

Name: _____
Date: _____

Ancient Rome: A New Power Rises

Italy is a peninsula that extends into the Mediterranean Sea east of the Greek peninsula. Rome lies on the western shore near the center of the peninsula. Today Rome is the capital of the modern nation of Italy and one of the largest cities in Europe, but Rome was once the seat of a huge empire.

In 509BCE, Rome was a small village. But as time went on--through force or persuasion--Rome controlled almost the entire Italian peninsula by 247BCE. In fact, by the second century of the Common Era, Rome developed into the greatest western empire of the ancient world. Many of our technological achievements, our ideas about law and government, and the words we use can be traced to the ancient Romans.

Rome grew from a village to an empire in part because the city was protected from enemy attack. Rome is situated along the banks of the Tiber River about fifteen miles inland from the sea. The Tiber has a ford, or shallow portion near Rome. The ford made it impossible for large seagoing ships to attack the city, but experienced Roman sailors could navigate the Tiber's waters in smaller ships. Seven hills surround Rome. The hills made it harder for invaders to reach the city and served as lookout areas for the ancient Romans. Rome is also close to excellent farmland and an abundance of wood and stone, so the Romans had the resources to supply a large army.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the banks of the Tiber River were first inhabited about 1500BCE, but the origins of Rome are steeped in myth and legend. Many ancient Romans believed twin boys named Romulus and Remus were responsible for the foundation of the city. The legends say a king feared the twins would rob him of his throne, so he tossed the infant boys into the frigid Tiber River. Soon after, a wolf rescued Romulus and Remus and nursed the brothers back to health.

Romulus and Remus decided to establish a city on the Tiber River, but the brothers could not agree on a location. Signs from the heavens told each brother to establish separate cities, and on April 21,

753BCE, Romulus completed the wall around his city. Remus belittled the wall and its builders. When Remus climbed over the wall, the enraged Romulus killed his brother with an ax. Rome is named for Romulus, its legendary founder.

Rome grew from a small town in 509BCE to the ruler of most of the Italian peninsula by 247BCE. Throughout this era, Rome was constantly at war with one or more of its neighbors. At that time, when two cities went to war, the victorious army would destroy the conquered city and either kill or sell the citizens of the conquered city into slavery.

The Roman model of conquest was different. Rome expanded its territory in part because they extended many of the rights of citizenship to the people they conquered.

The Romans did not collect tribute from the people they conquered, but the Romans did require their neighbors to provide soldiers for the Roman army. As a result, the Romans had a massive source of manpower to draw upon for

their many wars.

The Roman army built roads that often made the conquered cities more prosperous. The soldiers spread Roman customs to their home villages once their service ended. In time, the Latin language of the area around Rome was spoken throughout the Italian peninsula.

The Romans did not necessarily have the best army, but the immensity of the Roman military allowed them to continue fighting despite tremendous losses. In 279BCE, King Pyrrhus of Epirus defeated the Roman army in two battles. Rome had a larger supply of soldiers, and while the Romans suffered greater casualties, the losses inflicted by the Romans destroyed Pyrrhus' smaller army. Today we refer to a pyrrhic victory as an achievement with such disastrous results that it is actually a defeat. If your favorite team wins a game that clinches a berth in the playoffs – but loses two star players to injury in that game – the win could turn out to be a pyrrhic victory.

Rome managed to unite most of the modern nation of Italy by 265BCE. Rome would next turn its attention to a rival in North Africa and go on to create a world empire.



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Fill in the Blanks

Rome grew from a small village 509BCE to the ruler of most of the I_a_i__n peninsula 244 years later. Rome would later develop into the greatest western e_pi__e of the a__c__e__t world. The city was p__o__e__t__d from enemy i__v__s__on by seven h__l__s and a shallow r__v__r. From the hills the Romans could see e__e__i__s approach. Experienced Roman s__i__o__s with small ships were able to n__v__g__te the T__b__r River, but the river could not accommodate large s__a__o__ng vessels necessary to attack the city.

Roman *m__t__o__o__y teaches that the city was founded in 753BCE by R__m__l__s, one of two b__o__h__rs raised by a w_____ after he and his t_____ brother were thrown into the T__b__r River. The a__c__a__o__o__i__al evidence indicates that Rome has been occupied since about 1500BCE.

Roman warriors united most of the Italian peninsula through f__r__e and p__r__u__si__n. The city was almost constantly at w____, but unlike most other cities at that time, Rome allowed the people they c__n__u__r__d to become c__ti__e__s. The massive Roman army built r__a__s that connected Italian cities and villages. The army also provided an endless supply of m__n__o__er for Rome's many wars.

Answer in complete sentences

*1. Explain how the Roman model of conquest between 509BCE and 265BCE was different from most other cities of that era.

2. *Describe a real or imagined example of a pyrrhic victory.

*3. Write a paragraph that explains how Rome managed to unite most of the Italian peninsula by 265BCE. Your paragraph must have a topic sentence, at least two support sentences and a conclusion that restates but does not repeat the topic sentence.

*A higher order-learning question. Any reasonable answer will be accepted.