

Romans

Teacher's Notes written by Martin Malcolm

Age: 7 - 11

Audio online:

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<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0589xm1>

These Teacher's Notes are primarily intended for print. The content - with additional features - can also be found on the *Romans* pages of the website.

The website pages include online versions of images, which can be displayed on your IWB or computer while listening.

Titles that **appear in blue** have been hyper-linked to the relevant pages of the website, allowing convenient navigation from these notes to the web pages.

Introduction

The content in this series gives 7 to 11 year-olds a rounded view of the Roman invasion and settlement of Britain. In *Roman character sketches* pupils glimpse daily life under the Empire. The three-part drama *Boudicca* brings to life the bloody tale of the Roman invasion. And pupils can enjoy the lighter side of life under the Romans with the *Romans in Britain* comedy sketches.

Each content section comes with activity notes to explore its themes more fully in the classroom. Pupils are invited to imagine and investigate the period and to conduct their own historical research.

Useful links: links to useful websites are provided throughout. But please note that the BBC is not responsible for the content of external websites.

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Roman character sketches

Introduction

Three characters describe everyday life in Roman Britain.

The Centurion

Cornelius, a veteran centurion at work on Hadrian's Wall, dreams of the day he'll retire. He guides us through a punishing round of skirmishes and the hard graft of endless repairs to the crumbling wall. His story gives a vivid insight into the human cost of maintaining an empire.

The Slave

Nicia, a Briton and a slave, gives us a tour of the fine villa she works in. She has no illusions about her lowly place in the Roman world, but she's proud all the same of the finery she shows off. Her story hints at the complex relationships that grew up over time between the rulers and the ruled.

The Lady

Claudia, the wife of the new magistrate of Noviomagus (modern-day Chichester) is planning a party to celebrate her husband's promotion. There's the menu to choose, the flowers to arrange, the entertainment to organise, the slaves to instruct...it's a busy day for an ambitious hostess.

Claudia is very conscious that neither she nor her husband Aelius are Romans. In fact, they're descended from the very tribes that fought them. Now though, things are very different. Claudia's ready to embrace the Roman way of life and all the opportunities it offers. Her story illustrates how Britons and Romans increasingly mingled over the long years of occupation.

Activities

Your pupils could use these Notes to explore the themes of *Roman character sketches* in the classroom. The Notes provide opportunities for children actively to imagine and investigate the period and to conduct their own historical research.



The Centurion



'We march, set up camp and repair, march, set up camp and repair, march, set up camp and, well, you get the idea...'

Find out more about the life of Cornelius the centurion, battling Barbarians and bad weather on Hadrian's Wall.

Military mapping

Subjects: history, geography, information technology.

You could ask pupils, 'How do we know about the Roman conquest of Britain?' In reply, they might mention history books, artefacts, accounts from the time and archaeological remains.

Encourage pupils to find the 'Antiquities' section on the key of an Ordnance Survey map. Choose a local map, if you live in a part of the country with a lot of Roman remains. Otherwise choose a map of the area around Hadrian's Wall, or near to another well-known Roman settlement - Chichester, perhaps, or St Albans.

The key has symbols for Villa and Tumulus (a burial mound of an Ancient Briton chieftain), battlefields, monuments and other 'positions of antiquity'. Pupils could work in pairs to search sections of the map for these features. How many can they find? Are their finds clustered? What might such clusters suggest? Pupils could compare maps from different locations in Britain. Why do the children think some areas are richer in Roman remains than others?



Pupils could use online mapping sites and internet searches to capture images of their finds.

Weapons of war

Subjects: history, art, information technology

Cornelius mentions a number of Roman weapons: the *onagar*, the *ballista*, the spear and the short sword. Pupils could search a variety of sources, including books and websites, for images of these weapons. They could look too for other military equipment, such as shields.

The children could sketch their finds and draw their impressions of what Cornelius and his men might have looked like. Can pupils work out what each weapon would have been good for? For instance, which weapon would you choose to tackle a horseman? Which weapons would be hard to use in a confined space?

The children could collect their found images, photos and sketches into a digital slideshow. They could record a soundtrack to accompany the slideshow, in character as Roman soldiers, or their slaves, living on Hadrian's Wall. This commentary could give advice on how to use or maintain each of the items shown.

Mile march

Subjects: history, PE, mathematics

Our word 'mile' comes to us from the way Roman armies measured the distance of their marches. The Latin phrase 'mille passum' means 'one thousand paces'. When a Roman legionary had taken one thousand steps, he'd covered a mile.

You could ask pupils to estimate how long it would take them to march a Roman mile. Individuals could try marching on the spot, while a friend counts their paces and another classmate times how long it takes. Alternatively, if you have a pedometer, pupils will enjoy using this to count their steps. (Pupils could march a hundred steps and then multiply their time by 10 to arrive at their mile times.)

The class could go on to work out an average speed for a mile march, based on their individual scores. Based on this information, how many miles could they march in one hour? And how easy do they think it would be to keep up a fast pace? From their research, how long do they think it would have taken for a soldier to march the length of Hadrian's Wall (73 miles)? How many times do they think the soldier will need to stop and rest?

The children could go on to convert their miles-per-hour scores into kilometres-per-hour.



History Clips: The Romans

Roman report

Subjects: English, history, modern foreign languages

The website of the Vindolanda Fort and Museum has photos of Hadrian's Wall and of Roman writing tablets discovered nearby. These thin strips of wood are covered in spidery handwriting from 2,000 years ago. Romans living along the wall wrote letters home, which were carried by messengers to places all over the Empire.

Cornelius would have sent regular reports to his commander. You could ask pupils to draft the kind of report he might have made about the battle he describes in which he was wounded. Of course, Cornelius would have written in Latin. When the pupils have drafted their reports, they could use an online translation site to see how their message appears in Latin. They could try reading their Latin reports aloud. Do any of the words sound similar to ones we use today?

The children could go on to find and list words in an English dictionary (such as 'century') that have a Latin origin. They could make an alphabetical wall display of their finds and perhaps supplement them with any words of Latin origin they can find in dictionaries of other modern European languages. What does the widespread existence of Latin-root words suggest about the scale and duration of the Roman Empire?

