



JULIUS CAESAR

- THE BIG QUESTION

A Key Stage 2 PSHE and Citizenship Resource



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Curriculum Links

This KS2 Citizenship and English teaching sequence provides lessons to teach pupils about forming and talking about their opinions. It uses Shakespeare's **Julius Caesar** to look at the way in which we listen to those in charge and whether this is always the right thing to do.

There are various opportunities to meet **KS2 National Curriculum English** requirements, including study of a significant author, fiction from our literary heritage, drama, writing, and spoken language opportunities.

In addition, the lesson sequence includes opportunities to meet KS2 Citizenship curriculum requirements, giving children opportunities to:

- Talk and write about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect themselves and society.
- Prepare to play an active role as citizens by researching, discussing and debating issues.
- Reflect on spiritual, moral, social, and cultural issues, using imagination to understand other people's experiences.
- Resolve differences by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices.
- Understand that pressure to behave in an unacceptable or risky way can come from a variety of sources, including people they know, and how to ask for help and use basic techniques for resisting pressure to do wrong.
- Understand that actions affect themselves and others, to care about other people's feelings and to try to see things from their points of view.

Examples of actions schools can take to promote Fundamental British values, include:

- Ensuring all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to, and demonstrating how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes such as a school council whose members are voted for by the pupils.



Before you start this lesson and delve into the Big Question in the play, you might want to familiarise yourself with the story first.

- There are lots of different approaches you could take, including using the 10 point summary.
- If you or your students don't know the play, the following process is a great introduction to the story and its main characters.
- As with any lesson, do adapt this to suit the needs of your students.
- This is a great way to get the story on its feet quickly and help your students to understand the story arc.

Firstly, divide your students into groups and give them copies of the 10 point summary to explore the story order.

- Cut up and remove the numbers from the 10 point summary.
- Give each group a few minutes to rearrange them into the correct order.
- You could print a large copy of the 10 point summary so that each one is on an A3 page and when you go through the order with the whole class you can stick them up in the correct order around the room.
- Correct any misconceptions as you go through the points and ask your students to justify and clarify the decisions they made.
- This will support with comprehension work across English as there are some key indicators of the story structure (E.g. Romeo and Juliet can only get married once they have met, Macbeth can only become King once he has killed the King).

Once the correct order has been established, give each group two consecutive story points and ask them to create freeze frames to show this moment. Provide them with the following two rules:

1. Everyone must be involved.
2. Someone/some people must read out the story point.
 - Give them a strict time limit to create the freeze frame, before moving onto their second one.
 - Ask them to consider what else they could be if there are only a small amount of named characters in the scene - could they create the architecture or double up on characters?
 - After the time limit is up, give them a further two minutes to consider how they would adjust their positions so that the rest of the class can see the whole image – ask them to consider their audience.
 - With the rest of the class watching, move from one group to another, seeing each freeze frame in order and hearing the story point. Then jump into the image to 'Thought tap' some (or all ideally) of the characters.
 - It's really encouraging for students if they can share their ideas regardless of their character E.g. Macbeth or one of his soldiers.



- Ask them open questions about who they are, what they are doing and how they feel about it. Facilitate this in a light-hearted way to avoid the students feeling under pressure.
- If they struggle with an answer, throw the question out to the rest of the group and the audience.
- This is a great opportunity to get some interpretations of characters' thoughts and actions, but do use it to clarify facts about the story and the characters too.
- It is also a great time to show that you don't have all of the answers either and that you will all find out more as you delve further into the play and rehearsals.
- You could do this 'Thought Tapping' as a 'Roving Reporter', using a prop as a microphone to interview the characters as if live in that moment.

Once you have done this for each of the 10 images, bring the class back together for a plenary.

