JULIUS CAESAR
by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

EDUCATION TOUR RESOURCE GUIDE
Welcome and thank you for bringing Shakespeare Festival St. Louis to your school. Our mission at Shakespeare Festival St. Louis is to produce professional Shakespeare theatre, culminating in a free production in Forest Park and to celebrate both Shakespeare’s language and the artists he has inspired. We present Shakespeare and works inspired by Shakespeare. We are in Schools, in the Streets, and in the Park. Our work seeks to better the community, facilitate a diverse conversation, and encourage collaboration across disciplines.

With up to 100 school partnerships a year, our touring performances and workshops engage students in the timeless works of Shakespeare. The Festival Education staff has complied a collection of curriculum support materials in the form of a resource guide to compliment our 2017 touring production of JULIUS CAESAR. Our goal is for you to use the accompanying guide to provide your students with meaningful connections to Shakespeare’s work both before and after the performance.

Please feel free to reach out to us and tell us your thoughts. We would love to hear more about how you used these activities in your classroom.

Enjoy the show,

JENNIFER WINTZER
Director of Community Engagement & Education

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The Monsanto Fund sponsors Education Tour visits to rural communities.

The Education Tour also receives generous support from the Saigh Foundation, the Dana Brown Charitable Trust, and First Bank.

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William Shakespeare, the “Bard of Avon,” was baptized at Stratford-upon-Avon on April 26, 1564. Since no birth records were kept, tradition holds that he was born approximately three days before baptism, and that he died on his birthday, but this is perhaps more romantic myth than fact, as April 23 is St. George’s Day, named for the patron saint of England.

His parents were John Shakespeare and Mary Arden, a landed heiress. John was a glover by trade, but also held the offices of alderman and later bailiff in Stratford (equivalent to a present-day mayor). William was the third of eight children in the Shakespeare household, three of whom died in childhood. We assume that Shakespeare went to the King’s New School (now Edward VI Grammar School), presumably because of his father’s position as bailiff. This would have meant that Shakespeare was exposed to the rudiments of Latin, rhetoric, logic, and literature.

On November 27, 1582, 18 year-old William married 26 year-old Anne Hathaway. Their first daughter, Susanna, was born six months later. Three years after Susanna, the Shakespeares bore twins, Hamnet & Judith, but Hamnet died in childhood at the age of 11, on August 11, 1596. It’s unclear how the young Shakespeare first came to London or to the stage. One theory holds that he was arrested as a poacher and escaped to London to avoid prosecution in Stratford; another holds that he joined a company of traveling players called Lord Strange’s Men, where he learned theatrical arts as an apprentice.

However, it is clear that between 1582 and 1592, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, Shakespeare became involved in the London theatre scene as a principal actor and playwright. By 1594, Shakespeare was listed as a shareholder in one of the most popular acting companies in London: the Lord Chamberlain’s Men. Led by Richard Burbage, one of the most famous Elizabethan actors, the Lord Chamberlain’s Men performed at the Rose Theatre, an outdoor stage on the banks of the Thames River. Around 1599, they constructed the Globe Theatre, perhaps the most recognizable Elizabethan playhouse. When King James I was crowned in 1603, he favored Shakespeare and the Chamberlain’s Men so much that the company was renamed the King’s Men. In 1608, the King’s Men leased the indoor Blackfriars Theatre in London, which served as their winter playhouse. The Globe Theatre stood until 1613, when it burned down during a performance of Henry VIII. Shakespeare retired to Stratford not long after, where he died on April 23, 1616, and was buried at Holy Trinity Church two days later.

In the years since Shakespeare’s death, he has become one of the most celebrated writers in history. His plays were not published until the 1623 First Folio, seven years after his death, compiled by John Heminges and Henry Condell, former players in the King’s Men. However, in the 1800s, his plays became so popular that many refused to believe that a glovemaker’s son from Stratford (with no university training) had written them. To this day some believe that Sir Francis Bacon was the true author of the plays; others choose to believe Edward Devere, 17th Earl of Oxford, was the author. Still others would prefer to believe Christopher Marlowe, a fellow playwright, penned the lines attributed to Shakespeare. While speculation still runs rampant, what isn’t disputed is that William Shakespeare was the “Soul of the Age.”
Materials Needed: Handout for “Shakespeare’s Globe” (p. 14), scissors, glue

In this activity, students will create a paper model of the Globe Theatre using the handout.