Centurion's questions

Subjects: English, history, drama

If pupils could interview Cornelius, what would they ask him about his life? You could encourage the children to develop a list of interview questions. For example, 'What do you eat?', 'What do you miss most about Rome?' and 'What is your greatest fear?'

The children could swap lists with a partner and use a variety of research sources (such as books, museums and websites) to come up with some answers.

After pooling all the information gleaned, the class could stage 'hot seat' interviews, where they take turns to play the role of Cornelius and answer the questions put by class members.



Life on the wall

Subjects: English, history, drama

Pupils could work in small groups to form tableaux, illustrating life in a Roman fort on Hadrian's Wall.

The children could take turns to use clues from Cornelius's story as well as information from their own research, to come up with their tableau ideas.

For further inspiration you could ask a group of able readers to search out passages about army life from a historical novel and read their finds to the class. Rosemary Sutcliff's *The Eagle of the Ninth* would be a good choice. It tells the story of the famous 'lost' Ninth Legion, who marched from Eboracum (now York) in 117 AD to deal with a rebellion beyond the wall. They were never seen again.

A group of children might show soldiers playing dice perhaps, or taking part in spear practice, bathing a wound, firing a ballista, or sharpening a blade with a whetstone.

Encourage other classmates to guess what the tableaux show. For an extra clue, each tableau could come to life, as a short mime. This activity is a good way for pupils to sum up their research about life on Hadrian's Wall.

Useful links

Vindolanda Fort and Museum:

<http://www.vindolanda.com>

British Museum - The Vindolanda Tablets:

<http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore>

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The Slave



'Slaves who can cook are highly valuable and are well looked after. Some poor slaves have a very hard life though. All they get is back-breaking work, ten hours a day.'

Find out more about Nicia, a Briton slaving away in the villa of her Roman masters...

Model villa

Subjects: history, design and technology

Pupils could use toy construction bricks to build a model of the villa Nicia describes in her story. The children could compare their first models with drawings of Roman villas and photos of villa remains from books and websites. They could rebuild their models in the light of their research.

Typically, a Roman villa in Britain was a single-storey house, built around a central courtyard. A veranda faced into the courtyard on three sides. You might see a fountain in the centre of the courtyard, with a herb garden somewhere on the perimeter. The bathhouse would be likely to be a separate building, reached via a roofed colonnade. Somewhere close at hand would be a water source, such as a well. Inside the villa, there would be a room, dining room, kitchen, bedrooms and servants' quarters, all reached from a central corridor.

Useful link

English Heritage: Gallery of images of a reconstructed Roman villa:

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/wroxeter-roman-city/wroxeter-roman-town-house/>



Mosaic making

Subjects: history, art, design and technology, mathematics

Nicia sees a floor mosaic under construction in her master's villa. Pupils could make their own mosaics for a classroom display. They could begin by searching for images of mosaics in books and on webpages, as an inspiration for their own designs, which they could plan out on squared paper. You could point out that many Roman designs featured symmetrical geometric patterns, where the shapes tessellate, or fit closely together. Encourage pupils to incorporate these features into their own designs. Ask, 'Does the maths word tessellate remind you of a Roman word?'

Roman mosaics were made from tesserae, small cubes of fired clay or stone. Your class could replicate these with cubes of salt dough. A simple salt dough mix (1 cup of flour, half a cup of salt, half a cup of water) is ideal.

You and your class could make several batches, adding a drop of food colouring to produce tesserae of varying hues. Rolled flat to an approximate 1cm thickness, the dough can easily be cut into 1cm cubes. The cubes will dry hard in the air in a few days, or for quicker results, pop them in the microwave (lowest setting) for 2 to 3 minutes.

Pupils could assemble their tesserae designs on sheets of thick card and glue them together with thick flour-and-water paste, using it like mortar or grout. It is best to encourage children to work on a small scale, as the work is time-consuming.

The children should wipe away any excess paste before leaving their masterpieces to dry. When fully set, the children could paint a coat of white PVA glue over their mosaics. It will dry to leave a clear, shiny finished surface.

Pupils could go on to work out the area of their mosaics, using the cm-cube tesserae to help them calculate.

Useful link

BBC History - Mosaics of Roman Britain gallery:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/romans/mosaics_gallery.shtml



Roman games

Subjects: history

Nicia finds the master's children have left their toys in a mess for her to tidy up! You could encourage the class to find out more about Roman toys and pastimes, from books and websites.

A popular game was 'knucklebones', played with pieces made from the small animal bones left over from meals. The Romans knew the game as 'tali'. Pupils could make their own tali from salt dough, or just collect five small pieces of gravel that are roughly oblong in shape.

No-one today knows the full rules of the game. Our best guess is that you take turns to flip the five stones into the air and try to catch them all on the back of one hand. Pupils could try this and could go on to develop their own refinements of the rules and their own ways of scoring. Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum has an online page all about knucklebones, with photographs of the gaming pieces.

Another game the Romans loved was latrunculi, a war game played on a board made up of 64 squares (just like a chess board). The first player had eight 'soldiers' (counters) in one colour, the second player had eight soldiers in another colour. Historians think the object of the game was to take turns to try to 'surround' an enemy soldier with two of your soldiers. Then you could take the enemy soldier off the board. But beyond that no-one is exactly sure how to play the game.

Your pupils could try developing their own sets of rules and comparing their ideas with the many suggestions for game play they can find online. Just use the search term 'latrunculi'.

Useful link

Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum - Knucklebones:

<http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/the-collection/object-stories/archaeology-of-daily-life/childhood/knucklebones/>

Amulet art

Subjects: history, art

Nicia places amulets around the villa to bring good luck. The Romans (and other Iron Age people too) were fond of good luck charms and many examples can be seen of these little artefacts have been found by archaeologists. A boar, or wild pig, was popular as a protective charm.

You could ask pupils to carve their own animal amulets, based on Roman designs. The children could search history books and webpages (or the collection of their local museum) for ideas. The British Museum website has a page about amulets, which makes a good starting point.



