

The Ways of the Romans Name: _____ Prd: ____ Score: __ / __pts. __

Directions: **Highlight information on the left** that makes reference *to Rome's advancements* in: **city services, public baths, games & sports, the calendar, language, art & architecture & laws.** Then note which advancement it refers to on the right. Use this reading to complete your *Daily Life in Rome Organizer*.

As Rome's empire grew, so did the city itself. Perhaps a million people lived in & about the city at the time of the later emperors. No Greek city had been nearly so large. People marveled at the grandeur, or greatness, of Rome. One poet called it "Golden Rome, first of the cities." Others thought it *not* so grand. Another poet wrote of Rome's "thousand dangers." He thought a person who was wise would move *out* of the city to a quiet country place. There were good reasons for both views...

Rome had many attractions. It was the capital & the center of a great empire. Something was always going on there. Today, we still use a saying about the importance of the old city: "**All roads lead to Rome.**" **People & goods** from all over the empire came to Rome. It was said, "Whoever wishes to see all the goods of the world must either journey throughout the world or stay in Rome."

Rome had many problems as well, however. They were similar to those of large cities today including **crowding, dirt, noise, & heavy traffic!**

→ Ex: city services

A city of a million people needs a lot of **food**. The nearby farms could not feed that many people alone. Therefore, **grain** ships from Egypt & other parts of North Africa brought **wheat** for Rome's daily **bread**. Spain supplied fine olive oil & **dried fish**. Greece also sent **olive oil** along with **wine & honey**. The "first of the cities" depended on other places for much of its food. Large cities always did & still do so today.

A large city needs **water**, also. The Tiber River runs through Rome, but the city itself made the water *too dirty to drink*. Therefore, Roman engineers built waterways, called **aqueducts**, to bring clean water in from distant streams & springs. The water flowed through these aqueducts to **fountains & tanks** in the city.

The water moved through the aqueducts without pumps. To keep the water flowing, engineers had to tunnel through hills in some places. In other places they had to build stone arch bridges to support the waterway. Pipes carried the water into the first floor of some of the houses. The Romans used pipes made of earthenware (**pottery**) or **lead**.

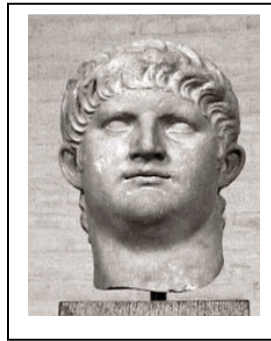
A large city also needs **sewers**. Sewers are waterways that carry the wastes *away from* the city. One of Rome's early rulers built the Great Sewer which 2,500 years later still empties into the Tiber River. Romans were so proud of their ability to build useful things such as roads, aqueducts & sewers.

In spite of its aqueducts & sewers, Rome was a dirty & rather smelly city. **Garbage** was thrown into open pits within the city. The open **fish & meat markets** gave forth odors in a day when no one had any refrigerators. A leather tannery, a place where hides are prepared, gave forth other bad odors, too, into the air. All contributing to quite the odiferous aroma.

Streets through the city were narrow & very crooked. Some were paved with stone; others were not. They were little more than dirt lanes ~ dusty in dry weather & muddy when it rained. Traffic became so bad that Julius Caesar ordered carts & wagons *to stay out* of the city until late afternoon. Goods had to, then, be brought into the city after the crowds got off the streets. Cart wheels rumbling over stone pavements did not make it easy to sleep at night, either.

Most of Rome's people lived crowded together in 4- & 5-story **apartment buildings**. Many of these buildings were made of brick & wood. When a **fire** got started, it would easily spread rapidly throughout the crowded city.

A fire during the reign of **Emperor Nero** in A.D. 64 destroyed a large part of the city. You may have heard the saying, "Nero fiddled while Rome burned." That saying is based on this old story. Nero supposedly had the fire set because he did not like the old buildings & narrow, crooked streets. According to the old story, Nero wanted to build a grander city. So, while much of Rome burned to the ground, the emperor played his fiddle.



This story is *probably not true*, but after the fire, Nero ordered that there be "regular rows of streets & very wide roads" instead of narrow, winding lanes. He limited the height of buildings & ordered that all be at least partly made of stone so that they would not burn so easily. Others said that the old neighborhoods had been better. Officials who rebuild old cities often make things both better & worse.

