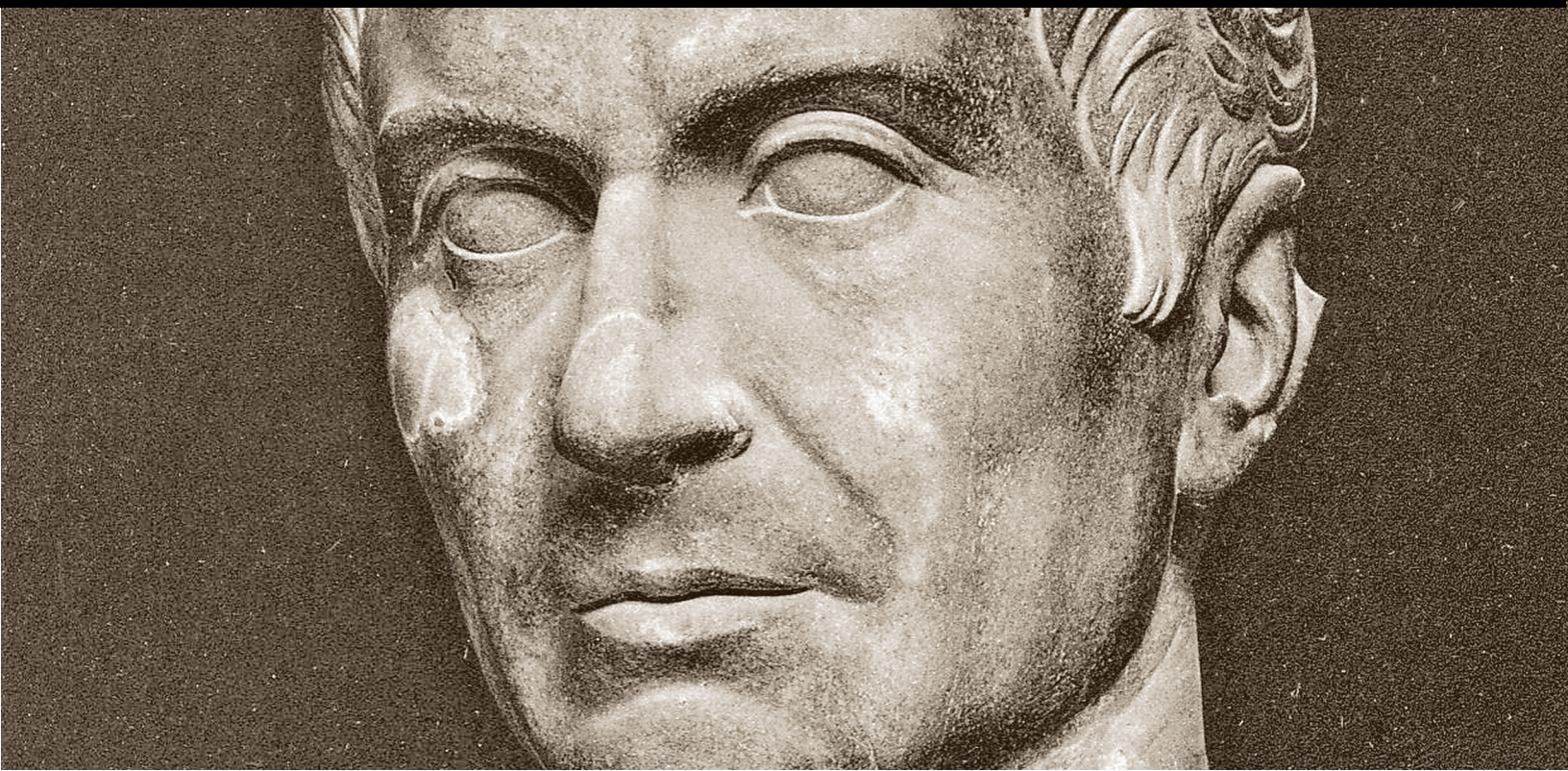


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## Introduction

### Goals

The main goal of this book is to help students develop skills outlined in the Common Core Standards by clarifying what the standards are asking for and by giving teachers specific activities they can use to address the standards.

### Organization

The book is mostly organized by the categories into which Common Core places its standards. The first three chapters are “Key Ideas and Details,” “Craft and Structure,” and “Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.” Because “Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity” is addressed every time students read, it does not have its own chapter. Also, because it is common for many writing categories to overlap on a paper, the fourth chapter covers all the writing standards and is divided into the three main paper types: argumentative, informative, and narrative.

Activities open with an introductory page that includes every standard covered by the activities, directions, estimated lesson length, and additional teaching ideas. At the back of the book are selected answers for the reading activities.

### Tracking Common Core Standards

On page 3, there is a chart that can help you track which Common Core Standards you have addressed and with which activities.

### Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is not required for social studies teachers, which is why there is no WHST.6-8.3. However, this form of writing was included in this book because numerous social studies teachers also teach language arts, for the many educators who find creative writing a valuable way to explore history, and because other required writing standards can be covered with narrative writing.