A small block of soft wood - such as balsa - makes an ideal medium for wood carving with a craft knife (ensure your children are supervised). Pupils could use beads to represent the jewels and precious stones with which Roman amulets were sometimes decorated. If wood carving is not practical in your classroom, pupils could perhaps carve small blocks of wax cut from a candle instead, or model their amulets in clay.

Useful links

The British Museum - Guardians and good luck charms:

http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/themes/animals/guardians_and_good_luck.aspx

Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum:

<http://archaeologicalmuseum.jhu.edu/the-collection/object-stories/archaeology-of-daily-life/jewelry/gold-amulet-pendant/>

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Household tasks

Subjects: history, drama

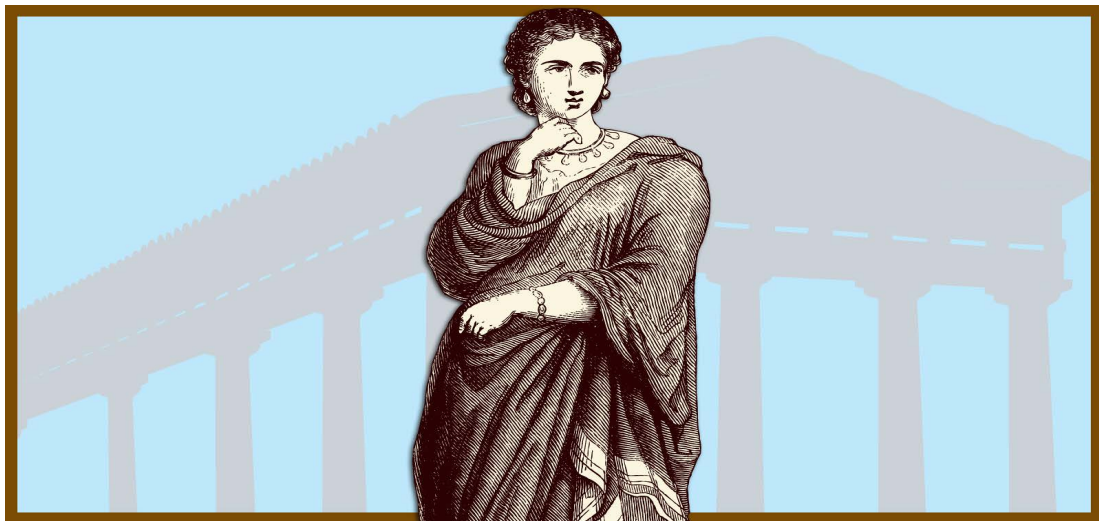
After listening to Nicia's story, you could encourage children to recall all the household tasks that she mentions. Which jobs do the pupils think were the most important? Are there any other household tasks that would need to be done that were not mentioned by Nicia?

After some research, using books and websites, the children could compile a list which might include: drawing water, gathering and chopping firewood, turning a spit over a fire to roast meat and putting oil in the lamps.

Finally, the pupils could mime the various household tasks. The mime could start with one person, who is gradually joined by others, until the entire class is involved, to show the busy daily life of a Roman villa.



The Lady



'My father fought against the Romans at the time of Boudicca. But well, times have changed and my husband Aelius has just been appointed the town magistrate...I suppose that makes us almost Romans now!'

Find out more about the life of Claudia, a Briton who is hoping to become a Roman and enjoy the luxuries of the Roman way of life ...

Sulpicia's reply

Subjects: English, history

We join Claudia as she plans a party in her grand villa. She's just written a letter inviting her friend Sulpicia to come. Encourage the children to write a reply to this invitation, either in role as Sulpicia, or as a member of her family. This is an opportunity for pupils to include details from their own research about the way of life enjoyed by the villa-dwelling classes of Roman Britain (whether Romans or Britons). Claudia mentions an even grander villa she's seen in Fishbourne. Pupils can search online to find out more about it.

Perhaps Sulpicia is a little lukewarm about Claudia's enthusiasm to become a Roman? She might ask her friend some pointed questions! We don't know if the historical Sulpicia did attend the party, but we do know that she and Claudia did really exist. Fragments of Claudia's letter have been found by archaeologists. It forms part of a collection of messages now called 'The Vindolanda letters'.

Pupils can view the fragments of Claudia's message and read a transcript of her letter on the Education Scotland website. They could frame their replies in a similar style to the original.



Finished letters could be transcribed onto thin sheets of card (Claudia's original was written on a thin sliver of wood). Pupils could 'age' their replies to resemble the other Vindolanda letters. They could give their card sheets ragged edges and dab them with an old teabag to give them an ancient patina!

Useful links

Education Scotland - Vindolanda letters:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/scotlandshistory/caledonianspictsromans/vindolandaletters/index.asp>

The Sussex Archaeological Society - Fishbourne Roman Palace and Gardens:

<http://sussexpast.co.uk/properties-to-discover/fishbourne-roman-palace>

Street sounds

Subjects: history, geography, music

Claudia lives in the Roman town of Noviomagus, the site of the city of Chichester we know today. Pupils could find Chichester on a map. The 'chester' part of the place name is a clue to its Roman origins. The successors to the Romans in Britain, the Anglo-Saxons, used the forms 'chester', 'caster' or 'cester' for any place that had been a Roman fort or fortified town. Pupils could brainstorm a list of places they know, or have visited, that have this element in their name (e.g. Colchester, Manchester, Doncaster). How many more Roman settlements can they find on a map of the UK? Are there any in Scotland or Wales? And if not, why not?

The Romans based their towns on the ones they had built back in Italy. They wanted to make their conquered land as much like home as they could! Children can get an idea of the street plan of a Roman town by looking at a map of Ostia (the port town of Rome itself). The popular *Roman Mysteries* novels by Caroline Lawrence have a clear map of Ostia on the flyleaves of the book. The children could go on to design the street plan of a new town in Roman Britain. They should add in all the things that would make a Roman feel at home: a temple perhaps, or an amphitheatre.

You could encourage pupils to describe routes from one place to another on their maps. Ask, 'What do you think you might have heard if you stood here in the street in Ostia?' Pupils could describe the sounds of the town: splashing from the public baths, the neighing of horses from the stables, the growling of the wild beasts in the amphitheatre, or the marching feet of soldiers at the barracks. The children could go on to create a 'soundscape' of a Roman town, using a variety of musical instruments.



