

12.2.2 Lesson 8

Introduction

In this lesson, students continue their reading and analysis of *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare. Students read Act 2.1, lines 253-333 (from “Brutus, my lord. / Portia! What mean you? Wherefore rise you now?” to “All the charactery of my sad brows. / Leave me with haste”), in which Portia confronts Brutus about his distressing behavior. Students analyze how Portia’s interaction with Brutus develops the central idea of social bonds. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How do the interactions between Brutus and Portia develop a central idea in the text?

For homework, students read Act 2.1, lines 335-362 of *Julius Caesar* (from “Here is a sick man that would speak with you” to “That Brutus leads me on. / Follow me then”) and respond to the following prompt: Explain how the references to “sickness” in lines 347-354 differ in meaning from Brutus’s statement in line 277 that he is “not well in health, and that is all.”

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
Addressed Standard(s)	
W. 11-12.9.a	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply <i>grades 11-12 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).
L.11-12.4.c	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 11-12 reading and content</i> , choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation or a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.

Assessment

File: 12.2.2 Lesson 8 Date: 2/13/15 Classroom Use: Starting 2/2015

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Assessment(s)

Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.

- How do the interactions between Portia and Brutus develop a central idea in the text?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify a central idea in the text (e.g., social bonds).
- Analyze how Brutus and Portia's interactions develop this central idea (e.g., In this passage, the interaction between Portia and Brutus develops the central idea of social bonds. In order to convince Brutus to tell her why he has been "heavy" and why he met with the conspirators (line 296), Portia calls upon their bond as husband and wife. She says, "I charm you ... / By all your vows of love, and that great vow / Which did incorporate and make us one" (lines 292-294). If they truly are one, she says, as Brutus's vows of love and marriage imply, then he will not keep secrets from her. She goes further and claims that if he keeps secrets from her, then she is "Brutus' harlot, not his wife" (line 310). When this appeal fails, Portia refers to the fact that she is "Cato's daughter" (line 318) and "[a] woman that Lord Brutus took to wife" (line 316). Portia then gives herself a "voluntary wound" (line 323) on her leg to prove she is "stronger than [her] sex" (line 319), and therefore strong enough to "bear" (line 324) Brutus's secrets. In doing so, she appeals again to social bonds, this time the bonds among Roman men, as she seeks to prove that she is as deserving of Brutus's confidence as any other Roman.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- *rheumy (adj.) - dank, full of moisture
- *unpurged (adj.) - not cleansed (by the sun's rays)
- harlot (n.) - a prostitute
- ruddy (adj.) - red or reddish
- *constancy (n.) - self-control, fortitude

Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- None.

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- prevailed (v.) - defeated an opponent especially in a long or difficult contest
- acquainted (v.) - caused (someone) to know and become familiar with something
- contagion (n.) - a disease that can be passed from one person or animal to another by touching
- vows (n.) - serious promises to do something or to behave in a certain way

- Words defined in the explanatory notes are marked with an asterisk.

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.9.a, L.11-12.4.c Text: <i>Julius Caesar</i> by William Shakespeare, Act 2.1: lines 253-333 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Whole-Class Dramatic Reading and Discussion 4. Quick Write 5. Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% 2. 15% 3. 60% 4. 15% 5. 5%

Materials

- Herbert Wise's 1979 BBC version of *Julius Caesar* (47:13-52:29)
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 12.2.1 Lesson 1) (optional)

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Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
☞	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.2 and RL.11-12.3. In this lesson, students read Act 2.1, lines 253-333 of *Julius Caesar* (from “Brutus, my lord. / Portia! What mean you? Wherefore rise you now?” to “All the charactery of my sad brows. / Leave me with haste”). Students analyze how Portia’s interaction with Brutus develops a central idea.

- Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

15%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Read Act 2.1, lines 206-252 and respond briefly to the following questions). Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about their responses to the homework questions.

Summarize lines 206-252.

- In these lines, the conspirators express concern that Caesar will not come to the Capitol if he receives bad omens from the augurers. Decius tells them he will flatter Caesar into coming. They agree to meet with each other in the morning to kill Caesar.

Metellus sets off to involve Pompey in the plot, and the rest disband for the time being.

How do lines 206-252 develop the conspirators' view of Caesar's character?

- Student responses may include:
 - Cassius's concern shows that they think Caesar has become easily swayed by "the persuasion of his augurers," or the omens found by his augurers (line 217). Cassius's concern makes Caesar seem superstitious and gullible.
 - Decius's confidence in his ability to "o'ersway" with flattery and convince Caesar to appear in the Capitol shows that the conspirators think Caesar is vain and weak-willed (line 220).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to share and discuss the vocabulary words they identified for homework (L. 11-12.4.c).

- Students may identify the following words: *rheumy*, *unpurged*, *harlot*, *ruddy*, and *constancy*.
 - **Differentiation Consideration:** Students may also identify the following words: *prevailed*, *acquainted*, *contagion*, and *vows*.
 - Definitions are provided in the Vocabulary box in this lesson.
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Instruct students to take out their responses to the second part of the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Read Act 2.1, lines 253-333 and respond briefly to the following questions.) Instruct student pairs to share their summaries of Act 2.1, lines 253-333.

Summarize lines 253-333.

