

YEAR 4: JULIUS CAESAR AND IMPERIAL ROME (5 lessons)



Contents Include:

Military success

Dictator of Rome

Cleopatra

Rome after Caesar

Roman Emperors

Suggested Teacher Resources:

- *A Little History of the World* by Ernst Gombrich (chapters 13, 15 and 17).
- The [BBC primary site](#) has Roman resources and information for pupils.
- [BBC History](#) has overviews of different aspects of Roman history.
- *Rome: The Rise and Fall of an Empire* (History Channel) covers the period. Also, scenes from films such as *Gladiator* (2000), *Cleopatra* (1963) and *Spartacus* (1960).

Lesson 1. The Young Julius Caesar

Julius Caesar is one of the great figures in world history. His name is synonymous with political ambition and treachery, and he lived a highly eventful life. As a young man, he joined the Roman army, where he gained fame. In one well known story, he was captured by pirates and held at ransom, but Caesar insisted the ransom price was too low. After he was freed, Caesar hunted down the pirates and had them executed. Caesar was later made the Governor of Spain, and then the Governor of Gaul, in which position he expanded the Roman empire, and became a hero in the eyes of the Roman citizens.

See page 131 of *What Your Year 4 Child Needs to Know*.

Learning Objective	Core Knowledge	Activities for Learning	Related Vocabulary	Assessment Questions
<p>To understand the early life of Julius Caesar.</p>	<p>Julius Caesar is one of the great figures in world history. He lived a very eventful life, and was captured by pirates as a youngster.</p> <p>He mixed political ambitions with military success, and as governor of Gaul he greatly expanded the Roman Empire.</p> <p>Julius Caesar's military victories made him a hero in the eyes of Rome's citizens, and gave him political ambitions to rule the whole Roman Empire.</p>	<p>Read various stories from Caesar's early life, and consider what can be learnt about his character from the events. These could include his capture and ransom by pirates; his marriage to three different women; his falling out with Pompey; his conquest of Gaul.</p> <p>Consider ten facts about Julius Caesar, and try to work out which are true, and which are false (resource 1).</p> <p>This and this are amusing videos about Julius Caesar from Horrible Histories. <i>Rome: The Rise and Fall of an Empire</i> (History Channel) has some good episodes, and the third is about Julius Caesar.</p>	<p>pirate governor Gaul Caesar</p>	<p><i>What achievements did Caesar have as a young man?</i></p> <p><i>What sort of man was Julius Caesar?</i></p> <p><i>Why was Caesar seen as a hero in the minds of the Roman people?</i></p>

1. Julius Caesar: true or false

Many amazing stories are told about Julius Caesar, some of which are true, and some of which are not. See if you can work out from this list which claims are true or false.

At the age of 25, Julius Caesar was kidnapped by pirates whilst sailing for the Greek island of Rhodes.

Caesar liked to have cool, fresh food on the battlefield, and particularly liked chicken, parmesan and salad leaves. After his death, his favourite meal became known as the Caesar salad.

The Romans used to think there were 355 days in the year. This left them 10 and a quarter days short, and people would get very confused. Caesar reformed this system, stating there should be 365 days in a year, and a leap year every four years. This was called the Julian calendar.

Caesar had a very complicated love life. He married three times, usually to secure an advantage in politics. Whilst married to his third wife, he met the beautiful Egyptian Queen Cleopatra and with her he had a son.

When Julius Caesar was born, he had to be cut from his mother's stomach. This method of child birth became known as a 'Caesarean section'.

Caesar could be very cruel on the battlefield. Whilst fighting in the conquest of Gaul, Caesar surrounded an enemy army and prevented them from gaining water. Just when they were close to dying of thirst, he ordered all of their hands be chopped off.

Julius Caesar invaded Britain, defeated its population of Celts, and managed to take it for the Roman Empire. This was the origin of his famous saying, 'veni, vidi, vici', meaning 'I came, I saw, I conquered'.

Caesar had a famously large nose, and was extremely strong. He would often lead the charge into battle with his own men, and was said to be able to crush an apple in one hand.

