



Julius Caesar was a Roman general and dictator who lived from 100 B.C. to 44 **B.C.** He helped to make Rome a great **empire** and was also a talented writer.

Caesar's early life

His father, Gaius Caesar died when Caesar was 16. Caesar's mother, Aurelia, **influenced** her son greatly. **Although** Caesar came from a noble upper-class family, he **supported** normal people.

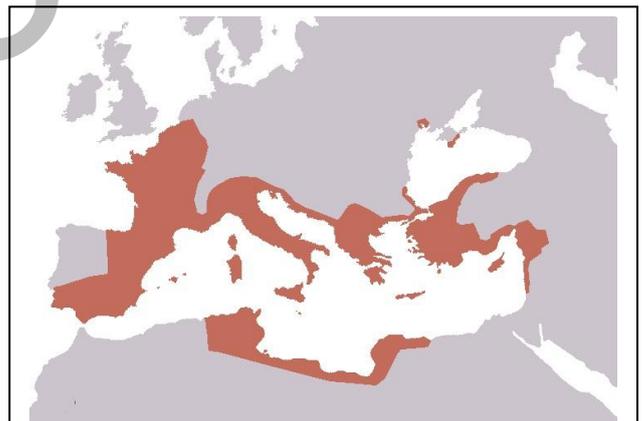
Caesar studied **public speaking** on Rhodes, an island in the Mediterranean Sea. On his way there, he was **captured** by pirates who wanted gold from him. Caesar quickly organized a small **navy**, **captured** the pirates and had them killed.

Caesar enters politics

After Caesar returned from Rhodes, he began his political **career**. In 69 or 68 B.C. he became quaestor, a high Roman **officer**, who controlled **finances**. Caesar soon moved up the Roman political ladder. He organized great games that made him **popular** with the **public**.

In order to make him stronger Caesar made a political **agreement** with the two most powerful men in Rome, Marcus Licinius Crassus, a rich **politician**, and Pompey the Great, a popular general. This partnership became known as the First **Triumvirate**. In 59 B.C. Caesar was elected **consul**, the highest **public office** in **ancient** Rome. As one of two consuls, he **ruled** the Roman state for one year.

After his year **in office** Caesar left Rome to govern Gaul, a province that is now France. Together with his army he fought against and **conquered** many **tribes** of Western Europe.



The Roman Republic after Caesar's conquests

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Caesar conquers Rome

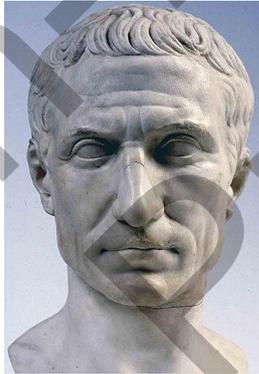
Meanwhile, Caesar's old friend Crassus was killed while fighting in Asia. Caesar and his other old friend, Pompey, then became **rivals** and fought for power. Pompey wanted Caesar to give up his power, but Caesar was **unwilling** to do so. He marched back from Gaul towards Italy at the **head** of his army.

The Romans **sided with** Caesar, so Pompey **fled** across the sea to Greece. Caesar took over the **treasury** in Rome and **set up a government** with himself as dictator. For five years Caesar's soldiers fought against Pompey's **supporters**.

Caesar followed Pompey to Egypt, but Pompey was murdered before Caesar could catch him. To **prove** his power, Caesar continued to fight and win **battles**. After one **victory** in Asia, he sent back the message, "*Veni, vidi, vici*," which means "I came, I saw, I **conquered**."

When Caesar returned to Rome, he became the **permanent head** of the government and even more **honored** and powerful. Romans created statues of him and compared him to God.

Julius Caesar's death



**Bust of Caesar in the
Vatican Museum**

Image: [Musei Vaticani \(Stato Città del Vaticano\)](#), Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Caesar also had many **enemies**. Some of them thought that power should not be in the hands of one person.

On March 15, 44 B.C., 60 senators organized the murder of Caesar at a meeting of the Senate. Caesar's friend Brutus was head of the **conspiracy**. Caesar first fought back but then Brutus killed him with his **dagger**.

Rome's greatest **statesman** and soldier left the world many things. Caesar **founded** the Julian calendar, which is now used in most parts of the world. The Roman month Quintilis, in which Caesar was born, was renamed July in his **honor**.