

# Augustus caesar essay



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## Augustus Caesar

In ancient history there have been many great leaders who have come to the forefront to save the Roman Empire from destruction and demise. The leaders and heroes of the Roman Empire are countless, but one leader stands out from all the rest. Augustus Caesar's contributions to Roman history helped make Rome the dominant empire we study and remember today. (Octavian) Augustus Caesar is without a doubt the greatest political leader in the history of the Roman Empire.

As a young adolescent, Octavian demonstrated his leadership ability long before having thoughts of becoming the first emperor of Rome. Octavian's strengths, feats, and accomplishments as a military leader show just a portion of his great political skills he possessed. After the murder of Octavian's great uncle, Julius Caesar, in 44 BC; Octavian along with Mark Antony, and Lepidus formed the Second Triumvirate. The three men lead their armies into Rome. The Roman Assembly granted the Second Triumvirate full power for five years. With full backing of the Roman Assembly, Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus waged a bloody campaign against all those who opposed them. As a reward for outstanding service to the Second Triumvirate, the land won from conquered victims was distributed amongst deserving soldiers.

Octavian and his two companions put a temporary end to the civil war of the Roman Empire in 42 BC. The Triumvirs, at Philippi in Macedonia, defeated the republicans led by Brutus and Cassius. They divided the empire between themselves. Antony remained in the wealthy East, Lepidus got control of Gaul and Spain, and Octavian received Italy. This was not the most generous

of gift for young Octavian. He had the difficult task of settling the veterans of Italy. This involved redistributing land and forcibly expelling any of the previous landowners. In time, Octavian forced Lepidus into retirement and won control of all western provinces.(Chodorow 90)

By 32 BC, Italy and the western provinces swore an oath of allegiance to Octavian. Octavian could then concentrate his efforts on moving against Antony, for total control of the Roman Empire. The Battle of Actium in 31 BC was arguably one of the most important naval battles in the history of the Roman Empire. Upon defeat by Octavian at this furious naval battle, Antony flees to Egypt with his lover Cleopatra. The following year in Egypt, Octavian and his army again defeat Antony. Consequently, Antony and Cleopatra commit suicide. With the victory at the Battle of Actium, Octavian was now sole ruler of Rome and all its provinces.

Upon the defeat and death of Antony, Octavian proclaimed the restoration of the Republic of Rome. However, he had no intention of stepping down as ruler. In 27 BC, with more of theatrical gesture than sincerity, Octavian placed the republic at the disposal of the Senate and the Roman people. The Senate thereupon, realizing by past experience its own helplessness and knowing that it did not possess the organization for ruling the great Roman world successfully, gave him Octavian officially the command of the army and the control of the most important frontier provinces. Besides these vast powers he held also the important rights of a tribune....(Breasted 680)

Octavian's position was now legitimized by the Senate's request that he command and lead Rome. He was given the military command, known as Imperium for ten years. This office included the administration of Roman

provinces that required the presence of the army. The official name of Octavian became Emperor Caesar Augustus. From that time would be known as Augustus, which means the Exalted.

Augustus received the tribunician power for life and assumed the role of protector of the Roman people. He also received the right to intervene in those provinces administered by the Senate. The backbone of Augustus power came from being Imperium of the military. The major portion of the army was not, however, kept in Italy, where rebellious generals might intrigue with the Senate and rise in sudden revolt. Instead, the Roman legions (twenty-eight of them, of six thousand men each, plus enough auxiliary forces to bring the total to about four hundred thousand men) were stationed at the other boundaries of the realm in just those places where there might be trouble with the barbaric tribes beyond the border. (Asinov 5) It was of great importance to Augustus that the elite troops and military officers were of Roman descent. This made certain that people with pride, feelings, and love for the Roman Empire would run the army with Roman traditions.

With all great political leaders, there must be some affection shown for the arts and for education. Augustus understood the importance of ideology and propaganda. He sponsored and encouraged the leading writers and artists of his time. The historian Livy, and the poets Vergil and Horace were of importance to Augustus. Their works glorified Rome's past and the greatness of Augustus' achievements. This time of restoration is frequently referred to as The Golden Age of Latin Literature. Latin literature achieved its highest level of excellence with the help of Augustus promoting of higher learning

and his patronizing of the arts. The term Augustan Age, used to describe periods of great literary achievement in modern nations, shows that Augustus had a profound impact on the world's history of learning. Augustus filled his house at Capri with huge fossilized remains of sea and land monsters, which people call Giants Bones or Heroes Weapons. What Augustus did with them, nobody knows. Of course, he was an emperor, and so could be only an amateur scientist: he was too busy to spend a lot of time on his hobbies. (Nichols 8) Augustus known the importance of learning and continuing to learn new knowledge.

In an effort to bring back the moral standards of the past, Augustus established a code of laws and social programs. The laws passed restored the family unit, which gave total power of the family to the head male. These laws included such things as: Encouraging marriage and child bearing with penalties going to people not married by the age of thirty. Adultery was strictly forbidden. Married men were heavily fined and taxed for not having children and tax breaks were given to people with three or more children. Augustus laws also gave the male head of household the right to decide who the children would marry, where they would live, and what profession and economic goals they would pursue.