1. Julius Caesar: true or false

(complete)

Many amazing stories are told about Julius Caesar, some of which are true, and some of which are not. See if you can work out from this list which claims are true or false.

At the age of 25, Julius Caesar was kidnapped by pirates whilst sailing for the Greek island of Rhodes. He was insulted by the low cost of their ransom, and demanded it be higher. After he won his freedom, he tracked down the pirates back and had them executed by crucifixion.

Caesar liked to have cool, fresh food on the battlefield, and particularly liked chicken, parmesan and salad leaves. After his death, his favourite meal became known as the Caesar salad.

false

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Lesson 2. Crossing the Rubicon

After his time as governor of Spain, Caesar returned to Rome and became a consul. He ruled Rome alongside two men named Crassus and Pompey, and together they were called the triumvirate. When Crassus died, and Caesar was away fighting in Gaul, Pompey (who never trusted Caesar) had Caesar declared 'a public enemy'. He ordered him to disband his army and give up his political powers. Instead, Caesar decided to 'cross the Rubicon' with his army and attack Pompey in Rome. This was a declaration of civil war, hence the origin of the phrase which means a great decision which one cannot reverse.

See page 132 of *What Your Year 4 Child Needs to Know*.

Learning Objective	Core Knowledge	Activities for Learning	Related Vocabulary	Assessment Questions
To understand how Julius Caesar became Rome's 'dictator for life'.	<p>Julius Caesar was a great military leader, but he also wanted to have political power in Rome.</p> <p>His rival Pompey was envious of Caesar's power, and did not trust him. So, he declared him a 'public enemy' and ordered him to return to Rome.</p> <p>Caesar decided to 'cross the Rubicon' (a river dividing Gaul and Italy) with his army and invade Rome. Pompey fled Rome, and was eventually killed in Egypt.</p>	<p>Show pupils an image, such as this, so they understand that the Rubicon is a river that separated Rome from Gaul. This is a good video from the History Channel about 'crossing the Rubicon'.</p> <p>Imagine that you are an advisor in Julius Caesar's camp in northern Italy, and the news has just arrived that Pompey has declared Caesar an enemy of Rome. Advise Caesar on whether he should give in to Pompey, or whether he should 'cross the Rubicon' and start a civil war.</p>	<p>Rubicon Pompey Gaul Invade Enemy</p>	<p><i>Why did Pompey declare that Caesar was an enemy of the state?</i></p> <p><i>What choice did Caesar have when he was ordered by Pompey to return to Rome?</i></p> <p><i>What was so significant of Caesar's decision to 'cross the Rubicon'?</i></p> <p><i>What happened to Pompey?</i></p>

Lesson 3. Caesar's death

Having defeated and killed his rival Pompey, Caesar became Rome's 'Dictator for Life'. However, the people of Rome began to dislike their new ruler. In particular, when Caesar fell in love with the Egyptian Pharaoh Cleopatra and fathered a child with her. People worried that Cleopatra was going to become their queen. The Roman Senate though Caesar had become too powerful, so plotted to kill him. On a day called the Ides of March, 15 March 44 BC, a group of senators ambushed Caesar in the Senate and stabbed him 22 times. One of the murderers was his former friend, ally and possibly his own son, Brutus.

See page 132-134 of *What Your Year 4 Child Needs to Know*.

Learning Objective	Core Knowledge	Activities for Learning	Related Vocabulary	Assessment Questions
<p>To understand why a group of senators assassinated Caesar.</p>	<p>Having defeated Pompey, Caesar made himself 'dictator for life' in Rome.</p> <p>This was highly unpopular with the Senate, who still wanted to see Rome ruled as a Republic. Caesar had become too powerful, and too arrogant, so they plotted to kill him.</p> <p>Caesar was killed on the Ides of March, 44 BC, when a group of senators attacked him and stabbed him 22 times.</p>	<p>Write a letter from Brutus, who was head of the plotters to the rest of the Senate explaining why they must kill Julius Caesar, and how they intend to do so. Include the fact that Caesar has become too powerful; is romantically involved with Cleopatra; does not listen to the Senate's advice; has made himself dictator for life; and is preventing Rome from being a republic again.</p> <p>Read Act 3 Scene 1 from the Shakespeare play Julius Caesar, and focus in particular on the line 'Et tu, Brute?'. Watch the scene here, or here.</p> <p>The following links are to Horrible Histories videos: This is about Caesar's time as dictator and this is about his murder. This is another video about Caesar's life.</p>	<p>dictator Ides of March plot assassination Brutus Cleopatra</p>	<p><i>What was meant by Caesar's new position as 'dictator for life'?</i></p> <p><i>What sort of leader was Caesar?</i></p> <p><i>Why did members of the Senate plot to assassinate Caesar?</i></p> <p><i>How was Caesar killed?</i></p>

