Julius Caesar Study Guide

Record your answers on a separate sheet of paper. You must answer in complete sentences.

Act I, Sc. 1: A street in Rome

1. Near the end of Scene I, what do Flavius and Marullus plan to do?

2. What worries them about Caesar?

3. Why are Marullus and Flavius determined to destroy the celebration of Caesar’s victory over Pompey?

4. A pun is a word that is used in an unconventional, often humorous way, so as to suggest multiple meanings. Though the use of puns is not generally considered a dramatic technique, Shakespeare does use such word play to define dramatic conflicts. Scan the following sentences for examples of puns. Write down the letters of the following sentences that actually contain puns:
   a. Those new police computers really help take a byte out of crime.
   b. Gary almost lost his head when someone tried to cut in line.
   c. I don’t know why anyone would want to see the rock band Electrified Zombies.
   d. My Dad speaks cross words only when he’s doing the New York Times Sunday Puzzle.
   e. A man looking very down in the mouth tried to make his way to the front of the line.
   f. Because our tiny kitten liked cold-cuts, we named her Deli-cat.
   g. “We broke our necks to get here on time,” Gary said.

Act I, Sc. 2: A public place in Rome

1. Contrast Marc Antony and Brutus using at least three differences about the men.

2. Find and write two examples that Cassius uses to show that Caesar has a “weak character.”

3. Choose two of the following words that best describe Cassius’ tone in his conversation with Brutus:
   helpful  cunning  deceitful  shrewd  humble
   arrogant  premeditated  irrational  loving  manipulative

4. Despite their friendship, why doesn’t Brutus want Caesar to become king?

5. Who does Caesar characterize as having “a lean and hungry” look? Given Caesar’s superstitious nature, how would you expect him to behave in this person’s presence?

6. Who explains the shouts of the distant crowds to Brutus and Cassius? If his account is plausible, what does it say about Caesar?

Act I, Sc. 3: A street in Rome

1. Why is Casca frightened as this scene opens?

2. What does Cassius think the signs mean?
3. Throughout the play so far, we have seen that Cassius doesn’t think too highly of Caesar. Write some of the words/phrases that Cassius has used that show his contempt for Caesar.

4. O, he sits high in all the people’s hearts,
   And that which would appear offense in us,
   His countenance, like richest alchemy
   Will change to virtue and to worthiness.

Who speaks the following quote? About whom is it said? What does it mean?

**Act II, Sc. I: Rome, Brutus’ garden**

1. Throughout this scene, Brutus resents the sneaky way the others are going about things. Remember, he wants to kill Caesar for the good of Rome, and he believes that this noble cause shouldn’t be smeared by “criminal-like” behavior. Give an example when Brutus spoke out against the behavior of the others.

2. Who is the only one that doesn’t seem to want Cicero to be in on the plot?

3. Why do the others pacify him?

4. Why does Cassius plot to kill Mark Antony as well as Caesar?

5. How does Brutus persuade Cassius not to kill Mark Antony? This was a tactical error, and Cassius knew it, but why was he willing to make it?

6. Who volunteers to make sure Caesar goes out to the Capitol the next day?

7. At what time are they planning to meet Caesar?

8. Who is Portia?

9. What does Portia want to know?

10. What is Brutus’ answer?

**Act II, Sc. 2: Rome, Caesar’s house**

1. Caesar does not fear death because
   a. he thinks he is immortal.
   b. it must come to all men.
   c. the fortune tellers say all is well.

2. Why does Calphurnia object to Caesar’s going to the Capitol?

3. Using two or three sentences, describe Calphurnia’s dream.

4. How many ploys does Decius use to get Caesar to go to the Senate? Explain each one. Why do you think Caesar was more ready to believe Decius’s interpretation of the dream than Calphurnia’s interpretation?
Act II, Sc. 3 and 4: A street in Rome and at the house of Brutus

1. In Scene 3, what seems to be the one remaining hope that Caesar may yet be saved?

2. According to Artemidorus, what is it that allows others to plot assassinations?
   a. trust
   b. overconfidence
   c. jealousy

3. In the following quote from Artemidorus, what or who does “goodness” symbolize? What or who does “jealousy’s envious fangs” symbolize?
   My heart grieves that goodness cannot live out of reach of jealousy’s envious fangs.
   goodness =
   jealousy’s envious fangs =

4. What evidence is there that Portia is starting to lose control?

5. Brutus shows himself to be a poor judge of character. How? He also makes several key mistakes. What are they?

Act III, Sc. I: In front of the Capitol building in Rome

1. Who thwarts Artemidorus in his attempt to warn Caesar of the plot against him?

2. What happens to make Cassius believe that the news of their conspiracy has been discovered?

3. Does Cassius give himself half-heartedly to his conspiracy, or does he commit himself fully? Cite evidence from the text to support your claim.

4. What does Metellus Cimber do as a ploy to engage Caesar’s attention?

5. Is Caesar conceited or truly humble? Cite evidence to support your claim.

6. How do the murderers explain the death of Caesar?

7. What does Mark Antony do when he first confronts the conspirators?

8. How do we know that Mark Antony’s show of friendship for the conspirators is just an act?

9. What huge mistake do you predict Brutus makes in this act? Explain your answer.

Act III, Sc. 2: The Roman Forum

1. According to Brutus, what was it that caused him to kill Caesar?
   a. Caesar’s good fortune
   b. Caesar’s valor
   c. Caesar’s ambition
   d. all of the above
2. Brutus implies that anyone who disagrees with the assassination 1) would rather be a slave, 2) would rather not be a Roman, and 3) 
a. doesn’t love his country  
b. doesn’t like civilization  
c. has done Brutus wrong  

3. Brutus suggests that rulers should be willing to...  
a. give their money to the poor.  
b. die if it is best for the country.  
c. kill those who disagree with them.  

