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WORKSHEETS

Questions & Answers



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Julius Caesar

by William Shakespeare

Gr 11 & 12

WORKSHEETS: Questions and Answers



Published by: Proverto Educational Publishers
Compiled by Dr N J Kotze
First Edition: 2025

SUMMARY:

ACT 1

Julius Caesar, a Roman General, died 44 years before the birth of Christ.

The play starts when Caesar has just won a civil war against a Roman General called Pompey. The people of Rome celebrate Caesar's victory but two tribunes remind them that not so long ago Pompey was their hero and make them feel guilty and ashamed for turning against Pompey so soon.

Caesar emerges as the new hero of Rome but not everybody admires him. Cassius is one of his opponents and becomes more bitter and envious as Caesar is growing in power and popularity. Cassius plans to kill Caesar. He realizes that with Brutus on his side there is a chance of succeeding. Cassius also knows that as a republican Brutus believes that it would be wrong if one man held all the power. Cassius hints that this is exactly what Caesar wants to do. Then Casca arrives and tells that a crowd shouted out to Caesar that he must be king. Although, according to Casca, Caesar refused it was obvious that he did want to be the king. Brutus starts to think that perhaps Cassius is right and that Caesar really would like to be King of Rome.

Caesar tells Antony that Cassius is jealous and therefore a dangerous person but Antony does not agree. He thinks Cassius has only Rome and its people at heart.

During a terrible storm that night some people in Rome think that the storm is a sign of political trouble. Cassius takes advantage of the situation and very cleverly makes Casca believe that the storm is an indication of a monster (Caesar) and that it must be killed. Cassius, Casca and the men who want to kill Caesar gather secretly and agree that Brutus must be persuaded to kill Caesar.

ACT 2

Although Caesar has not yet exposed himself as a tyrant Brutus feels that it might be necessary to kill Caesar before it is too late. He also considers it to be good for the public.

When the other men who want to kill Caesar arrive Brutus says he will join them. They decide that Brutus will be their leader. Brutus tells them that it would not be wise to ask Cicero to be part of the conspiracy. He also suggests that they must not kill Antony. Cassius says it will be dangerous for them if they do not kill Antony. Although Brutus tells them that the death of Caesar is a sacrifice for the good of all he says that if they kill Antony as well they degrade themselves to the level of common murderers.

Portia, Brutus's wife, asks him not to keep his thoughts to himself and that he must share his troubles with her. He promises her that he will tell her everything which is worrying him. Caesar's wife, Calphurnia, is worried that the strange things which have happened during the stormy night are signs that Caesar's life is in danger. Caesar promises that he will stay home all day. But Decius who is one of the conspirators himself persuades Caesar to go to the senate (where the conspirators plan to kill him). The other conspirators arrive and promise to go to the Senate House with Caesar.

The Act ends with the soothsayer - who can tell what will happen in the future - waiting for Caesar to pass by in the street because he wants to tell him something important.

Artemidorus knows about the plan to murder Caesar and has written the names of the conspirators on a piece of paper. He intends to give this to Caesar.

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ACT 3

Caesar sees the Soothsayer in the crowd on the way to the Senate House. It was on a day known as the 'ides of March' (what today would be called 15 March). It reminds Caesar that the soothsayer told him to be careful on the ides of March. He tells the soothsayer that the ides of March have come but nothing has happened to him. The soothsayer replies that the day is not yet over.

Artemidorus tries to warn Caesar about the conspiracy, but Caesar pushes him aside. Cimber, one of the conspirators, kneels down before Caesar at the Senate House and ask him to change his mind about the banishment of his brother from Rome but Caesar refuses. The conspirators strike at Caesar with their daggers and just before he dies Caesar sees Brutus amongst the conspirators. Caesar becomes so sad that he says he might as well be dead.

Brutus tries to win the people of Rome over to their side by telling the other conspirators to bathe their hands in Caesar's blood. In that way they will show that the act of killing Caesar was rather a sacrifice than a murder.

Brutus tells a messenger sent by Mark Antony that it will be safe for him to come to them. Although Cassius does not trust Antony he can not prevent him from coming.

Antony is filled with grief and anger when he sees Caesar's body and the blood on the hands of the conspirators. But he knows that there will be time for revenge and that he must keep control of himself. Brutus gives Antony permission to take care of Caesar's body and even allows him to make a speech about Caesar after Brutus told the Roman people himself why he killed Caesar.

