

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

GATEWAY TO EMPIRE



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2–3 (History, Geography)

Learning objectives

- Explore how Richborough was connected to the wider Roman Empire.
- Understand the importance of transport and trade across the Empire.
- Develop map-reading skills.

Time to complete

Approx. 60 mins



This reconstruction by Peter Lorimer shows Richborough around AD 120 when the settlement was at its largest.

SUMMARY

Richborough was a major point of connection between the Roman province of Britannia and the rest of the Roman Empire. This activity highlights the extent of these connections, encouraging students to consider who was travelling across the Empire and how, as well as developing their map-reading skills.

SUGGESTED APPROACH

- Read the Historical Information on pages 6–13 as a class to establish the importance of Richborough as a link between Britannia and the rest of the Roman Empire.
- Discuss who was travelling through Richborough based on the information students have found out. Answers may include military personnel, government officials, messengers and merchants.
- Introduce the idea that Roman travellers could access many major Roman settlements via Watling Street which began at Richborough. Sea connections between Richborough and Gaul (modern-day France) opened routes across the rest of the Empire.
- Share Stanford University's map of the Roman world (ORBIS) with students.
- Set Richborough (Rutupiae) as your starting point and ask students to explore the map, using the activity sheet on page 28 to guide them. Answers are in the Teachers' Notes on page 29. You may find comparing locations on the Roman Empire map with a modern online map or atlas useful.

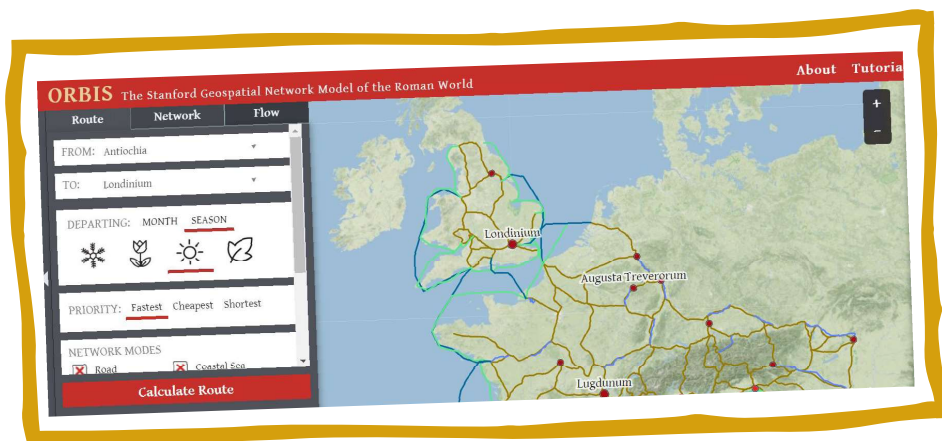
MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Ask students to research Roman travel further and use the online map and their findings to create short stories from the perspective of someone travelling through Richborough for the first time. They could be a Briton experiencing Roman buildings for the first time or a Roman citizen from elsewhere in the Empire.

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The Roman Empire connected Britain with Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. People could travel in safety and communicate using Latin as a shared language. Richborough (Rutupiae) was the main route in and out of Britain for around four hundred years.



Use Stanford University's online interactive map of the Roman world and a modern online map of the UK or an atlas to answer the following questions:

1 Which Roman city is closest to your school?
Is it north, south, east or west of your school?

2 Find these cities on the Roman online map. What do we call these today?
TIP: You might find it helpful to compare the town names on the Roman map with a modern map.

A. Roman city: Londinium
Modern name:

B. Roman city: Eburacum
Modern name:

C. Roman city: Camulodunum
Modern name:

3 According to the Roman online map, which major Roman city is furthest away from Richborough?
Which direction is it in (north, south, east or west)?
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How long is the route in kilometres (km) and how many days would it take to reach Richborough from this city on foot

A. in the spring?

B. in the summer?

C. in the autumn?

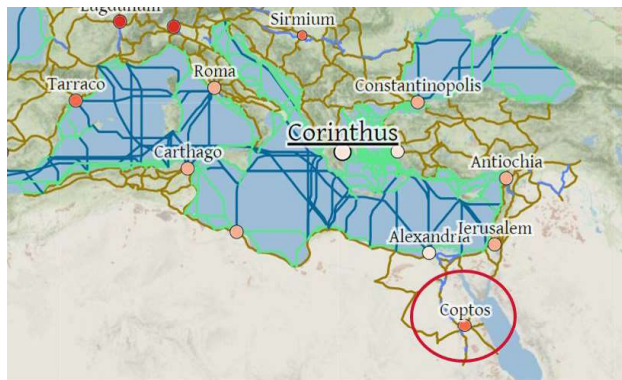
D. in the winter?

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TEACHERS' NOTES

ANSWERS TO STUDENT ACTIVITY SHEET

1. This answer will be dependent on your location.
2. The modern names for the Roman cities listed are:
 - A. **London**
 - B. **York**
 - C. **Colchester**
3. The major Roman city furthest away from Richborough is **Coptos (modern-day Qift in Egypt)**.



It is between **4,803km** and **4,806km** away from Richborough depending on the route taken. The route was dependent on the time of year a journey was made.

- A. In the spring the route would be **4,803km** and it would take **66** days on foot.
- B. In the summer the route would be **4,805km** and it would take **55** days on foot.
- C. In the autumn the route would be **4,803km** and it would take **53** days on foot.
- D. In the winter the route would be **4,806km** and it would take **74** days on foot.

Travelling by road would often take longer than travelling by sea.

Students can also use the online Roman map to discover how much these journeys would cost. Travelling in the summer was easier and so cost less than travelling in the winter.