



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

TEACHERS' KIT Wroxeter Roman City

This kit has been designed to help teachers plan a visit to Wroxeter Roman City, which was once the fourth largest town in Roman Britain and provides essential insight into the Roman Empire's impact on Britain. Use these resources before, during and after your visit to help students get the most out of their learning.

KS1-2

KS3

KS4+



GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR EDUCATION BOOKINGS TEAM:

☎ 0370 333 0606

✉ bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk

🌐 bookings.english-heritage.org.uk/education

Share your visit with us on Twitter [@EHEducation](https://twitter.com/EHEducation)

Step into England's story

WELCOME

This Teachers' Kit for Wroxeter Roman City has been designed for teachers and group leaders to support a free self-led visit to the site. It includes a variety of materials suited to teaching a wide range of subjects and key stages, with practical information, activities for use on site and ideas to support follow-up learning.

We know that each class and study group is different, so we have collated our resources into one pack allowing you to decide which materials are best suited to your needs. Please use the contents page, which has been colour coded to help you easily locate what you need and view individual sections. All of our activities have clear guidance on the intended use for study so you can adapt them for your desired learning outcomes.

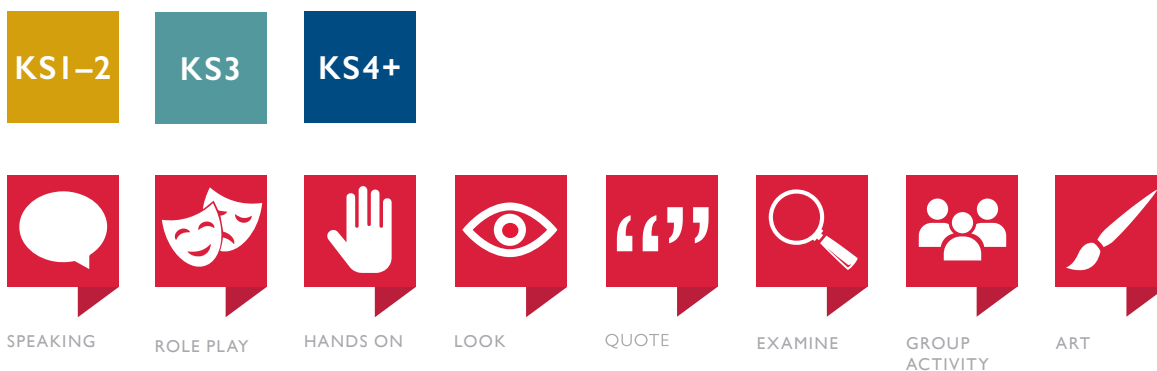
To further aid your planning, we have created Hazard Information sheets, which you can download from the Wroxeter **Schools page**. Here you can also download information on our expert-led Discovery Visits and an overview of what your class can experience.

We hope you enjoy your visit and find this Teachers' Kit useful. If you have any queries please don't hesitate to get in touch with a member of our team either via bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk or on 0370 333 0606.

English Heritage Learning Team

ICON KEY

The icons below will help you quickly identify the types of activities and information presented.



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KSI-2

KS3

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INTRODUCTION

All the practical things you need to know to plan your visit to Wroxeter Roman City.

SITE INFORMATION



KEY TO SITE

- 1** Entrance and shop
- 2** Exhibition
- 3** Basilica
- 4** Bath suite
- 5** Market hall
- 6** Forum
- 7** Reconstructed townhouse

FACILITIES

- P** Parking
- A** Picnic area
- ♿** Toilets
- 📺** Education rooms

Continued...

OPENING HOURS FOR EDUCATION VISITORS

For information about opening times, please visit:

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/wroxeter-roman-city/prices-and-opening-times

In November and March we allow special access to the site for education groups on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. Please contact the Education Bookings Team for more information.

PARKING

A large car park is located near the entrance to the site. Accessible parking is available on site. There is a designated coach drop-off point in the main car park.

WELCOME

Please ask your group to line up outside the visitor centre while the leader enters the shop to register the group. A member of staff will then greet your students and show you all to the education room.

TOILETS

Toilets (including accessible toilets) are located at the visitor centre.

SHOP

The shop is very well stocked with memorabilia for your students to buy and take home. We ask that you help our staff by supervising your students and only allowing 10 in the shop at any one time. We also offer goody bags that you can pre-order. If you are interested, then please speak to site staff during your planning visit, or phone the shop on 01743 761330.

GUIDEBOOKS

You can get 20% off site guidebooks when you present your visit permit on site.

LUNCH

There is a picnic area with tables and benches next to the exhibition area and tables outside the education rooms.

STORAGE

Unfortunately, there are no facilities to store bags.

WET WEATHER

If the weather is bad, the site staff will do their best to find a suitable place for your group to eat their lunch.

ACCESSIBILITY

For information about access, please visit:

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/wroxeter-roman-city/plan-your-visit/access

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BEHAVIOUR AND SUPERVISION

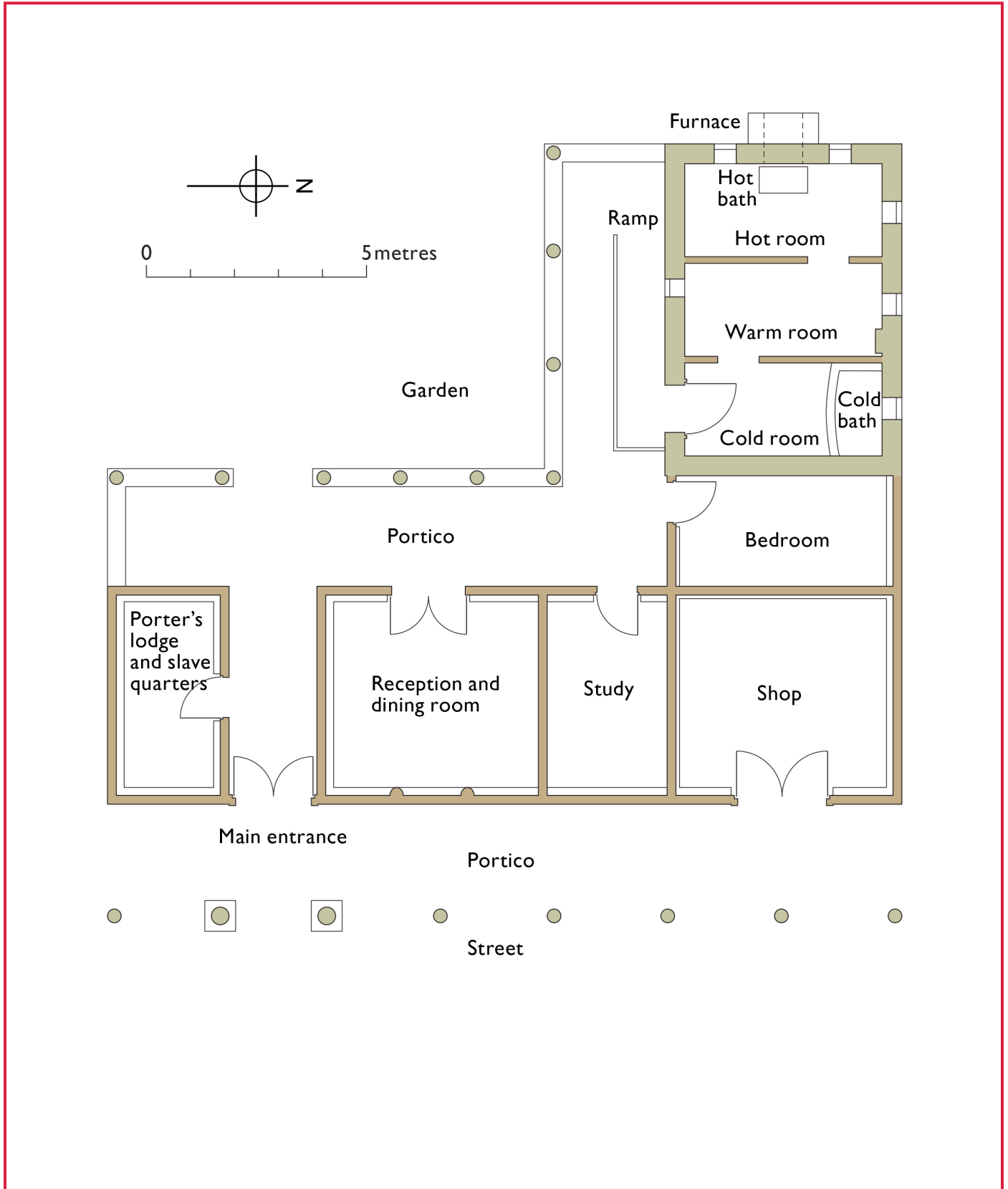
While at the site, please ensure that your students are supervised at all times. Please follow these leader-to-student ratios on the day of your visit and if your group is forming smaller groups while at the site:

