Fall Of Rome

## Goals & Objectives

Goals: Students will learn the borders of the Roman Empire at the height of its power and the reasons for the eventual fall of Rome.

Objectives:

Students will locate, identify, and label the boarder of the Roman Empire at the height of its power as well as important geographical features within the empire.

Students will analyze primary documents regarding the fall of Rome. They will compare and evaluate all of the documents before developing their own thesis on why the Roman Empire fell.

Students will point out similarities and differences between the fall of Rome and the United States today and consider the future of our own country.

## California State Content and Common Core Standards

California State Content Standards:

**CA Content Standard: 7.1 Students analyze the causes and effects of the vast expansion and ultimate disintegration of the Roman Empire.**

1. Study the early strengths and lasting contributions of Rome (e.g., significance of Roman citizenship; rights under Roman law; Roman art, architecture, engineering, and philosophy; preservation and transmission of Christianity) and **its ultimate internal weaknesses (e.g., rise of autonomous military powers within the empire, undermining of citizenship by the growth of corruption and slavery, lack of education, and distribu­tion of news).**

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Common Core Standards:

**Common Core Writing Standards:**2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.

 a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories as appropriate to achieving purpose; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.   b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.   c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.   d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.   e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone.   f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

*5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed*

 8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources **(primary and secondary),** using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

### Lesson Introduction

The teacher will ask students to describe the “American way of life”. Students will come up with a variety of answers, but the teacher should put emphasis on answers like “Twitter”, “Keeping up with the Kardashians”, “MTV”, “Fast Food”, “Obesity”, “online shopping”, etc.

The teacher will then ask them if the US was always this way. Students should reflect on the foundation of our nation, great American writers, pioneers, the Oregon Trail, Lewis and Clark, etc. Even Walt Disney and his work ethic (great comparison to most of Disneyland’s guests today and the food available in the park).

Ask the students why they think this change happened. What changed the US from a great nation to a lazy nation?

### Vocabulary

The following vocabulary words will be used in this lesson. Each word will be introduced and defined (as a class) in a specific time during the lesson.

ELLs, Striving readers, and students with special needs will each receive a vocabulary worksheet with the words, definitions, and pictures filled out.

* Analyze
* Assassination
* Plague
* Suicide
* Republic
* Pax Rommana
* Dictatorship
* Sack
* Expansion
* Conscription
* Migration
* BCE/AD/CE

### Content Delivery

Content will be delivered through the use of primary documents. These include:

* A list of the Roman Emperoros from 235 CE to 285 CE
* An excerpt from *Concerning Military Matters* by the Roman historian Vegetius, c. 450 CE
* An excerpt from *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A Reappraisal,* Crown Publishing, 1982
* A map of the foreign invasions of the Roman Empire
* An excerpt from *Roman History* by the Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus, c. 380 CE on the Huns

(Using the Fall of Rome mini-Q packet from “The DBQ Project”)

Day 1:

Before introducing students to the primary documents, the teacher will first teach them how to analyze the text and take annotated notes. The teacher will do so using the Mini-Q background essay, “What Were the Primary Reasons for the ‘Fall’ of Rome?”.

First the teacher will have students review the background questions, explaining that they are the destinations that the essay will lead them to. With those questions in mind, the teacher will read the essay out loud as students follow along in their heads. The teacher will scaffold how to analyze the text by pausing at certain points and “thinking out loud”.

“Hmm, ‘from modern day Scotland to … I think this is important to know I’m going to highlight this sentence on where the Romans expanded their empire…” Etc.

Through the scaffolding activity, the students will learn what questions to be asking themselves as they read the primary documents, what information is essential, which information can be ignored, and how to interact with the text while reading (writing notes and questions on the side, having a dialog with the text).

Conclude the class with a whip around: ask each student one thing they highlighted in the background essay or to read a note or question they wrote in the margins.

Day 2:

Daily intro: whip around activity where you ask each student one thing they learned about how to analyze a text.

The first document that the students will be analyzing is “Document A: Roman Emperors, 235-285 CE”. The teacher will project the document on the smart board and ask students to follow along in their packets. The first question asks: “How many Roman Emperors ruled during the 50-year period covered by this chart? How many died a natural death? What was the most frequent cause of death of these men?”

