

**LESSON 1****1. Party Time - A Hero's Return?****Drama: Improvisation**

Explain to pupils that the play opens in Rome, 44BC, on the day of the Feast of Lupercalia. This ancient festival was celebrated by the Romans to ward off evil spirits. The Romans on this day are particularly joyful as it happens to coincide with Julius Caesar's triumphant return to Rome. Four years ago, he defeated Pompey the Great in a civil war. Now he has beaten Pompey's son. The streets are crowded with men and women dancing, feasting and drinking.

**Scene 1:**

Introduce the two tribunes (magistrates elected by the people) Marcellus and Flavius who are weaving their way through the crowds. Explain to pupils that they are angry that the common workers of Rome are celebrating as they believe Pompey was a better ruler, so they insist everyone calms down and takes away all the ribbons and decorations.

For this activity, prepare in advance balloons, banners to decorate the space. This creates a 'party' atmosphere. Use party blowers/poppers, empty bottles for drinking etc. as props.

Select pupils to act the roles below:

Play the opening track (Sinfonia of London)- The Feast of Lupercal:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDERbnkOYIA>

Flavius: *Hence! Home, you idle creatures, get you home, is this a holiday!?*  
(To a bystander) *Speak, what trade are thou?*

Commoner 1: *a carpenter!*

Flavius: *You, sir, what trade are you?*

Commoner 2: *I am but a cobbler! We make holiday to see Caesar and to rejoice in his triumph.*

Marcellus: *Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings him home? .Oh you hard hearts, you cruel people of Rome. Knew you not Pompey?*

Flavius: *Disrobe the images, if you do find them decked with ceremonies!*

The children work in groups, acting out this short scene, focussing on facial expression, physical movements and gestures to indicate their space.

Scene 2:

For the next scene, use Leon Garfield's 'Animated Tales' version of Julius Caesar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DtJkeMK0yU>

Focus on the soothsayer's warning, 'Caesar, beware the ides of March!' Children will enjoy acting this scene out, thinking about the soothsayer's stooped, hunched body language compared to Caesar's proud, domineering stance. Practice different versions of this scene.

## Writing

### Narrative

Focus:

Setting the scene and use of the 'zoom' technique

Following on from the drama activity, pupils will compose a short narrative piece, describing the scene they have acted out above.



Explain that they will use a technique called the 'zoom'. Their first few sentences will describe the whole scene, and just like a camera, zoom in to close up details.

The teacher will model this process to the pupils e.g.

### Scene 1- ZOOM in

*It was a crisp February afternoon, and the people of Rome were celebrating. They had gathered to celebrate the triumphant return of their general, Julius Caesar. As the sunshine lit up the city's temples, arches and pillars, the whole city was bustling with noise. Delighted to have the day off work, people danced through the busy streets. On a street corner, two tribunes glared around them at the colourful decorations. Snatching a red ribbon, Flavius muttered under his breath. How could these people think today was a day for celebrating?.....*

### Scene 2 – ZOOM in

*In the distance, Caesar led the procession, proud and mighty, riding a gleaming white horse. His richly embroidered red robe fluttered in the spring breeze. As the crowd cheered and roared, he held his head high and smiled with pride. Emerging from a shadow, a toothless soothsayer stepped forward ..*

To support younger pupils, teachers can provide a writing frame. See below:

It was a .....afternoon, and the people of Rome were..... They had gathered to celebrate the triumphant return of their general, Julius Caesar. As the sunshine....., the whole city was..... Delighted to have the day off work, people .....through the .....streets. On a street corner, two tribunes .....at the colourful decorations. Snatching a....., Flavius muttered under his breath. How could these people think today was a day for celebrating?.....

In the distance, Caesar led the procession, proud and mighty, riding a ..... , ..... horse. His ..... , .....red robe .....in the .....breeze. As the crowd .....and....., he held his head high and..... Emerging from a shadow, a .....soothsayer stepped forward..... 'Caesar, beware the ides of March', he

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