

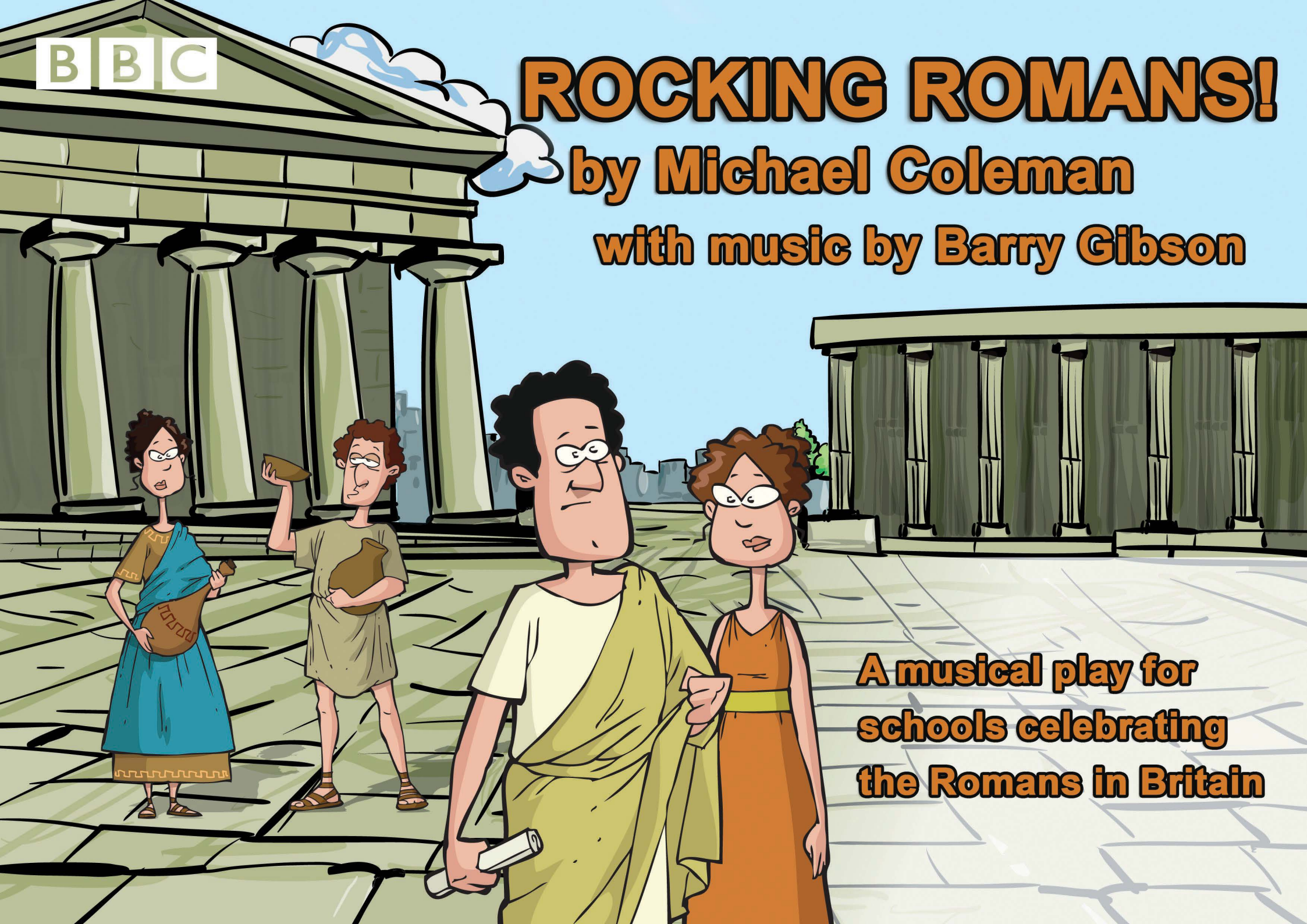
The BBC logo is located in the top left corner of the image. It consists of the letters 'B', 'B', and 'C' each inside a white square, which are then arranged in a row within a larger white rectangular frame.

BBC

ROCKING ROMANS!

by Michael Coleman

with music by Barry Gibson



A musical play for
schools celebrating
the Romans in Britain

ROCKING ROMANS!

by Michael Coleman
with music by Barry Gibson

The script assumes that the whole cast (the ENSEMBLE) are seated throughout on a 'stage', in front of which is a 'performance space'. Elements involving the whole ensemble are either conducted in situ, or have the ensemble moving to and from the performance space in a controlled manner. Individual actors 'enter' from the ensemble and 'exit' back to it. Needless to say, the staging will need to be adapted where different circumstances apply.

Two elements of staging are fixed: one table down stage left and one table downstage right. These will be for NARRATORS/ANNOUNCERS if multiple used or for a NARRATOR and an ANNOUNCER if only one of each. On the table down stage left is a large cut-out 'TV screen' for use by the Announcers.

SCENE 1

AUDIO CUE 1: MUSIC - OPENING MUSIC (00' 52'')

The ENSEMBLE enters the performance space to stand facing the audience. Roughly half are dressed as ROMANS the other half as BRITONS. They're mingled, though, to reflect the way that Britain ends up. Once gathered, music down and lights off.

AUDIO CUE 2: SONG - 'SIGNALS' (01' 37'')

*Signals! Sounding through centuries.
Signals! Fanfares to victory!
Signals! Conquer! Attack! Defend!
Signals! Orders in code to send...*

The lights go up. The ENSEMBLE now begin to march around the performance space as they sing:

*Marching to Londinium... (echo)
On to Verulamium... (echo)
On to Camulodunum... (echo)
Onwards, North, to Hadrian's Wall... (echo)*

The ENSEMBLE begins to head for the stage area, slowing their march in time with their singing:

*Signals! Sounding through centuries...
Signals! Sounding through centuries...
Signals!
Signals!
Signals!
Signals!*

The ENSEMBLE should now be in the stage area. The NARRATOR(S) and ANNOUNCER(S) are already in position.

NARRATOR: Who likes history?
ENSEMBLE: Bo-ring!
NARRATOR: Ancient history...
ENSEMBLE: Really bo-ring!



NARRATOR: Ancient Roman history.
ENSEMBLE: *(Controlled yawns, while pretending to be asleep on their folded hands)*
NARRATOR: With lots of battles and fighting...
ENSEMBLE: *(Perking up)* Ooh!
NARRATOR: And scary gods bringing thunder and lightning...
ENSEMBLE: *(Enthusiastic)* Ooohh!
NARRATOR: And mean, moody and magnificent gladiators!
ENSEMBLE: Yes!
NARRATOR: Then welcome to Rocking Romans! Music, laughter...and your favourite Roman TV programmes!

AUDIO CUE 3: MUSIC - ROMAN TV JINGLE (00' 07")

ANNOUNCER: Yes - tonight on Romans TV we'll be presenting some specially-commissioned programmes!

AUDIO CUE 4: SONG - 'IS THAT A FACT', PART 1 (00' 55")

*Is that a fact?
How can we know?
Where is the evidence?
What does it show?
How can we tell if it's really so?
Is that a fact?*

*Romulus and Remus
Abandoned twins
Saved by a wolf
(With her teeth in a grin!)*

*That's where the story of Rome it begins
Is that a fact?*

NARRATOR: No, the story of Romulus and Remus - the orphaned twins said to have founded Rome - is a myth. Calling it a fact would be a BIG MYTH-STAKE! But the Roman Empire was a fact. A very big fact...