History Clips: The Romans

Hypocaust heating

Subjects: history, design and technology, science

Pupils could investigate the principles behind the hypocaust, the central heating system used in Claudia's villa. The Roman term hypocaust means 'the fire beneath'.

Using toy bricks, the children could construct a model hypocaust - a floor supported on columns enclosed by a retaining wall. They should put gaps in the floor allow air to circulate and build a chimney leading out from one end of the hypocaust.

At the opposite end, a conduit should lead to the 'furnace' - a brick box large enough to house a cup or mug. Finally, they could represent the villa by standing an inverted a clear plastic box (the kind fruit is sold in at the supermarket) on the floor above the hypocaust.

To test their model, children could pour hot water into the mug and then put a roof over the 'furnace' building, so any hot air can only exit into the hypocaust. They could put a thermometer into their plastic box 'villa' to monitor its temperature. Can the pupils make their central heating system work? The children could go on to modify their designs to see if they can them more efficient, for example by altering the size of the chimney, of the vents in the floor and the positioning of the conduit.

Useful link

St Albans Museum - Roman mosaic and hypocaust:

<http://www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk/Your-Visit/Verulamium-Museum/Roman-Mosaic-and-Hypocaust>

Toga challenge

Subjects: history, design and technology

The flowing robes we often associate with the Romans were generally reserved for special occasions, events such as Claudia's party perhaps. Many of these garments were not stitched together, but were composed of artfully folded and draped lengths of cloth, fastened and held in place by brooches and belts.

Pupils could collect images of Roman togas and dresses from a range of sources. They could experiment with lengths of fabric, some belts and old items of costume jewellery. Can they fashion a convincing toga, or palla (a flowing shawl that a fine lady might wear over a stola or simple tunic)?

Useful link

Getty Iris - How to wear a toga the ancient Roman way:

<http://blogs.getty.edu/iris/how-to-wear-a-toga-the-ancient-roman-way/>



Feasting food

Subjects: history, cooking

The Romans famously considered dormice a delicacy and ate all kinds of things we don't often see on the menu today. But pupils can still sample a taste of what Roman cuisine was like by making some simple dishes that might have graced Claudia's cena, or dinner party.

Encourage pupils to research Roman recipes from books and online sources. As a class, you could draw up a menu of dishes you'd like to try and investigate what your local shops offer to see if you can source the ingredients. You might not find dormice at your supermarket, but olives, cheese, vegetables, fruit, nuts and honey and are all elements of the Roman diet. You might even find some (tinned) vine leaves to stuff with cooked lentils.

With the help of willing parents, the class could make some of the simpler recipes: dates stuffed with walnuts and rolled in honey for example. Finally, pupils could invite family and friends, don a toga or palla, weave ivy or laurel wreathes for their heads and lie down (Roman style) to enjoy a feast!



Boudicca



Background

Episode 1: Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni tribe, shares her part of Britain (which is now Norfolk) uneasily with the invading Romans. The British tribes and the Roman legions eye each other warily, but as long as the Emperor in Rome receives his taxes from the Britons, an awkward peace is maintained.

But when Boudicca's husband King Prasutagus dies in 60 AD, the situation changes. Boudicca is bound and whipped by a Roman centurion. Shamed and wounded, she vows revenge...



Episode 2: Boudicca makes an alliance amongst the tribes in her part of Britain. She defeats part of the feared Ninth Legion of the Roman Army and destroys Camulodunum (today's Colchester), the Roman's capital city, showing no mercy to its inhabitants. Then she marches on Londinium. Suetonius, the Roman governor of Britain, abandons the city to its fate, withdrawing his forces before Boudicca arrives.

Boudicca sacks Londinium and then burns the Roman settlement of Verulamium (now known as St Albans) to the ground. She dismisses any talk of making peace. She's intent on driving the hated Romans out of Britain for good.

Episode 3: Suetonius prepares his battle plans. He chooses his ground carefully and provokes the Iceni to attack in the heat of their anger.

The Iceni are overwhelmed, even though they are the larger force. Trapped by their own waggons which block their retreat, Boudicca's forces are defeated. She flees the battlefield but dies soon after, perhaps from taking poison.

Activities

Your pupils could use these Notes to explore the themes of Boudicca in the classroom. There are opportunities for children to imagine and investigate the period and to conduct their own historical research.

Part 1: Queen of the Iceni

'When I was younger, the Romans treated us like equals. Now, they treat us like slaves. Now is the time to take our revenge!'

Find out more about the Romans who invaded and the Britons who fought them...

Timeline

Subjects: history, art

Pupils could create an annotated timeline of Boudicca's life. They could plot the main events onto a large display on the classroom wall. The children could illustrate the key events of Boudicca's turbulent campaign with sketches and paintings, as well as photographs of artefacts or locations. They could supplement the information they glean from the drama with the results of their own research and add to the timeline after hearing each episode.



History Clips: The Romans

Torc

Subjects: history, art, design and technology

The Ancient Britons were famed for their fine jewellery, fashioned from gold and silver. In particular, they made torcs, ornaments worn around the neck. The torc was made by plaiting together thin gold and silver wires, to build up a 'rope' of metal.

After studying torc designs shown in books or on webpages, pupils could make model torcs, using tin foil. The children should first roll thin strips of foil into long 'wires' and then twist the wires together into a plait, gradually building up the torc shape.

Pupils could mould foil ends to finish their torcs, based on the historical designs they have studied. To achieve the 'raised-pattern' look, the children could press designs into the reverse side of the foil with a pencil.

These model torcs are, of course, a lot lighter than the originals. The British Museum reports that one torc found in a collection of treasure known as 'The Snettisham Hoard' weighed around a kilogram!

