

Hello, fellow teacher!

Below is your reading passage; I hope it serves you well.

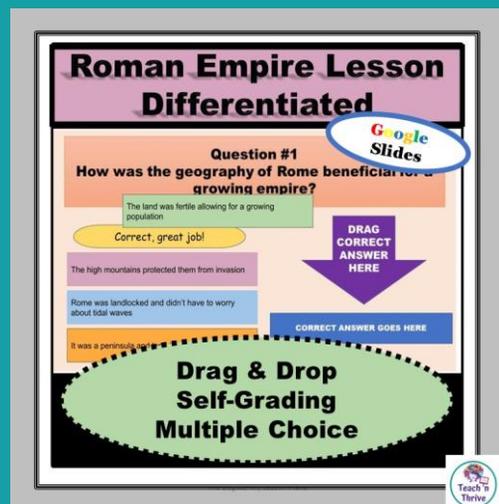
Print it out and it's ready to use. Or, if you want to differentiate for struggling students, use the highlight feature on the PDF to annotate what you want the kiddos to focus on.

Click [here](#) to get a digital copy.

Don't forget to check back to the site regularly and see what has been added!

Warmest Wishes,  
Joan

Check out my differentiated Google Lesson on the Roman Empire [here](#)



If you are looking for some teaching ideas to use with this reading passage watch my video [here](#).

# ANCIENT ROME



Ancient Rome has affected our current life in a range of ways including language, government, the arts and architecture. The letters of this essay alone shows this.

## Roman Republic

The mythical founders were the brothers Romulus and Remus, nursed by a she-wolf, and descendants of a Trojan hero (later portrayed in the Roman classic, *The Aeneid*). History suggests the city of Rome was founded in the 8th Century BCE by members of the Latin tribe (thus the "Latin" language) in central Italy. This began a reign of kings that ended in 509 BCE, when the Roman Republic began.

A republic is ruled by elected officials instead of kings. The highest officials were two consuls who ruled with a senate with a variety of minor officials developed to administrate day to day life. A sign of Roman citizenship was a long robe called a "toga." It was a classed based society with an elite land-owning class (patricians), commoners (plebeians) and slaves. The republic influenced our own system of government and is an important part of the legacy of Ancient Rome.

Over a span of hundreds of years, including defeating the North African city-state of Carthage (Punic Wars), the Romans not only gained control of all of Italy but surrounding areas. The reach of the Roman Empire at its highest point ranged from Great Britain to lands in the Middle East, including Palestine.

## Pax Romana

Key to Roman military success and ability to retain power was their army with the legion as its main unit. This also left open the possibility of military takeover. Julius Caesar was a great military leader, particularly for his exploits in Western Europe (Gaul). He eventually seized power leading to a series of moves that ended the Roman Republic. After Caesar was assassinated, a power struggle ultimately led to his nephew Augustus gaining power.

