

Chapter Preview

In this chapter you will discover how people lived in ancient Rome. You will also learn about the birth of Christianity, its effect on Rome, and the collapse of the Roman Empire.

Section 1 Roman Daily Life

Section 2 Christianity and the Roman Empire

Section 3 The Fall of Rome

Target Reading Skill

Main Idea In this chapter you will identify the main idea of a paragraph or section. Identifying main ideas will help you better understand what you read. This skill also includes identifying supporting details and implied main ideas, or ideas that are not stated directly.

- ▶ **Romans knew the Colosseum as the Flavian Amphitheatre. In use for almost 500 years, it held audiences of more than 45,000 for its bloody spectacles.**



The Roman Empire

MAP MASTER[™] Skills Activity



Location The Romans extended their empire to include all those areas that would serve their political and economic interests.

Use the Legend What was the northernmost province of the empire? Southernmost? What was the widest extent of the empire in miles east and west? How far was Judaea from Rome? **Apply Information** Which city on the map would be most difficult for the Roman Army to reach? Why?

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map skills practice.



Roman Daily Life

Prepare to Read

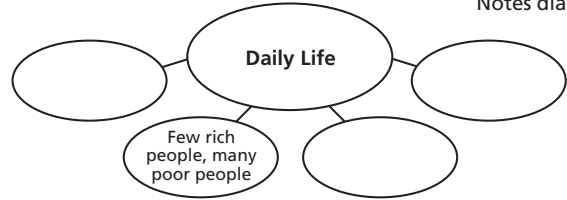
Objectives

In this section you will

1. Discover who could be a Roman citizen.
2. Find out how Romans of different social classes lived.
3. Understand the importance of family life in Roman society.
4. Learn about slavery in ancient Rome.

Taking Notes

As you read, note the most important points about the daily life of the ancient Romans. Copy the diagram. Then fill it in with the main idea of each section.



Target Reading Skill

Identify Main Ideas To remember information, good readers identify main ideas as they read. The main idea is the most important point in a text. Sometimes the main idea is stated directly. As you read, identify the main idea stated in each section. Write the main ideas in your Taking Notes diagram.

Key Terms

- **census** (SEN sus) *n.* an official count of people living in a place
- **villa** (VIL uh) *n.* a country estate
- **circus** (SUR kus) *n.* an arena in ancient Rome or the show held there
- **gladiator** (GLAD ee ayt ur) *n.* a person who fought to the death as entertainment for the Roman public



At the height of its glory, Rome had perhaps the most beautiful monuments and public buildings in the world. Wealth and goods flowed into Rome from all parts of the empire. Its marketplaces and shops had more goods than any other city. Not everyone was thrilled with the excitement. One Roman complained of narrow streets “jammed with carts and their swearing drivers.” Another, the poet Martial (MAHR shul), grumbled about the noise:

“
”

An ancient wall painting from Pompeii, Italy

Roman Citizens

Rome was a huge city, teeming with people. As the capital of an immense empire, it was first among the cities of its time. The poet Martial also used poetry to celebrate Rome's size and importance:

“

In its day, ancient Rome had no equal. In terms of its population, however, it was actually the size of some cities today. Rome actually had too many people. A million or more people lived within its limits by the time of Augustus. The citizens of Rome had to put up with noise and crowding every day.

Being Counted as a Citizen

Despite the problems caused by overpopulation, being a Roman citizen was a matter of great pride. In the republic and during the early years of the empire, only residents of the city of Rome itself enjoyed citizenship. Every five years Roman men registered for the **census**, or official count of people living in Rome. Registering for the census was the only way to claim citizenship. Roman men declared their families, slaves, and wealth to authorities at census time. If a man did not register, he ran the risk of losing his property. Worse yet, he could be sold into slavery. Women, girls, slaves, and those who had been freed from slavery were not counted as citizens. Their place in Roman society was determined only by their relationship to citizens.

Citizens and City As the Roman Empire expanded, people beyond Rome gained Roman citizenship. But this expanded citizenship did not change the special love that residents of Rome felt for their city. Rome was everything to them. Its buildings and monuments were a constant reminder that their city was the center of religion, politics, and culture. Lively banquets and other gatherings made Rome the scene of all social life.

✓ **Reading Check** How did a person claim Roman citizenship?



”



This bronze tablet is an official Roman document granting citizenship to a group of people in a Roman province.

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on the Roman city of Pompeii.



An ancient Roman glass flask shaped like a bunch of grapes

Roman Social Classes

Roman society was made up of a small number of rich people and many poor free people and slaves. Most Romans had nothing like the luxuries of the wealthy. In fact, there was a huge difference between the lives of the rich and the poor. The majority of poor Romans were either slaves or without jobs. Most of Rome's jobless survived only by handouts from the government.

A Life of Luxury The rich often had elegant homes in the city. Many also had **country estates called villas**.

Wealthy Romans were famous for overdoing things. A Roman historian describes the eating habits of Aulus Vitellius (OH lus vuh TEL ee us), emperor for only six months in A.D. 69:

“He used to have three, or four, heavy meals a day. . . . He had himself invited to a different house for each meal. The cost to the host was never less than 400,000 coins a time.”

Of course, few Romans could afford to eat as this emperor did. Still, the wealthy were known for their feasts. Often they served game, perhaps partridge or wild boar. For very special occasions, they might also serve exotic dishes such as flamingo or ostrich. Roman feasts often had entertainment, including musicians, dancers, and performers reciting poems.