The original Globe opened in 1599 in London on the south bank of the Thames River, in an area now known as Bankside. The Globe was the principal playhouse of the Lord Chamberlain’s Men (who would become the King’s Men in 1603), of which William Shakespeare was a shareholder, playwright, and actor. Many of his most famous plays were first staged at the Globe, including Julius Caesar, Macbeth, Othello, King Lear, and Hamlet.

On June 29, 1613, the Globe Theatre went up in flames during a performance of Henry VIII. A theatrical cannon, set off during the performance, misfired, igniting the wooden beams and thatching. According to one of the few surviving documents of the event, no one was hurt except a man who put out his burning breeches with a bottle of ale.

Like all the other theatres in London, the Globe was closed down by the Puritans in 1642. It was destroyed in 1644 to make room for tenements. Its exact location remained unknown until remnants of its foundations were discovered in 1989 beneath the car park of Anchor Terrace on Park Street.

For further exploration of Shakespeare and the Globe:

BrainPOP (Shakespeare): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSUq8eO50og

Globe Theater Tour (short): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3VGa6Fp3zI

Globe Theater (long): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3VGa6Fp3zI
ACT 1
“Beware the ides of March.”
—Soothsayer (Act 1, Scene 2)

Two Roman tribunes argue with citizens who are celebrating Caesar’s triumph over his rival, Pompey, chiding them for supporting Caesar so easily after cheering for Pompey first. During the celebration, a soothsayer proclaims to Caesar, “Beware the ides of March,” but Caesar dismisses him. Cassius persuades a distant, stoic Brutus that Caesar’s growing power is dangerous; Casca enters and informs them Mark Antony offered Caesar a crown three times. As a result, Brutus invites Cassius, Casca, and others to his home to discuss their next moves. The weather grows angrier with storms that are ominous omens.

ACT 2
“Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius, To cut the head off and then hack the limbs—”
—Brutus (Act 2, Scene 1)

Neither Caesar nor Brutus are sleeping well. Brutus persuades Cassius and the other conspirators that killing Caesar (but sparing Antony and others) will make the people view his death as a sacrifice or purge. Brutus’ wife Portia attempts to comfort him and discover the source of his troubled mind, but he rebuffs her. The next morning on the ides of March, Calpurnia awakes from a nightmare of Caesar’s death and tries to stop him from going to the Senate, but some conspirators arrive and persuade him to go.

ACT 3
“Et tu, Bruté?—Then fall, Caesar.”
—Julius Caesar (Act 3, Scene 1)

At the Senate on the ides of March, the conspirators kneel before a confident Caesar, but then they stab him to death, with Brutus delivering the final blow. This plunges Rome into chaos, as many citizens flee to their homes. Antony calmly and nervously confronts the group of conspirators, and Brutus agrees to speak at Caesar’s funeral with Antony to explain the reasons behind their assassination. Cassius is worried the people will be moved by Antony, who privately confesses to Caesar’s body that he will avenge him and “let slip the dogs of war.” At the funeral, Brutus attempts to make the case for the conspirators’ cause, but Antony is far more persuasive in his speech, winning over the citizens, who drive the conspirators out of Rome in massive riots.

ACT 4
“Strike as thou didst at Caesar, for I know, / When thou didst hate him worst, thou lov’st him better / Than ever thou lov’st Cassius.”
—Cassius (Act 4, Scene 2)

Antony, Lepidus, and Caesar’s nephew, Octavius, marshal an army to battle the conspirators at Philippi. Brutus and Cassius, meanwhile, are bickering amongst each other with Brutus accusing Cassius of taking bribes. They eventually reconcile, and Brutus reveals that his wife Portia has committed suicide. That evening, Caesar’s ghost appears to Brutus and says he’ll see him at Philippi.