Alone with Caesar's body Antony is full of grief and anger. He is told about Octavius and his army who is waiting outside Rome and Antony decides to ask Octavius to help him punish the conspirators.

After hearing the reasons for killing Caesar the Roman people seem to be satisfied and do not even want Antony to speak but Brutus insists that the crowd must give him a chance to speak because he feels pity for Antony who was a close friend of Caesar's.

In a clever and ruthless manner Antony turns the crowd against Brutus and his conspirators. The Roman people are ready to stand up to riot. They burn down the conspirators' houses and Brutus and his conspirators have to flee from Rome.

ACT 4

Rome is now ruled by Antony. Octavius and Lepidus (known as a 'triumvirate'). They have a list of the people who do not agree with their rule and decide who must be killed. Even Lepidus's brother and Antony's newpew must be killed.

Antony would like to get rid of Lepidus but Octavius does not take sides in the quarrel. He realizes that there are more important dangers to deal with.

The conspirators fight among themselves. Brutus and Cassius is each in command of an army. They meet at Sardis and Brutus accuses Cassius of taking bribes. Cassius defends himself against these accusations but Brutus says he has a short and hot temper. However, Brutus admits that he has a bad temper too because his wife Portia committed suicide in a horrible way.

When Cassius hears about this he apologizes and he and Brutus become friends again. Together they make plans for the coming battle against Octavius and Antony. Brutus's advice is that his and Cassius's armies should attack rather than prepare a strong defence against the armies of Octavius and Antony.

While everyone in Brutus's camp is asleep he sees the ghost of Julius Caesar. The ghost tells Brutus that they will meet again at Philippi. This is the place where Brutus plans to attack the armies of Antony and Octavius.

ACT 5

Octavius and Antony watch the armies of Cassius and Brutus approaching the plains at Philippi. Before the battle the leaders from each side meet to insult each other. Then they separate to prepare for the battle which will decide the argument one way or another.

Cassius is disturbed by all the signs which predict that there will be a disaster. Brutus also feels unsure of himself. Although he hates the idea of killing himself he would rather prefer that than be led in chains as a prisoner through the streets of Rome. Cassius and Brutus separate and go to their respective armies. Due to a misunderstanding Cassius's army is defeated by Antony's army. Cassius wrongly hears that Titinius - his second-in-command - has been captured and sees his own tents burning and thinks that everything is lost. Cassius then commits suicide with the same sword which killed Caesar.

At first Brutus's army does well against a flank of Octavius's army. When Brutus sees that Cassius and Titinius are dead he thinks that Caesar is getting his revenge. In spite of this Brutus still has hope that he can win.

After the death of young Cato and the capture of Lucilius there is no hope for Brutus. Finally Strato offers to hold his sword ready and Brutus commits suicide. The battle is over and Antony and Octavius find Brutus dead. But they still think Brutus is a man of honour and Octavius says he will make sure that Brutus is given the honour of a military funeral.

THE PLOT

The plot concerns a small group of men who want to seize power from Julius Caesar and rule the mighty Roman Empire. Lacking the charisma to carry through the plot himself Cassius seeks support of Brutus who is popular and well-respected. After the assassination there is a struggle for power between Brutus and Antony. Cassius who initiated the plot becomes insignificant. The result of the struggle between Brutus and Antony is a battle from which Antony emerges as the victor and new leader of the Roman Empire.

Portens, omens, dreams and ghostly visitations

The following are references to portens, omens and dreams in the play:

- 1) Caesar brushes the portents and dreams by Calphurnia's side saying that they should be ignored. After his assassination we are made to see that the events he ignored could have saved his life.
- 2) His disregard of the Soothsayers' warning is seen as over-confidence and a mistake on his part.
- 3) On the night before Caesar's assassination Brutus experienced unusual happenings in his orchard and is either unaware of them or chooses to ignore them.

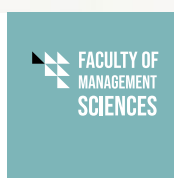
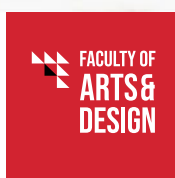
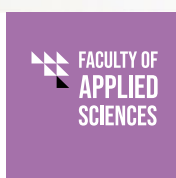
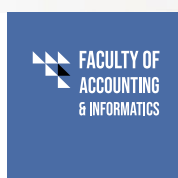


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4) The portents are a challenge to Cassius, but he thinks that they are directed towards Caesar and not towards himself and the other conspirators.