This is a good time to recap on what they have learnt about the characters and/or the story. This could be done in a number of ways:

- 1. Tell the story in a circle.** Everyone sits in a circle and adds a bit more information on the previous person's ideas. This means that those that have a good grasp will be able to share their knowledge and those who are still working towards it, will be able to add whatever they can – such as a character name or a setting for the play.
- 2. Provide them with plenary cards.** Use the following examples and ask them to share their response with someone else.
 - Something they have learnt today; a new word or phrase that they have used today; something that they would like to know more about; something that they are looking forward to in the play; a question that they now have about the play.
- 3. Learnt and enjoyed.** Simply ask for them to tell a partner something that they have learnt and something that they have enjoyed in this lesson



The Big Question – Julius Caesar

<p>Learning Objective</p> <p>Pupils use a range of balanced and persuasive argument techniques, across a range of drama activities to formulate a viewpoint and argument related to the Big Question.</p> <p>Pupils analyse the actions of the leaders in the play and explore the persuasive techniques they use.</p> <p>Success Criteria (including differentiation)</p> <p>All children can express an initial opinion on the 'Big Question' and justify their viewpoint.</p> <p>Most children can develop their opinion over the course of the lesson sequence by listening and responding to others.</p> <p>Some children can articulate a clear balanced argument on the 'Big Question', using sophisticated argument techniques.</p>	<p>Big Question: Should I always trust the person in charge?</p> <p>Vocabulary: Conspirators, state, democracy, power, trustworthy, responsibility, conscience, hot-seating, role on the wall.</p> <p>Starter: Exploring positions of power. Prompt a discussion with the class to lead into the Big Question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the students to consider their response to the Big Question by placing themselves on a Value Continuum. • Through discussion, ask pupils for their reaction Brutus' behaviour with regard to the killing of Caesar and the waging of war. • Students feed back to the rest of the class what they can infer about the characters of Brutus and Antony and their relationship with one another. • Pupils explore the characters of Brutus and Mark Antony, thinking about everything they have gone through using role on the wall and text extracts from the play. • Pupils hot-seat Brutus to find out more about his motivations to join the plot to kill Caesar. • Pupils take part in a conscience alley to advise Brutus what to do next. • <i>Optional written activity. Pupils write either a balanced argument or a persuasive argument, taking a stance on the behaviour of the conspirators based on what they heard and the evidence they had.</i> <p>See Teaching and Learning Activities for full details</p>	<p>Assessment Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value continuum • Role on the wall • Hot-seating and conscience alley • Follow up written work (persuasive or balanced argument) <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 point summary • Five Facts about Mark Antony and Brutus' relationship • Two Text Extracts • Role on the Wall templates • Question stems for hot-seating • Sentence starters (balanced and persuasive arguments) <p>KS2 English Curriculum Links (Y5/6 Programme of Study) Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase their familiarity with a wide range of books including fiction from our literary heritage. • Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence. • Provide reasoned justifications for their views. • Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions. • Participate in discussions, performances, role play/improvisations and debates. • Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, imagining and exploring ideas.
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Teaching and Learning Activities

Starter – Authority

- Ask the class what the following people have in common – Headteacher, Prime Minister, President, Policeman, parents/guardians.
- Guide them towards the idea that they are in a position of power.
- What good qualities do these people need to have? What would the opposites of these qualities be?
- Take ideas and write up for all to see. Discuss the difference between the two sets of attributes.
- Ask why is it important to have someone in charge.
- Think about when the person in charge might not be the best person to do the job. What are the circumstances that make this more likely to happen? Does it differ across the country or the world? What are the processes in place to determine who is in charge? Steer the students towards the differences between democracy and dictatorship.

Teaching and Learning Activity One - Value Continuum

- Introduce the concept of a Value Continuum by asking pupils to imagine that the room is bisected diagonally, with one corner of the room representing “Strongly Agree or Yes” and the other corner of the room representing “Strongly Disagree or No”.
- Explain to the pupils that you will ask them a question, and that they must stand somewhere on the imaginary line. They don't have to stand in the corners. Demonstrate where they might stand if they agree quite strongly or think ‘yes’, or if they disagreed slightly more than they agreed with a question.
- Now give them an example question so they can see how it works. E.g. ‘Is breakfast the most important meal of the day?’ or ‘Are cats better than dogs?’ Take views from different places on the line, encouraging pupils to articulate their feelings.
- Once they are used to how it works, ask them the ‘Big Question’ **‘Should I always listen to the person in charge?’** moving to where they think they should be. Ask for responses and for the reasoning for their thoughts.