ACT 5
“Caesar, now be still: / I killed not thee with half so good a will.”
—Brutus (Act 5, Scene 5)

During the climactic battle, Cassius’ men flee. In desperation, Cassius commands his soldier Pindarus to kill him; he does so and flees, as well. Brutus mourns, and tries to rally his own men, but Antony & Octavius’ army is triumphant. Brutus falls on his own sword. Antony declares that Brutus will have the honors of a soldier in burial.
THEMES IN JULIUS CAESAR

HONOR
“For Brutus is an honorable man; / So are they all, all honorable men—” —Mark Antony (3.2)

Brutus, moreso than Cassius and the other conspirators, seeks to restore the honor of the Roman republic, which he believes has been tarnished because of Caesar’s power-grabbing moves, such as vanquishing his former ally Pompey, as well as suppressing any of Pompey’s supporters (as happens in the first scene of the play). It is a theme that Antony emphasizes in his famous funeral speech; at first, it seems complimentary, but the more Antony repeats that “Brutus is an honorable man,” the tone becomes mocking and angers the mob of citizens. Just as Brutus believes his motives for assassinating Caesar are honorable, Mark Antony and Octavius’ respective desire to honor Caesar motivates their vengeance upon Brutus and Cassius.

AMBITION
“As Caesar loved me, I weep for him... but, as he was ambitious, I slew him.” —Brutus (3.2)

Ambition can present itself as a contrast to (or consequence of) honor. Whereas Cassius claims that his role in Caesar’s murder was honorable like Brutus, he seems to favor Caesar’s ambition: after fleeing Rome in the wake of Caesar’s murder, Brutus accuses Cassius of “having an itching palm,” meaning he took money in exchange for favors. According to historical accounts, Julius Caesar brought about the end of the Roman republic as a shrewd general who defeated a rival Roman named Pompey and assumed the role of dictator. Even when publicly refusing a crown offered him by Antony, the conspirators still see Caesar’s ambitions as a threat to Rome.

PATRIOTISM
“Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears...” —Mark Antony (3.2)

Another theme that divides Brutus & Cassius from Antony & Octavius is patriotism: their love of country, their love of Rome. Each group realizes that the key to achieving their objectives is swaying their fellow countrymen to their side. The conspirators say they killed Caesar for the good of Rome; Antony says that Caesar wanted only prosperity and glory for Rome. This conflict climaxes with Brutus’ and Antony’s speeches at Caesar’s funeral, where Antony is able to convince the citizens that Brutus and the conspirators are traitors, goading them to chase the assassins out of Rome.

MORALITY
“We shall be call’d purgers, not murderers.” —Brutus (2.1)

The central question of Julius Caesar has long been the subject of debate: was Caesar’s assassination right or wrong? Moral or immoral? The conspirators, especially Brutus, perceive Caesar’s ambition as immoral, which, in their belief, justifies their assassination. And although Brutus does not have a personal dislike of Caesar, he delivers the killing blow. Then, at the end of the play, he stabs himself, brought low by the burden of the consequences of his actions, his last words being, “I killed not thee with half so good a will.”
INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR: JOANNA BATTLES

1. Please describe your overall concept for Julius Caesar.
I believe this play is about the never-ending quest for power. There is nothing more sacred and desirable to the characters in this play than acquiring, and maintaining, dominance. Our protagonist, Brutus, is described as “noble”, and yet even he cannot resist the temptation of power. In Brutus’s world, the media controls the masses. Therefore, publicity = power.

2. Can you describe your casting process?
Since Brutus is the protagonist, it was important for me to cast an individual who not only handles the language well, but has natural charisma; he represents a younger generation’s voice. Conversely, Caesar is older, slightly out of touch with the people, and unaware of the growing unrest. Lastly, it was important to me to have a diverse cast in gender, race, and ethnicity so that our school audiences recognize themselves on stage, and as a result, better engage with the material.

