



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

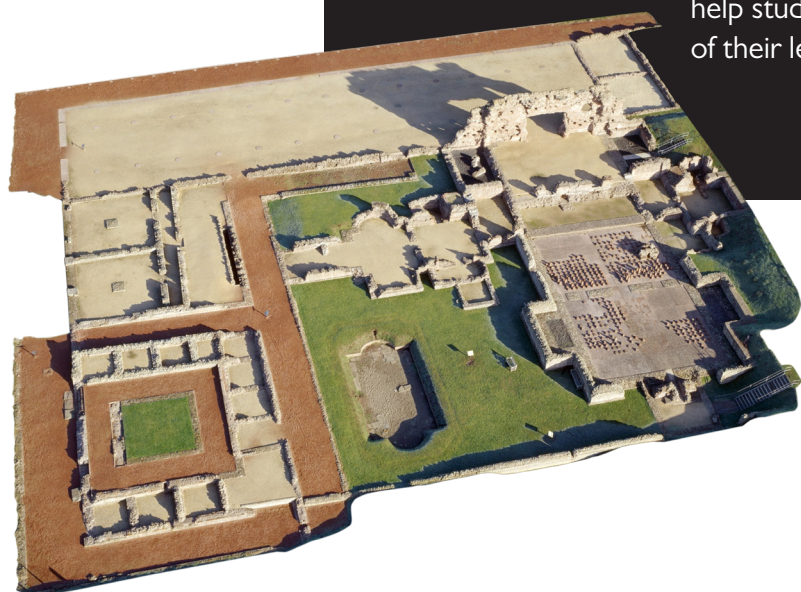
KS1-2

KS3

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.



GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR EDUCATION BOOKINGS TEAM:

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✉ bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk

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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 **School Visits 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.



KS1-2



KS3



SPEAKING



ROLE PLAY



HANDS ON



LOOK



QUOTE



EXAMINE



GROUP
ACTIVITY



MATHS



SMELL



ART



INDIVIDUAL
ACTIVITY



CUT OUT



CHALLENGE

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ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