Teaching and Learning Activity Two – Exploring Brutus and Antony

- Next, give each group one of the **Five Facts** and share with the class. These facts contextualise the relationship between the two characters up until after Caesar's funeral. What do we know for sure? What can we deduce from what we know? How does the relationship change or develop? What are the strengths and weaknesses of it? How do they think it will end between them? Why has the decision been made get rid of Caesar?



- Ask pupils for their reaction to the behaviour of Brutus and the decision to murder Caesar for the ‘good of Rome’. What effect does it have on everyone else?
- Show the following statement: **‘Brutus conspired against Caesar, he will do the same to Mark Antony. He is power obsessed’** and record their points on the whiteboard.

Teaching and Learning Activity Three – Role on the Wall

- First create a shared **Role on the Wall** for Mark Antony, exploring what the character is like on the inside (inner thoughts and feelings) and the outside (what he shows to the world).
 - E.g. Mark Antony– *Inside the figure – in mourning for his leader and friend, worried about the future of Rome and jealous of Brutus’s decisive approach to leadership.*
 - *Outside the figure – Wants to appear as a respectful, brave and strong leader.*
- Hand out the **Two Text Extracts** – one showing some of Brutus’s thoughts before the murder of Caesar and the other being the funeral speech.
- Lead pupils in a discussion about the difference between the two different versions of Brutus.
- Now, divide pupils into groups – with one set of groups creating a Role on the Wall for Brutus when he is plotting the murder, and one set of groups creating a Role on the Wall for Brutus at the funeral speaking about Caesar. Use the **Role on the Wall Template**
- Ask children to create their own Role on the Wall for whichever Brutus they have been allocated, with the characteristics, hopes, fears and personal desires of Brutus written on the inside of the figure. On the outside of the figure, children provide details of how the character wishes to appear to others.
- Once completed, share with the entire class and discuss the different Brutus’ that have been created. What similarities and differences are there?

Teaching and Learning Activity Four – Hot-seating

This is an exercise to allow pupils to really get to know characters by asking them questions and hearing them speak outside of the parameters of the story itself.

- The teacher should initially play the role of Brutus.
- Ask pupils to think about what they already know about Brutus up to this point in the story, using their existing knowledge, the five facts and their completed role on the wall. What would they like to know about what he wants and how he feels after Caesar has



died? They should especially consider his relationship with Caesar, Mark Anthony and the other conspirators.

- Provide open ended **question stems for hot-seating** to pupils to ensure that they use high order questions and not simply questions that can be answered yes or no.
- Have pupils work in groups to create their questions. Aim for 4 or 5 questions from each group.
- Pupils vote for the 'juiciest' questions in their groups - the ones likely to generate the most interesting answers. These are likely to be about character motivation/ feelings/hopes and wishes, rather than factual questions such as "What did you have for lunch today?"
- Teacher in role answers questions.
- After the teacher has answered a few questions in role, invite pupils to hot seat each other, first on their tables and in pairs, with one child asking and the other answering questions in role. Then, invite students to the front of the class to show their hot-seating discussions if they feel confident.

Teaching and Learning Activity Five - Conscience Alley

- Pupils take part in a conscience alley to advise Brutus what he should do about Mark Antony, when he has heard his funeral speech and seen the way the crowd have reacted.
- Explain that Brutus faces a decision – either to join forces with Mark Antony or to give up on his hopes of a better Rome.
- Ask children to work in pairs to provide advice to Brutus. Either he should give up or he should join Mark Antony.
- They must justify their decision with reference to the text or with reference to their own moral viewpoint.
- Justification is essential so therefore ask the children to practise doing this with their viewpoint, with their partner.
- The teacher should then play the part of Brutus.
- Pupils who think that he should join Mark Antony should stand on one side.
- Pupils who think that he should not join Mark Antony should stand on the other side.
- As the teacher moves along the tunnel, they should pause at every point and listen to the justifications from their left and right
- It is vital that this is done slowly so that every point and justification is heard (otherwise this can be a very noisy and unproductive exercise!)