The British Museum - The Great Torque of Snettisham:

http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/pe_prb/t/the_great_torc_from_snettisham.aspx

Yorkshire Museum - Iron Age gold torcs:

<http://www.yorkshiremuseum.org.uk/collections-2/collections-highlights/iron-age-gold-torcs/>

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Alternative views

Subjects: English, history, drama

After listening to the episode, pupils could work in pairs or small groups to improvise additional scenes that give an alternative view of events. Children must once have been caught up in what happened. Your pupils could imagine their responses.

For example, pupils might dramatise a serving boy's report of a discussion between Antonius and his bodyguards, following his encounter with Boudicca. Or we might hear what Boudicca's daughters thought of the same meeting.

Perhaps we could hear from two young Britons sent out to gather herbs for a potion to cure King Prasutagus. What are their hopes and fears? And what would the children of the Trinovantes say when they hear rumours about the coming war?



Pupils could develop scripts from their improvisations, adding in period details from their own research. This activity is an opportunity for children to reflect upon the motives of the historical figures involved and to examine the impact their decisions had upon the lives of ordinary people. Your pupils could develop similar scenes after hearing the remaining two episodes of *Boudicca*.

Part 2: Boudicca's victories

'Now it's the turn of the Romans to learn what cruelty is.'

Find out more about the Romans who invaded and the Britons who fought them...

Debates

Subjects: English, history, citizenship

You could hold a series of debates about issues raised in the second part of the drama. Pupils could prepare for a debate with research from books and websites.

Individuals could go on to propose or second a case for or against the topic under discussion. The speakers could then take questions from the floor, before the class votes to decide the issue. The class might consider these propositions:

- Boudicca's merciless revenge shows she was not fit to lead the Iceni.
- Suetonius acted like a coward by abandoning the people of Londinium.
- The Trinovantes had no choice but to follow Boudicca.
- The Iceni were right to challenge the Romans: better to die in battle than to live a slave.

As well as the topics suggested here, your pupils might like to contribute some ideas of their own.

The last days of Londinium

Subjects: history, design and technology, information technology

You could ask pupils to imagine they are householders in Londinium, abandoned by Suetonius. How would they try to protect themselves and their city? Ask the children to list all the things they might do. These could include: burying valuables to keep them safe; packing up food, water and other essentials to carry out of the city; or building barricades to defend it.

If this scene had been played out in *Boudicca*, what sound effects might we have heard? Pupils could experiment with 'Foley' work – using all kinds of 'found' items to represent the sounds. Crackling cellophane can make the sound of a fire for example, while the hiss of air released from a balloon could double as the sound of water putting out the fire. Can the children tell their story just using sound? They could end their scene with the sound of Boudicca's army arriving.



History Clips: The Romans

The children could record, sample and digitise their sounds to build up a montage telling the story of the last days of Londinium.

Tacitus

Subjects: English, history, art

The Roman historian Tacitus is the main (almost the only) source of direct information about Boudicca's challenge to the Romans. It is described in Book XIV, Chapters 29 - 39 (chapters here refer to paragraphs) of his work *The Annals*.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology offers a free download of *The Annals*, translated into English. You could read the class extracts from Chapters 29 and 30. These give a vivid account of what Suetonius was up to in Wales when Boudicca seized Camulodunum. Tacitus describes a Roman attack on the island of Mona. He explains how the Romans built boats to cross the water and how their cavalry swam across, alongside their horses. He describes the Welsh women as being like 'Furies in deathly black' and the Welsh Druids, whose spells and curses froze the Roman soldiers with fear. Pupils could draw storyboards or cartoon strips to illustrate Tacitus's account of the Roman crossing to Mona.

You could read further extracts from Chapter 31, which deals with the events dramatised in the play. Tacitus says the fighting started because veteran Roman soldiers, 'Were acting as though they had received a free gift of the entire country'. Do your pupils agree? Do they think Tacitus is a fair and objective commentator?

Tacitus was a child in Gaul (now called France) when the Romans invaded Britain. He wrote *The Annals* when he was an old man. He was not present at the events he describes. Does this make him a reliable source? Could he have been biased? Pupils could go on to find out more about Tacitus and write short biographies of him.

MIT - The Internet Classics Archive - *The Annals by Tacitus*:

<http://classics.mit.edu/Tacitus/annals.html>

NB - The BBC is not responsible for the content of external websites



Part 3: The final battle

'Though I am a woman, I know this is what I must do! You men, you can live in slavery again if you want. I will not!'

Find out more about the Romans who invaded and the Britons who fought them...

Battlefields

Subjects: history, geography

After listening to the episode, you could ask the class, 'Why do you think Suetonius won the last battle?' Pupils might suggest that he lured Boudicca into a trap, that he chose a position of strength and that he goaded Boudicca into losing her temper, so she rushed into the attack without thinking her battle plan through.

Give pupils a map of Norfolk, once the tribal lands of the Iceni. Ask them to play the role of a Roman general and to choose the best place for a battle. Can they find a strong position for their army (high ground, defended on three sides with a forest at the rear and with a narrow entry to reach it)?

Individuals could present their suggested locations to the class and argue for their choice of battle-ground. The class could vote to decide the most suitable location.

The actual site of Boudicca's defeat is unknown. Perhaps today it has been built over, or perhaps it is still there, out in open country. Could one of the pupils' choices be that lost battlefield?

After Boudicca

Subjects: English, drama, music, history, information technology

Building upon their work from earlier episodes, pupils could script and record their own radio play, with scenes set after the final battle. (Refer to the transcript on the website to see how such a script is usually presented.)

Pupils could play the parts of children on both sides: Britons fleeing from the battlefield, slaves in the Roman camp, or children back in Rome reading letters from a father or brother caught up in the fighting. How does the news of Boudicca's defeat make each of these people feel?

Pupils could add 'Foley' sound effects or improvise toned percussion music to add texture to their radio play. They could use digital recording software to edit and polish their soundtrack.



History Clips: The Romans

Memorial

Subjects: history, art, design and technology

How is Boudicca's rebellion remembered today? Pupils could find out from history books and websites. There is a famous statue of Boudicca at the foot of Westminster Bridge in London (see below). Pupils might like to sketch it from photographs. Does the statue do her justice? And is it right to remember solely Boudicca, rather than the others caught up in the fighting?

