

Watch these different performances of Marc Antony's speech.



Damian Lewis from Band of Brothers and Homeland

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q89MLuLSJgk>

Youtube:

Damian Lewis as Antony in Julius Caesar. Watch those changes!



College students doing the big funeral speech:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkuCaCHEjyQ>

Youtube:

Mark Antony's Funeral Speech (dj jiminez)



William Shatner (Captain James T Kirk from Star Trek)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mnDDk464M

Youtube:

William Shatner Clip Julius Caesar Funeral Speech

Yes, it's black and white and wobbly but worth looking at for the way he interacts with the audience. A very 'politician being man of the people' performance



Marlon Brando (considered a big deal actor)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7X9C55TkUP8>

Youtube: **Mark Antony's Speech** (Pochido)

Yes, it's in black and white again. Total opposite to the Shatner one.



Charlton Heston (Planet of the Apes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0bi1PvXCbr8>

Yes, he's old and it's a bit cheesy. In Shakespearan era clothing. Worth watching especially from 5:30 for the way Caesar's body is used to manipulate the plebians.

Youtube: Charlton Heston Mark Antony speech "Julius Caesar" (1970)

1) Copy the screen grabs from the other page and use them in your inquiry portfolio.

Underneath each picture, sum up in your own words how the character of Antony comes across in each performance (how he starts, how and when we see him change, how he ends up)



Mark Antony, portrayed by Damien Lewis, is depicted initially as a genteel, kindly persuasive character with a friendly face. He appears conciliatory as he begins the speech, particularly at the point where he says, "the good is often interred with their bones, so let it be with Caesar". This manner continues until he says, "Was this ambition?" in reference to Caesar refusing the crown. His tone changes, almost wincing as he speaks of Brutus as an "honourable man". He over-emphasises words such as "what I do know", to make an impact and stress his point without particularly raising his voice. He uses facial movement and expression to emphasise his disgust at what has happened. When he says, "you all did love him once." he says this with very deliberate, purposeful, staccato like speech. He appears to use this technique to persuade the crowd. At the point in the speech where he talks about his heart being in the coffin with Caesar he again changes, taking on a gentle demeanour once more. Damien Lewis in his portrayal of Mark Antony ends up depicting a character that is grief stricken and emotionally spent. His final sigh shows his resignation over the death of Caesar and how he perceives it to be such a tragedy.



In this portrayal of Mark Antony, the actor begins by appearing very severe and matter of fact. He delivers the speech as a leader superior to his people. He stands over them and talks down to the citizens. He gesticulates a lot and paces his platform seemingly to emphasise control. When he talks of Caesar in his coffin his demeanour changes to one of sadness. However, this is brief and he becomes extremely angry and emotional, raising his voice to make his point and incite the crowd to his way of thinking. At the completion of the funeral speech, as the crowd leaves to take revenge, the actor smiles smugly to himself as though showing satisfaction that he has got his way.



William Shatner's portrayal of Mark Antony begins with him reading the funeral speech from cards held in his hand. The content does not appear to be from his heart, more something scripted. He initially speaks quickly without giving the citizens time to consider his words. His character changes however with a big pause, when he throws away his cards. At this point he appears to be speaking more naturally, although more a narration than from the heart. He often has his hands clasped as though telling a sermon. His character changes again upon reading the will when he becomes more expressive and gesticulates. He comes down closer to the crowd to engage with them as if he is trying to be one of them. At the end he appears very content with what he has accomplished.



Marlon Brando uses a forceful voice with great energy to begin the delivery of the funeral speech. His position at the top of the steps emphasises his superiority and command over the citizens. He looks around frequently over the crowd as though to convey the importance of what he has to say. He pauses often to let his words take effect. His body language confirms the tone with what he is saying but he does not move greatly. He puts his hand on his heart when talking of Caesar indicating his love for the fallen leader. At the point in which he says, "which he did thrice refuse." his character changes to become more angry, more forceful, and one delivered with even more emphasis. He begins shouting and starts to move more dramatically. At the end he turns his back to the crowd before saying, "bear with me," giving the impression that he has been emotionally affected by Caesar's death and needs time before he can proceed.



Charlton Heston begins his funeral speech by clutching at the citizens in the crowd speaking directly to them and making very personal eye contact. He then dramatically raises his arms, exclaiming, gesticulating and walking around. At the point where he says, "Was this ambition?" his tone changes forcefully to one of sarcasm. As he says, "Bear with me." he hangs his head, quietens and pauses for a lengthy time, showing the crowd that this is a man who has been deeply affected by the events of Caesar's death. Upon reading the will, his character takes on one of greater stature. He stands higher and higher up the steps ultimately thumping a column of the building. When turning to Caesar's body, he kneels beside it, showing respect, and thus putting himself lower than the standing citizens. He

speaks of each wound to emphasise the damage inflicted by each person responsible. He dramatically uncovers the body to stress his point as though showing the citizens that what he is saying is the truth. As the speech progresses he speaks with rising intensity ending with him reading the will surrounded by the citizens. This implies he sees his status as one of the citizens and not someone superior.

