

Life in Roman times

1 Pre-reading

Guess and match the years a–h with the events 1–8. Then check your answers by doing an Internet search for *Romans*. You can visit these websites to help you:

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/romans
www.history-timelines.org.uk/places-timelines/03-ancient-rome-timeline.htm
www.historylink102.com/Rome/roman-time-line.htm
www.stormeducational.co.uk/romans/everyday_life/timeline.htm

- | | | | |
|---|----------|---|---|
| a | 753 B.C. | 1 | Augustus, the first Roman emperor, came to power. |
| b | 27 B.C. | 2 | A fire destroyed much of Rome. |
| c | 44 B.C. | 3 | The Romans started building the city of Rome. |
| d | A.D. 64 | 4 | The Romans finished building the Colosseum. |
| e | A.D. 80 | 5 | The Romans started using coins. |
| f | 280 B.C. | 6 | Julius Caesar was killed. |

2 Reading

Read and number the sections a–c in order.

DAILY LIFE IN ANCIENT ROME

- a After school, children played with their pets, toys, and friends. Adults went to the baths before or after the Forum. Children didn't visit the baths and slaves weren't allowed in the baths with rich people, except as attendants. There were cheap public baths everywhere in Rome. After dinner, adults sometimes went to the theatre.

Rich Romans lived a very good life. Roman slaves and people without a lot of money had to work all the time and had very difficult lives.

- b In Ancient Rome, the day began with breakfast. What people ate for breakfast depended on their social status. Slaves had to wake up early to prepare breakfast for their masters, and often only had some water for breakfast or a little bread. Rich families enjoyed bread, honey, fruit, cheese, and olives for breakfast. They usually drank water. Emperors had big breakfasts which included meat and fish. They sometimes had wine with their breakfast, too!

- c After breakfast, children went to school and many adults went to the Forum to go shopping and do their banking. The Forum was a market and commercial area. It was also used for festivals, celebrations, and ceremonies.

In early Roman times, children took classes at home. The father acted as a teacher and taught his son Roman law, history, customs, and physical training. Most girls learned to spin or sew with their mothers. Later, boys went to school, but girls usually stayed at home. The school day began at sunrise and there were classes in the morning and the afternoon.



3 Reading and writing

Complete the chart for you. Then read the text again and complete the information about the Romans. If you need help with vocabulary, go to the Macmillan Online Dictionary: www.macmillandictionary.com

	You	Romans
Food for breakfast		<i>slaves – water and bread</i> <i>rich people –</i> <i>emperors –</i>
Activities after breakfast		
Subjects/activities during the day		
Activities after school/the Forum		

4 Reading

Do an Internet search to find out more about life in Ancient Rome and answer the questions. You can visit these websites to help you:

- www.mce.k12tn.net/ancient_rome/children.htm
- www.stormeducational.co.uk/romans/everyday_life
- www.classicsunveiled.com/romel/html/romechildren.html

- 1 Did all children, rich and poor, go to school?
No, only rich children went to school or had tutors.
- 2 Did the school year start in September?
.....
- 3 Were the teachers always Romans?
.....
- 4 What did children use to write?
.....
- 5 At what age did children usually stop going to school?
.....
- 6 What were toy dolls made of?
.....
- 7 What did fathers teach their sons to do?
.....
- 8 What was the most popular pet in Roman times?
.....

5 Reading

Read and guess the answers. Then check your answers by doing an Internet search for *Spartacus and Roman Gladiators*. You can visit these websites to help you:

- rome.mrdonn.org/spartacus.html
- www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/spartacus.shtml

- 1 Who was Spartacus? An emperor? A poet?
A gladiator?
- 2 In Roman times, were gladiators usually slaves or freemen?

Now read the sentences and write *T* (true) or *F* (false). Use the information you found online to help you.

- 1 Spartacus was born a slave. *F*
- 2 He ran away from the army.
- 3 They sold him as a slave and he had to work as a gladiator.
- 4 One day, he and another 700 gladiators escaped.
- 5 The army tried to capture Spartacus and he lost the battle.
- 6 There were about 100,000 men in Spartacus' army.
- 7 Spartacus died in a battle at Lucania.
- 8 Michael Douglas was in the 1960 movie about Spartacus.