Rome had some open spaces in spite of the crowding. One such space was the **Field of Mars** where citizen soldiers had gathered in the early days of Rome. The Field of Mars in later times became a sort of **public park**. People went there to play ball, roll hoops, wrestle, &, in general, to enjoy themselves. The grassy field must have been a welcome relief to many Romans from the crowded streets & apartments of the city.

Romans could also go to one of the city's many **public baths** by paying a small fee. A Roman bath was a great deal *more than* a place to get clean. It was more of a recreation center. It was also a place to meet people & talk. Some baths even had **libraries**.

There were many small baths & several very large ones built by emperors for the people of the city. The large baths had beautifully decorated lounges, dressing rooms, & swimming pools. A man who lived near a bathhouse wrote that he could hear noise of "those who jump into the pool with a mighty splash." He also wrote about the puffing & groaning of the "stronger fellows exercising & swinging heavy lead weights in their hands."

People could play games in the exercise hall. **Bowling** with stone balls was one of the favorite games. People could also use the **steam room**, the **hot tubs** & the **chilling cold** pool called the frigidarium.

Romans liked to go to the circus, but a Roman circus was *not* like any circus *you* may have seen. The

Great Circus in Rome, called the **Circus Maximus**, was a place for **chariot races**.

It was a huge U-shaped **stadium** which could seat as many as



200,000 people. It was often completely filled because these races were *free* to the public. The emperor or another wealthy person paid for them as sort of a party for the whole city.

People of all sorts crowded into the Great Circus. An ancient historian declared that it was the "true temple" of the Romans. On race days people rushed to get seats as if they would outrun the chariots! They gathered to discuss the different drivers & their horses with great seriousness. They acted as if the future of Rome depended on who won the race.

Successful drivers became quite famous. They were even honored with **monuments** put up by the Romans. These words were carved on a monument for a man named Diocles: The champion of all **charioteers**. He drove chariots for 24 years, ran 4257 starts, & won 1402 victories." It was rather like the modern "halls of fame" for our football & baseball players. Chariot races were both fast & dangerous. Chariots often upset on the sharp turns at either end of the track.



To keep from being dragged along the ground, drivers carried knives to cut themselves free from the horses' reins. Such accidents made the races more thrilling for the crowd, but also more *deadly* for the drivers & horses (of course)!

In the early days of the republic, Romans held public **games in honor of their gods**. In time, the games came to be held more to give the people a free show than to show tribute to their gods. Romans liked the excitement of danger. They preferred the rougher sports at the games. They liked **boxing** rather than running or jumping. Roman boxing was particularly brutal because boxers wore gloves with strips of metal on them!

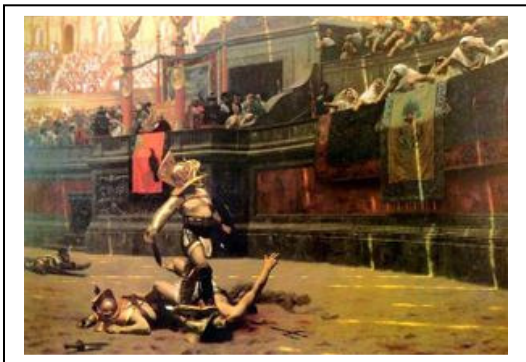
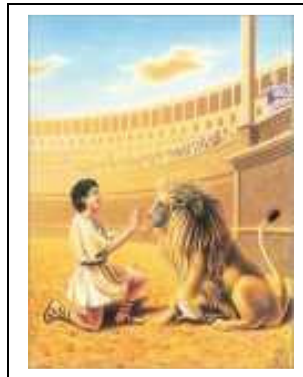
The athletes who took part in these contests were mostly professionals who fought for pay. They had their own organization, & they toured the cities of the empire to admiring crowds. Some fighters became popular heroes, *at least as long as they kept winning*...but they paid a high price for their fame. They sometimes received permanent injuries. A doctor of the time reported that they also usually ate too much, became overweight & likely died young.

Boxing was not the most brutal Roman sport. Crowds also gathered to watch both animals & armed men fight to the death. Many such events took place in the **Colosseum**, a large arena in Rome ~ part of which still stands. In the Colosseum different kinds of animals were made to fight each other. Tigers attacked bulls. Lions fought bears. Lightly-armed men *were forced* to do battle with frightened wild animals. Sometimes the man killed the animal; sometimes the animal killed the man. (Geez...ouch!)



