

Ancient Rome: Expansion and Conquest: Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 6-8

Curriculum Focus: Ancient History

Lesson Duration: Two class periods

Program Description

They came, they saw, they conquered. They rose and they fell. They created the world's first superpower, then ended as captives of illiterate barbarians. The ancient Romans changed the face of the world. In this five-pack video series, you'll join the Romans on their journey first to world domination and then to decline and defeat. *Expansion and Conquest* – Travel over the Alps with the great general Hannibal toward the Roman army's first great test of the Punic Wars. (Video 3 of *Ancient Rome* 5-pack.)

Onscreen Questions and Activities

Segment 1, Ancient Rome: Expansion and Conquest: Part One

- Pre-viewing questions:
 - What do you already know about the Punic wars between Rome and Carthage? What were the key factors that led to this rivalry?
 - During these wars, why was the Roman army considered to be unique?
 - As you watch the program, note the forces that drive Scipio and Hannibal. What events led to their rivalry?
- Post-viewing questions:
 - Rome's citizen militia is often heralded as the most disciplined and effective army in history. What qualities did the Roman soldier possess that allowed him to survive the challenges of battle?
 - Discuss why the non-professional, citizen army eventually was no longer adequate for securing the empire.
- Activity: Imagine you're a Carthaginian soldier under the leadership of Hannibal. Write a journal about your treacherous march through the Alps to Rome. Illustrate your journal with a map of the route.

Segment 2, Ancient Rome: Expansion and Conquest: Part Two

- Pre-viewing questions:

- Today, the expression “crossing the Rubicon” means taking a final, decisive step. What do you know about the significance of Caesar crossing the Rubicon with his troops? How did this move him one step closer to seizing power in Rome?
 - As you watch the program, pay attention to Caesar’s ability to balance military leadership and a genuine compassion for the Roman citizens.
 - Post-viewing questions:
 - Sulla was said to be the first leader to cash in on the loyalty of his men. Discuss the reasons why an army would remain more loyal to its general than to the state. How did a general benefit from this relationship?
 - If an army becomes more powerful than the state, what are potential consequences?
 - Activity: Research and construct a model or schematic drawing of a Carthaginian warship. Expand your drawing with descriptions of the ship’s main features and the roles of crew members. Present your drawing to the class.
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Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

Students will understand:

- Leaders of the Roman army and enemies of Rome were real men who faced real conflicts.
- Historical drama, like other historical fiction, is rooted in history but contains imaginary elements as well.

Materials

- *Ancient Rome: Expansion and Conquest* video and VCR, or DVD and DVD player
- Reference materials about famous Roman military leaders (biographies, history textbooks, encyclopedias, resources about ancient Rome)

Procedures

1. Tell students that they are going to work in small groups to write a one-act play based on a single event they have learned about while studying ancient Roman warfare.
2. Ask students to brainstorm a list of the leaders they consider most fascinating in their study of ancient warfare. The list will probably include Scipio, Hannibal, Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Augustus as well as others. Divide the class into small groups and ask each group to select one leader to focus on; depending on the number of groups and the number of leaders on your list, decide if more than one group can work on a given figure.
3. Direct each group to review multiple reference sources (primary and secondary) to learn more about their leaders. In particular, explain that students can lend authenticity to their dramas by finding passages from their subject’s personal writing that they may want to include in the



character's dialogue. If necessary, help groups to assign a reference source to each group member. All members should then report back to the group, which will by consensus pick one event from the leader's life to dramatize.

4. Go over with the class the following important elements of a one-act play:
 - The script of a one-act play must contain both dialogue (the conversation of the characters) and stage directions (descriptions of setting, characters, and action).
 - A one-act play usually deals with a single problem, or conflict, which occurs in a single setting.
 - As one or more characters try to solve the problem, the act builds to a climax, or point of highest intensity. Then the play shows the characters' reactions to the climax and moves on to a final outcome.
 - A play based on a historical event must stick to some historical facts but will also include fictional details, especially in the dialogue and actions.
5. In a series of mini-lessons, as detailed here, review with students how to proceed from prewriting the act, through writing, to revising and editing. Give the groups time to apply each mini-lesson.

