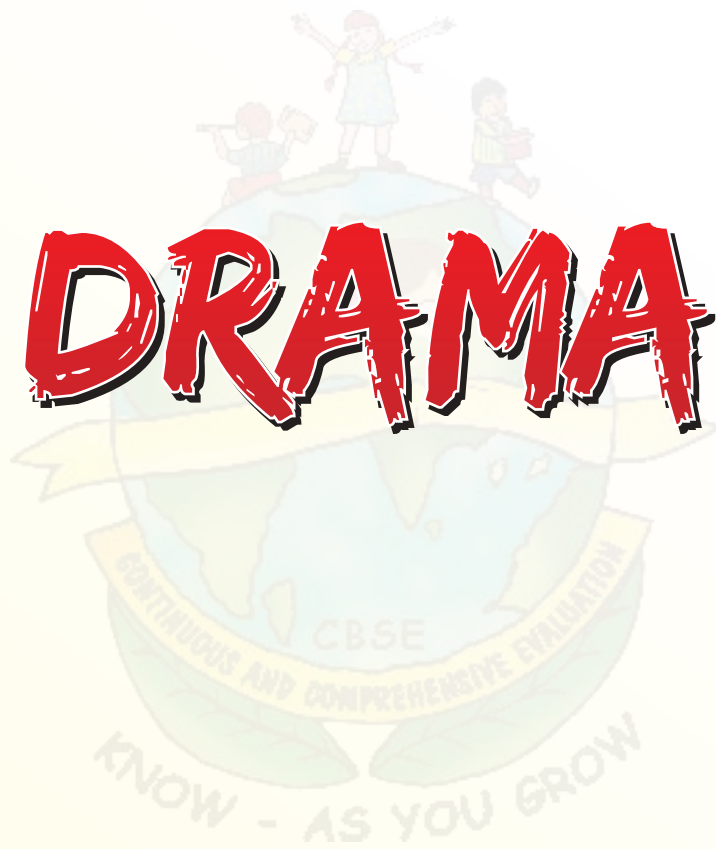


DRAMA



Drama

13 UNIT

D.1 The Dear Departed

by Stanley Houghton

1. Read an excerpt from the diary of a man of 72 years

As I sit here alone and waiting
I gaze at people passing me by.
I try to smile and reach out to them
But no one notices; no one waits.
They look to me like I am nothing-
Are they afraid to be seen saying "Hi" to an old
man like me?

Once my life, it's like a flower,
I had bloomed into a child.
Now, like the dying flower
Waiting for my one day to come-
It will be then that I am gone,
And yet, I still would not have heard that simple word, "Hi"
That for so long my heart had desired.

- What do you think is he feeling?
- What situation do you think leads to people feeling so?
- Can such people be helped? How?



2. Read the news story given below.

India's elderly face growing neglect

By Tinku Ray
BBC News, Delhi

There has been a steady rise recently in reports of cases of elderly being abused, harassed and abandoned in India.



Traditionally older people have been revered in India, signified by the touching of their feet by the younger generation.

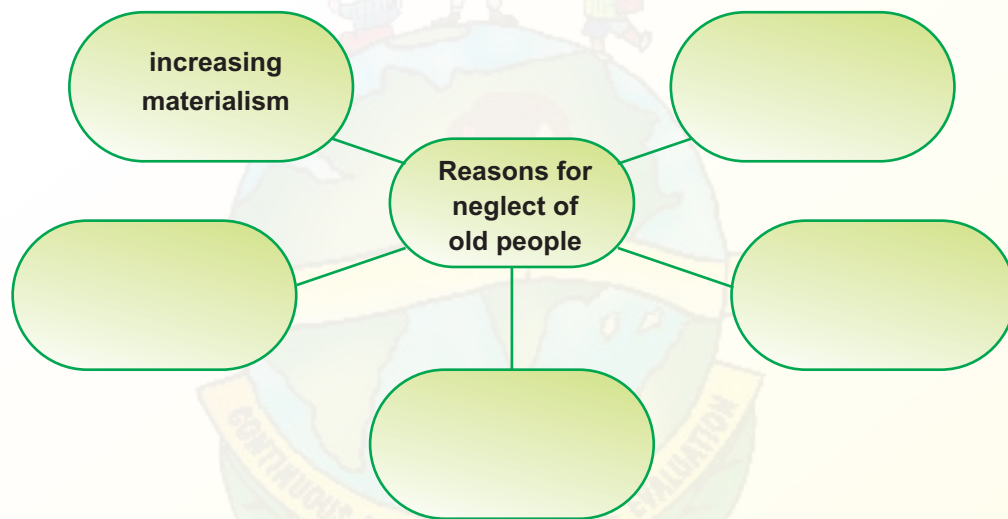
Prime ministers and Presidents have almost always been senior citizens.

Joint family systems - where three or more generations lived under one roof - were a strong support - network for the elderly.

But more children are now leaving their parental homes to set up their own.

Discuss in groups:

- a) What are the reasons for the old people being "abused, harassed and abandoned" in India?
- b) What are the problems faced by the old people as a result?



3. The play 'The Dear Departed' can be performed on the stage. The first step would be a dramatized reading of the play as a whole class activity. Later, your teacher will assign you roles which you will play after an audition. Later the play can be put up on stage.

Characters

Sisters	MRS. SLATER
	MRS. JORDAN
Their Husbands	HENRY SLATER
	BEN JORDAN
VICTORIA SLATER	A girl of ten
ABEL MERRYWEATHER	Grandfather



*(The scene is the sitting room of a small house in a lower middle-class district of a provincial town. On the spectator's left is the window, with the blinds down. A sofa is in front of it. On his right is a fireplace with an armchair by it. In the middle of the wall facing the spectator is the door into the passage. To the left of the door a cheap, shabby chest of drawers, to the right a sideboard. In the middle of the room is a table, with chairs round it. Ornaments and a cheap American clock are on the mantelpiece, in the hearth a kettle. By the sideboard a pair of gaudy new carpet slippers. The table is partly laid for tea, and the necessities for the meal are on the sideboard, as also are copies of an evening paper and of **TIT-BITS**¹ and **PEARSON'S WEEKLY**². Turning to the left through the door takes you to the front door; to the right, up-stairs. In the passage a hat-stand is visible. When the curtain rises Mrs. Slater is seen laying the table. She is a vigorous, plump, red-faced, vulgar woman, prepared to do any amount of straight talking to get her own way. She is in black, but not in complete mourning. She listens for a moment and then goes to the window, opens it and calls into the street).*

MRS. SLATER (sharply) Victoria, Victoria! D'ye hear? Come in, will you?

*(MRS. SLATER closes window and puts the blind straight and then returns to her work at the table. VICTORIA, a **precocious**³ girl often, dressed in colours, enters.)*

MRS. SLATER: I'm amazed at you, Victoria; I really am. How you can **gallivanting**⁴ about in the street with your grandfather lying dead and cold upstairs, I don't know. Be off now, and change your dress before your Aunt Elizabeth and your Uncle Ben come. It would never do for them to find you **in colours**⁵.

VICTORIA: What are they coming for? They haven't been here for ages.

MRS. SLATER: They're coming to talk over poor grandpa's affairs. Your father sent them a telegram as soon as we found he was dead. *(A noise is heard.)*

Good gracious, that's never them. *(MRS. SLATER: hurries to the door and opens it.)* No, thank goodness! It's only your father.

*(HENRY SLATER, a stooping, heavy man with a drooping moustache, enters. He is wearing a black **tailcoat**⁶, grey trousers, a black tie and a bowler hat. He carries a little paper parcel.)*

1 **TIT-BITS** - A British weekly magazine founded by George Newnes in 1881, which was in mass circulation in England.

2 **PEARSON'S WEEKLY** - A British weekly magazine founded by Sir Cyril Pearson (1866-1921) in 1890.

3 **precocious** - a person whose mental attitude is developed beyond his/ her age

4 **gallivanting** - go about seeking pleasure

5 **colours** - wearing gay dress

6 **tailcoat** - a man's black coat worn for formal daytime occasions and having a long rounded and split tail



HENRY: Not come yet, eh?

MRS. SLATER: You can see they haven't, can't you? Now, Victoria, be off upstairs and that quick. Put your white frock on with a black sash.

(VICTORIA *goes out.*)

MRS. SLATER: (to HENRY): I'm not satisfied, but it's the best we can do **till our new black's ready**⁷, and Ben and Elizabeth will never have thought about mourning yet, so we'll outshine them there-

(HENRY *sits in the armchair by the fire.*)

Get your boots off, HENRY; Elizabeth's that prying she notices the least speck of dirt.

HENRY: I'm wondering if they'll come at all. When you an Elizabeth quarreled she said she'd never set foot in your house again.

MRS. SLATER: She'll come fast enough after her share of what grandfather's left. You know how hard she can be when she likes. Where she gets it from I can't tell. (MRS. SLATER *unwraps the parcel HENRY has brought. It contains an apple pie, which she puts on a dish on the table.*)

HENRY: I suppose it's in the family.

MRS. SLATER: What do you mean by that. Henry Slater?