1) Which performance do you prefer and why?

I preferred the depiction of Mark Antony by Charlton Heston. I feel he successfully manipulates the crowd through his change of position within the set and his persuasive and convincing manner. He builds the intensity of the speech up well, which makes a big impact on the audience. He comes across as being trustful and makes good eye contact, speaking directly to the citizens. I particularly liked him dramatically uncovering the body, immediately driving the crowd's attention to the corpse. I liked the originality of the costumes and feel that this gave it authenticity. Although the set was quite simple, the use of the stairs was very effective.

2) Which bits of different performances are the most effective and why?

The Damien Lewis depiction was effective because of its simplicity. He appeared to be talking to the viewer personally, evoking a response from them. It was so apparent when his character changed. He used great facial expression to do this. The college performance where the actor finishes with a smug look shows the power of rhetoric where it alone has galvanized the citizens into action. William Shatner's portrayal of Mark Antony is effective as he appears to win the crowd over to his way of thinking by observing and pausing during their responses. This is particularly so when he throws his speech cards away. The stage was particularly effective in the Marlon Brando depiction, with the use of the towering steps showing the control of Mark Antony over the people. In the Charlton Heston depiction, at the beginning when he clutches at the crowd he sets the scene that there will be high emotional intensity to follow. The use of the body in the Charlton Heston one was effective as it further manipulated the audience to feel disgust and horror as he spoke and personalized each wound on Caesar's body. The sound of the cloth ripping as it is removed immediately focuses everyone's attention. As the importance of his speech intensifies and he wants to make more impact, he climbs higher above the citizens, therefore increasing the dramatic impression.

3) Write down the 3 most important lines or short quotes that Antony delivers. What techniques can we see and why do they make things more powerful or interesting? What are the most important/powerful/symbolic words? Why?

1. "Friends, Romans, Countrymen, Lend me your ears". Shakespeare has used the technique of the rule of threes for literary effect. The words are related and follow each other in quick succession. This technique is used as things that come in threes are more persuasive and people typically remember three things. The quote, "Friends, Romans, Countrymen" is extremely well known throughout the world today, even among people who have never read Julius Caesar, as it is such a memorable quote. To a lesser extent, Shakespeare has used repetition with slight variation, following the opening line of Brutus's speech, where he begins with, "Romans, Countrymen, and Lovers". Using repetition as a technique to link Brutus's speech with Mark Antony shows a strong unity in this part of the play. It is though one speech is being pitched against the other to gauge which one receives a better response from the crowd. By starting with "friends", Mark Antony immediately establishes a connection with the people he is hoping to persuade. By linking friends, Romans, and countrymen together, he is shown to be inclusive of all. Without this impressive beginning, he may not have got the attention of the crowd and been able to persuade them to his way of thinking. The idiom, "lend me your ears", is used to secure the crowds immediate and full attention. It is not authoritative or demanding, more friendly, which makes it appeal to the crowd.

2. "But Brutus says he was ambitious, and Brutus is an honourable man"(repeated twice, ending with a similar repetition, "and sure he is an honourable man."). Shakespeare has used the literary technique of repetition to make the idea that Brutus was in fact not honourable, clearer. It creates a dramatic impact. With the repetition, doubt is introduced into the crowd's minds, and as the sentence is repeated, it is said with increasing sarcasm, ending with "and sure he is an honourable man", confirming to the crowd that the murder was unfounded. Each time the phrase is repeated, it is amplified in the minds of the citizens. Shakespeare has skillfully used the device of repetition with a recurrent phrase, to manipulate the crowd without directly insulting Brutus. He uses the technique of sarcasm to mock Brutus, so as to hurt his reputation. The technique of this sarcasm completely reverses what it literally means. A symbolic word used here is "honourable" which is one of the highest accolades to give another person. The fact that Mark Antony has used it with sarcasm, in fact has led the crowd to believe that Brutus is the opposite.

3. "Bear with me, my heart is in the coffin there with Caesar". Here the technique of using emotive language has been used to arouse powerful feelings from the crowd. They may feel a mixture of fear, pity, or anger. The use of this technique will evoke the citizens' emotions, rather than allowing them to use rational thought. The emotion here is in sharp contrast to Brutus's unfeeling speech given moments before. This resonates with the crowd, as they seem to be moved by Mark Antony's feelings. This is an effective way of appealing to the crowd's emotions. "my heart is in the coffin there" shows the use of a metaphor, in which Mark Antony's emotions are exaggerated in terms of his heartfelt feelings. It conjures up a picture of part of Mark Antony dead alongside Caesar, such is the impact of this tragedy upon him. The use of this metaphor heightens the meaning and draws the audience in in a very persuasive manner. The words, "bear with me," are particularly important and powerful as they show Mark Antony's way of getting the crowd's co-operation in a seemingly gentle manner. He wants the crowd to come around to his way of thinking on their own, without coercion.

