

JULIUS CAESAR

Name _____

Movie Questions

Date _____

As you watch the movie version of Julius Caesar, answer the following questions. Your answers need to be on another sheet of paper. If your answers are short enough to fit on this page, they will not be long enough to receive full credit. *Answer fully all parts of each question.*

A: Plot

1. In the movie, during Caesar's speech in Act 1, Scene 2, lines 190-214 ("Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look"), Cassius hears Caesar's remarks about how he dislikes him. Shakespeare's original play, however, leaves out whether or not Cassius can hear Caesar during this scene. How would your understanding of Cassius's motivation be different if Caesar had said these lines without Cassius present?
2. Thinking about the same scene from question 1, would your opinion of Caesar change if you had not seen Caesar openly insult Cassius? Explain your answer.
3. During Act 2 Scene 1, in which the conspirators win Brutus to their cause, pay close attention to the actors' costumes. How is Brutus dressed differently than the others? How does this suit his honest personality?
4. Act 2 Scene 3 is moved in the movie, and is used as a short introduction to Act 3 Scene 1, instead of being a standalone scene. What about the content of Act 2 Scene 3 do you think caused the director to choose to do this?
5. Act 3 Scene 3 is presented as though the citizens' attack on Cinna the Poet was filmed by an observer who captured it on a cell phone. How does this unique filming style help bring the play farther from the stage and into the real world?
6. In Act 4 Scene 1, Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus discuss which family members they must kill in order to take absolute power. Right after every time the pen touches the paper, what do you see happen and why would the director choose to show you this?
7. Brutus and Cassius discuss strategy late in Act 4 Scene 3 (Lines 196-225). In the movie they draw out their plans on the ground as they are talking. Does this help you understand what they are talking about, or does it distract you from what they are saying? Why do you think it is so?
8. In Act 5 Scene 5, Brutus is asking for assistance in his suicide. In the movie he asks the same number of people as in the original play, but they are not the same people named in Shakespeare's original cast. Why do you think the director would choose to reuse characters from earlier in the film rather than add in new characters five minutes from the end?

9. Shakespeare's plays are famous for many reasons. One reason is that they are open enough that actors may interpret them in many ways. In this movie, for instance, as Brutus dies he has a smiling look of relief on his face. Why would he be relieved?
10. Which elements of the plot were easier to understand when watching the play as a movie? Why do you think this is?
11. Which elements of the plot were easier to understand when reading through the play and pausing for explanation, as we have done in class together? Why do you think this is?

B: Setting

12. The movie we are watching takes Shakespeare's play from its original setting and puts it into a more modern context. What about the play makes more sense when taken in a modern context?
13. What about the play makes less sense when taken in a modern context?
14. Why do you think the play's director decided to change the setting from ancient Rome to a modern African nation? Why move to this setting instead of another?
15. Do you feel that seeing the play presented in a modern context helps you understand the play better overall? Why do you think this is the case?

C: Characters

16. This movie changes the play's setting, and this in turn changes the physical appearance of all of the characters. In spite of this, do the characters' personalities line up with how you imagined them to be? In general, how do the actors look and speak compared with how you imagined while reading? (*Don't get hung up on race, clothing, etc.*)
17. Choose one specific character who behaves differently than you imagined. How is the character's behavior different from how you envisioned him or her prior to watching the movie?
18. Now that you have seen the movie version of the character you picked for #17, which do you prefer – the movie's version of that character, or your own imagination? Why is this so?

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