Roman Villas

Wealthy Roman families lived in villas, such as the one shown below. In this drawing, the roof is cut out to show the inside. **Analyze Images** How did wealthy Romans eat their meals?

- 1 Atrium
- 2 Study
- 3 Bedroom
- 4 Dining Room
- 5 Kitchen
- 6 Open Courtyard



Another Way of Life for the Poor The world of the poor stood in stark contrast to the feasts of the wealthy. In Rome, most people lived in poorly built, rundown housing. Many lived in tall apartment houses with no running water, toilets, or kitchens. All food and drink had to be carried up the stairs. Rubbish and human waste were carried down to the street or—as often happened—dumped out of a window. Because most houses were made of wood, fires were frequent and often fatal. The worst, in A.D. 64, destroyed most of the city.

Bread and Circuses The poor of Rome needed wheat to survive. When wheat harvests were bad or when grain shipments from overseas were late, the poor often rioted. To prevent these riots, the emperors supplied free grain and provided spectacular shows. These were held in the Colosseum or in **arenas called circuses, so the shows came to be called circuses, too.**

The circuses could be violent. Romans, rich and poor, packed the arenas to watch the events, which included animals fighting other animals, animals fighting humans, and humans fighting humans. Clowns might also entertain, or a criminal might be publicly executed. The highlights of the day were the fights between **gladiators, people who fought to the death.** Most gladiators were slaves who had been captured in battle. However, a few were free men—and some women—who enjoyed the fame and fortune they could gain from their success as gladiators.

Before the battles, the gladiators paraded onto the floor of the arena. Approaching the emperor's box, they raised their arms in salute and shouted "Hail, Caesar! We who are about to die salute you." Then the battles began. The end came when one gladiator was dead or dying, or disarmed and on the ground. A wounded gladiator's life might be spared if he had fought well. It is commonly thought that the crowd waved handkerchiefs to spare the loser. Thumbs pointed down signaled death.

Not all Romans approved of these violent sports. The writer Seneca noted:

“It's sheer murder. In the morning, men are thrown to the lions or bears. At noon, they are thrown to the spectators.”

✓ Reading Check What conditions often led the poor people of ancient Rome to riot?



Gladiators wore helmets for protection.



Identify Main Ideas

Which sentence states the main idea in the section Bread and Circuses?



This Roman mosaic shows a slave baking bread.

Roman Family Life

Despite their taste for brutal sports, many Romans had a strong sense of traditional values. Most of all, they valued family life. Roman writings are filled with stories of happy families, dedication, and love.

Support from the Government

The Roman government provided family support, usually to the upper classes, in various ways. Under Julius Caesar, for example, fathers of three or more children received land from the government. Freeborn mothers of three children and freed slaves who had four children were given certain privileges. At the same time, unmarried men and couples with no children did not receive finan-

cial benefits provided by Roman law. These measures were designed to encourage the upper classes to increase the size of their families and to continue their family names.

The Roman Household The head of a Roman household was known as the *paterfamilias* (pay tur fuh MIL ee us). This Latin term means “father of the family.” The family included everyone in the household below the rank of *paterfamilias*—women, children, and slaves. The *paterfamilias* could be the father, grandfather, or great-grandfather of the household. Three generations often lived together under the same roof. Romans of all social classes lived in large extended families.

Under Roman law, the *paterfamilias* had absolute power over the entire household. He owned everything in it—women, children, slaves, and furniture. To do business or to own property, a son had to be emancipated, or freed, by the father of the family. In the early days, the *paterfamilias* could sell a son or daughter into slavery. Later, this power was reduced.

The number of people controlled by the *paterfamilias* differed greatly depending on a family’s wealth. Wealthy families often controlled hundreds of slaves, who did all of the work for the family, often including child rearing. Poor families did not own slaves and generally consisted of a couple and their children and perhaps their children’s spouses and their grandchildren.

Links to

Language Arts

The Latin Language The Latin language was the source of today’s French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian languages. About half of all English words have a Latin history. Some, such as *legal*, *computer*, and *library*, came directly from the Latin language. Others came into the English language from the French, after French invaders conquered England in 1066.

Cornelia

To many, Cornelia (kawr NEEL yuh) was the perfect daughter, wife, and mother. The daughter of Scipio Africanus (sip ee oh ah rih KAHN us), Cornelia married her father's rival, Tiberius Sempronius (ty BIHR ee us sem PROH nee us), to bring an end to their disagreements. Cornelia had twelve children. Three survived—a daughter and two sons. After her husband's death, Cornelia raised these children on her own. Her daughter married a Roman military hero. Her sons, Tiberius and Gaius (GY us), became two of Rome's greatest statesmen.

The Roles of Women in Roman Society The Romans thought of property and genealogy in terms of households. A household passed among the men in the family. Women married into it from outside. A woman's place in the household depended on the kind of marriage she made. Sometimes a woman formally left the house of her father to live in the house of her husband. The new wife took on the role of a daughter under the *paterfamilias* in her new home. Depending on circumstances, a woman might keep ties with the family into which she was born. Her only role in her husband's family would be to produce children.

The amount of freedom a woman in ancient Rome enjoyed depended on her husband's wealth and status. Wealthy women had a great deal of independence. Women had a strong influence on their families, and some wives of famous men became famous themselves. The mothers or wives of some Roman emperors also gained great political power.