The teacher will ask the students to work with the person sitting next to them. Discuss the questions and come up with answers that they both agree on. Students will then be asked to share their findings with the class.

The next question is “What message might these frequent and violent changes in leadership have sent to people of the Roman Empire?”. The teacher will lead a class discussion by first asking students to reflect on how they would feel if they heard of a bunch of shootings in their neighborhood. Would they feel unsafe? (Students answer). The teacher would also ask students to analyze how frequently the Emperor is being replaced. How would they feel if the president changed that frequently? What does is say about the Empire that they live in?

The following question for document A is, “What message might these frequent and violent changes in leadership have sent to people living outside the Roman Empire?” Ask students to think about how the Empire was created? (Answers: war, military powers, conquering other lands). In a world where Empires are built based on strong leadership and military strength, how do you think outsiders viewed the Roman Empire at this time? (A body without a head, easy to attack, weak, attacking themselves from within).

Students will then be grouped into pairs of twos or threes and asked to analyze Document B: excerpts from *Concerning Military Matters* and *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A Reappraisal.* Towards the end of class students will be asked to wrap up their work (answering the analysis questions). The teacher will then conclude the lesson for the day by asking groups to share their findings or ask questions they came up with while analyzing the text.

Day 3:

Daily intro: quickly remind students what they did the previous day.

Students will be completing a map of the Roman Empire in pairs with the help of their textbook, other books on the Roman Empire, and the following interactive website: <http://www.worldology.com/Europe/roman_empire_imap.htm>

The teacher will walk around and assess how students are doing with the completion of the map.

After they have completed their maps, the teacher will lead a classroom analysis of “Document C: Foreign Invasions of the Roman Empire”.

Students will then analyze Documents D and E with a partner. The teacher will walk around and assess student’s progress and answer any questions through scaffolding (not just giving the answer).

### Student Engagement

Day 1:

Students will read the background teacher on their own as the teacher reads it out loud. Students will follow the teacher’s example as the read and highlight important information and write along the margins to have a dialog with the text.

Students will complete the background essay questions in class if they have time or complete it at home for homework.

Day 2:

Students will analyze “Document A” with their reading partner and then with the rest of the class.

Students will analyze “Document B” in pairs or groups of three and complete the document analysis questions in class or for homework.

Day 3:

Students will complete a map of the Roman Empire with their partner.

Students will analyze Document C with the entire class.

Students will analyze Document D and Document E in groups of two or three and complete the document analysis questions in class or for homework.

Students will analyze document F on their own at home for homework.

### Lesson Closure

Students will write an essay on why they believe the Roman Empire fell based on their personal analysis of the primary documents for homework. The concluding paragraph of their essay must answer the question “so what?”. Peer reviews will take place in class.

### Assessment

**Entry-level Assessment:** The teacher will assess who has worked on Document Based Questions before and who has not. Teacher will assess who has learned how to write annotated notes and who has not. Teacher will assess understanding of the vocabulary words.

**Progress monitoring**: Teacher will be assessing student’s progress as they work in pairs throughout the lesson.

All analyzes made by students must be apparent on ALL of the documents. This means each document must have highlighted sections as well as annotated notes in the margins. Students will receive points for analyzing each document as well as for answering the analysis questions thoroughly.

Students will turn in their maps of the Roman Empire at it’s peak to be graded. Maps will be given back to students the next day so they can use them as a reference as they complete their essays.

**Summative Assessment:** Students will write an essay on why they believe the Roman Empire fell based on their personal analysis of the primary documents used in class. This will be completed as homework but peer reviews will take place in the classroom and students may ask the teacher to review their essays during lunch or after school.

## Accommodations for English Learners, Striving Readers and Students with Special Needs

Vocabulary worksheets will be given out to all students who are ELLs, striving readers, or students with special needs.

ELL students will be grouped with bilingual students or students who are able to speak in their native language as well (if possible).

ELL students, striving readers, and students with special needs will be given the opportunity to work on their DBQs with the resource teacher, or spend extra time after class with the teacher for extra help. These students will also be paired with students who are patient and grasping DBQs quickly so they can give them the extra support they need as well.

## Lesson Resources

http://www.worldology.com/Europe/roman\_empire\_imap.htm