

# **Student Essay on Cicero**

**Cicero by Anthony Everitt**

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# Essay

Ancient Greek philosophers working between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE largely defined Western thought in later years. According to the author Bryan Magee, philosophy began with the "elucidation of concepts." Along with this concept, he also believed that the greatest philosophers have gone much deeper than that and questioned the most fundamental aspects of our existence, and our experience. Among these great thinkers, a man by the name of Marcus Tullius Cicero has changed the lives of people during his own era and the lives of millions of peoples afterwards. He made them rethink common situations in their everyday lives and look past what they would normally "see."

Cicero was born on January 3, 106 BCE by Marcus Tullius Cicero Sr. and Helvia Cicero. He was born and raised a couple of miles north of Arpinum, which was near Rome. He was the son of a wealthy, but still working, landowner who strongly enjoyed his full Roman citizenship, along with many other Romans. During Cicero's existence, he described himself as a "strong defender of order and gradual change," who was "an enemy of both mob violence and aristocratic privilege." While Cicero was growing up, the option of joining the military and serving in the Social War (90-89 BCE) was a great privilege. This would have been very important to the Greeks and Romans if he had chosen to do so. Since Cicero wasn't a huge fan of war itself, however, he constantly wrote either poems describing his feelings or he made some anti-war speeches to the townspeople stating how ignorant a person must be to actually support national fighting. Basically, Cicero had two choices in life: join the military, or become a lawyer. Due to previously mentioned reasons, he chose the occupation of a lawyer and joined an experienced political party.

Cicero's education was also very important in the influence of his later accomplishments in philosophy and life itself.