HENRY: I was referring to your father, not to you. Where are my slippers?

MRS. SLATER: In the kitchen; but you want a new pair, those old ones are nearly worn out. (*Nearly breaking down.*) You don't seem to realize what it's costing me to bear up like I am doing. My heart's fit to break when I see the little trifles that belonged to grandfather lying around, and think he'll never use them again. (*Briskly*)

Here! You'd better wear these slippers of grandfather's now. It's lucky he'd just got a new pair-

HENRY: They'll be very small for me, my dear.

MRS. SLATER: They'll stretch, won't they? I'm not going to have them wasted. (*She has finished laying the table.*)

Henry, I've been thinking about that **bureau**⁸ of grandfather's that's in his bedroom. You know I always wanted to have it after he died.



7 **till our new black's ready** - till a new dress of mourning is ready

8 **bureau** - a writing desk with drawers

HENRY : You must arrange with Elizabeth when you're dividing things up.

MRS. SLATER : Elizabeth's that sharp she'll see I'm after it, and she'll **drive a hard bargain**⁹ over it. Eh, what it is to have a low money grubbing spirit!

HENRY : Perhaps she's got her eye on the bureau as well.

MRS. SLATER : She's never been here since grandfather bought it. If it was only down here instead of in his room, she'd never guess it wasn't our own.

HENRY : *(startled)* Amelia! *(He rises.)*

MRS. SLATER : Henry, why shouldn't we bring that bureau down here now? We could do it before they come.

HENRY *(stupefied)* : I wouldn't care to.

MRS. SLATER : Don't look so daft. Why not?

HENRY : It doesn't seem delicate, somehow.

MRS. SLATER : We could put that shabby old chest of drawers upstairs where the bureau is now. Elizabeth could have that and welcome. I've always wanted to get rid of it. *(She points to the drawers.)*

HENRY : Suppose they come when we're doing it.

MRS. SLATER : I'll fasten the front door. Get your coat off. Henry; we'll change it. *(MRS. SLATER goes out to fasten the front door. HENRY takes his coat off. MRS. SLATER reappears.)*

MRS. SLATER : I'll run up and move the chairs out of the way.
(VICTORIA appears, dressed according to her mother's instructions.)

VICTORIA : Will you fasten my frock up the back, mother?

MRS. SLATER : I'm busy; get your father to do it.
(MRS. SLATER: hurries upstairs, and HENRY fastens the frock.)

VICTORIA : What have you got your coat off for, Father?

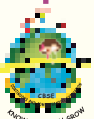
HENRY : Mother and me is going to bring grandfather's bureau down here.

VICTORIA : *(after a moment's thought.)*: Are we pinching it before Aunt Elizabeth comes?

9 **drive a hard bargain** - to argue in an aggressive manner and force somebody to agree on the best possible arrangement.



- HENRY: *(shocked)* No, my child. Grandpa gave it to your mother before he died.
- VICTORIA: This morning?
- HENRY: Yes.
- VICTORIA: Ah! He was drunk this morning.
- HENRY: Hush; you mustn't ever say he was drunk, now. *(HENRY has fastened the frock, and MRS. SLATER appears carrying a handsome clock under her arm.)*
- MRS. SLATER: I thought I'd fetch this down as well. *(She puts it on the mantelpiece.)* Our clock's worth nothing and this always appealed to me.
- VICTORIA: That's grandpa's clock.
- MRS. SLATER: Chut! Be quit! It's ours now. Come Henry, lift your end. Victoria, don't breathe a word to your aunt about the clock and the bureau.
(They carry the chest of drawers through the doorway.)
- VICTORIA: *(to herself)* I thought we'd pinched them.
(After a short pause there is a sharp knock at the front door.)
- MRS. SLATER: *(from upstairs)* Victoria, if that's your aunt and uncle you're not to open the door.
(VICTORIA peeps through the window.)
- VICTORIA: Mother, It's them.
- MRS. SLATER: You're not to open the door till I come down. *(Knocking repeated.)*
Let them knock away. *(There is a heavy bumping noise.)*
Mind the wall. Henry. *(HENRY and MRS. SLATER, very hot and flushed, stagger in with a pretty old- fashioned bureau containing a locked desk. They put it where the chest of drawers was, and straighten the ornaments, etc. The knocking is repeated.)*
- MRS. SLATER: That was a near thing. Open the door, Victoria. Now, Henry, get your coat on. *(She helps him.)*
- HENRY: Did we knock much plaster off the wall?
- MRS. SLATER: Never mind the plaster. Do I look all right? *(Straightening her hair at the glass.)* Just watch Elizabeth's face when she sees we're all in half-mourning. *(Throwing him Tit-Bits.)* Take this and sit down. Try



and look as if we'd been waiting for them. (HENRY *sits in the armchair and MRS. SLATER left of table. They read **ostentatiously***¹⁰. VICTORIA *ushers in BEN and MRS. JORDAN. The latter is a stout, complacent woman with an impassive and an irritating air of being always right. She is wearing a complete and deadly outfit of new mourning crowned by a great black hat with plumes. BEN is also in complete new mourning, with black gloves and a band round his hat. He is rather a jolly little man, accustomed to be humorous, but at present trying to adapt himself to the regrettable occasion. He has a bright, chirpy little voice. BEN sails into the room and solemnly goes straight to MRS. SLATER and kisses her. The men shake hands. Not a word is spoken. MRS. SLATER furtively inspects the new mourning.*)

MRS. JORDAN : Well, Amelia, and he's gone at last.

MRS. SLATER : Yes, he's gone. He was seventy-two a fortnight last Sunday. (*She sniffs back a tear. MRS. JORDAN sits on the left of the table. MRS. SLATER on the right. HENRY in the armchair. BEN on the sofa with VICTORIA near him.*)

BEN : (*chirpily*) Now, Amelia, you mustn't give way. We've all got to die some time or other. It might have been worse.

MRS. SLATER : I don't see how.

BEN : It might have been one of us.

HENRY : It's taken you a long time to get here, Elizabeth.

MRS. JORDAN : Oh, I couldn't do it. I really couldn't do it.

MRS. SLATER : (*suspiciously*) Couldn't do what?

MRS. JORDAN : I couldn't start without getting the mourning. (*Glancing at her sister.*)

MRS. SLATER : We've ordered ours, you may be sure. (*Acidly*) I never could fancy buying ready-made things.

MRS. JORDAN : No? For myself it's such a relief to get into the black. And now perhaps you'll tell us all about it. What did the doctor say?

MRS. SLATER : Oh, he's not been near yet.

MRS. JORDAN : Not been near?

10 **ostentatiously** - showily



BEN : *(in the same breath)* Didn't you send for him at once?

MRS. SLATER : Of course I did. Do you take me for a fool? I sent Henry at once for Dr. Pringle but he was out.

BEN : You should have gone for another. Eh, Eliza?

MRS. JORDAN : Oh, yes. It's a fatal mistake.

MRS. SLATER : Pringle attended him when he was alive and Pringle shall attend him when he's dead. That's professional etiquette.

BEN : Well, you know your own business best, but-

MRS. JORDAN : Yes-it's a fatal mistake.

MRS. SLATER : Don't talk so silly, Elizabeth. What good could a doctor have done?

MRS. JORDAN : Look at the many cases of persons being restored to life hours after they were thought to be 'gone'.

HENRY : That's when they've been drowned. Your father wasn't drowned, Elizabeth.

BEN : *(humorously)* There wasn't much fear of that. If there was one thing he couldn't bear, it was water. *(He laughs, but no else does.)*

MRS. JORDAN *(pained)* : BEN!
(BEN is crushed at once.)

MRS. SLATER *(piqued)*¹¹ : I'm sure he washed regular enough.

MRS. JORDAN : If he did take a drop too much at times, we'll not dwell on that, now.

MRS. SLATER : Father had been 'merry' this morning. He went out soon after breakfast to pay his insurance.

BEN : My word, its a good thing he did.

MRS. JORDAN : He always was thoughtful in that way. He was too honourable to have 'gone' without paying his premium.

MRS. SLATER : Well, he must have gone round to the 'Ring-o'-Bells' afterwards, for he came in **as merry as a sandboy**¹². I says, 'We're only waiting for Henry to start dinner'. 'Dinner', he says 'I don't want no dinner. I'm going to bed!'

BEN : *(shaking his head)* Ah! Dear, dear.



11 **piqued** - experienced indignation

12 **as merry as a sandboy** - extremely happy and care free

HENRY : And when I came in I found him undressed sure enough and snug in bed. *(He rises and stands on the hearthrug.)*

MRS. JORDAN : *(definitely)*

Yes, he'd had a 'warning'. I'm sure of that. Did he know you?

HENRY : Yes. He spoke to me.

MRS. JORDAN : Did he say he'd had a 'warning'?

HENRY : No. He said, 'Henry, would you mind taking my boots off? I forgot before I got into bed'.

MRS. JORDAN : He must have been wandering.

HENRY : No, he'd got 'em on all right.

