

• The Middle Ages was an extended period of disunity in Europe defined as the historical period between the end of the Roman Empire and the beginning of the Renaissance. This period was characterized by feudal relationships between lords, vassals and serfs. Ask students to research and summarize the nature of these feudal relationships, focusing on the elaborate ceremony called "homage" in which medieval men swore oaths to their lords. Ask students to read an actual example of an oath from a medieval homage ceremony and as Middle Age reporters, write eyewitness accounts of what this ceremony was like. An example of an homage oath may be found at the following web site:

www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/atron1.html

• There is no single explanation that accounts for the gradual decline and fall of Rome, but corrupt leadership was a major cause. Emperors dominated the senate, could get laws passed and commanded the troops. Although some acted wisely, others became slaves to their desires and were scheming, devious and driven by their own greed for power. Ask students to develop detailed time lines and biographical sketches of the most oppressive Roman emperors, including information on political assassinations, court intrigues and major psychological issues. Many historians reflect that it is amazing that the empire lasted as long as it did, considering its leadership. By contrast, students may also research and summarize the leadership characteristics of the "Five Good Emperors" who ruled from 96 to 180 CE. As an extension, ask students to create Venn diagrams comparing and contrasting the leadership characteristics of the "Good" emperors with those of the more tyrannical Roman emperors from history.

• When tourists walk Rome's Via dei Fori Imperiali to the Colosseum, they see four stone reliefs that trace the growth of the mighty Roman Empire. At the peak of the Pax Romana, or "Roman Peace," the Romans ruled all lands around the Mediterranean Sea and most of northwest Europe. Ask students to research and develop their own historical maps showing the extent of the Roman Empire at its peak. Students may also research and map important ancient sites such as El Djem, Bosra and Pont du Gard and list modern countries that were under Roman control.

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- www.uwgb.edu/dutchs/WestTech/xromans.htm
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay provides historical analysis on the decline and fall of Rome.
- eawc.evansville.edu/chronology/ropage.htm
The University of Evansville's "Exploring Ancient World Cultures" site offers a detailed historical time line of ancient Rome.
- <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dec/MA/GERMANS.HTM>
Washington State University has an excellent historical summary of Germanic tribes such as the Goths and Vandals.

Suggested Print Resources

- Boatwright, Mary Taliaferro. *The Romans: From Village to Empire: A History of Ancient Rome from Earliest Times to Constantine*. Oxford University Press, New York, NY; 2004.
- Forsyth, Fiona. *Augustus: The First Emperor*. Rosen Pub. Group, New York, NY; 2003.
- Nardo, Don. *From Founding to Fall: A History of Rome*. Lucent Books, San Diego, CA; 2003.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Jeffrey W. Litzke, M.Ed.
Curriculum Specialist, Schlessinger Media

TITLES IN THIS SERIES

- ALEXANDER THE GREAT & THE FALL OF THE PERSIAN EMPIRE
- THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE
- EGYPT: THE END OF THE PHARAOHS
- THE EGYPTIAN EMPIRE
- THE FALL OF ROME
- HANNIBAL & THE FALL OF CARTHAGE
- THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE
- THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Teacher's Guides Included
and Available Online at:



800-843-3620



Program Copyright 2005 ZDF Enterprises / ZDF
Teacher's Guide Copyright 2006 by Schlessinger Media,
a division of Library Video Company
P.O. Box 580, Wynnwood, PA 19096 • 800-843-3620
All rights reserved.



THE FALL OF ROME

Grades 9–12

In the coastal areas along the Mediterranean Sea and in the deserts of the Middle East, emerged the cultures and great powers of the ancient world. Understanding the rise and fall of these early civilizations and empires provides us with unique and valuable historical insight, and is basic for an understanding of civilization today. In *The Fall of Great Empires*, students will learn about the clash of ideas, the legendary struggles for imperial power and the insatiable drive for great wealth that characterized the ancient world. Students will discover how these vast and influential societies declined and left a deep and lasting imprint on the history of Western civilization.



Program Summary

Rome is considered to be one of the most successful empires in world history. Its long history stretches from the city's legendary founding in 753 BCE by the twins Romulus and Remus, to the formation of a republic in 509 BCE — which created a form of government that is widely emulated today — to the Pax Romana, during which the Roman Empire stretched from the Near East across North Africa and as far north as Britain.

Its vast wealth and roads left the Romans vulnerable to northern Germanic tribes, which were trekking south in the hopes of finding a better life. Despite its tremendous military and power, the Roman Empire was not prepared for the consequences of this mass migration.

In addition to external threats, internal corruption led to the Empire's division into eastern and western parts, with the western half falling to Germanic invaders in 476 CE. The symbolic end of Rome's thousand-year empire came when the Germanic commander Odoacer took the diadem, the sign of imperial sovereignty, from the head of Romulus Augustulus, the last Roman emperor. Although the Western Empire fell, the Eastern Empire continued in Constantinople. Traces of Rome's rich and diverse culture still exist throughout Europe today, inspiring great interest and scholarship.