4. In his speech, Antony lists three times when Caesar was NOT ambitious. List them.  

5. Antony implies that Caesar’s will  
a. includes gifts for all the common people.  
b. rewards the members of his own family.  
c. includes bad news for all of Rome.  

6. What does Antony really mean when he says Brutus and his friends are “honorable” men?  
a. They are worthy of honor.  
b. They carried out the assassination in a decent and open way.  
c. They are not honorable men.  

7. “Reverse psychology” means suggesting the opposite of what you want someone to do. Find an example of reverse psychology in Antony’s speech. Describe how he used this method to skillfully manipulate the crowd.  

8. Antony does a good job of using pathos to stir the emotions of the crowd. He knows, however, that this alone is not enough to fully commit the crowd to his side. His final strategy is what does it. In this final strategy, Antony appeals to the crowd’s  
a. pity  
b. greed  
c. patriotism  

9. At the end of Scene 2, we learn that Brutus and Cassius have  
a. fled the city in fear.  
b. killed Octavius.  
c. burned Antony’s house.  
d. all of the above  

Act III, Sc. 3: A street in Rome  

1. The angry mob assaults Cinna because  
a. he didn’t answer quickly enough.  
b. he was going to Caesar’s funeral.  
c. his name was Cinna.  

Act IV, Sc. 1: Rome, at Antony’s house

1. Octavius and Antony form a triumvirate with
   a. Lepidus
   b. Flavius
   c. Ligarius

2. The triumvirate seems
   a. cold and ruthless.
   b. anxious to preserve Roman justice.
   c. a close-knit alliance.

3. Name two things that Antony does or says that show him to be a changed man – for the worse.

4. Antony compares Lepidus to a donkey because
   a. he is only useful for doing the work Antony doesn’t want to do.
   b. he is stubborn.
   c. he complains a lot about his work.
   d. he is lazy.

5. Antony compares Lepidus to his horse because
   a. Lepidus can’t do things on his own, but must be told what to do.
   b. Lepidus is a loyal and brave soldier.
   c. Lepidus will eventually be “put out to pasture.”
   d. Lepidus is merely good for carrying loads for others.

6. How is the triumvirate “like the bear” in a bear-baiting?

7. The comparisons that Antony and Octavius use (Lepidus to a donkey and a horse; the triumvirate to a bear) are examples of what figure of speech?

Act IV, Sc. 2: A military camp near Sardis

1. After Brutus and Cassius meet and begin to argue, Brutus suggests meeting privately in his tent instead. Why is this a good idea?

2. Cassius claims he was wronged by
   a. Lucilius
   b. Caesar
   c. Brutus
   d. all of the above

Act IV, Sc. 3: A military camp near Sardis, in Brutus’ tent

1. Cassius claims that Brutus
   a. publicly disgraced a friend of his.
   b. disregarded his requests.
   c. chose the wrong time for disciplining minor offenses.
   d. all of the above
2. Who else does Brutus accuse of taking bribes?
   a. the Sardians
   b. Cassius
   c. Antony
   d. Lucius

3. Whose death has Brutus been sorrowing over? How did she die?

4. The quarrel between Brutus and Cassius at camp near Sardis shows
   a. how the conspiracy is disintegrating.
   b. Brutus’ growing ability to deal with practical problems.
   c. Cassius’ ability to manipulate Brutus.

5. While speaking with Cassius, what military action does Brutus want to take? What is one reason he gives for doing this?

6. Cassius disagrees. What is his idea? What is one reason he gives?

7. Why do you think Cassius gives in to Brutus?

8. What reason does Caesar’s ghost give for coming to visit Brutus?

**Act V, Sc. 1: Near Philippi**

1. At the beginning of the scene, Octavius and Mark Antony clash on military strategy. What conflict of Act IV does this parallel?

2. The four leaders (Octavius, Antony, Brutus, Cassius) meet on the battlefield before the fighting begins. Which statements are true about the purpose of that meeting? (Hint: More than one of these is true.)
   a. It served little strategic purpose
   b. To make bets on the outcome
   c. To insult each other
   d. To get “pumped up” for the battle

3. The final battle takes place on
   a. Caesar’s birthday.
   b. the ides of March.
   c. Brutus’ birthday.
   d. Cassius’ birthday.

4. As you read lines 70-125, there is a feeling that...
   a. both men think they will probably lose the battle.
   b. Brutus is confident of victory, while Cassius is not.
   c. Cassius is confident of victory while Brutus is not.
   d. both men are confident of victory.
Act V, Sc. 2 and 3: On different parts of the battlefield

1. Why does Cassius send Titinius down the hill on horseback?
   a. to find out if the soldiers by his tents are friends or enemies
   b. to break through enemy lines in order to get help from Brutus
   c. to see how the battle is going
   d. to pick up a pizza for his hungry men

2. To whom does Cassius speak his last words?
   a. Pindarus
   b. Brutus
   c. Titinius
   d. Caesar

3. Why does Cassius ask Pindarus to kill him?

4. Why does Titinius commit suicide?
   a. So he would not be taken prisoner by Antony’s men
   b. Peer pressure
   c. To show how much he loved Cassius
   d. He knew he was going to die anyway

5. Describe how Brutus feels about Cassius’ death.

Act V, Sc. 4 and 5: On different parts of the battlefield

1. What does Brutus ask of Clitus, Dardanius, and Volumnius?

2. How do each of the three men respond?

3. How does Brutus finally die?

4. In Antony’s last speech over Brutus’ body, how does Antony compare Brutus to the rest of the conspirators?

5. Who has the last lines in the play? What is significant about the fact that he has the last lines?