

Context Clues in Julius Caesar

Name: _____

One of the most famous of William Shakespeare's plays is "The Tragedy of Julius Caesar." The play tells of the murder of the Roman emperor Julius Caesar by Roman officials, many of whom were once Caesar's friends.

In the scene below, Caesar is walking in public with Casca, other friends and supporters. Many citizens are following the group. Read the passage, paying special attention to the underlined words. Complete the grid at the bottom of the page.

ACT I, Scene II.

Soothsayer: Cæsar!

Caesar: Ha! who calls?

Casca: Bid every noise be still: peace yet again!

Caesar: Who is it in the press that calls on me?

I hear a tongue, shriller than all the music,

Cry "Cæsar!" Speak; Cæsar is turn'd to hear.

Soothsayer: Beware the ides of March.

Caesar: What man is that?

Brutus: A soothsayer bids you beware the ides of March.

Caesar: Set him before me; let me see his face.

Casca: Fellow, come from the throng; look upon Cæsar.

Caesar: What say'st thou to me now? speak once again.

Soothsayer: Beware the ides of March.

Caesar: He is a dreamer; let us leave him: pass.

Word	part of speech	What do you think it means?	What were your clues?
1. bid			
2. still			
3. press			
4. shriller			
5. turn'd			
6. soothsayer			
7. throng			
8. say'st			

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Caesar: He is a dreamer; let us leave him: pass.

Student answers will vary for columns 3-4. Example of correct answers:

Word	part of speech	What do you think it means?	What were your clues?
1. bid	verb	command or ask	
2. still	adverb	quiet	
3. press	noun	crowd	
4. shriller	adjective	harsher or higher	
5. turn'd	verb	moved	
6. soothsayer	noun	fortune teller	
7. throng	noun	mob	
8. say'st	verb	tell or speak	