

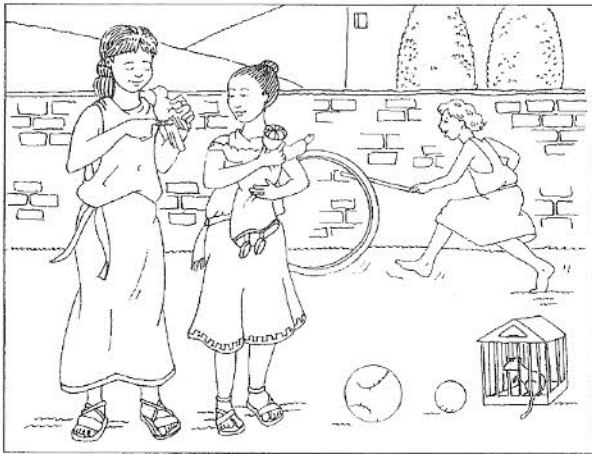


Welcome to Rome!

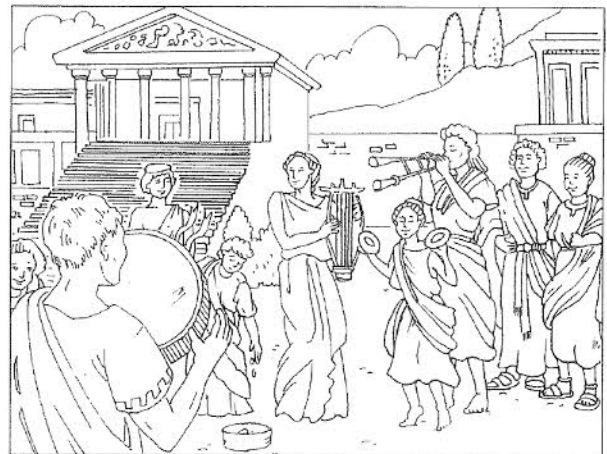
You may know the ancient Romans as people who ran around in togas and liked to watch gladiators fight lions. These are the Romans you see in the movies.

Who Were the Real Romans?

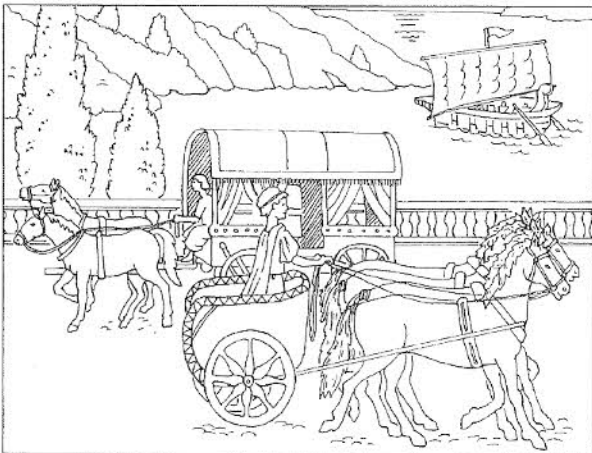
To begin with, they were people like us. They celebrated birthdays, wore wedding rings, went to the theater, worked for a living, took vacations, attended school, had parties, sent for the doctor, lived in houses or apartments, used cosmetics, bought presents, played sports, ate in fast-food restaurants, shopped, loved, argued, laughed, danced, and worshipped.



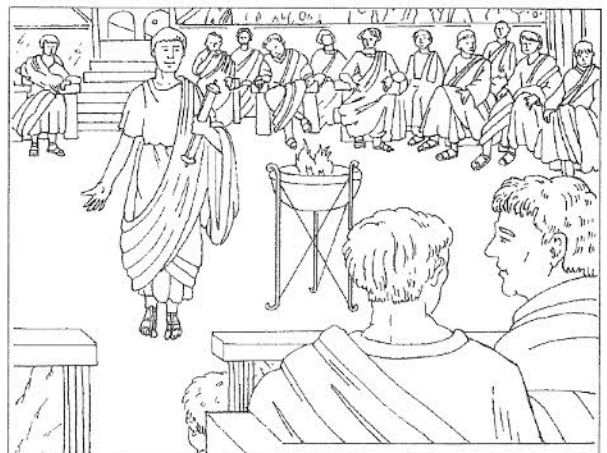
Roman children had dolls and toys, played ball games, and trained birds and mice as pets.



Romans celebrated many religious holidays, like the Saturnalia in honor of the god Saturn, Jupiter's father.



Romans liked to travel far and wide. They even visited the pyramids of Egypt and temples in ancient Greece.