5) After the death of Caesar both Brutus and Cassius experience ghostly visitations and see them as warnings that they will die as a result of their own deeds.

6) Even Cassius is in the end forced to accept that there is truth in signs and portents.

The love element

There is a strong love element in the lives of all the main characters in the play. With the exception of Octavius all of them are loved by and love each other.

Everybody loved as well as respected Brutus. That is why Cassius wants him to join the conspiracy. Cassius realizes he will never enjoy the same respect as that enjoyed by Brutus because he (Cassius) lacks the charisma of Brutus. Cassius knows that alone he will never succeed and if he wants to be the ruler of Rome it must be part of a triumvirate.

If Brutus had accepted the love he was shown and did not seek power which he never really wanted then the tragedy which caused his death could have been avoided. Because Brutus trusted Cassius too much he violated the bond of love between him and Caesar.

Cassius's love for Brutus was according to some commentators nothing more than a hunger for ambition and self-gratification. The reader will have to decide for himself whether Cassius was sincere or false concerning his 'love' for Brutus. There are conflicting opinions among commentators about Antony's love for Caesar.

Some commentators feel that Antony's passionate love for Caesar made him oppose Brutus and Cassius and strive for revenge. Other commentators feel that if the conspirators had not killed Caesar Antony would have done so himself.

The moral element in the play

The following are examples of moral choices that the main characters in the play are faced with:

- 1) In Act 1 Scene 2 (lines 302-9) Cassius urged Brutus to denounce, or even kill Caesar, to save Rome. But this was nothing but intrigue to ensnare Brutus. This intrigue can be seen as an example of Vice personified through the words of Cassius.
- 2) Portia refused to be involved with her husband's despicable actions and Lucius disappeared after the visitation of Caesar's spirit at Sardis. Some say that Brutus therefore has been deserted by virtue.
- 3) Portia's care for Brutus's sick soul represents the struggle he faces.
- 4) Brutus's monologues show his inner struggle and his false choice after his faulty reasoning.
- 5) The fickleness of the crowd is demonstrated by their initial support for Brutus which are swayed to such an extent that they want to attack Brutus.

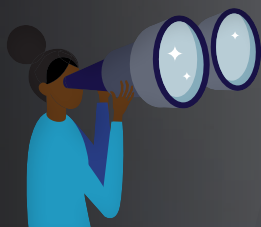
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Questions and Answers

Act 1 Scene 1

Questions:

1. Give the names of the two tribunes?

2. What was a tribune?

3. What was a workman supposed to do on a working day?

4. What does a 'cobbler' mean?

5. Give the meaning of the word 'naughty' in the days of Shakespeare?

6. Why must the day be declared a holiday according to the shoemaker?

7. What reason does Marullus give not to rejoice and have a holiday?

8. How does Marullus view the people?

9. Through which city does the Tiber flow?

10. Who has Caesar just defeated?

11. Why is there a chance that the gods may punish the people?

12. What was the Lupercal?

13. What will Flavius and Marullus remove from the status of Caesar?

14. What does Flavius mean with 'fly an ordinary pitch'?

15. What is characteristic of Caesar's personality according to Flavius?

16. What is the meaning of the expression "servile fearfulness"?

Act 1 Scene 2

Lines 1 - 24

Questions:

1. Who's wife is Calphurnia?

2. What feelings does Antony have for Caesar?

3. Why does Caesar have to turn his head to listen to the Soothsayer?

4. Explain what a Soothsayer is?

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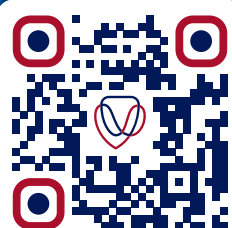
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5. What warning does the Soothsayer give Caesar?

6. How does Caesar respond to what the Soothsayer have to say?

7. What will happen to Caesar on the ides of March?

Lines 25- 78

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the words by Brutus, “I am not gamesome”?

2. What does Cassius say to Brutus about their friendship?

3. What reason does Brutus give for his unfriendliness?

5. What is the meaning of Brutus’s words ‘that which is not in me’?

6. What sort of friend is Cassius according to himself?

7. What sort of friend will Cassius prove to be for Brutus?

8. Who is the better man: Cassius or Brutus?

Lines 79 - 131

Questions:

1. When Brutus hears the shouts of the people what does he fear?

2. Is Brutus in favour of Caesar as a future king?

3. Who says: "I was born free as Caesar?"

4. What did Caesar once dare Cassius to do?

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5. Who cried out for help and was carried out of the river on the back of Cassius?