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

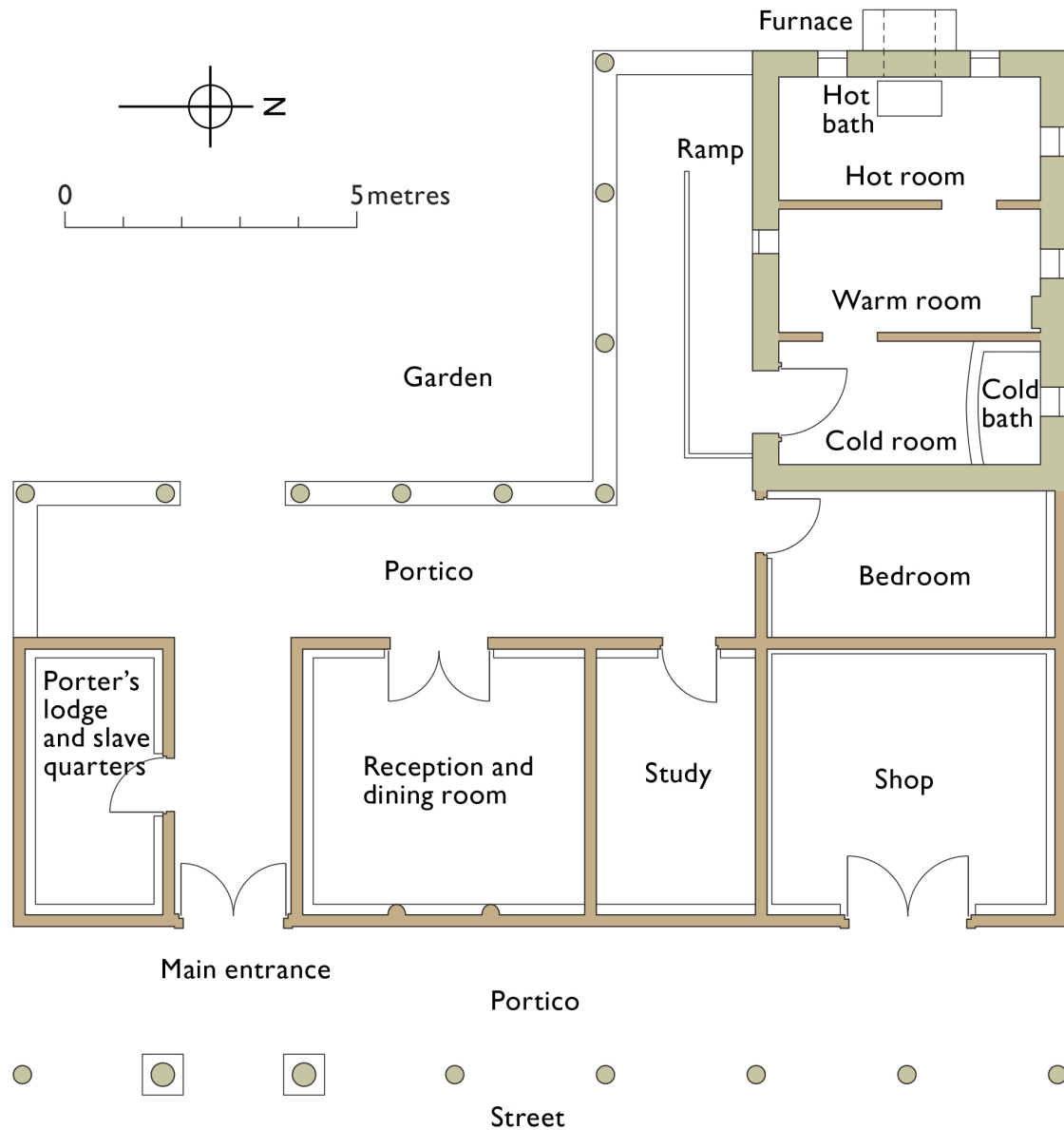
WROXETER ROMAN CITY

SITE PLAN



WROXETER ROMAN CITY

TOWN HOUSE 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.

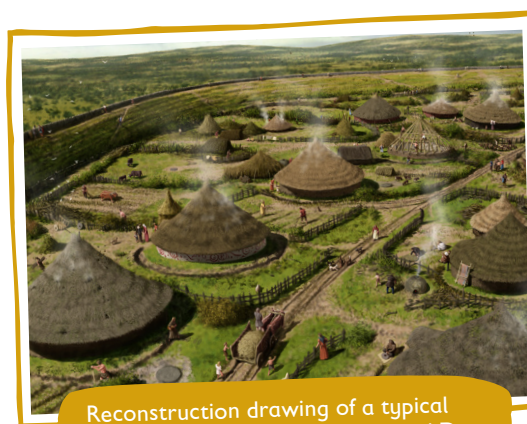
BEFORE THE ROMANS

Many different tribes of people lived in Britain during the **Iron Age**. As these tribes were all very different from each other, there is not a simple way to refer to all of them, although some people use the modern term 'Celts'. The Romans called the **native** people 'Britons'. Iron Age 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 Iron Age 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 brooches and horse equipment. When they arrived at Wroxeter, the Romans would have found a landscape that was already farmed and settled.



Reconstruction drawing of a hillfort at Maiden Castle.



Reconstruction drawing of a typical Iron Age town in the 1st 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.



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 protected the river Severn crossing and had good views of the surrounding landscape.

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, named Vedica, 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**) and 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 a hot, steamy room (**caldarium**). 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 the seat of government in the region. It had a large courtyard, where people could meet and markets could be held. Behind the courtyard was a large basilica where trials took place and taxes were paid.

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 'Viriconium' and that the forum was completed in AD 129–30. The baths were finished slightly later, by AD 150.



A reconstruction of the bath house at Wroxeter Roman City as it 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 of Wroxeter Roman City as it may have looked in the early 3rd century AD. Notice the 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 cut 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 shorter 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.

To find out more about Wroxeter after the Romans left, explore the history tab on Wroxeter Roman City's page on the English Heritage website.



A view over the baths' 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

TRICKY TERMS 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



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

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’.

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

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

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.

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

Cornovii – the Iron Age tribe in charge of the area before the Romans

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



An image of a man on a carved bone plaque from a box, 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 that was 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



A reconstruction of the forum in Wroxeter Roman City. Go to page 43 for an enlarged version.

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 major river that flows past Wroxeter. Boats could travel up it to Wroxeter Roman City from the Welsh coast.

shrine – a building or place 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 ‘caldarium’ 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.17–138) builds Hadrian's Wall as the northern border of Roman Britain. He wants to protect Roman Britain from raiding by tribes beyond the wall and control access to Roman Britain.

**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
CENTURY2ND
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 private houses and country villas. This means the buildings at Wroxeter aren't very well looked after.



**3RD
CENTURY**

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.

**4TH
CENTURY**

ANGLO-SAXONS, VIKINGS AND BRITONS

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

Roman rule in Britain ends.

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

Some towns continue 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 buildings that had formed the baths were used until the end of the 5th century, but as looking after the bath suite needs special skills and knowledge which the Romans had not passed on to local people, the buildings were not used for bathing.

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



KS1–2

Recommended for

KS1–2 (History, Art and Design, Maths)

Learning objectives

- Consider the importance of classical art and interior design in Roman culture
- Understand the process of creating a mosaic
- Recognise and identify lines of symmetry in patterns

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes



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

SUMMARY

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

The activity box contains:

- A piece of Roman mosaic from Wroxeter's bath suite
- A copy of these activity instructions
- Bags of 'tesserae' (stone cubes)
- Mosaic templates.

EXPLORING MOSAICS AT WROXETER

You will find the activity box in the Education room at Wroxeter. Ask students to sit in groups around the tables.

