



# JULIUS CAESAR



**EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE**

## Why Bilingual Shakespeare?

The first Shakespeare production I saw that featured Latinx actors and Spanish asides at its center was Oregon Shakespeare Festival's *Romeo and Juliet*. One of my favorite moments as an audience member was hearing the reactions from the bilingual audience and the slightly delayed response of their family and friends that they would whisper a translation to — it was alive, electric, and exciting. It made a play that had lived with me for over a decade new again. So when George Mount approached me in 2017 about whether I would be interested in developing a bilingual script of *The Taming of the Screw* with director Erin Murray, I jumped at the chance. Here was an opportunity to create the magic I experienced in that dark theatre, but to push it to a whole new level: to have the Spanish language and Latinx culture integrated into the classical text, not just in the moments in between.

As someone who travels through her world code-switching (alternating between two or more languages and/or cultures) on a daily basis, I have always had a deep love for language. I love jumping back and forth between rolling my r's in Spanish and my English iambic pentameter. To be bilingual often means that you are always searching for the perfect word or phrase to express yourself or to connect with someone. Language defines so much of how you see your world and how you define it — much like the characters of Shakespeare's imagination. Characters who love language so much that they invent words to fill their ideas and emotions with meaning. The idea of always desiring to connect, to fully express oneself, or to further understand a feeling, has been at the root of our process in developing a bilingual Shakespeare script. How does this word or phrase not only motivate a character when it is said in Spanish, but how does this impact a bilingual actor on a deeper level? How can we truly hold the mirror up to nature?

One unique thing about the Spanish language is that its evolution has not been as drastic as English—meaning that we are closer to speaking the same language of Cervantes than Shakespeare.

Delving into various scholars' translations of Shakespeare's work help me identify with characters in ways that I had never done before. A simple example would be the use of the formal and informal with Shakespeare's you and thou, the separation of the two uses no longer part of the English vernacular. However, in Spanish the use of tu versus usted, is still very present and defining in how people address each other across relationships, class, and power. The one evolution of the Spanish language that does keep popping up is the differences of translations due to national dialects. Within that truth holds the beauty of diversity and ugliness of colonization that Latinx people across Latin America have endured throughout centuries.

When others ask me, "Why bilingual Shakespeare?" my answer has not changed. It is not because it's trendy or cool — it is because this is already who we are.

Shakespeare has always been a celebration of words. "He is translated into over 40 languages!" every language arts teacher and English professor tells us . . . why not hear it?

We have always been a country of multiple languages. From the hundreds of Native languages that have fought to survive (a toast to the Diné with whom we owe thanks for their service as code talkers during both World Wars), to the immigrants that came here looking for new beginnings from every corner of the globe, to the Mexican-Americans that have lived throughout the Southwest since Spanish reign. The fluidity of languages existing in the same space is not only American, but human. It is us. It is the future. Seattle Public Schools has over 20 represented languages, and 49% of students across Washington state speak another language besides English. To quote my collaborator, and [a previous] tour director, Erin Murray, "We are telling Shakespeare's story while treating the script as a living document." Aquí estamos y no nos vamos. Adelante.

— by Ana María Compoy

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# Biography: William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare, widely regarded as the greatest dramatist in the English language, was born in the month of April of 1564 to John Shakespeare, a city councilman and glovemaker, and Mary Arden. He was the eldest son in a family of eight.

Not much is known about William's childhood or education. The local school in Stratford would have provided him with a foundation in classical Latin authors, as was standard in Elizabethan curriculum. In 1582, at eighteen years old, William was married to Anne Hathaway. The marriage was apparently a hasty one, as Anne gave birth to a daughter, Susanna, six months later. Two years later the couple had twins, a son Hamnet and a daughter Judith. After the birth of the twins, records of William cease for several years. These "lost years" have caused speculation among historians and suggestions about his vocation during this time vary greatly. Some say William began his theatrical career minding the horses at the theatre's stables. Regardless of what he was doing, William must have been honing his skills as a writer. No one knows when he began writing exactly, but we do know when people began to take notice.



Above: William's birthplace in Stratford.



Left: Ancient oaks were common in the forrest of Arden near where William grew up. Some still alive today would have been 600 years old during William's lifetime.

Below: King Edward VI Grammar School.



In 1592, theatre records show that William Shakespeare's plays started being performed in London. William joined an acting company called Lord Chamberlain's Men. This company, co-owned by William and several other actors, became a favorite of Queen Elizabeth I and of her successor, James I. Records from the period show that William acted in his own plays, usually as minor characters, as well as in other productions. William Shakespeare's earliest plays were largely comedies and histories. In 1596, William's son, Hamnet, died of an unknown illness.

