

# Julius Caesar

Content Area: **English Language Arts**  
Course(s): **Language Arts Literacy II**  
Time Period: **6 weeks**  
Length: **Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

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Students will read and analyze *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*. The students will explore elements of drama, Elizabethan vocabulary, plot, public speaking, close reading, and integrating knowledge through a variety of classroom activities.

## Transfer

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Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Understand the historical context of the play and relate to other texts and current events
- Identify elements of a drama.
- Identify elements of a tragedy.
- Analyze and interpret Shakespeare's language.

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For more information, read the following article by Grant Wiggins.

[http://www.authenticeducation.org/ae\\_bigideas/article.lasso?artid=60](http://www.authenticeducation.org/ae_bigideas/article.lasso?artid=60)

## Meaning

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## Understandings

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Students will understand that...

- The importance of literary elements, such as dramatic irony and foreshadowing, affect the development of the play
- Themes of envy, revenge, ambition, and vanity in Julius Caesar relate to current events
- Shakespeare used particular techniques to develop characters and their relationships

- That ambition and revenge come with negative consequences

## **Essential Questions**

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Students will consider the following questions...

- How are the themes in literature relevant to today's society?
- How does reading enhance our perception and understanding of various cultures both past and present?
- In what ways do ambition, vanity, envy, and revenge affect the choices that one makes?
- Why is Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* a tragedy?
- Are contemporary political figures different from those of the ancient past?
- Are there universal traits for politicians?
- What insight into human nature can we gain by studying William Shakespeare?

## **Application of Knowledge and Skill**

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### **Students will know...**

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Students will know...

- Historical context of play - Students will understand who Julius Caesar was before reading the play
- Dramatic elements - Plot, characters, dialogue, audience, genre, theme, tragic hero, tragic flaw, internal conflict, supporting roles, crisis, climax, catastrophe
- Elements of a tragedy - Downfall of a tragic hero, contrast, fate, the supernatural, suspense, soliloquy, aside, and comic relief.
- Plot details - Act I **Exposition**, Act II **Rising Action**, Act III **The Crisis**, Act IV **Falling Action**, Act V **The Catastrophe - often, the Climax**
- Character development - Revealing character's mood, motivations, attitudes, and feelings of other characters through direct and indirect characterization.
- Themes - envy, revenge, betrayal, power, ambition, greed

## **Students will be skilled at...**

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Students will be skilled at...

- Reading with fluency and comprehension on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical, and personal.
- Identifying and examining literary and dramatic elements: plot, characterization, soliloquy, aside, etc.
- Deciphering Shakespearean language
- Connecting main events and characters in the play to the development of theme
- Defining vocabulary words and improving their understanding of the play through vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the play

## **Academic Vocabulary**

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Academic vocabulary is the language encountered in textbooks and on standardized tests.

- Anticipate
- Background
- Bias
- Distortion
- Individual
- Insight
- Interpretation
- Manipulate
- Perspective
- Analyze
- Integrate
- Evaluate
- Deduce
- Specify
- Investigate

## **Learning Goal 1**

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Students will be able to analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact over the course of the play.

## **Objective 1 - Level 1 and 2**

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SWBAT:

- Read and discuss William Shakespeare's life events.
  - Complete pre-reading activities such as an anticipation guide discussing themes of betrayal, friendship, and ambition.
  - Evaluate Roman society in the past and present as it relates to the setting in the play.
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LA.RI.9-10.6

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetorical devices to advance that point of view or purpose.

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### **Objective 2 - Levels 1 and 2**

SWBAT:

- Identify and discuss plot development.
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LA.RL.9-10.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details and provide an objective summary of the text.

LA.RL.9-10.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create specific effects (e.g., mystery, tension, or surprise).

LA.SL.9-10.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

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### **Objective 3 - Level 2 and 3**

SWBAT:

- Examine the aspects of a tragedy in conjunction with how major characters change over the course of a play.
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LA.RL.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

LA.RL.9-10.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development

over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details and provide an objective summary of the text.