SCENE 2

Five ROMAN SOLDIERS enter. They are identifiable in some simple way - cardboard swords, perhaps.

SOLDIER 1: *(Tough)* We're the Roman Army... *(The other soldiers say, 'Yeah!')*

SOLDIER 2: We're clever and all-conquering... *(Ditto)*

SOLDIER 3: By 55 BC we're ruling so many countries... *(Ditto)*

SOLDIER 4: We've called them the Roman Empire. *(Ditto)*

SOLDIER 5: And in charge of it all is...

ALL: Julius Caesar!

JULIUS CAESAR enters. He's identified by the wreath on his head. He's holding a map. SOLDIER 1 joins him.

CAESAR: I like my new map of the Roman Empire! It's got all the lands we've conquered coloured in red. Blood-red! *(Frowns and points at the map)* Except for...that bit. That funny-looking island.



SOLDIER 1: That's Britannia, Caesar.
CAESAR: But it's not coloured red. It's messing up my map. Why isn't it coloured red?
SOLDIER 1: Because we Romans haven't conquered it yet, Caesar.
CAESAR: Right! We'll see about that!

As the ENSEMBLE sing the following verse, JULIUS CAESAR and SOLDIERS march from one side of the performance space to the other during lines 1-4, reversing and reversing quickly again on lines 5 and 6. They stop, wobbling dizzily.

AUDIO CUE 5: SONG - 'IS THAT A FACT', PART 2 (00' 38")

*Julius Caesar
To Britain he came
'Came, saw and conquered'
For glory and fame
Then he went home. Then he came back again!
Is that a fact?*

NARRATOR: Yes, it's a fact. Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 55 BC, and again in 54 BC - more than anything, to make himself popular in Rome when he went back!

CAESAR: (To ENSEMBLE) Coo-ee! I'm home!

JULIUS CAESAR and SOLDIERS exit.

SCENE 3

AUDIO CUE 6: MUSIC - ROMANS TV JINGLE (00' 07")

ANNOUNCER: Romans TV begins this evening with a documentary. For nearly 100 years after Julius Caesar the Romans stayed in Rome. So what were the ancient Britons up to during that time? It's over to our historical expert...

The ENSEMBLE now effectively divides into LEFT and RIGHT halves, the two halves turning to face each other. EXPERT prowls around in front of them, talking to the audience as if to camera, in the style of an early natural history programme.

EXPERT: (With emphases as shown) I'm here with this extraordinary tribe of Ancient Britons. They have a quite fearsome reputation, but they seem to me to be a really peaceful group of people...

The ENSEMBLE halves wave and smile at each other.

EXPERT: I've been observing them for a while now. They raise strong and sturdy animals. They grow delicious crops...

Still waving and smiling, the ENSEMBLE halves mime digging and reaping.

EXPERT: And, I must say, they appear to be fairly intelligent.

The ENSEMBLE halves mime heating metal and beating it.



EXPERT: They've discovered iron, so they also spend a lot of time making handy things like pots and pans. Let me see if I can find out what else...

As EXPERT approaches, the ENSEMBLE's smiles turn to grimaces and their waves into high clenched-fist actions, as though they're holding swords. A couple of them look threateningly at EXPERT.

EXPERT: Oh! Swords! They've discovered how to make awfully frightening weapons! *(As he exits, hurriedly)* Until next time! If there is a next time!

The two halves of the ENSEMBLE continue their threatening behaviour for a few moments, then begin chanting:

LEFT: Our tribe's better than your tribe!

RIGHT: No it isn't! Your tribe's tripe!

NARRATOR: The ancient Britons lived in tribes - a bit like gangs - and neighbouring tribes often fought each other...

The two halves of the ENSEMBLE jeer each other.

NARRATOR: There were about thirty tribes in all, from the Caledones of the far north down to the Belgae of the south. Two of the biggest were the Iceni and the Trinovantes...

LEFT ENSEMBLE now plays the part of the ICENI. They turn to the front.

LEFT/ICENI: *We're the Iceni!
We're real big and meany!
The land of our brave folk,
will one day be Norfolk!*

LEFT ENSEMBLE turns back to the side. RIGHT, playing the TRINOVANTES, turns to the front.

RIGHT/TRIN: *We're the Trinovantes!
We don't wear frilly panties!
Our capital's Camulodunum!
It's impregnable and really strong!*

LEFT ENSEMBLE/ICENI now turn to the front as well. Whole ENSEMBLE gives fearsome looks and waves their imaginary swords.

ENSEMBLE: *If the Romans do come back
They'll be barmy to attack!*

AUDIO CUE 7: SONG - 'BRITS ARE STRONG' (00' 18")

*Brits are strong
Brits are rough
Brits may pong
But Brits are tough
BRITANNIA!*



SCENE 4

NARRATOR: Back in Rome, though, trouble was brewing. It was now 43 AD and a new Emperor had just come to power. His name was Claudius - and he was looking for a way to impress the people...

CLAUDIUS enters. He too has a wreath on his head. He's holding Julius Caesar's old map. He's joined by GENERAL PLAUTIUS, identified by a sergeant's stripes.

CLAUDIUS: General Plautius. I've been looking at this old map of Julius Caesar's. Britannia - is it coloured red yet, or not?

PLAUTIUS: No, Emperor. It's still green and full of turbulent tribes.

CLAUDIUS: Perfect! This'll impress everybody. I want you to invade Britannia again.

PLAUTIUS: Yes, Emperor! Er...another go, see, conquer and come home again job is it?

CLAUDIUS: No it is not! This time we're jolly well staying there!

AUDIO CUE 8: MUSIC - STEADY DRUM BEAT AND HORNS (00' 41'')

NARRATOR: So General Plautius took an army of forty thousand soldiers to Britain...

The BRITONS in the ensemble remain in place. In time with drum beat, and led by a soldier carrying a Roman eagle standard, the ROMANS come out from the ensemble in twos and begin to march into the performance space.

NARRATOR: After fierce fighting, the Britons were defeated. Romans marched triumphantly into the town we now call Colchester - but then called Camulodunum...

By the time the drum beats have finished the ROMANS should have formed a semi-circle at the centre of which is an elephant-shaped seat that has been set up during the marching. CLAUDIUS is on it, waving smugly. PLAUTIUS is standing a little aside from the semi-circle, towards the front of the performance space.

NARRATOR: At the head of the victory parade was the Emperor Claudius himself - riding a creature that no Briton had ever seen before...

The drum beat peaks and ends. SCRUFFY BRITON enters, rushing noisily across to PLAUTIUS.

SCRUFFY: Oy! Mr Roman soldier man! What's that creature he's riding?

PLAUTIUS: That, you ignorant little Briton, is...a elephant!

SCRUFFY: Wow! Look at those thick legs! And those big, flappy ears! And - that nose. It's huge!

PLAUTIUS: Oh yes, that's elephants for yer.

SCRUFFY: Elephant? (*Moving away*) I was talking about the Emperor! Ha-ha-ha!

The SCRUFFY BRITON rushes off as PLAUTIUS shakes his fist. CLAUDIUS exits, but ROMANS remain.