The Romans, however, had at least one story with a happy outcome in the Colosseum. There was once a slave named **Androcles** who ran away from a cruel master & hid in a cave. A wild lion entered the cave limping with a barbed thorn in its swollen paw. Androcles gently & bravely removed the thorn, & the lion became quite friendly.

Some time later, Androcles was captured & sent into the arena to fight for his life. A cage was opened & *out came the same lion!* The grateful animal recognized Androcles & proceeded to rub his majestic head against Androcles, licking his hand! *The crowd went wild!!!* They were so surprised by the unusual turn of events that they *demand*ed freedom for both Androcles & the lion! It is said that Androcles, afterwards, went about showing off the friendly lion in taverns throughout Rome. (How 'ruff is that?)



Not only did people fight animals in the Colosseum, they found each other. Men, & sometimes women, who fought to entertain the crowds were called **gladiators**. They were usually slaves or criminals condemned to death. The fight in the arena gave them a chance to escape their fate. A gladiator who fought especially well might be given his/her freedom. Those who lost a

fight, usually lost their lives as well...

Gladiators killed each other to thrill & amuse the crowds. (Imagine that as entertainment?) Only a few Romans protested that it was wrong to kill people "for sport or amusement." It simply was one of the cruel facts of Roman life & in the life of any of the "first cities."

Visitors to **Pompeii**, another Roman city, see in the doorway of a house a sign that warns, "CAVE CANEM" which is Latin for "beware of dog." But they need not worry about being bitten. That sign was put there more than 1,900 years ago. The dog that watched the house *probably* died on August 24 in the year A.D. 79. On that day, a great cloud of fire & smoke burst forth from nearby



Mt. Vesuvius. Rocks & ash fell like hail & snow on Pompeii. By the time the mountain grew quiet again, *a 12-foot blanket of ash buried the city!!!* Many of its people & their animals lay dead under layer upon layer of gray, powdery ash.



But before ashes covered Pompeii, it had been a busy city of 20,000 people. It was south of Rome on the western coast of the peninsula. Like most cities in the Roman Empire, Pompeii could be reached by water as well as by road. People came from Rome to vacation in Pompeii. Traders & other travelers came on business, **to trade & to bring new ideas & goods.**

Shops & houses were crowded together along Pompeii's narrow streets. Most of the shops were small **family businesses** run by men & women. **Butchers, sandal makers, leather workers & wine sellers** all sold their goods from small shops that opened onto the streets.

Every neighborhood had its **bakery**. All the work of making bread from wheat & barley was done within each bakery. The baker ground the flour, mixed the dough, shaped the loaves & baked them in an oven. The bakeries made different kinds of bread. Some even made dog biscuits, perhaps for the dogs that watched their doorways.

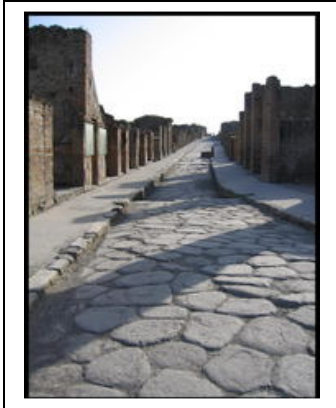
Pompeii had a number of **fuller's shops**. These people finished the rough, woolen cloth woven by peasants in the nearby villages. Fullers washed & thickened the cloth, bleached it in the sun & then dyed it. Materials used for cleaning & drying were rather smelly. But so was a fish sauce made in Pompeii for which the city was well-known. Perhaps that is why there are also so many **perfume shops** in Pompeii. ☺

One of the busiest places in Pompeii was the **forum**. The forum was somewhat like a modern shopping mall. It was a paved open area where people could walk without having to dodge vehicles!



There was a **town hall** at one end & a **temple** at the other. A two-story covered walkway supported by stone columns ran along each side. **Shops & offices** were located on the walkway. **Farmers** selling fruit & vegetables sat in the shade of the walkway. **Potters** spread pots & plates on the pavement for buyers to see.

