

Ancient Rome: CAESAR

EARLY LIFE

Gaius Julius Caesar was born in Rome in the year 100 B.C. to an aristocratic family who can be traced back to the founding of **Rome**. Caesar's parents were well-off, but not rich by Roman standards. He began his education around age six with a private tutor, Marcus Antonius **Gniph**. He taught him to read and write. He learned important skills needed as a leader of Rome. This included Roman law and public speaking. When Caesar was sixteen, his father died. This led to him becoming the head of the family. He took responsibility for his mother, **Aurelia**, and his sister, **Julia**. Caesar married **Cornelia**, the daughter of a powerful politician in Rome, at the age of seventeen.



POLITICAL CAREER

Caesar soon found himself in the middle of a power struggle between two sides in the government. **Sulla**, the current **dictator** of Rome, was enemies with both Caesar's uncle **Marius** and Caesar's father-in-law, **Cinna**. Caesar joined the army and left Rome to avoid Sulla and his allies. He later returned to Rome after Sulla died. After spending many years in the army, Caesar was a military hero who quickly rose in the ranks of the Roman government. He allied with powerful men, such as general **Pompey the Great** and the wealthy **Crassus**. The people of Rome loved Caesar because he was an excellent speaker and great leader. They trusted him to fix the problems Rome had, such as crime.

CONSUL AND GOVERNOR

Julius Caesar was elected to **consul**, the highest ranking position in the **Roman Republic**, at age 40. This position was like a **president**, but there were two **consuls** who only served a one-year term. Caesar became **governor** of the province of **Gaul** at the end of his year as consul. As governor, Caesar was in charge of four Roman **legions**. He was an effective leader and conquered all of Gaul. This earned him the respect and honor of his army. He was soon considered, alongside Pompey, as the greatest general in the Roman army.

CIVIL WAR

While Caesar was in **Gaul**, the politics in Rome became increasingly hostile. Many leaders were jealous of him. He and Pompey became **rivals**. The people supported Caesar and Pompey had the backing of the aristocrats. Caesar announced he was going to return to Rome and run for **consul** again. The Roman **Senate** said he must give up the command of his army. Caesar refused and the Senate said he was a **traitor**. He marched his army to **Rome** and took control of the city in 49 BC. They spent the next 18 months fighting Pompey. Caesar eventually defeated him, driving him all the way to **Egypt**. Upon reaching Egypt, the young Pharaoh, **Ptolemy VIII**, had Pompey killed. His head was presented to Caesar as a gift.

ROME'S DICTATORS

Caesar returned to **Rome** in 46 BC becoming the most powerful man in the world. He was made **dictator** for life by the Senate and ruled like a king. Caesar made many changes in Rome. His supporters were placed into the **Senate**. Caesar built new buildings and temples in Rome. He changed the calendar to the now famous **Julian** calendar with 365 days and a leap year. The calendar was used widely for over 1,500 years. The month of **July** was named after Caesar. He was the first to have his head on a **coin**.



MURDER!

Certain people in Rome felt Caesar became too powerful and worried his rule would put an end to the **Roman Republic**. They felt Caesar may make himself **king**. They had vowed to never be ruled by a king again. His friends, **Cassius** and **Brutus**, led a plot to kill Caesar. On March 15, 44 BC Caesar entered the Senate. Men quickly attacked and killed him, stabbing him 23 times. This day is known as the **Ides of March**. Two years after Caesar's death, he was declared a **god**.

IMPACT

Julius Caesar was important for many reasons. His death led to a series of **civil wars** within Rome. The Roman Republic began unraveling. Caesar's adopted son, **Octavian**, became the next leader of Rome. He is better known as **Caesar Augustus**. Octavian and Mark Antony defeated Caesar's assassins in 42 B.C. He rose to power within Rome. The Roman Empire eventually fell.

Name _____

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IDENTIFY: Use the word bank to identify each description.

| | | | |
|--------|----------|--------------|----------|
| 16 | dictator | Ptolemy VIII | calendar |
| Brutus | Sulla | Gaul | Pompey |
| 44 | consul | Cornelia | 100 |

| | |
|--|---|
| | 1. Caesar fled Rome and this dictator when he joined the army |
| | 2. Caesar was made this for life by the Roman Senate |
| | 3. Caesar was born in this year (BC) |
| | 4. Caesar conquered and controlled this province |
| | 5. Became jealous of Caesar; Ptolemy VIII gave him his head |
| | 6. Along with Cassius, friend of Caesar's who betrayed him |
| | 7. Caesar became the head of his family at this age |
| | 8. Caesar was elected to this position at age 40 |
| | 9. Caesar created a new one of these with 365 days |
| | 10. Pharaoh who presented Caesar with Pompey's head |
| | 11. Year Caesar was murdered (BC) |
| | 12. Wife of Caesar; they married when he was 17 |

MULTIPLE CHOICE: Choose the best answer.

13. Which of the following best completes the analogy?

Caesar : People :: Pompey: -----

- A. Commoners
- B. Aristocrats
- C. Nobility
- D. Romans

14. Which event occurred **first** in Caesar's life?

- A. Married Cornelia
- B. Became Roman Consul
- C. Tutored by Marcus Antonius Gniphos
- D. He engaged in a civil war with Pompey

15. What is the **main** reason Caesar was killed?

- A. His friends decided he had become too confident.
- B. Many felt he had gained too much power.
- C. He had betrayed Rome by having Pompey killed.
- D. Brutus wanted to be the dictator of Rome.

16. Which of the following was **NOT** a contribution Caesar had in Rome?

- A. Developed the Julian calendar
- B. Had many new buildings and temples constructed
- C. Conquered the land of Egypt
- D. Conquered the province of Gaul

17. Which of the following is **LEAST** necessary to include in a summary of the passage?

- A. Julius Caesar was a powerful leader of Rome.
- B. Julius Caesar's father died when he was sixteen.
- C. Julius Caesar was betrayed by his friends and stabbed to death.
- D. Julius Caesar was an excellent speaker who made many changes in Rome