3. How is this play still relevant to contemporary audiences?
Julius Caesar’s Rome is very relatable to our own world in which political parties jockey for power in the name of the people. With our recent election, both politicians suffered from the seemingly fickle crowd, so much so that political polls felt unreliable. This has a direct correlation to the biggest dramatic reversal in Julius Caesar when Marc Antony addresses the crowd with, “Friends, Romans, Countrymen...”

4. What would you like students to take away from this performance?
Ultimately, I would like students to witness how power can corrupt even the most honorable of us. This play doesn’t provide answers, but instead is there to provoke thought—can any leader avoid self interest? Is it possible to protect the interests of the ever changing crowd without doing harm? Do the people need protection from themselves?

5. What advice do you have for students that want to pursue careers in theatre?
Good training is the foundation for any theatrical pursuit, this includes on the job training as well as training in an educational setting. Read as many plays as you can get your hands on. See as much theatre as you possibly can. Read reviews of plays, and interviews with theatre artists you admire. Grab a bunch of friends and read plays out loud. Try your hand at writing dialogue. Any activity that gets your creative juices flowing is worthwhile. If you surround yourself with theatre, opportunities will find you.
Objectives:

• Explore/discuss different time periods in which to set *Julius Caesar*.

• Individually or in groups, create costumes for Caesar, Brutus, and Calpurnia based on the time period

• Sketch a scenic design for the play (using the above rendering as an example).

How does the time period in which the play is set affect its meaning? For instance, if we place the action of *Julius Caesar* in 1930s Germany and give Caesar a small mustache, his assassination changes the course of modern history. Eras to consider:

• 2012—USA, President Barack Obama
• 1990—UK, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher
• 1963—USA, President John F. Kennedy
• 1918—Russia, Tsar Nicolas II
• 1793—France, King Louis XVI
• 1781—USA, Gen. George Washington
ACTIVITY: MAKING THE FRONT PAGE

Materials Needed: Tabloid-size paper (11x17), colored pencils or crayons, magazine clippings (optional)

If Shakespeare's plays happened in modern day, how would characters chronicle the events: through a legitimate source such as The New York Times or a propagandist article from a fake news site like InfoWars? In this activity, students will create the front page of a newspaper, magazine (like the example pictured here), or website using the criteria below:

- Using the synopsis, depict at least 3 major events from Julius Caesar
- Choose one thematic topic to tie all events together (Example: Political Revolution)
- On the front cover, each event must include 1 illustration, 1 title, and 2-3 captions
- Name your tabloid or newspaper

ACTIVITY: CONTEMPORARY CAESAR

As Mrs. Battles observed in her interview on page 7, “Rome is very relatable to our own world in which political parties jockey for power in the name of the people.”

After reading or seeing the play, have students brainstorm a list of powerful personalities (not just politicians, but also celebrities, businesspeople, and more) in today’s world. Compare these people to characters in the play.

For example, who in the present day emulates Brutus’ calculated charisma? What if Cassius’ incendiary speeches against Caesar were said with the voice of a modern politician? Imagine Mark Antony’s famed oratory spoken instead by a U.S. President.

Make a cast list with the principal characters and their contemporary equivalents. Then, if time permits, act out a scene or speech with your updated cast.
The Bard of Avon used at least 15,000 different words in his plays and poems (some theorize close to 30,000), compared to the King James Bible, which used only 8,000. In addition, as Michael Macrone, author of the book Brush Up Your Shakespeare! explains, it’s difficult to figure out who first coined a word or phrase, but the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) credits Shakespeare with coming up with over 500 original words.

You can find a great list of Shakespeare’s “Frequently Encountered Words” on the Shakespeare’s Words website: [http://www.shakespeareswords.com/FEW](http://www.shakespeareswords.com/FEW)

**ACTIVITY: A WORD FROM THE BARD**

Materials needed: Handout (p. 15), Index cards, large sheets of paper, markers.

