIA
- CASCA
- DECIUS BRUTUS

Pass out the names to twelve students. Have them arrange themselves (in character) in order from youngest character to oldest; highest status to lowest status; most honest to least honest; most loyal to least loyal, etc. Encourage discussion: does the class agree with the placement? If not, why not? You can alternate the participating group of students, and take category suggestions from the class.

Blueprint Strand 3: Making Connections

Common Core Strands: R.3 (how individuals interact); R.6 (points of view); W.1 (have students write about the experience afterwards); W.9 (use quotes from the text to support choices the class made); SL.1 & SL.3 (discuss as a class)



PART FIVE: SOURCES

SOURCES

TEACHING SHAKESPEARE

by Rex Gibson

SHAKESPEARE FOR DUMMIES

by John Doyle (Artistic Director, CSC) and
Ray Lischner

THE FRIENDLY SHAKESPEARE

by Norrie Epstein

THE GENIUS OF SHAKESPEARE

by Jonathan Bate

BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE!

by Michael Macrone

ESSENTIAL SHAKESPEARE HANDBOOK

by Leslie Dunton-Downer and Alan Riding

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE AND THE GLOBE

written and illustrated by Alik

EYEWITNESS SHAKESPEARE

written by Peter Chrisp, photographed by
Steve Teague

SHAKESPEARE AFTER ALL

by Marjorie Garber

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guide created by Alice Renier in 2018, and updated by Marella Martin Koch in 2020.

Special thanks to all who contributed to this guide: Archer Brinkley, Braden Cleary, John Doyle, David Heatley, Sarah Kahn, Josephine McDonald, Alice Renier, Cassandra Steinhäuser





Classic Stage Company (CSC) is the award-winning Off-Broadway theater committed to re-imagining the classical repertory for contemporary audiences. Founded in 1967, CSC uses works of the past as a way to engage in the issues of today. Highly respected and widely regarded as a major force in American theater, it has become the home to New York's finest established and emerging artists, the place where they gather to grapple with the great works of the world's repertory.



The National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest presents *Shakespeare in American Communities*. CSC is one of 40 professional theater companies selected to participate in bringing the finest productions of Shakespeare to middle- and high-school students in communities across the United States. This is the twelfth year of this national program, the largest tour of Shakespeare in American history.



Council on the Arts

This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Special thanks to the Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting Classic Stage Company.