

Teacher Notes

The Roman army

Synopsis

Julia discovers a gladius and tells us all about the Roman army. She explains why its weapons, tactics and soldiers made it so successful.

Resources:

Comprehension:

Seven questions testing a variety of skills (retrieval, summarising, etc.) to check and reinforce learning from the animation.

Command the Army:

Children pretend to be generals and choose which Roman tactics to use in given situations. They then explain their choices.

A Legionary's Equipment:

Children label a picture of a legionary to show what each piece of equipment is, then explain how this equipment contributed to Roman dominance.

Key questions to consider:

How are we able to find out so much about Ancient Rome?

How was life in Ancient Rome similar/different to our lives now?

How was the city of Rome founded?

How did Ancient Rome compare to other ancient cities, and our modern cities?

History curriculum objectives:

- Continue to develop chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of history.
- Regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance.
- Construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information.
- NI: Some of the characteristics of past societies and distinctive features of life in the past.
- Welsh Progression step 3: I can use appropriate methods to gather information related to my enquiries and I am able to interpret the information obtained in the context of the enquiry question.
- Welsh Progression step 3: I can identify and explain the main causes and effects of events in a range of contexts, and I can recognise how these impact communities and societies.
- Welsh Progression step 2: I can present what I have discovered in a variety of ways and draw simple conclusions.
- SOC 2-06a: I can discuss why people and events from a particular time in the past were important.

Comprehension

How long did soldiers have to serve in the army for?

What animal gave its name to the Roman *testudo* shield formation?

Give two differences between *legionaries* and *auxiliaries* in the Roman army.

How many men were in a *legion* and how many cohorts was a *legion* split into?

Describe two weapons mentioned in the animation.

Why did the Romans invade Britain?

Was the army important to Rome and its empire? Explain your answer with evidence from the animation.



Comprehension

How long did soldiers have to serve in the army for?

25 years

What animal gave its name to the Roman *testudo* shield formation?

The tortoise

Give two differences between *legionaries* and *auxiliaries* in the Roman army.

Any two of the following: *Legionaries* were Roman citizens; *auxiliaries* were people from around the empire / *Legionaries* were given benefits like land; *auxiliaries* only became citizens after serving / *Legionaries* were paid more.

How many men were in a *legion* and how many cohorts was a *legion* split into?

About 4,800 men were in a *legion*, and *legions* were divided into ten cohorts.

Describe two weapons mentioned in the animation.

Any two of the following: *Gladius*, a short sword / *Pilum*, a spear that disabled enemy shields / Catapult, which threw rocks / *Ballista*, a huge crossbow

Why did the Romans invade Britain?

The Romans wanted wealth and Britain was rich in natural resources like tin, lead and copper. There was a lot of wheat there too and people the Romans could take as slaves.

Was the army important to Rome and its empire? Explain your answer with evidence from the animation.

Yes. The animation says it affected the way the empire was governed and how Rome made its money. It even says that without the army, there would have been no empire at all.



Command the Army



"I hope you're ready for your new job: a general in the Roman army! Below is a set of challenges you and your army face. For each one, choose the right action, tick it, and then explain why you made that choice. Your soldiers are counting on you!"

1. An army of Celts is charging at you. Do you order your army to:

Throw their *pila* (javelins)?

☐
☐

Form a *testudo* (tortoise)?

☐
☐

Build a camp of *sudes* (stakes)?

Build a permanent fort of stone?

Explain your choice.

2. You stop for the night in enemy lands. Do you order your army to:

Build a road?

☐
☐

Build a camp of *sudes* (stakes)?

☐
☐

Use catapults and *ballistae*?

Form a *testudo* (tortoise)?

Explain your choice.

3. You want to attack a Celtic hillfort. Do you order your soldiers to:

Build a permanent fort of stone?

☐
☐

Throw their *pila* (javelins)?

☐
☐

Build a road?

Use catapults and *ballistae*?

Explain your choice.

4. Your enemies attack with archers. Do you order your soldiers to:

Build a camp of *sudes* (stakes)?

Throw their *pila* (javelins)?

Form a *testudo* (tortoise)?

Build a road?

Explain your choice.

5. You have conquered a new area and want to keep it. Do you order your army to:

Use catapults and *ballistae*?

Build a permanent fort of stone?

Build a road?

Build a camp of *sudes* (stakes)?

Explain your choice.

6. A border town may need fast help in the future. Do you order your soldiers to:

Build a road?

Form a *testudo* (tortoise)?

Build a camp of *sudes* (stakes)?

Use catapults and *ballistae*?

Explain your choice.

A Legionary's Equipment



"A Roman legionary was a man to be feared if you were an enemy of Rome. They were better trained and better equipped than most warriors they faced. It's no wonder they won so many battles. Below is a legionary from the time of the first emperors. Label his equipment using the correct numbers from the list at the bottom of the page."



1 **Pilum** A throwing spear

2 **Gladius** A short sword

3 **Pugio** A thick knife

4 **Lorica Segmentata** Plate armour

5 **Tunic** Cloth garment

6 **Galea** Metal helmet

7 **Caligae** Stud-bottomed sandals

8 **Cingulum Militare** Decorated belt

9 **Scutum** Large wooden shield

10 **Valli** Stakes to make a camp wall

11 **Tools** To build camps and roads

12 **Sagum** A thick, woollen cloak

13 **Furca** A pole to carry things on

14 **Food, drink and cooking equipment**

A Legionary's Equipment



"There is no doubt that the Roman army was incredibly successful. It carved out and held an enormous empire for hundreds of years. Why was it so successful? Now you have seen what its strongest soldiers were equipped with, answer the questions below."

1. Choose two pieces of a legionary's equipment and explain how they would have helped him to win a battle.

2. Choose two pieces of a legionary's equipment and explain how they would have helped the army to travel quickly to problem areas, or through enemy lands.

3. How important was legionary equipment to the success of the Roman army? What else might have made it so good at winning and keeping an empire?
