

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

IN THE FIRST CENTURY

Name: _____
Date: _____

Rome Day

- You have spent time learning about the social classes in Rome, and you have been assigned to be a member of one of those social classes. Using information from The Roman Empire in the First Century Web site's Life in Roman Times [<http://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/empire/life.html>], the Social Order feature [<http://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/empire/order.html>] and the Related Resources [<http://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/educators/lesson1.html#resources>] listed in this lesson plan, determine the appropriate dress for your group. Gather the materials needed for these costumes. Design the costumes and be prepared to wear them in class on Rome Day. All group members will need to wear appropriate, teacher approved costumes representing your social class on Rome Day.

Roman Society, Roman Life [<http://www.roman-empire.net/society/society.html>] presents detailed information about all facets of life in ancient Rome including some diagrams and charts.

The Romans Web pages [<http://www.iol.ie/~coolmine/typ/romans/intro.html>] provides information about typical Roman pastimes and important aspects of Roman life. Some pictures are also included.

- Using the same resources, gather as much data as you can about your assigned topic(s). Your job is to teach your classmates about these aspects of Roman life by providing them with some type of experience or participation in an activity. Some ideas for presenting the topics are suggested below:

- **Games: gladiators and chariot races, holidays, and entertainment**
 - Learn a traditional Roman game played by the people and teach it to your classmates.
 - Focus on a major Roman holiday and re-enact what would be done to celebrate.
 - Re-enact a traditional public performance such as a poetry reading.
 - Pretend to be one of the different types of gladiators or a chariot racer and write a letter or journal entry that discusses these events. Share the letter or journal entry with classmates so they can get a better understanding of what these events were like.
 - Other: use your own ideas, but get approval from your teacher first.

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- **Baths and bath rituals**

- Create a large map or diagram of the public baths and take turns describing what is contained in each different room and how it was used.
- Pretend to be a servant or slave working at one of the baths. Describe the typical sights and sound of the bath rituals as if you were showing someone how to use the baths for the first time.
- Other: use your own ideas, but get approval from your teacher first.

- **Family life**

- Each person in the group should pretend to be a member of the family in their social class. Use a setting such as a typical meal to have each family member discuss their activities for the day in order to teach others about family life.
- Explain the rights of men and women in a family and discuss how children were typically viewed and treated.
- Other: use your own ideas, but get approval from your teacher first.

- **Weddings, marriages, and divorce**

- Show pictures of or model examples of traditional wedding garments.
- Re-enact or explain the “business dealings” of arranging a marriage and a proper dowry between two families.
- Describe or re-enact a typical wedding ceremony and demonstrate common customs and traditions associated with the ceremony.
- Other: use your own ideas, but get approval from your teacher first.

- **Housing and food and mealtime customs for the various classes**

- Prepare traditional Roman foods for your classmates and explain which meal the food would have been eaten at and by which social class.
- Act out a typical Roman dinner and show classmates what would have been eaten and what the customs surrounding the meal would have been.
- Create pictures or diagrams of different types of Roman homes and discuss which social class would occupy each type of home. Include the “modern” amenities that each home provided.
- Other: use your own ideas, but get approval from your teacher first.

- **Education, funerals, and theatre**

- Re-enact a scene from a Roman play the way it would have been done at that time using masks and narration.
- Pretend you are in an ancient Roman classroom and act out a scene where the students are taught something specific such as Roman numerals. Have

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- your classmates (students) complete an assignment based on using Roman numerals.
- Explain what would happen in a typical family after the death of a loved one by showing pictures, illustrations, or re-enactments of key events or ceremonies.
 - Other: use your own ideas, but get approval from your teacher first.
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- Practice your Rome Day presentation so you are ready to present it to your classmates.

 - On Rome Day:
 - Wear your costume.
 - Behave like a member of the social class you represent.
 - Present your topic(s) to the class by providing an interactive experience or participation activity for your classmates if possible.