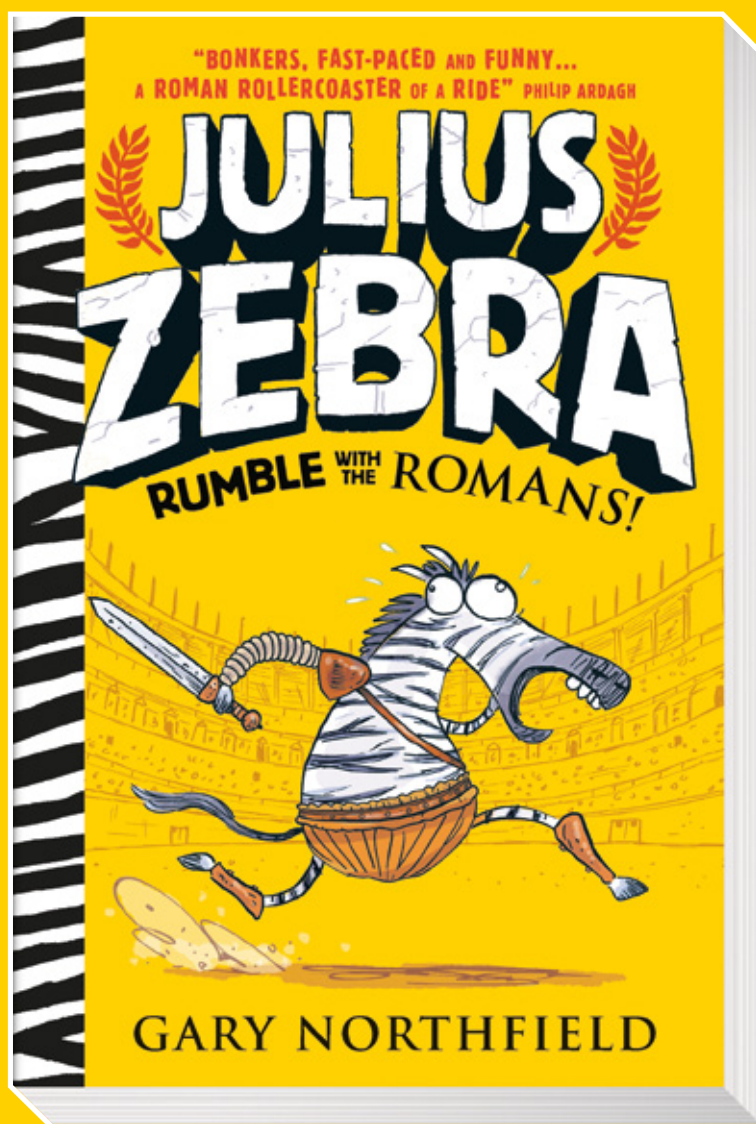


Walker Books Teachers' notes

Julius Zebra: Rumble with the Romans!

GARY NORTHFIELD



For readers aged 8 years+

9781406354928 • Hardback • £8.99 | 9781406365870 • Paperback • £6.99

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A chapter by chapter reading guide



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GENERIC ACTIVITIES

Keep a reading log so you can record thoughts and ideas and viewpoints as they develop and change during the course of the story. This can include:

- Predictions
- Plot development – summarising each chapter.
- Character studies – deduction and making inferences and refining opinions as the story progresses.
- Author techniques – style analysis: form, language, imagery, foreshadowing, motifs, themes, viewpoint, tone.
- Vocabulary – clarifying unfamiliar words and extending personal vocabulary.
- Your own sketches of characters and ideas for your own comic strip or narrative which you can develop as you read the book.

When considering discussion points, try out your ideas with a response partner before entering into whole class discussion.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Discussion points

(Prediction and inference)

Make a note of your opinions.