### Common Core Standards

If a teacher covers the six reading activities and three papers outlined in this book, he or she will have addressed every 6–8 History/Social Studies Common Core Standard at least once. Although it is not expected that teachers cover every standard in each unit of study, this gives teachers a great way to see examples of every standard and have numerous assignments to choose from.

# Common Core Standards

## READING

### Key Ideas and Details

#### **RH.6-8.1**

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

#### **RH.6-8.2**

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

» *Summarize primary or secondary sources.*

#### **RH.6-8.3**

Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

» *Summarize the steps of a process or historical event.*

### Craft and Structure

#### **RH.6-8.4**

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

» *Use context to decipher the meanings of difficult words.*

#### **RH.6-8.5**

Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

» *Determine how the author has ordered the information.*

#### **RH.6-8.6**

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

#### **RH.6-8.7**

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

» *Interpret a reading with a visual.*

#### **RH.6-8.8**

Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

#### **RH.6-8.9**

Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

#### **RH.6-8.10**

By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

## SPEAKING AND LISTENING

### Comprehension and Collaboration

#### **SL.6.1–SL.8.1**

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6–8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## WRITING

### Text Types and Purposes

#### **WHST.6-8.1**

Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

» *Argumentative writing.*

#### **WHST.6-8.2**

Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

» *Informative writing.*

#### **W.6.3–W.8.3**

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

» *Creative writing. (This is not required for social studies teachers.)*

### Production and Distribution of Writing

#### **WHST.6-8.4**

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization,

and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

» *Write for a specific audience.*

#### **WHST.6-8.5**

With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

» *Use writing process.*

#### **WHST.6-8.6**

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.

» *Publish writing for an audience.*

### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

#### **WHST.6-8.7**

Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

» *Research to answer a question.*

#### **WHST.6-8.8**

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

» *Use multiple credible sources when researching and summarize findings in own words.*

#### **WHST.6-8.9**

Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

» *Support essays with information or quotes from texts.*

### Range of Writing

#### **WHST.6-8.10**

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

# Tracking Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment
<u><b>RH.6-8.1</b></u>				
<u><b>RH.6-8.2</b></u>				
<u><b>RH.6-8.3</b></u>				
<u><b>RH.6-8.4</b></u>				
<u><b>RH.6-8.5</b></u>				
<u><b>RH.6-8.6</b></u>				
<u><b>RH.6-8.7</b></u>				
<u><b>RH.6-8.8</b></u>				
<u><b>RH.6-8.9</b></u>				
<u><b>RH.6-8.10</b></u>				
<u><b>SL.6.1–SL.8.1*</b></u>				
<u><b>WHST.6-8.1</b></u>				
<u><b>WHST.6-8.2</b></u>				
<u><b>W.6.3–W.8.3*</b></u>				
<u><b>WHST.6-8.4</b></u>				
<u><b>WHST.6-8.5</b></u>				
<u><b>WHST.6-8.6</b></u>				
<u><b>WHST.6-8.7</b></u>				
<u><b>WHST.6-8.8</b></u>				
<u><b>WHST.6-8.9</b></u>				
<u><b>WHST.6-8.10</b></u>				

\*Not required for social studies teachers.

## THE ROMAN GAMES <sup>1/3</sup>

### Seneca

Seneca (ca. 4 BCE–65 CE) was a Roman writer, philosopher, and statesman. He tutored Nero as a child, and became his adviser when Nero became emperor. After Seneca retired, there was a failed conspiracy to kill Nero and he was accused of being part of the plot. It is not known if Seneca played any role in the plan, but he was forced to commit suicide in 65 CE because of his alleged involvement. Below is a letter he wrote to a friend in 50 CE after watching the Roman games.

There is nothing so ruinous to good character as to idle away one's time at some spectacle. Vices have a way of creeping in because of the feeling of pleasure that it brings. Why do you think that I say that I personally return from shows greedier, more ambitious and more given to luxury, and I might add, with thoughts of greater cruelty and less humanity, simply because I have been among humans?

The other day, I chanced to drop in at the midday games, expecting sport and wit and some relaxation to rest men's eyes from the sight of human blood. Just the opposite was the case. Any fighting before that was as nothing; all trifles were now put aside—it was plain butchery.

The men had nothing with which to protect themselves, for their whole bodies were open to the thrust, and every thrust told. The common people prefer this to matches on level terms or request performances. Of course they do. The blade is not parried by helmet or shield, and what use is skill or defense? All these merely postpone death.

In the morning men are thrown to bears or lions, at midday to those who were previously watching them. The crowd cries for the killers to be paired with those who will kill them, and reserves the victor for yet another death. This is the only release the gladiators have. The whole business needs fire and steel to urge men on to fight. There was no escape for them. The slayer was kept fighting until he could be slain.

“Kill him! Flog him! Burn him alive!” [The spectators roared] “Why is he such a coward? Why won't he rush on the steel? Why does he fall so meekly? Why won't he die willingly?”