SCENE 5

NARRATOR: By the year 47 AD, just four years after they'd arrived, the Romans had conquered most of the south and east of Britain. The Roman Army really was the greatest the world had ever seen.

ROMANS: *(Football chant at Britons)* We are the greatest! We are the greatest!

AUDIO CUE 9: MUSIC - TV JINGLE INTO FOOTBALL THEME (00' 29'')

ANNOUNCER: Hello, and welcome on a big day for international crunch-battles! Later on we'll be covering the progress of *Boudicca's Bruisers*. But first up we have a profile of the Roman Army. Let's go over to the scene of their battle today and our roving reporter -

PLAUTIUS is still at the front of the performance space. He's now joined by SPORTS REPORTER, carrying a modern microphone. S/he begins by addressing the audience, as if to camera.

REPORTER: With just a few minutes to go before their next big battle kicks off, I'm here with the Roman Army's head coach, General Plautius! *(To Plautius)* General what's your game plan today?

PLAUTIUS: *(Football-speak)* We're going to attack them like, y'know, like we was an animal!

REPORTER: What - as fiercely as a tiger, you mean? As powerfully as a rhinoceros?

PLAUTIUS: No. Like as slowly as a - y'know - testudo.

REPORTER: Testudo? That's a tortoise, isn't it?

PLAUTIUS: You're not wrong! *(Calls)* Come on, lads! Testudo formation!

AUDIO CUE 10: MUSIC - TESTUDO AND BRITONS ATTACK (01' 59'')

The 'testudo' or 'tortoise-attack' formation is performed by the ROMANS (whether they're soldiers or not)

PLAUTIUS: *(Commentating as they move, rather like a barn dance caller)* Two by two! Four by four! Eight by eight! Doh-see-doh to form a square! Wait for it...shields up!

BRITONS now come down from the stage to join in, moving around the testudo formation as they attack (with the change in the music). Then the testudo breaks apart and as the Romans attack the Britons. As it proceeds, SPORTS REPORTER acts as a commentator.

REPORTER: And it's the Britons on the attack! But they're getting no joy from the Roman defence. It's too well organised. *(At the end of the movement)* And that's another defeat for Team Britannia. Looks like they need a new manager!

The whole ENSEMBLE leaves the performance space and return to the stage.



SCENE 6

NARRATOR: Organisation, equipment and tactics: all these explain why the Roman Army was so good and why the invasion of Britain succeeded - which isn't to say that the Britons were beaten easily. They were fierce fighters, with some really unpleasant habits...

BRIT WIFE *enters. She is identified by an apron and carries a wooden spoon and mixing bowl which she uses cheerfully. Once established, WARRIOR enters; he has his hands behind his back.*

WARRIOR: I'm home!

BRIT WIFE: Hello, dear! Have a good day at the battle?

WARRIOR: Yes, we won - and I've brought you a present to celebrate!

BRIT WIFE: *(Gasps with pleasure)* Not - one of your enemies' heads?

WARRIOR: No... *(As BRIT WIFE looks dismayed, from behind his back he produces a couple of balloons with cartoon faces)*
Two enemy heads!

BRIT WIFE: Oh, that's the nicest present you've ever brought me!

WARRIOR: *(Bashfully)* Well you know what they say: *(Joined by ENSEMBLE)* two heads are better than one! *(They exit.)*

SCENE 7

NARRATOR: The most famous example of British resistance to the Romans was led by a woman.

BOUDICCA *enters; she carries a trident and shield. She plants herself boldly in the middle of the performance space.*

BOUDICCA: Me! Boudicca! Queen of the Iceni! *(Turns and conducts the ENSEMBLE)*

ENSEMBLE: We're the Iceni! We're real big and meany!

BOUDICCA: *(Turns back)* When my husband, Prasutagus - the king of the Iceni - died the Romans sneakily seized our kingdom. That was when the Romans discovered that... *(She turns and conducts the ENSEMBLE again)*

ENSEMBLE: We're the Iceni! We're real big and meany!

BOUDICCA: I waited until the Roman army went off to attack another part of the country and then I led a revolt! *(BOUDICCA exits)*

AUDIO CUE 11: SONG - 'BOUDICCA' (01' 55'')

*In sixty AD or not far off
Wife of Prasutagus, filled with wrath
Leads the Iceni with angry shout
Wants to drive the Romans out
Tribal warrior, Celtic Queen
Fiercer than Romans had ever seen
BOUDICCA!*

*Metal-torc and bright red hair
Tattooed skin and angry glare
Horses thundering, chariot-ride
Thousands of warriors by her side*



*Attacks three cities with sparks of fire
Burns them into a funeral pyre
BOUDICCA!*

[Instrumental verse with body-percussion and percussion -
to evoke iron, galloping horses and war-shouts]

*In sixty AD or not far off
Wife of Prasutagus, filled with wrath
Leads the Iceni with angry shout
Wants to drive the Romans out
Tribal warrior, Celtic Queen
Fiercer than Romans had ever seen
BOUDICCA!*

NARRATOR: The Roman Army rushed back. Boudicca's army was defeated and the brave queen met her end. Exactly how she died isn't certain - but there's a legend that she's still in London...

ENSEMBLE: (*Steam train*) Chuffa-chuffa, chuffa-chuffa (*Repeat until end of Narrator's next line*)

NARRATOR: ...buried under platform nine of King's Cross station. Mind the doors!

AUDIO CUE 12: SONG - 'BOUDICCA', CODA (00' 12")

*Boudicca!
Boudicca!
Boudicca!*

*Boudicca!
BOUDICCA!*

SCENE 8

AUDIO CUE 13: MUSIC - ROMANS TV JINGLE (00' 07")

ANNOUNCER: Today's top story is that the Romans say they're in Britain for good. Later on we'll be looking at what that means for sport - will they play for Great Britain or Italy? Right now, though, we're asking: where are they all going to live? Over to our property expert, Ivor Mansion!

IVOR and CENTURION enter from opposite sides. IVOR carries a clipboard, CENTURION holds a spear or something Centurion-ish.

IVOR: Well, as usual it will all come down to location, location, location. I've got a Centurion here to explain the Roman problem. Centurion! I'm an expert. I must be because I'm on the telly. How can I help?

CENTURION: I'm looking for a plot of land.

IVOR: A-ha! I'd recommend something small and manageable.

CENTURION: No. A big plot of land.

IVOR: Right. Then, what with you being a newcomer, I'd recommend something in the village with lots of friendly neighbours.



CENTURION: No. Our neighbours won't want to be friendly. They'll be our enemies. I want land that's out in the open so we can see them coming.

IVOR: Oh. How about in the middle of a nice flat field? Easy for the delivery people to reach you.

CENTURION: No. Up at the top of a hill would be best, so we can fire nasty things down on them from above.

IVOR: *(Tuts)* Expensive. Getting water up there will cost you.

CENTURION: Not if we're near a stream or river to give us fresh water.

IVOR: Well...take my expert advice, the location's all wrong. The only thing a hill in the open next to a stream is good for is... *(Suddenly falls in)* ...ohhh! You want to build a fort, don't you?

CENTURION: Yep.

IVOR: *(Exaggerated)* I fort so!

IVOR exits, but CENTURION stays.