- Ages 4–6 (UK Year 2 and under): 1 leader for every 6 students (1:6)
- Ages 7–10 (UK Years 3 to 5): 1 leader for every 8 students (1:8)
- Ages 11–18 (UK Years 6 and over): 1 leader for every 15 students (1:15)
- For an adult learning group, consisting of individuals all over the age of 18, there are no ratios but there must be an appointed group leader
- All ratios outlined above apply to home education groups

SITE PLAN



TOWNHOUSE FLOOR PLAN





PRE-VISIT

Information and activities you can use in the classroom before your visit.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

DISCOVER WROXETER
ROMAN CITY

Below is a short history of Wroxeter Roman City. Use this information to learn how the site has changed over time. You'll find definitions of the key words in the Glossary resource.

BEFORE THE ROMANS

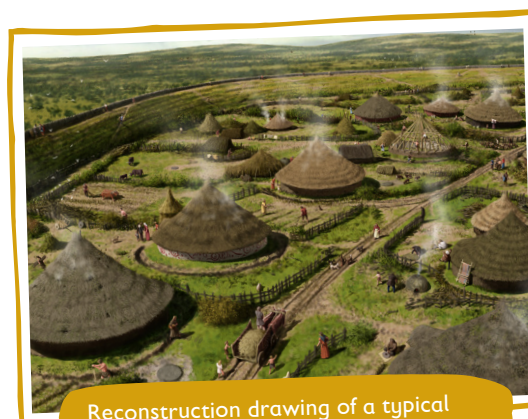
Before the Romans invaded Britain in AD 43, the country was occupied by the Celts. The word 'Celts' is a modern name which we now use to describe the many different tribes living in Britain during the **Iron Age**. The Romans would have simply called the **native** people 'Britons'. Celtic tribes were ruled by chiefs who often fought one another. For defence against enemies, tribes built forts on hilltops known as **hillforts**.

Most people in Celtic Britain lived in villages and worked as farmers. The land at Wroxeter was used for farming from about 1500 BC. A tribe called the Cornovii were in charge of the area and created small **farmsteads** which they surrounded with simple ditches and fences for protection. The Cornovii tribe relied on **livestock** as its main resource. We know about the Cornovii because of objects found in the ground, such as swords, brooches and horse equipment. When they arrived at Wroxeter, the Romans would have found a landscape that was already farmed and settled.

The arrival of the Roman army must have been shocking to the Cornovii people, who were expected to take on a new way of life under Roman rule.



Reconstruction drawing of a hillfort at Maiden Castle.



Reconstruction drawing of a typical Iron Age town in the first century AD.

ROMAN ARMY OCCUPATION

In AD 47, the Romans invaded the Wroxeter area from two directions: on one side, they followed the **river Severn**, and on the other side they marched along the line of the Roman road, Watling Street. They came via a **hillfort** on the Wrekin—a hill overlooking the site—which was defended by the Cornovii tribe. The Roman army attacked and burnt the hillfort, which forced the Cornovii to surrender.



An aerial photo of Wroxeter Roman City, showing the excavated bath house (right) and the river Severn running close to the city (top left).

The Romans quickly built a small fort for a unit of 500 soldiers, south of where Wroxeter Roman City is today. About ten years later, a better site was found for a larger **legionary fortress**. This new site was protected by the river Severn and had good views of the surrounding hills, so the army could keep an eye on the former tribal hillforts.

Over time, the native Cornovii people got used to the Roman way of life. Some of the natives learnt **Latin** and we know of at least one Cornovii woman who married a Roman soldier.

WROXETER AS A ROMAN FORTRESS

Roman **legionary fortresses** followed very similar plans wherever they were built. The headquarters building (**'principia'**) was at the centre of the fort. The army commander had a grand house next to the headquarters building. Nearby would have been a hospital (**'valetudinarium'**), granaries (**'horrea'**) plus workshops (**'fabricae'**) for making and repairing weapons and armour.

A legion of about 5,000 foot soldiers and 500 cavalrymen (horse riders) stayed at the fort. In return for signing up for 25 years' service, soldiers were paid, given regular meals and offered good medical care.

We know of two **garrisons** using Wroxeter fortress: the 14th and 20th **Legions**. To start off with, the fortress would have been a busy fighting base—the headquarters of the legion while it rested between **campaigns** in Wales. As Roman attacks moved further north, however, Wroxeter became less important and the army eventually left.



A Roman soldier as he may have looked in the 1st century AD.

THE FIRST TOWN AT WROXETER

When the Roman army left Wroxeter's fortress in AD 90, the street grid and some of its buildings were used to create a new town for **civilians** to live in.

The town probably had an elected council ('**ordo**'), who decided where the edges of the town should be and how it should be laid out. To serve on the 'ordo', you had to be a local landowner, which meant most of its members came from people high up in the local Cornovii tribe, but Roman army **veterans** were also allowed because they were Roman citizens living in the town.

The newly created town was large compared to others in Britain but, to start off with, it doesn't seem to have had **civic buildings** for the public to use. That changed at the start of the 2nd century AD when the town **forum** and baths were built.



The rectangle marked out with dotted lines shows where the Roman fortress used to be, before it was built on to create the new town.

DEVELOPING THE TOWN

The baths and forum were built on either side of the newly created main road that ran through the town. At the baths, people could exercise in the hall ('**basilica**') then enter the main bath house to progress from the unheated room ('**frigidarium**') through the warm room ('**tepidarium**') into either a hot, dry room ('**sudatorium**') or hot, steamy room ('**cauldarium**'). The rooms were heated by furnaces, with fires stoked by slaves.

There was also a cold, outdoor pool ('**natatio**') and two indoor plunge pools.

The forum was a row of shops along the street front, with a square courtyard behind for hot-food bars. On the far side of the courtyard was a range of rooms including the council chamber and the town's main **shrine**.

In 1920, **archaeologists** found a huge slab of stone which used to be above the entrance to the forum. The Latin words carved onto it confirmed that the town was called 'Viroconium' and that the forum was completed in AD 129–30. The baths were finished slightly later, by AD 150.



