

TEACHER: Kashama Sharma

TENDER HEART HIGH SCHOOL, CHD.

CLASS: X

SUBJECT: ENGLISH LITERATURE

ACT IV, SC-1 JULIUS CAESAR

CONTEXT QUESTIONS:

PASSAGE 1. [Page No - 90 Workbook]

- (i) Antony is referring to Lepidus here. Antony is talking to Octavius, the only legal heir of Julius Caesar.
- (ii) Antony calls Lepidus a feeble man of no merit because Antony has become too shrewd now and that is why he has such a derogatory opinion about Lepidus (a capable and efficient man who was renowned for his military prowess).  
Lepidus was told to bring Julius Caesar's will from his house.  
He was sent to fetch the will because Antony feels that he is only fit for carrying out these kinds of errands.
- (iii) Antony behaves a clever manipulator here and tries to control the situation being the eldest member of the 2nd triumvirate as the first Triumvirate was formed by Julius Caesar, Pompey and Crassus in 60 B.C.  
Crassus was one of the richest men in Rome during the time Caesar was climbing. Crassus wants Octavius' opinion regarding the division of Julius' legacy into three fold world. He does not want to give any share to Lepidus.



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Before this he consulted Lepidus who all should be condemned to death or who must die or be banished. After sometime he regards Lepidus as a 'Slight unmeritable man', a barren spirited fellow, lacking in originality, who does not deserve to have an equal share of the triumvirate.

The three will meet either at Antony's house or at the Capitol.

- (iv) Antony intends to leave Lepidus unrewarded after his purpose is served. He wants to leave Lepidus like a tramp or an ass after removing the burden (using Lepidus in every possible way) from his head to wander and graze in pasture land.

Three fold world refers to the division of the world according to the Romans into three parts i.e. Europe, Africa and Asia (AAE).

- (v) Octavius refutes what Antony has said.

Tauntingly he says if Lepidus is a feeble man of no merit, then his taking of Lepidus' vote as to who should be marked off to die is not justified. Octavius was completely flabbergasted on hearing about Antony's opinion about a brave and efficient soldier like Lepidus.



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**EXTRACT 2.** Octavius - You may do your will; ...

(i) Mark Antony is the eldest member of the 2nd triumvirate. Octavius tells Antony to do as he likes because he respects Antony's seniority though he completely disagrees with his opinion about Lepidus.

(ii) Antony compares Lepidus to his horse because like his horse whom he ensures a plentiful <sup>supply</sup> of food, whom he trains to fight, to stop and gallop same way Lepidus has no individuality of his own. As the movements of his horse are controlled by his wishes in the same way Lepidus must be guided, trained and instructed.

(iii) Store of provender means to ensure a plentiful supply of food to an animal which is reared up by one which here means to Mark Antony's horse.

∴ The physical movements of Antony's horse are controlled by him because his horse is a mere creature whom he has to train to fight, to turn in a desired direction and work strictly according to his desire.

(iv) Antony further degrades Lepidus by calling him a mere tool or an unwanted <sup>and</sup> piece of furniture who is satisfied with cast-away fragments, things which have got outdated with the passage of time. He is the one who uses them as if in use now also.

[rest 2 parts are general] Do it yourself.

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- (V) The important things that Antony wants to speak about are Brutus and Cassius' initiative of raising armies. He wanted Octavius to muster up all the resources, to form a firm alliance. He also wanted to make the best allies and then stretch their resources as far as possible. He also wants Octavius to immediately go and discuss how hidden things should be disclosed to the public and how dangers should be easily confronted so that they could defeat Brutus and Cassius.



## Act 4, Sc-3

### Julius Caesar 26.8.24

#### CONTEXT QUESTIONS

##### QUESTION-1

1. They are in a camp near Sardis. Brutus told Cassius that should not have written in support of Lucius Pella who is a corrupt man.
2. Cassius feels that in such a time as this when their enemies are collecting armies and are ready to attack they should not keep arguing on such a small matter as writing a letter in favour of one person.
3. Brutus accused Cassius of having an 'itching palm'. Cassius reacts very angrily to this accusation. He says that if anyone else had said this he would have killed him.
4. This means that times are hard. Their enemies are collecting forces and can attack anytime. At such a time it is not proper that they should take every little fault into account so seriously.
5. Yes, he was justified. Cassius had been selling offices for money. Moreover, when Brutus sent a message to Cassius asking for money which he needed to pay the troops, he refused to give.

##### QUESTION-2

1. Brutus reminds Cassius of idea of March when Caesar was killed **March**, the **ides** of **March**.
2. The words in the blanks signify the Ides of March. This was the day when Caesar was killed by them to uphold justice, liberty and democracy. Now that they had power, they were resorting to corrupt practices.
3. Brutus reminds Cassius that the senators who killed Caesar were not murderers. They killed Caesar in the name of justice. They killed him because he allowed the robbers to go unpunished. What he means to say is that they should not repeat those things for which they sacrificed Caesar.
4. Brutus was wrong because they killed Caesar not because he was unjust, but because he was going to be a despot.  
Brutus was not fair to Cassius. He was angry with Cassius because the latter had not given him money when he needed it.
5. Brutus' behaviour has changed. He appears to be tense and agitated. There is inner turmoil in him. Perhaps he is so much disturbed due to the death of Portia, his dear wife.

