

Marcus Tullius Cicero:

Roman statesman, orator, politician, author

What do you currently know about Cicero? What do you think you know?

Get out your Chomebooks see what you can find.

- When did he live?
- What is he known for?
- What were some major events in his life?



Cicero's Legacy

Marcus Tullius Cicero is one of the most famous Romans who ever lived.

Some of his contributions to history:

- He began his career as a lawyer and 58 of his 88 original law speeches survived the Middle Ages.
- He opposed Julius Caesar and was a staunch supporter of the Roman Republic throughout his career.
- According to Cicero, he saved the Republic from Cataline and his fellow conspirators before they could overthrow the state.
- He was a prolific writer, writing on topics from philosophy, old age, friendship, and the Republic itself.
- His book, *de officiis*, was the second book to be printed ever.



Early Life

- born 106 BCE not far from Rome.
- father was well to do, member of the equestrian order, but not a politician.
- his cognomen, *Cicero*, meant "chickpea," probably because his family grew them at some point in the past.
- During this time, to be cultured meant knowing Greek. Cicero was fluent and translated many Greek philosophical works into Latin, thus introducing them to a larger audience.

Career

Started under the command of the general Sulla, but had no taste for military life. He began in 83 BC, working as a lawyer.

How are modern trials conducted? What skills are necessary for lawyers? What must a lawyer do to be successful?



The Rostra



Built in the early Republic, speakers would stand on it and face the Senate house.

Several were built throughout the Republic and Empire.

The decapitated heads of conquered enemies would also be placed here.



cursus honorum

- Cicero always wanted to go into "public life." What is public life?
- Held his first office in 75 BCE, *quaestor*. Then *aedile* in 69 BCE, and *praetor* in 66 BCE. He held each office *suo anno*.
- Cicero was elected *consul*, the highest political office, in 63 BCE. As a *novus homo*, this was quite an accomplishment.
- While he was *consul* he thwarted a conspiracy which was attempting to overthrow the state, according to Cicero.

The Catilinarian Conspiracy

There are many accounts of this, all from Cicero's side of events. How might this taint our knowledge of the facts?

Prior to the conspiracy, Cataline was influential and served in both the military and government.

When Cicero was elected consul in 63, it was Cataline whom he defeated.

During his year in office, Cicero accused Cataline of trying to overthrow the Republic. He made a series of speeches against him called the Cataline Orations.

Remember, Cicero was learned, and a successful lawyer. What skills did he have to make him a convincing speaker?

What kinds of things should Cicero point out in his speech?

What points should he make to persuade others that his point is right?

What things would you mention?

First Cataline Oration

This was the first of four speeches which were made in front of the Senate against Cataline.

The first was made while Cataline was present in the Senate house. In this speech Cicero sets up his antagonism to Cataline:

"How long, O Catiline, will you abuse our patience? And for how long will that madness of yours mock us? To what end will your unbridled audacity hurl itself?"

After the speech, Cataline tried to defend himself, but the other Senators called him a traitor and he stormed out, leaving the city.

The Second, Third, and Fourth Oration

In the 2nd speech Cicero informed Rome that Cataline had left the city and was raising an army against the Republic. He described Cataline and his followers as men who craved power and wealth, but assured the people that he and the gods would protect Rome.

In the 3rd speech Cicero claimed he had saved the city from a bloody rebellion and presented evidence about Cataline's fellow conspirators.

In the final speech Cicero argues about punishment.. While not allowed to formally comment on the matter, he subtly suggests the death penalty.

While historians tend to agree that Cicero saved Rome, what do these speeches show us about Cicero, the man?

The Conspiracy

After the first Catilinarian, Cataline flees the city. He eventually raises an army.

- Was this to continue the conspiracy he was already involved in or merely a reaction to Cicero's attack?

Cicero intercepts letters between Cataline and his minions. In Rome the conspirators in the city are taken to a prison and strangled.

With the conspiracy over in Rome Cataline loses hope and in a clash with Republican troops dies on the front lines of battle.

Post Conspiracy

Cicero is a hero and is named *pater patriae*. He is the most famous man in Rome. He knows it too.

However, shortly after this Cicero would encounter several problems to his further advancement.

Gaius Julius Caesar was just coming onto the political scene. Cicero is a staunch Republican, always standing up for the Roman Republic.

Caesar invited Cicero to be the fourth member of his partnership with Pompey and Crassus. Cicero declined because he thought it would undermine the Republic.

What goes up...

Cicero suffered as a result of not joining the First Triumvirate.

An ally of Caesar became consul and passed a law making it illegal to put Roman citizens to death without a trial. Why might that be bad for Cicero?

Cicero argues he was acting on behalf of the Senate and in the interest of Rome, but fails to gain support.

He goes into exile due to the law. As a result he goes into deep depression. When he is gone his possessions are confiscated and his homes burned.

He wrote to Atticus: "Your pleas have prevented me from committing suicide, but what is there to live for? Don't blame me for complaining. My afflictions surpass any you have heard of earlier."

Cicero eventually returns to Rome, though he never recovers the fame that he once had.

As Caesar grows in power, so Cicero wanes. Cicero kind of opposes Caesar, but mostly just acts indignant. Cicero has no army with which to oppose Caesar, and lacks the support that he once had in the Senate.

Cicero does outlive Caesar, but after publicly insulting Marc Antony, Cicero is eventually proscribed by Antony and Octavian in 43 BCE.

Wheelock, page 133:

Cicero urges Cataline's departure from Rome

Also page 73, and 95

Cicero Newspaper

Straight News v. Opinion.

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Hansel and Gretel

Three Little Pigs

What points does one want to emphasize in straight news?

What points does one want to emphasize in a one sided story?