



Caesar: Selections from his Commentarii De Bello Gallico
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Readability Report

When considering the readability of a foreign language text book, the use of a readability formula (such as the Fry Formula) has little value. Such formulas are intended to be used with English-language material. What makes more sense is to consider the help the text provides for students. In the case of *Caesar: Selections from his Commentarii De Bello Gallico*, students get considerable aid:

1. The preface and introductory notes provide summaries of the required AP® readings and give guidance on how to use the reader.
2. The introduction provides important background information on Julius Caesar: his life, his legacy, his writings, and the chain of command. In addition, this section gives an overview of the Gallic War and a select bibliography.
3. A listing of signs and abbreviations is provided.
4. Eight maps help students visualize the routes used in the military campaigns.
5. In addition to the maps, 24 illustrations provide a view of Roman life and spur student interest.
6. An English translation of the sections not covered in Latin provides students with needed context.
7. An appendix of figures of speech helps students as they work their way through the process of reading and comprehending the Latin text.
8. A complete Latin to English glossary is provided.

Just as important, if not more so, is the help that students get as they work their way through the text. Each Latin section has same-page vocabulary and notes, modeled after the highly praised Pharr method. Just in case that is not enough, a pullout section of high-frequency vocabulary gives students a handy resource should a vocabulary word's meaning elude them.

In short, this BCP annotated text of Caesar provides students with the help they need to be confident in reading Caesar passages in the original Latin. Since they will not have to spend so much time on figuring out the translation, they can concentrate on Caesar's role in history and the lessons he provides for modern living.

Appropriateness for High School Students

The College Board selected the passages that are contained in this text and their position is that these selections are highly appropriate for high school students.

Students have much to learn from Caesar's writings and his example. His legacy goes beyond his calendar and his name. The Gauls became Roman and their descendants speak a form of Latin to this day. Indeed, 723,000,000 people in 57 nations speak one of the Romance languages. Caesar's example has had imitators for thousands of years, and the framers of the American Constitution were careful to protect Americans from abuses of leaders who might try to emulate him. Partly in reaction to the example of Caesar's dictatorship, the US founders devised a complex system of governmental checks and balances. Teachers can use this text to teach concepts of historiography, historical principles of the history of the evolution of international mores, and analyses of Caesar's use of propaganda. In every way, Caesar is a pivotal historical figure, and reading his work will enlighten students and broaden their perspectives.

Screening for Bias

Again, the College Board selected the passages that are contained in this text. Any bias in the writings is Caesar's. The Latin passages are primary source material and provide students with important historical evidence. The commentary is clearly written and objective and provides the context students need for working their way through the Latin itself so that they can then understand what Caesar wrote and ultimately evaluate the legacy of Caesar and its meaning in the 21st century for themselves.

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