

**HANNIBAL BARCA OF
CARTHAGE: SWORN
ENEMY OF ROME**



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Description

Through the investigation of primary and secondary sources, students in this lesson will identify, understand and be able to explain the story of Hannibal Barca of Carthage, how he was able to outwit and out maneuver the Roman army time and time again during the Second Punic War and why his crossing of the Alps is still considered today to be one of the greatest military maneuvers of all time.

Subjects

World History
European History

Grade Level

11-12

Duration

90 minutes

Tour Links

- Various Monuments in Spain
- Hannibal Monument, Gebze, Turkey
- Carthage

Essential Questions

- Where was Carthage? Who were the Carthaginians?
- Who was Hannibal Barca? What was his plan for the Second Punic War?
- How was Hannibal able to surprise the Roman army by invading Italy from the north?
- What were the battles of Trebia, Trasimene and Cannae? How was Hannibal able to achieve Carthaginian victories against much larger Roman armies at these battles?
- How were the Romans able to turn the tide against Hannibal?

Academic Summary

Polybius, *The Histories*, 2nd Century BCE

In the course of the conversation Hannibal defended himself on various grounds, and at length, being at a loss for further arguments, resorted to the following. He said that at the time when his father was about to start with his army on his expedition to Spain, he himself, then nine years of age, was standing by the altar, while Hamilcar was sacrificing to Zeus. When, on the omens being favorable, Hamilcar had poured a libation to the gods and performed all the customary rites, he ordered the others who were attending the sacrifice to withdraw to a slight distance and calling Hannibal to him asked him kindly if he wished to accompany him on the expedition. On his accepting with delight, and, like a boy, even begging to do it besides, his father took him by the hand, led him up to the altar, and bade him lay his hand on the victim and swear never to be the friend of the Romans. He begged Antiochus, then, now he knew this for a fact, as long as his intentions were hostile to Rome, to rely on him confidently and believe that he would have in him his sincerest supporter, but from the moment he made peace and alliance with her he had no need to wait for accusations but should mistrust and beware of him; for there was nothing he would not do against the Romans. Antiochus, listening to this, thought he spoke genuinely and sincerely and in consequence abandoned all his former mistrust. However, we should consider this as an unquestionable proof of Hamilcar's hostility and general purpose, and it is confirmed by the facts. For he made of his daughter's husband Hasdrubal and his own son Hannibal such enemies of Rome that none could be more bitter. As Hasdrubal died before putting his purpose into execution, it was not in his case fully evident, but circumstance put it in the power of Hannibal to give only too manifest proof of his inherited hatred of Rome.

His tactics and strategies are still studied around the world in military academies over 2000 years after his death. Stories of his exploits and bravery are the stuff of legends. Called a barbarian by his enemies, he nonetheless earned their begrudging respect and admiration. Generations of common Roman citizens told stories of his brutality. Although his army was eventually defeated in battle, he remained defiant, leading different troops into battle against Rome until he was an old man. Perused by Roman troops for decades, he ultimately committed suicide to deprive the Romans of the satisfaction of killing him. He was, in the end, the Enemy of Rome. His name was Hannibal Barca of Carthage.

Carthage was a prosperous and powerful city in North Africa across the Mediterranean Sea from Sicily. Originally founded as a Phoenician colony in the 9th century BCE, the city had quickly established itself as a wealthy trading center. With wealth came power. By the 3rd century BCE, Carthaginian armies had conquered an empire stretching across the Mediterranean to Spain. Growth, however, also brought trouble with another Mediterranean power: Rome, which at the time had expanded off the Italian peninsula and was eyeing Sicily. A showdown ensued. Known as the First Punic War (Punic was the Roman word for Phoenician), the war broke out in 264 BCE and lasted for over 20 years. A back-and-forth exhausting struggle, the first war ended in a Roman victory, but it was a hard-fought one. Carthage's army in the war was led by Hamilcar Barca. In the peace treaty, Carthage agreed to abandon Sicily and to pay

Rome an annual tribute.