- Looking only at the front cover (don't peep at the blurb!), pick out as many clues as possible to predict what you think this book will be about.
- What is a 'rumble'?
- How does your view develop further on reading the blurb? What sort of tone is established?
- What genre of book do you think this might be?
- Who do you think is the target audience for this book?
- Discuss the design features of the book cover and end papers. Discuss the different features and evaluate the overall effect.
- Performance poetry:
 - Synonym search: find synonyms for bonkers and create a 'Rollercoaster Chant,' incorporating these, thinking about rhythm and alliteration, and possibly rhyme – but don't force it!
- Brainstorm as a class what you already know about the Romans. As you progress through the book, and undertake your own research, add new discoveries in a different colour so that you can map how much you have learned.
- Think, pair, share:
 - Look at the contents page. What is unusual? What could you do to help you understand the page numbering system?
 - Discuss possible ways that the plot might develop, map these out quickly and share with the class.
 - What do the following mean: *Epilogue*, *Glossary*?
- On a piece of paper measuring the same dimensions as the book cover, create your own design to fit the title. What features will you need to include?

- Creative thinking:
 - In pairs, using the chapter headings, create a story map of how you imagine the tale of Julius will develop. Share your views with your class.
- Watch Gary Northfield introducing Julius Zebra: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AaQK2IScObc>
- Watch Gary Northfield drawing Julius Zebra. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hH7pdBAAUA>
 - What top tips does he give? Have a go at creating the first of your characters that might appear in your own work, using these techniques. You could create a class gallery of different characters.

INTRODUCTION

Author technique (VI, VII)

- Why do you think the author has linked the words *knowledgeable* and *gnu*?
Create your own list of words which use a silent *k* and a silent *g*. Do any of them link together well in pairs?
<http://www.neilramden.co.uk/spelling/searcher/> This is a great website for finding spelling patterns quickly.

Reflect and discuss

(Literal comprehension, inference, making connections)

- What do you think the character of Julius will be like, judging from the illustration?
- List what you know about zebras. What else would you like to find out?
<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/animals/general-animals/zebra-facts/#!/register>
<https://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/animals/stories/20-things-you-didnt-know-about-zebras>

Role on the wall

- Draw the different characters as you meet them in the book and attach the cut-out to the wall.
- Using post-its, write down words and phrases that tell you about them and stick on the figure: known facts can be written around the silhouette, and thoughts, feelings, attitudes and motivation on the inside.
- Add to your observations as you read through the book and find out more.
- Create a chart and decide which category each character belongs to as you progress through the book:

Pessimist	Optimist	Realist

CHAPTER 1 LAKE OF DOOM

Reflect and discuss (XVII)

(Literal comprehension)

- What is the name for 'a flaming rock from the sky'?

Rapid research

- Look up the statistics for zebras being eaten by lions
<https://kruger-nationalpark.weebly.com/predator-prey-relationships.html>
- Create an infographic on zebras. Think carefully about the overall design, the organisation of facts and figures and how to make the information easy to read and understand.

Examples:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/great-zebra-exodus-infographic-all-about-the-plains-zebra/8338/>

<http://robertpalmerstudios.com/zebra-infographic/>

- Find out how zebras cope with crocodile and lion attacks.

Short burst writing (XVIII)

Choose from the following:

- Think of an occasion when you've been expected to go somewhere you really don't want to go to. Either:
 - Plan out your arguments to explain why you shouldn't go.Or:
 - Write an account of the occasion, noting the little details that will make it more vivid for the reader and encourage them to empathise with you.Or:
 - Create a character sketch of a particularly irritating person, like Julius's *'big show-off brother.'*

Quick think

- Working around the class, say *'Last one there is a ...'* and substitute an animal with an adjective that would serve as an insult, avoiding repetition.

CHAPTER 2 STINK HOLE

(XX-XI)

Rapid research

- Name the different creatures you can see in the illustrations.
- Find out about the different animals that visit African waterholes.
<https://www.roxannereid.co.za/blog/12-of-the-best-waterholes-at-etosha-national-park-namibia>
- Create a fact file on one of the animals, to make a class collection.

