

## Life in Ancient Rome

### Year 4

**Key end points** of the 'Life in Ancient Rome' unit are:

- Romans believed that Romulus and Remus founded Rome
- Ancient Rome was a powerful empire
- Rome's location, in the centre of the Mediterranean, gave it a powerful position
- Rome began as an absolute monarchy and later became a republic
- Roman society varied vastly during the Roman Republic
- Pompeii, a wealthy town on the Italian coast, was destroyed by a volcano
- Archaeologist used the preserved ruins from Pompeii to learn about life in Ancient Rome
- Roman leisure activities included baths, the forum, chariot races and gladiator fights
- Romans spoke in Latin and Latin formed the basis of many other European languages
- Until the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, most works of science, religion and politics were written in Latin

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In Year 2, pupils were introduced to the history unit 'The Romans in Britain'. During this unit, they were introduced to the key substantive concept of **empire**. The pupils studied the Roman invasion of Britain and learnt how at the time the people living in Britain were not as advanced as the Romans who used their large army and technology (technical skills and knowledge) to grow and build their empire. The Romans significantly influenced Britain's towns, roads, canals and aqueduct systems (which brought water into towns and cities). The Roman empire was vast, long-lasting and hugely impactful on the history of Britain, Europe and the world. It is, however, worth noting that it was neither the world's largest empire, nor its earliest. With their long existence, wide territory and extensive organisation, the Romans are often considered a 'classic' example of a multi-ethnic empire.

Before this unit, the pupils would have also studied the Year 4 geography unit on 'Mediterranean Europe'. It is important the pupils have the locational knowledge of Europe, Italy and Rome before beginning this unit, utilise the knowledge organiser from geography to support with this prerequisite knowledge. In addition, pupils will also have prior knowledge of other **ancient civilisations** including Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece. Building on the pupils' chronology, they have previously learnt that the Ancient Greeks influenced the Ancient Romans. The study of Ancient Greece provides much (though by no means all) of the cultural capital that informs later European civilisations. The Roman Empire, meanwhile, is vital for understanding the formation of the political structures of Europe. It also covers a vast expanse of time. The fall of the Roman Empire, which will be studied next half-term.

In this Year 4 unit, the pupils will learn about the changing political context of Rome, beginning by being governed by an absolute monarchy, to later the Republic and finally the Empire. Pupils will build on their substantive knowledge of the concepts of **government** and **democracy**, and, during this unit, will analyse how Rome was ruled compared with other

ancient and modern civilisations, and how the role of democracy varied during the Roman Empire compared to Britain today.

In addition, the pupils will also look at the **social context** of Ancient Rome and will learn about Rome's social classes, comparing the lives of patricians, plebeians and slaves (disciplinary concept: **similarities & differences**). If appropriate, teacher may wish to also look at the ways that men and women were treated differently, as Rome was known for having a very patriarchal society (this would support pupils when studying the Suffragette unit in Year 6). The leisure activities that Roman citizens engaged in, such as chariot racing, visiting the forum, Roman public baths and gladiator fights, will also be studied. Please note that teachers must use their discretion and consider how much detail to go into regarding more violent activities such as gladiator fights.

This unit also highlights the role **sources & evidence** play in adding to the discipline of history. The third lesson focuses on the artefacts that were found at Pompeii, and how these artefacts helped archaeologists and historians to interpret what life was like during the time of the Ancient Romans. The pupils have previously studied how the use of artefacts support historical understanding (Y1: Discovering History; Y3: Stone Age to the Iron Age; Y4: Ancient Egypt). During this unit, pupils should be given the opportunity to look at images of real artefacts found at Pompeii and use their knowledge of the Romans to interpret what the artefact teaches us about life in Ancient Rome.

In the final lesson, pupils will study one of the important legacies of Ancient Rome, the Latin language. They will explore Latin words and look at how Latin has influenced many world languages, including the English language. Pupils will learn how until the 17th century, almost all works of science, religion and politics were written in Latin. Some historians argue that Rome left behind an idea of a politically unified and harmonious Europe.

The pupils will build upon their knowledge of Ancient Rome in their next unit on the Rise and Fall of Rome.

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**Key substantive concepts** focused on in this unit are **empire, civilisation, power, monarchy, government** and **democracy**.

**Key disciplinary concepts** focused on are **similarities & differences** (how life in Ancient Rome was experienced differently by different people), **sources & evidence** (preserved ruins of Pompeii).