In 1599, the Lord Chamberlain's Men had gained enough success to fund the construction of their own theater venue, the Globe Theatre. As Shakespeare's career grew, the Lord Chamberlain's Men became one of the most popular theatre groups in London. William's writing also matured as he began writing his great tragedies.

In 1603, with James I's succession to the throne following the death of Elizabeth I, the new king became the official patron of the Lord Chamberlain's Men and the group changed their name to the King's Men. In 1608, the King's Men expanded to purchase the indoor Blackfriars theatre. Shakespeare himself became quite wealthy due to his career success; he made numerous property purchases, including New Place, the second largest house in his hometown of Stratford. He divided his time between London and Stratford, eventually retiring to Stratford. Shakespeare died on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1616. The cause of his death is unknown.



Left: William Shakespeare's plays were performed for Queen Elizabeth I multiple times during her lifetime.



Right: Soon after his coronation, King James I became the official patron of William's theatre company. The interests of the new king are reflected in several of William Shakespeare's plays from that period.

After a prolonged civil war, the brilliant military leader Julius Caesar returns to Rome having defeated the final opposing forces of his rival Pompey. The citizens of Rome, once loyal to Pompey, have rallied behind Caesar and his victorious forces. However, there are factions in the Roman Republic that fear Caesar's power may grow too great and that he will seize control of the government and become a tyrant. Among those opposed to Caesar's perceived ambitions are Casca, Cinna, Trebonius, and, chiefly, Cassius.

During a celebratory event to herald Caesar's triumph, a soothsayer warns Caesar to "beware the Ides of March," a warning about the 15th day of March. Caesar dismisses the prophecy and goes on with the festival.

Meanwhile, Cassius convinces Brutus, a well respected Roman Senator and friend to Caesar, to turn against the power hungry general. During Cassius' persuasion of Brutus, cheers from the crowd in the distance are heard. Casca enters to tell Brutus and Cassius that Mark Antony, Caesar's loyal supporter, had offered Caesar a crown, which Caesar refused three times before succumbing to a fit of epilepsy.

Later in the midst of a fierce and almost supernatural storm, Cassius, Casca and other conspirators arrange to meet with Brutus and finalize the plans for Caesar's assassination. Brutus continues to wrestle with his thoughts of killing Caesar for the good of the Roman Republic. Brutus's wife, Portia, has become aware of his unease and pleads with her husband to take her into his confidence and reveal what weighs so heavily on his mind. Before they can satisfactorily resolve their differences, Cassius and the other conspirators arrive. They agree to kill Caesar in the Senate but not harm the loyal Mark Antony.

The Ides of March arrives and a raging storm alarms Caesar's wife Calpurnia, who pleads with Caesar not to go forth from his house. She cites an ominous dream she has had, and briefly Caesar relents. When the conspirators arrive to escort Caesar to the Senate, they are able to reinterpret Calpurnia's dream from one of dire warning into a promise of blessing to Caesar and Rome if he goes forth. Antony arrives and he, together with Caesar, Brutus, Cassius, and the others, goes to the Senate.

At the Senate the trap is set. Caesar is set upon by the conspirators and falls beneath their swords. His last words as he looks on the face of Brutus, the man who betrayed him, are "Et tu, Brute?" Chaos and fear sweep the masses and the conspirators do their best to calm the panicked. Antony arrives on the scene to find the bloodied body of the fallen Caesar. Not knowing what fate awaits him from the conspirators, he gives himself over to their mercy. Sensing an opportunity to justify their assassination to the public and show the justice of their cause, Brutus spares Antony's life and allows him to speak an oration at Caesar's funeral after Brutus has addressed the crowd.

Brutus' speech before the angry throng of Roman citizens has the effect of swaying them to his position: that Caesar was a tyrant and an immediate threat to the future of the Republic, and therefore had to be eliminated. Antony arrives at the funeral with the body of the slain Caesar. The crowd, convinced by Brutus of Caesar's tyranny, is hostile to Antony, an avowed loyalist to Caesar. In a remarkable feat of rhetoric and persuasive speech, Antony turns the anger of the crowd to sorrow and incenses them against Brutus, Cassius, and the other conspirators. Chaos ensues and the crowd riots. In their fervor for revenge, the mob even attacks innocent citizens whose names are similar to those of the conspirators.

Antony prepares for the ensuing civil war by forming a triumvirate of power with Octavius, Julius Caesar's nephew and adoptive heir, and Lepidus, a general and statesman. Antony has enlisted for political and military strength. Brutus and Cassius also prepare for battle, but internal squabbles and power struggles threaten to tear apart their coalition. As the battle draws near, Brutus is haunted by the spirit of Caesar who prophesies that Brutus will be defeated in the ensuing conflict. Brutus is also personally troubled by news from home relating the horrendous suicide of his wife, Portia.