Explain that, for the Romans, a mosaic was the most expensive type of flooring available because it required a skilled artist to make it. It was made from tiny stone cubes called 'tesserae', which come in a variety of colours, 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 stories about gods and animals.

Show students the piece of Roman mosaic and explain that this is from the baths here at Wroxeter, which were built between AD 140 and 150. Pass it around, asking students to handle it carefully. Invite students to examine the mosaic closely and notice the small details. Once all the students have had a chance to handle and examine it, ask them to share what they noticed.

Give each group of students a bag of modern (replica) tesserae and the mosaic templates to work with. To start with, students should use the tesserae to copy the patterns on the template. Explain that some patterns are more complicated than others, and let students select which pattern to copy. Remind students that mosaics were used as a type of flooring, so there should be no gaps in the design.

Continued ...



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

Once they have copied a pattern, ask students to describe it to their neighbour. In their description, they should mention colours, patterns, and symmetry. After they have done this, they can create their own design.

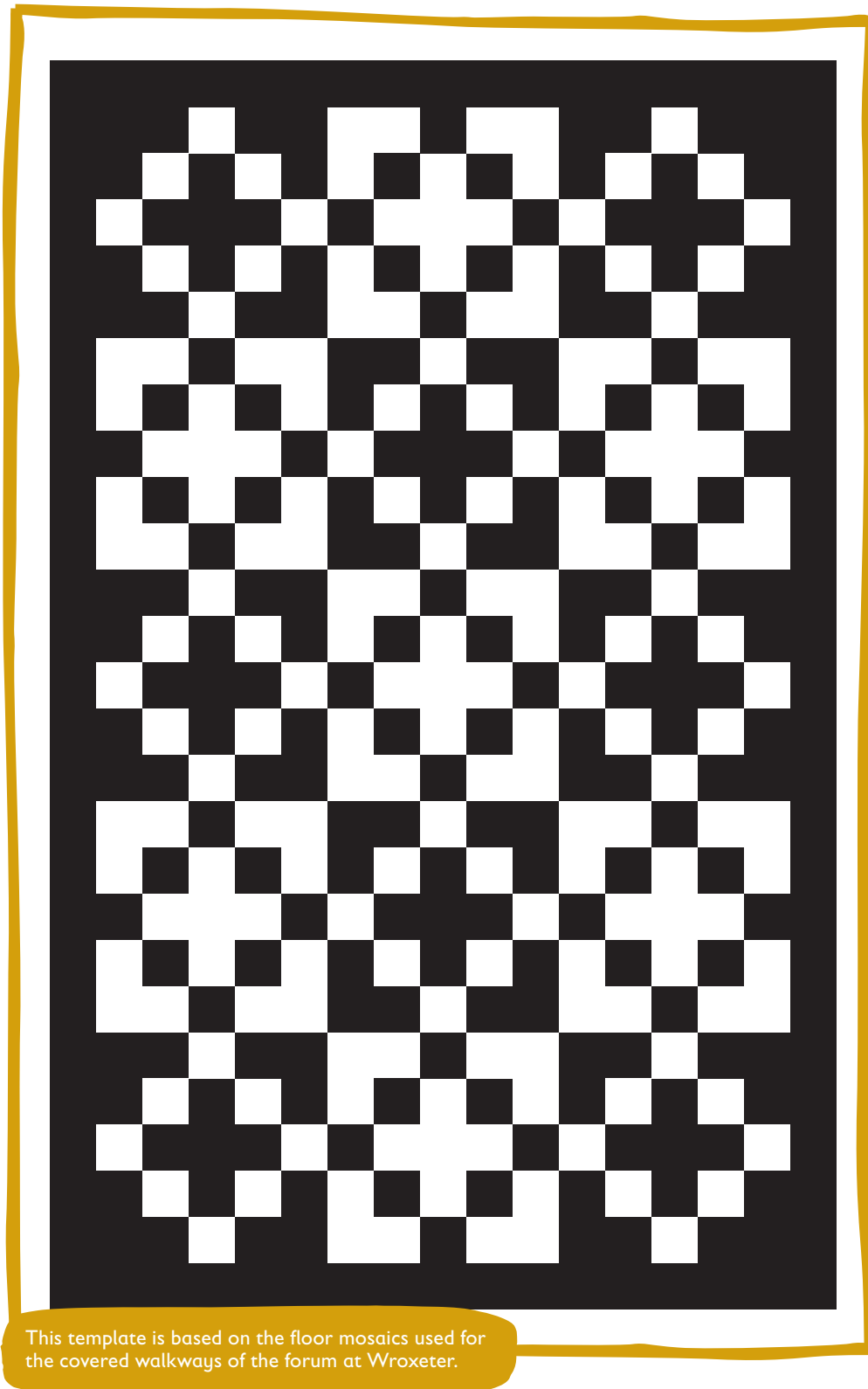
When you have finished doing the activity, please put the resources and objects back in the box as you found them, for others to enjoy.

