

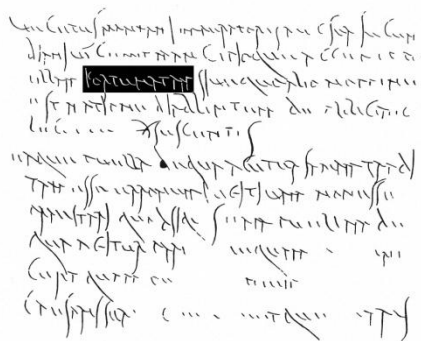
INVESTIGATING AND MAKING A WRITING TABLET

PART TWO

Introduction activity

Remind the class about the writing tablets that they created in the last lesson and explain that in this lesson they are going to investigate the Roman writing that would have been inscribed into the wax.

Show the image of the Roman writing and ask the class whether they see anything here that is familiar or similar to our writing. The name Fortunata, a slave girl, is highlighted in black.



Pupils could access the image themselves via the site and use the zoom function to investigate the lettering in detail.

As a class discuss the similarities and differences.

Main part of the lesson

Show the class the 'Roman alphabet image resource' and ask the class to spot which letters from our alphabet are missing (J, U and W).

Explain to the class that in this lesson they are going to write a message using the Roman lettering to put inside the writing tablet they made in the previous lesson.

Discuss with the class the different types of writing they could produce – a shopping list, a personal letter, a complaint letter to a trader (olive oil was bad, non-delivery of a samian bowl etc) or any message that they consider suitable for use in Roman times.

Pupils can then write a message. Initially, ask them to write their message and then to write using the Roman lettering.

When they have composed their message, pupils can then transcribe it onto paper of the correct size for their writing tablet.

Ask them to put their message inside the writing tablet and then swap messages with somebody else.

Pupils can then try to decipher each other's message.

Plenary

Use the 'Roman inscription image resource' and ask pupils to try and decipher some of the letters and whether they are able to work out any of the words.

Discuss what they think this actually is. It is a building inscription from Cumbria, about AD128.

Discuss how this writing has been carved on stone and that it has therefore survived because of the material. The lettering uses capital letters and is more suitable when carved in stone.

The actual transcript is:

The 20th Legion Valeria Victrix dedicated this (building) to the Emperor Caesar Trajan Hadrian Augustus, Father of his People