As the armies clash, Brutus' and Cassius' personal animosities conflate and their armies are defeated. Not wanting to be lead in defeat back through the gates of Rome, both men choose suicide over capture. As the battle subsides, Antony and Octavius find the lifeless Brutus and order him buried with full honors.



### CAESAR AND HIS SUPPORTERS

**Julius Caesar**, an overly powerful general and politician.

**Calpurnia**, Julius Caesar's wife.

**Octavius**, Julius Caesar's great nephew and adopted son. A politician after Caesar's death.

**Mark Antony**, a Roman general, politician, and supporter of Julius Caesar.

**Lepidus**, a Roman military leader, politician, and supporter of Julius Caesar.

### CONSPIRATORS AGAINST CAESAR

**Cassius**, a politician.

**Pindarus**, Cassius' servant

**Brutus**, a politician.

**Portia**, Brutus' wife.

**Lucius**, Brutus' attendant.

**Dardanius**, a soldier in Brutus' army.

**Clitus**, a soldier in Brutus' army.

**Trebonius**, a politician.

**Casca**, a politician.

**Metellus**, a politician.

**Decius**, a politician and general.

**Cinna**, a politician.

### OTHERS

**Artimedorus**, a fortune teller.

**Cicero**, a popular politician and writer.

**Cinna the Poet**, an avant-garde poet.

**Flavius**, a politician.

**Marullus**, a politician.

**Popilius**, a politician.

**Soothsayer**, a fortune teller.



Julius Caesar, painting by Clara Grosch (1892).

# Shakespeare's Rome

When Julius Caesar was assassinated, he had already become a larger-than-life public figure and his death created a vacuum of power that would only be resolved after more than a decade of civil and international war.

These grand and terrible episodes from the pages of history capture our imaginations because they are genuinely personal. The power struggles, betrayals, and loyalties in Julius Caesar and Antony and Cleopatra play out between a web of friends, relatives, and longtime colleagues that are so intricately tangled that it confounds the mind. But these particular pages of history were silent for centuries.

Newly broadened access to Roman texts, art, and architecture played a major role in the European Renaissance. After spending more than 1,400 years preserved in Latin under the care of Catholic clergy, the works of Plutarch were made available to the public in French in 1559 and English in 1579. The new pride for a glorified Roman past altered Europe's literature, art, architecture, and even cuisine. Shakespeare used Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* as the primary biographical source for Julius Caesar, *Coriolanus*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* — pulling some passages directly from the 1579 translation.

But even Plutarch, writing a century after the events of Julius Caesar, was working on the barest of original sources. After finally defeating Mark Antony and Cleopatra, Octavius placed a ban on travel between Egypt and Rome and a massive collection of correspondences and literary work was burned, including writing by Julius Caesar himself.

In recent decades, there has been a wealth of scholarly investigation into this fascinating period of history using newly discovered evidence and critically reassessing existing sources. For instance, Shakespeare did not know that Cleopatra had lived in one of Julius Caesar's estates near Rome with their son, Caesarion, for more than year at the time of his assassination. Or that he drafted and attempted to pass a law that would allow Rome's rulers to enter more than one legal marriage — a law that would have legitimized Caesarion as Julius Caesar's heir instead of his grand-nephew, Octavius, who ultimately followed him as Emperor of Rome.



Vercingetorix Throwing down His Weapons at the feet of Julius Caesar, painting by Lionel Royer (1899).



The Death of Caesar, painting by Jean-Léon Gérôme (1867).

### **Idealism**

Brutus has respect, a comfortable home, a loving wife, and good friends. Yet he willingly risks everything—and ultimately loses everything, including his life—to live up to his ideals.

### **Pride**

Caesar's arrogance is his downfall. A soothsayer tells Caesar, "Beware the ides of March," (1.2.23) but thanks to his hubris, Caesar ignores the warning. Caesar boasts that he does not fear Cassius, despite knowing Cassius' desire to rise against him. Caesar also ignores the warnings of his wife, who tells him of many omens that bode ill for him if he leaves home the Ides of March. Caesar's pride allows him to believe he is invincible, making him an easy target.

### **Greed**

The conspiracy against the politically ambitious Caesar begins to form after other government leaders and prominent citizens perceive him as power-hungry. They believe he will end representative government and rule as a tyrant, consolidating all power in himself.

### **Words as Weapons**

Daggers kill Caesar, but words sharpen the weapons. Consider Cassius's artful use of words to enlist Brutus as a conspirator. Consider, too, the flattery that Decius Brutus uses to persuade Caesar to go to the senate on March 15. Finally, consider Mark Antony's brilliant funeral oration. It turns a crowd sympathetic with the conspirators into an angry mob demanding the death of the conspirators.