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.



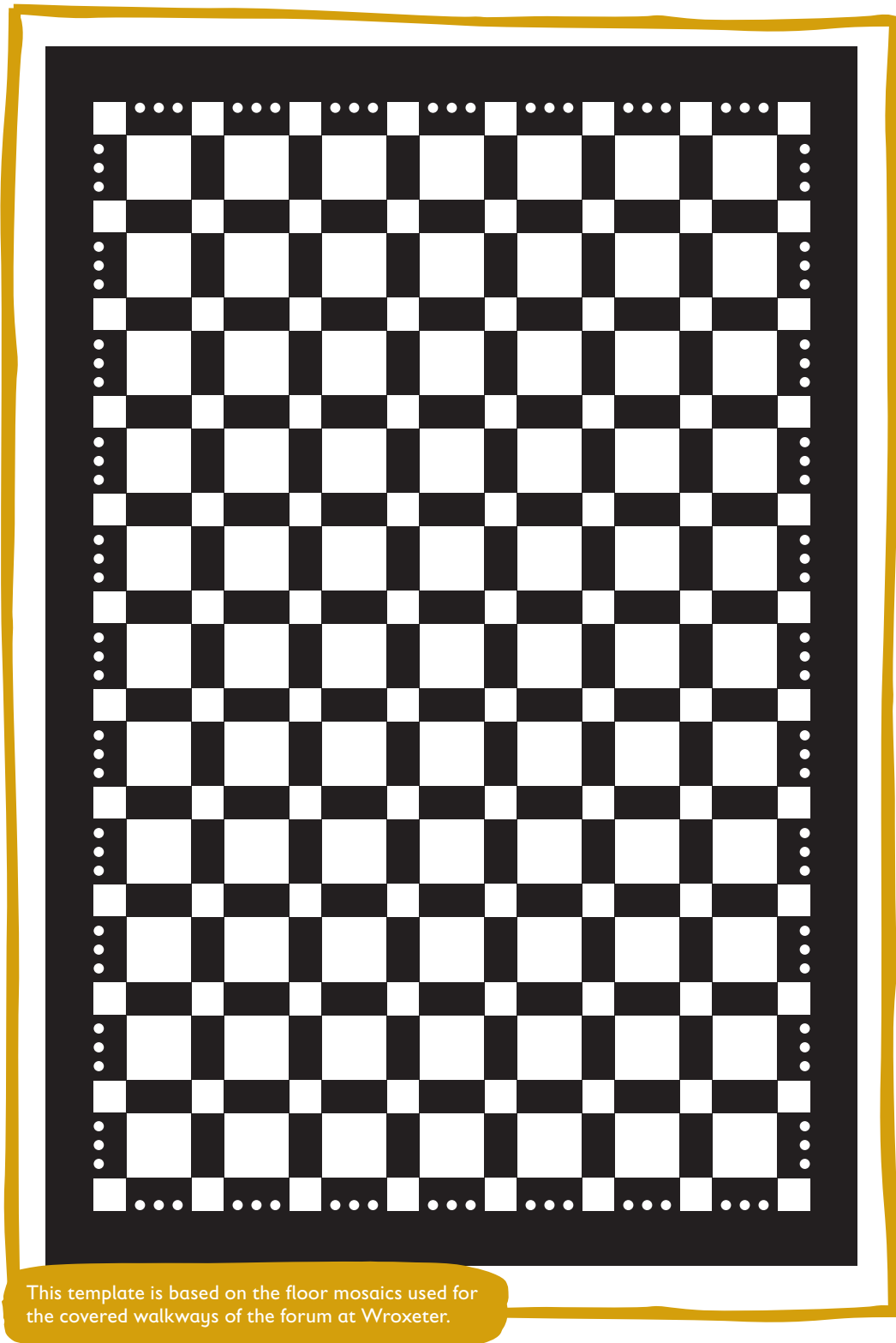
HINT

A pattern is a shape or colour that repeats over and over again. Symmetry is when something is the same on both sides, like a mirror image.

COMPLETED IT? Now, **describe** the pattern to a partner. **Find** examples of patterns and symmetry. Then **design** your own mosaic.