Lesson 4. Rome's first Emperor

The Senate hoped that killing Caesar would allow Rome once again to become a republic. However, the empire was now too large to be ruled in such a democratic way. Two of Caesar's best friends, Mark Antony and Octavian, became joint rulers of Rome. They fell out after Mark Antony, who was married to Octavian's sister, fell in love with Cleopatra. Mark Antony was defeated in a sea battle, and killed himself, leaving Octavian as sole ruler of Rome. The senate named him Octavian Augustus, and then Augustus Caesar. They gave him power for life to rule Rome, and he is considered to be the first Roman Emperor.

See page 134-135 of *What Your Year 4 Child Needs to Know*.

Learning Objective	Core Knowledge	Activities for Learning	Related Vocabulary	Assessment Questions
<p>To understand why Augustus Caesar is considered the first Roman Emperor</p>	<p>After the assassination of Caesar, Rome did not return to being a republic. Instead, power passed to two of Caesar's closest friends.</p> <p>These joint rulers, Mark Antony and Octavian, fell out because Mark Anthony, like Caesar, fell in love with Cleopatra.</p> <p>Octavian then became the sole ruler of the Roman Empire, and was named Augustus Caesar. He is considered to have been the first Roman Emperor.</p>	<p>Class role play the falling out between Caesar's two successors, with pupils playing Caesar, Octavian, Mark Antony and Cleopatra. Once this is done, they fill in a story board which breaks Octavian's rise to becoming the first Roman Emperor into six stages (resource 2).</p> <p>Inform the class that July and August are named after the two famous Roman rulers, Julius Caesar and Augusts Caesar.</p> <p>Study the character of Cleopatra and consider how she was able to win the hearts of two Roman leaders. Watch scenes from <i>Cleopatra</i> (1963), from History Channel, the Biography Channel, and the Horrible Histories Cleopatra Song.</p>	<p>Emperor Mark Antony Octavian Cleopatra Augustus Caesar</p>	<p><i>What happened after Julius Caesar's death?</i></p> <p><i>Why did Mark Antony and Octavian fall out?</i></p> <p><i>How did Mark Antony and Cleopatra die?</i></p> <p><i>Why is Octavian considered to have been the first Roman Emperor?</i></p> <p><i>Why was Octavian given the name Augustus Caesar?</i></p>

2. The First Roman Emperor

Caesar is killed by a group of senators who believe he has become too powerful.

Octavian is furious with Mark Antony, and fights a war against him.

Power passes to two of Caesar's friends, Mark Antony and Octavian.

Mark Anthony and Cleopatra kill themselves after loosing the war to Octavian.

Mark Antony rules the Eastern Roman Empire, and falls in love with Cleopatra.

Octavian is renamed Augustus Caesar, and becomes the first Roman Emperor.

2. The first Roman Emperor

Decide on what were the six key stages in the story of Octavian Augustus becoming the first Roman Emperor. (Use prompt cards to assist if necessary). Write a brief description of each stage in the small box, and then draw an image representing the stage.

2. The first Roman Emperor (complete)

Decide on what were the six key stages in the story of Octavian Augustus becoming the first Roman Emperor. Write a brief description of each stage in the small box, and then draw an image representing the stage.

Caesar is killed by a group of senators who believe he has become too powerful.

Power passes to two of Caesar's friends, Mark Antony and Octavian.

