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I am Warrior

Life as a Celt

The Celts were tribespeople who lived in England and across most of Europe over 2000 years ago. In Britain, there were many tribes of Celts, each with its own king. They were often at war with other nearby tribes. Celts lived by farming, hunting and gathering. They built roundhouses made from wattle and daub with thatched roofs. Most Celts farmed the land and kept animals, but there were also skilled craftsmen and blacksmiths. They made jewellery using glass beads and pots from clay.



Recreation of a Celtic roundhouse in Dorset

Life as a Roman

The Romans invaded Britain in AD 43 under the order of Emperor Claudius. Their way of life was different from the Celts. Romans built towns protected by walls. Inside, they had houses, shops, meeting rooms, workshops and bathhouses. Romans also enjoyed entertainment and built amphitheatres for theatre performances and gladiator battles. To join towns together, Romans built roads. These made it easier for troops to move around and for goods to be traded. Some rich Romans lived in grand country houses called villas. These were large farms with a big house for the owners, with servants and farm workers.

Celtic warriors

Celtic warriors carried an iron sword and an oval, wooden shield. Some wore bronze or wooden helmets and rode into battle on horses or chariots. It is thought that both men and women were warriors. They liked to scare their enemies by painting themselves with blue dye, called woad. They would shout, beat their shields and blow horns to frighten their enemies. The Celts were not as disciplined or as organised as the Romans.

Roman warriors

The huge Roman army was divided into groups called legions. Each legion was divided into groups of 80 men called centuries. The soldiers were well trained and organised. Roman soldiers lined up for battle in a tight formation. They carried curved, wooden shields that they could overlap to form a protective shell around them called a *testudo*, meaning 'tortoise'. Soldiers carried a short sword called a *gladius*, a dagger and a spear. They wore armour and helmets made of iron. Only men could be soldiers in the Roman army.

Queen Boudicca

Boudicca refused to allow her tribe's lands to be taken over by the Romans after the death of her husband, King Prasutagus, who was the leader of the Celtic Iceni tribe. As a punishment, the Romans tied Boudicca and her daughters to a post and savagely beat them. Boudicca promised to fight back and formed an army of loyal supporters. They defeated the Roman army at Colchester and then in London. However, although Boudicca had a bigger army, her warriors were not as well trained as the Roman army. The Romans fought back hard, and Boudicca was eventually defeated. It is thought she then ended her life by drinking poison.

Gladiators

Gladiators in ancient Rome were often slaves, criminals or prisoners of war. They were trained to fight each other or wild animals for the entertainment of huge crowds. They fought in large, open-air arenas called amphitheatres. Gladiators' lives were tough. They lived in special training schools called *ludi*. The schools were more like prisons, and the gladiators had very little freedom. Once in the arena, they would often fight to their deaths.



Roman mosaic showing gladiators fighting a tiger

Spartacus

Spartacus was a gladiator who led a major slave rebellion against the Roman Republic. He escaped slavery in 73 BC and hid on Mount Vesuvius, where he formed an army of other escaped slaves. Together, they attacked and defeated the Roman army many times over the next two years. Spartacus was eventually killed, and his army was defeated by the Roman army led by Marcus Crassus.



The Death of Spartacus by Hermann Vogel, 1882

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Timeline of the Roman Empire

753 BC	Rome is founded. Romulus becomes the first king.
509 BC	Rome becomes a republic ruled by elected citizens called senators rather than a king.
73–71 BC	A gladiator called Spartacus leads a revolt against the Romans.
58–51 BC	The Romans invade France, Belgium, western Germany and northern Italy and control many lands around the Mediterranean Sea.
55–54 BC	Julius Caesar tries to invade Britain twice but is beaten back by the Britons.
27 BC	Rome becomes an empire. Augustus Caesar becomes Rome's first emperor.
AD 43	The Romans invade Britain under the orders of Emperor Claudius.
AD 60	Boudicca leads the Iceni tribe in a revolt against the Romans.
AD 71–78	The Romans conquer Wales and northern England.
AD 83	The Roman army defeats the Scottish Highland tribes at the Battle of Mons Graupius.
AD 122	The building of Hadrian's Wall to defend the northern limit of the Roman Empire in northern England begins.
AD 211	Britain is split into two provinces called Britannia Superior and Britannia Inferior.
AD 250	New enemies, the Angles, Saxons and Jutes, repeatedly attack Britain.
AD 401–410	Roman soldiers leave Britain to protect other parts of the Roman Empire.

Roman numerals

The system of numbering using Roman numerals started between 900 and 800 BC. The numerals developed because the Romans needed a way to count that would be the same for everyone. This was essential for communication and trade. Roman numerals are still used today, for example after a king or queen's name, such as Henry VIII, or on a clock or watch face.

What the Romans did for us

The Romans invented or developed many things that are still used today. They designed a system of underfloor heating to keep homes warm. They developed a drainage and sewerage system. The Romans built many roads, some routes that are still used today. They also built stone forts and walls for defence, such as Hadrian's Wall and the fort at Vindolanda. Roman baths and aqueducts made of stone are still standing. The Romans brought in coins called *denarii* to buy things. The calendar we use today is based on the Roman calendar, with July and August being named after Julius Caesar and Emperor Augustus.



Ruins at Vindolanda Roman fort in England

Glossary

Britannia	The Roman name for Britain.
conquer	To take control of another country and its people, usually after a war or battle.
defeat	To win a war or battle against an enemy.
elect	To choose a person for a job by voting.
emperor	The leader of an empire.
empire	A group of countries that are ruled by one leader, king or country.
invade	To enter a country using force.
rebellion	An action against a leader or rules, especially when they are seen as unfair.
republic	A country ruled by elected people instead of a king or queen.
revolt	To refuse to be ruled or controlled by people in authority.
Roman numerals	Letters that ancient Romans used to write numbers.
tribe	A group of people, often of related families, who live together.
wattle and daub	A mixture of sticks, earth and clay used as a building material.

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