A reconstruction drawing by Ivan Lapper of the baths (centre) and the market hall (top left) as they may have looked in the 2nd century AD.

A BUSTLING CITY

By the end of the 2nd century AD, all the major civic buildings in the town had been built, as had the outer defences – an earth and timber **rampart**, perhaps with a wooden **palisade**. Wroxeter would have been a busy town with lots for people to do including exercising, bathing, eating, shopping and going to the market.



A reconstruction drawing by Ivan Lapper of Wroxeter Roman City as it may have looked in the early 3rd century AD. Notice the white bath house in the middle and the defensive rampart around the outside.

Wroxeter was a thriving city. We think between 5,000 and 10,000 people lived there. The houses of rich people were in the best locations. Their stone houses were close to the centre of the town, where the wind would carry away the smoke from fires. **Excavations** confirm a mix of grand town houses, some with mosaics and underfloor heating, and more simple houses.

HISTORY UNCOVERED

The Romans left Britain in AD 410 but they left behind lots of things which we can now use to find out about Roman life at Wroxeter. The excavations at Wroxeter produced one of the largest collections of **artefacts** in Roman Britain. Objects tell us about what people did in the town, how they dressed and how fashions changed.

For example, we know that **bronzesmiths** made brooches in many different styles, which were worn by both men and women. The study of objects like women's hairpins tells us that, in the later period, Roman women changed the way they did their hair, needing fewer pins.

Excavated building remains give us some idea of how the town was laid out and what the buildings were used for. But much of the town has not been excavated, so geophysical survey techniques are used to see what lies beneath the soil without disturbing the ground. These methods allow archaeologists to create a more detailed picture of the size and layout of Wroxeter Roman City.

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To find out more about Wroxeter after the Romans left, visit our online history pages: www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/wroxeter-roman-city/history



A view over the bath's heated rooms to the Old Work, the largest piece of free-standing Roman wall in the country, which used to separate the basilica from the bath suite.

GLOSSARY

WEIRD WORDS AND
WHAT THEY MEAN

Below is a list of words you might come across while exploring Wroxeter Roman City. Use this Glossary to find out what they mean.

archaeologist – someone whose job it is to learn about the past by studying the remains of buildings and objects found in the ground

artefact – an object made by a human being which we can use to find out about the past

'basilica' – a large, rectangle-shaped hall with two rows of columns running down the middle. At Wroxeter, the 'basilica' was used as an exercise hall or 'basilica exercitatoria'.



A bronze artefact found in the ground at Wroxeter. This figure would have been made by a bronzesmith.

bronzesmith – someone who makes items out of bronze by heating and shaping the metal

campaign – going on a mission to achieve a certain goal. Roman army campaigns had the goal of taking control of areas in Britain and enforcing the Roman way of life.

'cauldarium' – a hot, steamy room in a Roman bath, which was next to a furnace

civic buildings – the name given to buildings built for the community and community workers to use, such as baths, shops and offices, often located in the centre of a town

civilian – a person not in the army

excavation – the careful digging up and recording of objects and building remains found in the ground

'fabricae' – workshops where soldiers could go to make and repair armour and weapons and fit shoes to the horses used by the cavalrymen



A late Roman bone portrait of a man, excavated at Wroxeter.

farmstead – the name given to a farm, which includes all of its buildings and surrounding land

forum – a public area, often in the centre of a Roman town or city where religious ceremonies, political meetings, social activities and the selling and buying of goods took place

'frigidarium' – an unheated room in a Roman bath, furthest from the furnace and closest to the entrance

garrison – the community of soldiers based at the fort with the task of defending it and going out on campaigns, including foot soldiers and cavalry (on horses)

hillfort – a place of safety built on a hill, defended by earth banks and ditches

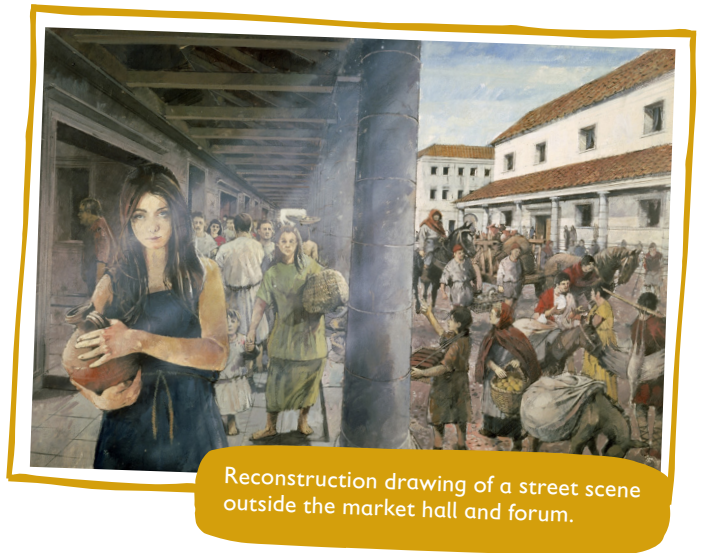


The Wrekin, an Iron Age hillfort. © Public Domain

'horrea' – granaries or storehouses for grain, used to make bread for the army to eat

Iron Age (800 BC–AD 43) – a period of prehistory (before written history) that followed the Bronze Age, when some weapons and tools were made using iron

Latin – the language used in the Roman Empire



Reconstruction drawing of a street scene outside the market hall and forum.

Legion – a team of 3,000–6,000 army men, including foot soldiers and cavalry (on horses)

legionary fortress – the place where a Roman Legion would stay and train. A legionary fortress would have about 5,000 foot soldiers, who were all Roman men, and 500 cavalrymen, who were usually recruited from native tribes in the local area.

livestock – animals that are kept on a farm such as cows, pigs, sheep and chickens

'natatio' – a pool where people could go to cool down during a visit to the Roman baths. At Wroxeter, this was outside.



The 'natatio' at Wroxeter, an open-air plunge pool.

native – a person already living in the area when the Romans invaded. At Wroxeter, the native people were the Cornovii tribe.

'ordo' – the town council who made decisions about the town and tried to keep it running smoothly

palisade – a fence of wooden poles or planks, fixed into the ground and used for defence

'principia' – the headquarters building in the middle of a Roman fortress. This is where the army commander and the people who worked for him did most of their work.

rampart – an earthwork built for defence, forming a tall, steep-sided bank which acted as a barrier

Severn (river) – the waterway that flows near to Wroxeter Roman City, which allowed water to be easily transported in

shrine – a building or object thought to be holy, used for worship and religious ceremonies

'sudatorium' – a hot, dry room (like a sauna) in a Roman bath, which was next to a furnace

'tepidarium' – the 'warm room' in a Roman bath

'valetudinarium' – the Latin word for 'hospital' in Roman times

veteran – someone who used to be in the army



Hot air from the furnace could move around under the floor of the 'tepidarium' and 'cauldarium' because of the gap created by the tile stacks. The closer to the furnace the room was, the hotter it would be.

ROMANS

AD 43

The Romans invade Britain under the rule of emperor Claudius (r. AD 41-54).



AD 60

Boudica, Queen of the Iceni tribe in England, tries to rebel against the Romans. Thousands of people die in battle and the Roman army is badly damaged. The rebellion fails and Boudica kills herself by drinking poison.

AD 122-8

The Roman Emperor Hadrian (r.117-138) builds Hadrian's Wall on the border with Scotland. He wants to protect Roman occupied areas in the north from invasion by enemy tribes beyond the wall.