While occasionally dissected further, Shakespeare's plays are typically divided into three categories: **Comedy, Tragedy, and History.**

## Comedy

A Shakespearean comedy is not necessarily what a modern audience would expect when they hear "comedy". Whilst there may be some laugh-out-loud moments, the most commonly identifiable traits of a Shakespearean comedy are:

- Young lovers struggling to overcome problems (often thanks to their strict elders)
- Mistaken identities, often involving disguise
- Complex, interwoven plot-lines
- Frequent use of puns
- A happy ending (often involving a wedding)

## Tragedy

While they may feature comedic moments, Shakespearean tragedies boast high-stakes storylines that often involve the death of main characters. The main features of a Shakespearean tragedy are that:

- Characters are impacted heavily by social or societal turmoil
- Themes of inescapable doom
- A noble, but flawed central character that suffers a terrible downfall
- Ends in death

## History

Shakespeare's histories are focused on English monarchs, and were often used to perpetuate Elizabethan propaganda, and influence the perception of royalty. Many historians have suggested there are inaccuracies in the depictions, but the plays have proved influential for centuries in shaping how we view these historical figures.

## Theater Audiences: Then & Now

Audiences in Shakespeare's time behaved much differently than what we think of today when we go to the theater. In general, audiences were much more rowdy and directly involved in the show than modern audiences.

London theaters like the Globe could accommodate up to 3,000 people watching popular plays. With theaters running most afternoons, that could mean as many as 10,000–20,000 people could see a play every week! Shakespeare's audience included the very rich, the upper-middle class, and the lower-middle class. People sought entertainment just as we do today and could afford to spend money going to the theater. Royalty might attend the theater in a private gallery or summon the players to perform at their court, as Elizabeth I and James I did.

To get into the Globe Theatre cost a penny. In Elizabethan England, one penny would buy a loaf of bread, a pint of ale, or a ticket to the theater. Those who paid just one penny were known as "groundlings," because they stood on the ground in what was known as "the yard," which is the area closest to the stage. For another penny, they could sit on a bench just behind the yard. For a penny more, they could sit more comfortably on a cushion. To get into the upper galleries, which were covered and had seats, cost would start at 6 pence.

Since there was no electricity, both the stage and the audience were in broad daylight, allowing actors and audience members to see each other and interact. Shakespeare's soliloquies would be spoken directly to the audience, who could potentially answer back! The audience would move around, buy food and ale in the theater, clap for the hero, boo the villain, and cheer for the special effects. The audience might dance at the end of a comedy along with the characters onstage. If an audience didn't like a play, they might even throw furniture and damage the theater!

Shakespeare used several tricks to gain and hold his audience's attention. His plays rarely begin with main characters onstage; instead a minor character typically begins the first scene. Without lights to dim at beginning of a play, the play simply started when actors walked onstage and started to speak, usually over the audience's noise, as they settled in to watch. The first scene would usually set the mood of the play, but the opening dialogue wasn't vital because it might not be heard.

Another trick that Shakespeare used was to break up the main action of the play with clowning. In most of his plays, there is comic relief in the form of "clown" or "fool" characters sprinkled throughout the show, making jokes or clowning around onstage. This ensured that even during a 3-hour history play, there would be something that appealed to everyone.



A performance of *King Lear* at the new Globe Theatre in London.

Audiences today can learn from Elizabethan audiences about how to watch a Shakespeare play. Here are some tips:

- Remind yourself that the first scene mostly sets the mood of the play and rarely has vital dialogue, so if you miss some of the words at the beginning, that is okay. It can take a couple minutes to adjust to Shakespeare's unusual language. It's a little bit like listening to a friend with a heavy accent speak; at first it can be difficult to understand, but after a minute or two it's easy. Our actors are professionally trained to make sure that you understand the words, so you'll catch on quickly!
- Enjoy the play and feel free to express your enjoyment. Laugh at the clowns, clap for the heroes, gasp at important revelations, and applaud for the actors at the end to thank them for their work. This will keep you engaged in the show and help let the actors know that the audience is paying attention and enjoying the play.
- Remember that in a play, unlike in a movie, the actors can see and hear you too! Even with more sophisticated theater lighting that keeps the stage lit and the audience dim, the actors are often very close to the first few rows, and they can definitely hear the audience. That means please don't talk to your neighbor during the show, don't allow your phone to make noise, and don't text (it lights up your face!) — these can all be very distracting.
- And finally, remember that the theater is for everyone. In Shakespeare's day it was a very affordable form of entertainment that appealed to everyone. Theater is not meant to be only for the upper class, only for college graduates, or only for older people. Shakespeare's plays can speak to you whether you have seen lots of plays or no plays at all, if you're rich, poor, young, old, or if you enjoy cheap jokes, amazing speeches, or action sequences. Shakespeare wrote his plays to be for everyone and that still shows through today.