Seeking to regain its prestige and rebuild its economy, Carthage turned its attention after the war to the Iberian Peninsula and its Spanish colonies. Led by Hamilcar, the Carthaginian army was successful in its campaign of subduing the local tribes and expanding Carthage's reach. After Hamilcar died in 229 BCE, his son Hannibal, who as a 9-year-old had sworn an oath to always be an "enemy of Rome" took up the reins. Hannibal, who had studied at the footsteps of his father and other Carthaginian military strategists since he was old enough to walk, knew that any direct attack on the Romans in Sicily would have been suicide. The key was to outflank the Romans and to catch them off guard. Hannibal decided to do the impossible. He ordered his army of 50,000 soldiers first to cross the Pyrenees Mountains (between modern Spain and France), then to cross the Alps in mid-winter. What made the decision even more unlikely was that the Carthaginian army also had war elephants (an ancient version of tanks designed to strike terror when charging). Crossing the Alps in winter, a decision even today questioned and studied by historians, was hard on Hannibal's troops (and elephants), but they eventually made it through to the other side. Reports vary, but most historians believe that the Carthaginians arrived in the Po Valley in Northern Italy with at least 25,000 soldiers and at least 20 elephants. As Hannibal marched south through the Po, he was able to gain allies among the local tribes, many of whom had long resisted Roman control.

Hannibal's move through the Alps, a mountain range long considered by Roman military strategists to be a natural barrier and thus impenetrable, shocked the Roman Senate. Most of Rome's army at the time was in Sicily and the other Mediterranean islands waiting for an attack that would never come. Hannibal's moves in Italy made matters worse, as the barbarians were able to defeat Roman forces in a series of battles. Each victory brought the Carthaginians more support from northern tribes and by 217 BCE Hannibal was threatening the city of Rome itself.

Eventually the Romans were able to turn the tide against Hannibal and his allies, first by attacking Carthaginian outposts in Iberia, then by invading North Africa and threatening Carthage itself. In 202 BCE, after over 15 years of wreaking havoc on the Italian peninsula but failing to capture Rome itself, Hannibal and his army were summoned home to defend the capital by the Carthaginian war council. The final great battle between Hannibal and the Romans (led by Scipio Africanus) took place on the plains of Zama. The Carthaginians put up a valiant but ultimately doomed effort. The Second Punic War was over.

After the war, Hannibal served in the Carthaginian government for a few years, but by 195 was forced to flee his home city after aggressive elements in Rome called for his arrest. Determined to fulfill his oath as an enemy of Rome, he went first to the Tyre (in modern day Lebanon) and later to Asia Minor (Turkey), where he spent the remainder of his life leading different armies in a futile attempt to stop Roman expansion.

Hannibal committed suicide around 183 BCE (the exact date is unknown) in what is today southern Turkey, depriving the Romans of the pleasure of executing him.

Through the investigation of primary and secondary sources, students in this lesson will identify, understand and be able to explain the story of Hannibal Barca of Carthage, how he was able to outwit and outmaneuver the Roman army time and time again during the Second Punic War and why his crossing of the Alps is still considered today to be one of the greatest military maneuvers of all time.

Objectives

1. Students will identify, understand and be able to explain the story of Hannibal Barca of Carthage and his role in the Second Punic War.
2. Students will identify, understand and be able to explain how Hannibal was able to outwit and out maneuver the Roman army time and time again during his invasion of Italy.
3. Students will identify, understand and be able to explain why Hannibal's decision to cross the Alps is still studied today as one of the greatest military maneuvers of all time.

Procedures

I. Anticipatory Set

- Writing / Question: Why were the Alps considered by the Romans to be a natural barrier? (5 min)
- Handouts – Copies of documents and readings from the websites listed. (5 min)

II. Body of Lesson

- Lecture / PPT – Hannibal of Carthage and the Second Punic War (20 min)
- Video – Hannibal (15 min)
- Independent Activity – Students read the articles and sources Hannibal and his role in the Second Punic War, taking notes as appropriate. (20 min)
- AP / Advanced students should focus on primary sources
- Suggestion: Have the students read some of these articles and sources before class.
- Group Activity – Socratic Seminar: Discussion on Hannibal and the Second Punic War. (15 min)

III. Closure

- Assessment / DBQ – Essay: Explain in detail the story of Hannibal Barca of Carthage, how he was able to outwit and out maneuver the Roman army time and time again during the Second Punic War and why his decision to cross the Alps is still studied today as one of the greatest military maneuvers of all time.

Extension

On tour: Maps of Ancient Rome / Via dei Fori Imperiali

While on tour, you will visit the Forum and other ancient Roman sites. Between the Colosseum and the Vittorio Emanuele Monument is a street known as the Via dei Fori Imperiali. Coming from the Colosseum, students should look to their left. Attached to the exterior wall of the Basilica of Maxentius are 4 maps showing the growth of Rome. The second map shows the extent of the Republic after the Punic Wars ended in 146 BCE. Students with a sharp eye will notice that there seems to be a fifth map missing. The maps date from the Fascist Era and were ordered to be placed there by Mussolini in the 1930s. After the war ended, the new Italian government ordered the last panel taken down, but left the remaining ones.

