

7P1 Classics Knowledge Organizer

The Origins of Rome

What is Classics: Classics' refers to the study of the **languages, literatures, material culture, and history of the societies of the ancient world**, together with their influence on later periods and cultures right up to the present day. It is one of the most varied and interdisciplinary of all subjects and can include literature, history, philosophy, art and archaeology.

Legend of Rome: Legend has it that **Rome was founded by when twin brother Romulus and Remus** were rescued by a she-wolf and later found by a shepherd. **In time they build a city** with Romulus living on a hill later called the Palatine and Remus on the Aventine. The brothers argued as to who should rule the city and Remus was killed. **Romulus was left in charge and he named the city Rome.**

Influence of Rome: Before Rome was founded, Italy was inhabited by lots of tribes. Some of these were indigenous, while others had their origins in the wider Mediterranean world; some engaged in friendly trades whilst others had more militaristic intentions. When Rome was believed to have been founded in 753 BC, **one of the biggest and most influential of these tribes were the Etruscans.** Although based to the north of Rome in Etruria, they colonised much of Italy. As Roman influence grew and Roman expanded the Etruscans led to the Romans adopting and adapting, especially temple design and divination. **An influence on The Etruscans and Romans were the Greeks. The Greeks, or Hellenes, were not only living in what we now know as Greece, but also migrated to nearby areas including southern Italy and Sicily from as early as the ninth century BC.** Again, much like with the Etruscans, Rome borrowed and adapted the religious ideas of the Greeks.

Roman Religion

Roman Religion: Before Christianity, the Romans **believed in many different Gods and Goddesses.** They adopted many of the Greek Gods and Goddesses, and based their beliefs on a series of myths and superstitions. This is known as **polytheism.**

Gods: The King of all Gods- Jupiter, Jupiter's wife, very jealous- Juno, God of the Sea- Neptune, Jupiter's child, no mother as was born out of Jupiter's brain- Minerva, God of wars, loves bloodshed- Mars, Goddesses of beauty- Venus, God of sun, music and light, twin of Diana- Apollo, twin of Apollo and known as cold and pitiless- Diana, Looks out for women- Vesta and fun and mischievous, delivers messages- Mercury.

Roman Priests: In Rome the priesthood was an excellent example of the role of religion in society. **The priests role was to uphold the state religion** by maintenance of the "pax deorum" (Pax= Peace and deorum = of the gods). This was done by uttering the correct prayer, completing the appropriate sacrifice and fulfilling priestly roles at festivals.

The Pontifices: These were the most important college of priests in the Roman world. Although the number of them varied the most common number was 15 and they were headed by the Pontifex Maximus, a post which was life long and so gave the holder power over the college. **The main role of the pontifices were the protection of the temples, regulation of burial and inheritance laws and supervision of the religious calendar.** Control of the calendar gave the priesthood immense power of when things could happen in Rome.

The Augurs: An Augurs main job was "taking in the auspices", which meant **reading the flight of birds, the behaviour of animals or direction of thunder to work out the will of the gods.** The taking of auspices was commonplace in both state business and personal life. Most commonly they took place before a battle, marriage or business transaction.

The Vestal Virgins: The Vestal Virgins were a college of 6 priestesses of the Roman Goddess Vesta (Goddess of the hearth). The Vestals lived in a temple in the Forum. **One of the most important roles of the Vestals was to maintain the sacred flame that burned in the temple.**

Temples: Temples were **built to the most important gods so that the Romans could worship them** and these were built in the most important area of Rome. **One of the most important temples, the Temple of Vesta was found in the Forum in Rome.**

Shrines: Roman people also would have **shrines in their houses to different Gods so they could worship from home.**

Votive offerings: Romans would go to Temples and Shrines and make Votive Offerings to the Gods in order to try and win their favour. **These items were not intended for retrieval and worked on the premise if that if they did something for the gods, then they would do something for them in return.**

Curse tablet: Curse Tablets have often been found alongside votive offerings. **The use of the curse-tablet seems to have been common in Roman times in Roman people seeking restoration of stolen property by offering different gods something in return of their help in cursing someone who had wronged them.**

The Suovetaurilia: This was the **most common sacrifices in Rome.** It consisted of sheep, pig and ox. It was used when purifying something such as new land or buildings. Before the sacrifice took place, the animals would be led in procession around whatever needed to be purified. Then they were sacrificed in the usual method

Emperor worship: The Romans **began to worship their emperors as gods.** They were influenced by the East. In Egypt and Persia rulers were regarded as Gods. When the Romans conquered these countries, the local people naturally thought of their new rulers as divine also! **When an emperor died it was thought his soul had been carried up to Mt. Olympus by an eagle.** The eagle is therefore often shown in images of dead emperors who had been deified (made into a god)