## Pre-Show Reflection

### Pre-Show Reflection

These questions will help students to think about some of the big ideas behind the play before watching it.

**Have you ever experienced an “omen” or supernatural warning of some sort? Even just a “bad sign” of something to come? Do you pay attention to these things? Why or why not?**

**At the end of the play, Brutus and Cassius both decide that their own personal honor is more important than life. Can you think of anything that you would be willing to die for?**

**The phrase “the ends justify the means” refers to the idea that sometimes a person has to make a tough decision or commit a seemingly bad action (the means) to ensure a good final outcome (the ends). Can you think of a time when you or someone you know had to make a decision where “the ends justify the means”? Did it turn out the way you had hoped?**

**Julius Caesar was a powerful world leader who was loved by some and hated by others. Can you think of other world leaders who fit this description?**



#### From Top to Bottom:

Louis Calhern in MGM's *Julius Caesar* (1953)

*Assasination of Julius Caesar* painting by Vincenzo Camuccini (1804)

Damien Lewis performing Mark Antony from *Julius Caesar* for Guardian (2016)

*The Last Senate of Julius Caesar* painting by Raffaele Giannetti (19th Century)



## Post-Show Discussion

The following questions are to help lead a discussion with your class after seeing the play. For all of these, there are many possible answers and student responses will vary. There is no wrong answer, as long as students use examples from the play to back up their opinions. Some possible responses are provided.

### Which force drives the action of the play, fate or free will?

- Fate! Omens, prophecies, dreams, and seemingly supernatural events suggest that fate determines the destiny of human beings.
- Free will determines destinies! It's Caesar's arrogance, and thereby his decision to ignore warnings that gets him killed, and it is the choice of the conspirators to kill Caesar that drives the action.

### Brutus believed that Caesar would lead to the end of the Republic, while Antony believed he was an honorable man. After hearing their speeches and seeing how the play unfolded, who do you believe was right?

- Antony was right: Caesar refused to become a dictator, but he did want to be a strong leader in Rome. He would have been an excellent leader and it's a shame he was killed.
- Brutus was right: Caesar had already taken too much power in his own hands, and was a tyrant only hungry for more.
- They were both right: Caesar may have been a good and honorable man, but his reign did end the Roman Republic and give way to emperors from then on.

### Think about all of the pairs of friends or lovers in the play – Brutus and Cassius, Caesar and Antony, Caesar and Calpurnia, Brutus and Portia, Antony and Octavius, Caesar and Brutus. Are these relationships about love or friendship? Or are they about political alliances or power?

- None of these pairings are actually friends. They all use each other for political gain or for consolidation of power.
- Portia truly loved Brutus. You can tell, because she committed suicide when she found out her husband was run out of Rome.
- Antony and Caesar were good friends. Antony's speech at his funeral proved that he would risk being killed by the conspirators to bring everyone's favor back to Caesar's side.
- Caesar was friends with Brutus, and the two men cared about each other. Caesar trusted Brutus to the end.

### "In Julius Caesar, many characters manipulate others to do their will. That's just politics!" Do you agree with this statement? Give some examples from the play, and some real-world examples of this phenomenon.

- Cassius convinces Brutus to kill Julius Caesar, because he needs all the support he can get from someone well-liked in the Senate.
- Brutus makes a speech to convince the Romans that Caesar was a tyrant, even though Caesar had never really done wrong by the people.
- Mark Antony convinces the Roman mob that Brutus and Cassius were wrong to kill Caesar, and he incites them to run the conspirators out of the city.
- In real life, lobbyists often try to convince political figures to vote in favor of their cause or industry, usually by donating money to their campaigns.
- In real life, politicians use their speeches to convince the public that their views are the correct ones.

### This play is titled Julius Caesar, but that character dies halfway through! Why do you think the play is named after him anyway? Should it be named after someone else?

- The death of Julius Caesar is the main action of the play, and Caesar is the central character that kicks off all of the other actions.
- Caesar lives on after death, and is in some ways even more powerful because he is no longer a mortal man, but a symbol to rally behind. In this way, Caesar doesn't actually go away when he dies.
- The play could instead be named "Brutus and Cassius," after the conspirators who are the central actors of the play, or just "Brutus" after the most sympathetic character. It would still be an important tragedy, and they both die at the end.
- The play could be named after Mark Antony, since he is in some ways the "winner" in the play.

## Cross the Line: Quotes

### Objectives:

- To introduce Shakespeare into daily lives of students
- Provide a low-stakes physical warm-up

**Time:** 5 minutes

### Student Skills:

- Following directions
- Identifying quotes and phrases

### To Prepare

Ask your students to dress for action and be prepared to sit on the floor. Allow time before and after the activity for moving furniture.