- Prior to class, prepare individual index cards based on the handout on page 15.
- Select a time-keeper from the class; he/she/they will also record the team points on the board.
- Divide the class into two to four groups.
- Select a person from each group who will be responsible for putting a hand up when the team has figured out a word. This person will be able to look at the word being drawn in advance, but he/she/they MAY NOT give hints about the word to others on the team, nor tell the player who is drawing how to draw the picture.
- Have teams count off to see who will go first, second, third, etc.
- Post large sheets of newsprint paper and markers in each team’s area. Or use an easel or whiteboard if available.
- Give one member from each team a word to draw from your stack of index cards. Show the word on the card or quietly say the word in the player’s ear. All teams get their word at the same time. They will have 45 seconds in which to draw pictures (à la Pictionary) and guess their word.
- The first team to guess correctly gets a point for the word.
- Give the next player from each team the next word. Repeat until each person has had one or two turns.

**NOTE:** If you wish to simplify the game for younger students or to save time, record the full list of words to be drawn on the board or distribute a list to each team. Students will search for, rather than guess, the word that is being drawn.
Understanding the way Shakespeare structured his verse can be a great tool when trying to unlock more about a character’s emotional state, mood, and intentions. Also, like a musical score, the structural choices Shakespeare made help the reader and/or speaker to naturally feel the tempos and rhythms of the language. There was very little time to rehearse in Shakespeare’s days, so this was a quick way for actors to get inside the minds and hearts of his characters.

Today we speak in what is called prose, “regular” speech that doesn’t have a specific pattern or rhythm to it. While Shakespeare sometimes wrote in prose to denote a lower status (for example, the citizens and Casca speak this way), 95% of *Julius Caesar* is written in a specific type of verse (or poetry), called blank verse. Blank verse is unrhymed iambic pentameter—a line of ten syllables that has a rhythm like a heartbeat. The first syllable (or beat) is unstressed and the second is stressed; this particular pair is called an “iamb.” Here’s a line of unrhymed iambic pentameter from *Julius Caesar* (note the marks of scansion):

```
˘     /     ˘    /   ˘      /       ˘      /       ˘        /
The good is oft interred with their bones.
```

While this is the basic structure of unrhymed iambic pentameter, Shakespeare loved to break his own “rules,” and did so intentionally to indicate a heightened emotional state. For example, Shakespeare adds a syllable to the beginning of one of Cassius’ speeches in Act 1, Scene 2, giving it what is called a “feminine ending” (eleven beats instead of ten):

```
˘      /        ˘    /   ˘        /       ˘          /      ˘      /       ˘
Then, Brutus, I have much mis-took your pas-sion...
```

Some questions to consider when analyzing a line like this with students could be:

- Why do you think Shakespeare chose to end the line with an unstressed syllable? (A “feminine ending?”) What does that tell us about how Cassius feels?
- If iambic pentameter represents a normal heartbeat, how do you think Shakespeare’s language changes when a character is terrified, excited, depressed, angry, etc. (Helpful hint: have students imagine what happens to their heartbeat when they experience these emotions.)

**LITERARY DEVICES IN JULIUS CAESAR**

**SIMILE**: a comparison of two different things that often uses “like,” “than,” or “as.”

“Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world / Like a Colossus…” – Cassius, 1.2

**METAPHOR**: a “condensed” comparison that expresses a complex idea in a precise way.

“So well as I by reflection, I, your glass, / Will modestly discover to yourself.” – Cassius, 1.2

**ANTITHESIS**: setting one idea against another.

“Set honour in one eye and death i’ the other…” – Brutus, 1.2

**DRAMATIC IRONY**: a kind of irony that occurs when the meaning of the situation is understood by the audience but not by the characters in the play.

“So often shall the knot of us be call’d/The men that gave their country liberty.” – Cassius, 3.1

**FORESHADOWING**: an indication of what is to come.

“Beware the ides of March.” – Soothsayer; 1.2

**ALLITERATION**: Repeated consonant sounds.

“The barren, touched in this holy chase, / Shake off their sterile curse.” – Caesar, 1.2

**PERSONIFICATION**: Giving human characteristics to an abstract idea or something which is not human.

“... ambition’s debt is paid.” – Brutus, 3.1

**IMAGERY**: Describing offstage action, encouraging audiences to use their imagination.

“Now could I, Casca, name to thee a man / Most like this dreadful night, / That thunders, lightens, opens graves, and roars / As doth the lion in the Capitol…” – Cassius, 1.3
ACTIVITY: SHARPPENING THE SPEECH

In this activity, students will explore the most famous of Antony’s speeches from both a scholarly and theatrical perspective. This speech can be found in Act 3, Scene 2 of Julius Caesar. It is also available online here: https://goo.gl/wbm1YX

Independently, have students:
• Read the speech aloud.
• Circle any words or lines they don’t understand.
• Examine the action of the play leading up to this speech.

Working in small groups of 3–4, have students identify and discuss any words and lines that have been circled.

Have each group member take turns reading the speech to their peers:
• First Person—take a slight pause each time they reach punctuation marks.
• Second Person—pace back and forth throughout the whole speech.
• Third Person—stay completely still.
• Fourth Person—shout one line of the speech while doing the rest in a whisper.

Discuss how these different vocal & physical choices affect the speech’s meaning & rhythm.

DISCUSSION TOPICS
• In a couple sentences, describe what is happening in the speech.

What is Antony trying to work out in the speech? What does he decide? What discoveries does he make, if any?

ANTONY

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears; I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him. The evil that men do lives after them; The good is oft interred with their bones; So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus Hath told you Caesar was ambitious: If it were so, it was a grievous fault, And grievously hath Caesar answer’d it. Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest— For Brutus is an honourable man; So are they all, all honourable men— Come I to speak in Caesar’s funeral. He was my friend, faithful and just to me: But Brutus says he was ambitious; And Brutus is an honourable man. He hath brought many captives home to Rome Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill: Did this in Caesar seem ambitious? When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept: Ambition should be made of sterner stuff: Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; And Brutus is an honourable man. You all did see that on the Lupercal I thrice presented him a kingly crown, Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition? Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; And, sure, he is an honourable man. I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke, But here I am to speak what I do know. You all did love him once, not without cause: What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him? O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts, And men have lost their reason. Bear with me; My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar, And I must pause till it come back to me.
PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS

• Describe the steps you have taken to make an important decision.

• Someone you trust tells you something bad about someone else you trust. How do you know whom to believe?

• Why do those we see in the world (politicians, for example) sometimes seem to pretend to be something they’re not?

• Name some traits that a great leader should have.

POST-SHOW QUESTIONS

• How were the four themes discussed in this guide (honor, ambition, patriotism, morality) referenced in the performance?

• Which character would you consider to be the most patriotic?

• Characterize yourself as a “thinker” or a “doer.” As such, which character in the play are you most like and why?

• What did you learn from watching the tragedy of *Julius Caesar* that you can apply to how you interact with your family or community?

• Describe a situation in which a politician or a world leader made a decision based on personal beliefs that had consequences for the entire country (ie, starting a war).
mountaineer
fortune-teller
bandit
watch-dog
schoolboy
football
worm hole
horn-book
shooting star
moonbeam
dew-drop
glow
dawn
alligator
lady-bird
luggage
eyeball
love-letter
puppy-dog
farmhouse
bedroom
birthplace
fairy-land
worthless
long-legged
pale-faced
hot-blooded
flea-bitten
green-eyed
upstairs
downstairs
skim milk
obscene
hot-blooded
epileptic
wormhole
household
laughing stock
naked truth
relationship
advertising
assassination
bedazzled
dishearten
enmesh
eventful
eyesore
lackluster
outbreak
quarrelsome
radiance
reclusive
seamy-side
stealthy
submerge
time-honored
undervalued
unmitigated
unreal
well-read
whirligig
denote
gossip
rant