

## TEACHING DEMONSTRATION LESSON PLAN

Written by Brian Hinds

**Lesson Title:** Cassius and Brutus – Staging Character in Act I, Scene ii of *Julius Caesar*

**Length:** 40 minutes



### Lesson Essential Questions

- How does Shakespeare use language to create mood and character?
- Can I analyze some of the language used to support my choices?
- Can I show Cassius and Brutus as characters and explain their intentions physically?

### Resources

Act I, scene ii, lines 135-161 of *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare

### Objectives

- To learn that Shakespeare's characters choose words deliberately to avert obstacles and get what they want.
- To connect words with physical actions providing clarity for students as they negotiate Shakespeare's language.

### Prior Knowledge

- Students will have a basic understanding of the story of *Julius Caesar*.
- Students will have a basic understanding of Shakespeare's language.

### Lesson Procedures

- Analyzing the Text – Each student underlines words that describe the size of something in speech.
- Exercise – Two students act out the speech with one student (Cassius) moving the other (Brutus) in the direction of the description, with audience right indicating large/huge, audience left indicating small, and the center indicating neutral space. Students switch roles. Cassius is now tasked with making Brutus feel large and small, depending on the emphasized word.
- Analyzing the Text – Each student circles every time Cassius says what should be done.
- Exercise – Outer circle students stomp feet when Cassius is telling Brutus to do something. Students switch roles. Students redo scene with Brutus leaving and coming back into the scene based on the words of Cassius.
- Discussion of Text – Students discuss speech as being similar to a piece of music in that one does not need to know the exact notes in order to enjoy and be moved by the music. Also, the fact that at the end of every line in Shakespeare's plays, student can grab the word on the next line in order to complete the thought. Do sound and movement activate Shakespeare's words?

### Lesson Accommodations

- Students with reading difficulties will be given text ahead of time.
- Students with mobility issues can read from their chairs.

### Lesson Enrichment or Extension

- Read the entire play together as a class, allowing students to use other strategies to explore character and language: character hot seating, scene interpretations, character journals, and character improv.