Augustus also re-established the priest hoods of Rome. He revived old religious customs and attempted to restore the old stern morality. When the elder incumbent died, Augustus assumed the role of Pontifex Maximus (Highest Priest). He also asserted his power as Pontifex Maximus to prohibit the Roman people from participating in mystery cults.

The organizational skills of Augustus were impeccable. This is evident by the conducting of a census at around the time of the birth of Jesus Christ. With his organizational ability and Augustus introduced laws that emphasized hard work, traditional family values, and loyalty to the Roman government. Augustus laws proved to be a success.

Part of Augustus success came from his ability to relate to the people of Rome. It always helps a politician to be able to relate to the people. And that strength made Augustus a politician. His young and energetic personality made it easy for the people of Rome to communicate with Augustus. Augustus dressed like common men of Rome. He would not dress in the costumes of the upper class. The extreme popularity of Augustus is evident with the people offering him Chancellorship for life. He turns down the title. People insisted that they worship him as a god. Once again he refuses, stating that he wants people to worship his ideas instead. The people who worship and spread the ideas of Augustus are referred to as the Augustilites. And in time, the month of Sextilis is renamed August in his honor.

History remembers the greatness of Augustus in several ways. Although it seems unusual, it is worthy of mention that Augustus Caesar was one of the few emperors to die a natural death. Augustus entered a city of brick and stone and left a city of marble. He extended the boundaries of the empire and reorganized its administration. His reign starts a two hundred-year period of peace known as the Pax Romana. The political system he established endured essentially no change for three centuries. The modern world honors him with our calender by the naming of the eighth month after him. The only thing that saved the destruction of the Roman Empire was the <https://assignbuster.com/augustus-caesar-essay/>

emergence of a brilliant political leader, Octavian Augustus Caesar, first emperor of the Roman Empire.

Thesis sentence: (Octavian) Augustus Caesar is without a doubt the greatest political leader in the history of the Roman Empire.

I. Octavian strengths, accomplishments, and feats as a military leader.

A. Octavian joins forces with Mark Antony and Lepidus.

1. Three form Second Triumvirate in 44 B. C.

2. Three lead their army into Rome and Assembly grants them full power for five years.

3. Brutus and Cassius are hunted down in Macedonia where Brutus and Cassius are defeated and killed in the Battle of Philippi in

42 B. C.

4. Octavian, Anthony, and Lepidus divide the empire.

B. Octavian forces Lepidus into retirement and gains control of all western empire.

C. 32 B. C. Octavian moves against Antony.

1. 31 B. C. Octavian wins naval battle at Actium.

a.. Battle of Actium puts end to civil war

b. Win at Battle of Actium gives Octavian sole control of the R

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Roman Empire.

D. Octavian proclaims restoration of empire in 27 B. C.

1. Proclamation is more theatrical than sincerity.

2. Senate begs Octavian to not abandon the empire.

3. Given military command for ten years.

a. Named Emperor Caesar Augustus and referred as

Augustus the Exalted.

b. Imperium is the Supreme Military Command.

E. Backbone of Augustus power is the army.

1. Army has twenty five legions of about six thousand men in each legion.

2. At least two hundred and fifty thousand men in army at all times.

II. Education and the Arts

A. Golden Age of Latin Literature

1. Octavian promotes learning.

2. Octavian patronizes the arts.



B. Great writers flourish in Augustan Age.

1. Augustan Age is a term used to describe periods of great

literacy achievement in modern nations.

2. Writers are Virgil, Horace, Livy, Ovid flourish.

III. Helping The Restoration of Rome through Code of Laws and Social Programs.

A. Passed laws to restore family unit.

1. Encouraged marriage and child bearing.

2. Penalties to people not married by the age of thirty.

3. Adultery is absolutely forbidden.

4. Married men are heavily fined and taxed for not having children.

5. Tax breaks are granted for people with three or more children.

B. Reestablishes the priest hoods.

1. When elder incumbent dies Augustus assumes the role of Pontifex Maximus (Highest Priest).

2. Prohibits participation of Roman people in mystery cults.

C. Augustus brings back morals of Rome.

D. Augustus has great organizational skills and conducts a census.

E. Augustus laws give total power of family unit to male head of the family.

1. Male head of family decides who the sons and daughters will marry.

2. Male head of family decides where sons and daughters will live.

3. Male head of family decides what profession and what economic goals his children will pursue.

4. Male head of family owns all families land.

F. Augustus new code of laws emphasize hard work, loyalty to the Roman government and traditional family values.

IV. Augustus Caesars Relates to the People of Rome

A. Augustus is young and very energetic.

B. Augustus dresses like common men of Rome and not in costumes of the upper class.

C. Extremely popular with the people of Rome.

1. Augustus Caesar is offered Chancellorship for life, but he turns title down.

2. People want to worship Augustus as a god.
  - a. Augustus wants people to worship his ideas instead.
  - b. Followers of Augustus are called Augustilites and tell of his ideals.
3. Month of Sextilis is renamed August in honor of Augustus.

#### V. History Remembers Greatness Augustus

- A. Augustus saves Rome from destruction.
  1. Entered a city of brick and left a city of marble.
  2. Sets the stage of Pax Roman Period (two hundred years of Roman peace).
- B. One of few Roman emperors to die a natural death.
- C. Honored on modern calendar with month of August named in his honor.
- D. Title as the Roman Empires first emperor.