### Instructions

- Push all the desks to the periphery of the room. Have students create two rows facing one another, with about 5 to 7 feet between them. Let the students know that this is a game to be played without talking.
- Tell the students that you will be saying a series of quotes/lines that start with the phrase “Cross the line if you have ever heard . . .” If they have heard the phrase, they should silently cross the line, without making comments about other student’s choices. It is up to the individual to decide if they want to cross the line.
- Feel free to pick and choose from the list, or to reorder the list to suit the class.
- **Variation:** This can be changed by instructing them how to move (slink, hop, run, glide, etc).
- Ask for observations. Tie what they have seen to their perceptions of what they know about Shakespeare.

### Cross the line if you have ever heard . . .

**To be or not to be** — *Hamlet*

**Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?** — *Romeo and Juliet*

**Out! Out! Damned spot!** — *Macbeth*

**Fair is foul and foul is fair** — *Macbeth*

**There is something rotten in the state of Denmark** — *Hamlet*

**Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears**

— *Julius Caesar*

**Double, double, toil and trouble, fire burn, and cauldron bubble**

— *Macbeth*

**A dish fit for the gods** — *Julius Caesar*

**A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse** — *Richard III*

**A plague on both your houses** — *Romeo and Juliet*

**A rose by any other name would smell as sweet**

— *Romeo and Juliet*

**Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio** — *Hamlet*

**All that glisters is not gold** — *The Merchant of Venice*

**All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players**  
— *As You Like It*

**All’s well that ends well** — *All’s Well That Ends Well*

**And thereby hangs a tale** — *As You Like It*

**As dead as a doornail** — *King Henry VI*

**As good luck would have it** — *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

**Beware the ides of March** — *Julius Caesar*

**But screw your courage to the sticking-place** — *Macbeth*

**But, for my own part, it was Greek to me** — *Julius Caesar*

**Discretion is the better part of valour** — *Henry IV, Part One*

**Eaten out of house and home** — *Henry V Part 2*

**Et tu, Brute** — *Julius Caesar*

**Eye of newt and toe of frog, wool of bat and tongue of dog**

— *Macbeth*

**Fie, foh, and fum, I smell the blood of a British man** — *King Lear*

**Flesh and blood** — *Hamlet*

**Frailty, thy name is woman** — *Hamlet*

**For ever and a day** — *As You Like It*

**Foul play** — *Pericles*

**His beard was as white as snow** — *Hamlet*

**I have not slept one wink** — *Cymbeline*

**I will wear my heart upon my sleeve** — *Othello*

**In a pickle** — *The Tempest*

**Love is blind** — *The Merchant of Venice*

**Much Ado about Nothing** — *Much Ado about Nothing*

**Neither a borrower nor a lender be** — *Hamlet*

**Now is the winter of our discontent** — *Richard III*

**Off with his head** — *Richard III*

**Pound of flesh** — *Merchant of Venice*

**Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?** — *Sonnet*

**Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon ‘em** — *Twelfth Night*

**The course of true love never did run smooth**  
— *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

**The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune** — *Hamlet*

**To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there’s the rub** — *Hamlet*

**We few, we happy few, we band of brothers** — *Henry V*

**What a piece of work is man** — *Hamlet*

## Compliments and Insults

### Objectives:

- Help students approach Shakespeare's language as fun and understandable
- Provide a low-stakes physical warm-up

**Time:** 5–10 minutes

### Student Skills:

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases
- Present to the class, speaking clearly

### To Prepare

Ask your students to dress for action and be prepared to sit on the floor. Allow time before and after the activity for moving desks and chairs.

### Instructions

- Have students pair up and look through the list of insults and compliments. They should work together to decide what they might mean — are they insulting or complimentary? — and choose their favorite way to address each other. Then go around the room and hear everyone's lines. Students should stand up to address each other and use their biggest, broadest acting voices!
- Help students reason out what each of the insults or compliments mean. For example, what might it mean if someone was called "unmuzzled"? What about "eye-offending"?

### Opening Phrases

"You are my..."

"Halt! Thou..."

"Never did I see a more..."

"What, ho...?"

### Column A

divine

sweet

fruitful

gentle

sugared

flowering

precious

gallant

delicate

celestial

unmuzzled

greasy

saucy

bawdy

vacant

peevish

impish

### Column B

honey-tongued

well-wishing

fair-faced

best-tempered

tender-hearted

tiger-booted

smooth-faced

thunder-darting

sweet-suggesting

young-eyed

angel-haired

eye-offending

dim-witted

onion-eyed

rug-headed

empty-hearted

mad-brained

### Column C

cuckoo-bud

toast

nose-herb

wafer-cake

pigeon-egg

welsh cheese

valentine

true-penny

song

dogfish

maypole

hedge-pig

pirate

minimus

egg-shell

buzzard

ruffian

*Adapted from activities from Folger Shakespeare*



## Cross the Line: Themes

### Objectives:

- Identify themes
- Relate stories to students' own lives

**Time:** 10 minutes

### Student Skills:

- Listening
- Choice-making
- Observation

### To Prepare

Ask students to dress for action and be prepared to sit on the floor. Allow time before and after the activity for moving furniture.