Unhappy as I am, how have I deserved that I must look on such a scene as this? Do not, my Lucilius, attend the games, I pray you. Either you will be corrupted by the multitude, or, if you show disgust, be hated by them. So stay away.



Gladiators

Sources:  
Davis, William Sterns. *Rome and the West*. Vol. 2 of *Readings in Ancient History*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1913.  
Wiedman, Thomas. *Emperors and Gladiators*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Image source: Gladiators. Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Pollice Verso*, 1872, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix

CHAPTER 2

# Craft and Structure

**ACTIVITY 3**

The Tale of Two Caesars

**RH.6-8.4**

**RH.6-8.5**

**ACTIVITY 4**

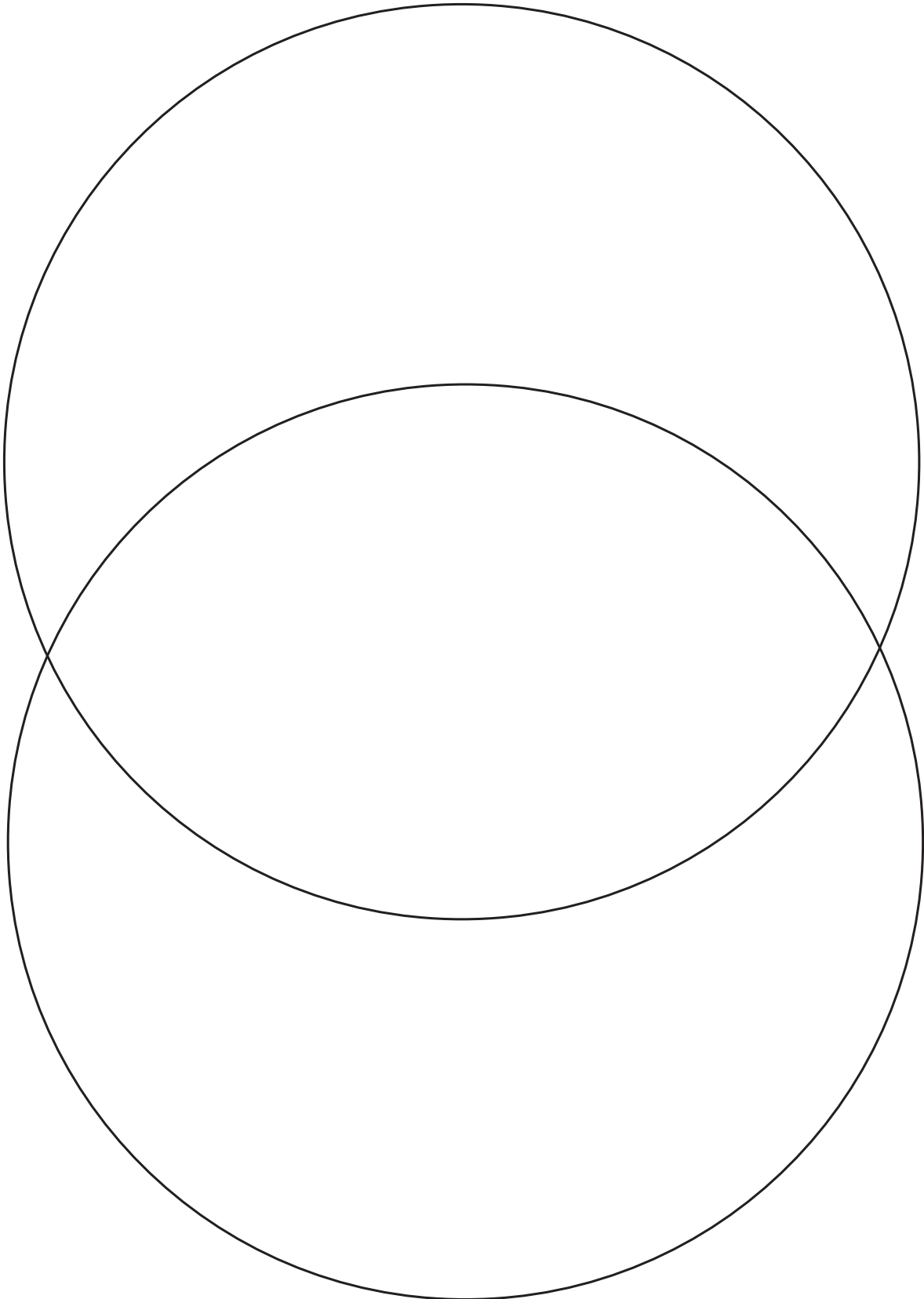
Barbarians

**RH.6-8.6**

## JULIUS AND AUGUSTUS VENN DIAGRAM

---

Label one circle "Augustus" and the other "Julius." Place five to seven facts in each section.



7. Which source did you trust the most? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Which source did you trust the least? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What does it mean when a politician is accused of “fiddling while Rome burned”? How does this connect to Nero?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. Do you think Nero was playing the lyre while the fire raged? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. Do you think Nero started the fire? Why?