AUDIO CUE 14: SFX - HAMMERING, SAWING, BUILDING (00' 25'')

NARRATOR: The Roman's longest fort of all was built in 122 AD, in the time of Emperor Hadrian. By then the Romans were threatening the people of what we now call Scotland - who they called Barbarians. And the Barbarians had been fighting back! So Hadrian decided he'd invaded enough of Britain...

CENTURION: *(To the ensemble)* New instructions, lads! From the Emperor Hadrian, on how to deal with the Barbarians. Have a guess.

ENSEMBLE: Build-a-de-fence!

CENTURION: Close...

ENSEMBLE: Build-a-de-wall!

CENTURION exits.

Building sounds continue under the narration, only stopping at 'because'...

NARRATOR: Hadrian's Wall took over six years to build and in the end it stretched for over 70 miles. Forts certainly helped the Romans keep the land they'd won. But what helped most was persuading the tribal kings and queens to live peacefully alongside them. And the Romans could be very persuasive...

SCENE 9

A Roman GENERAL and a British KING/QUEEN enter from opposite sides.

GENERAL: Well we had a good battle, Your Majesty, but the best side won in the end. Us! So now I want you to talk your tribe into accepting us and living like we do.

KING / QUEEN: *(Really bad loser)* Why should I?

GENERAL: Because if you do agree we'll let you stay in charge.

KING / QUEEN: Huh! And what if I don't agree?

GENERAL: Then we'll make you a slave and take over anyway.

KING / QUEEN: *(Pause for thought)* You know, I've always fancied living like a Roman! *(They exit)*



SCENE 10

NARRATOR: One of the biggest changes the Romans brought to Britain was peace - in Latin, 'Pax Romana'. The tribes no longer fought each other. And so long as they didn't rebel, the Romans no longer fought them. They happily let the Britons live peacefully - on two conditions. Firstly: they had to hand over regular amounts of money...

TAX COLLECTOR *enters. S/he carries a collecting basket. S/he proceeds along the front row of the ensemble (or possibly round the performance space).*

AUDIO CUE 15: SFX - 'KERCHING' OF CASH REGISTER (00' 24")

COLLECTOR: Pay your taxes here! Come on, empty your pockets! The more you own, the more you pay! Pay your taxes here...

S/he continues 'collecting' until reaching the other end of the ensemble, then returns to it.

NARRATOR: The second condition was that Britons were supposed to worship the Roman gods and goddesses as well as their own...

AUDIO CUE 16: SONG - 'ROMAN GODS AND GODDESSES' (02' 01")

(Chorus)
*Roman gods and goddesses,
Dancing round in space,
Moving round, like planets,
Each one in their place,
Worship them in temples,
Plenty (just in case!)
Roman gods and goddesses,
Meet them, face to face.*

*Here comes mighty Jupiter,
Thundering along,
Keeps a watch for Mars as
He sings his war-like song.
On the hunt, Diana,
Goddess of the Moon.
Spreading love is Venus,
Bringing Springtime soon.*

(Chorus)
Roman gods and goddesses...

*Janus looks out both ways,
Brings the New Year in,
Minerva inspires poetry,
Art and medicine.
Roman gods and goddesses,
It's hard to keep a score,
With Saturn, Cupid, Juno...
Yes and (shouted) PLENTY MORE!*



NARRATOR: When their emperor died, Romans believed he would take his place in the heavens among all the other gods. This must have produced some interesting conversations between Emperors and their doctors...

EMPEROR *enters, dressed in a toga and coughing nastily.* PHYSICIAN *enters from the other side, a stethoscope draped around his/her neck.*

PHYSICIAN: Good morning, Emperor. How are you feeling today?

EMPEROR: Terrible. Have you got my test results yet?

PHYSICIAN: Ye-es. Do you want the good news or the bad news?

EMPEROR: The good news.

PHYSICIAN: The good news, Emperor, is that in a couple of days you'll be a god!

EMPEROR: But...Emperors only become gods when they're dead!

PHYSICIAN: Ah. That's the bad news.

SCENE 11

NARRATOR: Gods and goddesses were worshipped in temples. A temple could be dedicated to one god or many, and they could be found in every town...along with the forum, where public meetings took place.

ENSEMBLE: *(All begin gabbling to each other, as if in a public meeting. Stop instantly when NARRATOR commands).*

NARRATOR: QUIET! Next to the forum would be a building for government officials called a basilica. *(To ensemble)* And do you know how many officials worked there?

ENSEMBLE: About half of them!

NARRATOR: All Roman towns had straight streets and neat rows of buildings. And the Romans brought their architecture to Britain, too. Beautiful shapes appeared: *(Spoken as introductions to movement sequences)* Columns. Arches. Bridges.

AUDIO CUE 17: MUSIC - COLUMNS, ARCHES AND BRIDGES (01' 26'')

The ENSEMBLE mimes creating elegant columns, arches and bridges.

NARRATOR: The Romans were terrific builders...in part because of something they'd discovered...

A small table has a bucket on it. This is a necessary prop. A couple of further, small, containers would be a bonus. MAXIMA *enters, carrying a big spoon or ladle. She mimes tipping stuff into the bucket and stirring and is doing this as* TEACHER *- wearing a mortarboard and/or academic gown - enters.*

TEACHER: Maxima! This is supposed to be a science practical, not mud-pie making hour.

MAXIMA: I'm not playing, Sir. I've made a discovery! Look.

TEACHER: *(Peering into bucket)* Water? Hardly a discovery, Maxima!

MAXIMA: Ah, but if I mix in some volcanic sand *(Lifts containers if available)* and lime, then I get...

TEACHER: A soggy mess!

MAXIMA: No, Sir. It goes really hard.

TEACHER: Rubbish! Give me that bucket! *(Slides bucket from table and mimes it being too heavy to hold, letting it land on his/her foot. Reacts, hopping wildly)*



MAXIMA: I'm going to call it concrete, Sir... (*They exit*)
NARRATOR: Knowing how to make concrete and mortar enabled the Romans to build everything from harbours to towns and forts. But equally important were the roads. Before the invasion there had only been rough tracks. But well-made roads enabled soldiers and equipment to move around quickly.

SCENE 12

AUDIO CUE 18: MUSIC - ROMANS TV JINGLE (00' 07'')

ANNOUNCER: Now on Romans TV a sneak preview of our new motoring series called 'First Gear' - which will be trying out a new voice-activated navigation system...

Two chairs are set out in the centre of the performance space, representing the front seats of a car. The DRIVER enters - perhaps clad in white racing suit and helmet - and mimes opening and closing the car door. He sits in the 'driving seat'. SATNAV's voice is disembodied, the person playing the part being concealed from view.

DRIVER: Navigation system!
SATNAV: You called, oh speedy one!
DRIVER: Good, ten out of ten for hearing.
SATNAV: I assume you wish to use my top-of-the-range navigation features, Sir?
THE DRIVER: I certainly do. I'm going to *[INSERT DESTINATION]*.

SATNAV: And what type of roads do you wish to use?
DRIVER: Roman roads!
SATNAV: Very well. Route calculated. Drive straight ahead.

