



KS2 History Lesson Plan: The Roman Empire and Its Impact on Britain

Lesson overview

Field	Lesson details
Year group	KS2 (Year 3/4 or 4/5)
Subject	History
Topic	The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain
Focus	Invasions, resistance and “Romanisation” of Britain
Duration	60 minutes

Learning objectives

By the end of the lesson, pupils will be able to:

- Place key Roman events in Britain on a timeline (Caesar, Claudius, Boudica, Hadrian’s Wall).
- Describe who the Romans were and why they came to Britain.
- Explain, in simple terms, how life in Britain changed under Roman rule.
- Use appropriate historical terms (e.g. empire, invasion, conquest, resistance, Romanisation).
- Ask and answer historically valid questions about cause, change and significance.

Key vocabulary

- Rome, Roman Empire, emperor, Julius Caesar, Claudius, Boudica, legion, invasion, conquest, resistance, Hadrian's Wall, Romanisation, villa, bathhouse, road, aqueduct, Christianity

Resources

- ☐ Map of the Roman Empire and Britain (before and after conquest)
- ☐ Simple timeline of key events (55–54 BC to around AD 410)
- ☐ Short texts or story summaries about: Caesar's invasions, Claudius' conquest, Boudica's revolt, Hadrian's Wall, Roman towns (e.g. Caerwent)
- ☐ Image cards of Roman roads, villas, baths, mosaics, temples, early churches
- ☐ Large paper for group posters, pens, pencils, glue

Lesson sequence

Stage	Time	Teacher activity	Pupil activity	Resources
Warm-up / hook	10 minutes	Show a map of the Roman Empire at its height. Ask, “What do you notice? How big is this empire?” Zoom in on Britain and ask, “Why might the Romans want to come here?” Collect ideas such as land, power and resources on the board.	Share observations about the map and suggest reasons for the Roman interest in Britain.	Map of the Roman Empire and Britain; board
Direct instruction	10–15 minutes	Tell a brief overview story: Julius Caesar’s failed attempts (55–54 BC), Claudius’ successful invasion and conquest by AD 43, the building of Hadrian’s Wall, Boudica’s revolt and Romanisation through roads, towns, baths, technology and beliefs, including early Christianity. Place events on a class timeline and model	Listen, ask questions and help place the key events on the class timeline using historical terms.	Simple timeline; short texts or story summaries; image cards

		“Because the Romans wanted...” and “As a result...”		
Guided and independent practice	25–30 minutes	Distribute event cards and picture/fact cards. Support pairs with the timeline, then guide groups as they sort evidence and create a poster titled “How the Romans Changed Britain”.	Place event cards in order, add a note or symbol for each, sort cards into “Before Romans”, “During Roman rule” and “Lasting impact”, then create a poster with at least three examples.	Event cards; picture/fact cards; large paper; pens, pencils and glue
Closure	5–10 minutes	Ask groups to share one key change. Revisit the timeline and ask, “What connections and contrasts can we see over time?” Briefly discuss how ruins, artefacts and written sources provide evidence about Roman Britain.	Share a key change, identify connections and contrasts from resistance to Romanisation, and discuss the evidence used to study the Romans in Britain.	Class timeline; examples of ruins, artefacts and written sources

Pupil activities

Activity 1: Timeline Builders

- In pairs, pupils receive event cards (Caesar, Claudius, Boudica, Hadrian’s Wall, Roman towns, Christianity).
- Place the cards in order on a mini timeline and add one short note or symbol for each.

Activity 2: Impact of the Romans

- In small groups, sort picture/fact cards into “Before Romans”, “During Roman rule” and “Lasting impact”.
- Create a simple poster titled “How the Romans Changed Britain” with at least three examples (e.g. roads, towns, baths, language, religion).

Differentiation and challenge

- **Support** — Provide a partially completed timeline, simplified texts, a vocabulary word bank and mixed-ability pairs. Allow pupils to explain ideas orally before writing.
- **Core** — Complete the timeline and poster tasks, using at least three examples of Roman impact and appropriate historical terms.
- **Challenge** — Higher-attaining pupils write a short paragraph answering a question such as “Why was the Roman invasion important for Britain?” or “How did Roman technology change life in Britain?”
- **Language support** — Pre-teach key vocabulary with visuals and provide sentence stems such as “Because the Romans wanted...” and “As a result...”

Plenary

- Groups share one key change they think was most important.
- Revisit the timeline and ask: “What connections and contrasts can we see over time?” (e.g. from resistance to Romanisation).
- Briefly discuss how we know about the Romans in Britain (ruins, artefacts, written sources).

Key questions

What connections and contrasts can we see over time?

How do ruins, artefacts and written sources help us know about Roman Britain?

Homework

- **Homework task** — Pupils design a “Roman Britain” postcard showing one Roman site (e.g. a road, villa, bathhouse, Hadrian’s Wall, Caerwent).
- On the back, they write a few sentences as if they are a child living in Roman Britain, describing one change they notice.

Assessment

- **Chronology** — Look for pupils placing key events in roughly correct chronological order.
- **Vocabulary and impact** — Check use of historical terms and the ability to describe Roman impact.
- **Cause and change** — Note who can explain at least one cause for Roman invasion and one lasting change in Britain.
- **Exit ticket** — Ask pupils to write one cause for Roman invasion and one lasting change in Britain.