Remains of the  
Coliseum in  
Rome



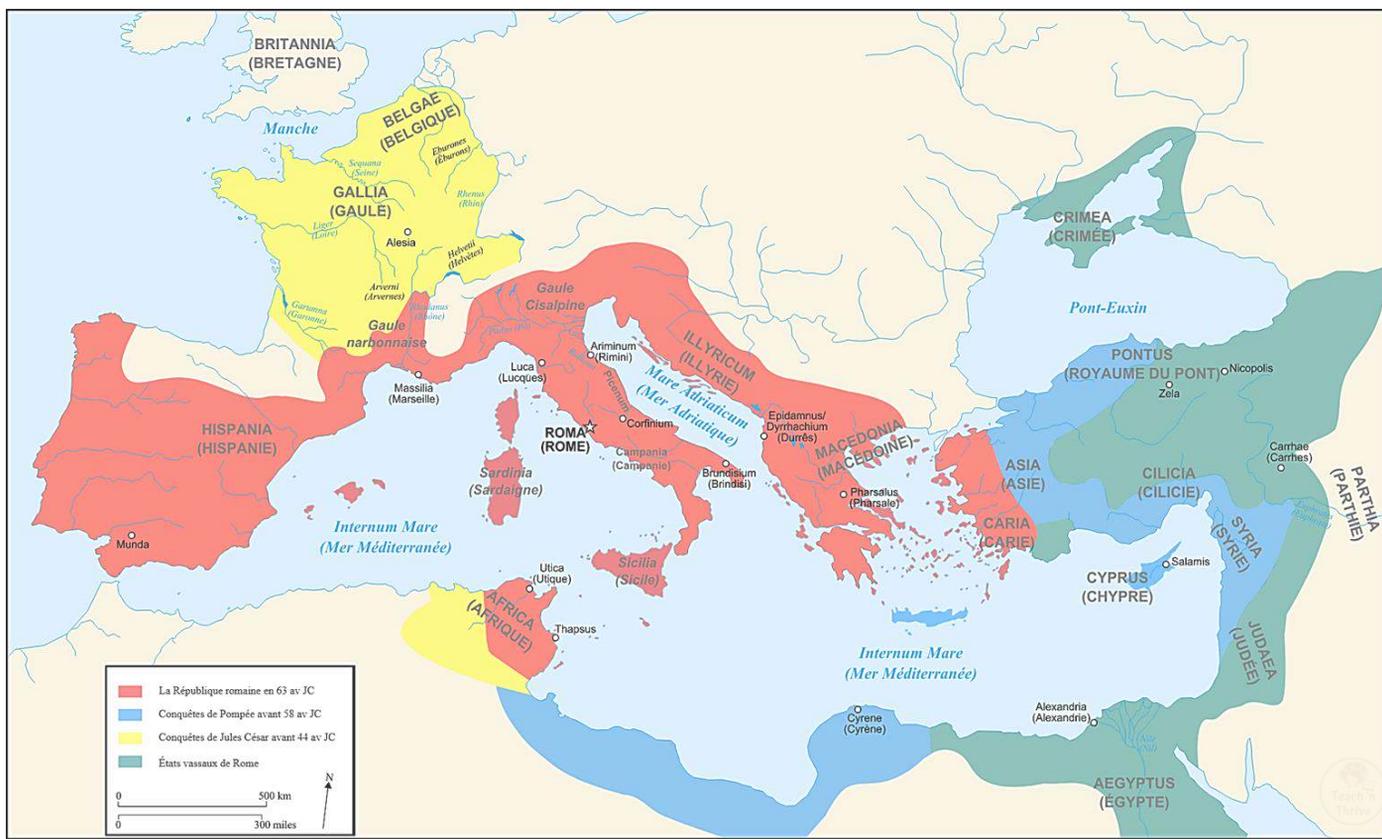
This is often marked as the beginning of the "Roman Empire" with a series of emperors being in control. It also began an about two hundred period of peace and prosperity known as the "Pax Romana" (Roman peace). The beginning of Christianity occurred during time. The Romans as a whole were polytheists, believing in many gods, official religious ceremonies an important part of their society.

It is also a time when many writers of philosophy, history, poetry and satire that are still read lived. We ourselves use the Latin alphabet and still sometimes use Roman numerals (such as "X" for ten). The Coliseum, a great arena used for entertainment events (including gladiator battles) was also built. Roman architecture also included aqueducts, man-made channels built to deliver water to towns. Roman roads that connected the empire also were long lasting, often still used long after the empire fell.

### Decline and Fall

The 200s (third century) was a particularly divisive time for the Roman Empire with many civil wars and short-term emperors. Constantine (later "the Great") gained control in the fourth century, transferring the capital of the empire to an eastern city (in Turkey) that became Constantinople. He authorized the practice of Christianity and it eventually became the official religion of the whole empire.

His success as a unifying force however was short-lived and the empire split in two parts (east and west) by the end of the fourth century. Invasions from outsiders, including of Rome itself, weakened the empire. Over time, central control from Rome itself declined, local powers growing in dominance. The end of the western empire occurred in 476. The eastern empire continued in some form until 1453, named the Byzantium Empire (after the original name of Constantinople).



## Vocabulary

Republic;

Patricians;

Plebeians;

Punic Wars;

Pax Romana;

Polytheists;

Coliseum;

Byzantine Empire;



Compare the map of the Roman Empire to the modern day one below. Describe, in geographic terms, the extent of the Roman Empire (where it was located).



Every Roman city had a public bath where people came to bathe and socialize. Romans came there, often daily, to get clean and socialize.

These communal baths were often extremely large. The floors and water were heated from furnaces underneath. Water was piped in using lead pipes and sewer systems.

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