Julius Caesar, Act I

The following questions ask you to read and comprehend William Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*. To answer the questions, you will have to consider what you read and apply it to the question. Please use *textual evidence* from the play to help support your answers.

**Act I, Scene I**

1. What is the *setting* of the opening of the play? (The *time and place* in which the action happens)

2. Why are Flavius and Murellus angry with the commoners at the opening of the play?

3. A *pun* is “the usually humorous use of a word in such a way as to suggest two or more of its meanings or the meaning of another word similar in sound.” Shakespeare often used puns in his plays for comedic effect. What pun does Shakespeare use in lines 1.1.13-14?

4. What does Shakespeare’s opening of the play show us about Rome’s political climate?

5. In lines 1.1.72-75., Flavius says:

   *These growing feathers plucked from Caesar’s wing
   Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
   Who else would soar above the view of men
   And keep us all in servile fearfulness.*

   If we take away Caesar’s support, he’ll have to come back down to earth; otherwise, he’ll fly too high and keep the rest of us in a state of fear and obedience.

   Why are Flavius and Murellus taking the decorations off of Caesar’s statues? What are they worried about?
1. What details are revealed to us about Antony’s character in this scene? Find an example in the text you can cite to support your claim.

2. What details are revealed to us about Caesar’s character in this scene? Find at least one example in the text you can cite to support your claim.

3. What does the soothsayer say to Caesar in passing?
   a. How does this warning affect the mood of the play (mood is the feeling the work gives off – funny, scary, etc.)
   b. How does Caesar react to this warning?

4. Cassius speaks to Brutus about Brutus’ recent change in behavior in lines 1.2.34–38. What has been going on with Brutus lately?
   a. How does Cassius offer to help Brutus? (lines 1.2.68–80)

5. We see many examples of how Brutus feels about Caesar in Act I, Scene ii. How does Brutus feel about Caesar? Find at least one example in the text you can cite to support your claim.

6. We see many examples of how Cassius feels about Caesar in Act I, Scene ii. How does Cassius feel about Caesar? Find at least one example in the text you can cite to support your claim.
Act I, Scene III

1. What is the setting of this scene? What could this setting foreshadow in the play?

2. There are many unusual events going on in Act I, Scene iii. Below, list an unusual event and the line number you found it on. The first is done for you:
   a. Raining fire from the sky (1.3.10)

3. In lines 1.3.63-79, Cassius speaks about why he believes there are unusual events taking place. What reason does Cassius give to explain these mysterious events?

4. Cassius says to Casca, in a foreboding sort of way, where he and the conspirators are meeting that night. (1.3.126-131.)
   a. Where are they meeting, and what significance does it hold?
   b. What do you predict will happen? What line lends support to your claim?

5. Why do the conspirators so desperately need Brutus to be on their side?

6. What is Cassius’ plan to win Brutus over to the “dark side”? (1.3.144-149.)
Famous Quotations, Act I

There are many famous expressions that come from the play *Julius Caesar*, as well as many important quotations that help us figure out what the characters are up to. For each quote below, state who is the speaker and what the quotation means – why is it important enough to be on this page?

1. “...it was Greek to me.” (1.2.288)
   a. Who said it:
   b. What does it mean?
   c. What does this show us about the speaker?
   d. Who was Cicero speaking to, if he was speaking Greek?

2. “Beware the ides of March!” (1.2.20)
   a. Who said it:
   b. To whom did he say it?
   c. What does it mean?

3. “Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look. He thinks too much. Such men are dangerous.” (1.2.194-195.)
   a. Who said it:
   b. What does it mean?