Roman Towns Change Britain

Teacher		**Class**	Year 3
Subject	History	**Topic**	The Romans in Britain
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United Kingdom

We learn why the Romans invaded and how they changed Britain. We plan our own mini Roman town with straight streets.

Curriculum links

- the Roman Empire and its impact on Britain [1]
- the Roman Empire by AD 42 and the power of its army [1]
- successful invasion by Claudius and conquest, including Hadrian's Wall [1]

Learning objectives

- Students will explain why the Romans invaded Britain for resources.
- Students will describe a Roman town with straight streets and forum.
- Students will order four key Roman dates from 55 BC to AD 410.

Success criteria

- I can say why the Romans came to Britain.
- I can describe a Roman town with forum and straight road.
- I can put four Roman dates in the right order.

What students already know

Ask: What was life like before phones and cars? What does an army do? Listen for army takes over, travel was slow.

Key words

empire	control of lots of lands by one ruler [9]
invasion	army coming to take over land and things [9]
Londinium	new Roman city that later became London [4]
forum	big open meeting place to talk and buy things [17]
villa	big posh stone house for rich people [17]

Materials

- large sugar paper
- pencils
- rulers
- blue crayon for river
- Slides 1-4, 6-7, 9-10, 12
- Video clip 1 (0:00-3:33)

Before the lesson

- Print Worksheet Task A for pairs and Task B for exit check
- Print one pre-drawn support sheet per pair needing help with river and one main road
- Test Slide 6 Video clip 1 (0:00-3:33) with sound
- Set out large sugar paper, pencils, rulers and blue crayons for river

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- Worksheet Task A printed
- Worksheet Task B printed
- pre-drawn support sheets with river and one main road
- Clear tables for group town planning

Lesson outline

0–8 min **Starter** 8 min · Whole class

To hook interest as town planners and recall why Romans came.

YOU DO

1. Welcome the class and say the hook with a ruler held up like a Roman planner.
2. Show title slide: How a huge empire changed life here and objectives slide.
3. Ask what empire and invasion mean and what Romans might want.
4. Link answers to tin, gold and food to set up the lesson.

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen and answer the planner challenge with a partner.
2. Repeat empire and invasion meanings together.
3. Suggest one thing an invader might want.

Say: No phones, no computers. You are town planners 2,000 years ago. Can you build a town with just a ruler? Today we will learn why the Romans came and what their towns looked like.

Ask: What is an empire? (Control of lots of lands by one ruler [9].) · What might Romans want from Britain? (Tin, gold, iron, cattle and food [9].)

Check understanding: Thumbs up if you can say one reason Romans came; if not, repeat tin, gold and food together.

Support: Show picture clues for tin, gold and wheat while asking. **Stretch:** Ask why taking cattle and metals would make Rome richer.

Use: Slides 1-2

8–20 min **Teaching** 12 min · Whole class

To explain invasion reasons and order the four key dates.

YOU DO

1. Show chain: Rome ruled an empire, wanted tin and gold, invasion, Britain became more Roman.
2. Show army bullets: big group of trained soldiers, about 40,000 soldiers sailed, strong and organised.
3. Show invasion story in 4 steps in order and read each date aloud.
4. Model Worksheet Task A Why chain and hand it out for pairs to fill.

STUDENTS DO

1. Chant the four dates in order with actions for sail, stay, build, leave.
2. Fill Worksheet Task A Why chain in pairs.
3. Check order against the 4 steps on the board.

Say: Rome ruled lots of lands. It wanted Britain's tin, gold and food. Invasion means an army came to take over. Emperor Claudius sent about 40,000 soldiers in AD 43 and stayed [4][10][7].

Worked example: Why chain filled: Rome wanted metals and food -> sent organised army in AD 43 -> built forts, roads and towns -> Britain slowly became more Roman [15]. Dates in order: 55 BC Julius Caesar tries but leaves, AD 43 Claudius invades and stays, AD 122 Hadrian builds wall, AD 410 Romans leave [4].

Ask: Who led the invasion that stayed in AD 43? (Emperor Claudius [4][10].) · What happened in AD 122 and AD 410? (AD 122 Hadrian built a long wall, AD 410 Romans left Britain [4][15].) · Why was the Roman army so powerful? (Big, strong and organised, built forts and roads [15].)

Check understanding: Hold up fingers 1 to 4 to order dates called out; reteach any mixed Caesar and Claudius dates.

Support: Give date cards 55 BC, AD 43, AD 122, AD 410 to order on desks. **Stretch:** Explain in one sentence why Caesar did not stay but Claudius did.

Use: Slides 3-4, 7 and Worksheet Task A

20–27 min **Explore** 7 min · Whole class

To spot two new Roman changes and how roads helped soldiers.

YOU DO

1. Set task: Spot two new things Romans brought and listen for how roads helped soldiers.
2. Play video clip on how Romans changed Britain.
3. Pause to name roads, towns and coins with quick facts.
4. Link to next town task.

