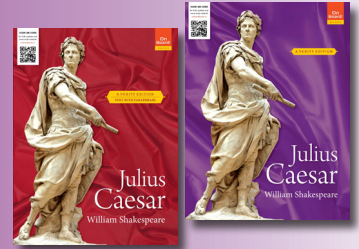


Julius Caesar

William Shakespeare



SAMPLE QUESTION PAPER 3 (For Class 10 – Act 3)

ANSWERS

Question 1

- (i) (c) Caesar was disinclined to listen to suits that concerned his own well-being.
- (ii) (c) Marcus Brutus
- (iii) (b) He shakes their hands
- (iv) (d) Gauge the public's reaction to his speech
- (v) (c) They decide to burnt the houses of the conspirators
- (vi) (d) Cinna the Poet

Question 2

- (i) Brutus had asked Antony to look into the hearts of the conspirators and glean their earnest desire to rid Rome of oppression. According to Brutus, this stemmed from their pity for the people of Rome, which had driven out their pity for Caesar. Caesar's death was a penalty for his ambition: the death of a single person for the greater good was more desirable than the death of many.
- (ii) Upon seeing Caesar's corpse for the first time, Antony expressed shock since he felt that Caesar had been reduced to nothing. He lamented that all that Caesar had done – his achievements, victories, etc – had been reduced to his mortal remains. He asked the conspirators if this death had been planned or not. Antony claimed that there was no better time, place, or method for him to die, than to be killed by those who assassinated Caesar.
- (iii) Cassius did not think it would be wise to allow Antony to address the commoners at the pulpit since he was apprehensive of Antony's ability to move the people through his speech. Brutus instructed Antony to inform the people that he had been given permission to speak by the Brutus and the other conspirators. He was also expected to speak after

Brutus, and from the same pulpit as him. Antony was instructed to speak highly of Caesar and warned against criticising the conspirators in his speech.

- (iv) Once he was admitted to the gathering of the conspirators, Antony carefully promised to follow and support them in their endeavours. He was not deceptive about how he felt about Caesar but appeared to understand that the conspirators had honourable intentions and did not criticise them. He shook hands with each and every one of them, falsely promising his loyalty to gain their trust.
- (v) Mark Antony had decided to support the conspirators in an attempt to gain their trust. He was outnumbered by them at the Capitol and in order to secure his own well-being, he had to present himself as one who did not bear any ill will towards them. This was especially important since we know that Cassius had wanted to kill Antony alongside Caesar. Antony's fondness for Caesar was very well established so he went ahead and verbally declared that he might be perceived as a flatterer or a coward for changing his alliance and supporting them. This was as smart a move as shaking hands with each one of them and making a mental note of all those involved in the conspiracy. By convincing the schemers of his loyalty and gaining their trust, Antony was able to get permission to address the commoners – an advantage that would allow him to sway public opinion against the conspirators.

Question 3

- (i) The lines given are a part of Brutus' address to the commoners. They were delivered by Brutus from the pulpit at the forum in Rome.
- (ii) Brutus and Antony had remarkably different rhetorical approaches. Brutus began his speech by demanding the attention and trust of the commoners reminding them of his position and honour. He listed the reasons behind Caesar's assassination and instructed the people to admire what had been done for their freedom. Brutus' speech was built on the premise that all the commoners appreciated and harboured the same set of values he did. On the other hand, Mark Antony appealed to their emotions more than their values. He paused several times to gauge the changing mood of the public. Unlike Brutus who mentioned abstract values and rights, Antony successfully tempted the public with evidence, informing them to what they stood to inherit from Caesar.
- (iii) Antony informed the commoners that Caesar had been accused of ambition by Brutus (and the conspirators) but there was no evidence that support this accusation. Caesar had refused the crown thrice on the day of the Lupercalia feast. Antony clearly states that Caesar had brought wealth to Rome in the form of tributes and had been empathetic towards the poor in the state. Upon his death, Caesar had even left behind wealth for the people of Rome. Antony provided tangible evidence, as opposed to Brutus, and convinced the public that Caesar had indeed not been ambitious.

- (iv) Antony shared the conditions of Caesar's will with the public hoping to unite them against those who killed him. According to the will, Caesar had left each individual Roman seventy-five drachmas. He had left them large tracts of land near the Tiber which included his walks, orchards, and arbours. Caesar's private lands were made public property to be used by the common people for recreational activities.
- (v) It is to be noted that Antony's reconstruction of Caesar's assassination was fictional since he was not present when it had taken place. He began by showing the blood-stained robe of Caesar, sentimentally recalling how Caesar had first worn it after his victory over the Nervii tribe. He then pointed at individual tears in the robe, listing the names of the conspirators and the tears made where they had stabbed Caesar through the robe. To aggravate the crowd more, Antony dramatised the moment when Caesar had realised that even his beloved Brutus wanted him dead. Antony lamented that Brutus' attack was the "most unkindest cut of all" and blood had gushed out of Caesar to confirm if it had indeed been Brutus. Antony then displayed the wounded body of Caesar, stating that each gash was a mouth begging to be heard and avenged. This vivid, graphic reconstruction swayed the commoners to mutiny against the conspirators.