MOSAIC TEMPLATE 2

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



HINT

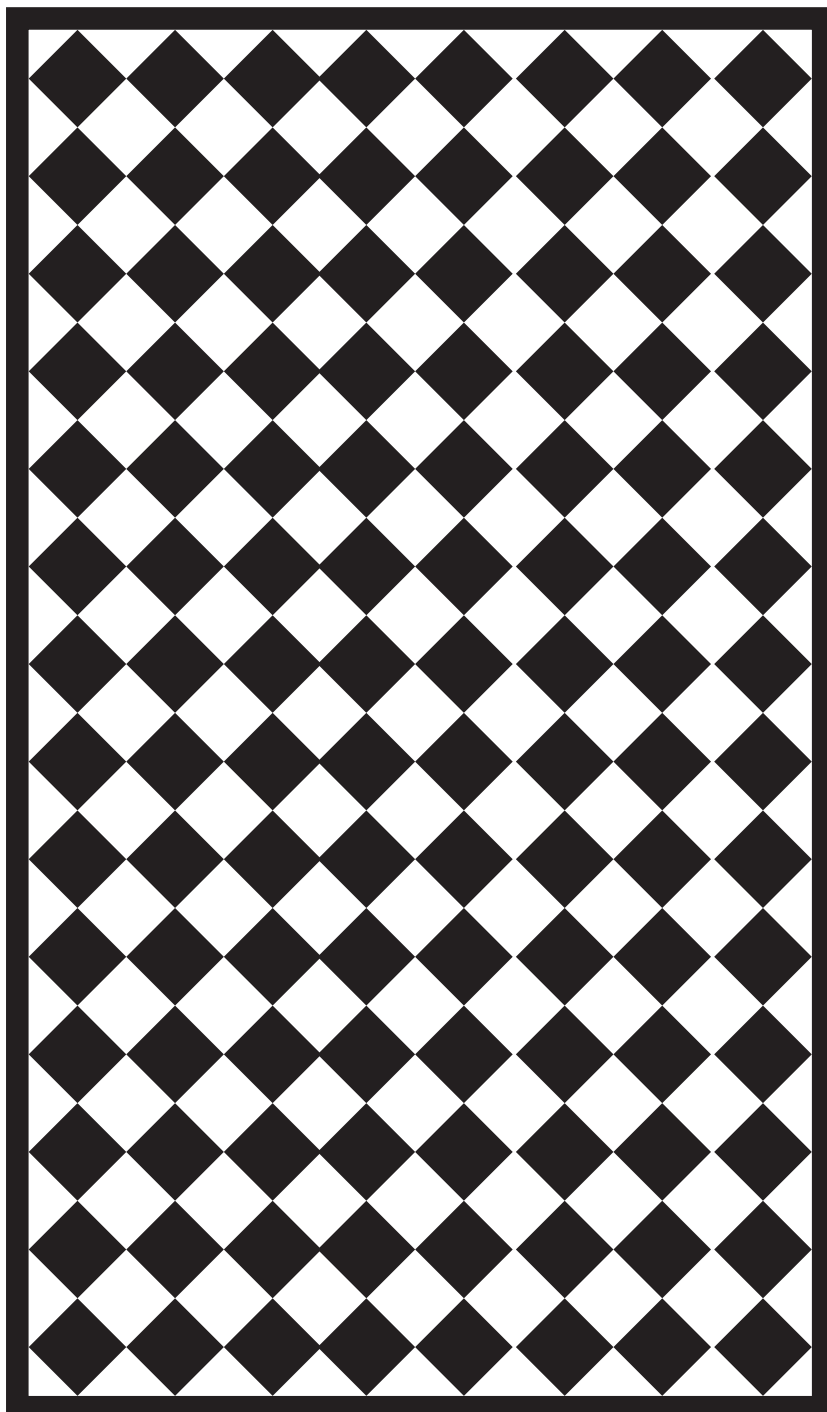
A pattern is a shape or colour that repeats over and over again. Symmetry is when something is the same on both sides, like a mirror image.

This template is based on the floor mosaics used for the covered walkways of the forum at Wroxeter.

COMPLETED IT? Now, **describe** the pattern to a partner. **Find** examples of patterns and symmetry. Then **design** your own mosaic.

MOSAIC TEMPLATE 3

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



HINT

A pattern is a shape or colour that repeats over and over again. Symmetry is when something is the same on both sides, like a mirror image.

This template is based on the floor mosaics used for the covered walkways of the forum at Wroxeter.

COMPLETED IT? Now, **describe** the pattern to a partner. **Find** examples of patterns and symmetry. Then **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
- 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. 45 minutes



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

SUMMARY

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

This activity box contains a copy of these activity instructions, four costumes and eight sets of Roman character cards (enough for a class of 32 working in groups of four).

DRESSING UP

To set up this activity, put students in groups of four. Unpack the activity box and give 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 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, 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 could walk and talk to show their character's status.

Now, ask the 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.

Then, you could select a few pairs to get into costume, using the costumes in the activity box, and perform their role play to the rest of the group. Most Romans would wear a simple tunic for day-to-day wear. Further information on Roman dress can be found in the Teachers' Notes on page 26.

Wealthy Romans would often have assistants to help them get dressed. You could ask a couple of students to act as dressers to help those performing their role plays to get ready.

When a student is role playing as the town council member, explain to the class that the toga was a high-status piece of clothing, only for special occasions, which had to be worn a certain way.

Continued ...



Students dressing up in a red Roman tunic in Wroxeter's Education room.

