

Great gods

The Romans believed that there were many gods and goddesses who controlled different areas of life. Neptune, for example, was the god of the sea and if you went on a boat trip, you would have prayed to him to protect you. Venus was the goddess of love and beauty, so if you had a crush on someone and didn't know how to tell them, you would have asked her for help. Temples were built to honour



JUPITER

He was the king of the gods and the most important and powerful god for the

JUNO

The queen of the gods and Jupiter's wife, this goddess protected women,

MINERVA

The daughter of Juno and Jupiter was the goddess of arts, crafts and knowledge.

ROME RULES!

For the first 250 years, Rome was ruled by kings. Then, it became a republic governed by a council of 600 rich men (the senate) and two consuls. In 27BC,

Augustus took all the power for himself, founded the Roman Empire and became its first emperor. Take a look at the faces of some famous Roman leaders. Can you



1. LIVIA

This powerful and clever empress reigned together with her husband, Augustus. There were statues of her all over the empire and she

2. NERO

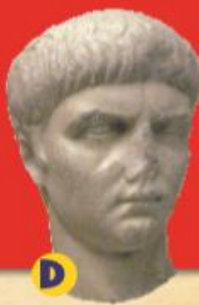
Not-so-nice Nero was perhaps the cruellest Roman emperor. He persecuted hundreds of Christians, and killed his two wives and his

3. CAESAR

The most famous Roman leader and commander wore a laurel wreath to hide his lack of hair! Caesar was in love with Cleopatra, who became

4. AUGUSTUS

Rome's first emperor has the month of August named after him. Legend has it that Augustus died of poisoned figs offered to him by his wife,



Answers: A, B, C, D, 2

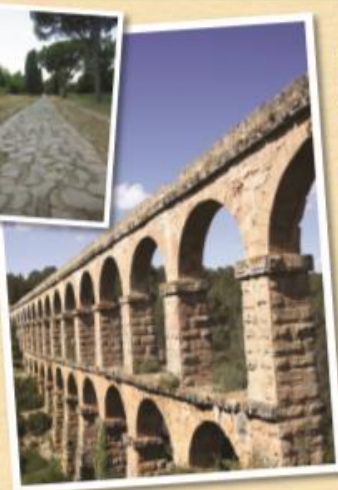
Army in action!

How did the Romans manage to build such a big empire? With a strong army which conquered new lands! During battle, a Roman soldier or "legionary" first hurled his throwing spear towards the enemy, then he fought him with a sword. To protect himself, he carried a shield of wood and wore a helmet and armour made from metal. Some soldiers used giant catapults to fire rocks or balls of burning tar at the enemy – yikes! When they weren't at war, legionaries secured the frontiers in military bases throughout Europe, Africa and the Middle East. After some 20 years of service,



CLEVER COMBAT

The Roman legionaries used clever methods. For example, they could turn themselves into a 'tortoise'! That's what they called a special fighting technique where



Building an empire

The Romans didn't spend all their time fighting – they were also amazing architects and engineers! They built roads, walls and aqueducts – things we take for granted today, but which were new ideas in Roman times! The roads were made from big, flat stones that were laid on layers of clay, chalk and gravel. They were slightly higher in the middle so that rain water could drain off. Roads were important for the Romans because they allowed them to move their army quickly to an area if there were riots. The Romans also erected stone walls to keep out 'barbarians' and to mark their

SHOWTIME!

In their capital, Rome, the Romans built the largest arena of their empire: the Colosseum. In this amphitheatre, men and women fought against each other, or against tigers



Roman Text 1

Understanding the text

- 1.) Who was the god of the sea?
- 2.) Name three things that a Roman soldier used to protect himself.
- 3.) How far could the Roman army march in a day?
- 4.) Who was the most famous Roman leader?
- 5.) Why were roads important for the Romans?
- 6.) How did Romans make sure that their roads didn't flood?

Looking at language

- 7.) Explain the meaning of these words and phrases as they are used in the text.
Use a dictionary to help you.

a) arena b) temples c) conquer d) catapult e) frontier f) persecute

Exploring information writing

- 8.) Give three examples of sub-headings.
- 9.) Why do you think the gods Jupiter, Juno and Minerva have their own fact boxes with big red lettering for their names?
- 10.) What do you notice about the titles of the green fact boxes?

Taking it further

- 11.) Would you like to have been in the Roman army? Explain why.

Roman Text 2



SCARY SCHOOLS

Everyone wants a day off school sometimes, but imagine if you never had the chance to go to school to learn to read and write and count. That's what happened to most slave children in Roman Britain.

For Romans, though, school started early and went on until early afternoon. Roman lessons might seem boring to us. There were no whiteboards, computers or even books. The children just had to sit and listen while their teacher spoke in the Roman language, Latin. Children would learn to read from a scroll made of animal skin.

They wrote on a **wax tablet** with a stick called a stylus.

Latin words and sums scratched on a wax tablet could be wiped off if you made a mistake.



DID YOU KNOW?

Graffiti

Romans who could write sometimes scrawled graffiti around their towns. They included love poems, advertisements for gory games, and horrible insults.

I'm glad I'm not a Roman school child. I would have been beaten with a cane for being late, or for getting my sums wrong.



A Roman school was usually just a small group of children. Teachers were often educated slaves.



Roman Text 2 – Scary Schools

Understanding the text

- 1) Which Roman children didn't go to school?
- 2) What language did Roman teachers speak?
- 3) How did Roman children learn to read?
- 4) How did Roman children learn to write?
- 5) Why was the boy glad that he didn't go to school in the Roman times?
- 6) True or False? Roman children were in large classes at school.

Looking at language

7) Explain the meaning of these words and phrases as they are used in the text.
Use a dictionary to help you.

- a) scroll b) Latin c) tablet d) graffiti e) scrawled f) insults

Exploring information writing

8) Why do you think the author used the heading 'Scary Schools'?

Taking it further

9) What are the differences between school now and school in the Roman times? Which one would you prefer? Explain why.