Include:

- Features
- Habitat
- Diet: herbivorous/omnivorous/carnivorous
- Family

Rating on endangered species list: critically endangered / endangered / vulnerable / lower risk

- Using the information you have discovered, agree to categories, as a class, and collectively produce a set of Top Trump cards electronically, importing photographs, which can then be printed off and used.

Examples: <https://hubpages.com/games-hobbies/printable-trump-card-game>



Reflect and discuss (XXIV and XXV)

(Evaluating and supporting opinion)

- Look at the illustrations. Which do you find the most amusing and why?

Short burst writing (XXIV)

- What scene would you envisage if you were thinking of some place you would rather be? Remember the importance of sensory details in evoking a scene.

Number cruncher (XXVII)

- Create an Animal Olympics graph, showing the relative speeds of African animals.
<https://mathspig.wordpress.com/?s=animal+speeds>

Reflect and discuss (XXVIII)

(Deduction, inference and making connections)

- Why do you think Julius is disobeying his mother? What sort of things might happen if you disobey your parents? Or what sort of things have happened when you have disobeyed them?

Rapid research

- Find out about nomadic lions.
- Why might they be '*far more wily than your ordinary lion*'?
- Find out what sort of wolves live in Africa. How are they different from the better-known grey wolf?

Reflect and discuss

- How is the book design different on XXXVI – XXXVIII?
- Why do you think the author and designer decided on this?

CHAPTER 3 ON THE ROAD

Vivid vocabulary

- Pick out the adjectives to describe the horse/zebra.
- Find synonyms and antonyms for these words.
- Think of two other animals that have similarities but are really quite different in some respects. Using a folded piece of paper, create and label your own version of these animals, using adjectives with precision!

Rapid research

- Create your own accurately labelled diagram of a Roman centurion.

Author technique

- Spot the simile on page XLIII. Why does it work?
- Think of your own original simile that could be substituted.

Reflect and discuss (XLV)

(Prediction)

- What do you think the future holds for the trio of animals?
- Big Question: Why do some countries want to take over '*lots of other strange lands*'?
- Do you think this is ever justified?
- Can you think of examples from history and from current times?

Author technique (XLVI - XLVII)

- Pick out all the verbs and choose a criteria for sorting them into groups.
(E.g. synonyms for *said*, movement words)

Design Time

- Create your own cart with solid wheels and axels. Decide on the scale and plan, taking into account the measurements and materials you will need.
- Extra challenge: create a cart that will carry an agreed weight load.

Vivid vocabulary (page XLVIII-XLIX)

- What makes you think the warthog's information might be inaccurate?
- In pairs, create a complex sentence with interesting and challenging vocabulary, with plenty of detail.
- Play a game of Chinese Whispers. How accurately does the final person's sentence match the initial one?

Reflect and discuss

- Why are names important?

CHAPTER 4 ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Rapid research

Maps ancient and modern

- Look at the map on page LVII. Compare it with a modern map.
- In which countries do you think '*Stinky Lake*,' *Leptis Magna*, *Carthage* and *Rome* are?
- Find out three interesting facts about either Carthage or Leptis Magna.

Reflect and discuss

Superstitions

- What superstitions do you know?
- Do you believe in superstitions? Support your opinion with reasons.
- Why do you think superstitions arise?
- Find out about superstitions related to birds.

<https://www.britishbirdlovers.co.uk/articles/bird-superstitions>

<https://animals.howstuffworks.com/birds/10-superstitions-about-birds.htm>

CHAPTER 5 I CAME, I SAW, I THREW UP

Reflect and discuss

- Why does this chapter have this particular heading?

Vivid vocabulary

- What is the meaning of '*ramshackle*'? Find synonyms and construct some sentences of your own, incorporating these words.
- Spot the simile and create your own alternative effective simile for the journey:
'as if ...'

Rapid research

- Find out about the Colossus of Rhodes.
- What is bronze?
- What are the other Wonders of the Ancient World?