AUDIO CUE 19: SFX - CAR IGNITION AND RUN UNDER... (01' 10'')

DRIVER: (*Mimes driving throughout*) When's my first turning?
SATNAV: Searching map data. Turnings information absent.
DRIVER: What? How about corners, then? Or bends?
SATNAV: Searching map data. Corners and bends information absent.
DRIVER: You're joking! How about curves! Zig-zags! Wiggly bits!
SATNAV: Searching map data. Curves and zig-zags information absent. Same goes for wiggly-bits.
DRIVER: Call yourself a navigation system! What sort of road is so straight it doesn't have turnings or corners or bends?
SATNAV: A Roman road!

SCENE 13

NARRATOR: As towns grew larger, so did the houses. The largest of them were called villas, which were quite different from the homes that Britons were used to...

A ROMAN and a BRITON enter. ROMAN looks wealthy and superior, BRITON poor and down-trodden.



ROMAN: My villa has lots of rooms arranged around a courtyard!
How many rooms has your home got?

BRITON: Er...one.

ROMAN: My home has solid walls of stone!

BRITON: Mine has wobbly walls of wood!

ROMAN: My roof is made from tiles.

BRITON: My roof is made of straw - if our cow hasn't eaten it.

ROMAN: And we have drains! We can wash or go to the toilet and our drains take it all outside.

BRITON: Er...we go outside first and then - y'know.

ROMAN: Best of all, I now have a hypocaust.

BRITON: A what?

ROMAN: A hypocaust. It's a system that sends hot air from a furnace through spaces under the floor so that the whole house is warmed up! We call it central heating.

BRITON: (*Sniffs*). Oh, we've had central heating for years. Our fire's always been in the middle of the floor! (*They exit*)

SCENE 14

AUDIO CUE 20: MUSIC - ROMANS TV JINGLE (00' 07'')

ANNOUNCER: It's the middle of the evening here on Romans TV and time for a short message from our sponsors - Roman Refurbishing!

SPONSOR enters. *S/he is holding a modern microphone.*

SPONSOR: We at Roman Refurbishing know the importance you place on fabulous furnishings, on precious pottery and sensational sculpture. And today we are proud to announce a new line: magnificent mosaics! We've signed up the foremost exponent of the art available - none other than the legendary Pickaxo!

Wearing an artist's smock, PICKAXO enters. S/he is carrying a bag (containing shells or similar).

PICKAXO: Hello every bodies!

SPONSOR: Mr Pickaxo, can I ask you first: what exactly is a mosaic?

PICKAXO: A mosaic is picture made of itsy-bitsy stones or teeny-wee-ny pebbles or titchy-witchy bits of glass or pottery.

SPONSOR: I see. Where do you get them from?

PICKAXO: Itsy-bitsy stones everywhere on the ground! Same for teeny-weeny pebbles!

SPONSOR: How about the - er...titchy-witchy bits of glass or pottery? Can you tell us your favourite way of collecting them?

PICKAXO: It's-a-simple. (*Holds up bag*) First, find vase or glass or something you not like much. Then drop it on floor (*He does so*) and jumpy-jumpy! (*He jumps on the bag a few times*) Now have lots of titchy-witchy bits!

SPONSOR: Um. Er. Ha-ha. Yes.

AUDIO CUE 21: SONG - 'MAKE A MOSAIC' (01' 06'')



*Make a mosaic,
Join up the pieces,
Pattern or picture,
Creature or face,
Such a creation!
And such tessellation!
Yes, make a mosaic,
Find the right place...*

*Pottery, sculpture,
Metalwork, glassware,
Fabrics and jewellery,
Join up each part,
Altogether they make
Such a mosaic!
Yes, creative patterns,
Crafted with art!*

*Make a mosaic...
Make a mosaic...
Make a mosaic...
MAKE A MOSAIC!*

NARRATOR: Towns and roads, houses of stone, central heating and drains - even interior decorating! Nowadays we take them all for granted. But Britons had none of these before the Romans came.

SCENE 15

The ROMANS and BRITONS halves of the ensemble now turn to face each other.

NARRATOR: In the early years of Roman Britain there were some big differences between the ordinary people...

ROMAN: We Romans are powerful!

BRITONS: We Britons do what we're told.

ROMANS: We Romans are wealthy!

BRITONS: We Britons haven't got a bean. We're poor Britons. Aaaah!

NARRATOR: But over the years, life changed for the Britons...

In the front row of the Britons half of the ensemble, BRIT 1, BRIT 2, BRIT 3 and BRIT 4 turn to face the front.

BRIT 1: I don't feel like a poor Briton any more!

BRIT 2: I eat like a Roman...

BRIT 3: I dress like a Roman...

BRIT 4: I speak like a Roman...

The whole BRITONS half of the ensemble turn smartly to face the front.

BRITS: Now we feel like poor Romans!

The ROMANS half of the ensemble now turn to face the front.

NARRATOR: And the difference between the rich and poor in Roman Britain was very big indeed...



AUDIO CUE 22: SONG - 'OH, THE STRATA OF SOCIETY' (02' 10")

*Oh, the strata
Of society,
Down from Emperor to slave,
Oh they tell you
What you ought to do
And just how you should behave
And the manners
That you have to show
When superiors you pass...
Roman people,
Neatly organised
Into layers, class by class.*

*From the toga
With the purple stripe,
To the sack-cloth down below,
Know your status
In society,
What you wear and who you know,
Status symbols?
Own a villa
And a garden and a horse...
Make your slaves do
What you want them to,
When you want them to, of course.*

*Yes, the Romans
Practiced slavery,
Made their beaten foes serve them.
Cook my meals, slave!
Wash the dishes!
Bow down low to all my friends.
If you're lucky,
I won't beat you,
I will even give you food
If there's any
We haven't eaten -
And I'm in a friendly mood!*

NARRATOR: Yes - at the very bottom of society were slaves. Slaves would be bought and sold in markets. Male slaves would be used for such things as working the fields, female slaves for duties in the house. A slave with a talent would cost more - like one who could cook...

SCENE 16

AUDIO CUE 23: MUSIC - ROMANS TV JINGLE (00' 07")

ANNOUNCER: Welcome to *Slave Time* - for all you slaves out there! Today - develop a talent, like our guest. S/he's a cook named, er... (*Looks quizically off screen*) ...cook. Here s/he is!

COOK enters. S/he wears an apron and carries a mixing bowl and spoon.



COOK: *(Who addresses the audience throughout)* Do you eat three meals a day? Then you're eating like a Roman. Ientaculum is always my first job - that's what you call breakfast.

S/he starts mixing as MASTER, wearing a toga, enters. He doesn't get close to COOK, simply shouts imperiously from a distance.

MASTER: My usual, cook. Wheat pancakes with dates and honey.
(Turns away)

COOK: Then comes Prandium: that's the mid-day meal.

MASTER: *(Turns back)* Fish, bread, cold meat and vegetables for me, cook. I'm saving myself for later! *(Turns away)*

COOK: Later! *(Groans)* By 'later' he means Cena, the main meal of the day. Evening dinner. If I was slave to a poor Roman it wouldn't be so bad. Just vegetables and porridge. But for a rich Roman, food is a way of showing off.

MASTER: *(Turns back)* We have a dinner party tonight, cook. Be adventurous! Your snails fattened in milk are good, but what I'd really like are partridge brains or flamingo tongues!
(Exits)

COOK: Partridges? Flamingoes? *(Scoffs)* Hah! He's getting the snails. They're easier to catch! *(COOK exits)*

SCENE 17

During the following sketch, NARRATOR interacts with the whole ENSEMBLE, BRITONS, ROMANS, ROMAN GIRLS and ROMAN BOYS as indicated. If this is impractical then the different parts could be voiced by the whole ensemble.