## Act 4, Sc-3

### QUESTION-3

1. The lines are spoken scornfully. Brutus means that Cassius will have to swallow the poison of his anger and bad temper even if it kills him.
2. Brutus tells Cassius tauntingly that if he shows this kind of anger and ill temper he will laugh at him. The words pinch Cassius so much that he says "Is it come to this?"
3. Cassius considers himself better because he has more experience of the world. He was not justified in his assessment because he was not more experienced than Brutus.
4. Brutus had called Cassius a madman. Secondly, he said to Cassius that he should frighten his slaves by showing how choleric he is. Brutus will not be frightened. He was not justified in doing this.
5. The misunderstanding was that when Brutus sent a message that he needed money to pay the troops, Cassius refused. Cassius justified himself saying that he did not refuse to give him money but the man who brought this message must be a fool. Cassius softens towards Brutus when he comes to know that Portia has died.

### QUESTION-4

1. Cassius says that a friend should bear with the weaknesses of a friend but Brutus does not budge from his hard stand. This frustrates him. Complaints of Cassius were that Brutus had wronged him many times. He had also disregarded Cassius' letter written in support of Lucius Pella.

2. He means to say that his heart is dearer than the wealth of god Pluto. He means to say that as there is gold enough in Pluto's mine, he has love for Brutus in his heart.
3. Cassius says that he had not denied giving money to Brutus. The man who brought this message must be mad. He offered his breast to Brutus and said that the man who denied him money has opened his heart to him. Brutus can take out his heart, his dearest possession.
4. Brutus pacifies Cassius telling him that he is the partner of a man whose heart is very soft. He admits that he had taunted him in a bad mood. Thus he ends the quarrel. We would have ended the quarrel by feeling sorry for the fit of bad temper.
5. A poet enters the scene. He puts them to shame for quarreling among themselves in this way. Brutus angrily asks him to get out.

**QUESTION-5**

1. Brutus speaks to Cassius in the first line. He does not want to speak about the death of Portia. Brutus is upset because he has received letters informing that Antony and Octavius have gathered great power.
2. He is trying to wave off Portia's thought. He is an idealist and he is trying to use this philosophy (we must all die one day) in this context.
3. He is a soldier in the army of Cassius. He gives the information that he too has got letters and by an edict and an order of doom Antony, Lepidus and Octavius have put to death hundred members of the senate.
4. Brutus suggests that they should march immediately towards Philippi. Cassius does not agree to this. He says that the enemy would exhaust energy in seeking them, while they will remain full of strength. So they should not march.
5. Cassius gives good suggestion. But Brutus turns down Cassius' suggestion although it is more practical. He insists on having his own way and gives arguments which are impractical. No wonder they lose the battle.

**QUESTION-6**

1. Brutus explains to Cassius that people between Philippi and Sardis have no goodwill towards them. If they allow the enemy forces to march to them, the people might join the enemy. So they should, without giving time to enemy, launch the attack.
2. Just like the tide in the sea, there is tide in the life of men. If the ship misses the tide it is bound to be stuck up. Similarly if human beings miss the opportunity, the voyage of life becomes sorrowful. They lose the battle of life.
3. Brutus says that journey of life is comparable to journey of ship. If a ship takes advantage of the tide it sails smoothly. Similarly if human beings take advantage of opportunities of life they succeed, otherwise they fail.
4. No, Brutus was not justified in taking advantage of the tide. His decision to march towards Philippi was wrong that is why his forces faced defeat. He should have acted upon the suggestion of Cassius which was more practical.



**QUESTION-7**

1. The scene is set in a camp at Sardis. It is the time of midnight and all have gone to sleep. A candle is burning and Brutus sees Caesar's ghost. It turns his blood cold.
2. The apparition tells Brutus that it is Brutus' evil spirit. It will meet him again at Philippi. Brutus is alarmed to see the ghost. Had I been in Brutus' place, I too would have been dumb with fear.
3. The appearance of the ghost adds to tension and excitement. The words of the ghost are a warning of the coming catastrophe. They point out to the doom of Brutus and Cassius.
4. Shakespeare knew that the Elizabethans were interested in the supernatural things. So he brought in the ghost. We feel that it was only a figment of Brutus' imagination. After the murder of Caesar, Brutus must have been thinking all the time of Caesar. No wonder his thoughts acquired the form of a spirit and appeared before him. No other person saw anything.
5. The apparition appears before Brutus in the Philippi fields a night before the final battle. Brutus tells about this to Voluminus.