

TO TELL THE TRUTH: JULIUS CAESAR

Three students will be chosen to pretend they are Julius Caesar. They will stand next to each other in the front of the room facing the class. During the game, the three will be asked questions by other students in class. The questions will be about Julius Caesar's life.

Thirteen other students will be chosen to ask one question each during the game. They will be assigned a number from 1 to 13. This is the number of the question they will ask when the game begins.

After every question, the three Julius Caesars will each give an answer. "Number 1" will always answer first, "Number 2" second, and "Number 3" third. Only one of the three is really Julius Caesar. The real one will always tell the truth when answering questions. The other two will only tell the truth once in awhile. After all questions have been asked, class members will vote for the person they think is the real Julius Caesar.

This game will be played like a television game show. The teacher will be the "MC," or Master of Ceremonies. The people who ask questions are the "panelists."



MC: Now let us meet Julius Caesar. Number 1, what is your name please?

Number 1: My name is Julius Caesar.

MC: Number 2?

Number 2: My name is Julius Caesar.

MC: Number 3?

Number 3: My name is Julius Caesar.

MC: And here is Julius Caesar's story. He says, "I, Julius Caesar, was born in Italy in 100 B.C. As a young man, I decided to make politics my career. It soon became apparent that a person had to have military power in order to rise to a high position in the government. And so I led Roman armies to great victories in foreign lands. I earned the reputation of a military genius and became a hero to the citizens of Rome. Yet some people, especially members of the Senate, were jealous and fearful of my power. But the remainder of Rome's citizens gave me the title of dictator. People today regard me as one of the greatest figures in the history of the world." Signed, "Julius Caesar." We will start the questioning with Panelist 1.

Panelist 1: In what city were you born and raised?

Number 1: I was born in Venice, a city in northern Italy. My family moved to Rome when I was a teenager. At first I didn't like living in a large city, but eventually got used to it.

Number 2: I was born and raised in Rome, Italy.

Number 3: I was lucky to have been born in Rome. Rome was the most important city on the Italian peninsula. Being from this city made it easier for me to get involved in politics and later gain an important position in the army.

Panelist 2: Could you tell us a few things about your family and the kind of education you received as a boy?

Number 1: My parents had nine children, with me being the youngest. Since I later became a great leader, this led to the expression "saving the best 'til last." As for schooling, my parents sent me to Florence where I was tutored by the famous scholar Aristotle.

Number 2: Besides myself and my mother and father, there was only one other family member, a sister. We were well-to-do aristocrats. Unfortunately, my father died when I was fifteen, leaving mother alone to raise two kids. She saw to it that I received a good education and continued to influence my life for many years to come.

Number 3: I was an only child, which led my parents to spoil me somewhat. They gave me a lot of attention and made me feel important. I wanted to keep that feeling. One reason I got involved in the government and the army was that being a leader made others think highly of me. I enjoyed the spotlight of success.

Panelist 3: We know that you were always interested in public affairs. Your secret for gaining power in the government was to do things for people that would win their approval. On one occasion, as director of public works and games, you spent so much money to please the people that the government went into debt. In time, you and two other men became the leaders of Rome. How did you, wealthy Marcus Crassus, and the great general Pompey manage to become the leaders of the Roman government?

Number 1: We were elected as consuls by the Roman Assembly.

Number 2: We came to power by means of violence and bribery.

Number 3: The citizens of Rome wanted us to head the government. Marcus Crassus was the richest man in Italy, General Pompey was a military hero, and I was a young and very popular politician. People were sure we would lead Rome to a position of greatness among the nations of the world.

Panelist 4: Although you were one of the three rulers of Rome, you longed for even more power. You hoped someday to become the only leader of the Roman government. One way to strengthen yourself politically was to win great victories on the battlefield. In this way, you could make a triumphant return to Rome and seize power. Where did your armies eventually win battles which proved to all that you were a military genius?

Number 1: My troops were successful in Greece and Asia Minor.

