

Summary: Ancient Rome

The Growth of Rome

Rome began as a group of villages near Italy's center. The first Romans were shepherds and farmers. They settled there because of the good climate and soil. Around 600 B.C.E., Etruscans conquered Rome. They built roads, a sewage system, and public buildings. They taught the Romans Greek ideas, such as how to use an alphabet. Rome grew large and wealthy.

Roman Government

Under the Etruscans, a king ruled Rome. His advisers were called the Senate. In 509 B.C.E. the Romans took over and formed a republic. In a republic, citizens vote for leaders to represent them. Only male citizens could vote. Citizens met in groups called assemblies. The Senate held a great deal of power. Women and slaves had no say in the government.

The republic lasted for about 500 years. In 27 B.C.E., the republic became an empire ruled by an emperor. By C.E. 106, Rome controlled half of Europe, much of the Middle East, and the north coast of Africa. Emperors collected taxes to pay for the huge army.

Roman Achievements

Ancient Romans had many ideas about government, literature, law, and art. Builders still use ideas from Roman architecture. Romans developed concrete. They built aqueducts to bring clean water to Rome. Roman soldiers built many miles of roads. The roads made it easy to control the empire and to spread ideas, beliefs, and skills.



Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

republic *noun*, a form of government in which citizens vote for leaders to represent them

empire *noun*, a group of nations ruled by one government

architecture *noun*, the design of buildings

aqueduct *noun*, a system of pipes and waterways that carries water from one place to another



After You Read

REVIEW In what ways did the Etruscans help Rome grow large and powerful? Draw a box around sentences that tell what the Etruscans did after they conquered Rome around 600 B.C.E.

REVIEW Compare a republic and an empire. Highlight the sentence that tells how citizens chose leaders in the republic. Then circle the word that tells who ruled the empire.

REVIEW In what ways did Roman builders help the people of the Roman Empire? Highlight the sentences that tell what the Romans built.