Romans vs Christianity: Roman faith believed in many angry Gods who punished humans. Christians believed in one peaceful God who believed in forgiveness. In 64 AD there was a large fire in Rome. The fire killed many people. The Romans were upset because Christians said that only people who believed in their faith would go to heaven. Christians refused to worship Emperor Nero. Nero decided to blame the Christians for the fire and torture them. **Christians would have secret symbols such as the fish symbol to meet together to worship without getting caught.**

Christianity in the Roman Empire: In 313 CE, **Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity and made Christianity legal.** Under his leadership, Christians could no longer be arrested just for being Christian. After a fairly short period of time, Christianity became the dominate religion of Rome. Some years after that, it became the law that you must be Christian to be a citizen of Rome. **The Romans preferred Christianity due to the fact that their all loving God would forgive their sins and they would get to heaven.**

Life in Rome

Life in Rome: Rome, with more than a million inhabitants, was bigger than any modern city in Britain apart from London. **It had blocks of flats called 'insulae', streets with pedestrian crossings, lavish public baths, public lavatories seating up to 60 people...** and huge amounts of graffiti. **The Romans invented concrete,** which allowed them to build large buildings, with huge domes. One famous building was the Pantheon, which still survives, this is a system of **nine aqueducts supplied Rome with 222 million gallons of water a day.**

Gladiators: Most Romans enjoyed gladiator contests. There were two kinds of gladiator – **the retiarius**, who used a trident and a net, and different kinds of swordsman, such as the **murmillo**, the **thraex** and **the secutor**, armed in slightly different ways. Sometimes they fought each other, sometimes wild animals. Gladiators – including women gladiators – became as famous as modern footballers.

Roman Villa

Atrium: The atrium was a **large room with an open roof to allow light in.** It had very little furniture in it and this would add to the sense of space in the room. In the corner of the Atrium there would be a **lararium**, a small shrine at which the family gods were worshipped.

Peristyle: The peristyle (or peristylum) was made up of a **number of pillars surrounding a garden**. Like the atrium it would have been very impressive. Around the sides would have been the summer dining-room, kitchen, lavatory, slaves' quarters and storage rooms.

Hypocaust: Roman houses could get cold in the winter months. **To keep them warm they created an underfloor heating system which forced hot air under the floors**. This was known as a hypocaust.

Shops: Many houses in Pompeii had shops at the front which were rented out. This was in a perfect position for people to sell their goods to those walking past.

Poverty in Rome

Poverty: Some of the poorer shopkeepers **would have only a room or two about their shop**. In Rome, many people lived in blocks of flats several storeys high, some of them in very poor conditions. These buildings could be up to 20 metres high. Streets were kept very narrow to save space. **They were often crowded and several Roman writers complained about the constant pushing and shoving that went on! It was also very noisy**. Traders shouting out details of the goods they had for sale were responsible for a lot of this noise. Many who came to Rome turned to crime. **Gangs of robbers were a constant problem and few people would go into certain areas after dark**. Those who did have to leave their homes at night would take slaves with them to carry torches and to guard them against attacks from criminals. **Although the Romans had a sewage system most of their waste went into the River Tiber**. This was not only unhealthy but created unpleasant smells, especially in the summer.

Roman Army

Roman army: The Roman army was the **largest and meanest fighting force in the ancient world**. One of the main reasons Rome became so powerful was because of the strength of its army. It conquered a vast empire that stretched from Britain all the way to the Middle East. The army was very advanced for its time. **The soldiers were the best trained, they had the best weapons and the best armour**. Being a soldier was a serious business. When the Romans invaded Britain, their army was so good that it took on armies 10 times its size and won!

Army formation: Roman soldiers were grouped into large numbers called **legions**. There were between 29 and 30 of these at different times. Each legion was divided into 10 cohorts of 480 men. Each cohort was divided into **6 centuries of about 80 men led by a centurion**. Each century was split into 10 groups of 8 men who shared a tent or barrack room. Roman soldiers usually lined up for battle in a tight formation. After a terrifying burst of arrows and artillery, the Roman soldiers marched at a slow steady pace towards the enemy. At the last minute, they hurled their javelins and drew their swords, before charging into the enemy. Then they used cavalry (soldiers riding horses) to chase anyone who tried to run away. Roman soldiers firing a catapult. **Artillery soldiers fired giant catapults called 'onagers'. These machines fired rocks or balls of burning tar**.

Army equipment:

