

Summary: Ancient Rome was a powerful and important civilization that ruled much of Europe for nearly 1000 years. The culture of Ancient Rome was spread throughout Europe during its rule. As a result, Rome's culture still has an impact in the Western world today. The basis for much of Western culture comes from Ancient Rome, especially in areas such as government, engineering, architecture, language, and literature. Rome first grew into power as a Republic. This meant that Rome's leaders, such as senators, were elected officials that served for a limited amount of time, not kings who were born into leadership and ruled for life. They had a complex government with written laws, a constitution, and a balance of powers. These concepts became very important in forming future democratic governments, like the United States.

Key concepts

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| 1 | The Roman Empire: Octavian was the most powerful man in all of Rome. In 27 BC, he had himself named "Augustus" and became the first Emperor of Rome. This marked the beginning of the Roman Empire. The first period of the Roman Empire was one of the most prosperous times of Ancient Rome. The empire expanded to cover its largest expanse and Rome became very wealthy. |
| 2 | Government: Many modern-day governments are modelled after the Roman Republic. Ideas such as balance of powers, veto, and representation all were developed and recorded by the Romans. The United States has three branches of government similar to the Roman Republic. The U.S. even named one house of Congress, the Senate, after the Senate of Rome. |
| 3 | Inventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewers and Sanitation • Roads and highways • Aqueducts • Roman Numerals |
| 4 | The Colosseum: Construction on the Colosseum was started in 72 AD by the emperor Vespasian. It was finished eight years later in 80 AD. The walls of the Colosseum were built with stone. They made use of a number of arches in order to keep the weight down, but yet still keep them strong. There were four different levels that could be accessed by stairs. Who could enter each level was carefully controlled. The floor of the Colosseum was wooden and covered with sand. |
| 5 | Medicine and Public Health: Roman Medicine was centred on prevention rather than cure. They had good public health and recognised the value of cleanliness. |
| 6 | Britain during the Roman Empire: The Romans ruled Britain for nearly 400 years from 43 AD to 410 AD. They left Britain to defend their homeland in Italy which was being threatened by barbarians. The Roman legions may have returned home to Italy, but they left a lasting legacy on the culture of Britain. Roman construction such as aqueducts, roads, and concrete had a lasting impact on the people of Britain. Other aspects of Roman culture that remained in England included the Julian calendar, Roman laws and government, and many words from the Latin language. |

Key developments

753 BC - The "foundation of Rome"

45 BC - Julius Caesar becomes the first dictator of Rome.

44 BC - Julius Caesar is assassinated

27 BC - The Roman Empire begins as Caesar Augustus becomes the first Roman Emperor.

476 AD - The end of the Western Roman Empire and the fall of Ancient Rome.

Key words

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| 1 | Aqueduct | A manmade channel used for delivering water to Roman towns. Public fountains and baths made water available to everyone. Wealthy Romans had running water in their homes. |
| 2 | Barbarian | A term used by the Romans to refer to people who lived outside the Roman Empire. |
| 3 | Century | A division of the Roman army made up of 80 soldiers and led by a centurion. |
| 4 | Citizen | A Roman citizen had certain rights and privileges including the right to vote. Only freeborn men were fully Roman citizens. |
| 5 | Consul | The highest position in the Roman government. There were two consuls elected each year for a one year term. |
| 6 | Dictator | A ruler that has absolute power. |
| 7 | Dynasty | When a family passes down the leadership of a country from generation to generation. |
| 8 | Emperor | The leader of an empire. The first emperor of Rome was Augustus. |
| 9 | Forum | The area of a Roman town that was the center of Roman life. Government meetings, public speeches, and business all took place in the forum. |
| 10 | Gladiator | A person who fought for the entertainment of Roman audiences. Gladiators sometimes fought to the death. |
| 11 | Province | An area of the Roman empire that was outside Italy. |
| 12 | Republic | A country where the government is run by elected officials rather than by a king or emperor. |
| 13 | Senate | A group of prestigious men who advised the consuls. In most cases the consuls did what the Senate recommended. |
| 14 | Toga | A long robe worn by Roman citizens. It was generally white with colour markings for high ranking officials. |

Summary: The Middle Ages, or Medieval Times, in Europe was a long period of history from 500 AD to 1500 AD. That's 1000 years! This was a time of castles and peasants, guilds and monasteries, cathedrals and crusades. When people use the terms Medieval Times, Middle Ages, and Dark Ages they are generally referring to the same period of time. The Dark Ages is usually referring to the first half of the Middle Ages from 500 to 1000 AD.