MRS. SLATER : And when we'd finished dinner I thought I'd take up a bit of something on a tray. He was lying there for all the world as if he was asleep, so I put the tray down on the bureau -(correcting herself) on the chest of drawers - and went to waken him. *(A pause.)* He was quite cold.

HENRY : Then I heard Amelia calling for me, and I ran upstairs.

MRS. SLATER : Of course we could do nothing.

MRS. JORDAN : He was 'gone'?

HENRY : There wasn't any doubt.

MRS. JORDAN : I always knew he'd go sudden in the end.

(A pause. They -wipe their eyes and sniff back tears.)

MRS. SLATER : *(rising briskly at length: in a business-like tone)*

Well, will you go up and look at him now, or shall we have tea?

MRS. JORDAN : What do you say, Ben?

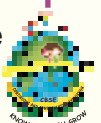
BEN : I'm not particular.

MRS. JORDAN : *(surveying, the table)* Well, then, if the kettle's ready we may as well have tea first.

(MRS. SLATER puts the kettle on the fire and gets tea ready.)

HENRY : One thing we may as well decide now; the announcement in the papers.

MRS. JORDAN : I was thinking of that. What would you put?



MRS. SLATER : At the residence of his daughter, 235 Cornbank Street, etc.

HENRY : You wouldn't care for a bit of poetry?

MRS. JORDAN : I like 'Never Forgotten'. It's refined.

HENRY : Yes, but it's rather soon for that.

BEN : You couldn't very well have forgot him the day after.

MRS. SLATER : I always fancy, 'A loving husband, a kind father, and a faithful friend'.

BEN : (*doubtfully*) Do you think that's right?

HENRY : I don't think it matters whether it's right or not.

MRS. JORDAN : No, it's more for the look of the thing.

HENRY : I saw a verse in the Evening News yesterday. Proper poetry it was- it rhymed. (*He gets the paper and reads.*)

'Despised and forgotten by some you may be, But the spot that contains you is sacred to we.'

MRS. JORDAN : That'll never do. You don't say 'scared to we'.

HENRY : It's in the paper.

MRS. SLATER : You wouldn't say it if you were speaking properly, but it's different in poetry.

HENRY : **Poetic license**¹³, you know.

MRS. JORDAN : No, that'll never do. We want a verse that says how much we loved him and refers to all his good qualities and says what a heavy loss we've had.

MRS. SLATER : You want a whole poem. That'll cost a good lot.

MRS. JORDAN : Well, we'll think about it after tea, and then we'll look through his bits of things and make a list of them. There's all the furniture in his room.

HENRY : There's no jewellery or valuables of that sort.

MRS. JORDAN : Except his gold watch. He promised that to our Jimmy.

MRS. SLATER : Promised to your Jimmy! I never heard of that.

MRS. JORDAN : Oh, but he did, Amelia, when he was living with us. He was very fond of Jimmy.



MRS. SLATER : Well. (*Amazed.*) I don't know!

BEN : Anyhow, there's his insurance money. Have you got the receipt for the premium he paid this morning?

MRS. SLATER : I've not seen it.

(VICTORIA, *jumps up from the sofa and comes behind the table.*)

VICTORIA : Mother, I don't think Grandpa went to pay his insurance this morning.

MRS. SLATER : He went out.

VICTORIA : Yes, but he didn't go into the town. He met old Mr. Tattersall down the street, and they went off past St. Philip's Church.

MRS. SLATER : To the '**Ring-o'-Bells**'¹⁴, I'll be bound.

BEN : The -Ring-o'-Bells'?

MRS. SLATER : That **public-house**¹⁵ that John Shorrock's widow keeps. He is always hanging about there. Oh, if he hasn't paid it -

BEN : Do you think he hasn't paid it? Was it overdue?

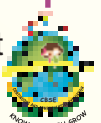
MRS. SLATER : I should think it was overdue.



MRS. JORDAN : Something tells me he's not paid it. I've a 'warning', I know it; he's not paid it.

14 '**Ring-o'-Bells**' - the name of a restaurant

15 **public-house** - a pub, a place that is licensed to sell alcoholic beverages



BEN : The drunken old beggar.

MRS. JORDAN : He's done it on purpose, Just to annoy us.

MRS. SLATER : After all I've done for him, having to put up with him in the house these three years. It's nothing short of swindling.

MRS. JORDAN : I had to put up with him for five years.

MRS. SLATER : And you were trying to turn him over to us all the time.

HENRY : But we don't know for certain that he's not paid the premium.

MRS. JORDAN : I do. It's come over me all at once that he hasn't. ,

MRS. SLATER : Victoria, run upstairs and fetch that bunch of keys that's on your grandpa's dressing table.

VICTORIA : *(timidly)* In Grandpa's room?

MRS. SLATER : Yes.

VICTORIA : I-I don't like to.

MRS. SLATER : Don't talk so silly. There's no one can hurt you. *(VICTORIA goes out reluctantly.)* We'll see if he's locked the receipt up in the bureau,

BEN : In where? In this thing? *(He rises and examines it.)*

MRS. JORDAN : *(also rising)*
Where did you pick that up, Amelia? It's new since last I was here.
(They examine it closely.)

MRS. SLATER : Oh-Henry picked it up one day.

MRS. JORDAN : I like it. It's artistic. Did you buy it at an auction?

HENRY : Eh! Where did I buy it, Amelia?

MRS. SLATER : Yes, at an auction.

BEN : *(disparagingly)* Oh, second-hand.

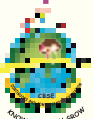
MRS. JORDAN : Don't show your ignorance, Ben. All artistic things are secondhand. Look at those old masters.
(VICTORIA returns, very scared. She closes the door after her.)

VICTORIA : Mother! Mother!

MRS. SLATER : What is it, child?

VICTORIA : Grandpa's getting up.

BEN : What?



MRS. SLATER : What do you say?

VICTORIA : Grandpa's getting up.

MRS. JORDAN : The child's crazy.

MRS. SLATER : Don't talk so silly. Don't you know your grandpa's dead?

VICTORIA : No, no; he's getting up. I saw him.

(They are transfixed with amazement. BEN and MRS. JORDAN left of table. VICTORIA clings to MRS. SLATER, right of table HENRY near fireplace.)

MRS. JORDAN : You'd better go up and see for yourself, Amelia.

MRS. SLATER : Here-come with me, Henry. *(HENRY draws back terrified)*

BEN : *(suddenly)*

Hist! Listen.

(They look at the door. A slight chuckling is heard outside. The door opens, revealing an old man clad in a faded but gay dressing-gown. He is in his stocking feet. Although over seventy, he is vigorous and well coloured; his bright, malicious eyes twinkle under his heavy, reddish-grey eyebrows. He is obviously either Grandfather ABEL MERRYWEATHER or else his ghost.)

ABEL : What's the matter with little Vicky? (He sees BEN and MRS. JORDAN); Hello! What brings you here? How's yourself, Ben?

(ABEL thrusts his hand at BEN, who skips back smartly and retreats to a safe distance below the sofa.)

MRS. SLATER *(approaching ABEL gingerly)* Grandfather, is that you? *(She pokes him with her hand to see if he is solid.)*

ABEL : *(irritated by the whispering)*



Of course it's me. Don't do that, 'Melia. What the devil do you mean by this **tomfoolery**¹⁶?

MRS. SLATER: *(to the others)* He's not dead.

BEN: Doesn't seem like it.

ABEL: You've kept away long enough, Lizzie; and now you've come, you don't seem over-pleased to see me.

MRS. JORDAN: You took us by surprise, father. Are you keeping quite well?

ABEL: *(trying to catch the words.)* Eh? What?

MRS. JORDAN: Are you quite well?

ABEL: Aye, I'm right enough but for a bit of a headache. I wouldn't mind betting that I'm not the first in this house to be carried to the cemetery. I always think Henry there looks none too healthy.

MRS. JORDAN: Well, I never!

(ABEL crosses to the armchair, HENRY gets out of his way to the front of the table.)

ABEL: 'Melia, what the **dickens**¹⁷ did I do with my new slippers?

MRS. SLATER: *(confused)*

Aren't they by the hearth, grandfather?

ABEL: I don't see them. *(Observing HENRY trying to remove the slippers.)* Why, you've got 'em on. Henry.

MRS. SLATER: *(promptly)* I told him to put them on to stretch them; they were that new and hard. Now, Henry. *(MRS. SLATER snatches the slippers from HENRY and gives them ABEL, who puts them on and sits in armchair)*

MRS. JORDAN: *(to BEN)* Well, I don't call that delicate, stepping into a dead man's shoes in such haste.

(HENRY goes up to the window and pulls up the blind. VICTORIA runs across to ABEL and sits on the floor at his feet.)

VICTORIA: Oh, Grandpa, I'm so glad you're not dead.

MRS. SLATER: *(in a vindictive whisper)* Hold your tongue, Victoria.

ABEL: Eh? What's that? Who's gone dead?



¹⁶ **tomfoolery** - foolish behaviour

¹⁷ **dickens** - informal way of saying that you are annoyed or surprised

MRS. SLATER : *(Loudly)* Victoria says she's sorry about your head.

ABEL : Ah, thank you, Vicky, but I'm feeling better.