A few Roman women shaped roles for themselves outside the family. Some trained to be doctors and worked in women's medicine. Others became involved in business and even controlled their own money. Women are known to have owned ships, although it is unclear whether they engaged in trade. Lower-class women took on various kinds of work. They were cooks, dressmakers, and hairdressers. Some did jobs more commonly done by men, such as shoemaking. Others danced, sang, or acted for people's entertainment.

✓ Reading Check What rights did men and women have in ancient Rome?

The Roman diet included the foods, herbs, and spices shown below.



Slavery in Rome

Slavery was common in ancient Rome. Almost every wealthy family owned slaves. About a third of Italy's population were slaves by 50 B.C. Although few owners paid slaves for their work, many people often took good care of their household slaves. Slaves had almost no rights, yet relationships between household slaves and their owners were sometimes trusting and friendly. These slaves provided their owners with companionship and helped raise the family's children. Sometimes slaves rose to important positions in the households of wealthy owners.

Household slaves were more fortunate than other kinds of slaves. Some slaves led short, hard lives. Those who worked on farms were sometimes chained together as they worked during the day and slept in chains at night.

Slaves in copper, tin, and iron mines worked in terrible conditions. Gladiators who were slaves risked death every time they fought. Slaves trained as rowers powered Roman warships.

Some slaves were able to save tips or wages and buy their freedom. These might be slaves with very special skills, such as gladiators and chariot racers. These sports heroes sometimes became famous and wealthy.



Artifacts of Slavery ▲

At top right is a bronze plaque naming a freed slave, Hedone, her former master, Marcus Crassus, and Feronia, a goddess popular with freed slaves. Beneath it is a figure of a weeping kitchen slave holding a mortar. **Analyze** What was the importance of slaves in Roman society?

Reading Check Who owned slaves in ancient Rome?



Section 1 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms listed at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains the term's meaning.

Target Reading Skill

What are the four main ideas in Section 1?

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) Identify** Who could claim Roman citizenship?
- (b) Analyze Information** Why do you think Roman men were required to register their families, slaves, and wealth at census time?

- (a) Recall** Describe how rich and poor Romans lived.
- (b) Draw Inferences** Why did the Roman government feed and entertain its people?
- (a) Describe** What was family life like for the ancient Romans?
- (b) Evaluate Information** Why do you think Romans valued peaceful family life but also enjoyed watching violent combat in Roman arenas?
- (a) Name** What kinds of jobs did slaves perform in ancient Rome?

- (b) Predict** How would abolishing slavery have affected Roman lifestyles?

Writing Activity

In this section you read Seneca's reaction to a circus. Write a journal entry that describes your reaction to a Roman circus.

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Section 2

Christianity and the Roman Empire

Prepare to Read

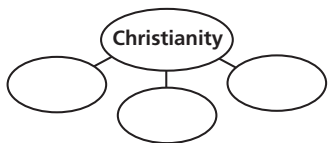
Objectives

In this section you will

1. Learn about the rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire.
2. Discover how Christianity spread throughout the empire.
3. Understand the Roman government's reaction to the growth of Christianity.

Taking Notes

As you read, look for details about the early history of Christianity. Copy the diagram. Fill it in with details that support this section's main ideas about Christianity.



Target Reading Skill

Identify Supporting

Details Details support the main idea of a paragraph or section by giving more information about it. Supporting details help explain the main idea and may also give examples or reasons for it. As you read, record in your Taking Notes diagram details that support the main idea of each section.

Key Terms

- **Jesus** (JEE ZUS) *n.* (c. 6 B.C. – A.D. 30) founder of Christianity; believed by Christians to be the Messiah
- **messiah** (muh SY uh) *n.* a savior in Judaism and Christianity
- **disciple** (dih SY pul) *n.* a follower of a person or belief
- **epistle** (ee PIS ul) *n.* in the Christian Bible, letters written by disciples
- **martyr** (MAHR tur) *n.* a person who dies for a cause

According to the Bible, a Jewish religious teacher named Jesus spoke the words below to his followers in the first century A.D.:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

—*The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:3–10*

This sermon and its meaning are an important part of a religion called Christianity. **Jesus founded Christianity.** In the beginning, its followers were mainly the poor and slaves. Over time, Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire.



In this painting, Jesus heals a paralyzed man who had been lowered through the roof of the building.

Language Arts

Sign of the Fish A secret sign that Christians used to identify one another was a simple image of a fish. How did a fish come to be an early Christian symbol? Each letter of the Greek word for fish, *ichthys* (ἰκθῆς), was the first letter of a word in a Greek phrase. The phrase meant “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.”



The Rise of Christianity

Christianity was one of many religions in the vast Roman Empire. The empire included many lands with different languages, customs, and religions. The Romans were tolerant toward the people in these lands. They allowed them to follow their own religions. But the conquered people had to show loyalty to Roman gods and to the emperor.

Unrest in Judaea The Romans conquered the Jewish homeland of Judaea (joo DEE uh) in 63 B.C. At first, they respected the Jews' right to worship their God. But many Jews resented foreign rule. Some believed that a **messiah, or savior**, would come to bring justice and freedom to the land. As opposition to Roman rule grew, the Romans struck back with harsh punishment. In 37 B.C., the Roman senate appointed a new ruler of Judaea named Herod (HEHR ud). It was during Herod's reign that Jesus was born in the Judaeen town of Bethlehem.

