



WESTON  
MUSEUM



# ANCIENT ROME

Everyday life for the ordinary Romans living in Ancient Rome was quite advanced for the time. They enjoyed many luxuries that were lost for a thousand years after the fall of the Roman Empire.

Throughout this activity pack, we will be exploring what daily life in Ancient Rome was like.

# JOBS

Ancient Rome was a complex society that required a number of different job functions and skills to function. Most of the menial tasks were performed by slaves. Here are some of the jobs a Roman citizen might have:

- **Farmer** - most of the Romans who lived in the countryside were farmers
- **Soldiers** - the Roman Army was large and needed soldiers, and the army was a way for the poorer class to earn a regular wage and to gain some valuable land at the end of their service
- **Merchant** - merchants of all sorts sold and bought items from around the Empire
- **Craftsman** - from making dishes and pots to crafting fine jewellery and weapons for the army



What are some of the other jobs Roman citizens might have had?

# FAMILY

The family unit was very important to the Romans. The head of the family was the father. Legally, he had all of the power in the family.

However; usually, the wife had a strong say in what went on in the family. She often handled the finances and managed the household.



What was the name of the head of the family?

# SCHOOL



What age did Roman children start school?

Wealthy children would be taught by a full time tutor.

Other children went to public school. They studied subjects such as reading, writing, math, literature and debate.

School was mostly for boys; however, some wealthy girls were tutored at home. Poor children did not get to go to school.

# FOOD

Most Romans ate a light breakfast and little food during the day. They would then have a large dinner. Dinner was a major event starting at around three in the afternoon.

They would lie on their sides on a couch and be served by the servants. They ate with their hands and would often rinse their hands in water during the meal.



What were some typical foods that the Romans ate?

Romans ate little meat. The rich would have a variety of foods in fancy sauces. How the food looked was just as important as the taste. Some of the food they ate would seem very strange to us - such as mice and peacock tongues.

# CLOTHING

Toga - The toga was a long robe made up of several yards of materials. The wealthy wore white togas made from wool or linen. Some colours and markings on togas were reserved for certain people and occasions.

**For Example** - a toga with a purple border was worn by high ranking senators and consuls, while a black toga was generally only worn during times of mourning.

The toga was uncomfortable and hard to wear and was generally only worn in public, not around the house. In later years, the toga grew out of style and most people wore a tunic with a cloak when it was cold.

Tunic - The tunic was more like a long shirt. Tunics were worn by the rich around the house and under their togas. They were the regular dress of the poor.

# DID YOU KNOW?

1. The way we set up our calendar is like the calendar that the Romans used. Julius Caesar made a calendar based on 365 days in a year, and 366 in leap years.
2. The Romans spoke a language called Latin. While nobody speaks Latin anymore, lots of languages we speak today are at least partly based on Latin words - even English!
3. The Romans all went to the same place to take baths - these were called bath houses. They would be decorated in pretty mosaics, and have hot and cold water so people could wash properly. People could get a massage there if they wanted, play sports and even stay a while to chat to friends.

# ANSWERS



What are some of the other jobs Roman citizens might have had?

entertainers, lawyers, teachers, engineers and the government



What was the name of the head of the family?

the paterfamilias



What age did Roman children start school?

at age 7



What were some typical foods that the Romans ate?

bread, beans, fish, vegetables, cheese and dried fruit