Written Follow up

Children write a balanced argument giving both viewpoints to Brutus or a persuasive letter encouraging him to make a certain decision.

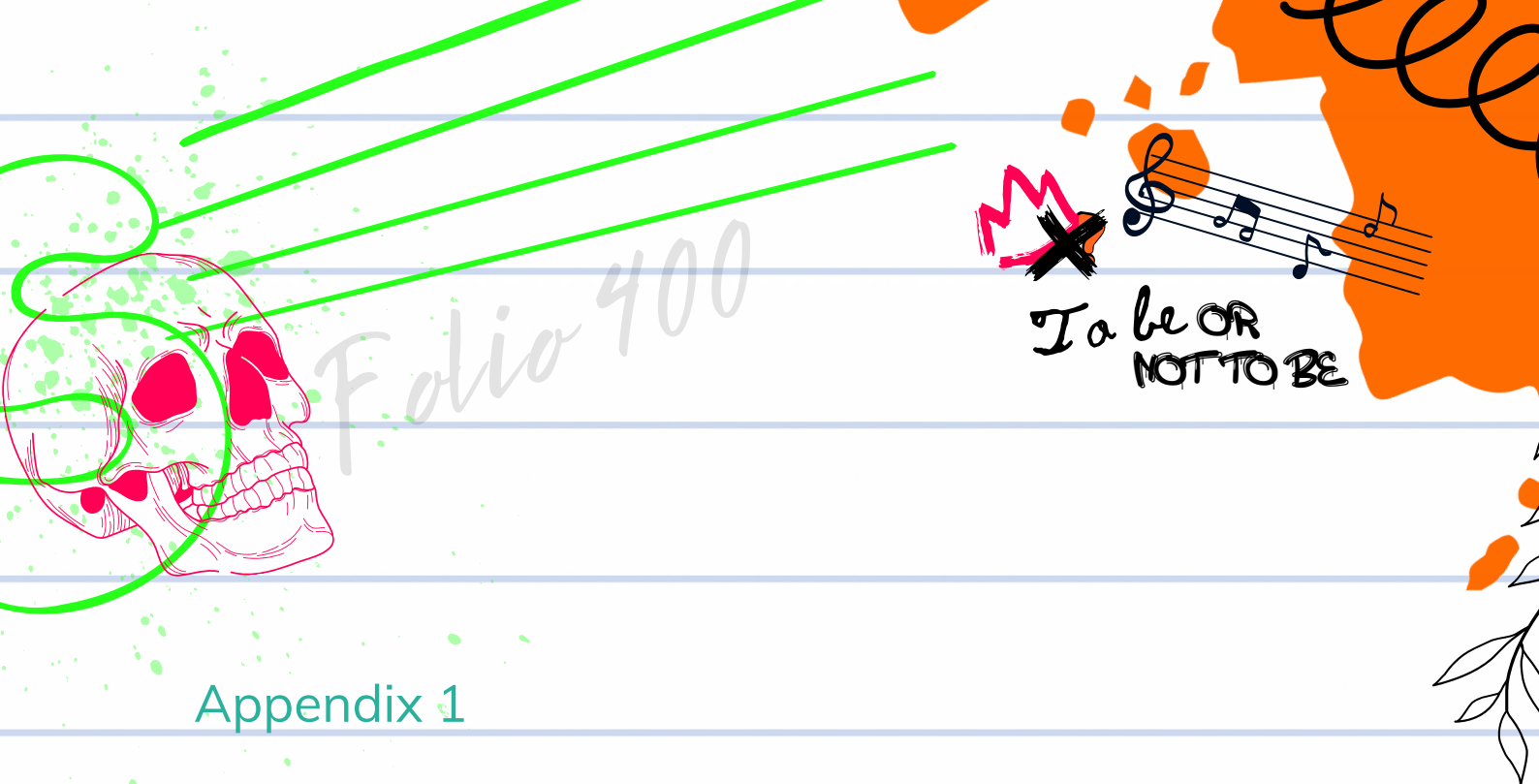
The Resources section contains **Sentence starters (balanced and persuasive arguments)**.