### Instructions

- Push all the desks to the periphery of the room. Have students create two rows facing one another, with 7–10 feet between them. Point out that there is an imaginary line in the middle, between the two rows. Tell the students that this is a game to be played without talking.
- Tell the students that you are going to be saying a series of quotes/phrases that start with the instruction phrase, “Cross the line if . . .”
- Ask for observations. What did the students find surprising?

### Cross the line if . . .

- . . . if you have ever been part of a secret club or organization.
- . . . if you have delivered a persuasive speech.
- . . . if you have ever ignored good advice.
- . . . if you have ever been betrayed by a friend.
- . . . if you have ever been pushed by a friend to do something that seemed like a bad idea.

# The Art of Tableaux

## Objectives:

- Physicalize Shakespeare's stories
- Identify key characters in a frozen moment

**Time:** 30 minutes

## Student Skills:

- Listening
- Taking direction
- Working together

## Definition

A tableau is a frozen picture of people in motion.

## Partner Tableaux — sculpting

- Divide students into pairs. Have them all work (space permitted) on one side of the room.
- Number the students 1 and 2. Student 1 acts as the sculptor, Student 2 acts as the clay. Student 1 then “sculpts” student 2 into an image on the theme of *AMBITION*. This should take no more than two minutes.
- When all pairs have finished, have all of students 1 cross to the other side to observe their work as a whole. Students 2 stay frozen.
- Ask for feedback from the sculptors: What do they see?
- What could make a stronger picture?
- The 2 students then have their turn sculpting the 1 students. This time have students create a statue on the theme of *DESPAIR*.
- When all students 1 have been sculpted, have all of students 2 cross to the other side to observe their work as a whole. Students 1 stay frozen.
- Again ask the sculptors to observe each others’ work and discuss what they see.

## Group Tableaux — the physical scene

Now we are going to relate the tableau experience to the scenes in the play.

- Explain to your students that they are now going to work in larger groups, taking on specific characters and situations found in a specific scene from *Julius Caesar*. The whole process is collaborative. They will have 5–10 minutes to work on their tableaux. Then each tableau will be shared with the class.
- Explain to your students that the tableau’s objective is to clearly tell the main event in the scene. Each character should have his/her own distinct reaction to the situation.
- Assign each group a specific moment in the play.
- When these are shared, please do the tableaux in chronological order, as they appear in the play.

## Scenes from Julius Caesar

- The Soothsayer telling Caesar “beware the ides of March”.
- Cassius convincing Brutus to kill Caesar.
- The Conspirators murdering Caesar.
- Mark Antony incensing the crowd to rise against the Conspirators during Caesar’s funeral.
- The clash of Mark Antony versus Brutus, while Brutus is haunted by the spirit of Caesar.

## Discussion Questions

As each group shows their tableau, discuss the following questions:

- Who are the characters in this scene? How can you tell?
- How does each character feel about this moment?
- What do you think is about to happen, if we pressed “play” on this frozen picture?

# Power of Persuasion

**Time:** 15-20 minutes

**Materials:** Printed copies of two speeches

**Learning Standards:** Delineate a speaker's argument, determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, analyze how an author contrasts the points of view of different characters.

## Overview

So much of Julius Caesar is about persuasion, getting people on your side and dissuading them from an opposing view point. Cassius convinces Brutus to join the conspirators against Caesar. Portia wants Brutus and Mark Antony after Caesar's assassination. The act of persuading someone is about getting them on your side.

## Instructions

1. Have all the students in the class stand in the middle of the room. Tell them that they are all angry Romans, who have just been told that Caesar has been stabbed by the Senate.
2. Ask for one volunteer who will start off playing Brutus. Have them walk to the opposite end of the room. Give them a copy of the famous Brutus speech and have them begin reading it, one stanza at a time. Ask them in this speech to try and persuade other classmates that Caesar was a tyrant, and that the Senate was justified in assassinating him.
3. As the "Brutus" reads the script, have each student decide when they — as a Roman — are convinced. Once they are convinced, have them walk across the room and stand by Brutus.
4. Once a Roman joins Brutus on the opposite side of the room, they are invited to take over and read a stanza from the speech, passing the paper around to give multiple students an opportunity to play Brutus and attempt to convince other students.
5. Once the Brutus speech is finished, repeat this activity by having a student walk to the far opposite side of the room and begin reading the famous Antony speech (cut slightly for time). They will try to convince the Romans that Caesar was not, in fact, a tyrant, and Brutus and Cassius were wrong.
6. Finish the speech, and note how many people are on each side of the room, and if any are left standing in the middle of the room where they started. Then as a class, discuss the following questions.