PREWRITING

- a) In addition to a main character (one of the individuals listed above), the act needs at least one other character – a friend or foe of the main character. Therefore, each group should list one or more characters, real or fictional, and decide when to put them on stage.
- b) The characters need to have a problem or conflict between themselves or with someone else. Ask the groups to brainstorm possible problems involving their characters – either real-life problems they faced or problems that the group decides the characters might have faced. Selecting one of those problems, each group should then think about and prepare notes on how the characters will respond to the problem and how the problem will be solved.
- c) Each group should imagine how its characters look (including how they dress), sound, and act, and take notes for later use.
- d) Each group must also be clear on where and when the act takes place, so the students should jot down their thoughts on background scenery, furniture, and props.

WRITING

- a) When students in each group are ready to move on to the actual drafting stage, let them figure out how multiple authors can work together. Review with them, if necessary, the mechanics of listing characters and of writing stage directions and dialogue.

- b) Advise students to follow their prewriting notes to unfold the scene: introducing characters and the problem, building suspense, and winding up with a historically accurate or believable ending. Students should, however, be free to abandon prewriting notes that may take them to dead ends – and rethink their act.
- c) Remind students that, at the end of the act, the audience needs to know what each character is doing and feeling – or, at least, what each character's situation is.
- d) If they have not done so earlier, students should now title their act.

REVISING AND EDITING

Share with students a checklist such as the following, giving them time to revise as necessary so that they can answer yes to all the questions:

- a) Content: Does the dialogue or stage directions clearly show the character(s) facing a conflict, lead up to a conclusion, and always include characters' reactions?
- b) Style: Is the dialogue realistic and easy for an actor to say?
- c) Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics: Have you checked to make sure capitalization, spelling, and matters such as agreement, comparison, and pronoun references are correct?

6. Ask each group to perform, or at least read, its act for the rest of the class.

Discussion Questions

1. Explain what made the Roman army that fought the Punic Wars different from armies of other nations.
2. Hypothesize what might have happened to the balance of power in the Mediterranean if Hannibal had conquered the city of Rome.
3. Even though the Carthaginian Empire was defeated, the Romans destroyed the city of Carthage. What do you think led to such actions?
4. In your opinion, what were the characteristics that made Julius Caesar one of history's greatest generals?
5. What were the changes that took place in Rome when Emperor Augustus took power?
6. Why was control of the Mediterranean of such strategic importance?

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students' historical drama included historically accurate elements; well-formulated story line with problem and solution; smooth, realistic dialogue and clear stage directions.
- 2 points: Students' historical drama had some basis in historical fact; inadequately developed story line; some unrealistic dialogue and incomplete stage directions.



- 1 point: Students' historical drama lacking in historical accuracy; inadequate solution to problem of the act; unrealistic dialogue and incomplete stage directions.

Vocabulary

anarchy

Definition: A state of lawlessness or political disorder due to the absence of governmental authority.

Context: Roman armies tried to put their own generals into power, creating a Roman government that was in a state of upheaval, anarchy, and lawlessness.

allegiance

Definition: Devotion or loyalty to a person, group, or cause.

Context: The Roman army showed its loyalty and allegiance to Caesar by crossing the Rubicon with him.

maneuver

Definition: A military or naval movement or training exercise.

Context: The Roman army's military dominance was due to strong soldiers who constantly practiced their battle techniques and war maneuvers.

strategist

Definition: One skilled in the science and art of military command exercised to meet the enemy in combat under advantageous conditions.

Context: Hannibal successfully employed the art and science of warfare and is known as one of history's finest military strategists.

tyranny

Definition: A government in which absolute power is vested in a single ruler.

Context: Rome became a tyranny when Augustus made himself emperor and absolute sole ruler of Rome.

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- World History – Classical Traditions, Major Religions, and Giant Empires: Understands major global trends from 1000 BCE to 300 CE.



- World History – Classical Traditions, Major Religions, and Giant Empires: Understand how major religious and large-scale empires arose in the Mediterranean Basin, China, and India from 500 BCE to 300 CE.
- World History – Expanding Zones of Exchange and Encounter: Understands the Imperial crises and their aftermath in various regions from 300 to 700 CE.

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching social studies. To view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands/>.

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Time, Continuity, and Change
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Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
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