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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2015 Volume II: Explaining Character in Shakespeare

Take a Stab at It: Exploring Character in Julius Caesar

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This unit for an advanced ninth grade classroom seeks to explicate strategies and activities that represent a well-rounded deep investigation of character in William Shakespeare's tragedy, *Julius Caesar*.

There is universality in William Shakespeare's works that makes them relevant for all people in our increasingly globalized society. In our current moment, the characters and concerns of the four primary characters of *Julius Caesar* are as relevant and applicable to the ethical, political and psychological struggles of today as they were during the author's era.

The focus of this unit is how to enable students to understand the creativity and economy with which the Bard approached the English language, and the frank and clear eye with which he was able to evaluate some of the most base and inherent characteristics of the human condition. Students will come to understand Shakespeare as a master craftsman of humanism and of the psychological development of characters. This unit [] could be easily adapted for learners at all levels, in middle or high school.

(Developed for English, grade 9; recommended for English, grades 7-12)

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