CHAPTER 6 ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME

Reflect and discuss

- Find out how this saying originated and discuss what you think it means.
- Which animal would you choose to walk through the streets with? Support your answer with reasons.

Rapid research

- Find out when Hadrian ruled.
- Find out about the rules on entering Rome with carts.
- Find out about famous buildings in Rome which date from 2000 years ago.

Play time (drama page LXXIII)

- Hot seat one of the following characters on their feelings on approaching and entering Rome:
 - Milus
 - Cornelius
 - Julius

(Remember to prepare open-ended questions which encourage longer answers. Also prepare possible extended answers, before taking the hot seat, for the character you are portraying which clearly explain your thoughts.)

- After practising, film and evaluate the quality of questions and answers.
- Decision Alley: choose one person to represent Julius and divide the class into two lines: one suggesting good reasons for making a run for it, the other suggesting good reasons for entering Rome. Whisper these as Julius progresses between the lines before he makes his final decision and gives reasons for this.

CHAPTER 7 SHOW ME THE MONKEYS!

Reflect and discuss

- Why do you think this chapter is called '*Show me the Monkeys!*'?

Number cruncher

- Work out how many people your school hall can comfortably hold. What methods could you use to determine this?
- How many school halls would you need to accommodate 10,000 people?

Vivid vocabulary and author technique

- Find the description of the crowd. Which pair of words has the author chosen for effect?
- Why is being overwhelmed by a crowd similar to drowning?
- Read page LXXIX. What does the use of the word '*sniggering*' suggest?
- What physical sensations does the author link with fear?

Short burst writing

- Think of a way to describe the experience of fear vividly. It helps to remember a time when you felt afraid, thinking through the physical and mental sensations you experienced.

Reflect and discuss (LXXX)

- Who do you think the men sitting on the steps are? Predict what might happen as a result of Julius's questions.

Play time: drama

- Act out the entry down the tunnel, with people playing the parts of Julius and Cornelius, whilst others are the pacing animals. Think about the importance of facial expressions and body posture to indicate emotions.

Illustration conversation

- Look at the illustration on page LXXXIII. How has the artist created this?
- Choose an animal and create your own picture of it behind bars, using this technique.

Vivid vocabulary (LXXXIII)

- Pick out the words which you feel have the most impact in creating atmosphere at this point in the story.

Rapid research

- Using the glossary, find out what a quaestor, subligaria and Venatores are.

Author technique

- Pick out the pun on page LXXXVII.
- Working in pairs, think of puns of your own.

Play time: drama

- Create a play-script for pages LXXXIV to XCIV for the characters of Julius, Lucia, Cornelius, Rufus, Felix, Pliny, Milus and a narrator. You might want to divide it into shorter sections. Don't forget stage directions and sound effects.

Reflect and discuss

- Milus calls the Romans '*savages*,' whereas '*Roman civilisation*' is often spoken of. Do you think this is a contradiction in terms, and which viewpoint do you think you would adopt?

Vivid vocabulary

- What is the meaning of '*ad infinitum*'? Can you think of a context in which you might use this Latin term?

CHAPTER 8 VENATIO

Vivid vocabulary

- Find out the meaning of the word '*Venatio*.'

Rapid research and design challenge

- Find out about the construction of cage lifts and how they worked in the Colosseum.
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/how-ancient-romans-got-wild-animals-colosseum-180955580/>
- Construct a model lift and see how many marbles you can safely transport in it.

Number cruncher

- Using the facts and figures that you have found out about the cage lift, create some number problems for others in your class.

Illustration conversation (page XCVIII)

- What effect has the illustrator created?

Vivid vocabulary

- Read the first sentence on CII and discuss the meaning of the word '*guile*.' With a partner, construct your own sentence using this word.