Number 2: Forces commanded by me won victories in Gaul, now known as France, and also in Britain. We lost just two battles in nine years.

Number 3: My armies conquered Spain, Greece, Turkey, and parts of North Africa. We never lost a battle. The enemy was no match for the well-disciplined Roman soldiers. Our men were better trained and carried newer weapons of war.

Panelist 5: Roman soldiers were risking their lives fighting wars for you. How was it possible to raise the large numbers of men needed to win great battles in distant lands?

Number 1: Males over 18 years of age were drafted into the armed forces. A general, with the approval of the Roman Senate, could organize an army to capture foreign lands and increase Rome's power and wealth.

Number 2: It was common for generals to promise their soldiers money and pensions, and to let them have anything they might gather up in conquered lands.

Number 3: The people of Italy respected me and were confident I would succeed in whatever I did. Men joined my armies because they were certain I would lead them to glorious victories and lasting fame. They would be heroes to their countrymen back home.

Panelist 6: How did you finally become the dictator of Rome?

Number 1: Because of my triumphs on the battlefield, citizens welcomed me back to Rome with open arms. In an emotional celebration, they demanded that I become the one and only leader of the land.

Number 2: Marcus Crassus died, which left just General Pompey and myself as rivals at the top of the government. A civil war broke out in which Romans fought against Romans. My army finally defeated the army of General Pompey.

Number 3: The Senate and Assembly approved a new constitution ending the practice of having consuls as heads of government. The constitution called for the election of a president who would govern along with the Senate and Assembly. I was the people's overwhelming choice for president.

Panelist 7: During one of your military campaigns, something unusual happened in Egypt, a country across the Mediterranean Sea from Italy. Tell us about it.

Number 1: We were camped near Cairo, Egypt, when I decided to give my soldiers a few days off for rest and relaxation. Some men went swimming and boating in the Nile River. Others visited the pyramids of Egyptian pharaohs. As sundown approached, we were suddenly attacked by an Arabian army. It was the closest we ever came to losing a battle.

Number 2: When I was in Egypt, I met Cleopatra and fell in love with her. She was smart and had a sense of humor, and I was handsome. Many women throughout the Mediterranean world admired me and thought I was good-looking. Before I returned to Italy, I fought a war and made Cleopatra the ruler of Egypt. Later, she came to Rome to be with me.

Number 3: An epidemic of smallpox took the lives of 2,000 of my soldiers. This disease killed more of my men than enemy troops ever did.

Panelist 8: Just before returning to Rome to become dictator, your armies won several more battles. What famous words did you once use to report a victory to the Roman Senate?

Number 1: "Friends, Romans, and countrymen, lend me your ear. We have met the enemy and they are ours."

Number 2: "I came, I saw, I conquered."

Number 3: "We're number one." I said this because my soldiers kept shouting these words after winning a great victory. The famous words were later used by spectators watching sports events at the Colosseum. The custom of yelling "we're number one" gradually spread to sports fans in other countries.

Panelist 9: After a heroic return to Rome, the citizens made you their dictator. At a festival soon afterwards, a friend and former soldier named Mark Antony offered you the crown of a king. How did you respond to this offer?

Number 1: I accepted the crown and always wore it in public. It was a symbol of respect and authority. The crown also reminded people that I was their king, and this pleased them. Besides, I enjoyed wearing jewels. I often wore gold and silver necklaces, bracelets, and rings.

Number 2: I refused the crown. Romans hated kings.

Number 3: Being a king was not for me. I would not take the crown. I would have been embarrassed wearing jewels on my head. I suppose it might have covered up my bald spot, however.

Panelist 10: What were some of the reforms you adopted to improve the government and help the people?

Number 1: I gave jobs to the poor, built irrigation ditches for farmers, cleaned up the cities, and started a system of Roman numerals.

Number 2: Dishonest government officials were replaced by honest ones. I gave free grain to the needy and land to 100,000 of the country's poor. Changes were also made in the calendar, thereby making it easier to keep time.

