

Cleopatra

Queen of Egypt



What Was Cleopatra like as a Leader?

Cleopatra is described by historians as a highly intelligent and successful leader. She spoke multiple languages and was believed to be the first in her family to do so. One of these languages was ancient Egyptian, which is thought to have made her popular with the local people.



During a particularly bad drought, Cleopatra is thought to have opened up the city's grain reserves. This meant that everyone had something to eat and that nobody went hungry. She also studied scrolls from the library of Alexandria.

Who Was Cleopatra?

Cleopatra was thought to have been born around 69 BC. Although she was born in Egypt, her family were Greek. When her father (Ptolemy XII) died, she took over as the ruler of Egypt. However, at the time, women were not allowed to rule on their own. Therefore, Cleopatra's younger brother (Ptolemy XIII) became joint ruler. At the time, Cleopatra was around the age of 18 and her brother was around the age of 10.



Cleopatra and Julius Caesar

A few years into their leadership, Ptolemy XIII decided that he no longer wanted to rule alongside his sister. So, he had her thrown out of Alexandria and refused to let her back in.

At the same time, Ptolemy XIII had angered a Roman general named Julius Caesar. Wanting to confront the leader, Caesar travelled to Alexandria and demanded to speak to Ptolemy XIII.

Cleopatra had heard what had happened and desperately wanted to speak to Caesar before her brother could.

At the time, this was home to writing from some of the world's greatest scholars.



However, she was banned from entering Alexandria. So, Cleopatra wrapped herself in a duvet and had herself sent to Caesar. He was amazed by her intelligence and cunning and offered to help her get back into Alexandria and overthrow her brother. This was successful and Cleopatra was once again the queen of Egypt. Ptolemy XIII tried lots of different ways to get back into Alexandria, including pumping raw sewage into the water supply. He was not successful.

Cleopatra and Mark Antony ◆

After her relationship with Caesar had ended, Cleopatra started receiving letters from another Roman general named Mark Antony. He was trying to take control of the Roman Empire and thought that making friends with the ruler of Egypt would help him. Eventually, he moved to Egypt and he and Cleopatra had three children together.

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However, Mark Antony began making comments about his children one day being in charge of countries within the Roman Empire. This angered some people back in Rome and they named Mark Antony and Cleopatra as enemies of the empire.

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Not long after, Egypt was taken over and became a part of the Roman Empire, bringing an end to Cleopatra's rule.



Questions

1. How old was Cleopatra when she took over as ruler of Egypt? Tick one.

- around the age of 10
- around the age of 14
- around the age of 16
- around the age of 18

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in.

- Cleopatra became joint ruler of Egypt.
- Julius Caesar travelled to Alexandria.
- Cleopatra began receiving letters.
- Ptolemy XIII angered Julius Caesar.

3. According to the text, what did Ptolemy XIII try doing in order to get back into Alexandria?

4. Look at the section titled **What Was Cleopatra like as a Leader?**

Find and copy one word that means the same as **very**.

5. In which section can you find out information about three of Cleopatra's children?

6. How do you think the author of this text felt about Cleopatra? Explain your answer.

7. Compare Cleopatra as a leader to Ptolemy XIII. How were they different?

8. Explain how you think Cleopatra felt when she was named as an enemy of the empire.
