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❁ ACT 1 ❁

PRE-GRAMMAR | Preparation

Prepare to think about the novel and its Central One Idea by drawing upon my prior knowledge, experience, or interests.

1. Consider the saying “There is strength in numbers.” Groups can have strength, and that strength can often be a good thing. Think of a time in your own life or in history when “strength in numbers” worked for the good. Now consider the converse. Can you think of a historical example when “strength in numbers” has caused harm? How do groups succeed in their goals? Write your thoughts to all parts of this writing prompt in the space below or in your Literature Notebook. Conclude with a sentence that lists three or four characteristics of a good leader.

GRAMMAR | Presentation

Discover essential facts, elements, and features of the play through the Reading Notes, Words to Be Defined, and Comprehension Questions.

READING NOTES

1. **Flavius** – a Roman tribune
2. **Marullus** – a Roman tribune
3. **tribune** – a political office created during the reign of Coriolanus during the early republic; represents the plebeians and has power to veto any laws he dislikes
4. **Caesar** – Rome’s leader
5. **Casca** – a member of the conspiracy
6. **Calphurnia** – Caesar’s wife
7. **Antony** – loyal to Caesar; a triumvir after the death of Julius Caesar
8. **Cassius** – the leading conspirator

9. **Brutus** – Caesar’s good friend who joins the conspiracy
10. **Cicero** – a Roman senator
11. **soothsayer** – someone believed to have the divine gift of being able to see into the future
12. **sovereign** – one possessing supreme political power
13. **servile fearfulness** – fear of a suffering and humiliating enslavement
14. **pun**– a play on words deriving from the similarity of sounds between two words with different meanings¹
15. **tone** – whatever leads us to infer the author’s attitude; implies the attitudes toward the subject and toward the audience in a literary work
16. **metaphor** – a direct, implicit comparison between two unlike things (does not use *like*, *as*, or *than*) (Example: *My daughter is an angel.*)
17. **simile** – the comparison of two unlike things with the use of *like*, *as*, or *than*; shows that something unknown can be understood because it is similar to something known (Example: *My daughter is as silly as a monkey.*)
18. **irony** – a discrepancy between what is said and what is actually intended
19. **dramatic irony** – a form of irony in which the audience knows more than a character(s)
20. **soliloquy** – a speech given by a character when he is alone on stage
21. **monologue** – a long speech by a character, esp. one that monopolizes a conversation
22. **allusion** – An implied or stated reference to something else – such as Greek or Roman mythology, the Bible, a historical event, work of art, or an epic poem. Knowledge of the reference imbues additional meaning to the work under consideration.

[1] William Flint Thrall and Addison Hibbard, *A Handbook to Literature*, Revised and Enlarged by C. Hugh Holman (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960), 388.

WORDS TO BE DEFINED

Definitions Bank		
believe; consider	oppression;	small or lesser
curved; hollow	something that	crowns
facial expression; a	causes cruelty	strength of spirit or
person's face	or takes away	temperament
a man of humble	freedom	thoughts
position	pointed tool used	unnatural,
ominous; hinting of	for making holes in	extraordinary,
something sinister	leather	ominous
	set foot; stepped	

1. What trade, thou **knave**? Thou naughty **knave**, what trade? (1.1.14)
2. Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the **awl**. (1.1.22)
3. As proper men as ever **trod** upon neat's leather have gone upon my handiwork. (1.1.26)
4. To hear the replication of your sounds made in her **concave** shores (1.1.48)
5. I turn the trouble of my **countenance** merely upon myself (1.2.38)
6. Thoughts of great value, worthy **cogitations** (1.2.50)
7. And groaning underneath this age's **yoke** (1.2.61)
8. Brutus had rather be a villager than to **repute** himself a son of Rome (1.2.173)
9. 'twas not a crown ... 'twas one of these **coronets** (1.2.236)
10. Thy honourable **mettle** may be wrought from that it is dispos'd (1.2.308)
11. For I believe they are **portentous** things (1.3.31)
12. In personal action, yet **prodigious** grown (1.3.77)



Read the Prologue and Act 1, marking the text in key places according to the method taught in "How to Mark a Book."

As you read through Act 1, be sure to pause as often as necessary to read the helpful footnotes for difficult words and phrases. You may not need to read all of the footnotes because you will probably know some of the words already or have a sense of their meaning as you read. If you pause frequently in any section, it will be helpful to read the section again without pausing so that you get a proper sense of the rhythm and continuity of the language, as well as the gist of the complete speech or scene.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Act 1, Scene 1

1. What are the professions of the onlookers questioned by the tribunes, and how do the two men explain their absence from work?
2. Why does Marullus think the crowd should feel terrible about Caesar's victory over Pompey?
3. a) Marullus and Flavius each give instructions to the gathered crowd. Using a quote from the text, tell what each tribune advises the people.
b) What do Flavius and Marullus plan to do after dispersing the crowd?

Act 1, Scene 2

4. Brutus and Cassius do not attend the races. Why not?
5. When Cassius tells Brutus he has been behaving strangely toward him lately, how does Brutus respond?
6. Cassius offers to be Brutus's mirror. What does Cassius "show" Brutus about himself?
7. Referring to scene 2, ll. 72-78, list four reasons Cassius says Brutus should trust him.
8. Cassius describes two occasions when he felt Caesar did not behave like someone who should become leader of the Roman Republic. Briefly describe the two occasions, including at least one quote in your answer.