You could ask the children to design their own memorials to the struggle between the Iceni and the Romans. They could make scale models of their ideas in the medium of their choice. Where do they think their memorial stands? London? (Legend says Boudicca's grave lies somewhere under what is now Platform 9 of King's Cross Station!) Or perhaps St Albans? Colchester? The children could use mapping websites to find the perfect location.



Statue of Boudicca in central London



The Romans in Britain sketches



Background

A light-hearted dash through the history of Rome's invasion and settlement of Britain begins with the first attempt at conquest by a lukewarm Julius Caesar, upset that one bit of his map of Europe wasn't coloured Roman red.

After a regime change, the Romans return in force at the command of their glory-seeking new emperor, Claudius. This time, they're here to stay and despite fierce resistance from tribes like the Iceni, led by warrior queen Boudicca, it's not long before Claudius makes a triumphant progress into the captured Briton stronghold of Camulodonum, riding on the back of the first elephant in Britain. Now that the Romans have won, he reasons, what could possibly go wrong?

By the time of the Emperor Hadrian, in 122 AD, things had got a lot tougher for the Roman overlords. Their frontier with Caledonia (the country we today call Scotland) was under constant attack from raiding parties. Hadrian's solution? Build a wall from shore to shore, to keep these 'Barbarians' out.

Activities

Your pupils could use these Notes to explore themes from our *Roman sketches* in the classroom. There are opportunities for children to imagine and investigate the period and to conduct their own historical research.



1. Romans, Britons and invasion

'My ancestors were Britons – but now I'm a British Roman!'

'My ancestors were Romans – but now I'm a Roman Briton!'

Find out more about the new way of life the Romans brought to Britain...

Military mapping

Subjects: history, geography, information technology.

You could ask pupils, 'How do we know about the Roman conquest of Britain?' In reply, they might mention history books, artefacts, accounts from the time and archaeological remains.

Encourage pupils to find the 'Antiquities' section on the key of an Ordnance Survey map. (Choose a local map, if you live in a part of the country with a lot of Roman remains. Otherwise choose a map of the area around Hadrian's Wall, or near to another well-known Roman settlement, Chichester, perhaps, or St Albans.)

The map's key has symbols for Villa and Tumulus (a burial mound of an Ancient Briton chieftain), battlefields, monuments and other 'positions of antiquity'. Pupils could work in pairs to search sections of the map for these features. How many can they find? Are any of their finds clustered? What might such clusters suggest? Pupils could compare maps from different locations in Britain.

Why do the children think some areas are richer in Roman remains than others?

Pupils could use online mapping sites and internet searches to capture images of their finds.

Sources spreadsheet

Subjects: history, information technology, mathematics

Pupils could develop a spreadsheet of sources of information about the Roman invasion and settlement of Britain. They could use this gradually growing database to help them with their research. They could include separate pages for 'websites' and 'books' for example, or develop sections dealing with a specific topic, such as 'armour', 'houses' or 'pastimes'. Other pupils could then use the sheet's search facility to quickly find the best sources of information.

As well as, say, a web link, an entry might note the source's key features, for instance: 'gallery', 'map', 'statistics', 'artefacts' or 'documents'. Users of the resource could give it a mark out of five, with a gradually aggregating total. The sheet could also keep count of the number of visits from class members each resource receives. Pupils could analyse this data. Which website received the most visits? Which book got the highest rating? How do these figures compare with the average scores given to the resources on the sheet? As well as calculating averages, the children could use the data to draw graphs, illustrating the usefulness of the various resources.



When the class has finished studying the Roman invasion, their database could be saved, ready for future classes to consult.

Limerick slam

Subjects: English, history

The radio episode includes a spoof rhyming contest:

*We're the Trinovantes! We don't wear frilly panties!
Our capital's Camulodenon! It's impregnable and really strong!
If the Romans do come back – they'll be barmy to attack!*

Pupils could enter into the spirit of the episode by inventing limericks about the Romans in Britain. Encourage the children to smuggle historical facts into their limericks wherever they can. You could stage a limerick contest, with a panel of judges (teachers? parents? pupils?) who award points for humour, rhyming skill and historical accuracy.

You could give your pupils a rhyming dictionary and some opening lines to get them started...

- *One day, up on Hadrian's Wall...*
- *A legionary fired a ballista...*
- *The strange thing about the Iceni...*
- *As Boudicca leaped from her chariot...*
- *There once was a fine Roman villa...*



2. Roman army and British resistance

'By the year 47 AD, just four years after they'd arrived, the Romans had conquered most of the south and east of Britain. This was fast going in those days!'

Find out more about the funny new ways those Romans brought to Britain...

Conquest chart

Subjects: history, geography, information technology

Pupils could develop a series of maps showing the progress of the Roman invasion and settlement of Britain, from 43 AD onwards. They could shade in areas of the British Isles that had come under Roman rule and add dates to show when this happened. They could add in features such as cities or roads as well as major developments such as Hadrian's Wall. The children could use books and websites, to gather the information.

If all pupils involved use the same standard outline map of Britain and the same colour scheme, they could scan their maps in sequence to compile a digital slideshow. They could set the slide interval to make the finished result into an animated map, which illustrates the relentless spread of Rome's influence throughout Britain.

Useful link

BBC Primary History - Romans - Invasion:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/romans/invasion/>

Roman report

Subjects: English, history, modern foreign languages

The website of the Vindolanda Fort and Museum has photos of Hadrian's Wall and of Roman writing tablets discovered nearby. These thin strips of wood are covered in spidery handwriting from 2,000 years ago. Romans living along the wall wrote letters home, which were carried by messengers to places all over the Empire.

The centurion in charge would have sent regular reports to his commander. You could ask pupils to draft the kind of report he might have written. Of course, the report would have been written in Latin. When the pupils have drafted their reports, they could use an online translation site to see how their message appears in Latin. They could try reading their Latin reports aloud. Do any of the words sound similar to ones we use today?



Useful link

Vindolanda Fort and Museum:

<http://www.vindolanda.com>

Testudo test

Subjects: history, design and technology

Pupils could test the legionaries' battle tactic of the 'testudo' (or tortoise). The children could make long rectangular 'shields' cut from cardboard boxes, with a strong cardboard handle stapled to the shield back. Each shield should be nearly the height of its user.

