**Lesson 23 – Julius Caesar, Act IV, 4-20-12**

**TIME and SETTING**

Advanced English II – Small Rural School – 50 minute class period

**OBJECTIVE/S**

By the end of class today, students should be able to:

* Write for an ongoing short period of time to a thematic question connecting to the big picture.
* Contribute to discussion with the teacher only there to help facilitate.

**MATERIALS**

* Responses from yesterday, extra sheets of paper for absent students if needed

**PROCEDURE**

Warm-Up (5 minutes)

Start by handing back their responses from yesterday. Inform students that I read over them briefly to see what we needed to cover in discussion, but that I would like them to reread and add (or finish as some of them ran out of time) and use their response for the basis of discussion. Students should continue responding to the question: Why do we read Shakespeare, and in our case why do we read *Julius Caesar?* Think of why and what you have taken from this unit so far and with *Romeo and Juliet* last year. Instruct students to write silently for the next 5 minutes and to be ready to share.

Main Activity (40 minutes)

After students have written for 5 minutes, allow conversation to open up to all students and flow freely. I am there mainly to direct the conversation and to ensure that students take their response to the next level. I want this to be a student-centered activity where they make real world connections to the story. Instruct students to write down notes if necessary on the paper, but to please leave room for a final question at the end.

Be sure to cover in discussion:

* Major themes in *Julius Caesar*
* Why we study classic literature and Shakespeare
* How issues of betrayal and authority still rule our world

Use about 30 minutes for discussion. Then, as discussion wraps up, bring up how this connects to the exam.

For the 10 minutes go over expectations for the exam which will be different than usual. Explain to the students that they will take an in-class timed writing over *Julius Caesar.* We will discuss why I feel this is an appropriate exam but students again have the opportunity to speak up so that I can make changes as necessary and fit it towards their needs.

Wrap- Up (5 minutes)

To wrap up, students will again use the sheet of paper to respond to a new question to complete today’s circle discussion. If students need more paper, provide them with another sheet. Students should put away all of their things except the paper and something to write with, and they should write for the final 5 minutes of class. This is their ticket out of the door. Students should respond to the question: How do you now feel about *Julius Caesar* and its relevance and significance to your lives. Also have students jot down any final suggestions or comments to make about their understanding or hopes for understanding the play.

**ASSESSMENT**

We will assess overall their understanding and responses with their writing. They are writing prior to discussion to show what they know and to support their ability to discuss. Then, we will respond afterwards to assess how their understanding has changed or improved. I will informally assess them based off of participation and responses. To complete the unit and to formally assess, next week the students will take a test over *Julius Caesar.*

**COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOALS**

* RL.9-10.10. By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. – At this point they should have a thorough understanding of the main themes and ideas in *Julius Caesar.*
* W.9-10.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. – Students will meet this standard by writing in preparation for the discussion and afterwards. Then, when we complete the exam, they will also engage in a different type of writing as well.