MRS. SLATER *(to MRS. JORDAN)* : He's so fond of Victoria.

MRS. JORDAN *(to MRS. SLATER)* : Yes; he's fond of our Jimmy, too.

MRS. SLATER : You'd better ask him if he promised your Jimmy his gold watch.

MRS. JORDAN : *(disconcerted)* I couldn't just now. I don't feel equal to it.

ABEL : Why, Ben, you're in mourning! And Lizzie too. And 'Melia, and Henry and little Vicky! Who's gone dead? It's someone in the family. *(He chuckles.)*

MRS. SLATER : No one you know, father. A relation of Ben's.

ABEL : And what relation of Ben's?

MRS. SLATER : His brother.

BEN *(to MRS. SLATER)* : Hang it, I never had one.

ABEL : Dear, dear. And what was his name, Ben?

BEN : *(at a loss)* Er - er. *(He crosses to front of table.)*

MRS. SLATER. *(R of table, prompting)* : Frederick.

MRS. JORDAN *(L of table, prompting)* . : Albert.

BEN : Er-FedAlb-Issac.

ABEL : Issac? And where did your brother Isaac die?

BEN : In-er-in Australia.

ABEL : Dear, dear. He'd be older than you, eh?

BEN : Yes, five years.

ABEL : Aye, aye. Are you going to the funeral?

BEN : Oh, yes.

MRS. SLATER and MRS. JORDAN : No, no.

BEN : No, of course not.

(He retires to L.)

ABEL : *(rising)*

Well, I suppose you've only been waiting for me to begin tea. I'm feeling hungry.



MRS. SLATER : *(taking up the kettle)* I'll make tea.

ABEL : Come along, now; sit you down and let's be jolly.

(ABEL sits at the head of the table, facing spectators. BEN and MRS. JORDAN on the left. VICTORIA brings a chair and sits by ABEL. MRS. SLATER and HENRY sit on the right. Both the women are next to ABEL.)

MRS. SLATER : Henry, give grandpa some pie.

ABEL : Thank you. I'll make a start. *(He helps himself to bread and butter.)*

(HENRY serves the pie and MRS. SLATER pours out tea. Only ABEL eats with any heartiness.)

BEN : Glad to see you've got an appetite, Mr. Merry weather, although you've not been so well.

ABEL : Nothing serious. I've been lying down for a bit.

MRS. SLATER : Been to sleep, grandfather?

ABEL : No, I've not been to sleep.

MRS. SLATER and HENRY: Oh!

ABEL : *(eating and drinking)* I can't exactly call everything to mind, but I remember I was a bit dazed, like- I couldn't move an inch, hand or foot.

BEN : And could you see and hear, Mr. Merryweather?

ABEL : Yes, but I don't remember seeing anything particular. Mustard, Ben.

(BEN passes the mustard.)

MRS. SLATER : Of course not, grandfather. It was all your fancy. You must have been asleep.

ABEL : *(snappishly)* I tell you I wasn't asleep, 'Melia. Damn it, I ought to know,

MRS. JORDAN : Didn't you see Henry or Amelia come into the room?

ABEL : *(scratching-his head)* Now let me think-

MRS. SLATER : I wouldn't press him Elizabeth. Don't press him.

HENRY : I wouldn't worry him.

ABEL : *(suddenly recollecting)* Ay, begad! 'Melia and Henry, what the devil did you mean by shifting my bureau out of my bedroom? *(HENRY and MRS. SLATER are speechless).* D'you hear me? Henry! 'Melia!



MRS. JORDAN : What bureau was that. Father?

ABEL : Why, my bureau the one I bought-

MRS. JORDAN : (*pointing to the bureau*) Was it that one. Father?

ABEL : Ah, that's it. What's it doing here? Eh? (*A pause. The clock on the mantelpiece strikes six. Everyone looks at it.*)

Drat me if that isn't my clock too. What the devil's been going on in this house? (*A slight pause.*)

BEN : Well, I'll be hanged.

MRS. JORDAN : I'll tell you what's been going on in this house. Father. Nothing short of robbery.

MRS. SLATER : Be quiet, Elizabeth.

MRS. JORDAN : (*rising*) I'll not be quiet. Oh, I call it double-faced.

HENRY : Now now, Elizabeth.

MRS. JORDAN : And you, too. Are you such a poor creature that you must do every dirty thing she tells you?

MRS. SLATER : (*rising*) Remember where you are, Elizabeth.

HENRY : (*rising*) Come, come. No quarrelling.

BEN : (*rising*) My wife's every right to speak her own mind.

MRS. SLATER : Then she can speak it outside, not here.

ABEL : (*rising: thumping the table*) Damn it all, will some one tell me what's been going on?

MRS. JORDAN : Yes, I will. I'll not see you robbed.

ABEL : Who's been robbing me?

MRS. JORDAN : Amelia and Henry. They've stolen your clock and bureau. (*Working herself up.*) They sneaked into your room like a thief in the night and stole them after you were dead.

HENRY and MRS. SLATER: Hush! Quiet, Elizabeth!

MRS. JORDAN : I'll not be stopped. After you were dead, I say.

ABEL : After who was dead?

MRS. JORDAN : You.

ABEL : But I'm not dead.



- MRS. JORDAN: No, but they thought you were. (*A pause. ABEL gazes round at them.*)
- ABET: Oho! So that's why you're all in black today. You thought I was dead. (*He chuckles.*) That was a big mistake. (*He sits and resumes his tea.*)
- MRS. SLATER: (*sobbing*) Grandfather.
- ABEL: It didn't take you long to start dividing my things between you.
- MRS. JORDAN: No, father; you mustn't think that. Amelia was simply getting hold of them on her own account.
- ABEL: You always were a keen one, Amelia. I suppose you thought the will wasn't fair.
- HENRY: Did you make a will?
- ABEL: Yes, it was locked up in the bureau.
- MRS. JORDAN: And what was in it, father?
- ABEL: That doesn't matter now. I'm thinking of destroying it and making another.
- MRS. SLATER: (*sobbing*) Grandfather, you'll not be hard on me.
- ABEL: I'll trouble you for another cup of tea, 'Melia; two lumps and plenty of milk.
- MRS. SLATER: With pleasure. Grandfather. (*She pours out the tea.*)
- ABEL: I don't want to be hard on anyone. I'll tell you what I'm going to do. Since your mother died, I've lived part of the time with you, 'Melia, and part with you, Lizzie. Well, I shall make a new will, leaving all my bits of things to whomever I'm living with when I die. How does that strike you?
- HENRY: It's a bit of a lottery-like.
- MRS. JORDAN: And who do you intend to live with from now?
- ABEL: (*drinking his tea*) I'm just coming to that.
- MRS. JORDAN: You know, father, it's quite time you came to live with us again. We'd make you very comfortable.
- MRS. SLATER: No, he's not been with us as long as he was with you.
- MRS. JORDAN: I may be wrong, but I don't think father will fancy living on with you after what's happened today.



- ABEL : So you'd like to have me again, Lizzie?
- MRS. JORDAN : You know we're ready for you to make your home with us for as long you please.
- ABEL : What do you say to that, 'Melia?
- MRS. SLATER : All I can say is that Elizabeth's changed her mind in the last two years. (*Rising*). Grandfather, do you know what the quarrel between us was about?
- MRS. JORDAN : Amelia, don't be a fool; sit down.
- MRS. SLATER : No, if I'm not to have him, you shan't either. We quarrelled because Elizabeth said she wouldn't take you off our hands at any price. She said she'd enough of you to last a lifetime, and we'd got to keep you.
- ABEL : It seems to me that neither of you has any cause to feel proud about the way you've treated me.
- MRS. SLATER : If I've done anything wrong. I'm sure I'm sorry for it.
- MRS. JORDAN : And I can't say more than that, too.
- ABEL : It's a bit late to say it, now. You neither of you cared to put up with me.
- MRS. SLATER and MRS. JORDAN : No, no grandfather.
- ABEL : Aye, you both say that because of what I've told you about leaving my money. Well, since you don't want me I'll go to someone that does.
- BEN : Come Mr. Merryweather, you've got to live with one of your daughters.
- ABEL : I'll tell you what I've got to do. On Monday next I've got to do three things. I've got to go to the lawyer's and alter my will; and I've got to go to the insurance office and pay my premium; and I've got to go to St. Philip's Church and get married.
- BEN and HENRY : What!
- MRS. JORDAN : Get married!
- MRS. SLATER : He's out of his senses. (*General consternation.*)
- ABEL : I say I'm going to get married.
- MRS. SLATER : Who to?
- ABEL : To Mrs. John Shorrocks who keeps the 'Ring-o' -Bells. We've had it fixed up a good while now, but I was keeping it for a pleasant



surprise. (He rises.) I felt I was a bit of a burden to you, so I found someone who'd think it a pleasure to look after me. We shall be very glad to see you at the ceremony. (*He gets to the door.*) Till Monday, then. Twelve o'clock at St. Philip's Church. (*Opening the door.*) It's a good thing you brought that bureau downstairs, 'Melia. It'll be handier to carry across to the 'Ring-o' -Bells on Monday. (*He goes out.*)

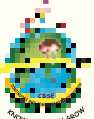
THE CURTAIN FALLS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Stanley Houghton (1881-1913), was a famous English dramatist. He was one of the best of a group of realistic playwrights often called the Manchester School. In every play he sought to present an idea. He had a remarkable gift for dialogue that is evident in *The Dear Departed*. *The Dear Departed* was first produced in Manchester in 1908. Here Houghton satirizes the degradation of moral values in the British middle-class.