- 4) What is Shakespeare telling us about through these quotes: eg about friendship, politicians, power, the public?
 1. In the first quote, "Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears", Shakespeare is showing us that the introduction of the speech needs to establish a link between the orator and the audience. Here, Mark Antony needs to get the attention of a noisy, excited crowd who have just heard Brutus's speech. He knows he needs the crowd on his side to rouse the citizens against the conspirators. The twist on Brutus's opening line to his one of friends, etc... immediately makes Antony seem more trustworthy. In political speeches this technique is often used to establish trust. Often people make their minds up regarding the suitability of a politician as to how they deliver their words sometimes more so than their actions. The power of political rhetoric is immense wherever you are in the world.
 2. The second quote, "And Brutus is an honourable man", shows us the danger of power. Brutus is indeed initially an honourable man who wants to shape the events that have unfolded before him rather than accepting them and building on them. Despite his supposed good intentions, he has allowed himself to become corrupted. Mark Antony shows the citizens through the use of this quote, that while Brutus was once honourable, the deed he has been involved in is so wrong, that he no longer holds that status. Shakespeare is also showing us how people can be manipulated by those in power. A political opponent is always capable of giving another side to a story portraying a different side to a character. Often it is the more accomplished speaker not necessarily the truth, that sways public opinion.
 3. The third quote, "Bear with me, my heart is in the coffin there with Caesar", shows the theme of friendship. In the play, friendship was used as a manipulative element, where trust, a key element to all friendships, would be turned into betrayal. Throughout the play it is sometimes difficult to tell

the difference between friends and enemies. By speaking at Caesar's funeral, Mark Antony shows his loyalty and his extreme grief. By describing his heart in the coffin with Caesar, Shakespeare shows the importance of the theme of friendship.



5) One of the most recent performances of Julius Caesar has caused HUGE controversy and shows my Shakespeare is still relevant.

Watch this YouTube report on a Donald Trump-like Caesar performed in New York:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qfzqBr1qh0>

You may also want to read:

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2017/jun/12/donald-trump-shakespeare-play-julius-caesar-new-york>

and, for a totally different viewpoint:



6) Next, read the pdf file 'Trumpian Julius Caesar Dropped by Sponsors' on the Google Classroom task.

- Write down what the for/against arguments are for staging it in this way?

For	Against
<p>Its shows that while the events of Julius Caesar happened a long time ago, similar occurrences can repeat themselves over time.</p> <p>It promotes freedom of expression through the arts. Freedom of expression is the basis of a democratic society and when these rights are taken away this is when dictator type rulers can move in and take over the</p>	<p>Some people could see it as inciting violence.</p> <p>The play's message has been interpreted in many different ways which has caused a lot of controversy and loss of sponsorships.</p> <p>It is not a good representation of the political situation in America today because Trump was democratically elected. During the election campaign he told the people what he was going to do and now that</p>

<p>control of a country. In the US the constitution guarantees people freedom of speech which means people should be allowed to portray him as they like.</p>	<p>he has been democratically elected he is doing these things.</p> <p>The fact that a play that is critical of Trump is put on in America without retribution shows that he is not like Caesar. In Julius Caesar the people's tribunes are put to death for "pulling scarves off Caesar's images".</p>
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- Complete the 'You Decide' activity on page 2

"You Decide" Activity

1. Is it wrong for the Public Theater to portray Julius Caesar as Donald Trump, considering he is assassinated on stage? No it is not wrong for the theater to portray it this way, as it is up to the public to decide what plays they want to watch and how they want to be entertained. If censorship is put on what plays can be performed it is violating people's freedom of speech. This freedom was hard fought for and should never be weakened. It is the foundation of a democracy.

2. Does history repeat itself? If so, why? Yes history does repeat itself. This is because people's natures over the years do not change and they will often do the same things given the same circumstances. Humans are remarkable in their consistent reactions to certain events. On the subject of assassinating leaders, there have been between 4 and 6 US presidential assassinations and 16 plotted/attempted assassinations on US presidents mostly in contemporary times.

- 7) Find a photograph of an actor you think would be the ideal choice to play Marc Antony on stage.



- Daniel Craig

- Briefly explain why you think they are suitable.

