

Julius Caesar: The Roman Empire in the First Century

In preparation for the reading of *Julius Caesar*, the class will be conducting research on the Roman Empire in the First Century. You will be compiling information and presenting your research to your classmates. Here's the plan:

- 1) You will choose your own group of 3-4 students. Choose wisely.
- 2) You will choose a topic from the list below. Each group will be responsible for a written and visual component. Once you choose your topic we will provide you additional guidelines/information for your particular topic.
- 3) You will be given limited class time to work on your project, but you will also need to work on this project outside of class. Once again, choose your group members prudently.
- 4) General guidelines include:
 - a. You will need to include a minimum of 3 Internet references. The PBS.org is a good reference site for this project, but you may use others. Please do not use wikipedia.com. Remember, you need to give appropriate credit to all sources for any written work as well as visual images. Refer to the MLA guidelines for the rules on citations and how to write a "Works Cited" page.
 - b. You will hand in a minimum of a 2 page written component (plus the Works Cited page) for your project. Each project is different, so the exact written work will depend on your specific project.
 - c. Your class presentation should be 3-5 minutes in length. Each member of the group will be expected to speak during the presentation.
 - d. Where appropriate, we will use your visual work for our bulletin board.
 - e. This project will be worth 50 points. 25 points for the written, and 25 points for the visual/presentation to the class.
 - f. Have fun!

Topics:

- a) When in Rome... Part I: Games: gladiators and chariot races, holidays, and entertainment (This is not as easy as it sounds.)
- b) When in Rome...Part II: Family life
- c) When in Rome...Part III: Weddings, marriages and divorce
- d) When in Rome...Part IV: Housing, Food and mealtime customs for the various classes
- e) When in Rome...Part V: Education, funerals and theatre
- f) Getting to Know the Emperors of Rome
- g) Religion and Politics in Daily Life
- h) Architecture and Medicine
- i) Slaves, the Labor Force and the Economy

Due Date: _____

Handouts for Each Topic:

When in Rome...Part I

- Games: gladiators and chariot races, holidays, and entertainment
 - Learn a traditional Roman game played by the people and teach it to your classmates.
 - Focus on a major Roman holiday and re-enact what would be done to celebrate.
 - Re-enact a traditional public performance such as a poetry reading.
 - Pretend to be one of the different types of gladiators or a chariot racer and write a letter or journal entry that discusses these events.

When in Rome...Part II

- Family life
 - Research social classes in Rome during this time period.
 - Each person in the group should pretend to be a member of a family in their social class. Use a setting such as a typical meal to have each family member discuss their activities for the day in order to teach others about family life.
 - Explain the rights of men and women in a family and discuss how children were typically viewed and treated.
 - Choose one member of the family and write a diary entry detailing the events of their day and how they might view these events.

When in Rome...Part III

- Weddings, marriages, and divorces
 - Research weddings, marriages and divorce during this time period
 - Show pictures of or model examples of traditional wedding garments.
 - Re-enact or explain the “business dealings” of arranging a marriage and a proper dowry between two families.
 - Describe or re-enact a typical wedding ceremony and demonstrate common customs and traditions associated with the ceremony.
 - Write a detailed account of the wedding (including family background) that could be published in a Roman newspaper.

When in Rome...Part IV

- Housing and food and mealtime customs for the various classes
 - Research social classes in Rome during this time period.
 - Act out a typical Roman dinner and show classmates what would have been eaten and what the customs surrounding the meal would have been. You may prepare actual food or use props or pictures. Be sure to address different social classes.
 - Research different types of Roman homes and discuss which social class would occupy each type of home. Include the “modern” amenities that each home provided. You may create pictures or diagrams to explain the homes.

When in Rome...Part V

- Education, funerals, and theatre
 - Re-enact a scene from a Roman play the way it would have been done at that time using masks and narration.
 - Pretend you are in an ancient Roman classroom and act out a scene where the students are taught something specific such as Roman numerals. Have your classmates complete an assignment based on using Roman numerals.
 - Explain what would happen in a typical family after the death of a loved one by showing pictures, illustrations, or re-enactments of key events or ceremonies.

Getting to Know the Emperors of Rome

You are going to become a campaign manager for one emperor of your choice as they take part in an election to become the next leader of the country. As their campaign manager, it is your job to present the emperor in the most positive way possible in order to earn him votes from the people. Use what you know about the emperor’s achievements, leadership style, personality, and other qualifications and create a campaign poster for the emperor.

This is your one chance to influence voters, so you must also write up a biography of your candidate to be published in the newspaper OR you can create a

flyer that will be mailed. The flyer needs to contain the biography of your candidate and get people to vote for him.

Choose one of the following emperors for the subject of your campaign poster: Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero.

Religion in Politics and Daily Life

- Research religion in Rome during this time period.
 - Roman mythology: Who are main gods and goddesses?
 - Religion in the Roman home: Design a larium (shrine) similar to one that would have been present in a Roman home and make a model or high quality color drawing of what this shrine might look like.
 - Religious Holidays and Observances: Learn about one religious holiday such as Festival of the Crossroads, and create a display or demonstration that illustrates some of the important aspects of the festival/celebration and explains its religious significance.
 - Write an article for the local Roman newspaper describing the importance of religion in Roman society. Be specific.

Architecture and Medicine.

- Research Roman architecture and medicine.
 - What characteristics of Roman architecture are still used in modern construction and why are they important elements? You may want to make a model to show the class.
 - How are cities in ancient Rome similar to cities today? How are they similar?
 - How would adopting an ancient Roman point of view about diet and exercise benefit the American public in 2012?
 - Clean water was critically important to the Roman Empire, as it is today. Discuss how the developing countries of the world could use the basic ideas learned and practiced by the ancient Romans to provide clean water sources for their people.
 - Write an article for the local Roman newspaper describing which issue had the greatest impact on the Roman people and still continues to impact us today. Be specific.

Slaves, the Labor Force and the Economy

- Research the critical role that slaves, freemen, and plebeians played in the day-to-day operations of the Roman Empire.
- Research the various jobs held by the different groups. How did they dress? Was there any significance to their clothing?
- What social programs were in place to avoid people rebelling?
- What public welfare program was put in place and how did it impact productivity?
- Write a script depicting a conversation among slaves, plebeians and freemen. Be sure to include specifics and stage direction.