

Brutus's Funeral Oration

Directions: Examine the first part of act 3, scene 2, in which Roman citizens listen to Brutus's oration at Caesar's funeral. Then answer the following questions.

1. Both Brutus and Cassius plan to deliver speeches. What will be their main goal?
2. Cassius goes off stage, but Shakespeare includes Brutus's speech in the scene. Is the speech written in prose or in poetry? Why does Shakespeare use this form?
3. What does Brutus assert about his own attitude toward Caesar?
4. Brutus includes several rhetorical questions in his speech. What are they, and what answers does he expect?
5. Why does he conclude that he has offended no one?
6. In the concluding lines, what does Brutus claim to be willing to do?
7. How would you describe the style and tone of the speech as a whole?
8. How do the citizens respond to Brutus's words?

Turning the Tide: Mark Antony's Speech

Directions: Use the following questions to analyze Mark Antony's funeral oration for Caesar.

1. How might Antony's second sentence surprise the audience?
2. He goes on to refute the idea that Caesar was ambitious. What evidence does he provide?
3. Do you hear any irony—or even sarcasm—in Antony's comments about Mark Antony and later about Cassius?
4. What seems to cause the first pause in the speech?
5. In the second part of the speech, before he descends to Caesar's body, Antony refers to Caesar's will. What is his purpose?