4. Given below are the main incidents in the play. They are in a jumbled order. Arrange them in the sequence in which they occur in the play.

1. Victoria is asked to fetch the bunch of keys to the bureau to look for the insurance receipt.
2. Mrs. Slater instructs Victoria to put her white frock on with a black sash.
3. Mrs Slater discovers that grandfather is 'dead'.
4. The Slaters fetch the bureau and the clock from upstairs.
5. The family sits down to have tea.
6. Henry wears the new slippers of grandfather's
7. Grandfather comes to know how his daughters were in a hurry to divide his things between them.
8. Grandfather announces his intention to change his will and to marry Mrs. Shorrocks.
9. Grandfather comes down and is surprised to find the Jordans.
10. They discuss the obituary announcement in the papers and the insurance premium payment.
11. The Jordans arrive and learn the details of grandfather's 'demise' from the Slaters.



5. Answer the following questions briefly.

1. How does Mrs. Slater plan to outshine the Jordans? What does it reveal about her character?
2. Why does Mrs. Slater decide to shift the bureau from grandfather's room before the arrival of the Jordans? How does Henry react to the suggestion?
3. What is the reason for the Jordans taking a long time to get to the house of the Slaters? What does it show about the two sisters' attitude towards each other?
4. What does Mrs. Jordan describe as 'a fatal mistake'? What is the irony in the comment she makes on Mrs. Slater's defense?
5. Ben appreciates grandfather saying 'its' a good thing he did'. Later he calls him a 'drunken old beggar'. Why does he change his opinion about grandfather?
6. What change does grandfather make in his new will? What effect does it have on his daughters?
7. What are the three things that grandfather plans to do on Monday next?

6. Answer the following in detail:

1. Bring out the irony in the title of the play.
2. How does the spat between his daughters lead to grandfather discovering the truth?
3. Compare and contrast Henry's character with that of his wife. Support your answer with evidence from the play.

7. Bring out the traits in Mrs. Slater's personality quoting evidence from the play.

Trait	Evidence from the play
greedy	
Overpowering/ dominating	
Blunt/ straight talking	
impolite	
Insensitive	

8. Answer the following with reference to the context.

1. "Are we pinching it before Aunt Elizabeth comes?"
 - a) What does 'it' refer to here?
 - b) How does Vicky conclude that her parents are 'pinching it'?



- c) Mention the two reasons that Mrs. Slater gives for her action.
 - d) What does it reveal about the difference between the attitude of the elders and that of Vicky?
2. "I don't call that delicate, stepping into a dead man's shoes in such haste."
- a) Who makes this comment?
 - b) What prompts the speaker to say this?
 - c) Bring out the significance of this statement.
3. "Now, Amelia, you mustn't give way. We've all got to die some time or other. It might have been worse."
- b) Who is the speaker of these lines?
 - c) What prompts the speaker to say these words?
 - d) What does he mean when he says 'It might have been worse'?
 - e) What does it reveal about the speaker's character?

9. Writing

Victoria Slater is truly attached to her Grandpa. As she sees the elders in her family quarrel over the inheritance, she is bewildered and upset by their attitude. As Victoria write a diary entry outlining the incident and your feelings. (150 words)

10. Speaking

Grandfather says, "It seems to me that neither of you has any cause to feel proud about the way you've treated me." While it is true that the daughters disregard modesty, decency and filial obligation, grandfather cannot be fully justified in practically disowning his family. Besides, Victoria loves him and he seems to have spared no thought for her feelings.

Divide yourselves into groups of four or five and discuss the statement: **Grandfather is not entirely right in moving away from his daughters.**

After the discussion, a representative from each group will present the views of her/ his group to the class in about 3 minutes.



Drama

UNIT

D.2 Julius Caesar

by William Shakespeare

1. Consult a dictionary and find out the difference between

- a) killing
- b) murder
- c) assassination

2. Popular and powerful leaders have been assassinated in the past and in recent times. Can you name some of them?

-
-
-
-
-

3. Discuss in groups the reasons why the leaders you named in (2) were assassinated. Is assassination the end to a problem?

Have a group discussion on the topic in the context of past/ present day political assassinations.

Introduction:

JULIUS CAESAR is the story of a man's personal dilemma over moral action, set against a backdrop of strained political drama. Julius Caesar, an able general and a conqueror returns to Rome amidst immense popularity after defeating the sons of Pompey. The people celebrate his victorious return and Mark Antony offers him the Crown which he refuses. Jealous of Caesar's growing power and afraid he may one day become a dictator, Cassius instigates a conspiracy to murder Caesar. He realises that to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the Romans, he must win over the noble Brutus to his side for Brutus is the most trusted and respected in Rome. Brutus, the idealist,



joins the conspiracy feeling that everyone is driven by motives as honourable as his own. Ironically, Caesar is murdered at the foot of Pompey's statue.

Some Important Characters

Julius Caesar- The greatest and most powerful of the Romans. Assassinated by Brutus, Cassius and a band of conspirators who feel Caesar is very ambitious and wants the crown.

Calpurnia- Caesar's wife

Mark Antony- Caesar's most loyal friend

Marcus Brutus- Caesar's great friend who joins the conspiracy because of his great love for Rome and for democracy.

Cassius- Inspirer and organizer of the conspiracy

Decius Brutus- Co-conspirator in Caesar's assassination

4. **The play Julius Caesar can be performed on the stage. The first step would be a reading of the play as a whole class. Your teacher will then have an audition and assign you roles. Later the play can be put up on the stage.**

Given below are some suggestions and sites which may be visited for instructions regarding set-design, costumes and direction.

<http://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/>

<http://shakespeare.palomar.edu/theatre.htm>

<http://www.cummingsstudyguides.net/xGlobe.html>

<http://www.shakespearetheatre.org/plays/details.aspx?id=115>

<http://www.zunal.com/process.php?w=56091>

Act II Scene II

Caesar's house.

Thunder and lightning. Enter CAESAR in his night-gown

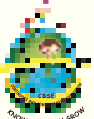
CAESAR Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace to-night:

Thrice hath Calpurnia in her sleep cried out,

'Help, ho! they murder Caesar!' Who's within?

Enter a servant

SERVANT My lord?



CAESAR Go bid the priest do present sacrifice and bring me their opinions of success.

SERVANT I will, my lord

Enter CALPURNIA

CALPURNIA

What mean you, Caesar? Think you to walk forth?

You shall not stir out of your house to-day.

CAESAR Caesar shall forth: the things that threaten'd me

Ne'er look'd but on my back; when they shall see

The face of Caesar, they are vanished.

CALPURNIA Caesar, I never **stood on ceremonies**¹,

Yet now they fright me. There is one within,

Besides the things that we have heard and seen,

Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.

A lioness hath whelped in the streets;

And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead;

Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,

In ranks and squadrons and **right form of war**²,

Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;

The noise of battle **hurtled**³ in the air,

Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan,

And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.

O Caesar! these things are **beyond all use**⁴,

And I do fear them.

CAESAR What can be avoided

Whose end is purposed by the mighty gods?

Yet Caesar shall go forth; for these predictions



-
- 1 **stood on ceremonies** - paid much attention to omens and forecasts
 - 2 **right form of war** - correct battle order
 - 3 **hurtled** - clashed
 - 4 **beyond all use** - most unnatural



Are to the world in general as to Caesar.

CALPURNIA When beggars die, there are no comets seen;
The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

CAESAR Cowards die many times before their deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once.

Of all the wonders that I yet have heard.

It seems to me most strange that men should fear;

Seeing that death, a **necessary**⁵ end,

Will come when it will come.

Re-enter Servant

What say the augurers?

Servant They would not have you to stir forth to-day.

Plucking the entrails of an offering forth,
They could not find a heart within the beast.

CAESAR The gods do this in shame of cowardice:

Caesar should be a beast without a heart,
If he should stay at home to-day for fear.

No, Caesar shall not: danger knows full well

That Caesar is more dangerous than he:

We are two lions litter'd in one day,

And I the elder and more terrible:

And Caesar shall go forth.

CALPURNIA Alas, my lord,

Your wisdom is consumed in confidence.

Do not go forth to-day: call it my fear

That keeps you in the house, and not your own.

We'll send Mark Antony to the senate-house:



And he shall say you are not well to-day:

Let me, upon my knee, prevail in this.

CAESAR Mark Antony shall say I am not well,

And, for thy humour, I will stay at home.

Enter DECIUS BRUTUS

Here's Decius Brutus, he shall tell them so.

DECIUS BRUTUS Caesar, all hail! good morrow, worthy Caesar:

I come to fetch you to the senate-house.

