

Continue



Shakespeare julius caesar act 1 reading and study guide answers

Two Roman tribunes, Flavius and Murellus, stumble upon the common folk celebrating Caesar's victory instead of tending to their daily chores. They demand an explanation for this unusual behavior. A cobbler enlightens them that the people are rejoicing over Caesar's triumph. Enraged by this revelation, Murellus chastises the workers, labeling them "you blocks" and "stones." He then reminds them that Caesar did not defeat a formidable enemy but rather annihilated Pompey's sons. Flavius's impassioned speech prompts the commoners to feel ashamed of their celebration, prompting them to depart with a more somber demeanor. In Act One, Scene Two, Julius Caesar returns to Rome, accompanied by Antony and Brutus, as well as their wives and numerous followers. Caesar instructs Antony to strike his wife Calpurnia during the Lupercalia festival, which would allegedly cure her sterility. Antony complies, stating that "when Caesar says 'do this,' it is performed." A soothsayer approaches Caesar, warning him of impending doom on March 15. However, Caesar dismisses the warning, deeming the man a dreamer. Brutus and Cassius remain on stage, with Cassius noticing Brutus's growing solemnity. Brutus confesses to being at war with himself and advises Cassius not to worry about his friend's altered demeanor. As the scene unfolds, Brutus expresses concern that Caesar will be crowned king, while Cassius sees this as an opportunity for them both to assert their freedom. Cassius shares a tale of how he once saved Caesar from drowning in the Tiber River, only to find himself now compelled to how before his former savior's greatness. Cassius remarks that "Brutus" is just as fitting a name to rule Rome as "Caesar." He draws parallels between Brutus' ancestor, who founded the Roman Republic and expelled the kings. Ultimately, Caesar returns with his entourage, turning to Antony and remarking on his desire for loyal men around him - those who are fat, sleek-headed, and sleep through the night. The crowd was restless, looking hungry and troubled. They thought too much about the wrong things. Such crowds were unpredictable. Caesar expressed his concerns to Antony but Antony didn't seem convinced that Cassius could be trusted entirely. He told Caesar to come along and see if there's anything really worth worrying about. Meanwhile, Casca stayed on stage with Brutus and Cassius. He mentioned that they had heard three shouts, which were due to Antony offering Caesar the crown thrice, but he declined each time. After falling down, his mouth foaming at the lips (as he was known to have epilepsy), Caesar got up and begged for forgiveness. Casca said the people forgave him, even more so because of his refusal of the crown. He also mentioned that Murellus and Flavius were removed from their posts for pulling down Caesar's statues. Cassius invited Casca to dinner the next day, hoping to get him on board with the conspiracy against Caesar. Brutus also left but agreed to meet Cassius the next night. In a soliloquy, Cassius told the audience that he would fake several handwritten notes and leave them in Brutus' room to make it seem like the people wanted him to take action against Caesar. Caesar's desire for an heir takes on a sinister tone in the play, with his words to Antony hinting at his wish to establish a dynasty, fuelling Brutus' motivations to destroy him. The opening scenes are marked by misinterpretation and mistrust, as characters construe events according to their own biases. Caesar himself proves Cicero's point by dismissing the soothsayer's warning and ignoring Calpurnia's dream of his death. Ominous signs abound, including tempestuous weather, an owl hooting during the day, and a lion roaming the streets. The mirror becomes a recurring symbol in Julius Caesar, with Cassius using it to manipulate Brutus, suggesting that he will reflect back Brutus' true nature. This mirrors (pun intended) Cassius' own private agenda, as he attempts to incite jealousy and a desire for power in Brutus by comparing him to Caesar. The reference to Lucius Junius Brutus serves as a reminder of the importance of honor and tradition. Caesar's assessment of Cassius is unflattering, portraying him as lean and hungry, with a tendency to overthink. This, combined with his love of reading and observing, marks him as a potential threat. Caesar's fear of Cassius stems from his perception that he does not enjoy music or plays, a characteristic often associated with evil characters in Shakespearean works. Caesar seems unenthused about life itself, while he has full trust in Antony who's renowned for being able to live life to the fullest. Two distinct personas exist within Caesar: a human side that's weak and vulnerable, and an idealized concept of him as an all-powerful leader. The weakness of Caesar is revealed through his need for Cassius' help in times of crisis and his struggles with epilepsy. On the other hand, as the great general and leader, he exudes power and nobility, commanding respect from everyone around him. Communication proves to be a significant challenge throughout the play, starting with the tribunes and plebeians who fail to listen to one another. Even Brutus and Cassius struggle to have a meaningful conversation due to constant interruptions by those outside their circle. Caesar's deafness in his left ear symbolizes his reluctance to acknowledge danger or warning signs, such as the soothsayer's ominous predictions or Calpurnia's disturbing dreams. The theme of decline is echoed through Caesar's physical decline and loss of power, much like Richard II's fall from the throne. The imagery of falling is also mirrored in language comprehension, with Casca describing Cicero's speech as incomprehensible ("It was Greek to me"). The plot centers around Brutus' internal conflict between his loyalty to the Roman Republic and his friendship for Caesar, emphasizing Caesar's influence even after his death. Caesar's ghost appears to Brutus, signifying that the memory of him will forever be etched in history. Despite his passing, Caesar continues to shape the narrative of the play, underscoring his enduring impact on the characters around him.