Time Line

753 BCE — The traditional date when Romulus and Remus founded the city of Rome.

510 BCE — The Roman Republic is established.

241 BCE — Sicily becomes the first Roman province.

45 BCE — Julius Caesar becomes the dictator of Rome.

44 BCE — Julius Caesar is assassinated; civil war begins.

31 BCE — The Battle of Actium takes place, signaling the beginning of the era of Imperial Rome.

9 CE — Roman legions are destroyed by Germanic forces in the Battle of Teutoburg Forest.

64 CE — Under Emperor Nero's rule, Rome burns.

79 CE — Mount Vesuvius erupts, burying Pompeii and killing thousands.

200 CE — Barbarians from the North attack the Roman Empire.

285 CE — Emperor Diocletian begins to reorganize the Roman Empire.

330 CE — Emperor Constantine builds a new Roman capital in the East at Constantinople.

378 CE — Eastern Emperor Valens is killed by Goths at Adrianople.

380 CE — Christianity is declared the state religion of the Roman Empire.

410 CE — Roman rule in Britain collapses.

451 CE — Attila the Hun invades Gaul and Italy.

476 CE — The end of the Roman Empire.

Vocabulary

Augustus — Julius Caesar's adopted son, who became emperor and began the "Pax Romana" — a period of relative peace which lasted for almost 200 years.

diadem — A ceremonial crown worn as a sign of royalty.

Roman Empire — An ancient empire founded in 31 BCE that was centered in the city of Rome. At its peak, the empire included most of Western Europe, North Africa and the Near East. It fell to German invaders in 476 CE.

Romulus and Remus — The legendary twin brothers (and sons of Mars, the Roman god of war) who founded Rome.

Hannibal — A Carthaginian who was one of the great military leaders in world history. After several major battles against Rome, such as the Second Punic War, he was finally defeated in 202 BCE.

Jugurtha — The King of Numidia from 113–104 BCE, in what is now eastern Algeria, who warred with Rome and was put to death in a Roman prison.

Teutons — One of the Germanic tribes, many of whom migrated south and battled the Roman Empire around the end of the second century BCE.

Colosseum — A large amphitheater near the Forum in ancient Rome where gladiators fought in front of thousands of spectators.

Principes — The title Emperor Augustus took when he rose to power. The term means "first man" or "leader."

Apicius — The name applied to three famous gourmet cooks in ancient Rome.

Ostia — An ancient city in southern Italy.

Tacitus — A famous Roman historian, orator and senator who wrote extensively about the Roman Empire.

Teutoburg Forest — The site of a major battle, in which Roman legions led by General Varus were destroyed by Germanic tribes led by Arminius in 9 CE.

Constantine — A Roman general who was proclaimed emperor by Roman forces in 307 CE. He embraced Christianity and established a new Roman capital in Constantinople in 330 CE.

Maxentius — The Western Roman emperor who was defeated by Constantine in the Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312 CE.

Hagia Sophia — A major example of Byzantine architecture, built during the reign of Justinian. The church became a mosque after the Ottoman conquest in 1453 and is now a museum.

Fritigern — A Visigothic leader who after being admitted into the empire, rebelled against and killed Valens, the Eastern Roman emperor, in 378 BCE.

(Continued)

Odoacer — The Germanic leader and mercenary of Rome who revolted and deposed Romulus Augustulus, the last Western Roman emperor, in 476 CE.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- Ask students to brainstorm a list of factors that might contribute to the decline of a powerful empire.
- The Roman Empire was ruled by one person called an emperor. Ask students to describe the difference between rule by a strong central government and rule by strict adherence to constitutional principles.
- Rome's wealth is described as having a "laming effect" on the empire. Speculate about the effects of luxury and self-indulgence on the Roman people.

Follow-up Discussion

- Roman soldiers were the guarantors of all of the empire's success. Discuss military training and technical innovations that made the Roman legions strong.
- What is the significance of the reign of Emperor Constantine? How did his victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge begin a new era for the empire?
- Who was Valens? What was the historical effect of his response to settlers, "Let them come, these Germanic Christians"?

Follow-up Activities

- Ancient Greece and the Roman Republic are both known for their use of democracy in government. The Twelve Tables of Rome were the first codified laws in Europe, and they led to the development of an effective legal system and formed the basis for the evolution of humanism and the Declaration of Independence. Tradition tells us that the code was composed by a commission in 451 BCE, engraved on twelve tablets and publicly displayed in the Roman Forum. Ask students to speculate about the reasons for codifying a systematic body of law at this time. As a follow-up, break students into small groups and ask each group to write summaries and discuss provisions of selected laws on matters such as property rights, children and major and minor offenses. The Twelve Tables may be found at the following web site:
www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/medieval/twelve_tables.htm

(Continued)