CAESAR And you are come **in very happy time**⁶,

To bear my greeting to the senators

And tell them that I will not come to-day:

Cannot, is false, and that I dare not, falsen:

I will not come to-day: tell them so, Decius.

CALPURNIA Say he is sick.

CAESAR Shall Caesar send a lie?

Have I in conquest stretch'd mine arm so far,

To be afraid to tell **graybeards**⁷ the truth?

Decius, go tell them Caesar will not come.

DECIUS BRUTUS Most mighty Caesar, let me know some cause,

Lest I be laugh'd at when I tell them so.

CAESAR Calpurnia here, my wife, stays me at home:

She dreamt to-night she saw my statue,

Which, like a fountain with an hundred spouts,

Did run pure blood: and many **lusty**⁸ Romans

Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it:

And these does she apply for warnings, and portents,

And evils imminent; and on her knee

6 **in very happy time**- at the right moment

7 **graybeards**- old men (contemptuously dismissing the senators)

8 **lusty**- strong; vigorous



Hath begg'd that I will stay at home to-day.

DECIUS BRUTUS This dream is all amiss interpreted;

It was a vision fair and fortunate:

Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,

In which so many smiling Romans bathed,

Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck

Reviving **blood**⁹, and that **great men shall press**

For tinctures, stains, relics and cognizance¹⁰.

This by Calpurnia's dream is signified.

CAESAR And this way have you well expounded it.

DECIUS BRUTUS I have, when you have heard what I can say:

And know it now: the senate have concluded

To give this day a crown to mighty Caesar.

If you shall send them word you will not come,

Their minds may change.

CAESAR How foolish do your fears seem now, Calpurnia!

I am ashamed I did yield to them.

Give me my robe, for I will go.

Enter PUBLIUS, BRUTUS, LIGARIUS, METELLUS, CASCA, TREBONIUS, and CINNA

CAESAR Good friends, go in, and taste some wine with me;

And we, like friends, will straightway go together.

BRUTUS [Aside] **That every like is not the same, O Caesar,**

The heart of Brutus yearns to think upon¹¹!

Exeunt

9 **blood**- In Decius' explanation the use of the term "blood" is metaphoric. It symbolizes Caesar's spirit or influence

10 **great men shall press... cognizance** - great men shall gather around Caesar and stain their handkerchiefs in his blood which will serve as colours added to a coat of arms, an object of reverence, mementos and a badge of service

11 **That every like is ... think upon**- Brutus's heart grieves when he thinks that being like a friend is not the same as being a friend



Act III Scene I

Rome. Before the Capitol; the Senate sitting above.

Flourish. Enter CAESAR, BRUTUS, CASSIUS, CASCA, DECIUS BRUTUS, METELLUS CIMBER, TREBONIUS, CINNA, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, POPILIUS, PUBLIUS, and others

CAESAR Are we all ready? What is now amiss
That Caesar and his senate must redress?

METELLUS CIMBER Most high, most mighty, and most **puissant**¹² Caesar,
Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat
An humble heart,--

Kneeling

CAESAR I must prevent thee, Cimber.

These **couchings and these lowly courtesies**¹³

Might fire the blood of ordinary men,

And turn **pre-ordinance**¹⁴ and **first decree**¹⁵

Into the law of children.

Thy brother by decree is banished:

If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,

I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.

Know, Caesar doth not wrong, nor without cause

Will he be satisfied.

METELLUS CIMBER Is there no voice more worthy than my own

To sound more sweetly in great Caesar's ear

For the repealing of my banish'd brother?

BRUTUS I kiss thy hand, but not in flattery, Caesar;

Desiring thee that Publius Cimber may

12 **puissant**- powerful

13 **couchings and these lowly courtesies**- bowing and bending

14 **pre-ordinance**- order that has existed from earlier times

15 **first decree**- law passed earlier



Have an immediate freedom of repeal.

CAESAR What, Brutus!

CASSIUS Pardon, Caesar; Caesar, pardon:

As low as to thy foot doth Cassius fall,

To beg enfranchisement for Publius Cimber.

CASSIUS I could be well moved, if I were as you:

If I could pray to move¹⁶, prayers would move me:

But I am constant as the northern star,

Of whose true-fix'd and resting¹⁷ quality

There is no fellow in the firmament.

I was constant Cimber should be banish'd,

And constant do remain to keep him so.

CASCA Speak, hands for me!

CASCA first, then the other Conspirators and BRUTUS stab CAESAR

CAESAR Et tu, Brute¹⁸ ! Then fall, Caesar.

Dies

CINNA Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead! Run hence, proclaim, cry it about the streets.

CASSIUS Some to the common pulpits, and cry out

'Liberty, freedom, and enfranchisement!'

BRUTUS But here comes Antony.

Re-enter ANTONY

Welcome, Mark Antony.

ANTONY O mighty Caesar! dost thou lie so low?

Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils¹⁹,

Shrunk to this little measure²⁰? Fare thee well.

I know not, gentlemen, what you intend,

16 I could pray to move - pray to others to change their minds.

17 resting - permanent

18 Et tu, Brute - even you, Brutus

19 spoils - trophies of war

20 little measure - small piece of ground on which your body lies



Who else must be let blood, who else is rank:

If I myself, there is no hour so fit

As Caesar's death hour, nor no instrument

Of half that worth as those your swords, made rich

With the most noble blood of all this world.

I do beseech ye, if you **bear me hard**²¹,

Now, whilst your purpled hands do **reek**²² and smoke,

Fulfil your pleasure. Live a thousand years,

I shall not find myself so apt to die:

No place will please me so, no mean of death,

As here by Caesar, and by you cut off,

The choice and **master**²³ spirits of this age.

BRUTUS O Antony, beg not your death of us.

Though now we must appear bloody and cruel,

Yet see you but our hands

And this the bleeding business they have done:

Our hearts you see not; they are pitiful;

And pity to the general wrong of Rome--

As fire drives out fire, so pity pity--

Hath done this deed on Caesar. For your part,

To you our swords have leaden points, Mark Antony:

Our arms, **in strength of malice**²⁴, and our hearts

Of brothers' temper, do receive you in

With all kind love, good thoughts, and reverence.

CASSIUS Your voice shall be as strong as any man's

In the disposing of new **dignities**²⁵.

ANTONY I doubt not of your wisdom.

21 **bear me hard** - bear a grudge against me

23 **master** - powerful

25 **dignities** - honours

22 **reek** - stench

24 **in strength of malice** - which may appear to be hostile



Let each man render me his bloody hand:
Gentlemen all,--alas, what shall I say?
My credit now stands on such slippery ground,
That one of two bad ways you must **conceit**²⁶ me,
Either a coward or a flatterer.

That I did love thee, Caesar, O, 'tis true:
If then thy spirit look upon us now,
Shall it not grieve thee dearer than thy death,
To see thy Antony making his peace,
Shaking the bloody fingers of thy foes,
Most noble! in the presence of thy **corse**²⁷?

CASSIUS Mark Antony,--

ANTONY Pardon me, Caius Cassius:
The enemies of Caesar shall say this;
Then, in a friend, it is cold **modesty**²⁸.

CASSIUS I blame you not for praising Caesar so;
But what **compact**²⁹ mean you to have with us?
Will you be prick'd in number of our friends;
Or shall we on, and not depend on you?

ANTONY Therefore I took your hands, but was, indeed,
Sway'd from the point, by looking down on Caesar.
Friends am I with you all and love you all,
Upon this hope, that you shall give me reasons
Why and wherein Caesar was dangerous.

BRUTUS Our reasons are so full of **good regard**³⁰
That were you, Antony, the son of Caesar,
You should be satisfied.



26 **conceit** - consider
28 **modesty** - understatement
30 **good regard** - serious consideration

27 **corse** - corpse
29 **compact** - agreement

ANTONY That's all I seek:

And am moreover suitor that I may
Produce his body to the market-place;
And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend,
Speak in the **order**³¹ of his funeral.

BRUTUS You shall, Mark Antony.

CASSIUS Brutus, a word with you.

Aside to BRUTUS

You know not what you do: do not consent
That Antony speak in his funeral:
Know you how much the people may be moved
By that which he will utter?

BRUTUS By your pardon;

I **will**³² myself into the pulpit first,
And show the reason of our Caesar's death:
What Antony shall speak, I will **protest**³³
He speaks by leave and by permission.

CASSIUS I know not what may fall; I like it not.

BRUTUS Mark Antony, here, take you Caesar's body.

You shall not in your funeral speech blame us,
But speak all good you can **devise of**³⁴ Caesar,
And say you do it by our permission;
Else shall you not have any hand at all
About his funeral: and you shall speak
In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
After my speech is ended.

ANTONY Be it so.

31 **order**- ceremony

33 **protest**- announce

32 **will**- will go

34 **devise of**- think of



I do desire no more.

BRUTUS Prepare the body then, and follow us.

Exeunt all but ANTONY

ANTONY O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,

That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!

Thou art the ruins of the noblest man

That ever lived in the tide of times.

Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!

