

Activity 1

Use the words in the box below to answer the questions.

porridge	legions	leapfrog	chariot races
an aqueduct	a stola	a chiton	

1. What game did children enjoy playing in ancient Rome?
2. What took place at the *Circus Maximus*?
3. Who were the roads originally built for?
4. What is the *Pont du Gard*?
5. What was the tunic worn by men called?
6. What did women wear on top of their tunic?
7. What was one of the most common dishes in ancient Rome?

Activity 2

Read the texts and check your answers to activity 1.



Activities such as wrestling, boxing and jumping were popular as well as ball games and dice games. Children played with toys or played games like leapfrog. Racing was extremely popular and many races took place in the *Circus Maximus* built in 600 BC. Up to 385,000 people could watch a chariot race in the *Circus Maximus*. Another popular form of entertainment was gladiator fights.





The Romans were great builders and many of their roads and aqueducts can still be seen today. Roman roads were one reason for the spread of the Roman Empire. They were originally built to enable Roman legions (the army) to move quickly, but soon became important for trade. The aqueducts helped supply water to cities as well as irrigate farmland. Most were built underground, but it is those that were built above ground and supported by arches (such as the *Pont du Gard* in the South of France) which are famous.



When people think of Roman clothes they usually think of the toga. But the toga was only really worn on special occasions and could only be worn by citizens of Rome. Most men wore a knee length tunic called a chiton with a cloak over the top. Women wore a long tunic with a stola over the top which went down to their ankles and was fastened at the neck with a brooch.



When we think of Rome and food we often think of lavish banquets with exotic meats and lots of grapes. In fact most Romans lived on a diet of vegetables, fish, bread, olives and wine. One of the most common dishes was a kind of porridge made of cooked oats. Children drank milk because the water wasn't safe to drink.



Activity 3

Answer these questions.

1. When was the *Circus Maximus* built?
2. How many people could watch a chariot race?
3. Where were most aqueducts built?
4. When did Romans wear togas?
5. Could anyone wear a toga?
6. Did the average Roman eat lots of meat?

Activity 4

Find words in the text that mean the following:

- a) a structure with straight sides and a curved top used for holding things up
- b) a piece of jewellery with a pin
- c) a vehicle with two wheels pulled by horses
- d) to give someone the opportunity or ability to do something
- e) something interesting or unusual, often from a distant foreign country
- f) something is fixed to something else so it doesn't fall down
- g) to bring water to land using pipes or channels
- h) very expensive and generous

The Romans

Adrian Tennant

Level

Elementary/Pre-intermediate

Topic

The Romans

Subject(s)

History

Time (approx)

Activity 1: 20 – 30 minutes

Activity 2: 20 – 30 minutes

Activity 3: 15 – 30 minutes

Preparation

Activity 1: Photocopy of quiz for each student.

Activity 2: One photocopy cut up and the texts placed around the room on the walls of the classroom.

Note: In classes with more than 20 students put up two or three copies of each text.

Activity 3 & 4: One photocopy per student.

Activity 1

- 1 On the board write *The Romans* and ask students to tell what they know about them.
- 2 Write up the ideas that the students give you.
- 3 Hand out the worksheet and ask the students to match the words with the questions.
- 4 Put the students in pairs and get them to check and discuss their answers together.
- 5 DON'T check the answers as a class yet.

Activity 2

- 1 Explain to the students that there are four texts around the room. Each text is about a different aspect of Roman life. Their first task is to go round and check their answers to activity 1.
- 2 Set a time limit of six minutes and get the students to stand up and go and read the four texts.
- 3 After six minutes get the students to sit down with their partner and check their answers.
- 4 Give the students another two minutes to find (or check) any answers they haven't got yet.
- 5 Finally, check the answers for activity 1 as a class.

Answers

- 1 *Leapfrog*
- 2 *Chariot races*
- 3 *(Roman) legions – soldiers*
- 4 *An aqueduct (in Southern France)*
- 5 *A chiton*
- 6 *A stola*
- 7 *(A kind of) porridge*

Activity 3

- 1 Now tell the students they are going to take part in a race of their own.
- 2 Tell them the pair to find the correct answers the quickest will win. When they finish they should come up to you and check their answers.
- 3 Put the students in pairs and hand out the questions and say *go*.
- 4 Stand at the front with the answer sheet. As soon as a pair comes up to you saying they've finished, check their answers with them.

- 5** When two or three pairs have finished and have got the correct answers, ask all the students to sit down. Check the answers with the whole class so that everyone has got the correct answers.

Answers

- 1 600 BC
- 2 385,000 people
- 3 Underground
- 4 On special occasions
- 5 No, only citizens of Rome
- 6 No, mostly vegetables

Activity 4

- 1** Hand out the worksheet and tell students to find the words that match the definitions – all the words are in the four texts.
- 2** Get students to work with their partner.
- 3** Monitor and help where necessary.
- 4** Finally, check the answers with the class.

Answers

- a) *Arches – a structure with straight sides and a curved top used for holding things up*
- b) *Brooch – a piece of jewellery with a pin*
- c) *Chariot – a vehicle with two wheels pulled by horses*
- d) *Enable – to give someone the opportunity or ability to do something*
- e) *Exotic – something interesting or unusual, often from a distant foreign country*
- f) *Fastened – something is fixed to something else so it doesn't fall down*
- g) *Irrigate – to bring water to land using pipes or channels*
- h) *Lavish – very expensive and generous*

Useful websites

Although the main focus is on the Romans in Britain there is still some very useful stuff here.

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

Lots and lots of detailed information, very useful for project work but the language may be a bit difficult at times.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/romans/>

A site devoted just to the Romans. Plenty of information here on almost every aspect of Rome & the Romans.

<http://www.roman-empire.net/>