

# 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.

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## 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?

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# 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?

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# 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.