STUDENTS DO

1. Watch the video and count new things on fingers.
2. Tell partner two new things Romans brought.
3. Say why straight roads helped soldiers move fast.

Say: Watch and spot two new things. The Romans built 10,000 miles of road across Britain [8]. They were first built so that the Roman army could travel quickly and safely [8].

Ask: Name one new thing Romans brought? (Straight roads, towns, coins, bath houses or Latin words [8].) · Why build roads straight? (So soldiers could travel quickly and safely [8].)

Check understanding: Hands up to name two changes; replay 30 seconds if fewer than most can name two.

Support: Give word bank: roads, towns, coins to point to while listening. **Stretch:** Say how coins are easier than swapping a sheep for a sword [8].

Use: Slide 6, Video clip 1 (0:00-3:33)

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27–52 min **Main** 25 min · Groups

To design a mini Roman town to show Roman impact on Britain.

YOU DO

1. Explain the Romans created Londinium with roads, stronger buildings, wall and first bridge across the Thames [4].
2. Show organised towns with straight streets and neat rows round a forum for meeting and markets [17], laid out in a grid [18].
3. Model a tiny town on sugar paper: river, straight bridge, grid streets, central forum, stone houses and villa.
4. Send groups to draw their own town with ruler and blue crayon for river.

STUDENTS DO

1. In groups draw river, bridge, grid streets, forum and houses on sugar paper.
2. Add a villa and check streets are straight with a ruler.
3. Give a walking tour pointing to forum, bridge and straight streets.

Say: You are planners with just a ruler. Draw a river in blue, one straight bridge across it, straight grid streets, a central forum in the middle, and stone houses. Include a villa, a big posh house [17].

Worked example: Model town step by step: 1. Draw blue river across bottom. 2. Draw one straight bridge over it. 3. Rule two straight roads crossing at forum. 4. Draw forum box in centre labelled meeting place. 5. Add 4 stone house squares and 1 big villa with garden. Point to straightest road and say soldiers march fast here.

Ask: What is a forum for? (Meeting place, to do business and hold markets [17].) · Why are your streets straight? (So soldiers and messengers can travel quickly and safely [8].)

Check understanding: Tour two groups and check for river, bridge, grid, forum; send back to add any missing part.

Support: Give a sheet with the river and one main road already drawn to finish off. **Stretch:** Add labels and a key, plus a town wall with two gates.

Use: Slides 9-10

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52–60 min **Plenary** 8 min · Whole class

To check objectives on reasons, town features and dates.

YOU DO

1. Hold up two best town plans and name forum, bridge and straight road.
2. Run quick quiz questions on Claudius, wanted goods and Hadrian's Wall.
3. Hand out Worksheet Task B multiple choice for pairs to tick.
4. Close by linking towns, roads and Latin to impact on Britain.

STUDENTS DO

1. Point to forum and bridge on own plan.
2. Answer quiz questions aloud.
3. Tick Worksheet Task B best answers in pairs.

Say: Show me your forum and straight road. Tell me one reason Romans came and one date. We will tick the best answers together to prove what we learned.

Ask: Who led the invasion that stayed in AD 43? (Emperor Claudius [4].) · Name one thing Romans wanted and one town feature? (Gold, tin, iron or cattle [9]; forum, straight road, bridge or wall.) · Order 55 BC, AD 43, AD 122, AD 410? (Caesar tries, Claudius stays, Hadrian wall, Romans leave [4].)

Check understanding: Collect Task B ticks; if many mix dates, reorder timeline rope call once more.

Support: Read Task B choices aloud and let students point to answer. **Stretch:** Explain why straight streets still help us today in one sentence.

Use: Slide 12 and Worksheet Task B

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Thinking Julius Caesar stayed and conquered Britain in 55 BC.	Puts 55 BC as staying invasion.	Caesar tried in 55 BC but left; Claudius invaded and stayed in AD 43 [4][10].
Thinking Hadrian's Wall was round Londinium.	Draws wall round town plan.	Wall ordered in AD 122 to guard the north, not the town [10].
Thinking Romans stayed only a few years.	Says they left straight after building.	Romans stayed nearly 400 years until last troops left c. AD 410 [15].

Support

- Pre-drawn river and main road sheets and word banks for forum and villa
- Date cards and picture clues for metals and food
- Paired work and read-aloud quiz choices

Stretch

- Add town wall with two gates, labels and key
- Explain in sentences why straight roads and coins helped rule
- Order all four dates and say what changed at each step

For the LSE or teaching assistant

Stay with target pairs in Teaching and Main; help order date cards, guide ruler lines, prompt forum and bridge vocabulary.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Who led the invasion that stayed in AD 43?	Emperor Claudius [4]
Name one thing Romans wanted from Britain?	Gold, tin, iron or cattle and food [9]
Name one Roman town feature and what it was for?	Forum for meeting and markets [17] or straight road for quick army travel [8]

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