LA.RL.9-10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

## Objective 4 - Level 3 and 4

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SWBAT:

- Form conclusions, compare and contrast, summarize, and write a variety of pieces in response to text.

(throughout novel)

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LA.W.9-10.1.B

Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies, propaganda devices, and using sound reasoning, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

LA.W.9-10.1.C

Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

LA.W.9-10.1.D

Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

LA.W.9-10.1.E

Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented.

LA.W.9-10.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

LA.W.9-10.2.A

Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

LA.W.9-10.2.B

Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

LA.W.9-10.2.C

Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

LA.W.9-10.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.

LA.W.9-10.2.E

Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

LA.W.9-10.2.F

Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the

topic).

- LA.W.9-10.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- LA.W.9-10.3.A Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
- LA.W.9-10.3.B Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- LA.W.9-10.3.E Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
- LA.W.9-10.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- LA.W.9-10.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- LA.W.9-10.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
- LA.W.9-10.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation (MLA or APA Style Manuals).
- LA.W.9-10.9 Draw evidence from literary or nonfiction informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- LA.W.9-10.9.A Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid mythology or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]”).
- LA.W.9-10.9.B Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to nonfiction informational (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning”).
- LA.W.9-10.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- LA.RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- LA.9-10.W.9-10.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

Production and Distribution of Writing

Range of Writing

## **Summative Assessment**

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- End of play test
- Essay
- Journal entries/free writes
- Project
- Reading comprehension quizzes

## **21st Century Life and Careers**

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CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP5	Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
CRP.K-12.CRP6	Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
CRP.K-12.CRP12	Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.

## **Formative Assessment and Performance Opportunities**

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- class discussion
- comprehension questions
- journal entries/free writes
- reading quizzes
- teacher observation
- vocabulary quizzes

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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- Allow students to highlight key points
- Create character word webs and associate dialogue with traits
- Provide adapted versions for the text
- Provide audio of each Act
- Study Guides by Act
- Visual Vocabulary

## **Interdisciplinary Connections**

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- Discuss and Analyze The Art of Performing on Stage
- Discuss Shakespeare's life and how it influenced his work
- Discuss the architecture of The Globe Theater
- Discuss the history of Shakespeare

- Examine and Discuss Social Class and Structure

SOC.6.1.12	U.S. History: America in the World: All students will acquire the knowledge and skills to think analytically about how past and present interactions of people, cultures, and the environment shape the American heritage. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions that reflect fundamental rights and core democratic values as productive citizens in local, national, and global communities.
SOC.6.1.12.A.1.b	Analyze how gender, property ownership, religion, and legal status affected political rights.
SOC.9-12.1.1.1	Compare present and past events to evaluate the consequences of past decisions and to apply lessons learned.
SOC.9-12.1.1.2	Analyze how change occurs through time due to shifting values and beliefs as well as technological advancements and changes in the political and economic landscape.
SOC.9-12.1.2.1	Construct various forms of geographic representations to show the spatial patterns of physical and human phenomena.
SOC.9-12.1.2.2	Relate current events to the physical and human characteristics of places and regions.
SOC.9-12.1.4.1	Take a position on a current public policy issue and support it with historical evidence, reasoning, and constitutional analysis in a written and/or oral format.
VPA.1.1.12.C.1	Analyze examples of theatre's influence on history and history's influence on theatre in Western and non-Western theatre traditions.
VPA.1.1.12.C.CS1	Theatre and the arts play a significant role in human history and culture.
VPA.1.1.12.C.CS2	Characters have physical, emotional, and social dimensions that can be communicated through the application of acting techniques.

## Unit Resources

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### Julius Caesar Resources

Links:

[StoryboardThat Project](#)

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### [Lesson Plans, Resources, and Activities](#)

- CDs to listen to the play
- Movie to compare/contrast
- Notes on time period/history
- Notes on William Shakespeare