Reflect and discuss

- What motivates Julius to fight? What do you think motivates anyone to fight?
- What does this episode tell you about people power?
- What modern methods are used to motivate people to action these days?
- What are the implications of Hadrian's proclamation on page CXV?
- Predict what will happen when Julius goes to the Ludus Magnus for training.
- Why would Victorious think that being a gladiator was an honourable profession?

CHAPTER 9 FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

Role on the wall

- Create a cartoon drawing of Septimus for your class display and add facts that you know about his character.
- Why are Septimus's words so often in CAPITALS? What does this tell you about his character?

Vivid vocabulary

- Use the glossary and add '*Lanista*' and '*sistercii*' to your vocabulary list.
- Why does Septimus use the phrase: '*Jupiter-knows-what*.'?

Rapid research

- Find out about Roman baths.

Reflect and discuss

- What words or phrases would you use to describe Julius's conversation with others? (CXXX)
- What does '*Pinky swear*' mean? (page CXXXIII)
- Will the animals keep their promises?
- What do you think the poles will be used for?

Rapid research

- Find out which countries the Romans did conquer.

Author technique

- Read page CXXXVIII from '*Suddenlycoming from*.'
- Find all the words relating to sound. What do you notice?
- Find alternative words that you could substitute that would work well.

Short burst writing

- Write a short description of your own choosing, where sounds are important in creating the atmosphere.

Play time: drama

- Create a play script from page CXL – XXLIV for the character of Julius, Pliny, Milus, Cornelius, Septimus and Felix.
- Rehearse, perform, film and evaluate.

Creative challenge

- Choose an animal of your choice and create your own cartoon portrait, with a word shower conveying its characteristics.

Reflect and discuss (CXLIV)

- Prediction point: What do you think will be the outcome of the agreement with Milus?
- Does the writing on the scroll give any indicators?

Rapid research

- Find out about the gladiators' oath (Sacramentum gladiatorium).

Short burst writing

- In pairs, create your own oath chant with percussion accompaniment.

Creative challenge

Either:

- Find images on the internet of gladiators on Roman art work. What information can you discover from these?
- Create your own clay tablets depicting one or more gladiators.

Or:

- Create a painting or collage of gladiators

Short burst writing

- Read the Training Scrolls of Julius and create a clear set of rules for gladiators, numbering each point and using imperatives.
- Create a cartoon sketch of your dream team of animal gladiators, other than the ones that feature in this book, listing their natural skills and attributes.

Rapid research

- Find out about the different contests that were held in the Colosseum.
- Find your own three most fascinating facts about gladiatorial combat.

Either:

- Create a poster advertising these.

Or:

- Create a filmed advert to encourage spectators to attend. Decide what aspects you will emphasise to appeal to the masses.

CHAPTER 10 BATTLE READY

Vivid vocabulary

- Define the meaning of the following and use them in a sentence of your own:
 - 'barracks' (page CLVI)
 - 'scourge' (page CLIX)

Rapid research

- Create a gladiatorial equipment list, with diagrams.

Author technique

- How does the author make the ant trick scene particularly funny?

CHAPTER 11 FIRST BLOOD

Reflect and discuss

- Why do you think this chapter is called *FIRST BLOOD*?
- What can result from being a celebrity?
- What happens when tickets go on sale on-line for concerts of celebrities?
- Do you think it is fair to charge more than normal for certain events? Why/why not?
- What role has Pliny adopted?
- What other occasions can you think of where people are given a 'pep talk'?
- Discuss how Milus's behaviour is different at this point in the story and what his motivation is. (CLXVIII).
- What metaphor does Milus use about the gladiators and why is this so effective? (Page CLXIX)

Vivid vocabulary

- Define the following words and include them in a complex sentence.
 - *mystical powers* (page CLXVII)
 - *dignitaries*
 - *barrage* (page CLXX). What definition fits best in this particular context?

Rapid research

- Create a time line of the different Roman Emperors.

Reflect and discuss (page CLXXXI)

- Predict how the different animals might behave under the onslaught.

Author technique (page CLXXXII)

- How does the author build up suspense?