Stories about what Jesus taught and how he lived are found in the New Testament, a part of the Christian Bible. After Jesus died, his **disciples, or followers**, told stories about his life and teachings. Between 40 and 70 years after Jesus' death, four stories of his life were written from these oral traditions. People came to believe that four disciples—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—had each written one story. These writings are called the Gospels.



Christian Beliefs According to the New Testament, Jesus grew up in Nazareth (NAZ uh ruth). He learned to be a carpenter and began teaching when he was about 30 years old. Christian tradition holds that for three years Jesus traveled from place to place, preaching to Jews who lived in the countryside. Much of what he taught was part of the Jewish tradition he learned as he was growing up. Like all Jewish teachers, Jesus preached that there was only one true God. As you will read on the next page, the teachings of Jesus became known as Christianity.

Reread the excerpt that begins this section. The ideas expressed in this excerpt are important Christian beliefs. According to the Gospels, Jesus taught that God was loving and forgiving. He said that people must love God with all their hearts. He also taught that people had a responsibility to love their neighbors as they loved themselves. Jesus promised that people who followed his teachings would have everlasting life. His followers believed that Jesus was their messiah.

Fears About Christianity Jesus' teachings alarmed many people. Some people complained to the Romans that Jesus was teaching that God was greater than the emperor. The Romans feared that Jesus would lead an armed revolt against the government, so the Roman governor condemned Jesus to death. Jesus was crucified (KROO suh fyd), or put to death by being nailed to a large wooden cross. According to the Gospels, Jesus rose from the dead and spoke to his disciples, telling them to spread his teachings.

 **Reading Check** Why did the Romans fear Jesus?



Identifying Supporting Details

What details in the paragraphs under the heading Christian Beliefs tell about the rise of Christianity?



Jesus and His Disciples

This scene is painted on the wall of a Roman catacomb, an underground passageway. Many early Christians—and people of other faiths—buried their dead in catacombs.

Analyze Images Use what you know about the life of Jesus to identify him and his disciples in the painting. Explain your reasoning.



The Spread of Christianity to A.D. 325

MAP MASTER[™] Skills Activity



Movement By A.D. 325, Christianity had spread north to England, south to Africa, west to Spain, and east to Asia Minor. The cities throughout the Roman Empire had strong Christian communities.

Locate Around what body of water were most Christian areas located?

Draw Conclusions Why didn't Christianity spread north into Germany in this period?

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Christianity Spreads

The Greek equivalent of the word *messiah* was *christos* (KRIS tohs). Many educated people of Jesus' time spoke Greek. As these people accepted the teachings of Jesus, they began calling him Christ. After his death, Jesus' followers, called Christians, spread the new religion from Jerusalem across the empire, and finally to Rome itself.

The Letters of Paul One of the most devoted followers of Jesus' teachings was a Jew whose original name was Saul. Saul was well educated and spoke Greek, the common language of the eastern Roman Empire. According to the New Testament, Saul at first rejected the Christian message. One day, however, he believed he had a vision in which Jesus spoke to him. After this experience, Saul changed his name to Paul and carried Christianity to the cities around the Mediterranean, spreading Jesus' teachings as he traveled.

Paul's writings also helped turn the Christian faith into an organized religion. Paul wrote many **epistles, or letters**, to Christian groups in distant cities. Some of these epistles became a part of the Christian Bible.



The Apostle St. Paul
by Marco Pino

Christianity Moves to the Cities Others also helped spread Christian beliefs throughout the Roman world. By A.D. 100, groups of Christians were gathering for worship in Alexandria, Antioch (AN tee ahk), Corinth (KAWR inth), Ephesus (EF ih sus), Thessalonica (thes uh LAHN ih kuh), and even Rome. The new religion gained many followers in cities. Many poor city dwellers welcomed the message of Christianity as good news. These early Christians used the word *paganus* (pah GAH nus) for anyone who did not share their beliefs. *Paganus* means “country dweller” in Latin. It is the root of the English word *pagan*. Today, *pagan* is used to describe someone who is not a Christian, a Jew, or a Muslim.

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on the travels of Paul.

Ways of Worship Early Christians shared a common faith in the teachings of Jesus and a common way of worship. Over time, their scattered communities organized under a structured Church. Christians borrowed some practices from Jewish worship. They prayed and sang. They also read from the scripture or from one of Paul’s letters. Often someone interpreted these readings for those gathered. Christians set aside Sunday, the day they believed Jesus had risen from the dead, as their day of worship.

As Jesus had instructed, Christians also practiced two rites, or holy acts. In the rite of baptism, a believer was dipped in water to wash away his or her sin. Baptism made the person a member of the church. In the rite of the Lord’s Supper, Christians shared bread and wine in a sacred meal called the Eucharist. They did this in memory of Jesus, whose last supper was described in the Gospels. Christians believed that through the Eucharist they were receiving the body and blood of Jesus.



The Baptism of Constantine is a painting by Raphael and is displayed at the Vatican palace in Rome.

✓ Reading Check Why did Christianity find many followers in the cities of the Roman Empire?

Rome Reacts

The fast-growing new religion alarmed the Roman government. Christians refused to worship the Roman gods and did not show the emperor the respect that was required. Some Christians turned away from their responsibilities as Roman citizens, such as serving in the army. Many Roman officials began to view Christians as enemies of the empire.



The Burning of Rome

After the fire, rumors placed the blame on Nero for the fire that destroyed the city. Legend suggests that in his glee for the ruin of Rome, Nero played his lyre while standing atop the Palatine. The legend is depicted above. **Infer** Why was Nero so quick to blame Christians?