Plenary

Return to the Big Question and the Value Continuum. **'Should I always trust the person in charge?'** Has anyone changed their minds? Interrogate how their understanding of Brutus's behaviour has influenced their decision.





Appendix 1

JULIUS CAESAR

THE BIG QUESTION

Resources Pack



Julius Caesar

10 Events

1. Julius Caesar's returns triumphant to Rome after defeating his rival in battle but a soothsayer warns him of an unknown danger ahead.
2. Certain dissident nobles express dissatisfaction at the extent of Caesar's power. They persuade an eminent Roman, Brutus, to join them in a plot to assassinate Caesar at the Capitol.
3. Brutus' wife, Portia, challenges his secretive behaviour,
4. Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, dreams of danger and warns him not to go to the Capitol, but he ignores her fears and goes anyway.
5. The conspirators murder Caesar at the Capitol and make an entente with Antony.
6. Brutus calms the people, but Antony incites them against the conspirators and riots ensue.
7. War is waged between the conspirators and Antony and Octavius, Caesar's heir. Portia commits suicide.
8. The conspirators suffer internal squabbles, and are defeated at the hands of Antony and Octavius. Octavius asserts power over Anthony.
9. Brutus and Cassius commit suicide rather than suffer the disgrace of defeat.
10. Anthony praises the noble intentions of Brutus.



Five Facts about Brutus and Mark Antony's relationship

1. Brutus, an honourable and patriotic man, is good friends with Julius Caesar but is persuaded to join a group of conspirators who are plotting to kill Caesar. They believe he plans to become a dictator to rule Rome on his own.
2. Brutus does not want Rome to be ruled by one person, and even though he is a powerful public figure and strong military leader, he is convinced by Caesar's enemies to join their plot against Caesar.
3. Brutus is caught between his loyalty to Caesar and his loyalty to Rome but he believes that if Caesar is killed, it will lead to the long term good of Rome.
4. Antony is a military commander and a great supporter of Caesar. He is also Caesar's best friend. To save his own life, Antony lies to Brutus and the conspirators, and pretends to agree with their plan to murder Caesar.
5. Brutus believes Antony and lets him speak at Caesar's funeral, as Brutus thinks that Antony will calm down the crowd who are angry that Caesar is dead. However, Antony convinces the crowd that Brutus and the conspirators are traitors, and commands the crowd to attack them for betraying Caesar.



