

Objective

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to analyze and understand the significance of Mark Antony's funeral oration in Act III, Scene 2 of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar." The student will explore themes of irony, repetition, pathos, and the concepts of ambition and honor, ultimately gaining a deeper insight into how language can influence public opinion.

Materials and Prep

- Notebook and pen for notes
- Printed copy of Act III, Scene 2 of "Julius Caesar" (if available)
- Access to a quiet space for reading and discussion

Before the lesson, ensure the student has a basic understanding of the plot of "Julius Caesar" and the characters involved, especially Julius Caesar, Brutus, and Mark Antony.

Activities

• Reading Aloud:

Have the student read Mark Antony's funeral oration aloud. Encourage them to pay attention to the emotion and emphasis in the speech. This will help them grasp the persuasive techniques used by Antony.

• Irony and Repetition Analysis:

Ask the student to identify examples of irony and repetition in the speech. They can make a list of phrases that are repeated and discuss their significance. This will help them understand how Antony manipulates language to sway the crowd.

• Pathos Exploration:

Have the student write a short paragraph on how Antony appeals to the emotions of the crowd. They should include specific examples from the speech that demonstrate pathos, helping them understand the power of emotional appeal in rhetoric.

• Debate on Ambition and Honor:

Organize a mini-debate where the student argues whether Julius Caesar was truly ambitious or if Antony was right to call him "honorable." This will encourage critical thinking and allow them to engage with the themes more deeply.

Talking Points

- "What do you think Antony means when he calls Brutus 'an honorable man'? How does this reflect irony?"
- "Can you find examples of repetition in Antony's speech? Why do you think he repeats certain phrases?"
- "How does Antony use emotional language to connect with the crowd? Can you give specific examples?"
- "What is the effect of Antony showing Caesar's wounds? How does this appeal to pathos?"
- "Why do you think Antony refers to Caesar's ambition? Is ambition always a negative trait?"
- "How does the crowd's reaction change throughout the speech? What techniques does Antony use to sway their opinions?"

- "What role does honor play in this scene? How do Brutus and Antony's views of honor differ?"
- "Why do you think Shakespeare chose to have Antony speak after Brutus? What impact does this have on the audience?"
- "How does the use of rhetorical questions in Antony's speech affect the audience's thinking?"
- "What can we learn about persuasion from Antony's speech? Are these techniques still used today?"
- "Discuss the historical context of the play. How does knowing the time period affect our understanding of ambition and honor?"
- "What do you think is the main message of Antony's speech? Is it just about Caesar, or is it about something bigger?"
- "How does the theme of friendship come into play in this scene? What does it say about Antony and Brutus?"
- "Do you think Antony's actions after the speech are justified? What does this say about his character?"
- "In what ways does this scene reflect modern political speeches? Can you draw any parallels?"