Over thy wounds now do I prophesy,--

Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips,

To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue--

A curse shall **light**³⁵ upon the limbs of men;

Domestic fury and fierce civil strife

Shall **cumber**³⁶ all the parts of Italy;

Blood and destruction shall be so **in use**³⁷

And dreadful objects so familiar

That mothers shall but smile when they behold

Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war;

All pity choked with **custom of fell deeds**³⁸:

And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,

With **Ate**³⁹ by his side come hot from hell,

Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice

Cry 'Havoc,' and let slip the dogs of war;

That this foul deed shall smell above the earth

With carrion men, groaning for burial.

Exeunt with CAESAR's body

35 **light** - fall

37 **in use** - common

39 **Ate**- Greek goddess of revenge

36 **cumber** - burden

38 **custom of fell deeds**-terrible deeds shall become so familiar



The Forum. Act III -Scene II

Enter BRUTUS and CASSIUS, and a throng of Citizens

Citizens We will be satisfied; let us be satisfied.

BRUTUS Then follow me, and give me audience, friends.

First Citizen

I will hear Brutus speak.

***BRUTUS** goes into the pulpit*

Second Citizen

The noble Brutus is ascended: silence!

BRUTUS

Be patient till the last.

Romans, countrymen, and lovers! hear me for **my cause**⁴⁰, and be silent, that you may hear: **believe me for mine honour**⁴¹, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe: **censure**⁴² me in your wisdom, and awake your **senses**⁴³, 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**⁴⁴ 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.

All None, Brutus, none.

BRUTUS Then none have I offended. I have done no more to Caesar than you shall **do to Brutus**⁴⁵. The **question**⁴⁶ of his death is **enrolled**⁴⁷ in the Capitol; his glory not

40 **my cause**- the cause that I represent

41 **believe me for mine honour**- believe me because you know I am honourable

42 **censure**- judge, criticize me harshly

43 **senses**- understanding

44 **rude**- uncivilised

45 **do to Brutus**- you may assassinate me if I become ambitious

46 **question**- reasons for

47 **enrolled**- recorded



extenuated, wherein he was worthy, nor his offences **enforced**⁴⁸, for which he suffered death.

Enter ANTONY and others, with CAESAR's body

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**⁴⁹; as which of you shall not? With this I depart,--that, as I slew my best **lover**⁵⁰ for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need my death.

All Live, Brutus! live, live!

First Citizen Bring him with triumph home unto his house.

Second Citizen Give him a statue with his ancestors.

Third Citizen Let him be Caesar.

Fourth Citizen Caesar's better **parts**⁵¹

Shall be crown'd in Brutus.

First Citizen We'll bring him to his house

With shouts and clamours.

BRUTUS My countrymen,--

Second Citizen Peace, silence! Brutus speaks.

First Citizen Peace, ho!

BRUTUS Good countrymen, let me depart alone,

And, for my sake, stay here with Antony:

Do grace to Caesar's corpse, and grace his speech

Tending to Caesar's glories; which Mark Antony,

By our permission, is allow'd to make.

I do entreat you, not a man depart,

Save I alone, till Antony have spoke.

Exit

First Citizen Stay, ho! and let us hear Mark Antony.

Third Citizen Let him go up into the public chair;

We'll hear him. Noble Antony, go up.



ANTONY For Brutus' sake, I am beholding to you.

Goes into the pulpit

Fourth Citizen What does he say of Brutus?

Third Citizen He says, for Brutus' sake,

He finds himself beholding to us all.

Fourth Citizen 'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here.

First Citizen This Caesar was a tyrant.

Third Citizen Nay, that's certain:

We are blest that Rome is rid of him.

Second Citizen Peace! let us hear what Antony can say.

ANTONY You gentle Romans,--

Citizens Peace, ho! let us hear him.

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**⁵²
 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**⁵³ 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.
First Citizen Methinks there is much reason in his sayings.
Second Citizen If thou consider rightly of the matter,
 Caesar has had great wrong.
Third Citizen Has he, masters?
 I fear there will a worse come in his place.
Fourth Citizen Mark'd ye his words? He would not take the crown;
 Therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious.
First Citizen If it be found so, some will dear abide it.
Second Citizen Poor soul! his eyes are red as fire with weeping.
Third Citizen There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony.



52 Lupercal- the feast of the god Lupercus. Lupercus was the protector of flocks and herds, the god of fertility
53 disprove- contradict

Fourth Citizen Now mark him, he begins again to speak.

ANTONY But yesterday the word of Caesar might
Have **stood against**⁵⁴ the world; now lies he there.

And none so **poor**⁵⁵ to do him reverence.

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**⁵⁶, **to wrong myself**⁵⁷ and **you**⁵⁸,

Than I will wrong such honourable men.

But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar;

I found it in his closet, 'tis his will:

Let but the commons hear this testament--

Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read--

And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's wounds

And dip their **napkins**⁵⁹ in his sacred blood,

Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,

And, dying, mention it within their wills,

Bequeathing it as a rich legacy

Unto their issue.

Fourth Citizen We'll hear the will: read it, Mark Antony.

All The will, the will! we will hear Caesar's will.

ANTONY Have patience, gentle friends, I must not read it;

It is not **meet**⁶⁰ you know how Caesar loved you.

You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;

And, being men, hearing the will of Caesar,

54 stood against - overcome the opposition of

55 poor - humble

56 wrong the dead - be unjust to Caesar, who has been assassinated, by calling him ambitious

57 to wrong myself - by not speaking what I know

58 you - by allowing you to be deceived by Brutus

59 napkins - handkerchiefs

60 meet - fitting, proper



It will inflame you, it will make you mad:

'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs;

For, if you should, O, what would come of it!

Fourth Citizen Read the will; we'll hear it, Antony;

You shall read us the will, Caesar's will.

ANTONY Will you be patient? will you stay awhile?

I have o'ershot myself to tell you of it:

I fear I wrong the honourable men

Whose daggers have stabb'd Caesar; I do fear it.

Fourth Citizen They were traitors: honourable men!

All The will! the testament!

Second Citizen They were villains, murderers: the will! read the will.

ANTONY You will compel me, then, to read the will?

Then make a ring about the corpse of Caesar,

And let me show you him that made the will.

Shall I descend? and will you give me leave?

Several Citizens Come down.

Second Citizen Descend.

Third Citizen You shall have leave.

ANTONY *comes down*

Fourth Citizen A ring; stand round.

ANTONY If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

You all do know this **mantle**⁶¹: I remember

The first time ever Caesar put it on;

'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent,

That day he overcame the **Nervii**⁶²:

Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through:

See what a rent the **envious**⁶³ Casca made:

61 mantle- cloak

62 Nervii- the most war-like of the Gallic tribes, defeated by Caesar in 57 B.C.

63 envious- malicious



Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd;
 And as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,
 Mark how the blood of Caesar follow'd it,
 As rushing out of doors, to be resolved
 If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no;
 For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel:
 Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him!
 This was the most unkindest cut of all;
 For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,
Ingratitude⁶⁴, more strong than traitors' arms,
 Quite vanquish'd him: then burst his mighty heart;
 And, in his mantle muffling up his face,
 Even at the base of Pompey's statue,
Which all the while ran blood⁶⁵, great Caesar fell.
 O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
 Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,
 Whilst bloody treason **flourish'd**⁶⁶ over us.
 O, now you weep; and, I perceive, you feel
 The dint of pity: these are gracious drops.
 Kind souls, what, weep you when you but behold
 Our Caesar's vesture wounded? Look you here,
 Here is himself, marr'd, as you see, with traitors.
First Citizen O piteous spectacle!
Second Citizen O noble Caesar!
Third Citizen O woeful day!
Fourth Citizen O traitors, villains!
First Citizen O most bloody sight!

64 **Ingratitude**- the blow struck by Brutus' ingratitude

65 **Which all the while ran blood**- which was covered with Caesar's blood

66 **flourish'd**- triumphed



Second Citizen We will be revenged.

All Revenge! About! Seek! Burn! Fire! Kill! Slay!

Let not a traitor live!

ANTONY Stay, countrymen.

First Citizen Peace there! hear the noble Antony.

Second Citizen We'll hear him, we'll follow him, we'll die with him.

ANTONY Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up

To such a sudden **flood of mutiny**⁶⁷.

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**⁶⁸, nor words, nor **worth**⁶⁹,

Action⁷⁰, nor **utterance**⁷¹, nor the power of speech,

To stir men's blood: I only speak **right on**⁷²;

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.

All We'll mutiny.

First Citizen We'll burn the house of Brutus.



67 **flood of mutiny**- wave of violence

70 **Action**- gestures

68 **wit**- intelligence

71 **utterance**- eloquence

69 **worth**- authority

72 **right on**- directly

Third Citizen Away, then! come, seek the conspirators.

ANTONY Yet hear me, countrymen; yet hear me speak.

All Peace, ho! Hear Antony. Most noble Antony!

ANTONY Why, friends, you go to do you know not what:

Wherein⁷³ hath Caesar thus deserved your loves?

Alas, you know not: I must tell you then:

You have forgot the will I told you of.

All Most true. The will! Let's stay and hear the will.

ANTONY Here is the will, and under Caesar's seal.

