

WORKING IN THE ROMAN FORT

INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF THE SOLDIERS IN THE FORT

Introduction activity

Watch the video clip that explains the different roles of the Roman soldiers posted to the fort and, as you are watching, ask the class to note down what the different jobs were for the Roman soldiers billeted in the Roman fort.

They were the government workers like military police, soldiers, guards, clerks and record keepers.

Main part of the lesson

Watch the gateway video clip and discuss the important role of the 4 soldiers who was positioned at each of the 4 gatehouses of the fort.

Use the 'West gate of fort' image' resource, to show the class how the doorways and entrances were set up

Explain to the class that you want them to imagine they are one of the soldiers on duty at the gate and they are to write up a log of all the activity that happened on their 'watch'.

Explain that you want them to use their knowledge of what they know about how the fort was used and the types of traders and merchants that would visit and what they would be supplying to the fort.

Use the 'Soldier's log resource' as an example. (NB the font used in this log is 'Roman' in appearance and is 'Felix Titling')

Pupils could use this link located [here](#) to decide what section of the Roman army they were in.

Discuss with the pupils that the Roman calendar was a bit different to ours and they will have to choose a different month name (from the list below). The original Roman calendar was said to be invented by Romulus, the first king of Rome. The calendar started the year in March (Martius) and consisted of a total of ten months, with six months of 30 days and four months with a length of 31 days. The winter season was not assigned to any month, thus the calendar year only lasted 304 days with 61 days unaccounted for in the winter. However, in 46BC Julius Caesar made changes to the calendar to make it work better. Known as the Julian Calendar, this is largely what we use today.

Ianuarius – 30 days

Februarius – 28 days (29 in a leap year)

Martius – 31 days

Aprilis – 30 days

Maius – 31 days

Iunius – 30 days

Iulius – 31 days
Augustus – 30 days
September – 30 days
October – 31 days
November – 30 days
December 30 days

To understand that the Romans did not have clocks and time pieces, explain that they divided the day into two parts, before midday (antemeridianus) and after (postmeridianus). The important thing was to note the moment when the sun crossed the meridian. One of the consul's jobs was to keep a lookout for it and to announce it to the people busy in the Forum. A herald's role was to make his announcement when he saw the sun "between the rostra and the graecostasis (a place in the Forum). If they were not in the Forum, they used sundials which they could use in their gardens. Explain that is why in the 'Soldier's log' resource there is a list of events before midday and after midday.

Pupils can create their own log using their knowledge of life in Roman London to create their own log.

For younger pupils perhaps use the 'Soldier's log blank' resource as a template.

The site from the museum of London <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/Explore-online/Pocket-histories/roman-life/default.htm> will help with details of everyday life in Roman London.

This site <http://primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/romans/towns.htm> is useful to find out British Roman town names.

Plenary

Share the logs and discuss the difference between this role and the role of modern day soldiers on guard duty.