AD 142-54

The Roman Emperor Antoninus Pius (r.138-161) orders the Antonine Wall to be built in Scotland to keep control of land further north.

AD 43

AD 100

AD 47

The Roman army moves into the Wroxeter area, attacking the Cornovii tribe and forcing them to surrender. They build a small fort for a unit of 500 cavalrymen.

AD 129-30

The forum at Wroxeter is completed.

AD 57-78

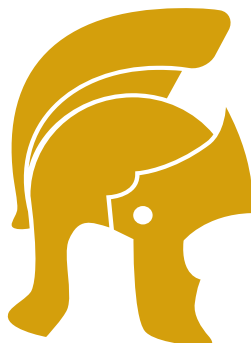
A new, bigger legionary fortress is built. Wroxeter becomes an important army base during attacks on Wales.

AD 140-50

The bath house is built.

AD 90

The Roman army leaves the fort at Wroxeter as it moves further north, to invade Scotland. A new town is created on the site of the fort.



AD 150-200

Wroxeter is now a busy, thriving town with lots for people to do including exercising, bathing, eating, shopping and going to the market.

1ST
CENTURY

2ND
CENTURY



ROMANS

AD 211

Britain is divided into two separate areas: Britannia Superior (Upper Britain) with London as its capital and Britannia Inferior (Lower Britain) with its capital at York.

AD 259

Due to a series of weak emperors, Britain splits away from the Roman Empire for a short time.

AD 296

Roman rule is re-established in Britain when Constantius I captures Britain from the rebel Allectus.

AD 306

Constantine (r.306–37) becomes emperor.

AD 314

Constantine ends the punishment of Christians in the Roman Empire and Christianity is made legal.

AD 367

Enemy tribes from Scotland, Ireland and Germany begin to launch raids on Roman Britain.



AD 200

AD 300

AD 200–300

The rich people (elite) in charge of the town stop investing their money in civic buildings and instead start spending it on themselves. This means the buildings at Wroxeter aren't very well looked after.

AD 300–400

The buildings at Wroxeter are poorly maintained due to a lack of funds.

Some money is spent on the baths and on improving the defences but expensive repairs are avoided.

Parts of the forum are abandoned.



**3RD
CENTURY**

**4TH
CENTURY**

AD 401–406

Enemy forces continue to attack Britain's borders. The Roman Empire is focused on more serious threats to Italy, so they stop sending soldiers to help the Roman army keep control of Britain.

AD 410

The Romans leave Britain. A system of tribes controlling different areas is put in place after the Romans leave.



AD 549

A great plague sweeps through Britain, killing many people and damaging the population in many towns. It's likely that the people still living at Wroxeter are badly hit.

AD 400

AD 500

AD 410–500

The town continues to be lived in after the Romans leave Britain.

c.AD 550

The town is abandoned, and stones from its buildings are used elsewhere: the Anglo-Saxon church at the village of Wroxeter, which is recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086, has Roman stones in its walls.

The baths are used until the end of the 5th century but looking after the bath suite needs special skills and knowledge which the Romans had not passed on to the local people.

Town life at Wroxeter gradually declines.



**5TH
CENTURY**

**6TH
CENTURY**



AT WROXETER

Activities for students to do at Wroxeter Roman City to help them get the most out of their learning.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

MOSAIC MAKERS



KSI-2

Recommended for

KSI-2 (History, Art & Design)

Learning objectives

- Consider the importance of classical art and interior design in Roman culture.
- Understand the process of creating a mosaic.

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes



Students in the education space at Wroxeter using 'tesserae' (stone cubes) to create their own mosaics.



You can find mosaic making equipment in the activity box which supports this activity.

SUMMARY

When you get to Wroxeter, ask a member of site staff about the activity box which supports this activity. It contains:

- a copy of these activity instructions
- bags of 'tesserae' (stone cubes)
- mosaic templates

To ensure everything is available on the day of your visit, please book this activity box with our Education Bookings Team.

You will find the activity box in the education room at Wroxeter. Ask students to sit in groups around the tables. Give each group a bag of tesserae and some mosaic templates to work with.

Explain that, in Roman times, a mosaic was the most expensive type of flooring available because it was such fiddly work and it required a skilled artist to make one. It was made from tiny stone cubes called 'tesserae', pressed into a fine mortar (like cement). Mosaics were used in public buildings such as the baths, but also in rich people's houses, to show off to guests. Roman mosaics normally have repeating, bold shapes or tell mythical stories about gods and animals.

To start with, students should use the stone cubes to copy the patterns on the template. Mosaics were used as a type of flooring, so there should be no gaps in the design. Once they have done this, they can have a go at creating their own.

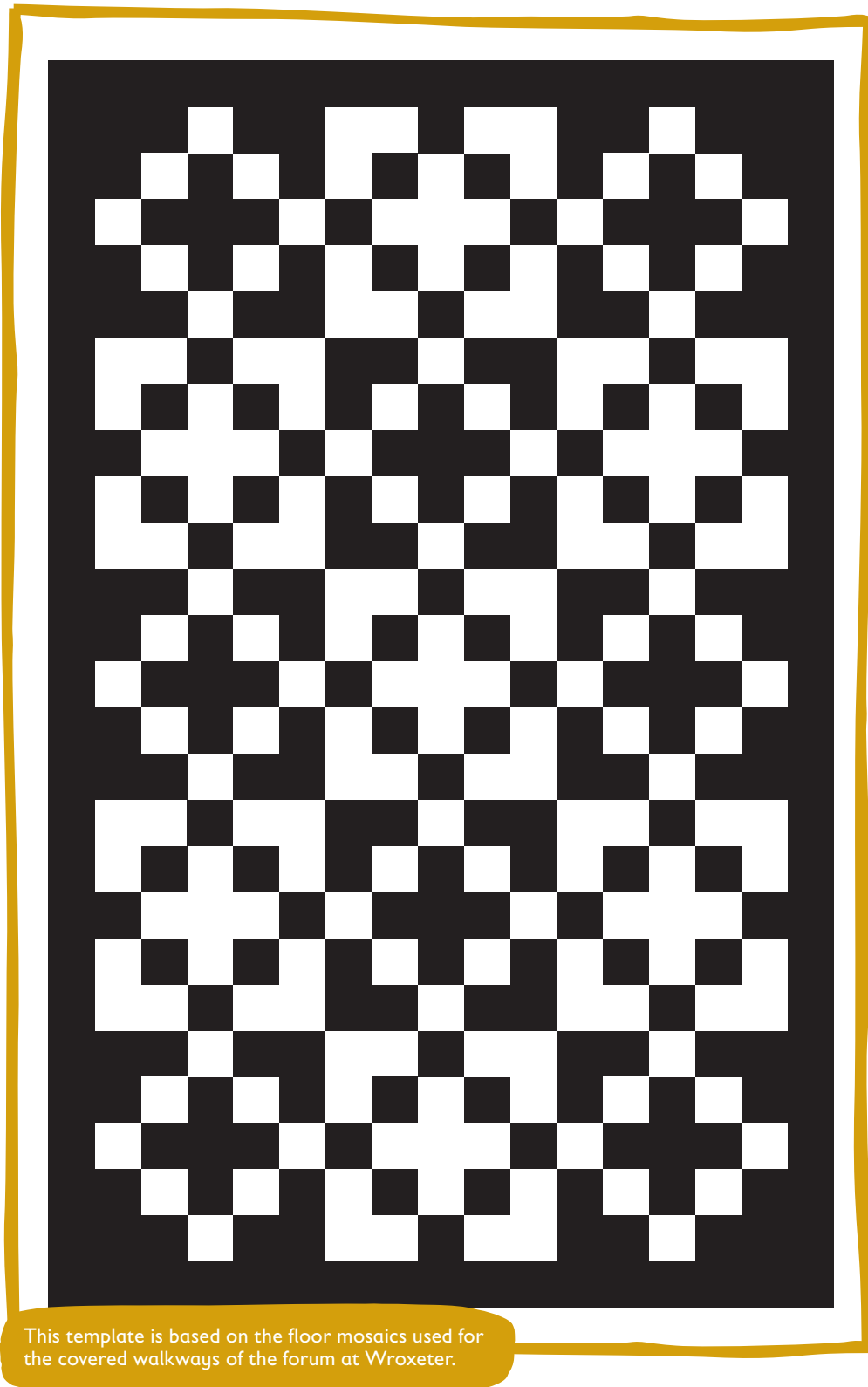
When you have finished doing the activity, please put the items back in the box as you found them, for others to enjoy.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, students could create a class mosaic to remind them of their trip to Wroxeter. They could work in small groups to create different sections, which then come together to tell a story. You could do this using ripped up pieces of paper of different colours and textures, then display it on the wall in the classroom. You can tweet photos of your class mosaic to [@EHEducation](https://twitter.com/EHEducation).