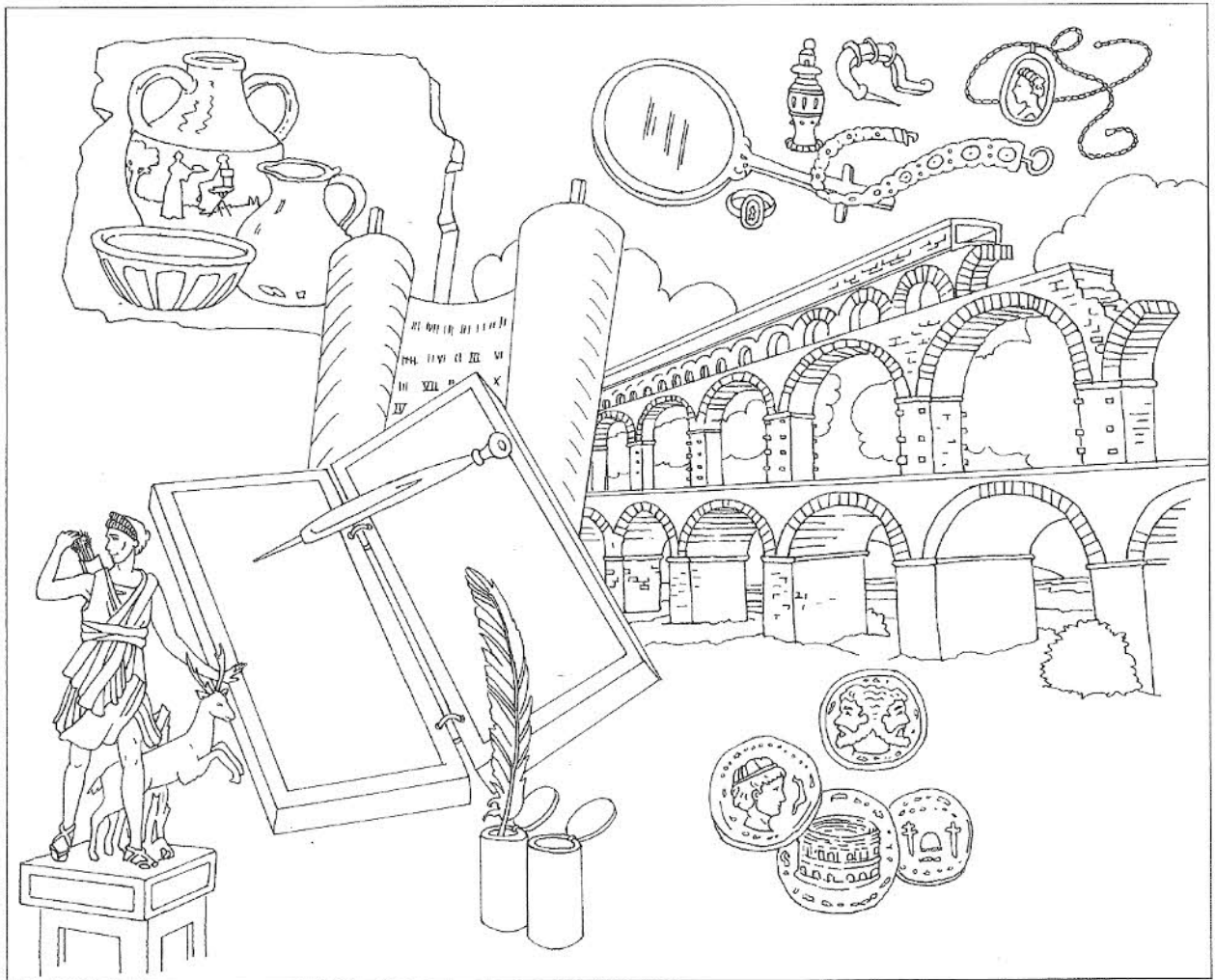


Roman senators met in the Senate House to discuss government business and laws.

How Do We Know About the Ancient Romans Today?

The original Romans started out as farmers who built a village near the River Tiber in Italy almost three thousand years ago. The village grew, and Rome became a major city and trade center spread over seven hills. As time passed, Roman soldiers were sent to conquer nearby lands. Rome became a huge empire, with the city of Rome at its heart. The Roman Empire covered much of what we call Europe, northern Africa, and the Middle East today.

Although the Roman Empire no longer exists, we know a great deal about it from what the Romans left behind. The study of our past through old objects is called *archaeology*. Archaeologists, people who dig up what has been buried over time, have found Roman pots and pans, jewelry, coins, statues, paintings, tools, weapons, graves, even houses, theaters, race tracks, and temples. All of these things help us to understand the ancient Roman way of life.



© Scott Foresman - Addison Wesley

Most important of all, the Romans had writing. And so they can tell us directly about themselves. From descriptions by ancient authors, written records found by archaeologists, and even graffiti on ancient buildings, we can recreate the history of Rome and the daily life of its men, women, and children.

Welcome to Rome!

Why Is It Important for Us to Learn About the Ancient Romans?

The Romans lived long ago, but they were great soldiers and builders. They left their mark on the history of the world. We owe much of our modern way of life to the Romans—our government and laws, our buildings, and the designs of our cities and roads. Most of all, the Romans gave us a language, Latin, which is basic to English. And Latin is the actual “parent” language of Spanish, French, and Italian, as you will see.

Although you may not realize it, you already know some Latin: *area, alibi, bonus, circus, color, data, error, gladiator, labor, medium, plus, rumor, senior, senator, series, stadium, vacuum*, and many other words look exactly the same in Latin and English. The motto of the United States is in Latin: **E pluribus unum** (one out of many). You can find it on the dollar bill.



The influence of Latin and the Romans is all around you. You can still see Roman ruins wherever the Romans built cities and, of course, in the modern city of Rome, Italy. But did you know that the Lincoln Memorial and the Capitol building in Washington, D.C. are based on Roman designs? And how about Yankee Stadium and other ball parks with ticket gates all around, like the famous Colosseum in Rome? Have you visited *Jupiter*, Florida, *Juno*, Alaska, *Cincinnati*, Ohio, or *Troy*, New York? Did you learn about the *Apollo* space missions? Have you seen a bride throw a bouquet? She is imitating Roman tradition.

As you study about the Romans and how they lived from day to day, you will be able to compare your own life-style with theirs. And along the way, you will speak the Latin language with your friends, read it, and write it, just as young Romans did! An adventure lies ahead for you, and lots of surprises. Get ready!