Reflect and discuss (CXC)

- Why do you think the animals failed so spectacularly?
- Did it surprise you?

Vivid vocabulary

- Find out what a 'Poena cullie' is.

Reflect and discuss

- How does this punishment make you feel about the Romans?
- Do you think the animals will be able to regroup?
- What would you plan if you were in their position?

CHAPTER 12 THE GREAT ESCAPE

Reflect and discuss

- How do the different creatures behave? Do they live up to the characteristics you have identified on their roles on the wall?
- What valuable lessons have the animals learned by the end of the chapter?

Rapid research and number cruncher

- Find out about the size of the Circus Maximus.

- Compare it to the size of the Colosseum.
- Find out the number of people who live in your nearest town or city.
- What proportion or multiple of the population would the Circus Maximus accommodate?

CHAPTER 13 THE CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS

Rapid research

- Find out five fascinating facts about Hadrian.
- Look at the cartoon on page CCXXI. Do you think the citizens of Rome are happy?

Short burst writing

- Think of a time when you've been surrounded by noise.
- Collect a hoard of noise words to create a short description.
- See if others can guess the situation

Author technique

- Spot the simile on page CCXXII. Why is the simile particularly appropriate?

Vivid vocabulary

- Define the word '*gallivant*' and use it in a sentence of your own.

Illustration conversation

- What is comical about the cartoon on page CCXXV.

Play time: drama

- Hot seat Milus and Pliny at this point in the story (page CCXXV).

Vivid vocabulary

- Explain the meaning of *Vernal Equinox*.

Rapid research

- Find out about other symbols of good luck relating to animals. Do you think they are accurate indicators of good luck?

Creative challenge

- Create a short story which features a 'lucky' animal.

CHAPTER 14 SHOWTIME

Creative challenge

- Imagine you are a gladiator. Describe entering the area, detailing the journey up from the dungeon, the sounds, smells, light and your feelings.

Vivid vocabulary

- Define '*cacophony*' and find out about the etymology (origins) of this Greek word (page CCCXI).

Reflect and discuss

- Look at the double page spread on page CCXXXII. Predict what will happen.
- Why is it important for Julius to '*push thoughts of failure to the back of his mind*.'?
- Look at the pictures of Cornelius and Destroius. Which do you think looks most threatening?
- Spot the differences between Destroius and Agrippa.

Author technique

- Spot the similes on page CCXLII. Which do you feel is the most effective and why?
- What does the detail of the delicacy Hadrian eats on page CCLII indicate about the author's opinion of Hadrian?

Vivid vocabulary

- Define '*ungainliness*' (page CCLVI). Act out being ungainly.
- Define '*unceremoniously*' (page CCLX)
- Find other words beginning with the prefix *un*.
- Create two columns – one for Julius and one for Maximilian and collect the adjectives, verbs and adverbs used to describe them (page CCLXI)
- Define '*bamboozled*' and '*dastardly*' (page CCLXIII). Use these words to create a short paragraph about a character you have created.

Reflect and discuss

- Why do contestants sometimes goad and taunt each other?
- Can you think of other sports where this happens?
- What do you consider to be good sportsmanship? Should this word be changed in light of female equality?
- Which sports people give the best examples of sporting behaviour in your opinion?
- How do you feel about Victorius helping Maximilian?
- Would you feel the same if it was one of the animals helping Julius?

CHAPTER 15 SHOWDOWN

Reflect and discuss

- Do you think Pliny would make a good coach? Support your opinion with reasons.
- How has Milus changed through the course of the story and why do you think he has changed?
- What does the sentence '*The crowd erupted.*' mean? (page CCLXVII)
- Why do you think Victorius tries to do a deal with Julius?

Play time: drama

Decision alley

- Should Julius accept Victorius's deal?

Reflect and discuss

- What do you think are the main points Julius has learned about combat?