Mark Antony is regarded as a trustworthy ally, but is prone to act on a whim and likes to enjoy life to the full. He is unconstrained and lives in the moment. He is quickly able to find clever ways to overcome difficulties and is a dangerous adversary. These are all features that Daniel Craig portrays when playing the role of James Bond.

- What kind of costume would you give them and why (eg historically Roman, Shakespearan, formal army uniform, battle fatigues, gang clothes, other).

Formal wear or suit. As Mark Antony was a politician he would be expected to dress formally when going about his business.

- Where/When would you set it and why?

In a modern day theatre in a modern European country. I would set it in modern times so people could relate to it better and in Europe because it is part of European history.

- What kind of ideas would your choice of costume and setting give to the audience?

He would look the part of a modern contemporary politician and adviser to the ruler. The setting would encourage the audience to think about occasions since Caesar's assassination when similar politics have played out in European countries and what the repercussions for the citizens may have been.

8) Write some DEVELOPED director's notes about how you would want them to deliver your chosen lines.

- How should they use their voice, emotion, body language, position on the stage?
- who he/she is looking at/talking to at key points and why?
- What language or techniques are most important to them in these lines and why?

The setting for the play will be a contemporary theatre where the backdrop will be simple facades of buildings and some elevated steps towards the back. There will be dramatic use of lighting and sound (particularly brass instruments) to portray the feeling of fear the Romans would have. The actor playing Mark Antony will begin by walking onto the centre of the stage with the crowd around the perimeter. A spot light will follow him with soft trumpet sounds. He will be wearing a loose black long jacket, a white shirt and black trousers. This will be in contrast to Caesar's blood stained white cloak and the informal clothing of the citizens. Caesar will be lying on a low wooden structure near centre stage in dim light. His opening line, "Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears.", needs to be said very forcefully to get the attention of the crowd. Lighting will then pan to the crowd. His tone and demeanour then needs to be subdued, as though to appear to be on the side of Brutus and the conspirators. He needs to be engaging and looking at as many people in the crowd as possible so as he can show that he is one of them and help win them over. He will mingle with the crowd with soft movements as they approach him, gaining their trust. With every repetition of, "___ is an honourable man," he needs to say it with more and more sarcasm in his voice, stressing the "sure" in "and sure he is an honourable man.". At this point his demeanour needs to change to one of anger in order to persuade the crowd to his way of thinking. His body language needs to reflect his growing anger by gesticulating forcefully. He needs to be particularly emotional when commenting that his heart is in the coffin with Caesar. He needs to look away from the crowd and at the ground to show how overwhelmed by emotion he is. This is to further win over the crowd's emotions and manipulate them to think similarly. He needs to use pauses to allow the crowd time to reflect on what he is saying. At the point of saying, "But was this ambition", his body language needs to change to one of controlled anger. He needs to look past the crowd into the audience with a steely expression as though inviting them to join in this emotion. His voice is to rise, but not shout. This is in order to emphasise his frustration to the crowd while keeping them on his side. When he says, "the day he overcame the Nervii," he needs to look skyward, to appear in great admiration of Caesar's accomplishments. He will raise a hand pointing skywards also. At the point of revealing Caesar's body, a spot light will focus on the area and he is to kneel beside the body and hang his head in despair. Music will softly play. He needs to dramatically remove the cloak covering the body in order to evoke horror and disgust from the audience. He must stress each word when demonstrating the cuts to the cloak. He will walk up the steps to begin the reading of the will. He needs to be calm, almost teasing the crowd getting them to respond emotionally. He needs to be making eye contact with as many of them as he can so as each and every one thinks that they are important and involved with the reading. As the crowd exits he must appear quietly triumphant that he has won the crowd over to his way of thinking. At this final point when he says "Mischief, thou art afoot" he needs to look into the distance of the audience, with a satisfied expression in order to show that he has achieved his goal of mobilising the crowd. Brass music will begin to play. The lighting will dim.

9) Explain how you would want your actor to engage the audience and get them to take the part of the Roman Plebians. How will your actor 'work the crowd' and how do you hope the audience will respond?

Right at the beginning as Mark Antony says "lend me your ears" , some members of the crowd will exit the audience area where they have been placed and join the rest of the crowd on the stage. This will allow the audience to feel as though they are part of the crowd being spoken to. At the point of saying, "but here I am to speak what I do know." he is to cast his eyes around the audience to persuade them that what he is about to say is the truth. His gaze will return to the crowd at the line , "You all did love him once.". By incorporating the audience into Mark Antony's delivery of the speech, they will feel involved in the drama and can reflect upon how they would respond to being in such a position. Would they believe Mark Antony? Or would they believe Brutus?

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Left: Caesar (top) and Marc Antony (bottom) in HBO's Rome TV series.

Right: Marc Antony works the crowd in a British stage version from June 2017.