MOSAIC TEMPLATE 1

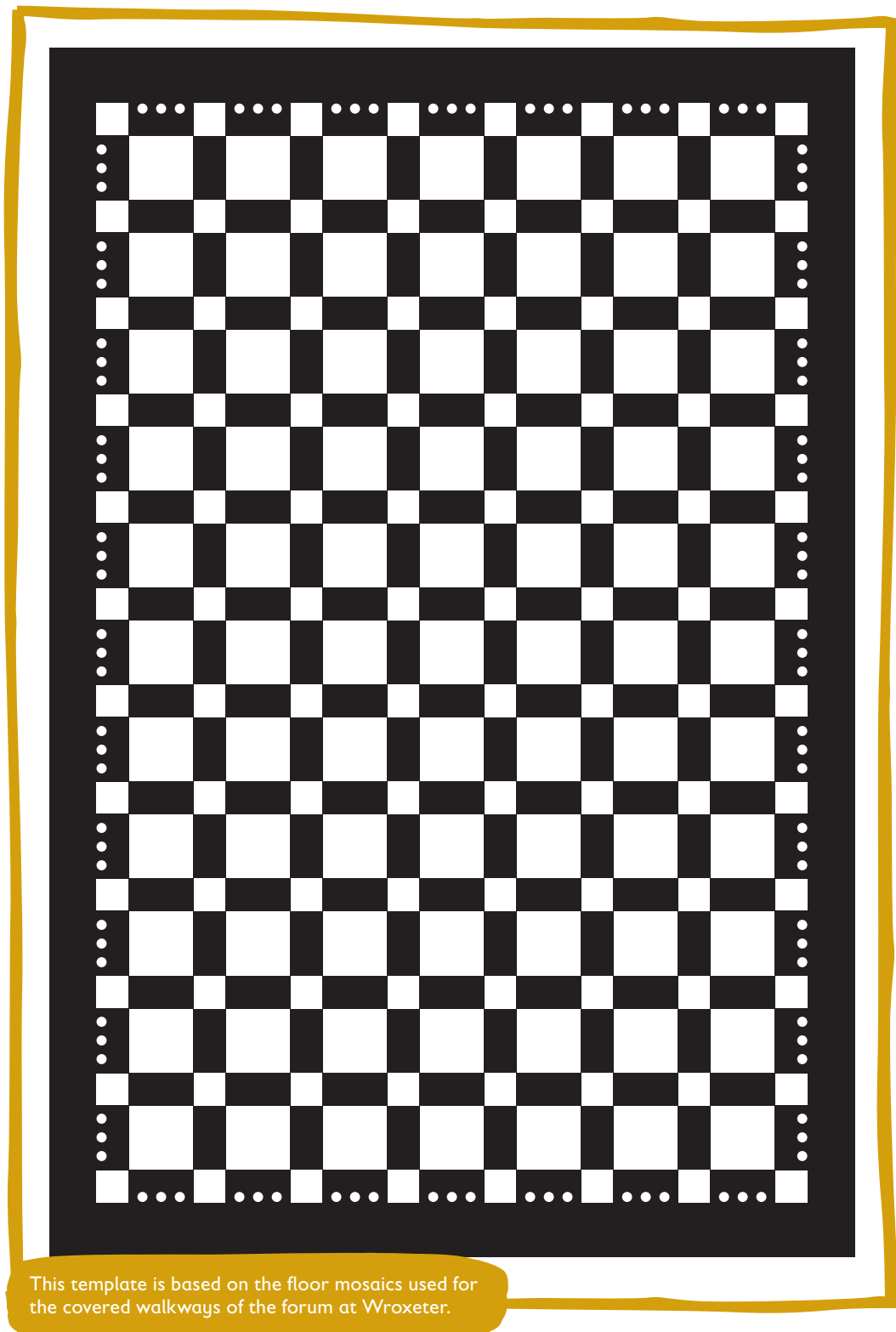
Use this template and the 'tesserae' (stone cubes) to **create** a colourful mosaic.



COMPLETED IT? Now **design** your own mosaic.

MOSAIC TEMPLATE 2

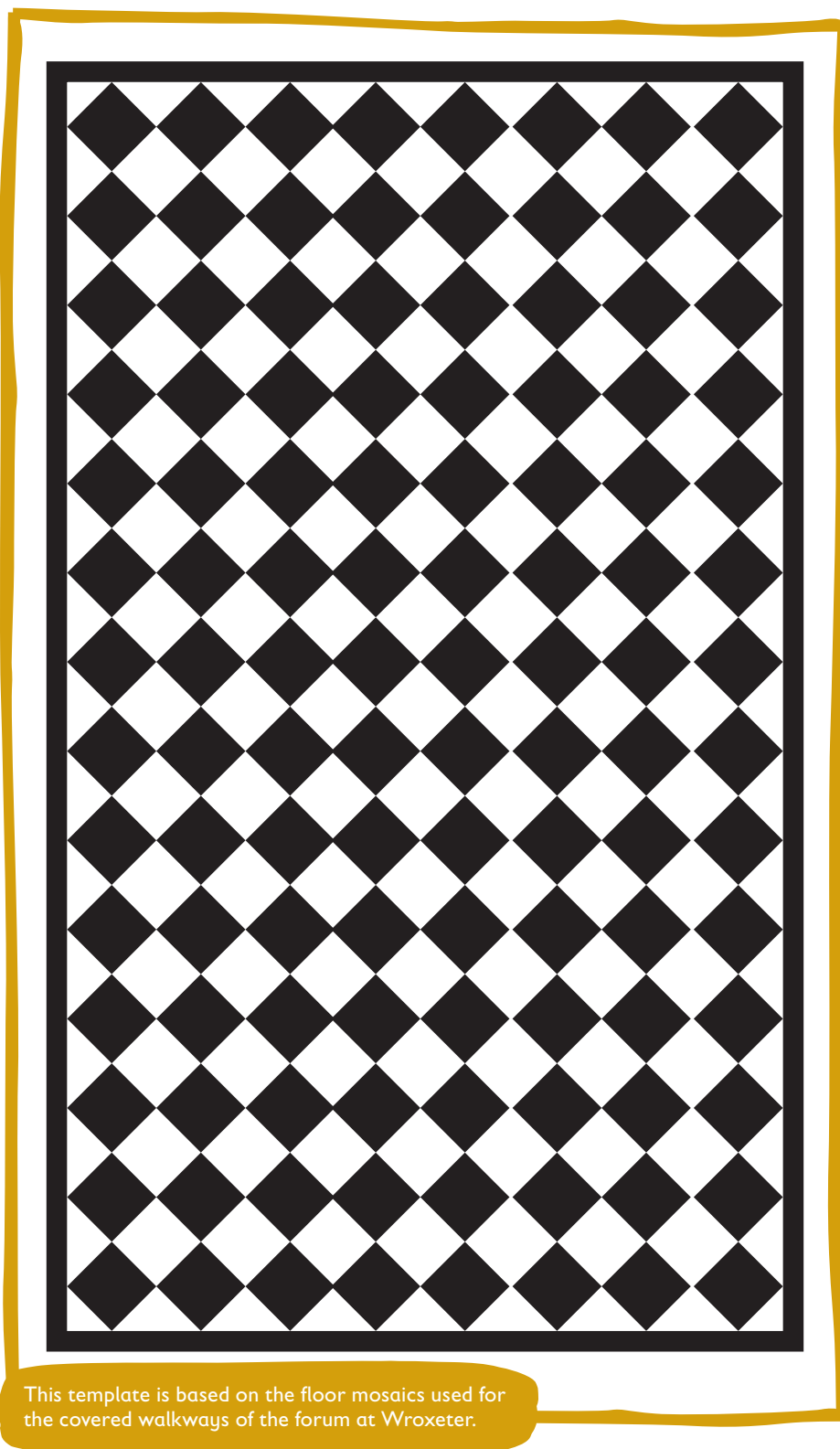
Use this template and the 'tesserae' (stone cubes) to **create** a colourful mosaic.



