



TAKE NOTE

1. The Roman calendar had three main days. The day before each of these three days was referred to by the word *prīdiē*, “the day before.” All other dates were given by counting backwards from these main days; the Romans included the first and last day in their reckoning. The abbreviation a.d. (*ante diem*) with a Roman numeral indicates how many days to count backwards.

Kalendae, “the Kalends,” referred to the first day of the month;

Nōnae, “the Nones,” referred to the fifth or seventh of the month; and

Īdūs, “the Ides,” referred to the thirteenth or fifteenth of the month.

Thus in lines 10–11 of the Latin passage above, Caesar writes *a.d. V. Kal. April.* This means *ante diem* V (Roman numeral five) or five days before the Kalends (Kal., the first) of April. By counting backwards from the Kalends (first of April), to March 31, to March 30, to March 29, and to March 28, one arrives at the corresponding date in our calendar.

2. To be sent under a yoke (of spears) was an act of humiliation for the soldiers of a defeated army because they had to bend their heads as they passed under the yoke and they were mocked by the opposing army. The English word “subjugate” derives from this practice.
3. The verb *putō* (1) “to think” is used in line 21; *existimō* (1) “to think” is seen in lines 8 and 23. In Caesar 1.4–5, line 8 the deponent verb *arbitror* (1) “to think” was used. These verbs are synonyms and are frequently employed to set up an indirect statement.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Name the two routes that the Helvetians could choose to follow when leaving their own territory.
2. What did the Helvetians think that they could either force or persuade the Allobroges to do? Cite the Latin.
3. Why did Caesar hasten to leave Rome and go to Geneva?
4. What other two actions did Caesar take when he heard the news?
5. What was the Helvetian response to Caesar?
6. Why did Caesar stall in giving the Helvetians an answer? Cite the Latin.

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