Julius Caesar Chunk Journal

Directions: You will be writing SIX CHUNKS for every act in the play (see the prompts below) and they will be due THE DAY AFTER we finish each act. Every chunk is worth 3 points - 1 point for being completed on time and 2 points for content. If you do the math, that means this entire journal is worth 90 points. To get full credit, be organized, properly embed, select powerful quotes, and create insightful commentary. Good luck!

ACT 1: Choose six of the following to answer in complete chunks.

1.1
1. What does this scene reveal about the atmosphere and the political situation in Rome?

2. The Roman crowd will appear several times in the play. What is your impression of them in this scene?

3. Shakespeare uses puns – words having the same sound but different meanings. Give three examples of such puns.

4. At the close of the scene, Flavius compares Caesar to a bird. Say why.

1.2
5. In his first two appearances, what strengths and weaknesses does Caesar reveal?

6. What are you first impressions of Antony? What does Brutus call him?

7. In their long dialogue, what strategies does Cassius use to sway Brutus?

8. Why is Caesar’s comment about his deafness ironic?

9. What do we learn from the first soliloquy of Cassius?

1.3
10. What meanings do the characters give to the images of night?

11. What changes do you see in Casca and Cassius from the previous scene?

ACT 2: Choose six of the following to answer in complete chunks.

2.1
12. How does the setting of this scene contrast with those of Act I?
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14. What conflict does Brutus reveal in his first soliloquy, and what resolution of the conflict does he reach?

15. List three instances in which Brutus overrides the opinions of the other conspirators. Do you think he is right?

16. What reason does Brutus give for not killing Anthony?

17. Interpret Brutus’s statement, “Let’s carve him as a dish fit for the gods, not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds.”

18. Why does Shakespeare include the dialogue between Brutus and Portia at this point?

19. How does the incident with Caius Ligarius reveal character and develop the play’s symbolism?

20. How does Caesar react to the omens and the upheavals?

21. What change does Caesar make in this scene in the way he refers to himself? Why does he make the change?

22. Compare the relationship of Caesar and Calpurnia to that of Brutus and Portia.

23. How does this scene illustrate Cicero’s earlier remark, “Men may construe things after their fashion, / Clean from the purpose of the things themselves”?

24. How does Decius prevail upon Caesar to go to the Capitol?

25. What flaws in Caesar are revealed in his conversation with Decius?

26. What purposes do these two brief scenes serve?

ACT 3: Choose six of the following to answer in complete chunks.

27. What example of dramatic irony appears in the opening lines of this scene?
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29. What traits does Caesar show in dealing with those who approach him in this scene?

30. In the exchange between Caesar and the conspirators, pick out three images of height and lowliness.

31. Look closely at Caesar’s dying words. What do they reveal about him?

32. What is the immediate general reaction to Caesar’s death?

33. What previous event foreshadowed the conspirators’ dipping their hands in Caesar’s blood?

34. What qualities does Antony display as he confronts the conspirators?

35. Brutus disregards the advice of Cassius and allows Antony to speak. Why?

36. What does Antony reveal by his soliloquy after the conspirators have departed?

3.2

37. What is the difference in form between the speeches of Brutus and Antony, and what is the significance of this difference?

38. The plebeian responds to the speech of Brutus thus: “Let him be Caesar.” What does this response indicate?

39. Why does Antony repeatedly claim that “Brutus is an honorable man”?

40. What actions and tricks of Antony’s particularly impress the mob?

41. After reading the two speeches, do you agree with Antony’s statement, “I am no orator as Brutus is,/But(as you know me all) a plain blunt man”?

3.3

42. Why does the mob attack Cinna the poet, and what does this reveal about them?

43. What is the significance of Cinna’s opening speech?
ACT 4: Choose six of the following to answer in complete chunks.

4.1
44. How do you know there has been a lapse of time between Acts III and IV?

45. How do the members of the triumvirate behave in this scene?

46. Contrast the Antony of this scene to the Antony of Act III.

4.2
47. From the dialogue between Lucilius and Brutus, what do you learn about the changed relationship between Brutus and Cassius?

48. What purpose or purposes are served by the long quarrel scene between Brutus and Cassius?

49. Of what does Brutus accuse Cassius?

50. What personal revelation does Brutus make to explain his mood?

51. How does the Brutus-Cassius quarrel compare with that of the triumvirate?

52. In what matter does Brutus again overrule the advice of Cassius?

53. Of what is Caesar’s ghost a symbol?

ACT 5: Choose six of the following to answer in complete chunks.

5.1
54. What evidence do you find in this scene of dissension between Octavius and Antony?

55. What dramatic purpose is served by the exchange of insults among the four generals?

56. What sort of imagery is used in this scene, and why is it appropriate?

57. What new view of life does Cassius express in this scene?

58. What does the farewell dialogue between Brutus and Cassius foreshadow?

5.3
59. What is ironic about the suicide of Cassius?

60. What is the final picture given of Cassius?

5.4
61. What noble gesture does Antony make in this scene?

5.5
62. How does Shakespeare emphasize the greatness of Brutus both before and after his suicide?

63. What purpose is served by assigning Octavius the last words of the play?