6. Who has to bend his body if Caesar only looks at him?

7. Describe Cassius's feelings about Caesar.

Lines 132 - 181

Questions:

1. Why does shouting of the crowd make Brutus very worried?

2. Who is compared to the Colossus?

3. According to Cassius, who is in control of a man's destiny?

4. Why does Cassius compare Brutus and Caesar with one another?

5. Why, according to Cassius, should the nobles of Rome be ashamed of themselves?

6. What does Cassius have in mind concerning Brutus and Caesar?

Lines 182 - 214

Questions

1. Give two reasons for Caesar's anger?

2. Why is Calphurnia's cheek pale?

3. Why does Caesar prefer to be surrounded by fat and contented men?

4. How does Caesar view Cassius's look?

5. Is Caesar's belief that Cassius is dangerous justified?

6. Does Antony agree that Cassius is a dangerous person?

7. Is Cassius open and friendly when he smiles?

8. According to Caesar, what is the underlying reason that makes men like Cassius uneasy and discontented?

9. When Caesar says, "For always I am Caesar" what does it tell us about him as a person?

Lines 215 - 304

Questions:

1. How did Ceasar react each time the crown was offered to him?

2. Who offered the crown to Caesar?

3. According to Casca, did Caesar want the crown?

4. What is Casca's feelings about the common people?

5. What was Casca's reaction when Caesar fell down in a faint?

6. What is "falling sickness" called today?

7. What is the reason behind Caesar's offer to the people to cut his throat?

8. Does Casca believe that Caesar was sincere?

9. What is the meaning of Marullus and Flavius were 'put to silence'?

10. Why were they killed?

11. What is Cassius thinking of when he mentions to Brutus about a 'bold or noble enterprise'?

12. Are there indications that Brutus might join the conspiracy to kill Caesar?

Lines 305 - 319

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of Cassius's words, 'Caesar, doth bear me hard'?

2. What feelings does Caesar have for Brutus?

3. What does Cassius want to throw through the windows of Brutus's house during the night?

4. Why does the support of Brutus means so much to Cassius?

5. What will Cassius write in the letters to turn Brutus against Caesar?

Act1, Scene 3

Lines 1 - 40

Questions:

1. Who is more afraid of the storm, Cicero or Casca?

2. What is the meaning of the words by Casca, 'the ambitious ocean'?

3. Of whom would the word 'ambitious' remind us?

4. What reasons does Casca give for the storm?

5. What was unusual about the slave's hand?

6. Where did Casca see a lion?

7. What did the women see in the streets?

8. What is a bird of night?

9. What was unusual about this particular bird?

10. What will happen to Caesar at the Capitol?

Lines 41 - 133

Questions:

1. Why did Cassius stand where the lightning might strike?

2. What explanation does Cassius give for the strange things which have happened?

3. What does Cassius mean by referring to terrible or unnatural things that could happen to Rome?

4. Who is Cassius referring to when he says: 'A man no mightier than thyself or me. In personal actions, yet prodigious grown'?

5. Why are the Roman men of his time womanish to Cassius?

6. Who wants to make Caesar a king the next day?

7. According to Cassius, how can one defeat a tyrant or escape from the strongest prison?

8. How will Cassius die?

9. Who is Cassius referring to when he speaks of a 'tyrant'?

10. Why does Cassius think of the Romans as sheep, hinds and trash?

11. Why is Cassius afraid of Casca?

12. Why does Casca shake hands with Cassius?

13. Where are the other conspirators waiting for Cassius?

Lines 134-164

Questions:

