

Lesson 4 The Legacy of Rome

MAIN IDEAS

Culture Roman culture was a unique blend of Roman and Greek ideas.

Science and Technology Roman advances in architecture and engineering have influenced builders throughout history.

Culture The spread of Christianity and the Roman system of law left a lasting legacy for the world today.

Roman Culture

ESSENTIAL QUESTION How did Roman culture differ from Greek culture?

Art

- Roman culture valued strength, loyalty, practicality
 - blended with Greek writing styles, concept of artistic ideal
- Artists created **mosaics**—pictures made of tiny, colored pieces of stone

Sculpture

- Romans learned from Greek sculpture, but did not show the ideal
- Created realistic portraits in **bas-relief** style
 - featured slightly raised figures against flat background

Literature

- Romans adopted form of Greek **epic**—long poem about a hero's adventures
- Virgil's epic poem the *Aeneid* is story of Aeneas—Trojan founder of Rome
 - modeled on Greek *Odyessy, Iliad*
- Statesman Cicero's works include his speeches
 - Cicero was master of **oratory**—art of public speaking as a means of persuasion
- Emperor Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* expresses philosophy of Stoicism

Language

- Latin was Roman language, spoken across Western Empire
 - evolved into Romance languages, still used in former Roman lands
- Romance languages: Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian, Romanian
 - word *romance* comes from the word *Roman*

REVIEW QUESTION

How did Roman culture influence the languages of Europe?

Technology, Engineering, and Architecture

ESSENTIAL QUESTION How did Roman ideas about architecture and engineering influence builders throughout history?

New Styles of Architecture

- Romans added to Greek building styles, made improvements
 - included arches, domes, **vaults**—arches that form a ceiling or roof
 - used advances to build larger, taller buildings
- A modern example of Roman design is the dome of the U.S. Capitol

New Building Materials

- Romans developed light, strong form of concrete
 - common building material today

Aqueducts

- **Aqueduct**—waterway to bring water to cities' fountains, bathhouses
 - eleven major aqueducts went to Rome; the longest was 57 miles

Roads

- Appian Way—road built in 312 B.C. running southeast from Rome
 - first of many that eventually formed system with Rome at center
- Soldiers, merchants needed roads to move quickly, easily
- Road system united empire, but also made it easier to invade

REVIEW QUESTION

What elements of Roman construction are still in use?

Religion and Law

ESSENTIAL QUESTION What religious and legal legacies did Rome leave?

Spreading Christianity

- Roman Empire played major role in spreading Christianity
 - missionaries converted many in empire
 - Roman Catholic Church became powerful Western European organization
- Eastern Orthodox Church was official religion of Byzantine Empire
 - spread Christianity to many, including Russia
- Most of Europe, parts of western Asia became Christian

Roman Government and Law

- Structure of Roman Republic influenced writers of U.S. Constitution
- Senators made up main political body of republic
- Laws in today's democracies evolved from ancient Rome, Byzantine
 - laws include rights to own property, make contracts, write wills
- Citizens in Roman Republic had right to equal treatment under law
 - inspired creators of French and American democracies

REVIEW QUESTION

Which elements of Roman law are found in U.S. law?

Lesson Summary

- Roman writers and artists were inspired by Greek culture, which they combined with their own ideas.
- Roman builders and engineers developed styles and construction methods that continue to be used.
- Roman laws and government continue to serve as models for modern countries.

Why It Matters Now . . .

Many areas of modern life—from government to architecture to language—still carry the mark of the Roman Empire.