Rome Burns Under the emperor Nero, the first official campaign against the Christians began in A.D. 64. One night, a fire started in some shops in Rome. The fire spread and burned for nine days, and it left much of the city in ruins.

According to some accounts, Nero blamed the Christians. He ordered the arrest of Christians, who were sent to their deaths. Some were forced to fight wild animals in the Colosseum. Others were soaked with oil and burned alive; others were crucified. Paul was imprisoned for two years and then killed.

Treatment of Christians The Romans persecuted Christians at various times for another 250 years.

To *persecute* means to treat repeatedly in a cruel or an unjust way. During these years, the Roman Empire began to lose its power. To explain the decline, Romans looked for people to blame. They found them among the followers of the new religion. As one Roman wrote:

“If the Tiber River reaches the walls, if the Nile fails to rise to the fields, if the sky doesn’t move or the Earth does, if there is famine or plague, the cry is at once: ‘The Christians to the Lions.’”

In the Roman world it had become a crime just to be a Christian. As you have read, the punishment for following the new religion was death.

The Appeal of Christianity Despite the persecution of its followers, Christianity continued to spread throughout the empire. The help that Christian communities gave to widows, orphans, and the poor drew people to the new religion. Its messages of love, forgiveness, and a better life after death appealed to many. The figure of Jesus also attracted followers. Jesus was not a hero from myth. He had actually lived among people of the empire. The writings known as the Gospels helped spread Jesus' teachings. The simple style of the Gospels also made Jesus' teachings easy to grasp. They were written in the language that ordinary people used.

As the Christian religion gained more followers, emperor after emperor tried to halt its spread. Actions against Christians were especially severe under Domitian (duh MISH un), Marcus Aurelius, Decius (DEE shus), and Valerian (vuh LIHR ee un). The emperor Diocletian (dy uh KLEE shuhn) was determined to stamp out the new religion, but not even he could stop the growth of Christianity. He outlawed Christian services, imprisoned Christian priests, and put many believers to death. Diocletian's actions accomplished the opposite of what he wanted, however. Many Romans admired the Christians. They saw them as martyrs and heroes. **A martyr is someone who dies for a cause.** By the A.D. 300s, about one in every ten Romans had accepted the Christian faith.

 **Reading Check** How did the Romans persecute Christians?



According to tradition, Saint Agnes, shown above, died for her beliefs under the persecution of Christians by Diocletian.



Section 2 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms listed at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains the term's meaning.

Target Reading Skill

List three details that support the main idea of the section under the heading Rome Reacts.

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

1. (a) **Describe** What ideas did Jesus teach?

(b) **Draw Conclusions** Why do you think the Roman governor had Jesus put to death?

2. (a) **Recall** To what new groups did Paul want to spread the teachings of Jesus?

(b) **Draw Inferences** Why might Christians have borrowed ways of worship from the Jewish religion?

3. (a) **Explain** Why did Roman officials consider Christians enemies of the empire?

(b) **Identify Cause and Effect** What effect did Diocletian's actions have on the growth of Christianity? Explain.

Writing Activity

You are a Roman citizen who has just learned about Christianity. Write a paragraph describing what you now know about it.

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Prepare to Read

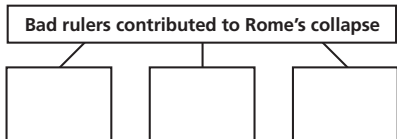
Objectives

In this section you will

1. Explore how bad government contributed to the decline of the Roman Empire.
2. Understand the fall of the Roman Empire.
3. Discuss Constantine's role in support for Christianity.
4. Learn how northern invaders contributed to the collapse of the Roman Empire.

Taking Notes

As you read, identify each section's main idea and details. For each section, copy the diagram below. Fill in each main idea and details.



Target Reading Skill

Identify Implied Main Ideas Sometimes main ideas are not stated directly. The details in a section or paragraph hint at a main idea, but you must state it yourself. As you read, study the details in each section. Then write the section's main idea and supporting details in your Taking Notes diagram.

Key Terms

- **Constantine** (KAHN stuhn teen) (c. A.D. 286–337) emperor of Rome from A.D. 312 to 337; encouraged the spread of Christianity
- **mercenary** (MUR suh neh ree) *n.* a soldier who serves for pay in a foreign army
- **inflation** (in FLAY shun) *n.* an economic situation in which the government issues more money with lower value

This statue of Emperor Constantine originally towered over 30 feet (9m). Today, only the head remains.