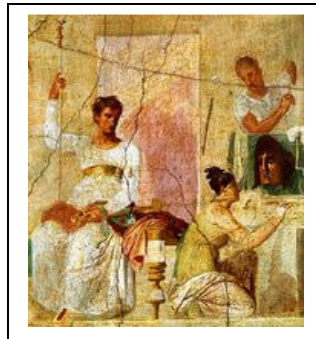
Today thousands of visitors go to see what remains of this once-busy city.



They look at tracks worn deep by chariot wheels in the stone streets. They see a bakery that had bread in the oven the very day Pompeii was buried. They sit in the stadium where 20,000 people once watched brave gladiators fight. Visitors walk through the rooms of a public bath. Most interesting of all, they enter the houses where people were living on that fateful August morning so long ago. They go into the rooms where the Romans slept & the kitchens where they cooked. Most

of the rooms are built around pleasant open **courtyards**. There are few outside windows. Scenes were painted on the walls so that the small rooms seem large & open.

Visitors to Pompeii can easily imagine the busy forum & streets, barking dogs, & children at play even though the city was destroyed over 19 centuries ago.



The empire of the Romans lasted a long time, but some of their works lasted longer. We call these Pompeii's legacy to us. They are part of the modern world. Some of these great works include new ideas & reforms (changes for the better.) The Romans were also great builders. Because they ruled an empire, there are Roman **works of art** in Europe, Asia & Africa even today.

One reform brought about by **Julius Caesar** was a new **calendar**. Caesar realized that the Egyptian calendar was *better* than that used in Rome. But he thought it, too, could be improved. He asked a Greek scholar at Alexandria to work out a calendar year that would be the same as the solar year of $365 \frac{1}{2}$ days. The scholar suggested a plan that Caesar, & later Augustus, adopted for the Roman calendar.

The improved calendar was almost the same as the calendar we use today. The year was made up of 365 days divided into 12 months. However, every fourth year had 366 days, so a day was added at the end of February.

In our calendar February has 28 days & because every fourth year it gains an extra day, we call this a **leap year**. It takes care of the extra $\frac{1}{4}$ day in the solar year. Two of our months remind us how our calendar began. **July** is named for **Julius Caesar** while **August** is named for **Augustus**.

The Romans did not invent the alphabet they used, but instead borrowed it from the Etruscans ~ a neighboring people who, in turn, had borrowed their alphabet from the Greeks. However, the Greeks were borrowers, too, because they had borrowed from the Phoenicians, a people from the Eastern Mediterranean land we now call Lebanon.

Alphabets were borrowed so many times that we do not know just who invented the first one. In Mesopotamia, people used cuneiform to represent sounds. But they had different marks for each syllable. This meant that a person had to memorize hundreds of marks in order to learn to write.

By 1200 B.C. some people in the eastern Mediterranean lands developed a simpler kind of writing. They discovered that if each mark stood for a single, simple sound, they could write using far fewer marks. This is the main idea of an alphabet. After all, you can write all the words in our language & only use 26 letters, can't you? (Well, yah.)

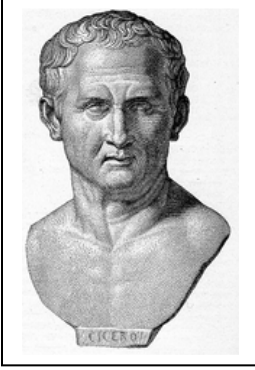
The Phoenicians were one of the peoples who adopted & developed an **alphabet**. The Phoenicians were sea traders who did business all around the Mediterranean. The Phoenicians often sailed to Greece to sell all sorts of precious goods. The Greeks bought their purple cloth, pearls, & gold jewelry. But they borrowed something much more valuable ~ their alphabet. The Greeks started using Phoenician letters to write their own language. Later, the Etruscans & Romans borrowed from the Greeks.

Each borrower of the alphabet made changes. The Greeks changed the Phoenician alphabet & the Romans changed the Greek's. For example, the Greek Δ became the Roman "D." The Greek Π became the Roman "P." The Roman alphabet is the most widely used alphabet in the world today. You are using it even as you read this.

Latin, the language of the Romans, lasted much longer than their empire. People still study Latin in order to read the writings of the ancient Romans. Ancient Latin also lives in languages people speak every day. **Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian & Romania languages** all grew out of Latin. These five are called the **Romance languages** because they came from the language of the Romans. Nearly 1/10 of the world today speaks one of these Latin-based Romance languages. Spanish & Portuguese are the main languages of Central & South America, & therefore, they are called Latin America.

