

INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF THE ROMAN SLAVE

FINDING OUT WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE A SLAVE IN ROMAN LONDON

Introduction activity

Discuss the Roman writing tablets and how the Romans would write on beeswax with a sharp tool called a stylus which was made out of bronze or iron.

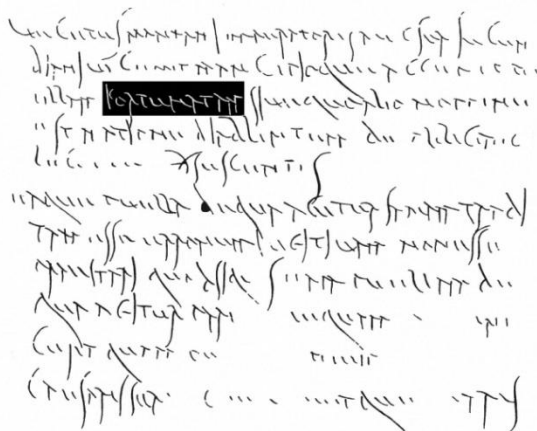


Explain that beeswax would not have survived from Roman times as it was a delicate material but we do have some actual Roman evidence of some writing that survived because the point of the stylus scratched onto the wood below the beeswax layer.

Watch the 'Deed of sale for slave called Fortunata' video clip.

As a class, look at the image from the deed of sale for Fortunata.

Can the pupils recognise any of the letters from their study of Roman text?



Main part of the lesson

Discuss the information from this clip and what important evidence it provides about life in Roman Britain if you were a slave.

Watch the clip again and ask the pupils to make notes this time of any important information.

From this clip the information we can gather is:

- There were slaves in Roman Britain
- That slaves were sold at markets
- That this evidence shows that a slave had a good job in the Treasury and had actually managed to earn enough money to be able to buy his own slave
- There was a slave market in London and that slaves would have come from different places
- Fortunata, the slave, came from France.

Pupils can then use the 'Roman slave resource' and write a diary, or an account as if they were a slave.

From the information in the resource they can decide what type of slave they were and what their role was in the household.

Plenary

Pupils can share their slave accounts.

Discuss whether or not they thought that being a slave in Roman Britain was a good role or not.