AUDIO CUE 24: SFX - SCHOOL BELL (00' 04")

NARRATOR: STOP! *(The bell stops)* We don't need a school bell for a show about the Romans in Britain. There were no schools in those days!

ENSEMBLE: Hooray!

NARRATOR: In fact most children didn't have lessons at all.

ENSEMBLE: Hooray!

NARRATOR: Unless they were the children of rich Romans - then they did.

ROMANS: Boo!

NARRATOR: At least they did if they were boys.

BOYS: Boo!

NARRATOR: Girls didn't have lessons.

GIRLS: Hooray!

NARRATOR: They were expected to learn how to help their mothers around the house.

GIRLS: Boo!

One ROMAN BOY steps forward, joined by SLAVE (a Briton).

NARRATOR: Rich children often had their own slave to do things for them.



SLAVE: (*Bows low*) Good morning, young Master. Isn't it a lovely day?

ROMAN BOY: No!

NARRATOR: A child's slave would be expected to look after them, and help them grow to be an adult.

SLAVE: Have you completed your lessons, young Master?

ROMAN BOY: No!

NARRATOR: If they'd been well educated before being captured, a slave might have been made to work as the child's teacher.

SLAVE: Young master, as your teacher I want you to learn your lessons!

ROMAN BOY: Well, slave, as your young master I'm ordering you not to want me to learn my lessons - so there! (*They exit*)

NARRATOR: Most children didn't have their own slave, of course. They had to help out in the fields or around the house...or with shopping at the market. Just like today, though, they might keep a pet: rabbits, dogs and birds were the most popular. And, when they had time, they might also play with toys like dolls and animals carved from wood. Everybody, young and old, enjoyed playing games.

AUDIO CUE 25: SONG - 'SPIN THAT COIN' (02' 50")

*Spin that coin and flip it over,
Is it heads or is it tails?
Take it to the marketplace
And change your coin for goods on sale.
Emperors, they come and go,*

*But trade and people carry on,
Spin that coin and flip it over,
On and on and on...*

[Instrumental verse, with market-place actions]

*Roll that dice and count the numbers,
One, two, three, four, five or six?
Fly a kite, throw knuckle-bones,
And play with dolls and hoops and sticks.
Model chariots, rolling marbles,
Toys and games they carry on,
Roll that dice and count the numbers,
On and on and on...*

[Instrumental verse, with toy-and-game actions]

*Sing the songs and dance the dances,
Blow the flutes and twang the lyre,
Step in time with tambourines,
Then stamp the ground, then reach up higher.
Castanets and finger-cymbals,
Dance and music carry on,
Sing the songs and dance the dances,
On and on and on...*

[Instrumental verse, with musical instrument actions]

Spin that coin...



Roll that dice...
Dance and music...
Spin that coin...
Spin that coin...
Roll that dice...
Dance and music...
Spin that coin...
Spin that coin...
Roll that dice...
Dance and music...
Spin that coin...
Spin that coin...
Roll that dice...
Dance and music...
Spin that coin!

SCENE 18

NARRATOR: Entertainment was important for adult Romans, too. Such as having a bath.

ENSEMBLE: Eeeewww!

NARRATOR: Most homes didn't have their own bath...

ENSEMBLE: Hooray!

NARRATOR: So ordinary Romans went to a public bath-house. This was a bit like the leisure centres of today. In the bath-house you could meet your friends...

Members of the ENSEMBLE shake hands with their neighbour.

NARRATOR: ...play board games...

ENSEMBLE mime looking thoughtful and moving pieces on a board.

NARRATOR: ...talk business...

ENSEMBLE engage in a certain amount of business-like head-shaking and/or finger-wagging.

NARRATOR: AND HAVE A BATH!

SCENE 19

AUDIO CUE 26: MUSIC - 'ROMANS TV JINGLE' (00' 07")

ANNOUNCER: Late night Romans TV continues with Roman Riches. Today we've got some advice on how to make money by saving it! If you're worried about the ever-spiralling cost of beauty products then here's Trixie with the answer you've been waiting for!

TRIXIE bursts on. She's dressed in a white coat and is enthusiastic in a TV sales-style.



TRIXIE: Hello! It's me, Trixie, your personal grooming advisor!
Today I'm going to tell you how to save money by getting clean the Roman way - without soap! Now, I need a volunteer Roman. (*Points at the ensemble*) You! And a volunteer slave. (*Points again*) You!

VOLUNTEER ROMAN *and* VOLUNTEER SLAVE *emerge reluctantly from the ensemble.*

TRIXIE: (*To VOLUNTEER ROMAN*) Now the first thing to do, of course, is take all your clothes off!

VOLUNTEER ROMAN *looks horrified and begins heading back to the ensemble until stopped by Trixie.*

TRIXIE: OK, we'll imagine that part. Now, hop into the caldarium - that's a hot, steamy room - and stay there till you're all sweaty!

VOLUNTEER ROMAN *mimes getting hot, wiping sweat from brow etc.*

TRIXIE: Dripping, are we? That means the pores of your skin are wide open! Now for the next part! (*She produces a wicked-looking - cardboard - strigil - an essential prop*).

VOL ROMAN: Wha - what's that thing?

TRIXIE: It's called a strigil. No home should be without one. (*To VOLUNTEER SLAVE*) Now, slave - drag this strigil firmly all over our Roman's skin.

AUDIO CUE 27: SFX - CARTOON SCRAPING (00' 27'')

VOLUNTEER SLAVE *does this, to much grimacing from VOLUNTEER ROMAN.*

TRIXIE: (*To audience, as scraping is taking place*) You can do this yourself of course, but slaves are soooo useful for getting into those hard-to-reach places! All done?

VOLUNTEER SLAVE *exits leaving a shaken VOLUNTEER ROMAN.*

TRIXIE: Now it's off to the frigidarium to jump into a freezing cold bath!

VOLUNTEER ROMAN *mimes jumping into the bath, with...*

AUDIO CUE 28: SFX - CARTOON SPLASH (00' 10'')

VOL ROMAN: Aaaggh! (*Begins shivering horribly*).

TRIXIE: Now get out, dry yourself off - and you're done!

VOLUNTEER ROMAN *exits, miming drying with a bath towel.*

TRIXIE: And that's how to save money by bathing Roman style!

She exits.



SCENE 20

NARRATOR: Another Roman entertainment was the theatre. Theatres were always in the open air and the audience sat on seats in a semi-circle, facing the stage.

ACTOR enters. Dress can be pretty much anything, so long as his/her demeanour is proud and haughty.

ACTOR: (OTT) Woe is me!

NARRATOR: Roman plays were usually ancient Greek tragedies...

ACTOR: (Slightly louder) Woe, woe and thrice woe!

NARRATOR: (Also raising voice) And very long...

ACTOR: I am doomed!

NARRATOR: So to stop the audience getting bored, performers would 'over-act', waving their arms about...

ACTOR: (Waving, reaching crescendo) Totally, completely and utterly doomed!

NARRATOR: (Over ACTOR) ...and SHOUTING THEIR LINES LOUDLY!