English does *not* come directly from Latin, but English borrowed nearly half its words from Latin. Most of the borrowed **words** are slightly changed, but some are not. For example, here are a few Latin words which are also English words: **arena, circus, index, senior, stadium, veto, virus**, as well as **viaduct**, to name just a few.

Some of the Romans who made the empire so great were also authors of great books that we still read. Julius Caesar wrote **The Gallic War**, an account of his war in Gaul (modern day France.) He wrote so clearly that students learn Latin just by reading his history.



Cicero, a Roman lawyer who lived at the same time as *Caesar*, wrote many **books**. His writings have been read by so many people that some of Cicero's **sayings** have become common in our society. The following are the words of Cicero ~ a man who died in 43 B.C.:

Where there is life, there is hope.

He is his own worst enemy.

One does not have to believe everything he hears.

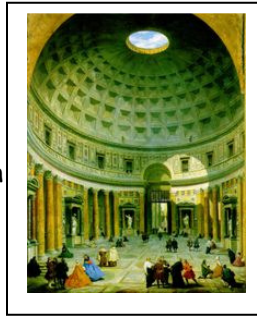
He added insult to injury.

Not to know what happened *before you were born is to remain forever a child.*

While both girls & boys were taught to read & write, some even learned the ideas of Greek & Roman scholars. However, *few* grew up to write works that lasted centuries & centuries into the future like those of Cicero & Caesar.

The Romans built breathtaking structures of stone, brick & concrete. They built magnificent cities, splendid **roads**, grand **bridges**, & functional aqueducts in all parts of their empire. Visitors still view the remains of their grand **temples**, beautiful **theaters**, magnificent **baths**, & other buildings in North Africa, Europe & western Asia.

Some of the Roman buildings such as the **Pantheon**, have held up very well over the years. Its huge concrete **dome** (→) has lasted, as have the ideas of those who planned & built it. *Compare* the Pantheon with the building in the United States designed by Thomas Jefferson. It is clear where Jefferson got his idea for this stately structure!



(←) Look at the **Roman Colosseum**. Many modern stadiums are designed based on its architecture. The ideas of ancient builders live on in modern buildings. Amazingly, this stadium played host to reenactments of famous sea battles when it was flooded.

Many different people lived within the Roman Empire including Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks, North Africans, Gauls, & a great many others. Each of these peoples had their own customs & laws. Yet, each could not just follow their own rules. *To live together in peace*, the different peoples of the empire had to live by some of the same laws.

Rome ruled the empire, so the Romans laid down the laws of the empire. But the Romans paid some attention to the ideas & customs of *other* people. The Romans knew that all peoples share the ability to reason. Romans thought that if they made reasonable laws, all people could see that the laws were reasonable.

A Roman law book said that **laws** should give people justice. What is justice? **Justice** gives every person his or her due. By due, the book meant that which is deserved. How can we know what is rightfully due a person? That was & is the business of **judges & courts**. A judge should decide what is good & fair in each *individual case*. The law book said that law was "the art of the good & fair."

Roman law had a number of rules to guide judges in the practice of this art. These were rules that the Romans thought any reasonable person would find "good & fair." Listed below are some of those rules. (Do they seem "good & fair" to you?)

- It is wrong for one person to attack another *without cause*.
- No one should gain wealth *through harm or injury* to another.
- A person should not be punished *for what he or she thinks*.
- It is better for a crime to be left unpunished than for an innocent person to be punished.
- A person accused of a crime should have a chance to face one's accusers & defend oneself.
- *There should be no *ex post facto* law.

The *last statement means that no law can be used to punish someone for something done *before* the law was made.

Roman law developed over a long period of time. It grew out of what many peoples in different times found "good & fair." The law systems of a number of modern countries are based on Roman law. The United States is not one of them, but Roman ideas about law found their way into our system. The Latin words *ex post facto* became part of our language & the rule part of our law. The Constitution of the United States reads: "No *ex post facto* law shall be passed." Here again, a great work from Rome *outlasted* the Roman Empire.

Do you recognize any of these "good & fair" rules? *From where?*

The Legacies of Rome