Mark Antony rules the Eastern Roman Empire, and falls in love with Cleopatra.

Octavian is furious with Mark Antony, and fights a war against him.

Mark Antony and Cleopatra kill themselves after losing the war to Octavian.

Octavian is renamed Augustus Caesar, and becomes the first Roman Emperor.

Lesson 5. The Roman Emperors

Augustus Caesar became Emperor of Rome in 27 BC, and for the next 450 years Rome was ruled by Emperors. Roman Emperors were not the same as kings. Often, the title of Emperor was hereditary, but the Emperor had to keep the approval of the army and the government bureaucracy. In addition, they had to share power with the republican institutions which remained strong, in particular the senate, consuls and magistracy. Some emperors such as Augustus and Constantine were highly effective and popular leaders, but some such as Nero and Caligula were disastrous, and damaged the strength of Rome.

See page 137-138, and 143-144 of *What Your Year 4 Child Needs to Know*.

Learning Objective	Core Knowledge	Activities for Learning	Related Vocabulary	Assessment Questions
<p>To understand the role of Emperor of Rome.</p>	<p>From the reign of Augustus Caesar until the fall of Rome in 476 BC, Rome was ruled by Emperors.</p> <p>This was known as the Imperial period. It was thought that Rome had grown too large and too strong to be ruled by consuls and the senate, and a single powerful leader was needed.</p> <p>There were some excellent Roman Emperors, such as Augustus Caesar and Constantine, but also some dreadful Emperors such as Nero.</p>	<p>Learn about the role of Roman Emperor's power. He was the only citizen allowed to wear a purple toga, and a laurel wreath made of gold.</p> <p>Pupils are given individual Roman Emperors to research, and then present to the class. These Emperors could include Nero, Trajan, Constantine, Marcus Aurelius and Calligula (resource 3). This website has good summaries of each of the Roman emperors, and this is a good resource from the BBC.</p> <p>There are many amusing videos on Horrible Histories about different emperors, such as here, here, here, here and here. Also, watch carefully selected scenes from <i>Gladiator</i> (2000) to gain an impression of Imperial Rome.</p>	<p>imperial toga senate Emperor Constantine Nero</p>	<p><i>Who was the greatest Roman Emperor?</i></p> <p><i>Who was the worst Roman Emperor?</i></p> <p><i>What made a good Roman Emperor?</i></p> <p><i>What were the benefits and drawbacks of Rome being ruled by an Emperor?</i></p>

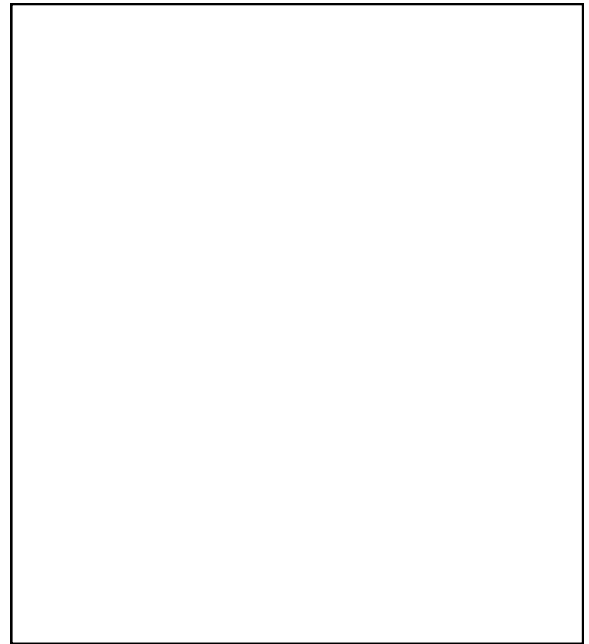
3. Roman Emperor

Your teacher will give you a Roman Emperor to research. Fill in the key details about their reign, and then assess whether they were a good or a bad Emperor.

Name: _____

When did he rule as Emperor? _____

What was he most famous for? _____



Was _____ a good Emperor? _____

What evidence do you have to back this view? _____

Emperor Score: _____/10