Key concepts

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| 1 | The Dark Ages to Middle Ages: After the fall of the Roman Empire, a lot of the Roman culture and knowledge was lost. This included art, technology, engineering, and history. Historians know a lot about Europe during the Roman Empire because the Romans kept excellent records of all that happened. However, the time after the Romans is "dark" to historians because there was no central government recording events. This is why historians call this time the Dark Ages. |
| 2 | William the Conqueror: William was a powerful king. He spent much of his early reign putting down revolts. William is responsible for bringing the Feudal System, Castles and the Domesday Book to England. |
| | Castles: One of William's most lasting legacies was his castle building. He built castles throughout England in order to maintain control. Perhaps the most famous castle William built is the White Tower of the Tower of London. |
| 4 | Feudal System: The basic government and society in Europe during the Middle Ages was based around the feudal system. Small communities were formed around the local lord and the manor. The lord owned the land and everything in it. He would keep the peasants safe in return for their service. The lord, in return, would provide the king with soldiers or taxes. |
| 5 | The life of a peasant: Most of the people living in the Middle Ages were peasants. They had a hard rough life. Some peasants were considered free and could own their own businesses like carpenters, bakers, and blacksmiths. Others were more like slaves. They owned nothing and were pledged to their local lord. They worked long days, 6 days a week, and often barely had enough food to survive. |
| 6 | Medieval villages: The majority of people living during the Middle Ages lived in the country and worked as farmers. Usually there was a local lord who lived in a large house called a manor or a castle. Local peasants would work the land for the lord. |
| 7 | Medieval towns: Town life was very different from country life, but it wasn't much easier. The towns were crowded and dirty. A lot of people worked as craftsmen and were members of a guild. Other jobs in the Town included servants, merchants, bakers, doctors, and lawyers. |

Key developments

1066 - William of Normandy, a French Duke, conquers England in the Battle of Hastings. He became King of England and changed the country forever.

1068-9 - The Harrying of the North: An English uprising killed all the Normans in Durham. In return William sent his soldiers to kill all English males in Durham. They burned down houses and set fire to food stores.

1085 - King William ordered the creation of the Domesday Book.

Key words

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| 1 | Baron | A ruler below the king in the feudal system, the baron ruled an area of land called a fief. He would pledge his loyalty to the king in return for the land. |
| 2 | Bishop | A leader in the church, the bishop was often the top church leader in a kingdom. |
| 3 | Castle | A defensive fortification where a lord or king would live. The local people would flee to the castle if they were attacked. |
| 4 | Chivalry | The code by which knights pledged to live. It involved honour, being courageous, and protecting the weak |
| 5 | Feudal System | A system of government where the king allotted land to his lords and barons. The lords and barons would then pledge their loyalty to the king and promise to protect his rule. |
| 6 | Fief | An area of land given to a lord or baron by a king to rule. |
| 7 | Guild | An association of craftsmen that focused on a specific trade or craft such as making shoes or weaving cloth. |
| 8 | Keep | A large tower within a castle that was considered the last line of defence. |
| 9 | King | The top ruler in a monarchy. |
| 10 | Knight | A warrior who rode a horse and wore heavy metal armour. Knights were rewarded with land and were required to protect the king when needed. |
| 11 | Manor | The center of life during the Middle Ages, the manor was the local lord's house or castle. |
| 12 | Moat | A ditch around a castle filled with water. |
| 13 | Serf | A peasant who worked the land for the local lord. The serf had few rights and was little better than a slave. |
| 14 | Vassal | Someone who pledges their allegiance to a lord. |