

# 12.2.2 Lesson 18

## Introduction

In this lesson, students read Act 5.1, lines 1-71 of *Julius Caesar* (from “Now, Antony, our hopes are answerèd” to “If not, when you have stomachs”), in which Antony, Octavius, Brutus, and Cassius confront each other before the battle at Phillipi. Students practice their dramatic reading skills as they participate in small-group dramatic readings of the focus excerpt, pausing several times to analyze how the complex interactions among characters in this passage develop a central idea in the text. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How do the interactions among characters in this scene contribute to the development of the central idea of exercise of power?

For homework, students read Act 5.1, line 72 to Act 5.2, line 6 of *Julius Caesar* (from “Why now, blow wind, swell billow, and swim bark!” to “Ride, ride, Messala! Let them all come down”), box unfamiliar words, and look up their definitions. Additionally, students conduct a brief search into the historical figure of Epicurus and his beliefs, and respond in writing to a series of questions.

## 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”).
SL. 11-12.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11-12 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)
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 of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
L. 11-12.5.a	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.

## Assessment

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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 among characters in this scene contribute to the development of the central idea of exercise of power?

### High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Analyze how character interactions develop the central idea of exercise of power (e.g., In Act 5.1, the exchange of insults among Antony, Octavius, Brutus, and Cassius contributes to the development of the central idea of exercise of power, because Antony shows that Brutus is hypocritical with his belief that “good words” are more powerful than “bad strokes” (line 30). Antony argues that Brutus’s “good words” (line 31) are merely empty “flatter[y]” (line 48) that masks the violence of his intention to seize power over Rome with a “vile dagger[.]” (line 42). Octavius’s decision to end the argument by “draw[ing] a sword against conspirators” (line 54) reinforces the idea that exercise of power through language inevitably leads to exercise of power through force. Though Antony, Brutus, and Cassius have engaged in a clever rhetorical debate, ultimately, their debate only serves as a step toward the physical violence and bloodshed, or “redder drops” of the battle (line 53).).

## Vocabulary

### Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- gallant (adj.) - showing courage; very brave
- parley (v) - to talk with an enemy or someone you disagree with especially in order to end a conflict
- hail (interjection) - used to express strong and enthusiastic approval or praise
- strain (n.) - lineage or ancestry
- peevish (adj.) - feeling or showing irritation
- reveler (n.) - a person who is celebrating with other people in usually a wild and noisy way

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

- None.

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

- blows (n.) - hard hits using a part of the body or an object
- strokes (n.) - acts of hitting someone or something with a stick, whip, etc.
- witness (v.) - to see (something) happen
- vile (adj.) - evil or immoral

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

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Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<p><b>Standards &amp; Text:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards: RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.9.a, <a href="#">SL.11-12.6</a>, L.11-12.4.c, L.11-12.5.a</li> <li>Text: <i>Julius Caesar</i> by William Shakespeare, Act 5.1: lines 1-71</li> </ul> <p><b>Learning Sequence:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>Homework Accountability</li> <li>Reading and Discussion</li> <li>Quick Write</li> <li>Preparation for End-of-Unit Assessment (Optional)</li> <li>Closing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5%</li> <li>15%</li> <li>50%</li> <li>10%</li> <li>15%</li> <li>5%</li> </ol>

## Materials

- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 12.2.1 Lesson 1) (optional)

## 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.
	<b>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</b>
	<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 5.1, lines 1-71 of *Julius Caesar* and analyze how the complex interactions among characters in this scene develop a central idea in the text.

- Students look at the agenda.

### Activity 2: Homework Accountability

15%

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

- Students may identify the following words: *gallant*, *parley*, *hail*, *strain*, *peevish*, and *reveler*.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Students may also identify the following words: *blows*, *strokes*, *witness*, and *vile*.
- Definitions are provided in the Vocabulary box in this lesson.

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Conduct a brief search into the historical figure of Octavius using <http://www.pbs.org/> (Google search terms: PBS, the Roman Empire, Augustus), and identify three important facts about his relationship with Julius Caesar and with Mark Antony. Then, respond briefly in writing to the following question: How does the interaction between Antony and Octavius in Act 5.1, lines 1-27 contribute to the development of Octavius’s character?) Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about the facts they identified in their search on Octavius.

- Student responses may include:
  - Julius Caesar was Octavius’s great uncle.
  - Julius Caesar adopted Octavius after Caesar won the civil war and was named ruler of Rome, because he had no other heir.
  - After forming an alliance, Antony and Octavius defeated their enemies and divided the Roman Empire. Antony took Egypt, and Octavius took Rome.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about their responses to the homework prompt.

