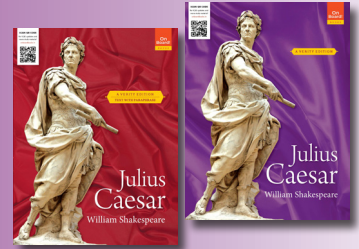


Julius Caesar

William Shakespeare



SAMPLE QUESTION PAPER 4 (For Class 10 – Act 4)

ANSWERS

Question 1

- (i) (d) Lepidus
- (ii) (d) Brutus had wronged Cassius
- (iii) (d) Portia
- (iv) (b) Caesar's ghost
- (v) (d) None of these
- (vi) (b) The Poet

Question 2

- (i) Cassius is described as “a hot friend cooling” since his attitude appeared to have changed. Lucilius had been sent as a messenger to Cassius and had been received with courtesies but friendly informality had been absent. The lack of affection had been disguised using formal behaviour. Brutus was critical of this insincerity as described in the given lines using the metaphor of promising-looking horses that betray on the battlefield.
- (ii) Cassius accused Brutus of condemning and punishing Cassius' supporter, Lucius Pella, who had been extracting money for war-related purposes from the people in Sardis. Brutus is then accused of rejecting Cassius' plea and recommendation he had sent on behalf of Pella. Cassius also accuses Brutus of being immoderately critical of him and his methods, and daring to reprimand him openly.
- (iii) Brutus believed that the conspirators had committed to an honourable cause when they had killed Caesar and the actions of Lucius Pella, as well as Cassius were bringing them disgrace. He accused Cassius of accepting bribes, attempting to plead Brutus into forgiving Pella, employing undeserving people in his ranks. Cassius is also accused of not assisting Brutus with financial aid for the war. Brutus was displeased with Cassius for attempting to prove his superiority over him.

- (iv) While the death of Portia aggrieved Brutus deeply, we also find him attempting to accept her death stoically. As a follower of Stoic philosophy, Brutus was expected to be indifferent to pain and pleasure. He does not comment her death or his feelings with respect to it in front of any of his inferiors: only his peer, Cassius learns about his feelings. Brutus informs the gathering that death was inevitable for all. He simply confesses that with Portia dying, he had a greater ability to face death.
- (v) Brutus wanted to march to Philippi since their armies did not have the support of the people of Sardis, where they were located at that point. The people around him were forcing their affections, especially since Cassius had been demanding money. Brutus felt that the people in Sardis would support Antony and Octavius' forces during the battle. The support of the locals at Philippi would boost the morale of the soldiers. Cassius was convinced that it was better to fight a defensive battle instead of launching an offensive at Philippi which would help them reserve their own resources and energy. Staying out at Sardis would also mean that the enemy would be wasting their resources while Cassius and Brutus' soldiers would be well-rested and active.

Question 3

- (i) In the lines given, Lepidus is being described by Antony for the benefit of Octavius Caesar.
- (ii) Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus were discussing their plans for the conspirators and those related to them. They were listing the names of the people who were to be executed for their role in Caesar's death. Lepidus had assented to the death of his brother upon the condition that Antony's nephew, Publius, was to be put to death as well. Antony had agreed to Lepidus' condition. Antony had then asked Lepidus to bring Caesar's will so that the three of them could later discuss ways in which Caesar's legacies for the public could be redirected to their war efforts.
- (iii) From the lines given, one can glean Antony's dismissive attitude towards Lepidus. It is amply clear that Antony had no regard for him and that Lepidus is being used to serve a purpose. He describes Lepidus – a human being and a potential triumvir – as “property” i.e. something that is possessed and put to use, and disposable in nature. Even the metaphors used by Antony express his disdain for Lepidus, apart from his shrewd cold-heartedness. While one had appreciated Antony's shrewdness and use of language earlier in the play, here we discover a despicable streak of callousness in him.
- (iv) Octavius, unlike Antony, does not feel unkindly towards Lepidus and is appreciative of the experience he had gained as a soldier. He is a good listener who keeps his cards close and does not reveal much. His intelligence and straightforwardness is seen when he questions Antony's opinion of Lepidus – asking why the latter had been consulted if Antony did indeed have such a low opinion of Lepidus. He is a careful observer who

keeps his opinions to himself without bluntly speaking ill of them. Octavius' prudence is seen when he does not dismiss Antony's opinion completely, nor does he defend Lepidus unambiguously, since he knew that they needed each other's support.

- (v) In this scene we find Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus, quite heartlessly and casually putting a mark against the names of the people they deemed guilty of being enemies of the second triumvirate. They do not even spare those they are related to which reminds one of the bloodshed described later in this play. Antony criticising Lepidus behind his back and admitting to putting him to use for the benefit of Octavius and him, shows his disdain for a fellow member of the triumvirate. There is an acute lack of trust apparent in this scene, which gets heightened later in the play. This is the second and last scene where Lepidus appears in this play which makes one wonder what had happened to him before the final battle. Only Octavius and Antony manage to maintain an uneasy alliance in this scene. Octavius does not reveal much about his intentions or motivations which leads one to believe that this alliance was already fraying before the battles with the conspirators. While Antony's bluntness reveals his hardheartedness, Octavius' silence reveals his shrewdness. The three are devious enough to even redirect some of Caesar's inheritances meant for the general public, towards their war effort.