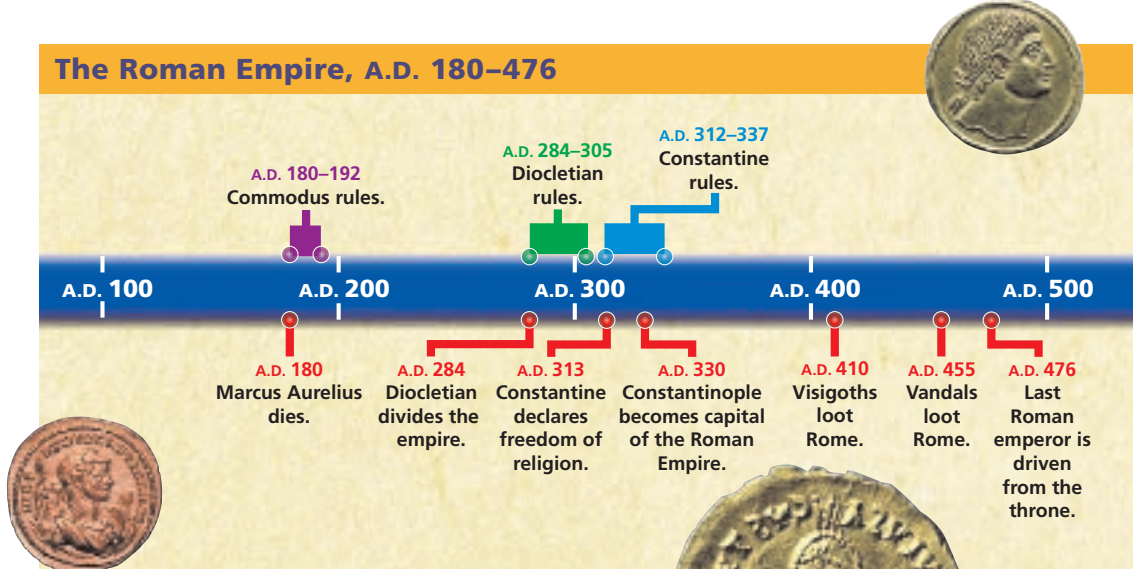
Emperor Constantine (KAHN stuhn teen) stood with his troops near a bridge spanning the Tiber River. On that day in A.D. 312, the sky was full of clouds and Constantine was filled with doubts. His enemies were waiting on the other side of the river.

As Constantine stood, hoping for victory, the sun broke through the clouds. According to one story, Constantine saw a cross in the sky. Above the cross was written in Latin: “Under this sign you will conquer!”

A different story claims that Constantine had a dream. Because of this dream, Constantine had his soldiers' shields marked with a Christian symbol. In the battle, Constantine's army won an overwhelming victory. Constantine believed that the victory had come from the Christian God. Constantine vowed to become a Christian.

Historians today debate whether Constantine had these religious experiences—or whether they are just legend. But **Constantine, Rome's emperor from A.D. 312 to 337, strongly encouraged the spread of Christianity.**

The Roman Empire, A.D. 180–476



From Good Rule to Bad

The Christian Church provided comfort and authority at a time when the mighty Roman Empire was close to collapse. By the time Constantine took power, he could do little to stop the empire's fall. The trouble had started 125 years earlier, when Marcus Aurelius died. The emperor left his son Commodus in power in A.D. 180.

Commodus was only eighteen when he became emperor. Marcus Aurelius was aware that his son was not qualified to rule the empire. But Commodus was in line to inherit power. Marcus Aurelius may have believed that Commodus would grow to be a good emperor as time went by.

Commodus allowed others to help him run the empire, but he made poor choices. He stood by as others worked to destroy the power and prestige of the senate. Commodus himself showed little use for the senate by not seeking its approval before he acted. He kept a grip on power by bribing the army to support him.

His bold, extravagant, and savage ways were his downfall. He loved the bloodshed of the gladiators. He took part in the games himself, dressed as the hero Hercules as well as in other costumes. Commodus had planned to appear as a gladiator on the first day of 193, but he was assassinated on New Year's Eve in 192.

✓ Reading Check What happened to the Roman senate under the emperor Commodus?

Timeline Skills

These timeline entries show the decline and collapse of the Roman Empire. **Identify** When did Diocletian divide the Roman Empire? **Summarize** Summarize the important events from the timeline.



Identify Implied Main Ideas

In one sentence, state the main idea that all the details in this section support.



Invasions of the Roman Empire to A.D. 476

MAP MASTER Skills Activity



Movement The Roman Empire in the west fell to German invaders in A.D. 476. The eastern part of the empire survived as the Byzantine Empire.

Identify What groups of invaders entered the Roman Empire?

Compare and Contrast In which part of the empire did most invasions take place?

Go Online
PHSchool.com Use Web Code **mup-0933** for step-by-step map skills practice.

The Empire Crumbles

The decline of the Roman Empire began under Commodus. Historians do not agree on any one cause for this decline. They believe that several problems led to the fall of Rome.

Weak, Corrupt Rulers After Commodus, emperors were almost always successful generals, not politicians. They often stole money from the treasury. They used the money to enrich themselves and pay for the loyalty of their soldiers. The government and the economy became weak and the senate lost power. Would-be rulers gained the throne by violence. Between A.D. 180 and A.D. 284, Rome had 29 emperors. Most were assassinated.

A Mercenary Army In earlier times, the Roman army had been made up of citizen soldiers ready to defend their land. Now the army was filled with **mercenaries, foreign soldiers who serve for pay**. Mercenaries were motivated by money, not by loyalty to any cause. They often switched sides if doing so could work to their personal advantage. Rome's strength had depended on a strong army that was loyal to the empire. This was now a memory.



Relief showing a barbarian fighting a Roman soldier

The Size of the Empire The Roman Empire had grown too large. Enemies launched attacks all over the empire. Many conquered territories regained their independence. The Roman army spent its time defending the empire instead of extending its authority. Consequently, the empire shrank.

Serious Economic Problems When Rome stopped conquering new lands, new sources of wealth were no longer available. The empire struggled to pay its army. To raise money, the government raised taxes. Meanwhile, the people of the empire suffered severe unemployment.

