

ANCIENT ROME

Culture



ANNOTATE AS YOU READ:

- ✓ Underline details that help you understand the development of Ancient Rome's culture.
- ✓ Highlight specific nouns (people, places, things) that are important examples of Rome's culture.
- ✓ Circle words/terms that you don't understand very well.
- ✓ Make notes in the margins. Write down information or thoughts that connect to what you are reading.

The history of Ancient Rome can be traced back to 753 BC when the city of Rome was founded. Over the next 800 years, Rome grew and expanded. It was identified as a republic, and later as an empire. Throughout that time, the Romans created a culture that was so rich and unique that it has continued to be one of the most admired in history.

The People. There were generally two social classes in Rome, the patricians and the plebeians. The patricians were those who had wealth and were in the upper class. They were also the minority, yet held the most power. All of the other citizens of Rome were plebeians. Overtime, the plebeians gained more political influence in Rome, but never had as much as the patricians. The social classes were based on birth, unless you were a slave. Slaves could be considered a third (and the lowest) social class because they made up almost 30% of Rome's population! Slaves were usually captured in territory that was conquered by the Roman Army. When it came to Roman women, they generally had no rights, and were in charge of the households. Children were able to receive an education if their family had money.

Government. For the first half of Ancient Rome's existence, it was known as a republic. There was no king or single ruler, but instead, groups of elected positions. The Consul, Senate, and other elected assemblies would vote on laws, decisions about war, and other legal responsibilities. Eventually, they voted to pass the *Twelve Tables* which provided some basic rights to all of the citizens of Rome. The early Roman republic shaped what modern democracies look like today! After the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BC, Rome became an empire ruled by an Emperor. It remained that way until the fall of Rome in 476 AD.

Occupations. The Roman Army is still considered one of the most powerful armies in history. In exchange for 20 years of service, Roman soldiers were usually rewarded with land or a sizeable amount of money, and sometimes both! As the Roman Empire expanded, merchants and artisans made a good living. Once the Romans had control of the entire Mediterranean Sea, merchants had a lot of freedom and territory to trade within. They helped to spread Roman culture by trading sculptures, jewelry, and metal works that were made by artisans.

Merchants also traded farm goods. Farmers lived in the countryside, and produced grain, grapes, and olives. Farmers would also trade their produce in the cities at markets. Throughout the empire, cities (with the largest being Rome) had advanced architecture, complex and grid-like road systems, and aqueducts to bring in fresh water. Therefore, laborers were a much needed occupation throughout Rome. They also helped with building walls around the cities to prevent invasions.

Religion and Arts. Romans believed in many gods, and often adopted the gods of conquered territories. The gods from Ancient Greece were the most admired by Romans, and were often kept but renamed. This made them Polytheistic. It wasn't until Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire that a monotheistic religion became dominant. Artistically, Romans admired the Greek art styles as well. They adorned the cities with marble statues and busts (a sculpture of just the shoulders and head) and with stone frescos on buildings. They also used painted tiles to make mosaics. As a result of the influence of ancient Greece into Roman culture, the Greco-Roman style was born.

Dress. Men and women wore tunics, usually made of wool. Men also wore togas, and typically in neutral colors or white. Women wore white tunics until they were married, and then a variety of colors would be worn. Most people also dressed their feet with leather sandals. Women tended to fashion themselves in jewelry, but the men did not.

Advancements. Advanced engineering could be seen throughout Roman cities. Using underground channels called aqueducts, fresh water from lakes and rivers was transported to public baths and fountains for drinking. Baths were well-constructed, and were central to activity in Rome; fees were small enough that even the poor could bath. Architecture and construction advancements can best be seen by what remains of the Colosseum. Like many stadiums and amphitheatres, the Colosseum was a place to hold gladiator battles, festivals, and tournaments. They often used arches and domes in their structures because they were strong. What may be the most impressive of all Roman advancements were their complex road systems. Roads helped with the organization of trade between cities and towns. More importantly, roads helped to move the Roman Army and Legions more efficiently. They even included gutters for water drainage! And speaking of the Roman Army- it was one of the most advanced armies in the world! Soldiers were well-trained, well-equipped, well-organized, and loyal.

The Roman Empire remains one of the most influential civilizations in history. It established the foundation for democracy, and created laws of fairness and justice. The size of Rome's massive empire can be credited to its powerful military and organizational abilities. Through Ancient Rome's art styles, it is clear that Rome embraced the diversity that existed in their empire. The wealth and prosperity that came from their incredible trade network created one of the most admired Golden Age's in history.

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: After annotating and reading about the culture of Ancient Rome:

- 1.) Define or get clarity for any words that you circled.
- 2.) Complete the "Ancient Rome Quick Facts" chart below with important details, concepts, examples.

Ancient Rome Quick Facts!

THE PEOPLE	
GOVERNMENT	
OCCUPATIONS	
RELIGION & ARTS	
DRESS	
ADVANCEMENTS	
<u>Identify and explain-</u> "THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF ANCIENT ROME WAS..."	

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Use what you have learned about Ancient Rome, and complete the statements below by filling in each blank with the correct term or concept.

1.) PEOPLE:

Roman citizens were divided into these two social classes, the _____ and the _____.

2.) GOVERNMENT:

The Republic of Rome voted to pass a set of basic rights and protections of Roman citizens called the _____.

3.) OCCUPATIONS:

Merchants traded goods such as _____ and _____ throughout the Roman Empire.

4.) RELIGION and ARTS:

The art styles in Rome and the gods that Romans worshipped were both strongly influenced by Ancient _____.

5.) DRESS:

Before they were married, women only wore tunics that were colored _____.

6.) ADVANCEMENTS:

Fresh water was transferred to public baths and fountains through underground channels called _____.

*BONUS:

Trade flourished throughout the Roman Empire thanks to their control of the _____ Sea.