

Correction des taches 3 à 8, p99 du livre / Julius Caesar.

3. Mark Antony's aim is to convince the Romans that Caesar was not ambitious/the dictator Brutus says he was and therefore that Brutus was wrong in killing him... His goal is to prove Brutus wrong without condemning him... But contrary to what he says at the beginning of his speech, he does praise his friend as he gives examples of the good deeds Caesar did for the city... He succeeds in persuading the crowd that Brutus and the conspirators were wrong to assassinate Caesar...

Mark Antony's aim is ultimately to avenge his dead friend... His speech is actually a plea to the Romans for vengeance...

4. Mark Antony uses several arguments to prove to the Romans that they have been taken in / deceived by the conspirators...

First he declares that he speaks as Caesar's friend: "He was my friend, faithful and just to me" (l. 25)... The rest of his speech makes the crowd understand that he remained Caesar's friend to the end, whereas Brutus said he loved him but murdered him...

Then he gives several examples to refute Brutus's accusation that Caesar was ambitious:

- Thanks to the ransoms paid for captives that Caesar brought to Rome, the city grew richer...
- Caesar sympathized with the poor...
- He refused to become king three times...

Finally he accuses the Romans of being ungrateful and versatile and reminds them that they loved Caesar in the past and that he was kind to them: "You all did love him once, not without cause" (l. 44)...

5. Mark Antony's speech is ironical as he says one thing while expressing the contrary... He is sarcastic indeed throughout his funeral oration:

- He asserts at the beginning of his speech that he did not come to praise Caesar but he praises him throughout his speech...
- He repeats that Brutus is an honourable man four times and maintains that the conspirators are "honourable men" (l. 23) while proving them wrong...
- He also repeats, several times, that Brutus says Caesar was ambitious but each time gives arguments to refute Brutus's allegation...

6. Mark Antony's rhetorical skill enables him to gain the citizens' trust... He masters the art of rhetoric... He never calls the conspirators "traitors", however his sarcastic repetitions (see question 5) as well as his rhetorical questions ("Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?" (l. 31), "Was this ambition?" (l. 38), "What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?" (l. 46)) make the crowd turn against the conspirators...

So although Mark Antony speaks in verse (contrary to Brutus's speech which was in prose), he easily succeeds in conveying his message to the crowd...

7. When he says: "My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar" (l. 51), Mark Antony appeals to the emotions of the audience... The crowd understands that Mark Antony stops speaking because he needs time to weep... He mourns his friend's death openly, making the crowd feel pity for him and certainly guilty about their own ungratefulness...

8. The crowd is depicted as versatile... Before Mark Antony starts speaking, the citizens are convinced that the conspirators were right to get rid of Caesar because he was a tyrant...

"This Caesar was a tyrant" (l. 7)... But after Mark Antony's speech, when the first citizen says "Methinks there is much reason in his sayings" (l. 53), we understand that Mark Antony has swayed the crowd... He has managed to convince the Roman citizens that the conspirators were wrong... He definitely reaches his goal...