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

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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 Belgis 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. __________________________

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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*

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| 1.   | **Gallia**: Gallia,-ae, f.: Gaul (modern France)  
      | **divisa**: dividó, -ere, divísí, divísum: 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 |
| 2.   | **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 |
| 3.   | **appellantur**: appello, -are, -avi, -atum: call (by name)  
      | **institūtīs**: institutum, -i, n.: custom  
      | **legibus**: lex, legis, f.: law  
      | **differunt**: differo, differe, distuli, dilatum: differ; with *ab* (“from”) |
| 4.   | **Garumna**: Garumna, -ae, f.: the Garonne river  
      | **flumen**: flumen, inis, n.: river  
      | **Matrona**: Matrona, -ae, f.: the Marne river |
| 5.   | **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 |
| 6.   | **propterea quod**: (adverb) for that reason that  
      | **culti**: 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 Provençe, 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, -tiner, -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