To test their shields, a team of children could form up into a square. Pupils along the edges of the square could use their shields to cover the flanks of the formation. Children inside the square could make their shields into a 'roof' to cover it. They could all then march in formation from one side of the playground to the other, while a team of opponents pelts the 'testudo' with wet sponges. If the testudo team is successful, they should reach their finish line without getting wet!

After all the teams have tested them, the children could paint their shields and hang them on the classroom wall to celebrate a famous victory.



Modern re-enactment of a Roman army 'testudo' formation



3. How the Romans changed Britain

'The tribes no longer fought each other. And, so long as they didn't rebel, the Romans no longer fought them.'

Find out more about the new ways the Romans brought to Britain...

This light-hearted dash through the history of Rome's invasion and settlement of Britain explores the impact of Roman cuisine, fashion, art, design and language. Over the 300 years of occupation, the way of life the Romans brought with them transformed the culture of Britain.

The Romans and the conquered British gradually learned to get along. Over the centuries of the occupation, the two sides gradually mingled. Tribal wars became a thing of the past. Some Britons became Roman citizens and embraced their way of life.

New forts and towns were built, straight Roman roads were laid, drains were dug, aqueducts were constructed to bring water to the new towns - and of course, taxes were collected to pay for all of it, too!

Street sounds

Subjects: history, geography, music

The Romans based their new towns on the ones they had built back in Italy. They wanted to make their conquered land as much like home as they could! Children can get an idea of the street plan of a Roman town by looking at a map of Ostia (the port town of Rome itself). The popular *Roman Mysteries* novels by Caroline Lawrence have a map of Ostia on their flyleaves.

The children could go on to design the street plan of a new town in Roman Britain. They should put in all the things that would make a Roman feel at home: a temple perhaps, or an amphitheatre.

Encourage pupils to describe routes from one place to another on their maps. Ask, 'What do you think you would have heard if you stood here in the street?' Pupils could describe the sounds of their town: the splashing from the public baths, the neighing of horses from the stables, the growling of the wild beasts in the amphitheatre or the marching feet of soldiers in the barrack square. The children could go on to create a 'soundscape' of their Roman town, using a selection of musical instruments.



Concrete mix

Subjects: history, mathematics, science, design and technology

The Romans discovered how to make concrete by mixing sand and cement (calcinated lime and clay) with water. You could demonstrate the principle by mixing small amounts (tablespoonfuls) of sand, cement and water together and pouring the results into polystyrene cups to set. Do not allow pupils to mix the materials themselves, as cement dust can irritate the skin. Wear eye protection and wash your hands well after mixing.

You could make several test mixes, using different proportions. Pupils should note the ratios used in each mix. The standard ratio for a successful mix is 1 measure of water, to 2 measures of cement and 3 measures of sand. This should produce a basic mortar, suitable for building brick walls. Larger projects would have mixed in gravel too, to produce concrete.

When the samples have thoroughly set (leave them to dry out over several days), pupils could strip away the cups and test the resulting lumps. Are some lumps crumbly? Which lump is the hardest? Pupils could perform a scratch test: a harder sample will leave a scratch on a softer sample when the two are rubbed together.

Hypocaust heating

Subjects: history, design and technology, science

The Roman term hypocaust means 'the fire beneath'. Using toy bricks, pupils could construct a model hypocaust – a floor supported on columns and enclosed by a retaining wall. They should put gaps in the floor (to allow the air to circulate) and build a brick box as a 'living room' above it.

They should add a chimney at one end of the hypocaust. At the opposite end, a brick conduit should lead to the 'furnace', a brick box large enough to house a plastic bottle.

To test their model, the children could fill the bottle with hot water and place it in the 'furnace' box. If they put a thermometer into their 'living room' they can monitor any rise in its temperature. Can they get their Roman central heating system to work?

Useful link

St Albans Museum - Roman mosaic and hypocaust:

<http://www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk/Your-Visit/Verulamium-Museum/Roman-Mosaic-and-Hypocaust>

NB - The BBC is not responsible for the content of external websites



4. How the Romans lived in Britain

'I don't feel like a poor Briton any more. I eat like a Roman, I dress like a Roman, I speak like a Roman. Now I feel like a poor Roman!'

Find out more about daily life under the Romans...

Mosaic making

Subjects: history, art, design and technology, mathematics

Pupils could make their own mosaics for a classroom display. They could begin by searching for images of mosaics, as an inspiration for their own designs which they could plan on squared paper. Many Roman designs featured symmetrical geometric patterns where the shapes tessellate, or fit closely together. Encourage pupils to incorporate these features into their own designs. Ask, 'Does the maths word tessellate remind you of a Roman word?'

Roman mosaics were made from tesserae, small cubes of fired clay or stone. Your class could replicate these with cubes of salt dough. A simple salt dough mix is ideal (1 cup of flour, half a cup of salt and up to half a cup of water, added little by little).

You and your class could make several batches, adding a drop of food colouring to produce tesserae of varying hues. The dough is easily rolled flat and cut into 1cm cubes. The cubes will dry hard in a few days, or for quicker results, pop them in the microwave (lowest setting) for two to three minutes.

Pupils could assemble their tesserae designs on sheets of card, using a thick flour-and-water paste as if it was mortar or grout. Encourage children to work on a small scale, as the task is time-consuming. The children should wipe away any excess paste before leaving their masterpieces to dry.

Pupils could work out the area of their mosaics, using the centimetre-cube tesserae to help them calculate.

Useful link

BBC History - Mosaics of Roman Britain gallery:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/romans/mosaics_gallery.shtml



Toga challenge

Subjects: history, design and technology

The flowing robes we associate with the Romans were generally reserved for special occasions, such as a dinner party. Many of these garments were not stitched together, but composed of artfully folded and draped lengths of cloth, held in place by brooches and belts.

Pupils could collect images of Roman togas and dresses from a range of sources. They could experiment with lengths of fabric, belts and old items of costume jewellery. Can they fashion a convincing toga, or palla (a flowing shawl that a fine lady might wear over a stola or tunic)?