## Discussion Questions

1. For the Romans — which parts of the speeches did you find persuasive? Which part(s) specifically convinced you to change sides?
2. For the readers on each side — did it get easier or more difficult as you got further into the speech? Why? Were you surprised at which parts the other Romans found convincing?
3. For those who remained unconvinced by a speech — what might have changed your mind?
4. Was one speech, in your opinion, stronger than the other? Were they both equally convincing?
5. Why are these speeches effective as pieces of persuasive writing? Did you notice any rhetorical devices in them?
6. What other speeches from history did these remind you of?



## Power of Persuasion: 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.

But yesterday the word of Caesar might  
 Have stood against the world; now lies he there.  
 O masters, if I were disposed to stir  
 Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,  
 I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,

Who, you all know, are honourable men:  
 I will not do them wrong; I rather choose  
 To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,  
 Than I will wrong such honourable men.

Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up  
 To such a sudden flood of mutiny.  
 They that have done this deed are honourable:  
 What private griefs they have, alas, I know not,  
 That made them do it: they are wise and honourable,  
 And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.

I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:  
 I am no orator, as Brutus is;  
 But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,  
 That love my friend; and that they know full well  
 That gave me public leave to speak of him:  
 For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,  
 Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,  
 To stir men's blood: I only speak right on;  
 I tell you that which you yourselves do know;

Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor poor dumb  
 mouths,  
 And bid them speak for me: but were I Brutus,  
 And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony  
 Would ruffle up your spirits and put a tongue  
 In every wound of Caesar that should move  
 The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

Here is the will, and under Caesar's seal.  
 To every Roman citizen he gives,  
 To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.

Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,  
 His private arbours and new-planted orchards,  
 On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,  
 And to your heirs for ever, common pleasures,  
 To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.  
 Here was a Caesar! when comes such

## Power of Persuasion: Brutus

Romans, countrymen, and lovers! hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear: believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe: censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge.

If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar's, to him I say, that Brutus' love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: --Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more.

Had you rather Caesar were living and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him: but, as he was ambitious, I slew him.

There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended.

Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

Then none have I offended. I have done no more to Caesar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of his death is enrolled in the Capitol; his glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy, nor his offences enforced, for which he suffered death.

Here comes his body, mourned by Mark Antony: who, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth; as which of you shall not? With this I depart,--that, as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need my death.

# SEATTLE SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

## Mission Statement

With the plays of William Shakespeare at our core, Seattle Shakespeare Company engages our audiences, our artists and our community in the universal human experience inherent in classic drama through the vitality, immediacy and intimacy of live performance and dynamic outreach programs.

## ABOUT US

Seattle Shakespeare Company is the Puget Sound region's year-round, professional, classical theatre. The company's growing success stems from a deep belief in the power and vibrancy of the time-tested words and ideas of Shakespeare and other classical playwrights along with a commitment to artistic excellence on stage. The results have been provocative performances that both challenge and delight audiences while fostering an appreciation for great stage works.

Our combined programs — which include indoor performances, free outdoor productions, regional tours, educator and youth programs — reach across barriers.

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## EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### In-School Residencies, Matinees, and Workshops

- In-School Residencies bring active, customized curriculum into schools across Washington State. Professional teaching artists plan with teachers to tailor each residency to fit the needs and objectives of the classroom. Seattle Shakespeare Company residencies inject vibrant, active exercises into lessons that unlock the text, themes, and actions of a Shakespeare play.
- Student Matinees bring over 3,000 students annually to our mainstage productions in the Seattle Center. Teachers are provided free study guides, and student groups are invited to stay after the show for a free Q&A session with the cast.
- Pre-show and post-show workshops can be booked to accompany mainstage matinees. These workshops include an introduction to the play itself, student activities, and insights into direction and design choices of our specific production.

### Touring Productions

- Fresh and accessible 90-minute productions tour across Washington State each Spring, reaching more than 14,000 students and adults. These nimble productions perform as easily in school gymnasiums as professional theatre facilities. Teachers are provided free study guides and students enjoy free post-show Q&A sessions with the cast.
- Schools have the opportunity to book accompanying in-school residencies with touring productions, led by members of the touring cast and additional teaching artists.

### Camps and Classes

- Our summer "Camp Bill" series in Seattle offers young actors a variety of camps to choose from or combine. Camps range from a One-Week Introduction to a Three-Week Production Intensive, with many options in between.
- Seattle Shakespeare Company occasionally offers adult classes and workshops to our community featuring guest artists who work on our stage.