**How does the interaction between Antony and Octavius in Act 5.1, lines 1-27 contribute to the development of Octavius’s character?**

- Student responses may include:
  - Upon entering with Antony and his army, Octavius asserts that Antony’s assessment of the battle tactics of the enemy was incorrect; rather than staying in the “hills” and high ground as Antony believed (line 3), the enemy has “come down” and intends to confront them at Phillipi (line 2). This suggests that Octavius is more aggressive than Antony, because he wants to be proactive and attack first, whereas Antony’s advice is to defend.
  - Octavius’s insistence upon attacking from “the right hand” (line 19), which is in direct opposition to Antony’s advice to attack from the “left hand” (line 18), suggests that he is strong-minded and confident because he is not afraid of challenging a man with more military experience.
  - Despite Antony’s assertion that Octavius is challenging or “cross[ing]” him (line 20), Octavius remains firm about his decision to attack from the “right hand” (line 19) when he says, “I do not cross you, but I will do so” (line 21). Octavius’s refusal to submit to Antony’s authority establishes his own authority. His clear statement, “I will do so” (line 21) suggests that he has the final word on the subject.

- After Octavius successfully challenges Antony, Antony refers to Octavius as “Caesar” (line 25) rather than “Octavius,” as he did before (line 17). Antony’s choice to use Octavius’s family name reminds the audience of his close relationship to Caesar, who Antony believes was “the choice and master spirits of this age” (Act 3.1, line 179). This switch in address suggests that Antony sees Octavius’s authority as similar to that of Caesar, implying that Octavius has demonstrated that he will be a great and powerful leader like Caesar before him.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

### Activity 3: Reading and Discussion

**50%**

Instruct students to form groups of four. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss (W.11-12.9.a).

- **Differentiation Consideration:** 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 this lesson:

**How does Shakespeare develop a central idea about power in Act 5.1, lines 1-33?**

Instruct students in each group to each take one of the four roles of Cassius, Antony, Brutus, and Octavius.

Instruct student groups to read aloud Act 5.1, lines 1-33 of *Julius Caesar* (from “Now, Antony, our hopes are answered” to “Crying ‘Long live, hail, Caesar!’”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

**What does Brutus’s question “words before blows; is it so, countrymen?” (Act 5.1, line 28) suggest he expects from Octavius and Antony?**

- Brutus’s greeting to the approaching Antony and Octavius, “words before blows; is it so countrymen?” (line 28), suggests that “words” or conversation is a step toward the physical violence of war, or “blows” (line 28). Therefore, Brutus’s greeting suggests that the “words” exchanged among Brutus, Octavius, Antony, and Cassius in this passage are not truly an attempt at “parley” (line 22) to end a conflict, but merely a first step toward “blows” or physical violence.

**How does the interaction between Brutus, Octavius, and Antony in lines 28-33 contribute to the development of each character?**

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- Student responses may include:
  - In response to Brutus’s greeting “words before blows; is it so, countrymen?” (line 28), Octavius replies “not that we love words better, as you do” (line 29). This response suggests that Octavius prefers “blows” or physical violence to “words,” or conversation and rhetoric (line 28), and implies that Brutus prefers the opposite. Octavius’s response also demonstrates his assertiveness and desire to feel superior to Brutus, because he insults Brutus to his face.
  - Brutus’s reply to Octavius that “good words are better than bad strokes” (line 30) reveals that he believes the strategic use of language or “good words” is preferable to unnecessary physical violence or “bad blows” (line 30).
  - Antony suggests that Brutus uses “good words” or strategic language and rhetoric to hide his “bad strokes” (line 31) or violent actions, as when he falsely pledged his allegiance to Caesar, “Crying ‘Long live, hail, Caesar’ before stabbing him (line 33). Antony’s accusation suggests that Brutus’s opinion of himself as a man who prefers language to violence doesn’t always align with his actions.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

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Instruct students to read aloud Act 5.1, lines 34-71 of *Julius Caesar* (from “Antony, / The posture of your blows are yet unknown” to “If not, when you have stomachs”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

**How does the extended metaphor in lines 34-41 develop the conflict between Cassius, Antony, and Brutus? (L.11-12.5.a)**

- Student responses may include:
  - Cassius, Antony, and Brutus all use the same extended metaphor comparing the use of rhetoric to words sweetened with stolen honey from “Hybla bees” (line 36) to frame their argument about the morality of their respective actions. Cassius initiates the argument by describing Antony’s “words” as sweetened by the stolen honey of “bees” (line 36), suggesting that Antony’s skillful use of language hides his true deceptive nature. This comparison implies that Antony’s accusation that Brutus is a hypocritical man who skillfully uses language to his own advantage is itself hypocritical.
  - Brutus then counters Antony’s assertion that Antony does not leave the bees “stingless” (line 38), or his words are harmless, by comparing Antony’s use of

language to the “buzzing” bees make before they “sting” (line 41), suggesting that Antony’s words are merely noise that comes before his violent actions.