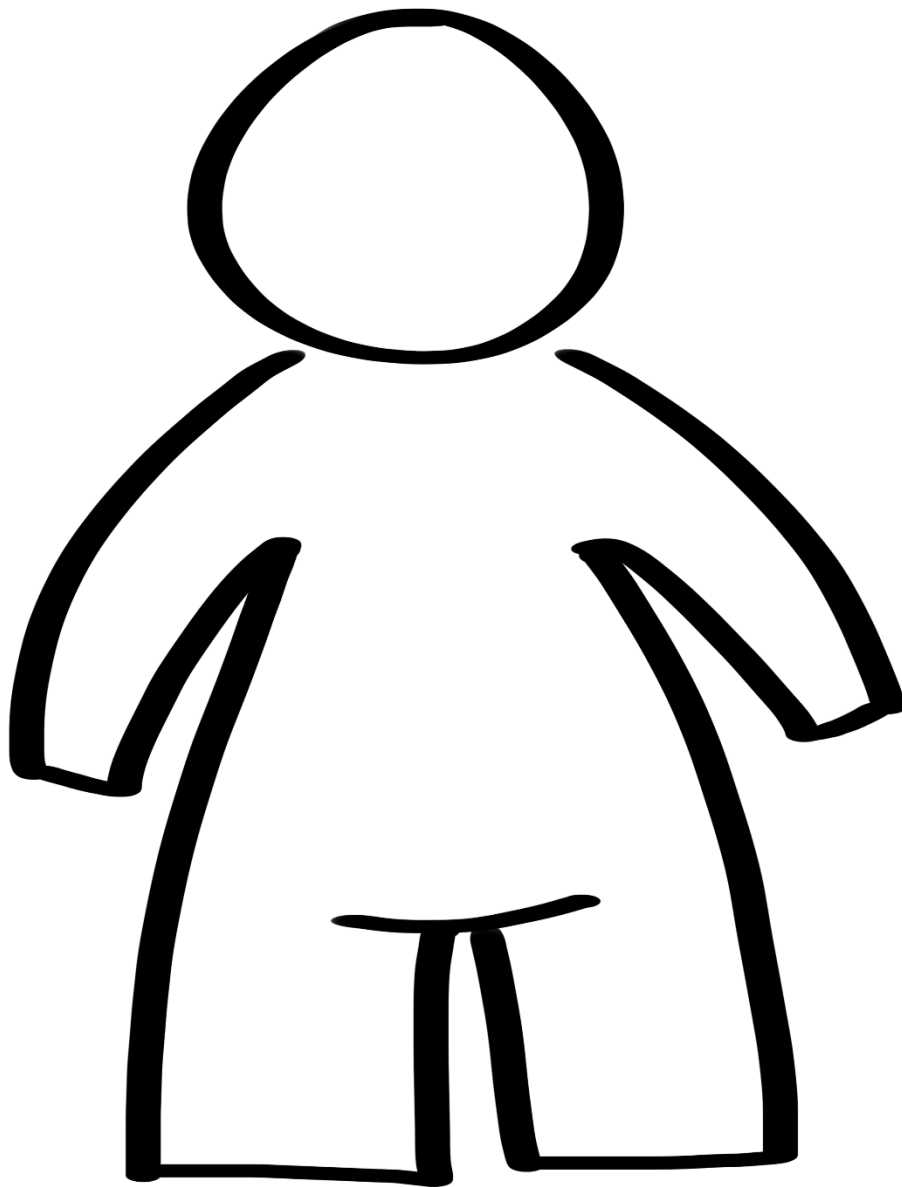
Role on the Wall Template: (for whole class modelling)

INSIDE the outline:

- How the character feels about him/herself/ other people.
- What the character thinks about his/her life and/or events.
- His or her dreams and regrets.

OUTSIDE the outline:

- What other people think about the character.
- Story/plotline about the character.