Ask students who are not role playing or dressing up to share the instructions from the 'How to Drape a Toga' flashcard to help the student playing the council member to get dressed. More information about Roman clothing, including everyday wear and togas, can be found on page 26, should students have further questions.

Finally, ask the students who are dressed up about their costumes, and how clothes might show the character's status, for example:

- The texture might be soft, so it's high quality – or rough and lower quality
- It might be hard to clean, which shows that it is for special occasions
- It is easy to move in, so could be for working
- It might make the wearer stand a certain way, which could demonstrate status

If students require prompting to share their thoughts on what it was like to wear the Roman costume, the following questions may be useful to start discussions:

- Have you worn anything like this before?
- How did you feel wearing the costume?
- Did you have to change the way you stood or moved?

Students may reflect that it was difficult to move in the toga and ensure that it did not unravel or get stepped on. They are likely to move slowly and carefully, especially to ensure that the drape and folds stay in place.

Please note: there are only four costumes available to help with this activity, so students will need to share.

Once you have finished doing this 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-status or low-status Roman man or woman, with labels.

ACTING LIKE A ROMAN

TEACHERS' NOTES

FAQs:

Q: WHAT WOULD BE EVERYDAY WEAR FOR A ROMAN?

A: Romans would have worn a simple tunic, and either sandals or boots on their feet. The quality of the clothing would differ depending on how rich someone was. Romans may have worn a cloak if they were going outside, like we would wear a coat or a jumper today. Although we think lots of Romans wore togas, it was a ceremonial piece of clothing worn by important men at special events.

Q: WHAT KINDS OF FABRICS WERE USED?

A: Romans often used wool to make their clothes because it was comfortable and hard-wearing. Wool was useful in cooler climates, like the one here in Britain, where it gets a lot colder than it did in Rome, Italy. Linens were used extensively in luxurious clothing. For shoes and some military wear, leather was used, because it is a tough material.

Q: ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TOGA?

A: There are six types of toga.

- Toga Pura: Any Roman citizen could wear this. It was made of natural, undyed wool.
- Toga Praetexta: A magistrate or a freeborn youth might wear this toga, which had a reddish-purple border. Freeborn girls could wear these too.
- Toga Pulla: When a male Roman citizen was in mourning, he wore this dark toga, like we may wear black to funerals.
- Toga Candida: If a Roman was running for political office, he made his Toga Pura whiter by rubbing it with chalk. This is a Toga Candida, which gives us the word 'candidate'.
- Toga Trabea: This toga was reserved for high-ranking politicians and priests. It had a stripe of purple or saffron.
- Toga Picta: Military leaders wore these in their Triumph parades. They have designs on them, decorated with gold embroidery or solid colours. The Imperial Toga Picta, worn by the emperor, was dyed a solid purple.

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 enslaved 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 my shop, selling things to customers.

More About Me

I enjoy helping 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'm saving the money my shop is making to buy a nicer house and clothes, like the rich people in town.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

BRICKS OF THE BATHS



KS1–2

Recommended for

KS2 (History)

Learning objectives

- Understand Roman bathing traditions and the layout of the bath suite at Wroxeter
- Examine some of the building materials used in the baths and identify their role

Time to complete

20–30 minutes



Reconstructions showing the 'basilica' (exercise hall) at Wroxeter (top), where people would go to work up a sweat and open their pores before entering the main bath suite, and the bath house where people would go to bathe (bottom).

SUMMARY

In the building of the baths at Wroxeter, the Romans used a variety of bricks and tiles. These often served different purposes, depending on where in the building they were and what their function was. This activity encourages students to investigate four different bricks and tiles. They need to correctly match each brick and tile to their description, location and image.

To ensure everything is available on the day of your visit, please book the Education room and activity box with our Education Bookings Team. You may also like to enquire about our expert-led Discovery Visits, which include more detail about the baths.

EXPLORING THE BATHS

1. Use the site plan, historical information and sources within the Teachers' Kit to ensure students have a reasonable working knowledge of the different areas related to bathing at Wroxeter, before completing the activity.
2. In the Education space, seat the students and then show the bricks from the box. Rotate them around small groups so students can examine each of the artefacts closely. (Groups can also take it in turns to see the large hypocaust tower base on display in the Education room.)
3. Remind students to handle the objects carefully and encourage their discussion with questions/feedback on their observations. To consolidate their learning, students could complete the Bricks of the Baths worksheet (page 30). Teachers' Notes (page 31).
4. Once you have finished doing this activity, please put everything back as you found it, for others to enjoy.





MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, students could design and label their own Roman bath suite.

BRICKS OF THE BATHS




Sort the cards to match each brick/tile to its correct function and location within the baths.