### What is the rhetorical effect of Antony’s use of figurative language in his criticism of Brutus? (L.1112.5.a)

- Student responses may include:
  - Antony uses vivid, descriptive imagery when he describes the “vile daggers” (line 42) of the conspirators as “hack[ing]” into “the sides of Caesar” (line 43), and of Casca “str[iking] Caesar on the neck” (line 48). These graphic details emphasize the brutality of Brutus’s actions.
  - Antony uses similes to highlight the shameful and dishonorable nature of Brutus’s deception. He compares Brutus and other conspirators to “bow[ing]” “bondmen,” or slaves who profess their obedience (line 46). He also compares them to “apes” who appear to be grinning because they “show[ ]” their “teeth” (line 44), and “hounds” who “fawn[ ]” at the feet of their masters (lines 44-45). These comparisons illustrate how Brutus’s professed allegiance to Caesar was devious “flatter[y]” that masked his true intentions (line 48).

### How does Antony’s criticism of Brutus develop a central idea of the text?

- Antony’s criticism that Brutus uses “good” language to mask his “bad” (line 31) actions develops the central idea of exercise of power. It suggests that although Brutus professes to believe in the power of “good words” over “bad strokes” (line 30), his rhetoric or “flatter[y]” (line 48) only masks his exercise of power through force, as when he hypocritically turned to violence in order to gain control over Rome.
- Students were introduced to the central idea of exercise of power in *Julius Caesar* in 12.2.2 Lesson 5.

### How does Octavius’s reaction to “arguing” (line 52) refine a central idea in the text?

- Octavius’s decision to “draw” his “sword against conspirators” (line 54) rather than continue with the argument refines the central idea of exercise of power. Although Antony, Brutus, and Cassius have engaged in a clever rhetorical debate, their words only serve as a precursor to the inevitable violence, or “redder drops” (line 53), of battle.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

- Consider asking students which passages they found difficult or problematic. Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

## Activity 4: Quick Write

10%

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

**How do the interactions among characters in this scene contribute to the development of the central idea of exercise of power?**

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: Preparation for End-of-Unit Assessment (Optional)

15%

- The following optional in-class activity prepares students for the 12.2.2 Part 1 End-of-Unit Assessment, in which students perform small-group dramatic readings of key scenes in *Julius Caesar*. Instruct students to meet in the small groups established in 12.2.2 Lesson 16. Post or project the following definition for students:

*Diction* means “the clearness of a person’s speech, including accurate pronunciation.”

Pose the following question for students to answer in their small groups before sharing out with the class.

**What is the role of *diction* in a dramatic reading?**

- Student responses may include:
  - Diction ensures that the audience understands what a performer says.
  - Diction makes a performance appear more polished and practiced, because it demonstrates that a performer is familiar with their lines.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion based on student responses.

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Instruct students to practice their small-group dramatic readings. Explain that during this practice time, students should focus on their diction.

- Student groups practice their dramatic readings with a focus on diction.
- Standard SL.11-12.6 will be assessed in the 12.2.2 Part 1 End-of-Unit Assessment. Students were introduced to SL.11-12.6 in 12.1.1 Lesson 11. Consider explaining to students that rehearsals for the 12.2.1 Part 1 End-of-Unit Assessment are an opportunity to practice adapting their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks and to demonstrate mastery of standard, formal English.
- Students may instead meet outside of class to practice their dramatic readings, in which case the time allotted to this activity should be added to Activity 3: Reading and Discussion.

## Activity 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to read Act 5.1, line 72 to Act 5.2, line 6 of *Julius Caesar* (from “Why now, blow wind, swell billow, and swim bark!” to “Ride, ride, Messala! Let them all come down”). Direct students to box any unfamiliar words and look up their definitions. Instruct them to choose the definition that makes the most sense in context and write a brief definition above or near the word in the text (L.11-12.4.c).

Additionally, instruct students to conduct a brief search into the historical figure of Epicurus and his beliefs using <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/epicurus/>. Instruct students to then respond briefly in writing to the following questions:

**What does Cassius’s statement “[Y]ou know that I held Epicurus strong / And his opinion. Now I change my mind” (Act 5.1, lines 84-85) suggest about his attitude toward death and fate?**

**What does the conversation between Cassius and Brutus in lines 102-132 suggest about their respective values?**

**How do Act 5.1 and Act 5.2 advance the plot of the play?**

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

- Students follow along.

## Homework

Read Act 5.1, line 72 to Act 5.2, line 6 of *Julius Caesar* (from “Why now, blow wind, swell billow, and swim bark!” to “Ride, ride, Messala! Let them all come down”). Box any unfamiliar words and look up their definitions. Choose the definition that makes the most sense in the context, and write a brief definition above or near the word in the text.

Additionally, conduct a brief search into the historical figure of Epicurus and his beliefs using <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/epicurus/>. Then, respond briefly in writing to the following questions:

**What does Cassius’s statement “[Y]ou know that I held Epicurus strong / And his opinion. Now I change my mind” (Act 5.1, lines 84-85) suggest about his attitude toward death and fate?**

**What does the conversation between Cassius and Brutus in lines 102-132 suggest about their respective values?**

**How do Act 5.1 and Act 5.2 advance the plot of the play?**

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