Food was scarce, so its price went up. To pay for food, the government produced more coins. The value of those coins was dependent upon the amount of silver in them. But because the government did not have much silver, less of this metal was put in each coin. This change resulted in **inflation, an economic situation in which more money circulates, but the money has less value**. When inflation is not controlled, money buys less and less. Roman coins soon became worthless.

Efforts to Stop the Decline Some emperors tried to stop the empire's decline. Diocletian worked to strengthen Rome. He enlarged the army, built new forts at the borders, and improved the tax system. Diocletian also divided the empire into two parts to make it easier to rule. He ruled the wealthier eastern part of the empire, and appointed a co-emperor to rule the western part.

✓ Reading Check What problems did having a mercenary army cause for the empire?

Roman warship





Christianity in the Roman Empire

Above is the church of St. John the Theologian in Ephesus, an ancient city whose ruins are located in present-day Turkey. Ephesus was an early base of Christianity within the Roman Empire. **Summarize** *How did Constantine encourage the spread of Christianity?*

Constantine and Christianity

Diocletian and his co-emperor stepped down in A.D. 305. A struggle for power followed. For seven years, generals fought one another for power until one—Constantine—became the winner. As you read earlier, Constantine reported that the Christian God had helped his army win the battle for control of Rome. The victory at the bridge over the Tiber made Constantine sole ruler of the Roman Empire in the West. In the East, rule of the Roman Empire was shared by Licinius (ly SIN ee us) and Maximinus (mak suh MEE nus). In 313 Licinius took complete control of the eastern parts of the empire.

Freedom of Religion Also in 313, Constantine and Licinius proclaimed freedom of worship for people across the empire. Under Diocletian and others, Christians had been tortured and punished for their beliefs. Now Rome would no longer persecute the Christians. They were free to practice their religion openly. They could organize churches. Property that had been taken from them was returned. Christianity would soon become the official religion of the Roman Empire.

Another Christian Victory In 324 Constantine won several battles against Licinius for control of the eastern half of the Roman Empire. Now Constantine was emperor of both East and West. Although Licinius and Constantine had agreed to tolerate all religions when they began sharing power in 313, Licinius had continued to allow the persecution of Christians in the East. Constantine saw his victory over Licinius as further proof that the Christian God was working through him.

Building a Faith During his 25 years as emperor, Constantine worked to strengthen the Christian church. In 325 he stepped in to help solve a religious crisis. The church almost split apart when eastern and western church leaders disagreed on certain issues of faith. Constantine led a meeting in Nicaea (ny SEE uh) that brought the two sides together and kept the church whole.

Constantine was a leading force behind the construction of important Christian places of worship. He helped plan and pay for the construction of a church in Jerusalem on the spot where Jesus was crucified, buried, and is said to have risen from the dead. The church of St. Peter in Rome was also built with his help. Constantine also supported the building of churches in the city that would become the empire's new capital.

A New Capital In 330, Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire east to the city of Byzantium (bih ZAN tee um), in what is now Turkey. It was a natural move for the emperor. He had grown up in the East and had lived in the eastern Roman city of Nicomedia (ni kuh MEED ee uh) at the court of the emperor Diocletian. The move east also made sense for the empire. Rome had not been its political center for some time.

Constantine spared no expense in enlarging Byzantium and filling it with riches. When he dedicated the city as the new capital of the empire, he called it New Rome. Soon, however, the capital was known by a different name, Constantinople (kahn stan tuh NOH pul), “the city of Constantine.” With the emperor and the empire's capital in Constantinople, the power of the Roman Empire was now firmly in the East.

✓ Reading Check What city became the new capital of the Roman Empire?

This shows the Hagia Sophia in Sultan Ahmet Square in Constantinople, the capital of the eastern Roman Empire. Today, Constantinople is known as Istanbul, Turkey.



Vandals Today, we call someone who destroys property and valuable things a vandal. The Vandals were one of the Germanic tribes that invaded the Roman Empire. They looted Rome in A.D. 455, stealing artwork and other highly prized items. Their name came to be connected with this kind of destructive behavior.




The Anglo-Saxons who invaded Roman England buried their kings in ships. At a site discovered in England in 1939, the ancient ship had rotted. Yet many items, including this helmet remained.

Invasions and Collapse

Constantine struggled to keep the empire together, but the forces pulling it apart were too great. After his death, invaders swept across Rome's borders and overwhelmed the empire. The invaders belonged to northern tribes. Today, we call them Germanic tribes. The Romans called them barbarians. In the past, the Roman army had been able to defeat these tribes. Now, however, they could not stop the intruders. In the 400s, the Germanic tribes overran the empire. One tribe, the Visigoths (VIZ ee gahths), captured and looted Rome in 410. The Vandals (VAN dulz), another Germanic tribe, took Rome in 455. The Roman emperor was almost powerless.

The last Roman emperor was 14-year-old Romulus Augustulus (RAHM yuh lus oh GUS chuh lus). His name recalled more than 1,000 years of Roman glory. But the boy emperor did not win glory for himself. In 476, a German general took power and sent the emperor to work on a farm. After Romulus Augustulus, no emperor ruled over Rome and the western part of the empire.

However, even after Rome fell, the eastern part of the empire remained strong. Its capital, Constantinople, remained the center of another empire, the Byzantine Empire, for a thousand years.

 **Reading Check** Who was Romulus Augustulus, and what was his fate?

Section 3 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms listed at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains the term's meaning.

Target Reading Skill

State the main idea of the section Constantine and Christianity.