- Portia confronts Brutus about his troubling behavior. Brutus tries to make excuses that he is simply feeling unwell, but Portia does not believe him. She attempts to convince Brutus to tell her what is bothering him by reminding him of their marriage vows. When this does not work, she proves her strength by reminding him that the noble Roman Cato was her father and that he, the noble Brutus, is her husband. She believes she should be considered strong enough to bear his secrets given these relationships.

Still, Brutus maintains his secrecy, so she cuts her leg open to prove her strength. Brutus promises to tell her his secrets at a later time but is called away.

- Students are held accountable for their responses to the homework questions during Activity 3: Whole-Class Dramatic Reading and Discussion. Questions answered for homework are marked with an asterisk (*).

Activity 3: Whole-Class Dramatic Reading and Discussion

60%

Transition to a whole-class dramatic reading. Assign two students the roles of Brutus and Portia. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to annotate for central ideas throughout the reading and discussion, using the code CI (W.11-12.9.a).

- If necessary to support comprehension and fluency, consider using a masterful reading of the focus excerpt for the lesson.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout the lesson:

Why does Brutus not share his secrets with Portia?

Instruct the students assigned to the roles of Brutus and Portia to stand and read Act 2.1, lines 253-310 (from “Brutus, my lord. / Portia! What mean you? Wherefore rise you now?” to “Portia is Brutus’ harlot, not his wife”), while the rest of the class follows along. Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk about the following questions before sharing out with the class.

***What does the interaction between Portia and Brutus in lines 253-288 suggest about their relationship?**

- The interaction between Portia and Brutus in lines 253-288 establishes that they share a caring relationship and are concerned for each other’s well-being. Brutus is upset that Portia is awake, because he does not want her to “commit / [her] weak condition” to the early morning cold, in case she becomes sick (lines 255-256). Portia wants Brutus to “acquaint[] [her] with [his] cause of grief,” or share what is making him upset, because Brutus has been acting strangely (line 276). She does not believe he is physically feeling ill; instead she is concerned about the “sick offense” on his mind (line 288). They are both concerned for the well-being of the other.

How do Portia’s references to the “great vow” (line 293) and the “bond of marriage” (line 302) develop a central idea in the text?

- Portia's references to the "great vow" (line 293) and the "bond of marriage" (line 302) develop the central idea of social bonds, as Portia uses her marriage to Brutus to convince him to tell her why he is "heavy" (line 296) and the identity of the men who "resort to [him]" (line 297). Portia believes that because of their "vow" (line 293) and "bond" (line 302) she is entitled to know Brutus's secrets.-

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct the students playing Brutus and Portia to read Act 2.1, lines 311-333 (from "You are my true and honorable wife" to "All the charactery of my sad brows. / Leave me with haste"), while the rest of the class follows along. Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk about the following questions before sharing out with the class.

How do Portia's references to her father and husband further develop a central idea?

- Portia's references to her father and husband develop the central idea of social bonds. She says that even though she is a woman she is "[a] woman that Lord Brutus took to wife" (line 316) and "[a] woman well-reputed, Cato's daughter" (line 318). Portia appeals to the reputations of both her father and her husband to prove that she is "stronger than [her] sex, / Being so fathered and so husbanded" (lines 319-320). Since her appeal to her status as Brutus's wife has failed, she calls upon a different bond, claiming that she is worthy of Brutus's trust through her ties to two noble Romans. In this way, she appeals to the bond among Romans, and particularly Roman men.

***How does Portia show the "strong proof of [her] constancy" (line 322)?**

- Portia cuts her leg open to prove her "constancy" or strength to Brutus (line 322).

How does Portia's explanation of her gesture of "constancy" (line 322) advance her purpose?

- Portia uses her "voluntary wound" as a way of proving her strength and demonstrating to Brutus that she is strong enough to be considered equal to noble Roman men (line 323), and therefore worthy of his trust.

***How do Portia's gestures of kneeling and wounding herself develop a central idea in the text?**

- Portia's gestures of kneeling and wounding herself develop the central idea of social bonds because they represent attempts to establish different relationships with Brutus. By kneeling in submission, Portia emphasizes her weakness and appeals to

Brutus's love for her as a woman: "I charm you, by my once commended beauty" (line 292). Later, by wounding herself, Portia demands Brutus's trust and confidence, seeking to inspire not pity but respect: "Can I bear [this wound] with patience, / And not my husband's secrets" (lines 324-325).

- To support comprehension and fluency, consider showing Herbert Wise's 1979 BBC version of *Julius Caesar* (47:13-52:29).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 4: Quick Write

15%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

How do the interactions between Portia and Brutus develop a central idea in the text?

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this lesson's vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition to the independent Quick Write.

- Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
- See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.
- Consider using the Short Response Rubric to assess students' writing. Students may use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

Activity 5: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to read Act 2.1, lines 335-362 of *Julius Caesar* (from "Here is a sick man that would speak with you" to "That Brutus leads me on. / Follow me then") and respond to the following prompt:

Explain how the references to "sickness" in lines 347-354 differ in meaning from Brutus's statement in line 277 that he is "not well in health, and that is all."

Ask students to use this lesson's vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses.

- Students follow along.

Homework

Read Act 2.1, lines 335-362 of *Julius Caesar* (from “Here is a sick man that would speak with you” to “That Brutus leads me on. / Follow me then”) and respond to the following prompt:

Explain how the references to “sickness” in lines 347-354 differ in meaning from Brutus’s statement in line 277 that he is “not well in health, and that is all.”

Use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in your written responses.