To every Roman citizen he gives,

To every several man, seventy-five **drachmas**⁷⁴.

Second Citizen Most noble Caesar! We'll revenge his death.

Third Citizen O **royal**⁷⁵ Caesar!

ANTONY Hear me with patience.

All Peace, ho!

ANTONY Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,

His private arbours and new-planted orchards,

On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,



73 **Wherein**- in what way

75 **royal**- generous

74 **drachmas**- silver coins



And to your heirs for ever, common pleasures,
To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.
Here was a Caesar! when comes such another?

First Citizen Never, never. Come, away, away!

We'll burn his body in the holy place,
And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.

Take up the body.

Second Citizen Go fetch fire.

Third Citizen Pluck down benches.

Fourth Citizen Pluck down forms, windows, any thing.

Exeunt Citizens with the body

ANTONY Now let it work. Mischief, thou art **afoot**⁷⁶,

Take thou what course thou wilt!

Exeunt

After the extract:

Antony instigates the mob to revenge. He then sits with Octavius Caesar, Julius Caesar's nephew, coldly calculating how to purge any future threat. Brutus and Cassius fall apart as the idealist in Brutus is outraged by Cassius' practicality. The armies of Octavius Caesar and Antony clash with those of Brutus and Cassius at Philippi and Sardis. Brutus and Cassius are defeated and both commit suicide.

About the author

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) is an English playwright and poet, recognized in much of the world as the greatest of all dramatists. Hundreds of editions of his plays have been published, including translations in all major languages. Scholars have written thousands of books and articles about his plots, characters, themes, and language. He is the most widely quoted author in history, and his plays have probably been performed more times than those of any other dramatist.

5. Answer the following questions by ticking the correct options.

1. When Caesar says "Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace to-night" he sounds



- a) worried
 - b) angry
 - c) joyous
 - d) frightened
2. Caesar's reference to the senators as 'graybeards' shows his
- a) confidence
 - b) cowardice
 - c) arrogance
 - d) ambition
3. Decius Brutus changes Caesar's mind about going to the Senate by appealing to his
- a) ambition
 - b) vanity
 - c) greed
 - d) generosity
4. The offer that Cassius makes to Antony after Caesar's assassination is that.....
- a) the conspirators would like to be friends with him
 - b) he may take Caesar's body to the pulpit and speak to the crowd praising Caesar for his achievements
 - c) his recommendations will be as strong as that of the conspirators while distributing the powers and benefits to friends
 - d) he may join the conspiracy against Caesar
5. Cassius tries to stop Brutus from letting Antony speak at Caesar's funeral as he
- a) knows the Roman mob loves Caesar and Antony
 - b) knows Brutus is not a good orator
 - c) knows they should not have killed Caesar
 - d) knows Antony is a good orator who can sway the mob
6. What prophecy does Antony make over Caesar's dead body?
- a) Romans will see Caesar's ghost roaming on the streets
 - b) Rome will experience fierce civil war in which many people will die
 - c) Rome will be ruled by Ate



- d) Roman women will smile at the death of Caesar
7. After listening to Brutus' speech, the Third Citizen says 'Let him be Caesar'. This clearly shows he
- has not understood Brutus' reason for killing Caesar
 - loved Caesar more than he loves Brutus
 - loves Brutus more than he loved Caesar
 - thinks Brutus killed Caesar to assume power.
8. When Antony calls the conspirators 'honourable men' his tone is
- admiring
 - flattering
 - angry
 - mocking
9. Antony's reference to Caesar's conquest of the Nervii is to
- remind the mob of Caesar's greatness as a warrior
 - make the mob feel afraid of being attacked by the war-like race
 - make the crowd weep for Caesar who died at war
 - stop and collect his emotions as he is feeling very upset
10. Antony's remark **Mischief, thou art afoot,**
Take thou what course thou wilt! , shows him to be
- a ruthless manipulator
 - an honourable man
 - a loyal friend
 - a tactful man
6. Answer the following questions briefly.
- How do the heavens 'blaze forth' the death of Julius Caesar?
 - What does Calpurnia try to convince Caesar of?
 - Why does Calpurnia say Caesar's 'wisdom is consumed in confidence'? What does she mean?
 - What does Calpurnia dream about Caesar? How does Decius Brutus interpret the dream?



- e) What are the arguments put forward by Decius Brutus to convince Caesar to go to the Capitol?
- f) Why is Decius more successful than Calpurnia in persuading Caesar?
- g) What is the petition put before Caesar by the conspirators? How does Caesar respond to it?
- h) Who says "Et tu Brute"? When are these words spoken? Why?
- i) In the moments following Caesar's death what do the conspirators proclaim to justify Caesar's death?
- j) Seeing the body of Caesar, Antony is overcome by grief. What does he say about Caesar?
- k) Whom does Antony call 'the choice and master spirits of this age'? Why?
- l) How do Brutus and Cassius respond to Antony's speech?
- m) Why does Cassius object to allowing Antony to speak at Caesar's funeral? How does Brutus overcome this objection?
- n) What are the conditions imposed by the conspirators before allowing Antony to speak at Caesar's funeral?
- o) When he is left alone with the body of Caesar what does Anthony call Brutus and the others?
- p) What prediction does Antony make regarding the future events in Rome?
- q) What reasons does Brutus give for murdering Caesar?
- r) Who says, "Let him be Caesar"? What light does this throw on the speaker?
- s) Why is Antony's speech more effective?
- t) At the end of the scene what is the fate of Brutus and Cassius?

7. **Julius Caesar and Antony reveal something about their character in their words and actions. We also learn about them from what other people say. Can you pick out the words that describe them from the box given below? Also, pick out lines from the play to illustrate your choice.**

superstitious	arrogant	loyal	clever
overconfident	manipulative	good orator	ambitious
brave	great conqueror	generous	fearless
loves flattery	firm	shrewd	crafty



Person	Extract from play	What it tells us about the character
Julius Caesar	1. the things that threaten'd me Ne'er look'd but on my back; when they shall see The face of Caesar, they are vanished. 2. _____ _____ 3. _____ _____ 4. _____ _____ 5. _____ _____ 6. _____ _____	1. arrogant
Mark Antony	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____ 3. _____ _____ _____ 4. _____ _____ _____ 5. _____ _____ _____	1. Loyal



8. In the play 'Julius Caesar', we meet the Roman mob. We find that as Brutus and Antony speak, the mob displays certain qualities and characteristics.

Given below are some characteristics of the mob. Complete the table by quoting the lines wherein these are revealed.

Words/ actions of the mob	Characteristics
1. _____ _____	Foolish
2. _____ _____	Does not understand the ideals of democracy
3. _____ _____	Emotional
4. _____ _____	Greedy
5. _____ _____	Fickle
6. _____ _____	Violent

9. Antony employs a number of devices to produce the desired effect on the mob. These devices may be described as rhetorical devices. He first speaks in such a manner that it seems to the mob that he is in full agreement with Brutus about Caesar. Then step by step he moves away from Brutus' position, depicting Brutus as a villain and Caesar as a wronged man. Copy and complete the following table by showing how Antony builds the argument in Caesar's favour.

Antony's words	Argument
1. I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.	Does not wish to eulogise Caesar
2. 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.	Seemingly agrees with Brutus
3. _____	
4. _____	
5. _____	



10. Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow:

1. **CAESAR** Cowards die many times before their deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.
 - a) Whom is Caesar speaking to? Why does he say these words?
 - b) What fears has the listener expressed?
 - c) What is the basis for the fears expressed?
2. But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar;
I found it in his closet, 'tis his will:
Let but the commons hear this testament--
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read--
And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's wounds
 - a) Who speaks these words? Where is the speaker at this moment?
 - b) What are the contents of Caesar's will that he is referring to?
 - c) Why does the speaker read Caesar's will to the citizens?
 - d) What is the reaction of the listeners to the reading of the will?

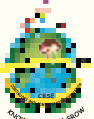
11. Activity

Stage a press conference that takes place shortly after Caesar's death. The "reporters" should have their questions written down ahead of time to ask the students who play the roles of Brutus, Antony and Cassius. These questions should focus on the key events in the play, as well as the characters' intentions.

12. Questions for Further Study :

Given below are some questions based on reading of the play 'Julius Caesar'. These questions are not for testing in the Exam. These are for a deeper understanding of the play and the characters.

- a) Why was the conspiracy to assassinate Julius Caesar hatched?
- b) Was Caesar really ambitious? Find evidence from the play to support your answer.
- c) What was Cassius' motive for murdering Julius Caesar?
- d) Why was it essential for the conspirators to include Brutus in the conspiracy?



- e) What were the mistakes made by Brutus that led to the failure of the conspiracy?
 - f) Comment on Caesar's friendship with Antony.
 - g) Write a brief character sketch of Antony.
 - h) What is the role of Julius Caesar's ghost in the play, Julius Caesar?
 - i) Why does Antony call Brutus 'the noblest Roman of them all'?
 - j) How do Brutus and Cassius meet their end?
13. A reporter covers the event of the assassination of Julius Caesar in the senate giving graphic details and a catchy headline. Write the newspaper report in about 200 words.