Web Links

Lesson Plan Websites

- www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/polybius-hannibal.asp
Polybius: the Character of Hannibal (primary source) – from the Ancient History Sourcebook at Fordham University
- http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Polybius/3*.html#11
Polybius: The Histories, Book III (primary source) – link goes directly to a section on Hannibal's boyhood oath
- www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/Carthage_StudentsWorksheets.pdf
The Wealth of Africa: Carthage – Students' Worksheets (PDF worksheets) -- from the British Museum (UK). Great resource for teaching the Punic Wars, especially for younger students. Highly recommended for all students and teachers.
- www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/hannibal
Hannibal (website) -- from the History Channel
- www.hannibalthewarrior.com/
Hannibal the Warrior (website) – great information applicable to all students and levels. Highly recommended as a starting place for all classes.
- www.phoenician.org/carthage_hannibal_barca.htm
Hannibal Barca (website)
- www.the-romans.co.uk/punic.htm
The Punic Wars website
- www.penfield.edu/webpages/jgiotto/onlinetextbook.cfm?subpage=1479806
Second Punic War (website) -- by John Giotto, teacher at Bay Trail Middle School in Penfield, NY
- http://loh.loswego.k12.or.us/noblem/ppt/wcv_punic_wars-hannibal.ppt
Punic Wars – Hannibal (PowerPoint) – from Mike Noble, history teacher at Lake Oswego High School (NY)
- www.teachingchannel.org/videos/choosing-primary-source-documents?fd=1
Reading Like a Historian: Primary Source Documents (video) – great 2-minute video on how to incorporate primary sources into the Common Core and history classes. From Shilpa Duvoor of Summit Preparatory Charter High School in Redwood City, CA – highly recommended for teachers.
- www.history.com/topics/punic-wars/videos#hamilcar-barca-and-the-punic-wars
Hamilcar Barca and the Punic Wars (video) – History Channel website
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_7dtbp-0nQ
History Channel Decisive Battles Cannae (video) – 20 minute video on the Battle of Cannae between Hannibal and the Romans in 210 BCE. It is considered one of the greatest tactical victories in history.
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=unKuRvO12Sg
The Battle of Zama (video)
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=9DQgwNvOvA
Hannibal: The Man, The Myth, The Mystery (video) – from the BBC
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1BKxeKtieM
Hannibal Rome's Worst Nightmare (video) – this 90 minute film, based on Hannibal's life is too long for most in-class showings, but is highly recommended as background preparation for students.

Background Information

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hannibal>
Hannibal – Wikipedia article
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Punic_War
Second Punic War – Wikipedia article

Other Relevant Passports Lesson Plans

- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/italy/ancient-rome-rape-of-the-sabine-women
Ancient Rome – Rape of the Sabine Women
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/italy/ancient-rome-romulus-and-remus
Ancient Rome – Romulus and Remus
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/italy/roman-republic-punic-wars
Roman Republic (509 BCE – 27 BCE) – Punic Wars
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/italy/roman-empire-nero-and-the-great-fire-64CE
Roman Empire – Great Fire of Rome 64 CE
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/italy/roman-empire-pompeii-eruption
Roman Empire – Pompeii and Herculaneum 79 CE
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/italy/roman-empire-pompeii-villa-of-the-mysteries
Roman Empire – Pompeii: Villa of the Mysteries
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/italy/roman-empire-pax-romana
Roman Empire – Pax Romana
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/roman-britannia
Roman Britannia – An Overview
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/england/roman-britain-hadrians-wall
Roman Britannia – Hadrian's Wall
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/france/roman-gaul-gallic-wars
Roman Gaul – The Gallic Wars: Caesar's Greatest Triumph
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/spain/hannibal-barca-of-carthage-second-punic-war
Hannibal of Carthage: Enemy of Rome
- www.passports.com/lesson_plans/turkey/byzantine-istanbul-constantinople
Byzantine Empire – Constantinople: New Rome

Key Terms

- Carthage
- Hannibal
- Iberian Peninsula
- Phoenicia
- Punic
- Roman Senate
- Scipio Africanus the elder
- Scipio Africanus the younger