1. How does Cinna feel after Casca has joined the conspirators?

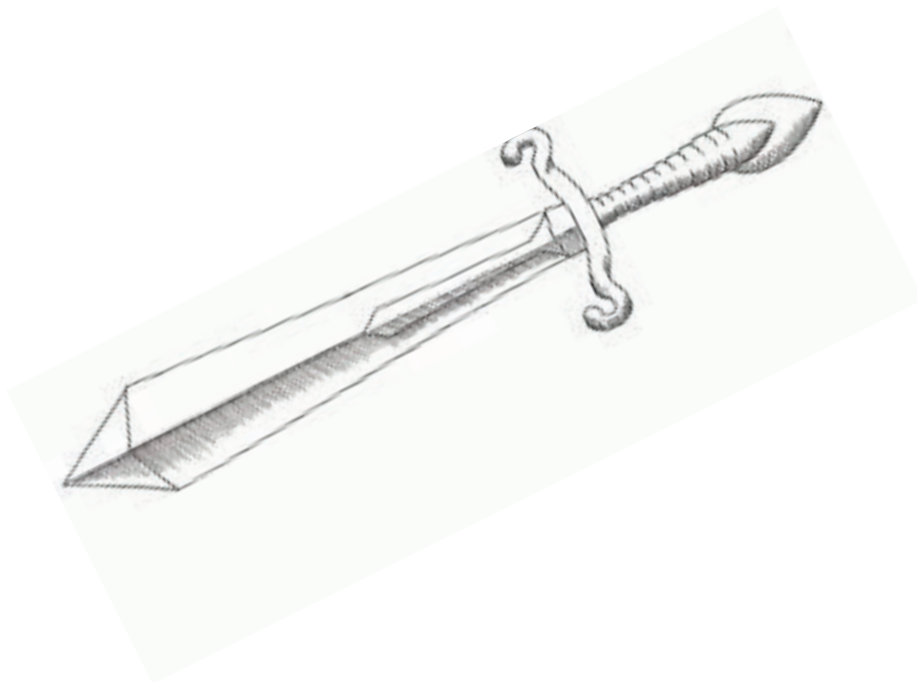
2. Does Cinna want Brutus to become one of the conspirators?

3. Where must Cinna leave some letters?

4. Why do Cassius and Casca go to Brutus's house?

5. What are the feelings of the common people towards Brutus?

6. What will the people say if Brutus does not join the conspiracy?





Act 1 Scene 1

Answers

Act 1 Scene 1

Answers:

1. Marullus and Flavius.
2. He was an important official in Rome.
3. Wear the clothes and carry the tools associated with the sort of work he did.
4. (a) A shoemaker or (b) an unskilful worker.
5. It meant that somebody was worthless or good for nothing.
6. To see Julius Caesar when he marches in triumph through the streets of Rome.
7. Caesar did not conquer a foreign enemy but the sons of Pompey (a great Roman general)
8. They once admired Pompey but all of a sudden they have forgotten all the good things Pompey did for them and now cheer the man who has beaten Pompey.
9. Rome.
10. The sons of Pompey.
11. Because they have been so ungrateful.
12. A Religious festival of purity and fertility.
13. The decorations that have been placed on the statues.
14. To behave like ordinary men.
15. He is ambitious.
16. Like a frightened servant.



Act 1 Scene 2

Answers

Act 1 Scene 2

Answers:

1. Julius Caesar's wife?
2. He has great respect for him.
3. He is deaf in one ear.
4. It is a fortune teller or a person who can tell what will happen in the future.
5. "Beware of the ides of March"
6. He says the soothsayer is a dreamer.
7. He will be killed.

Lines 25 - 78

Answers:

1. He does not like sport and is not a irresponsible person.
2. He accuses Brutus of being hard and acting as if they were strangers.
3. He says his love for Caesar has been in conflict with his fear that Caesar is becoming too ambitious causing conflicting emotions and feelings within himself.
4. Because he knows of Caesars' weakness and that he has no right to consider himself superior to other people.
5. It is not in him to kill Caesar.
6. A loyal friend.
7. A dangerous friend.
8. Brutus.

Lines 79 - 131

Answers:

1. He fears the people will choose Caesar as their king.
2. No.
3. Cassius.
4. To swim with him across the river. Tiber when the water was very rough.
5. Caesar.
6. Cassius.
7. He hates Caesar because he is jealous of him.

Lines 132 - 181

Answers:

1. He is afraid that the people want to give Caesar even more power than he already has.
2. Caesar.
3. He can control his destiny or fate himself.
4. He wants Brutus to think that Caesar is not a greater man than he is.
5. Because they have allowed Caesar to rule Rome all by himself.
6. He wants to turn Brutus against Caesar.

Lines 182 - 214

Answers:

1. a) The crowd was pleased when he did not take the crown and b) he had shown a weakness when he fainted.
2. Possibly because Caesar has spoken angrily or probably she is afraid

that her husband (Caesar) is in great danger because the soothsayer warned him (Caesar) that something may happen to him.

