

Biography of Julius Caesar

Occupation: Roman general and dictator

Born: July 100 BC in Rome, Italy

Died: 15 March 44 BC in Rome, Italy

Best known for: Being the dictator of Rome and putting an end to the Roman Republic

Where did Caesar grow up?

Julius Caesar was born in Subura, Rome in the year 100 BC. He was born to an aristocratic family that could trace their bloodlines back to the founding of Rome. His parents were well-off, but they weren't rich by Roman standards. His full name was Gaius Julius Caesar.

Did Caesar go to school?

At around the age of six, Gaius began his education. He was taught by a private tutor named Marcus Antonius Gniphio. He learned how to read and write. He also learned about Roman law and how to speak in public. These were important skills he would need as a leader of Rome.

Becoming an Adult

Caesar's father died when he was sixteen years old. He became the head of the family and was responsible for his mother Aurelia and his sister Julia. At the age of seventeen he married Cornelia, the daughter of a powerful politician in Rome.

Early Career

Young Caesar soon found himself in the middle of a power struggle between two factions in the government. The current dictator of Rome, Sulla, was enemies with both Caesar's uncle Marius and Caesar's father-in-law Cinna. Caesar joined the army and left Rome in order to avoid Sulla and his allies. When Sulla died, Caesar returned to Rome. He was now a military hero from his years in the army. He quickly rose up the ranks in the Roman government. He made allies with powerful men such as the general Pompey the Great and the wealthy Crassus. Caesar was an excellent speaker and the people of Rome loved him.

Consul and General

At the age of 40 Julius Caesar was elected to consul. Consul was the highest ranking position in the Roman Republic. The consul was like a president, but there were two consuls and they only served for one year. At the end of his year as consul, Caesar became governor of the province of Gaul. As governor of Gaul, Caesar was in charge of four Roman legions. He was a very effective governor and general. He conquered all of Gaul. He gained the respect and honor from his army and soon was considered alongside Pompey as the greatest general in the Roman army. Civil War Politics in Rome became increasingly hostile while Caesar was in Gaul. Many of the leaders were jealous of Caesar and his following. Even Pompey became jealous and soon Caesar and Pompey became rivals. Caesar had the support of the people and Pompey had the support of the aristocrats. Caesar announced that he was

going to return to Rome and run for consul again. The Roman Senate replied that he must give up the command of his army first. Caesar refused and the Senate said he was a traitor. Caesar began to march his army to Rome. Caesar took control of Rome in 49 BC and spent the next 18 months fighting Pompey. He finally defeated Pompey, chasing him all the way to Egypt. When he reached Egypt, the young Pharaoh, Ptolemy VIII, had Pompey killed.

Dictator of Rome

In 46 BC Caesar returned to Rome. He was now the most powerful man in the world. The Senate made him dictator for life and he ruled like a king. He made many changes to Rome. He put his own supporters in the Senate. He built new buildings and temples in the city of Rome. He even changed the calendar to the now famous Julian calendar with 365 days and a leap year.

Murder

Some people in Rome felt that Caesar was too powerful. They were worried that his rule would put an end to the Roman Republic. They plotted to kill him. The leaders of the plot were Cassius and Brutus. On March 15, 44 BC Caesar entered the Senate. A number of men ran up to him and began to attack him and killed him. He was stabbed 23 times.

Questions

1. The text states Julius Caesar was born to an aristocratic family, what is meant by this? RA
2. Name two achievements of Julius Caesar. RARE
3. Do you believe Julius Caesar would have been able to accomplish all he did without an education and why? RA
4. Once Julius Caesar became Emperor, Rome went from a Republic to an Empire. What changes in government took place? RARE
5. Why would people in Rome feel as if he was too powerful? RA
6. How did Julius Caesar die and what were the reasons behind this? RA