Performance poetry

- Create a string poem chant in support of Julius
 - Write Zebra on three post-it notes and stick these up on the board.
 - Then write out a few more post-its with zebra on as line finishers for your poem (as many lines as you like) and three more for the final line.
 - Split into groups working on finding specific types of words to write on post-its; e.g. ending in 'ing', starting with 'ex', trisyllabic, monosyllabic, alliterative, etc.
 - Stick post-its on the board.

- Once it's all laid out, rearrange the words and discuss the best order for each line.
- Practise and perform!

E.g. for another type of animal:

Lions, lions, lions

Fiery, fierce, ferocious lions

Mighty, muscular, majestic lions

Golden, bronzed, tawny lions

Silent, stealthy, stalking lions

Regal, hypnotic, fascinating lions

Lions, lions, lions

Play time: role play (page CCLXXV)

- Practise delivering Hadrian's short speech. What makes it a formal oration?

Reflect and discuss (CCLXXVI)

- What would you have replied to Hadrian, if you were Julius?
- Big question: should wild animals ever be taken into captivity? Research and decide by listing pros and cons and debating as a class.

EPILOGUE

Reflect and discuss

- Why did the author choose to end the book in this way?

Creative challenge

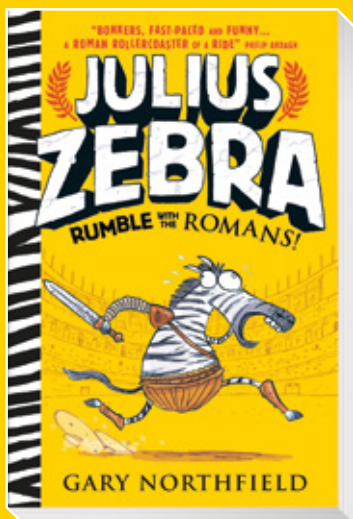
- Make a story map of the next episode in Julius's or Brutus's life.

ROMAN NUMERALS

Quiz time

- Explain the rules of Roman numerals to a partner.
- Write out some Roman numerals and see if your friends can work out their value accurately.
- Have speed trials for converting Roman numerals.

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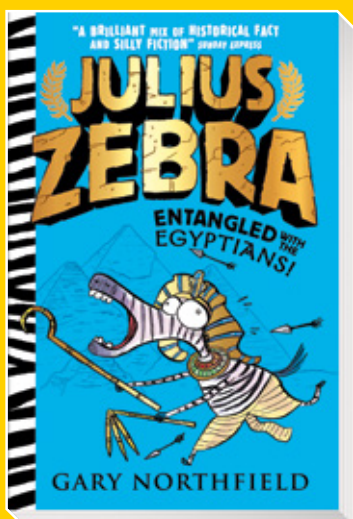
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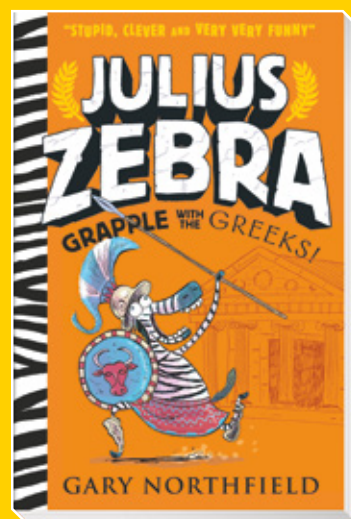
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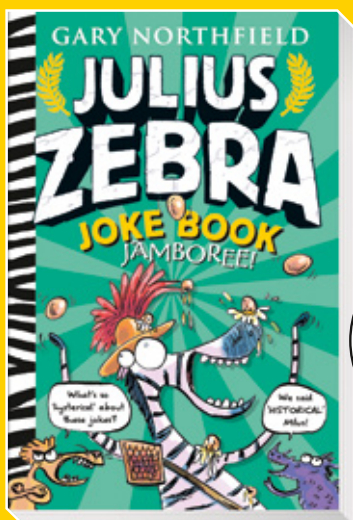
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