COMPLETED IT? Now **design** your own mosaic.

MOSAIC TEMPLATE 3

Use this template and the 'tesserae' (stone cubes) to **create** a colourful mosaic.



COMPLETED IT? Now **design** your own mosaic.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

ACT LIKE A ROMAN



KS1-2

Recommended for

KS2 (History, Drama)

Learning objectives

- Identify the clothing worn by the Romans and understand that this was linked to their status.
- Imagine what it would have been like to be a Roman living at Wroxeter Roman City.

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes



A student dressed up as a Roman town council member in Wroxeter's education room.

SUMMARY

When you get to Wroxeter, ask a member of site staff about the activity box which supports this activity. It contains a copy of these activity instructions and eight sets of Roman character cards (enough for a class of 32 working in groups of four).

To ensure everything is available on the day of your visit, please book this activity box with our Education Bookings Team.

To set up this activity, put students into groups of four. Unpack the activity box and hand out one set of Roman character cards to each group. Each student should take one character card and find out their character's age, gender, status and job.

Next, use the character cards as a stimulus for role-play. Ask four students, each playing a different character, to come to the front of the room with their character card. Interview them one at a time, to find out their age, their job and some other facts about them. At the end of each interview, ask the rest of the class to give the interviewee some tips on how this character should walk and talk to show their character's status.

Now ask students to get into pairs and, based on their characters, create a short dialogue. For example, the town council member might order the cart driver to go and get some more logs for the bath house.

Finally, you could select a few pairs to get into costume, using the costumes hanging on the rail in the education room, and perform their role-play to the rest of the group. Please note: there are only four costumes available to help with this activity, so students will need to share.

When you have finished doing the activity, please put the character cards and costumes back as you found them, for others to enjoy.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, students could apply their understanding of Roman fashion, by designing a costume for a high- and low-status Roman man or woman, with labels.

CART DRIVER

Age

23

Job

I'm a cart driver. I bring logs from the countryside into Wroxeter town. I load the logs onto a wooden cart, which is pulled along by oxen.

More About Me

The wood I bring into the town will be burnt to provide heat for rooms in the bath house.

It's hard work travelling in the wind and rain all day. I get nasty splinters on my hands from carrying the logs.

I'm a slave so I don't get paid anything but at least my master gives me food and somewhere to sleep.



COUNCIL MEMBER



Age

45

Job

I'm a member of the town council. I was elected by the local people to help make decisions about the town and how it should be run.

More About Me

I'm a local landowner and I have lots of money.

People care about my opinions and I make sure my voice is heard at council meetings.

The council is in charge of gathering tax for the government, dealing with people who break the law, and organising religious events.

ARISTOCRAT

Age

33

Job

I manage the household slaves, plan dinner parties, entertain guests and make sure my husband has everything he needs.

More About Me

My parents were rich enough to pay for my education so I learnt to read and write from a young age.

Looking young and beautiful is important to me. I make face cream from things like rose petals and honey. I get my slaves to do my hair and makeup.

My jewellery is worth lots of money so I make sure to show it off whenever I go out.



SHOP KEEPER

Age

21

Job

I spend all day working in a shop, selling things to customers.

More About Me

I have to serve people who come into the shop, and keep it well stocked, but I can't afford slaves to help me, so I have to wake up early and work all day.

The work is tough but satisfying.

I hope to one day use the money I earn to buy a nicer house and clothes, like the rich people in the town.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

BATHING ROMAN-STYLE



KS1-2

Recommended for

KS2 (History)

Learning objectives

- Understand Roman bathing traditions and use the correct terminology to describe the bath suite at Wroxeter.
- Explore the experience of bathing on the spot where it happened.

Time to complete

20–30 minutes



A reconstruction drawing of the 'basilica' (exercise hall), which you can find a full-page version of on page 40.

SUMMARY

The public baths, along with some pillars from the forum, are uncovered and on display at Wroxeter Roman City. Porticoes (covered walkways) and other open corridors are marked out in red gravel, interiors are marked with cream gravel, and areas of cold water with black gravel.

Gather pupils in the 'basilica' and ask them to close their eyes. Read aloud Seneca's description of a Roman bath house on page 45. Get students to open their eyes and discuss, in pairs, the things they might have seen, heard and smelt at Wroxeter's bath house.

Walk your pupils through the remains of the bath suite and ask them to mime the following:

1. Work up a gentle sweat by exercising in the hall ('basilica'). Typical exercises include wrestling, lifting weights or ball games.
2. Get changed in one of the two small rooms at the end of the basilica ('apodyteria'). If you were rich, you could tell your slave to watch your clothes while you're gone.
3. Enter the bath suite into the unheated room ('frigidarium').
4. Relax in the warm room ('tepidarium'). Notice the tile stacks which were used to create space under the floor (hypocaust) so heat from the furnace could move around and keep the room warm.
5. Choose which room to go into next, either of dry heat, like a sauna ('sudatorium') or wet steamy heat, like a Turkish bath ('caudarium'). All the hot rooms have under-floor heating and are right next to a furnace. They are much hotter than the rooms you've just come through so you'd need to wear wooden bathing shoes to stop your feet from burning.
6. Get a massage from one of the hot room attendants. Bathers were massaged with oils, then the oil and dirt was removed with a metal scraper, called a 'strigil'.
7. Return to the 'frigidarium', and take a refreshing plunge in the baths of cold water there, or take a dip in the equally cold outdoor pool, known as the 'natatio'.

Continued...



A reconstruction drawing of the 'natatio' (outdoor plunge pool). Go to page 41 for an enlarged version.

