



Auckland College Knowledge Organiser – Roman Empire



This **Romans** unit will teach children about the impact the Roman empire had on life in Britain. They will learn about the spread of the Roman empire, the invasion of Britain and the eventual conquest.

The children will also look in detail at some aspects of the Romanisation of Britain, such as the building of Roman roads and bathhouses. The children will also investigate Hadrian's Wall, examining how, where and why it was built. They will learn about the different features of the wall and use maps to determine its location. A lesson on gods and Roman religion will help the children to understand more about the culture and beliefs of Roman people.

By the end of the unit the children should be able to describe when the Romans conquered Britain and recall some facts about the Romanisation of Britain.

Roman Facts

The official languages of the Roman Empire were Latin and Greek. The Romans ruled most of Europe for 1000 years. Julius Caesar invaded Britain in August 55 BC. Hadrian's Wall ran for 73 miles. The Romans were famous for their long, straight roads.

Key Vocabulary

Colosseum	A huge amphitheatre in the centre of Rome
Gladiator	A slave trained to fight other gladiators or animals
Invasion	To take over a country with armed force
Daub	A thick and sticky substance used to form a wall in a round house
Empire	A group of countries ruled by an emperor
Hill fort	A group of round houses built on a hill
Legions	Roman army made up by a group of soldiers
Cavalrymen	Soldiers on horseback
Toga	A loose garment worn by Roman citizens made of cloth



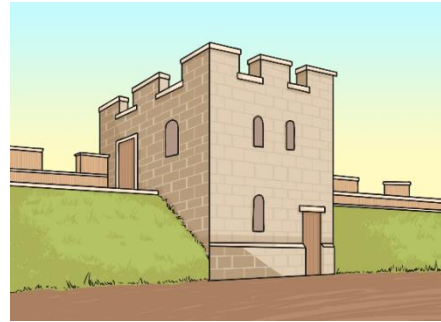
The Romans



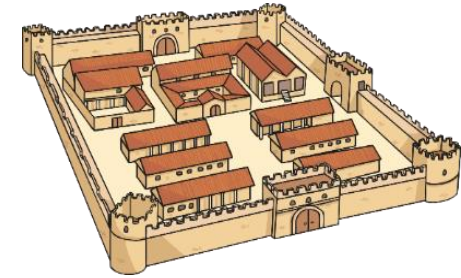
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There was a **milecastle** containing 20 soldiers every Roman mile (1.5km).



There was a **turret** guarded by soldiers built every 500m.



Major **forts** were built along the wall every 8km. These forts could accommodate between 500 to 1000 Roman soldiers

Hadrian's Wall

The solution for dealing with frequent attacks from the Picts came in the form of a great wall. The Roman Emperor Hadrian is best known for building this wall across northern Britain which helped the Romans defend their occupied land. The wall also meant that the Romans could control who was entering and leaving Roman territory and charge taxes to those who wanted to come in.

The Romans began building the wall in AD 122 and it took around 6 years to build. The wall was built by three Roman legions (15,000 men) using mostly stone. It was 117.5km long (or 80 Roman miles), up to 6m high and 3m wide. This meant that two Roman soldiers could perform sentry duty side-by-side.

The wall ran from Bowness-on-Solway on the west Coast to Wallsend on the east Coast. It passed through Carlisle, Gilsland, Chollerford and Corbridge among many other places.

Since thousands of soldiers were stationed along the wall, provision had to be made for them to be able to live their lives. Inside the forts were barracks for the soldiers, a larger house for the commander and his family, a grain store, toilets and sometimes a hospital. There would also be a bathhouse just outside the fort so soldiers could keep clean. Over time, villages and communities developed around the forts. These settlements would contain houses, shops, temples, and taverns. They were probably where the soldiers' wives and families lived.

Roman Gods and Goddesses

In the earlier Roman times, the Roman people believed in many different gods and goddesses whom they believed controlled different aspects of their lives.

The Romans believed in good and bad omens, and they performed many rituals in the hope of receiving good luck. Prayer and sacrifice were important, and the Romans held festivals every month to honour the gods. They would worship their gods and goddesses at temples.

The Romans had lots of gods and goddesses. Many of their gods and goddesses are the same as the Greek gods, but with different names. Some of the more popular Roman gods and goddesses are: **Jupiter** (King of Gods), **Juno** (Queen of Gods), **Mars** (God of War), **Venus** (Goddess of Love), **Apollo** (God of the Sun), **Diana** (God of the Moon), **Minerva** (Goddess of Wisdom) and **Neptune** (God of the Sea).

55 BC: The First Raid

The Roman General Julius Caesar came across the sea to Britain. He wanted to make Britain a part of the Roman empire. He brought with him two Roman legions. **Roman legions** – there were around 5000 soldiers in a Roman army legion.

The Celts were living in Britain. They fought back bravely and the Romans returned to France, despite winning several battles.

In 55 BC, the Romans already ruled the country that



54 BC: The Second Raid

One year later, Julius Caesar came back across the sea. This time he brought with him five legions and 2000 cavalrymen. **Cavalrymen** were soldiers on horseback. The Roman army fought in south-east England and this time got to the other side of the river Thames.

The British tribes agreed to pay tributes to Rome and were left in peace. Caesar did not think Britain was worth a long war and he had other problems in the empire to deal with. The Celts opened-up trading links with the Romans.

AD 43: The Third Attempt

Nearly one hundred years later, the Romans returned. **Emperor Claudius** was now in charge and he was determined to make Britain part of the Roman empire. He sent **General Aulus Plautius** and four legions of soldiers, plus about the same number of auxiliary soldiers. They were split into three divisions.

Auxiliary soldiers were people recruited from non-Roman tribes to reinforce the army or provide a specific skill. The Latin word 'auxilium' means 'help'.

Many Celtic tribes realised how strong this Roman army was and made deals to keep the peace. They agreed to obey Roman laws and pay taxes and in return, they were allowed to keep their kingdoms.

Before the Roman Roads

Before the Romans arrived, Britain had no proper roads. The Celts rode horses, walked and travelled in carts pulled by oxen along paths and tracks. These paths and tracks connected local farms and hamlets, and there were some longer routes for trade. These tracks were often in very poor condition.

Roman Roads

The Romans were famous for their long, straight roads. You can still see some Roman roads today, two thousand years after they were built. The **Fosse Way** was one of the first great Roman roads in Britain. It ran from Exeter to Lincoln, passing through Bath, Gloucester and Leicester.

The Romans wanted to build better roads so that troops could be quickly moved from one place to another; allow the Emperor to have more control as messages could be sent quickly; provide better links between places which was good for trading; and supplies could be sent to different areas of the country.

Over the years, the Romans continued to build more roads, linking to many places throughout Britain. Eventually, around 2000 miles of Roman roads had been built.

Building the Roads

To build a Roman road, we would need to: dig a large ditch the width of your road; fill your ditch with a layer of rubble and a layer of stones; dig two smaller ditches either side; dig two smaller ditches either side; set a layer of smooth paving stones into the sand or gravel to make a hard surface.