ACTOR: (Pathetic last gasp) Farewell! (Either crawls away or is carried off - milking applause as s/he goes!)

NARRATOR: Not all the plays were tragedies, though. The Romans also enjoyed a good laugh and watched plays a bit like our pantomimes...

GOODIE enters. S/he wears a simple flat cardboard mask on which is drawn a simple curved mouth. It's pointing downwards.

GOODIE: Hello, boys and girls!

NARRATOR: The actors often wore masks, so that the audience could tell the goodies from the baddies...

GOODIE: I'm a goodie, I am!

ENSEMBLE: Oh, no, you're not!

GOODIE: Oh, yes, I am!

ENSEMBLE: Oh, no, you're not!

GOODIE: (Removes mask and sees that the mouth is pointing the wrong way) Oh, no, I'm not! (Replaces the mask with the smile pointing upwards)

ENSEMBLE: Oh, yes, you are!

SCENE 21

AUDIO CUE 29: MUSIC - ROMANS TV JINGLE (00' 07'')

ANNOUNCER: Now on late night Romans TV...if you're of a nervous disposition, time to look away! We're going live to the amphitheatre where I hope our reporter Rosie Glow, is waiting. Rosie, are you there?

ROSIE oozes in, holding a microphone.

ROSIE: Yes, I'm here. And I've just been told that the gladiators have arrived!

ANNOUNCER: Rosie, I'm sure the audience doesn't need reminding, but gladiators are men especially trained to entertain crowds by battling to the death. Is that so?



ROSIE: That's right. Only half of them will be leaving here on foot. The other half will be carried out - possibly in a number of pieces.

SIMPLUS SIMONUS *enters, holding a wooden sword. He wanders around, gazing up and down, as if in a massive amphitheatre. ROSIE hurries across to SIMPLUS).*

ROSIE: Simplus Simonus, you're about to face your first fight as a gladiator! So how about this amphitheatre, Simonus?

SIMONUS: Yeah, big ennit? Why's it round?

ROSIE: So that everybody can see you clearly!

SIMONUS: Right! And why do them seats slope up towards the sky?

ROSIE: Same reason. Your fans won't have their view blocked by the person in front.

SIMONUS: Right! But them in the front row might get covered in sand. *(Points downwards)* Why's there so much of it on the ground?

ROSIE: It's perfect for soaking up blood.

SIMONUS: Right! Er...whose blood?

AUDIO CUE 30: SFX - LION ROARS (00' 07")

ROSIE: That lion's. Or yours. *(As s/he scurries away)* Good luck!

Simonus looks confused, then aghast, then exits hurriedly.

NARRATOR: Gladiators might fight wild animals - or each other. Many of the gladiators were slaves, bought for their size and strength. Others had been found guilty of committing a serious crime and been given a choice: be executed or take your chances in a fight!

AUDIO CUE 31: SONG - 'INTO THE ARENA' (02' 00"). WITH ADDITIONAL DRONE TO FADE OUT AS NEEDED UNDER THE FOLLOWING ACTION)

*Into the arena,
Cruelty and horror,
Animals displayed there
Hunted till they die,
Antelope and elephant
And lion, bear and leopard,
Into the arena, why?*

*Into the arena,
Gladiators fighting,
Locked in mortal combat
Fighting to the death.
Wrestling with weaponry
And nets and shields and armour,
Struggling for their final breath.*

A group of the ensemble act as GLADIATORS, the rest as SPECTATORS. As the whole ensemble sing the coda below GLADIATORS slowly move into the performance space, taking their positions for the movement which follows. All gaze around to give the impression that they're entering an amphitheatre.



SPECTATORS *lean forward, nudging each other in anticipation.*

Into the arena, go..!

Into the arena, go..!

Into the arena, go..!

Into the arena, go..!

The drone tail of the music continues under. The movement should end with two gladiators fighting in the centre of the performance space as all others watch them. One (WIMPUS) falls to the ground, defeated. The other (GIGANTICUS) should be poised, ready to deliver the coup de grace with a trident.

The following narration takes place over the movement. It needs to be timed so that the final sentence is delivered at the very end of the movement, with the two central gladiators positioned as described.

NARRATOR: The worst part came right at the end. And what happened depended on whether the spectators thought they'd seen a good fight or not...

All the FIGHTERS turn to look at the stage. One VIP spectator, in the middle of the front row, is wearing a wreath as a sign of importance. VIP steps forward as the COMPERE hurries on.

COMPERE: Giganticus wins! Wimpus submits! Time for the decision!

VIP: Ooh, I hate this bit!

COMPERE: (To VIP) Do you want to hold a public vote?

VIP: (Relieved) That's a good idea! (To the audience) Thumbs down if you think Wimpus should die! Thumbs up if you think he fought well and deserves to live!

The ensemble on stage have a mixture of thumbs up and down. COMPERE encourages audience participation. As s/he begins counting ups and downs, the other FIGHTERS move to surround GIGANTICUS and WIMPUS so that they're hidden from the audience's view.

COMPERE: (Working the audience) Ooh, looks pretty even. One up, one down, two down...

The trident rises high from the circle surrounding GIGANTICUS and WIMPUS, then comes down again.

WIMPUS: Aaaaaaagggghh!!

The circle parts. WIMPUS has the trident stuck between his arm and side.

COMPERE: Giganticus! I haven't finished counting!

GIGANTICUS: Oops. Sorree!

During the following narration GIGANTICUS makes his way up towards VIP.

NARRATOR: Amazingly, some gladiators survived until they were old enough to retire. When that happened, they were given a present...

VIP: (Solemnly) Giganticus, to celebrate your retirement, receive this wooden sword! (Produces one)

GIGANTICUS: Hmmph! I'd have preferred a nice clock.

FIGHTERS exit and return to the stage, perhaps carrying WIMPUS with them.



SCENE 22

NARRATOR: Romans and Britons lived together for a long time. They married, had children and grandchildren. If you could trace your family tree back far enough, you'd probably find a Roman ancestor!

ROMAN SOLDIER(S) *enter and march to the centre of the performance space where they stand facing straight ahead.*

NARRATOR: By the beginning of the fifth century Britain was still ruled by the Romans and protected by the Roman Army - but that was about to change...

BRITON 1 *enters, moving to the far left of the performance space.*

BRITON 1: Help!

NARRATOR: The Roman Empire was crumbling. It was being attacked on all sides.

BRITON 2 *enters, moving to the far right of the performance space.*

BRITON 2: Help!

NARRATOR: That included Britain, which was being threatened by war-like peoples coming from countries like Holland and Germany.

BRITON 1: We're being attacked over here! Send some Roman soldiers!

BRITON 2: What about us? We're being attacked here as well!

SOLDIERS: *(Reacting by looking right and left)* Hold on, hold on! The Roman army can't help you all!

NARRATOR: So the Roman emperors had to decide: who should they help and who should they leave to fight their own battles? They defended Britain for a while...

ENSEMBLE: Hooray!

NARRATOR: But in 410 AD they finally withdrew their army...

SOLDIERS: *(A capello, to WW1 tune)* Goodbye! Goodbye! We're off home, leaving you high and dryee! *(They exit, marching)*

SCENE 23

NARRATOR: That happened all of 1600 years ago. So - could there possibly be any evidence still left in modern Britain to show that the Romans were once here?