3. He thinks that such men are not jealous by nature and therefore do not want to murder him.

4. Lean and hungry.

5. Yes.

6. No.

7. No.

8. When they are among men who are greater than they are they become jealous.

9. He is arrogant.

Lines 215 - 304

Answers:

1. He pushed it aside with the back of his hand.

2. Mark Antony.

3. Yes, Caesar says that Caesar wanted to take the crown.

4. He despises them.

5. He wanted to laugh.

6. Epilepsy.

7. He wanted to show his humbleness and honesty. In other words, "If you do not believe me, kill me". It was also a way of apologizing for doing anything wrong (but it could be an effort to make people believe he had not lied or done anything wrong).

8. No. He thinks Caesar was only trying to impress the common people.

9. They were put to death.

10. Because they took the decorations off all the statues of Caesar.

11. A plot or plan (conspiracy) to kill Caesar.

12. Brutus plans a meeting with Cassius the next day to have further discussions about it.

Lines 305 - 319

Answers:

1. Caesar does not like him.
2. Caesar loves Brutus.
3. Letters, each one written in a different handwriting.
4. Because Brutus is a highly respected man in Rome and if he joins the conspiracy it will give credibility to the motive behind the death of Caesar.
5. He will write that Caesar is ambitious.



Act 1 Scene 3

Answers

Act 1, Scene 3

Lines: 1 - 40

Answers:

1. Casca.
2. It seemed as if the waves of the ocean wanted to be as high as the clouds.
3. Of Caesar who is also ambitious
4. (a) A civil war between the gods in heaven; or b) the gods were punishing men for being too 'scary' (cheeky)
5. (a) It burst into flames when he held it up. b) There were no burn marks on his skin.
6. Near the Capitol.
7. Men all on fire.
8. An owl,
9. It was seen and heard in the middle of the day.
10. He will be killed there.

Lines 41 - 133

1. He wanted to win Casca's confidence by showing him that good and honourable men, like himself, were safe.
2. It is a warning to the people that something terrible could happen to Rome.
3. (a) Caesar might become a king. b) The murder of Caesar.
4. Caesar.
5. Because they do not resist the way Caesar treats them as if they were oxen or slaves.

6. The Senators.
7. By committing suicide.
8. He will commit suicide.
9. Caesar.
10. Because they don't stop Caesar from becoming too powerful.
11. He is worried that Casca might tell Caesar that he spoke strongly against him.
12. Because he is now one of the conspirators.
13. At pompey' porch.

Lines 134 - 164

1. He is pleased.
2. Yes.
3. (a) On the magistrate's chair; b) Through Brutus's window;
c) On the statue of Decius Brutus
4. To persuade him to join the conspiracy.
5. They love Brutus.
6. They will say that killing Caesar was wrong.

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The Nedbank External Bursary Programme is open to full-time Undergraduate and Honours students who are studying towards qualifications in the financial sector with a strong focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and Green Economy skills.

If you do not have the financial means to study full-time towards your degree or diploma at a South African public university or university of technology, and you meet the below criteria, it is time to become a **#YoungDifferenceMaker!**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION:

To be eligible for the Nedbank bursary, you must:

- be a South African citizen; and
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Must have:

- a minimum academic average of 65% in the year that you are applying for the bursary;
- a minimum academic average of 65% for the required subjects aligned with the qualification you plan to study towards at university;
- not completed your grade 12 or senior certificate with mathematics literacy; and
- successfully obtained admission approval to a South African public university or university of technology for the undergraduate qualification you plan to study towards.

The application process:

We screen bursary applications against our external bursary selection criteria and award bursaries through the Nedbank Educational Trust, at the sole discretion of the trust.

The screening process:

- We will only consider bursary applications submitted online via the link we have provided.
- Incomplete bursary applications will be rejected.
- Bursary applications will be screened and shortlisted according to the qualifying criteria.

If you are shortlisted, we will ask you to:

- submit the relevant documents for financial review;
- participate in psychometric and other assessments; and
- attend an interview.

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All candidates will receive feedback on the status of their application at the completion of the recruitment and selection process.

Contact information:

Email: Unlockyourambition@nedbank.co.za

**Closing date for applications is
31 August 2024.**

Bursaries are granted at Nedbank's sole discretion.

For the complete application process and a list of required documents, please visit our website at www.nedbank.co.za/bursary