Act I Scene 1- April 25, 2011

I. Challenge Question- Identify as many puns as you can find in Scene 1 with your group. Pun- a comic technique that’s humor relies on a word with a double meaning.

II. Act I Scene 1 Notes-

A. Character List

1. Flavius/Murellus- Public Officials

2. Cobbler (shoe mender)/Carpenter- Common People

B. Setting- Streets in Rome

C. Major Action-

1. The reader learns that Caesar is returning victorious. The common people line the

streets to praise him, but the public officials remind them that they are praising the man

who defeated Pompey’s sons (who they recently praised). The public officials make the common people disperse and take down any decorations honoring Caesar.

D. The Language of Shakespeare

1. Blank Verse- unrhymed poem with iambic pentameter (10 syllables- stressed/unstressed)

a. Flavius and Murellus speak in blank verse

2. Prose- speech that is not poetic

a. The cobbler and carpenter speak in prose because they are lower characters

III. Theme to look for= dual loyalty leads to betrayal

IV. The elements of Tragedy

A. Tragic Flaw- a character trait of the hero that leads to his/her downfall. (Achilles’ heel)

1. The tragic flaw is not always a negative trait

B. Hero- the hero usually goes out into the world and returns a hero. The story centers around their rise and fall.

1. Pity and Fear-

a. Pity- we must feel sorry for the character

b. Fear- we must believe that it could happen to us

C. Fate- what it destined to happen will happen despite efforts to avoid fate

D. Death- tragedies usually end with *inevitable death*- death is the only way out of the problem

E. Types of Characters- While comedies are often about the common person, tragedies are

almost always about the upper class. Why do you think this is?

F. Comic Relief- Tragedies often contain some comedy to keep the audience intrigued and to

offer breaks from the emotions of pity and fear. Usually the comic relief comes from

unimportant (low-station) characters.

PUN