

Julius Caesar: *De Bello Gallico*

Some of the best prose of the late Republic comes from politicians concerned with enhancing their own position in a world racked by civil conflict. In his *Commentarii de bello gallico* (*Commentaries on the Gallic War*), Julius Caesar (100-44 B.C.) who wrote in a straightforward and concise style—and referred himself in the third person!—kept his popularity alive by sending home year by year a diary of his military successes as he conquered Gaul (58-51 B.C.). In the following excerpt (the opening words of this commentary), he introduces to his Roman readers the people he will subdue and absorb into the melting pot that is soon to become the great Roman Empire under his successor Augustus.

Text and Translation

Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres; unam partem incolunt Belgae,
All Gaul is divided into three parts; the Belgians inhabit one part, the Aquitanians

aliam Aquitani, tertiam qui ipsorum linguā Celtae, nostrā Galli,
(inhabit) another (part), (those) who are called Celts in their language, in ours Gauls,

appellantur. Hi omnes linguā, institutīs, legibus inter se differunt.
(inhabit) the third (part). All these differ amongst themselves in language, customs, (and) laws.

Gallos ab Aquitanīs Garumna flumen, a Belgīs Matrona
The Garonne river (separates) the Gauls from the Aquitanians, the Marne and Seine separates

et Sequana dividit. Horum omnium fortissimi sunt Belgae,
(the Gauls) from the Belgians. Of all these (tribes) the Belgians are the bravest,

propterea quod a cultū atque humanitate provinciae longissimē absunt,
for the reason that they are the furthest away from the refinement and civilization of the Province,

minimēque ad eos mercatores saepe commeant atque ea quae ad
and least (often) do the merchants often go and come to them and import those things

[continued on the next page]

effeminandos animos pertinent important, proximique sunt Germanīs,
which tend to weaken (men's) courage, and they are nearest to the Germans,

qui trans Rhenum incolunt, quibuscum continenter bellum gerunt.
who live across the Rhine River, with whom they regularly wage war.

Worksheet - Julius Caesar: *De Bello Gallico*

a. The questions below pertain to the forms underlined in the passage (pp. 1-2).

b. When you're asked to change a word from one form to another, change only *that* form of the word. For instance, if you're asked to change *habet* to the passive voice, make *habet* passive (i.e. *habetur*) but leave it in the 3rd sing. present indicative.

1. Make **omnis** ablative. _____
2. Make **unam** dative. _____
3. Make **incolunt** perfect. _____
4. Make **aliam** modify *Belgae*. _____
5. What case is **tertiam** and why? _____
6. Change **appellantur** to future perfect active singular. _____
7. Make **Hi omnes** singular. _____
8. Make **legibus** genitive. _____
9. Change **flumen** to dative plural _____
10. What case is **Belgīs** and why? _____
11. Change **dividit** to a future passive participle modifying *legibus*. _____
12. Change **Horum** to accusative singular. _____
13. Make **cultū** genitive. _____
14. Change **absunt** to future perfect first person singular. _____

[continued on the next page]

15. Make **eos** modify *humanitate*. _____
16. Make **mercatores** accusative. _____
17. Change **commeant** to perfect passive (masc). _____
18. What case is **ea** and why? _____
19. What case is **quae** and why? _____
20. Change **pertinent** to future passive. _____
21. Change **important** to a future active participle modifying *Celtae*. _____
22. Make **sunt** future. _____
23. What case is **quibus**(cum) and why? _____
24. Change **incolunt** into a present active participle modifying *bellum*. _____
25. Make **gerunt** pluperfect passive (feminine). _____

Notes and Vocabulary - Julius Caesar: *De Bello Gallico*

Line Note/ Vocabulary

- Gallia:** *Gallia, -ae, f.:* Gaul (modern France)
divisa: *divido, -ere, divisi, divisum:* divide
tres: *tres, tria:* three
incolunt: *incolo, -ere, -ui:* inhabit; live
Belgae: *Belgae, -arum, m.:* the Belgians; the *Belgae* were a tribe which inhabited northern Gaul (France) in Caesar's day
- Aquitani:** *Aquitani, -orum, m.:* the Aquitanians; the *Aquitani* were another Gallic tribe
tertiam: *terius, -a, -um:* third
lingua: *lingua, -ae, f.:* language
Celtae: *Celtae, -arum, m.:* Celts; another name for the Gauls
Galli: *Galli, -orum, m.:* Gauls
- appellantur:** *appello, -are, -avi, -atum:* call (by name)
institutis: *institutum, -i, n.:* custom
legibus: *lex, legis, f.:* law
differunt: *differo, differere, distuli, dilatatum:* differ; with *ab* ("from")
- Garumna:** *Garumna, -ae, f.:* the Garonne river
flumen: *flumen, inis, n.:* river
Matrona: *Matrona, -ae, f.:* the Marne river
- Sequana:** *Sequana, -ae, f.:* the Seine river
dividit: singular, because the two rivers are imagined to constitute one boundary
fortissimi: *fortis, forte:* brave; here, the superlative degree of the adjective, "bravest"; it modifies *Belgae* as a predicate adjective
- propterea quod:** (adverb) for that reason that
cultū: *cultus, -ūs, m.:* refinement
humanitate: *humanitas, -tatis, f.:* civilization
provinciae: *provincia, -ae, f.:* the Province; the only Roman settlement in Gaul before Caesar conquered Gaul. Known now as Provence, it lies on the southern coast of France.
longissimē: *longus, -a, um:* a long way off; here, the superlative adverb ("furthest")
absum: *absum, abesse, afui:* be away

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6. **minimē(que)**: least of all; superlative degree of the adverb *parum* (“little”)
mercatores: *mercator, -oris, m.*: merchant
commeant: *commeo* (1): come and go

7. **ad effeminandos animos**: the gerundive in a prepositional phrase; translate “to weaken (men’s) courage”
pertinent: *pertineo, -tinere, -tinui*: tend; + *ad* (“toward”)
important: *importo* (1): import
proximi: *proprior, -ius*: near; here, in the superlative degree (“nearest”); + dative

8. **Germanīs**: *Germani, -orum, m.*: the Germans
Rhenum: *Rhenus, -i, m.*: the Rhine river
continenter: (adverb) regularly