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) **Recall** How is Marcus Aurelius remembered?
- (b) **Analyze** Was Commodus a good choice for emperor?

- (a) **Identify** What factors contributed to the Roman Empire's decline?
- (b) **Identify Cause and Effect** How did each cause you listed affect the empire's stability?
- (a) **Describe** What did Constantine do to show that he accepted Christianity?
- (b) **Draw Conclusions** Why did Constantine take steps to strengthen the Christian church?
- (a) **Recall** What events led to the fall of Rome?
- (b) **Analyze Information** Why was the Roman army unable to resist the invading armies?

Writing Activity

The fall of the western Roman Empire was a turning point in history, but many people in those days may not have noticed any change. Why might this be true?

Go online
PHSchool.com

For: An activity on the fall of the Roman Empire
Visit: PHSchool.com
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Focus On The Roman Soldier

The Roman soldier was a citizen and a professional, committed to serving on the battlefield for at least 25 years. Away from his homeland for years at a time and forbidden to marry during his service, he formed strong bonds of loyalty to his commander and his comrades. If he survived to complete his dangerous service, he could expect to be well rewarded with land or money.



Pocket Sundial

This travel-sized Roman sundial was used to keep time.

Making Camp Foot soldiers, called legionaries (LEE juh nehr eez), sometimes marched 20 miles a day, weighed down by about 70 pounds (32 kilograms) of armor and gear. At the end of their march, the legion, or army, would make a temporary camp. Scouts traveled ahead of the legion to choose a level piece of land near a water source, such as a river or a stream.

When the legionaries arrived, some stood guard while others set to work building ramparts—banks of earth to protect them from attack. First they cut strips of turf from the ground. Then they dug trenches about 10 feet (3 meters) deep. The earth piled up from the trenches formed the ramparts, which were then covered with turf. Finally, stakes driven into the ramparts created a fence. Inside the camp, tents were pitched in orderly rows. The entire job probably took about two hours.



Ruins of a Roman military camp built near the Dead Sea in Israel

Armor

Various styles of armor were introduced throughout the army's history.

Tools

The men used pickaxes and turf cutters to build the camp's defenses.

Centurions

These officers led the legionaries into battle and directed them in their duties.

Iron Tools

Roman soldiers used many different kinds of tools. The axe (left) and a hook (right) used to lift cauldrons from a fire date from the A.D. 100s.

Assessment

Describe What types of challenges did legionaries face during their service in the Roman army?

Generalize Why do you think Roman soldiers developed a strong sense of loyalty to the army during their service?

Comparing and Contrasting



Suppose your teacher gave you this extra-credit project: Write a paper comparing and contrasting the ancient empire of Rome with China during the Qin dynasty.

To compare means to find similarities. (Sometimes people use *to compare* to mean to find similarities *and* differences. Be sure to ask your teachers what they mean when they ask you to compare.) You also know that *to contrast* means to find differences. For this project, you need to find out how Rome and China were alike and how they were different.

Learn the Skill

Whenever you are asked to compare and contrast, follow these steps:

- 1 Identify a topic and purpose.** What do you want to compare, and for what purpose? For example, you may want to:
 - make a choice
 - understand a topic
 - discover patterns
 - show that items are more alike or more different
- 2 Identify categories of comparison, and fill in details for each category.** You will need to take notes. You may want to organize your notes in a chart. Make a column for each item you want to compare, and make a row for each category of comparison. Then fill in specific information under each of your categories.
- 3 Identify similarities and differences.** If you make a chart, you can mark an *S* for similar or a *D* for different items.
- 4 Draw conclusions.** Write a sentence telling whether the items you're comparing have more similarities or more differences.

Practice the Skill

Use the chart below to practice comparing and contrasting.

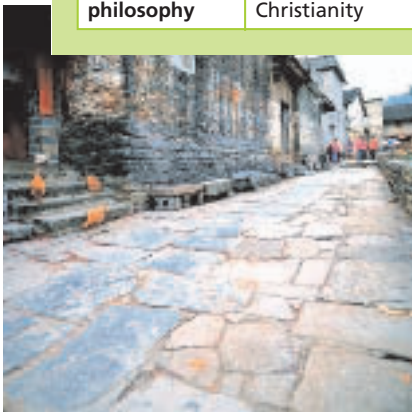
- 1 Examine the headings in the chart below to identify the chart's topic and its purpose.
- 2 What are the main categories of comparison in the chart? How do the details shown support each category?
- 3 Fill in *S* or *D* in the last column of the chart to identify the similarities and the differences between the two empires.
- 4 As you write your conclusion, keep in mind the topic and the purpose of the chart.

The remains of an ancient Roman road in Sicily



The Roman Empire and the Qin Dynasty

Characteristic	Roman Empire	Qin Dynasty	Similar or Different
Length of empire	About 520 years (44 B.C.–A.D. 476)	About 15 years (221–206 B.C.)	
Major characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built a network of roads • Created local governments • Established code of laws • Created a money system (currency) • Supported literature and the arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built a network of roads • Created local governments • Established code of laws • Created a money system (currency) • Restricted the freedoms of scholars 	
Religion or philosophy	Roman religion; later Christianity	Philosophy of legalism	



An ancient Chinese road

Apply the Skill

Use the steps on this page to compare and contrast features of Roman life with life in the United States today. Take notes or put your comparisons in a chart. Write a sentence that draws a conclusion about your findings.