As you walk through the various rooms, you could show your students the reconstruction drawings on pages 42 and 43 to help them picture what the Roman baths may have looked like.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, students could design and label their own bath suite. They should include these things: 'basilica', 'frigidarium', 'tepidarium', 'cauldarium', 'sudatorium', furnaces (nearest to the 'cauldarium' and 'sudatorium'), and a cold plunge pool (indoor or outdoor).

They could also write a diary entry, imagining they are someone living at Wroxeter in the 2nd century, describing their day at the baths. Pupils can use Seneca's description on page 47 as inspiration.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

TOWNHOUSE EXPLORERS



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2 & KS3 (History)

Learning objectives

- Understand the layout and features of a high-status Roman home, using the reconstructed townhouse at Wroxeter as an example.
- Identify what the different rooms in the townhouse were used for and compare it to a modern home.

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes



Students sitting in front of the townhouse at Wroxeter.

SUMMARY

In 2010, a version of a high-status Roman townhouse was built at Wroxeter, using only tools and materials known to the Romans, for the Channel 4 television programme 'Rome Wasn't Built in a Day'.

When you get to Wroxeter, ask a member of site staff about the activity box which supports this activity. It contains:

- a copy of these activity instructions
- ten laminated floor plans
- mini whiteboard pens with erasers

To ensure everything is available on the day of your visit, please book this activity box with our Education Bookings Team.

Take students to the reconstructed townhouse and put them in groups of about three. Hand out one laminated floor plan and one mini white board pen to each group.

Explain that we can tell this house belongs to a rich family because of its size, plus it has its own bath suite, slave quarters and mosaic flooring in the dining room.

Give students ten minutes to explore the rooms of the Roman townhouse, labelling the floor plan with the correct rooms. Encourage them to look around the outside of the house as well as in the rooms. The answers are provided on page 9 of this kit.

After ten minutes, gather everyone back at the portico and go through the answers. Finally, ask students to compare the Roman Townhouse with their own homes by identifying two similarities and two differences.

When you have finished doing the activity, please put everything back in the box as you found them, for others to enjoy.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

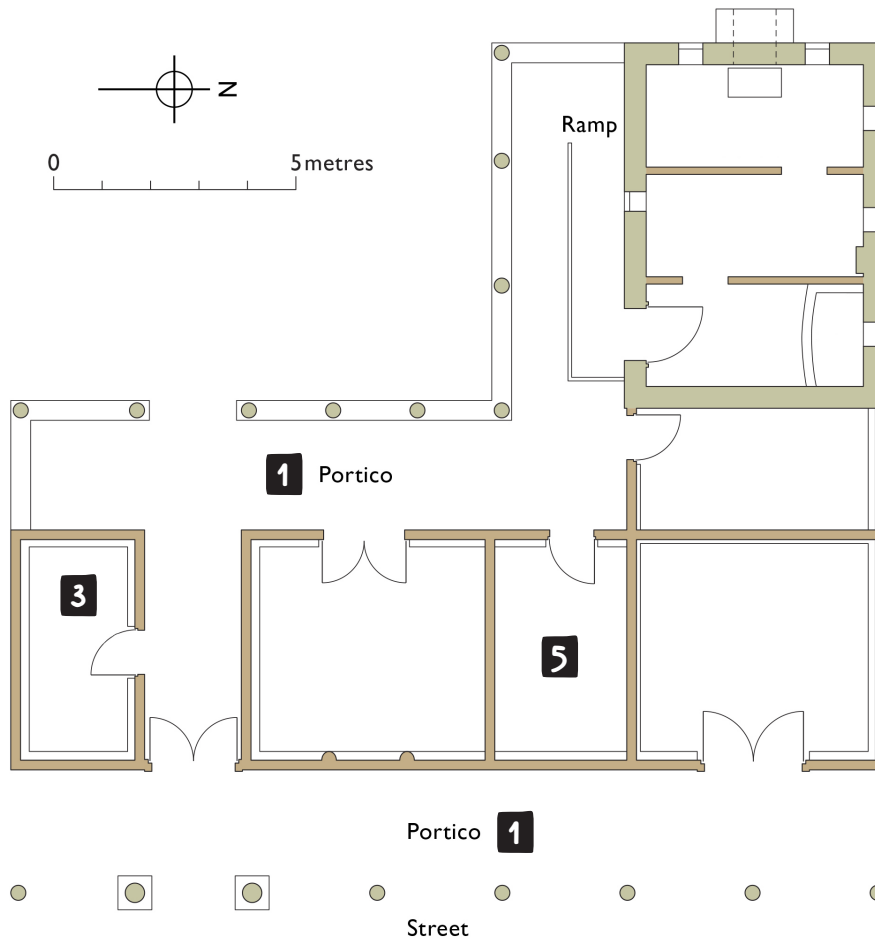
Back in the classroom, students could write an advert as if they were a Roman estate agent trying to sell the house. They could produce a poster which includes: an image of the townhouse, the price, the postcode and a short description of its features.

TOWNHOUSE EXPLORERS

Explore the Roman townhouse in small groups and guess what each part was used for.

HINT: Walk around the outside of the building too.

Label each part with the correct number from the list below. We've done some for you.



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Portico (outdoor covered walkway) | 7 Bedroom |
| 2 Main entrance | 8 Cold room (with a cold bath) |
| 3 Porter's lodge and slave quarters | 9 Warm room |
| 4 Reception and dining room | 10 Hot room (with a hot bath) |
| 5 Study | 11 Furnace (for lighting a fire) |
| 6 Shop | 12 Garden |

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

ROMAN BUILDERS



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2 & KS3 (History, Design & Technology, Engineering)

Learning objectives

- Identify Roman building materials and use the correct terminology to describe them.
- Understand key building techniques used by the Romans.

Time to complete

10–15 minutes



The wattle and daub wall, with wooden frame, on display in the Roman townhouse.



The walls have been left part-finished to display different Roman building techniques.

SUMMARY

When you get to Wroxeter, ask a member of site staff about the activity box which supports this activity. It contains a copy of these activity instructions and a set of laminated clue cards (for students to use during the activity).

To ensure everything is available on the day of your visit, please book this activity box with our Education Bookings Team.

Once you've picked up the activity box, take your class to the reconstructed townhouse and find the study. This room has been left part-finished to show the different building techniques used by the Romans, including:

1. Wooden frame
2. Wattle
3. Daub
4. Plaster
5. Stone wall
6. Hypocaust

Gather your class inside the study and hand out the clue cards. Ask students to discuss, in small groups, what each of the building techniques is called. They should work together to guess the missing letters on their clue card, checking the answer with you if they are unsure. Now get them to find an example of this building technique on display in the room. When they think they've found it, they can place the clue card near to the building material or method it describes.

When you are happy that the labels are all in the correct place, go round the room and ask a spokesperson from each group to teach the rest of the class something about the building technique they found.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, ask students to use what they learnt from the Roman townhouse to discuss the impact the Romans had on Britain, with regards to introducing new building ideas like under-floor heating, mosaics and painted wall plaster.

CLUE CARDS

CLUE CARD 1

_ O _ _ _ N F _ A _ _



- 1** On some walls, it can still be seen. On other walls, it is covered up by plaster.
- 2** It has horizontal parts (called sills and heads), vertical parts (called posts) and diagonal parts (called braces).
- 3** It is made from hardwood (e.g. oak).

CLUE CARD 2

W _ T _ L _



- 1** It is used to fill the wooden frame. Another way of doing it is to use bricks.
- 2** It makes a good base for daub (mud) but it burns easily so is a fire risk!
- 3** It is made from vertical sticks of bendy wood (willow or hazel) woven around horizontal sticks.