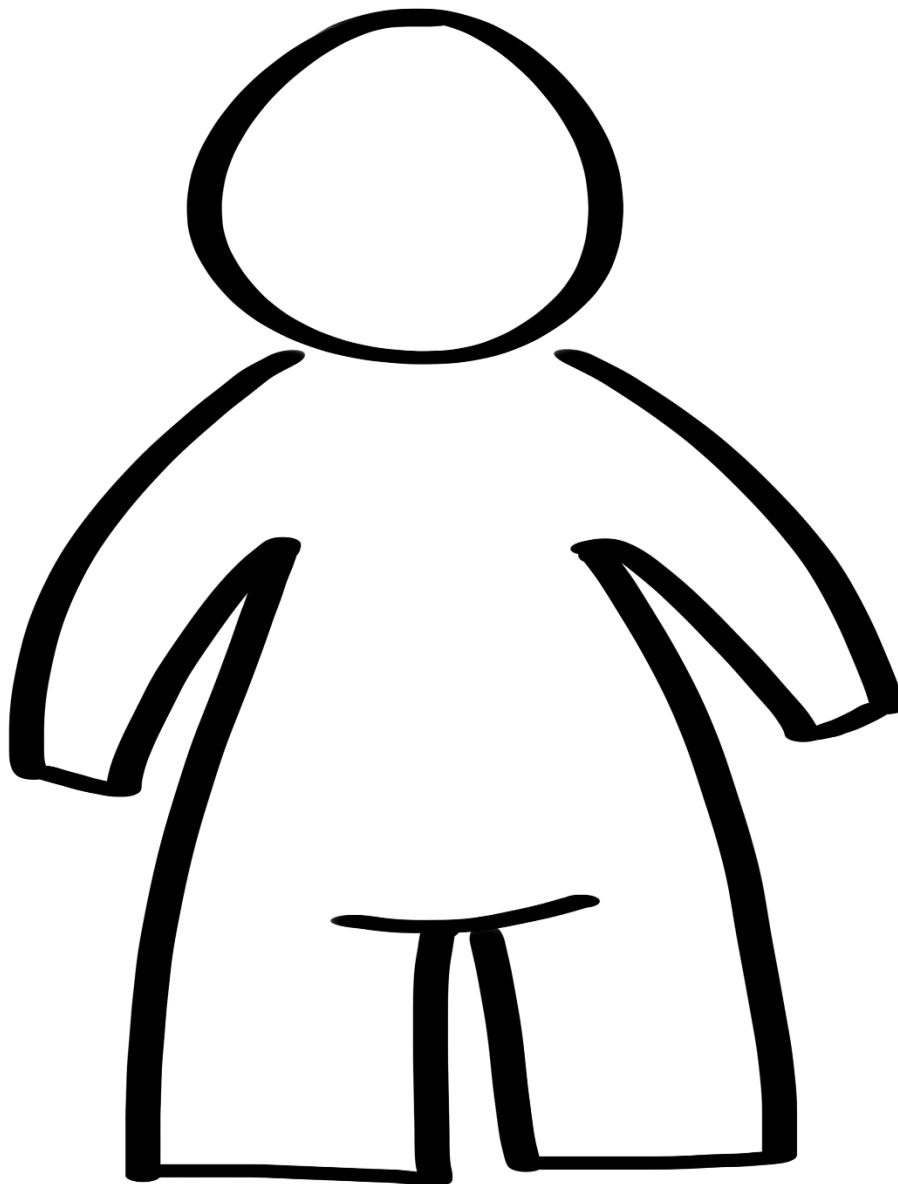
Role on the Wall Template: (for group work)

INSIDE the outline:

- How the character feels about him/herself/ other people.
- What the character thinks about his/her life and/or events.
- His or her dreams and regrets.

OUTSIDE the outline:

- What other people think about the character.
- Story/plotline about the character.



Two Text Extracts

Extract One – Brutus’s thoughts before the murder of Caesar (Not in the SSF abridgement: Act 2 Scene 1)

BRUTUS It must be by his death, and for my part
I know no personal cause to spurn at him
But for the general. He would be crowned.
How that might change his nature, there’s the question.
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder
And that craves wary walking. Crown him that,
And then I grant we put a sting in him
That at his will he may do danger with.

[Later to himself]

BRUTUS Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream.

Extract Two– The funeral speech (Scene 5)

BRUTUS *[shouting above the crowd]*
Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause.
If any dear friend of Caesar’s demand why
Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer:
Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more.
As Caesar loved me, I weep for him: as he was valiant,
I honour him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him.
Who is here so rude, that would not be a Roman?
If any, speak; for him have I offended.
I pause for a reply.



Question Stems for Hot-seating

How did you feel when...?

Why did you feel...?

Why do you think.....?

Why did you....?

In what ways does.....?

Explain how....?

What might.....?

Describe what...

If you were....

What do you think about...?

Have you ever...?

Do you agree that...?



Sentence Starters: Balanced and persuasive arguments

Some people believe that...	Others think that...
On the one hand...	On the other hand...
It is clear that...	On the contrary...
There is no doubt that...	Alternatively...
Whilst some argue that...	Many maintain that...
It is certain that...	But other facts show...
It could be argued that...	However...