BRICK/TILE			
			
<p>FUNCTION:</p> <p>A big tower of bricks is built on me, stuck together with mortar. This raises the floor and allows the hot air to flow around the hypocaust.</p>	<p>FUNCTION:</p> <p>I am hollow and form part of a wall. I have wavy lines on my side to help the plaster stick. I help the hot air to circulate around the baths.</p>	<p>FUNCTION:</p> <p>I am made from small tiles which form a pattern. I was used to decorate the baths.</p>	<p>FUNCTION:</p> <p>I am made from ceramic or clay. I am thick but bathers might still burn their feet on me. I have a paw print on me.</p>
<p>LOCATION:</p> <p>I am found in the walls of the hot rooms.</p>	<p>LOCATION:</p> <p>I am found under the floors of the hot rooms.</p>	<p>LOCATION:</p> <p>I am found on the floors of the hot rooms.</p>	<p>LOCATION:</p> <p>I am found on the floors of the unheated rooms.</p>
Floor tile	Mosaic	Hypocaust tower base	Box flue brick

BRICKS OF THE BATHS

TEACHERS' NOTES

Brick/Tile	Function	Location	Name
	I am made from ceramic. I am thick but bathers might still burn their feet on me. I have a paw print on me.	I am found on the floors of the hot rooms.	Floor tile
	I am made from small tiles which form a pattern. I was used to decorate the baths.	I am found on the floors of the unheated rooms.	Mosaic
	A big tower of bricks is built on me. This raises the floor and allows the hot air to flow around the hypocaust.	I am found under the floors of the hot rooms.	Hypocaust tower base
	I am hollow and form part of a wall. I have wavy lines on my side to help the plaster stick. I help the hot air to circulate around the baths.	I am found in the walls of the hot rooms.	Fragment of a box flue brick

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

EAT LIKE A ROMAN



KS2

Recommended for

KS2 (History, Maths, Geography)

Learning objectives

- Identify some of the main ingredients used in Roman cooking
- Understand how Wroxeter connected to the wider Roman Empire using maps
- Develop knowledge of Roman food preparation

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes



This is a mortarium. It was used by Roman cooks to grind and crush herbs and spices.

SUMMARY

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

In this activity, students will be introduced to the 'macellum', the produce market, where food was purchased in Roman Wroxeter. Students are invited to explore Roman food and compare it to foods they are familiar with. Then they can use the Roman cooking equipment and smell boxes for a sensory experience. Students can also examine the map provided to explore how far some of these objects and ingredients travelled and develop their knowledge of how the Roman Empire was connected.

In the Education room, you will find an activity box which accompanies this activity. It contains:

- A Roman shopping list
- A selection of smell pots
- A mortarium and grinding stone
- Samian ware (high-status dining sets)
- A map of the Roman Empire.

EXPLORING ROMAN FOOD

Seat students around the tables in the Education room. Explain that people in Roman Wroxeter would buy their food from shops in the 'macellum', the marketplace. Food and cooking supplies from all over the Roman Empire could be found there. If students have explored Wroxeter, ask them to describe the produce market, or the shop in the town house, and compare them to the modern-day shopping experience.

Many of the things the Romans ate and drank are still enjoyed today. Ask the students to work in small groups to investigate the Roman shopping list and share what items they have heard of and which ones are new to them.

Explain that Romans would use coins to trade for groceries. A commonly used type of coin was the denarius, (plural: denarii).

Continued ...



Students exploring the recreated shop in Wroxeter's Roman town house.

Still in their groups, ask the students to find the most and least expensive groceries on the list.

Give each group a smell pot and invite students to smell the scent and suggest what it might be. The smell pots are labelled, to enable students to check their guesses. Ask the students if the smells remind them of anything they might be familiar with.

Explain that these are ingredients, and that they would have to be prepared before being cooked and eaten as part of a meal. The herbs and spices would have been crushed and ground up before being added to the meal to give it extra flavour. We still use herbs and spices in cooking today.

Invite two students to investigate the mortarium and share why it would be a good tool to grind and crush. You could ask them prompt questions about the object's shape, size and texture to encourage them to describe the object to the class. The mortarium is too heavy to pass around, but the grinding stone can be handled by all the students.

Then, show the students the Samian ware. Explain that this was found here at Wroxeter. Give it to the students, asking them to handle it carefully. Invite students to examine the artefact closely, to notice the small details. Once all the students have had a chance to handle and examine the artefact, ask them to share what they noticed. They may reflect on the decoration, or that the artefact is not complete.

Remind students that artefacts found at Wroxeter came from all over the Roman Empire. Using the 'Where in the Empire?' flashcard in the box, ask the students to work in small groups to find where the items listed came from. Ask the groups to find which item came from furthest away. Check your answers together as a class.

Once you have finished doing this activity, please put the resources and objects back as you found them, for others to enjoy.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, students may research Roman cuisine and write and recreate some Roman recipes. Start by searching for Romans: Food and Health on the English Heritage website.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

TOWN HOUSE EXPLORERS



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2 & KS3 (History)

Learning objectives

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

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes



Students sitting in front of the town house at Wroxeter.

SUMMARY

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

In 2010, a version of a high-status Roman town house 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.