Keeping count

Subjects: history, geography, mathematics

Introduce the Roman numbering system to pupils. They could try converting familiar numbers (such as their door number or phone number) into a set of Roman numerals.

Pupils could use their phones to photograph examples of Roman numerals in their local area. Clocks and foundation stones are a good source. How many examples of Roman numerals can pupils find in 1km radius of their school? The class could make a gallery of 'Neighbourhood Numerals'.

You could test how quickly pupils can convert our numbers to Roman numerals by playing bingo. The twist is that the caller announces a Roman numeral, but the players have to identify the corresponding numeral we use today.



5. Roman pastimes and customs

'Children had toys like dolls and animals carved from wood. But unless they had rich parents, children didn't have a lot of time to play. They were expected to help out in the house and fields.'

Find out more about what the Romans did with their free time...

Eventually, Rome's empire fell and its legions were withdrawn from Britain. The Roman army marched away in 410 AD, never to return. By this time, the Roman way of life had become an established part of the culture in Britain. Roman pastimes and customs were widespread. But as the Romans faded from the scene, new invaders and settlers from northern Europe began to take their place. The old Roman ways gradually disappeared.

However, although the empire was gone, its influence remained. The Roman occupation left its mark on Britain and traces of Rome's legacy are still there, just beneath the surface of our everyday lives.

Many of our words, some place names and the remains of some buildings all owe their origin to the Romans. Even our calendar was designed by the Romans. And parts of our road network date back to Roman times. If you've ever been on a shopping trip to London and browsed the stores on the long straight expanse of Oxford Street, then you've shopped on a Roman road.

It's nearly 2,000 years since the last legionary shouldered his spear and marched home. The Romans may be gone - but they will never be forgotten!

Latrunculi

Subjects: history

One game the Romans loved was latrunculi, a war game played on a board made up of 64 squares (just like a chess board). The first player had eight 'soldiers' (counters) in one colour, the second player had eight soldiers in another colour. Historians think the object of the game was to take turns to 'surround' an enemy soldier with two of yours. Then you could take the enemy soldier off the board. Beyond that, no-one's exactly sure how to play the game.

Your pupils could try developing their own rules for latrunculi. They could compare their ideas with the many suggestions for game play they can find online.



Gods and monsters

Subjects: English, history, art

The Romans told plenty of stories about their gods, many of them borrowed from Ancient Greece – another part of the world they had conquered. These stories also featured plenty of monsters and mayhem.

The Roman poet Ovid collected these stories in a long poem called *Metamorphoses*. In it, the gods cause people to change shape, in an endless series of miraculous transformations. English poet Adrian Mitchell's *Shapeshifters* is a modern English translation for younger readers and many other translations are available to download.

You could read pupils one or two of these stories or ask groups of readers to browse the collection themselves. The children could make simple shadow puppets from card and use a lamp to throw the shadows on the wall for an animated re-telling of a favourite story. They might choose the story of Phaeton, who steals the sun god's chariot, or the story of the Minotaur, half man and half bull.

Useful link

Poetry in Translation - *Metamorphoses*, translated by A S Kline:

<http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/Metamorph.htm>

Citizen's questions

Subjects: English, history, drama

If pupils could interview Roman citizens, what would they ask about their lives? You could encourage the children to develop a list of interview questions. For example, 'What do you eat?', 'What's your favourite pastime?', 'Do you visit the theatre or do you prefer the gladiators and wild animal shows?', 'What is it like in a Roman bath house?', 'What do you most admire about Rome?' and 'What would your family do for a treat?'

Other children might prefer to develop a set of questions to ask a Briton living under Roman rule. The children could swap lists with a partner and use a variety of research sources (books, museums and websites) to come up with some answers.

After pooling the information gleaned, the class could stage 'hotseat' interviews, where they take turns to play the role of a Roman citizen or a Briton of the period and answer the questions put by classmates.



6. The Roman legacy

'We's goin' to Manchester 'n' Winchester, Chichester 'n' Colchester, Dorchester 'n' Portchester, Silchester 'n' Ilchester...'

Find out more about the lasting changes the Romans brought to Britain...

Roman remains

Subjects: history, geography

Pupils could find Chichester on a map. The 'chester' part of the name is a clue to its Roman origins. The successors to the Romans in Britain, the Anglo-Saxons, used the forms 'chester', 'caster' or 'cester' for any place that had been a Roman fort or fortified town. Pupils could brainstorm a list of places they know, or have visited, that have this element in their name (eg Colchester, Manchester, Doncaster).

How many more Roman settlements can they find on a map of the UK? How many are in England and how many in Scotland or Wales?

Roman roads

Subjects: history, geography

Pupils could find out about the major roads the Romans laid, using books and online sources. Roads to investigate include:

- Ermine Street
- Watling Street
- Stane Street
- Dere Street
- The Fosse Way.

Ordnance Survey publishes a map of Roman Britain which shows these roads. Other maps are available online, such as the one published by the British Towns and Villages Network. Pupils could compare the Roman routes with the UK's major road network today. Can the children find any examples of modern roads that follow a Roman route?

Useful links

British Towns and Villages Network - Map of the Major Roman Settlements and Roman Roads in Britain:

<http://www.british-towns.net/maps/roman-roads-map>



BBC - Roman Roads in Britain today:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/dna/place-lancashire/plain/A41607182>

Info Britain - Roman roads:

http://www.infobritain.co.uk/Roman_Roads.htm

NB - The BBC is not responsible for the content of external websites

Leave out the Latin!

Subjects: English, history

You could challenge pupils to write sentences about their daily lives - topics such as bedtime, holidays, meals, lessons, the park, hobbies, favourite books, TV shows, sports or pets. The children should try to avoid using words that have a Latin origin.

Encourage pupils to check in a dictionary the origin of any word they suspect of having Roman roots. Teams of children could then play a version of the gameshow they heard in *Roman sketches*.

To do this, team members take turns to read out their sentences. Any opponent who spots a word that has come down to us from Latin should call out 'Buzz!' Award a point for each word correctly spotted and dock a point for an incorrect challenge.

