

Romans in Britain

Year 2

Key end points of the 'Romans in Britain' unit are:

- The Romans were an ancient civilisation that built an empire.
- Romans had well-organised large armies with many soldiers.
- Romans invaded Britain and Boudicca led a rebellion against the Roman invasion.
- Romans built towns across Britain.
- After the fall of the Roman empire, many aspects of Roman life remained in Britain.
- Romans created written records which is why we know about their history.

This unit provides children with an early understanding of the **Roman Empire** in the familiar context of Britain, which will be built on in later years. This unit is the first real introduction of the key substantive concept of **empire**. Before this unit, they will have some understanding of power and monarchy from their units on Kings and Queens and Parliament and Prime Ministers. They will have also looked at what a country is when learning about the UK and Seven Continents in geography. This will enable them to develop a basic understanding of an empire being a 'group of states and/or countries ruled over by a single person or ruling power'.

Roman Empire was vast, long-lasting and hugely impactful on the history of Britain, Europe and the world. With their long existence, wide territory and extensive organisation, the Romans are often considered a 'classic' example of a multi-ethnic empire. It is, however, worth noting that it was neither the world's largest empire, nor its earliest. The Romans are studied in more detail in Year 4, with the units Life in Ancient Rome and The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire. As children progress through the curriculum, their schema and understanding of the concept of empire will grow and develop, some examples include: Y3 Ancient Egyptian empire, Y3 Ancient Greek empire, Y5 Mongolian Empire; Y5 Early Islamic Empire, Y5 British Empire, Y5 Mughal Empire, Y5 French Empire. This understanding of empire will support our pupils when they go onto study the World Wars and the Cold War in Y6.

This unit introduces children to the **Roman invasion** of Britain. Teachers should adapt this unit to incorporate some local Roman history. Throughout this unit, teachers can explain how historians and archaeologist are constantly unearthing new discoveries about the Romans, such as the spectacular ancient Roman mosaic discovered by archaeologists in London's Southwark neighbourhood in March 2022.

During these lessons, the pupils will encounter the significant individuals **Julius Caesar** and **Emperor Claudius**. They will also look closely at how the Roman army was organised and evaluate what made them so successful. In addition, the children will learn about the significant **rebellion** led against the Romans by the Celtic queen of the Iceni, **Boudicca**. The children will analyse **continuity & change** between life in Britain before, during and after the Romans, looking at what continued and stayed the same versus what changed. At the end

of the unit, the children will consider the legacy of the Roman invasion on life on Britain. They will learn that the Romans left their influence on the way we speak, read and write, and how they left behind the roads and towns they had built.

In key stage 2, the children will be able to use what they know about the Romans in Britain (including Julius Caesar's invasion and the Iceni tribe) when they learn about Prehistoric Britain (before the Roman era) and the Anglo Saxons and the Vikings in Y3 (post the Roman era), which will help children to develop a sense of chronology, and develop a deeper understanding of life in Britain before and after the Roman invasion.

Lesson Sequencing:

The sequence of lessons in this unit has been designed to provide children with a firm foundation for understanding key substantive concepts, such as **empire**, **invasion**, **rebellion** and **civilization**, which will be revisited again and again as children progress through the curriculum. Lesson 1 begins by introducing the Romans. Pupils will learn that the Romans were an ancient civilization that had used their large army and technology (technical skills and knowledge) to grow and build their empire. They will learn that at the time people living in Britain were not as advanced as the Romans. Lesson 2 introduces the Roman army and pupils will learn about how large and well-organised the Roman army was. They will learn that Roman soldiers were well trained, and this helped the Roman army to conquer much of Europe. Lesson 3 focuses on the Roman invasion of Britain in 43 CE. They will learn that Boudicca, a historically significant individual, rebelled against the Romans but her rebellion was unsuccessful. Lesson 4 builds on the pupils understanding of civilisation and outlines how Romans build towns surrounded by stone walls and how Hadrian's Wall formed the Northern border of the Roman Empire. Lesson 5 ends with pupils thinking like historians. They will consider the changes Romans made to Britain. They will learn that Romans created written records which is how historians know about their history. Pupils will learn how after the fall of the Roman Empire, many aspects of Roman life remained in Britain.

Key substantive concepts introduced in this unit are **civilisation**, **empire**, **invasion**, **conquer**, and **rebellion**. These concepts will be introduced for the first time, providing a foundation for the key stage 2 curriculum.

Key disciplinary concepts introduced are **sources & evidence** (looking at how we know about the Romans from the things they left behind, included written sources), and **continuity & change** (looking at how the Roman invasion changed life in Britain).