9. Reread scene 2, ll. 139-141. Paraphrase the idea Cassius presents to Brutus.
10. Caesar speaks to Antony about his concerns regarding Cassius. Summarize Caesar's concerns from scene 2, ll. 192-212.
11. What happened to Flavius and Marullus in scene 2, ll. 283-285?
12. Scene 2 ends with a short **soliloquy** by Cassius. In this soliloquy, what does Cassius say about himself in comparison to Brutus? What does he reveal he will do "this night"?

Act 1, Scene 3

13. Act 1, scene 3 begins with an ominous **mood** created by the weather. What does Casca tell Cicero about the weather at the start of scene 3?
14. In addition to the vicious storm, Casca reports observing four unusual occurrences that he believes are **portentous**. List the four spectacles.
15. Unlike Casca, why doesn't Cicero believe the storms and unusual happenings are **portentous**?
16. In scene 3, ll. 43-78, how does Cassius view the weather and strange events?
17. How does Cassius respond when Casca tells him that the senators plan on making Caesar king?
18. Where is Cinna supposed to take the letters written by Cassius?
19. Explain why Casca thinks the group needs Brutus to join.

LOGIC | Dialectic

Reason with the facts, elements, and features of the play; sort, arrange, compare, and connect ideas – and begin to uncover and determine the Central One Idea. Discussion of the Socratic Questions may include note-taking in the Literature Notebook, or they may be answered in written form in the Literature Notebook.

SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

May be verbally discussed or answered in written form in your Literature Notebook.

1. Relying only on details from scene 1, in a paragraph explain the problems facing Rome at the start of the play.
2. Read 1.1.37-53, starting at “*O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome*”
 - a) Who says this?
 - b) To whom?
 - c) What is the occasion?
 - d) What is the significance?
3. Shakespeare enhances his **dialogue** with **puns** and their ensuing humor. In a sentence or two, explain the pun on soles in the cobbler’s dialogue in scene 1, line 13.
4. Cassius offers to be Brutus’s mirror in scene 2, lines 55-62. This is an example of what **figure of speech**? Why are Cassius’s words **ironic**?
5. Read 1.2.307-321, starting at “*Well, Brutus, thou art noble; yet, I see*”
 - a) Who says this?
 - b) To whom?
 - c) What is the significance?
6. Many of Shakespeare’s plays include a play within the play. Reconsider Casca’s explanation of events in the Capitol in scene 2, lines 234-274. Describe the drama Casca recounts and include what thematic idea this off-stage scene suggests.

7. Read 1.3.80-84, starting at “*Let it be who it is; for Romans now ...*”
 - a) Who says this?
 - b) About whom?
 - c) What is the meaning?
 - d) What is the significance?
8. Read 1.3.127-130, starting at “*There is no stir or walking in the streets ...*”
 - a) Who says this?
 - b) To whom?
 - c) What is the significance?
9. Consider what you know thus far regarding the characters of Caesar and Cassius – their apparent strengths, weaknesses, and their concerns about one other. Which man would you prefer for your country’s leader if they were the only two candidates from which to choose?

RHETORIC | Expression

Reason with the facts, elements, and features of the play; sort, arrange, compare, and connect ideas – and begin to uncover and determine the Central One Idea. Discussion of the Socratic Questions may include note-taking in the Literature Notebook, or they may be answered in written form in the Literature Notebook.

RHETORICAL EXPRESSION

To be answered in your Literature Notebook in preparation for your essay.

1. In a sentence or two, summarize each scene in Act 1.
2. Write the Central One Idea of Act 1 in a precise, eloquent sentence.
3. List three or four points that support your determination of the Central One Idea.
4. Write a lead (1-2 sentences) that grabs the reader's attention – such as a *quote, question, startling fact or statistic, scenario, piece of dialogue, etc.*
5. Write an amplification/importance (1-2 sentences) that explains why your thesis is important in a larger or more universal sense.

◆ **Central Quote:** Choose a quote from anywhere in Act 1 that you think best embodies the Central One Idea. With good penmanship, write it in the Central Quote section at the beginning of Act 1.

- 1 Write the Central One Idea as expressed by the teacher.

ESSAY OPTION

Choose a topic below and respond with a 3-5 paragraph essay that includes an Introduction with a clear thesis; a Body with organized, logical, and specific support of the thesis; and a Conclusion that discusses the significance of the thesis.

The essay should feature appropriate tone, voice, and point of view; correct grammar, usage, and mechanics; a variety of sentence structures enhanced by subordination and parallelism; a balance of general and specific detail; and enhanced rhetorical effect through transition words, appropriate diction, strong verbs, descriptive adjectives, and other rhetorical devices.

1. Write a 3-5 paragraph essay in which you point out and explore the similarities between Caesar and Cassius.
2. Write a 3-5 paragraph essay discussing what you perceive to be Caesar's weaknesses, and how these weaknesses could affect his leadership and/or harm Rome.
3. Write a 3-5 paragraph essay exploring how appearances differ from reality in Act 1.
4. [Central One Idea] Write about Caesar's power. Why is it wrong to have power concentrated in Caesar? What sort of problems are already sprouting up for the Republic as early as this first act? In your concluding paragraph, explain why your reader should prefer a balance of power over the leadership of one person – even if that leader is considered virtuous.