ENSEMBLE: Yes!

NARRATOR: *(To audience)* Get ready for a whistle-stop tour of some Roman place names... *(To ensemble, as if conducting)* One, two, three, four...

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

NARRATOR: Any more?

ENSEMBLE: *'n' before you start to pester,
We're heading off to Chester,*



Leicester 'n' Worcester,
Gloucester 'n' Cirencester!

NARRATOR: Is that all?

ENSEMBLE: *Don't give us grief, headmaster!
We've still got towns with 'caster'!
Doncaster 'n' Lancaster
Tadcaster 'n' Brancaster!*

NARRATOR: Have we reached Wales, yet?

ENSEMBLE: *Yes! To keep things really fair,
There's Welsh towns that start with 'caer'
Caerphilly 'n' Caernarfon
Caerwent 'n' Caerleon!
(Clap three times)
Now we're done!*

NARRATOR: Every British place name that ends in 'chester' or 'cester' or 'castor', or Welsh place names that start with 'caer', is a sure sign that the Romans were there - because they all come from the Latin word 'castra' which means camp or fort. All of which proves that the Romans...

ENSEMBLE: Did a lot of 'roman about'!

SCENE 24

AUDIO CUE 32: MUSIC - ROMANS TV JINGLE (00' 07")

ANNOUNCER: And now our final programme before closedown - Latin Legacy Challenge!

AUDIO CUE 33: MUSIC - SERIOUS TV QUIZ THEME (00' 15")

QUIZ HOST *enters*. *S/he can have a buzzer/bell to use during the quiz.*

QUIZ HOST: Welcome to the *Latin Legacy Challenge*, the quiz that shows how much the English language is another sign that the Romans were here. Can we have our contestant, please!

PETRA *enters*. *She looks aggressively studious!*

QUIZ HOST: And your name is?

PETRA: Petra.

QUIZ HOST: Petra, you have to describe your life in four sentences that do NOT have a Latin word.

PETRA: Easy-peasy! Nobody speaks Latin any more!

QUIZ HOST: Four buzzes/rings like this (*Sounds buzzer / bell*) and you're out. Away you go. First sentence.

PETRA: I live with my family!

QUIZ HOST: (*Buzzer / bell*) Sorry, Petra. 'Family' comes from the Latin word 'familia' - which means family.

PETRA: I go to school!

QUIZ HOST: (*Buzzer / bell*) Sorry. 'School' comes from the Latin word 'schola' - which means school!

PETRA: My school has a library!

QUIZ HOST: (*Buzzer / bell*) I'm afraid 'library' comes from the Latin word 'liber' - meaning 'book'! Only one life left, Petra...

PETRA: (*Now seriously irritated*) Right, this one can't fail. (*Really confident*) I enjoy using my computer!



QUIZ HOST: (*Short pause, then buzzer / bell*) Sorry. Even some modern words are descended from Latin. 'Computer' comes from 'computare' - which is Latin for 'calculate'. I'm afraid you're out, Petra.

PETRA: (*As she stomps off*) What an idiotic game!

QUIZ HOST: (*Buzzer / bell as s/he follows Petra*) 'Idiotic' comes from the Latin 'idiota'...

A lectern is moved centre-stage. The following section takes place in rapid sequence with the different characters entering, moving to the lectern, saying their bit then exiting. Dress: JUDGE could merely carry a gavel, CHOIR - of three - wear collar ruffs, VICAR a surplice or dog collar as s/he lifts a folder marked 'Holy Bible', AUGUSTUS and JULIUS CAESAR laurel wreaths, MARS and JUNO tinsel crowns.

NARRATOR: There's plenty more evidence that the Romans were in Britain: evidence from our way of life...

JUDGE: Prisoner! Do you plead guilty, or not guilty? (*Exits*)

NARRATOR: The legal system we know today began life under the Romans - for example, trials before a trusted judge.

CHOIR: Halleluiah! Halleluiah!

NARRATOR: Britain became a Christian country in 380 AD, when Emperor Theodosius made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire.

CHOIR: We wish you a merry Christmas!

NARRATOR: Yes, Christmas began under the Romans too! When the Roman Empire switched to Christianity, the winter festival of Saturnalia - in honour of the god Saturn - was turned into a celebration of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. And why did Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem at all? Because...

VICAR: (*Reading from Bible*) 'A decree went forth from Caesar Augustus that a census of the whole world should be taken...'

NARRATOR: The census which is carried out in Britain every ten years began with the Romans! And Emperor Augustus, who decreed that famous census, is still with us in another way...

AUGUSTUS: The divine Augustus here! The month of August is named after little old me!

NARRATOR: Our calendar dates back to Roman times - as you can tell from the names of some of the other months...

JULIUS C'R: I'm Julius Caesar! July is named after me!

MARS: I'm Mars, the Roman god of war! The month of March is named after me!

JUNO: And I'm Juno, the Roman goddess of marriage. June is named after me!

NARRATOR: Yes, everywhere you look there are signs of the debt we owe...

ENSEMBLE: To the Rocking Romans!

AUDIO CUE 34: MUSIC - SONG: 'IT'S ROMAN FACT!' - TO THE TUNE 'IS THAT A FACT? (01' 25")



*Rocking Romans,
Though they were feared,
Left their echoes,
For our day and year.
Latin we speak and Latin we hear -
It's Roman fact!*

*Concrete began
With Roman brains,
Can you imagine
Life without drains, (poo!)
Easter bunnies or Christmas refrains?
It's Roman fact!*

*Roman baths - well,
It makes you think,
Without their lead
Would Britons still stink?
And their fair trials keep us out of clink.
It's Roman fact!*

*Art and beauty,
They brought it all
Even left us
With Hadrian's Wall.
Thank you, Hist'ry - you've just taught us all
(Spoken) ROCKING ROMAN FACTS!*

THE END

Downloading the audio cue for 'Rocking Romans!'

The audio cues indicated in red throughout the script have been hyperlinked so that you can preview them as you read the script. Simply click on the link and it should open in your default media player. All 34 of the audio links can be downloaded as a .zip file at this link:

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/rocking_romans/rocking_romans_audio_cues.zip

Putting on a performance of 'Rocking Romans!'

There is a comprehensive set of Notes available online with plenty of guidance on how to stage a memorable performance of 'Rocking Romans!' Go to:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03y5yvm>

Additional music resources:

The musical elements of 'Rocking Romans!' grew out of one of our regular series of 'Time and Tune'. The programmes are available here:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01n4h6j>

Each of the songs in 'Rocking Romans!' can be rehearsed in their original form (ie as used in 'Time and Tune') by going to this page and selecting either the 'full vocal' or 'backing track' versions of the songs:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03y66by>

The sketches grew out of our History series 'Romans Audio Clips'. The programmes are available here:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/history/romans>

Copyright

Please note: All copyright, trade marks, design rights, patents and other intellectual property rights (registered and unregistered) in and on BBC Online Services and BBC Content belong to the BBC and/or third parties (which may include you or other users). The BBC reserves all of its rights in BBC Content and BBC Online Services. Nothing in the Terms grants you a right or licence to use any trade mark, design right or copyright owned or controlled by the BBC or any other third party except as expressly provided in the Terms. For the full Terms and Conditions go here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/terms/>