Take students to the reconstructed town house and put them in groups of about three. Hand out one laminated floor plan and one mini whiteboard 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 town house, 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 6 of this kit.

After ten minutes, gather everyone back at the portico and go through the answers. Finally, ask students to compare the Roman town house 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 it, for others to enjoy.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

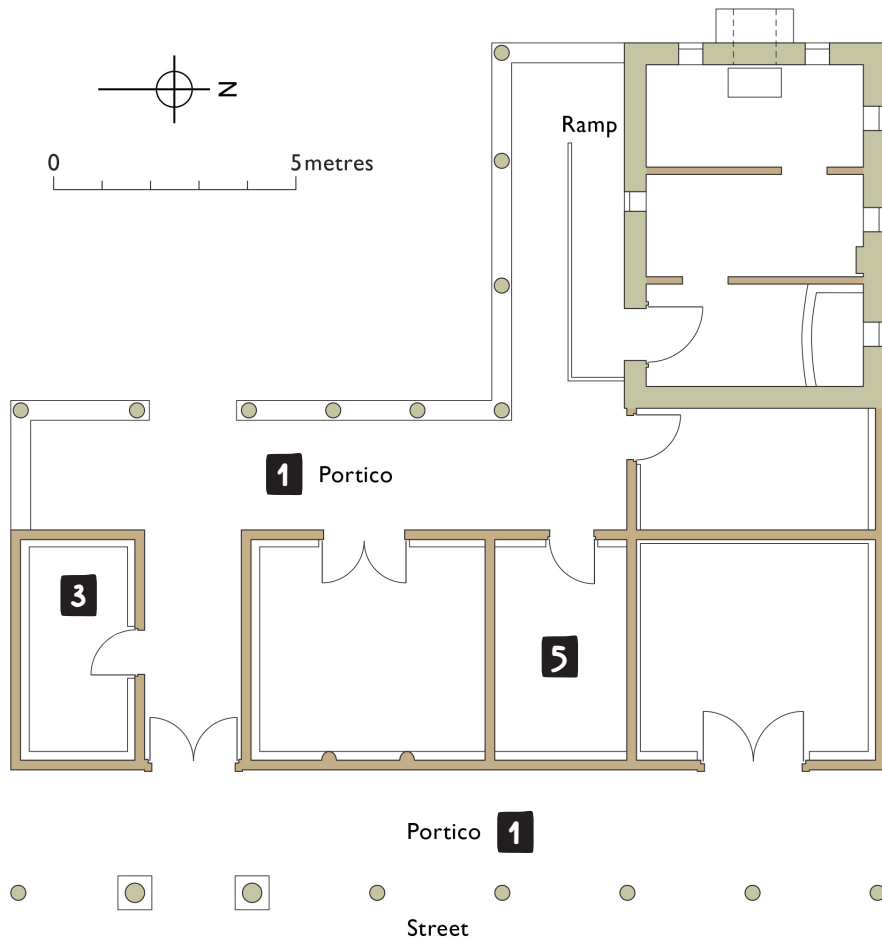
Back in the classroom, students could write an advert as if they were a Roman estate agent trying to sell the house. They could produce a poster which includes an image of the town house, the price, the postcode and a short description of its features.

TOWN HOUSE EXPLORERS

Explore the Roman town house 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 town house.



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

SUMMARY

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

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). Please ask students to clean the cards after use.

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 places, 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 town house to discuss the impact the Romans had on Britain with regard to introducing new building ideas like underfloor 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 (for example, 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 underfloor 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.



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

POST-VISIT

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

SOURCES

PEER 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.

SOURCE 1

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

SOURCE 2

TOMBSTONE OF A CORNOVIAN WOMAN

This tombstone shows a young woman named Vedica, aged 30, sitting in a high-backed chair. She originally came from the native Cornovii tribe and married a Roman soldier. 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



SOURCE 3

BRONZE DIANA FIGURINE

The Romans worshipped many gods (this is called 'polytheism'). They believed that different gods were in charge of different things, such as Diana, the goddess 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 had small **shrines** in their homes, where a figurine like this could be displayed.



SOURCE 4

BOX FLUE TILE

It wasn't just underfloor 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.



SOURCE 5

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 the 1920s 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.

SOURCE 6

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.



SOURCE 7

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.



SOURCE 8

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.



A reconstruction of the forum at Wroxeter Roman City. The forum was where religious ceremonies and legal matters took place.



A reconstruction of the forum at Wroxeter Roman City. The forum was where religious ceremonies, political meetings, social activities and the selling and buying of goods took place.

SOURCE 10



A reconstruction 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.

SOURCE 11



A reconstruction of the bath house at Wroxeter, where people would go to bathe.

SOURCE 12



A reconstruction of the 'macellum'
(produce market) at Wroxeter Roman City.

SOURCE 13



An aerial reconstruction showing Wroxeter Roman City as it may have looked in the 3rd century AD. It was the fourth largest city in Roman Britain at the time.