

ANSWER KEY

JULIUS CAESAR

Interactive Novel Study

(For Parents & Teachers)

Act I — Answer Key

Multiple Choice:

1. b 2. a 3. c 4. a 5. c 6. c

Short Answer (Suggested Responses):

1. Cassius uses logical appeals, emotional manipulation, and anecdotes to diminish Caesar. He recounts a story of saving Caesar from drowning and Caesar acting like a 'sick girl' when ill in Spain. By highlighting Caesar's physical weaknesses, Cassius argues that Caesar is merely a mortal man, not a god, and therefore does not deserve absolute power over other noble Romans.

2. Brutus is motivated by a deep sense of honor, patriotism, and concern for the Roman Republic; he is stoic and internalizes his conflict. Cassius is motivated by personal envy, resentment of Caesar's power, and ambition; he is passionate, manipulative, and pragmatic.

3. The plebeians are depicted as fickle, easily swayed, and lacking deep political convictions. In Scene 1, they are celebrating Caesar for defeating Pompey, whom they previously celebrated. This suggests the Roman republic is unstable because the masses can be easily manipulated by whoever is currently in power or speaks the loudest.

4. Casca interprets the omens (lion in the streets, men on fire, owl at noon) as warnings from the gods that something is terribly wrong in Rome. Cassius interprets them as warnings against Caesar's unnatural rise to power. Cicero warns that men interpret things 'after their fashion,' showing that omens are subjective.



Act II — Answer Key

Multiple Choice:

1. c 2. b 3. c 4. b 5. c 6. b

Short Answer (Suggested Responses):

1. Brutus admits he has no personal grievance against Caesar and that Caesar hasn't yet abused his power. However, he compares Caesar to a serpent still in its egg—harmless now, but guaranteed to become dangerous once hatched (crowned). This reveals Brutus's logic is based on preventative action and hypothetical future tyranny, rather than actual crimes committed.

2. Both relationships show wives deeply concerned for their husbands. Portia demands to be treated as an equal partner, proving her strength by stabbing her thigh; Brutus respects her but still hides the truth until the last moment. Calpurnia begs Caesar to stay home out of fear; Caesar initially yields to her, but easily dismisses her concerns when Decius appeals to his ego.

3. Decius manipulates Caesar's ego by reinterpreting Calpurnia's bloody dream as a positive sign of Caesar reviving Rome. He then attacks Caesar's pride by suggesting the Senate might change their minds about crowning him if he stays home because of his wife's bad dreams. This reveals Caesar's tragic flaw: his arrogance and obsession with his public image.

4. Brutus struggles deeply between his private love for his friend Caesar and his public duty to protect the Roman Republic from tyranny. His soliloquy in the orchard shows the heavy toll this conflict takes on his conscience, ultimately deciding that public duty must override personal loyalty.



Act III — Answer Key

Multiple Choice:

1. b 2. c 3. b 4. c 5. b 6. c

Short Answer (Suggested Responses):

1. Caesar compares himself to the Northern Star, claiming he is fixed, immovable, and superior to all other men. This reveals his immense arrogance and hubris right before his death. Ironically, he is entirely mortal and is struck down moments after declaring his invulnerability.

2. Brutus speaks in prose, appealing to the crowd's logic and reason ('Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more'). He is straightforward but cold. Antony speaks in blank verse, using brilliant emotional manipulation, props (Caesar's body, the will), and heavy sarcasm. Antony is more effective because he understands that the mob is driven by emotion and greed, not abstract logic.

3. Antony repeatedly calls the conspirators 'honorable men.' Initially, the crowd takes this literally. However, as Antony lists Caesar's good deeds (refusing the crown, weeping with the poor, leaving money to citizens), the word 'honorable' becomes increasingly sarcastic and biting, eventually turning the crowd against the conspirators.

4. The mob attacks Cinna the poet simply because he shares a name with Cinna the conspirator, even after he explains he is a poet. This scene illustrates the terrifying, irrational, and uncontrollable nature of mob mentality. It shows that Rome has descended into pure chaos and bloodlust, undermining Brutus's goal of a peaceful republic.



Act IV — Answer Key

Multiple Choice:

1. b 2. b 3. a 4. c 5. b 6. b

Short Answer (Suggested Responses):

1. In Act III, Antony appeared as a grieving, loyal friend. In Act IV, as part of the Triumvirate, he is revealed to be ruthless, cold, and power-hungry. He casually condemns his own nephew to death, plots to alter Caesar's will to save money, and treats his ally Lepidus with contempt, comparing him to a beast of burden.

2. The rift is caused by their differing philosophies. Brutus is an idealist who insists on moral purity; he is outraged that Cassius is taking bribes, arguing it taints their 'noble' assassination. Cassius is a pragmatist who believes that in wartime, one must overlook minor offenses to maintain alliances and fund the army.

3. Brutus reacts to Portia's suicide with extreme Stoicism, showing little outward emotion and refusing to dwell on it ('Speak no more of her'). This demonstrates his commitment to Stoic philosophy, which dictates that one must suppress emotion and accept fate, though it also makes him appear somewhat cold.

4. The ghost of Caesar identifies itself as Brutus's 'evil spirit' and promises to see him at Philippi. Symbolically, the ghost represents Brutus's guilty conscience and the inescapable consequences of his actions. It foreshadows his impending defeat and death.



Act V — Answer Key

Multiple Choice:

1. b 2. b 3. b 4. b 5. c 6. c

Short Answer (Suggested Responses):

1. Misinterpretation is fatal in Act V. Cassius's tragic flaw is his poor eyesight and hasty judgment; he misinterprets the scene below, believing Titinius has been captured by enemies when he is actually celebrating with Brutus's victorious troops. This misunderstanding leads directly to Cassius's unnecessary suicide.

2. Cassius dies a somewhat cowardly death, covering his eyes and having his servant stab him with the same sword used on Caesar. Brutus dies a 'noble' Roman death, running onto his own sword held by a loyal servant. Cassius dies in despair over a mistake; Brutus dies accepting his fate and expressing that his motives were pure.

3. Antony's praise ('This was the noblest Roman of them all') seems largely genuine. With Brutus dead, Antony has won and no longer needs to manipulate the crowd. He recognizes that while the other conspirators acted out of jealousy, Brutus truly believed he was acting for the good of Rome. However, it also serves politically to heal the fractured nation by honoring a respected figure.

4. (Answers will vary). A strong argument for Brutus: He is a noble man whose tragic flaw (idealism/naivete) leads him to make disastrous political decisions (sparing Antony, letting Antony speak). A strong argument for Caesar: He is a great leader whose tragic flaw (hubris/arrogance) blinds him to the danger around him, leading to his assassination.