Number 3: All persons over 18 years of age were given the right to vote -- except women.

Women are not well-educated and know little about politics and the government. Their place is at home cooking and caring for children. Among other things, I spent money to build new roads, bridges, and houses for the poor.

Panelist 11: Everyone knows about Julius Caesar's public career as a general and government official. But few people know him up close and personal. Please tell us something about the private side of your life.

Number 1: I enjoyed watching gladiators at the Colosseum. One time I almost entered the arena to fight a lion, but was stopped by my soldiers. They feared for my life. I guess you could say I have courage. I also have a sense of humor, and like playing practical jokes. On one occasion, my army was tired and depressed from a long march across North Africa. I joined several men gathered around the campfire one cold, dark night. I told them a lady named Lolita had come to the camp and was presently in my tent. I said the first man into the tent, located about 50 yards away, could hug and kiss her. A fast runner named Delevan, who had not seen a woman in months, charged into the dark tent. He kissed Lolita several times on the lips before realizing he was kissing a monkey who had wandered into camp from a nearby jungle.

Number 2: I had a friendly personality. I cared about my followers and was fair to people I conquered. I was even a friend to former political enemies. People looked to me to bring them peace, happiness, and a good life. My soldiers thought a lot of me, too. There were also plenty of ladies who admired me. Some people, however, said I was vain -- that is, they believed I thought too much of myself.

Number 3: As you can see, I am tall, dark, and handsome. I am six feet tall, weigh 180 pounds, and am very strong. There is no man on earth that I fear. I am a good person, but also a tough person -- a successful ruler must be both of these. I like to laugh, eat good food, and chat with close friends. I enjoy sports, but have little time to participate in them.

Panelist 12: Besides being a great general and politician, what other talents do you have?

Number 1: I am a pretty good artist and sculptor.

Number 2: Public speaking and writing are among my talents.

Number 3: I have a rather good singing voice and play the flute.

Panelist 13: Some members of the Roman Senate, and certain other people as well, do not like Julius Caesar. How do you explain such feelings against you?

Number 1: It is simply a case of jealousy. There are members of the Senate who wish they were the dictator. Others wish they were as popular as I am.

Number 2: I listen to advice from the Senate, but make all important decisions myself. This angers some senators. Others do not want their government headed by a dictator. Also, there are Romans who do not approve of my making citizens of former enemies we have conquered.

Number 3: People are afraid I am too much like a king. They do not like one all-powerful ruler.

MC: It's time now to vote for NUMBER 1, NUMBER 2, or NUMBER 3. All those who think NUMBER 1 is the real Julius Caesar, please raise your hand. All those who think NUMBER 2 is the real Julius Caesar, raise your hand. And all those who think NUMBER 3 is the real Julius Caesar, raise your hand.

The votes are all in. Will the real Julius Caesar please step forward?

Questions

Now that you know who the real Julius Caesar is, look back at the answers given by this person. All information in these answers is correct. Use the information to answer the following true-false questions. Also, use facts in the MC's introduction and in the questions asked by the panelists during the game.

- (1) _____ Julius Caesar was born and raised in Venice, Italy.
- (2) _____ The person who most influenced his early life was his father.
- (3) _____ Caesar believed that he could gain power in government by doing things to please the people of Rome.
- (4) _____ Marcus Crassus, General Pompey, and Julius Caesar were chosen to be heads of government in a special election.
- (5) _____ At the beginning of his military career, Caesar won victories in Gaul and Britain without losing a battle.
- (6) _____ He became the dictator of Rome as a result of a change in the constitution.
- (7) _____ Mark Antony crowned Julius Caesar king of Rome.
- (8) _____ As dictator, Caesar brought honesty to government and help to the poor.
- (9) _____ He enjoyed events at the Colosseum and was a practical joker.
- (10) _____ All Romans welcomed the dictatorship of Julius Caesar.