CLUE CARD 3

D _ U _



- 1** Builders put it on top of wattle (wooden sticks) to insulate the room.
- 2** It is made from mud and clay, plus sand or chalk to stop it from cracking.
- 3** It is greyish-brown in colour.

CLUE CARDS

CLUE CARD 4

P _ _ _ _ _



- 1 It is the only bit of the wall you see when it's finished.
- 2 It is sometimes painted with bright colours, scenes and patterns.
- 3 Builders spread it onto wattle (wooden sticks) and daub (mud) walls to create a smooth finish.

CLUE CARD 5

S _ _ _ E W _ _ _



- 1 It is half a metre high and made from sandstone.
- 2 It can be found at the base of each wall.
- 3 It stops the wooden frame from touching the damp ground. The wooden frame sits on top of it so that it doesn't get wet and rot.

CLUE CARD 6

H _ _ _ C _ U _ _



- 1 It is part of a special kind of under-floor heating, which keeps the house warm.
- 2 It creates a gap under the floor so hot air from the furnace can move around. The entire floor would have been covered by tile stacks and slabs like these.
- 3 It is made from a stone slab supported on piles ('pilae') of ceramic tiles.



POST-VISIT

Activities and information to help you extend your students' learning back in the classroom.

SOURCES

PEEK INTO THE PAST

A historical source is something that tells us about life in the past, such as a document, a picture or an object. It may be a primary source, from the time, or a secondary source, created later. Experts at English Heritage have chosen these sources to help you learn about Wroxeter Roman City.

IRON AGE POT

This late Iron Age pot was found at Wroxeter. The Cornovii tribe lived in the Wroxeter area during the Iron Age, working mainly as farmers. When the Roman army invaded, the Cornovii were forced to surrender. This pot dates from the time of the early fortress which the Romans built soon after they took control of the land.



© Roger H White



TOMBSTONE OF A CORNOVIAN WOMAN

This tombstone shows a young woman, aged 30, sitting in a high-backed chair. She originally came from the native Cornovii tribe and married a Roman soldier from Ilkley Fort. The quality of this tombstone suggests she was of high status by the time she died. The inscription identifies her as a 'citizen of the Cornovii', making this an important example of a British native who worked her way up the social ladder in Roman Britain.

© Paul White Photography



BRONZE DIANA SHRINE

The Romans worshipped many Gods (this is called 'polytheism'). They believed that different gods were in charge of different things, such as Diana, the god of hunting and the moon, and Mercury, the god of trade and money. They mainly worshipped in temples but there is evidence that some people also made small, portable shrines, like this bronze figure of Diana.



BOX FLUE TILE

It wasn't just under-floor heating that heated the rooms at Wroxeter's baths. Hot air produced by the furnace could also flow up the walls, behind the plaster, through hollow box flue tiles like this one. Marks were scratched into one side of the tile to help the wall plaster bind to it.



IMP CAES DIVI TRAIANI PARTHICI FIL DIVI NERVAE NEPOTI TRAIANO HADRIANO
AVG PONTIFICI MAXIMO TRIB POT XIII COS III PP CIVITAS CORNOVIORVM

“To Emperor Caesar Trajanus Hadrianus Augustus, the son of the divine Trajanus Parthicus, the grandson of the divine Nerva, Chief Priest, holding tribunician power for the fourteenth time, consul three times, Father of the Fatherland, the community of the Cornovii [(erected this)].”

These words were carved into a stone slab which was originally placed above the entrance of the forum at Wroxeter. The stone dedicates the forum to the emperor Hadrian (r.117–138), who famously built Hadrian's Wall across the north of England. The mention of Emperor Hadrian holding power for the 'fourteenth time' narrows the date the forum was completed to AD 129–130. The dedication stone was found by archaeologists in 1920 and confirmed the name of the Roman town. A replica of the stone can be seen on display in the museum at Wroxeter Roman City. The original is kept at Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery.



A reconstruction drawing by Ivan Lapper of one of the furnaces used to heat the rooms in the baths. The wood for the fire came from trees in the surrounding area and the fire was stoked by slaves – it would have been incredibly hot and tiring work.



A reconstruction drawing by Ivan Lapper of the 'basilica' (exercise hall) at Wroxeter, where people would go to work up a sweat and open their pores before entering the main bath suite.



A reconstruction drawing by Ivan Lapper of the 'natatio' (outdoor plunge pool) at Wroxeter, where people would go after visiting the hot rooms to take a refreshing dip in the water.



A reconstruction drawing by Ivan Lapper of the 'cauldarium' (hot, steamy room) at Wroxeter, showing the highly decorated floor, walls and ceiling. Bathers wore wooden shoes to protect their feet from the underfloor heating. They could get an oil massage from a hot room attendant then have the oil and dirt scraped off their skin with a metal 'strigil'.



A reconstruction drawing by Ivan Lapper of the baths (centre) and the market hall (top left) as they may have looked in the 2nd century AD. Beyond the market hall, the front of the forum can be seen.



An aerial reconstruction drawing by Ivan Lapper showing Wroxeter Roman City as it may have looked at the end of the 2nd century AD, when it was in its prime. It was the fourth largest city in Roman Britain at the time.

PAINTED WALL PLASTER

This section of plaster is from the entrance to the hot room at Wroxeter's baths. When the Romans invaded Britain, they brought with them new types of interior design, introducing a more detailed and highly-decorated style than people were used to. Beautiful patterns like this were painted directly onto the plastered walls and ceilings at the baths.



23. Seneca Letter 56.1-2

'My dear Lucilius,

If you want to study, quiet is not nearly as necessary as you might think. Here I am, surrounded by all kinds of noise (my lodgings overlook a bath house). Conjure up in your imagination all the sounds that make one hate one's ears. I hear the grunts of musclemen exercising and jerking those heavy weights around; they are working hard, or pretending to. I hear their sharp hissing when they release their pent breath. If there happens to be a lazy fellow content with a simple massage I hear the slap of hand on shoulder; you can tell whether it's hitting a flat or a hollow. If a ball-player comes up and starts calling out his score, I'm done for. Add to this the racket of [...] a thief caught in the act, and a fellow who likes the sound of his own voice in the bath, plus those who plunge into the pool with a huge splash of water. Besides those who just have loud voices, imagine the skinny armpit-hair plucker whose cries are shrill so as to draw people's attention and never stop except when he's doing his job and making someone else shriek for him. Now add the mingled cries of the drink peddler and the sellers of sausages, pastries, and hot fare, each hawking his own wares with his own particular peal...'

This extract is from a letter written by Seneca, a famous Roman philosopher, playwright, tutor and later advisor to Emperor Nero (r.AD 54–68). It is from one of his many 'moral letters' to his friend Lucilius, an important Roman knight and writer. In this dramatic account, Seneca describes the hustle and bustle of a nearby bath house, which he can hear as he tries to study.

There is a bright spring morning overhead, the old wall standing close by looks blank at us; here and there a stray antiquary clammers among the rubbish, careless of dirt stains; an attentive gentleman on the crest of a dirt heap explains Roman antiquities to some young ladies in pink and blue, who have made Wroxeter the business of a morning drive. An intelligent labourer, who seems to be a sort of foreman of the works, waits to disclose to the honorary secretary the contents of a box in which it is his business to deposit each day's findings of small odds and ends...'

This extract is from an account by Charles Dickens, the famous author, which he wrote after visiting Wroxeter on 14 May 1859. He describes an excavation taking place at Wroxeter in Victorian times.