



# MEET THE ROMANS

## The new arrivals in the Lake District

*This session aims to develop understanding of the Romans including who they were, their lifestyles and some of the features that made them such a successful military force.*

**CURRICULUM LINKS: HISTORY 2A, 2B, 4A, 4B, 5A, 5C, 6, 7, 8A, 9  
CITIZENSHIP 4B      ENGLISH 1C, 4A**

### OVERVIEW

LEARNING ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY DETAILS	LEARNING INTENTIONS	RESOURCES
<b>STARTER</b> whole class	<i>Brief idea gathering</i> Pupils volunteer all the facts they can remember about the Romans from Sessions I-III. They then suggest questions about the Romans that they would like to have answered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage interest in learning more about the Romans.</li> <li>To see progression from the questions asked in Session IV.</li> </ul>	
<b>ROLE PLAY AND INFORMATION GATHERING</b> small groups individual	<i>Learning about the Romans</i> Children who did not play the part of Brigantes in Session IV are given role-play cards describing a Roman character and his or her life. The other half of the class interviews the 'Romans'. All pupils complete a worksheet, recording their findings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To learn about several aspects of the Romans' lives.</li> <li>To develop the skills of empathy and role play.</li> <li>To develop the ability to identify and ask good questions, to absorb information, and to provide detailed answers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role-play cards (CD Resource 42)</li> <li>Worksheets (CD Resources 43 &amp; 44)</li> <li>Images of Romans and Roman buildings (CD Resources 45-50)</li> </ul>
<b>ROMAN SETTLEMENTS</b> small groups	<i>Where did the Romans settle?</i> Pupils work with a map, locating Roman settlements in the Lake District. They place a label on each settlement, describing its main use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand where the Romans built settlements and for what purposes.</li> <li>To see a connection between activity in Cumbria and Hadrian's Wall.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maps of Roman Cumbria (CD Resources 51 &amp; 52)</li> <li>Map template (CD Resource 53)</li> <li>Map labels (CD Resource 54)</li> </ul>
<b>FROM THE MUSEUM</b> whole class	<i>Looking at artefacts</i> Cumbrian museums can supply artefacts and further resources to help bring the topic alive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To help pupils engage more fully with ideas about the Romans and their lives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will find a museums contact list at the end of this booklet</li> </ul>
<b>PLENARY</b> whole class	<i>Comparing the Romans and the Brigantes</i> Pupils identify key differences between the two groups in general and between specific characters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To draw attention to important differences between the Romans and Brigantes.</li> </ul>	

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Romans invaded Britain in AD 43 but it took them 30 years to get up to Cumbria and then another few years to make their presence fully known in the Lake District.

The Romans who lived in Cumbria were not just from Italy. As the Roman Empire expanded across Europe, people from many countries and tribes were absorbed. Non-Romans who joined the army became auxiliary troops, and were sent to the far corners of the empire to protect the Roman frontier.

We know that the soldiers stationed at Hardknott were from Dalmatia in Croatia and the **Ravenglass military diploma** (CD Resource 30) states that its owner was from Heliopolis, in ancient Syria or modern-day Lebanon. A military diploma was issued to a foreign soldier who had served 25 years in the Roman army, and granted him Roman citizenship.

The soldiers' main purpose was to patrol the area around their fort, and to patrol the roads to ensure that they were not surprised by an attack. The local tribes were not afraid to attack the Romans. A **tombstone** found at Ambleside (CD Resource 31) is for a man called Flavius who the tombstone tells us was "killed in the fort by the enemy".

We know more about the Romans than we do about the Brigantes. The Romans were well known for their engineering techniques and their buildings have lasted in the landscape far longer than those built by others. They made things using metal and ceramics, which have survived in far better condition than the organic materials left by the Celts. The Romans could write and left records of what they did, where they went and who they met. We are therefore able to say a lot more about the Romans!

Whilst they were in the Lake District the Romans were stationed at stone-built forts. All the forts tended to be built on the same plan, using similar construction techniques. This made it easier and quicker for the Romans to build new forts, and also meant they always knew where the important buildings were, whichever fort they were at.

Roman women in richer households had slaves to do all of the housework, cooking, mending clothes and other household activities. Children usually helped their parents at work and most did not go to school. If the family was rich enough to afford a teacher, he would only teach the boys.

The Romans ate very well indeed. Not only did they eat meat from the animals they hunted but they also imported food and drink from Rome, like wine, olive oil, herbs and spices, garlic, onions and many other vegetables. They also ate a lot of bread, which meant building large stores to hold the grain, like the **granary** found at Ambleside Roman fort (CD Resource 43).

The Romans were very clean and cared a great deal about their appearance. Every fort had a bathhouse, built just outside the fort. There are impressive remains of a **Roman bathhouse** at Ravenglass (CD Resource 46).

## WHAT DID THE ROMANS LOOK LIKE? (CD RESOURCES 47 & 48)

Roman soldiers in the Lake District generally wore matching clothes of one colour. Their clothes were of simple design, and would have been worn with leather shoes or sandals called *caligae*, which tied up around the ankles. The men kept their hair cut very short, were clean-shaven, and used grooming tools like tweezers and nail scissors.

Roman women were generally quite well dressed and certainly had a sense of fashion. They wore a long tunic called a *stola*, and a blanket draped over their shoulders to keep themselves warm. They also wore leather sandals, of a different style to the men's. Hair was worn piled into a bun at the back of the head. Roman women wore a variety of jewellery including necklaces, brooches, earrings and bracelets.

## WHAT WERE ROMAN BUILDINGS LIKE? (CD RESOURCES 49 & 50)

Roman buildings were very different to the Celtic ones. The buildings were made of stone and they were rectangular or square with right-angled walls. The roofs were made with ceramic tiles. The fort and its buildings at Ambleside were similar to those found elsewhere in Britain and the Roman Empire.

# ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

## ROLE PLAY

The Session can be run in exactly the same way as Session IV on the Brigantes. See p.15 for further guidance.

Provide each group with images of **Roman dress** and typical **Roman buildings** (Resources 48 and 50) to give them further context for their questioning.

## ROMAN SETTLEMENTS

N.B. There are two versions of each of the map resources for this activity, one for projection and one for printing. The printed version is on two sheets that can be taped together to give a larger scale for group work.

Show the class the map of **Roman Cumbria** (CD Resource 51), pointing out Hadrian's Wall. Explain to the children that the occupation of the Lake District was part of the same set of measures for protecting the northern border as Hadrian's Wall.

Move on from the Cumbria map to the map showing just the **Lake District** (CD Resource 52). It is these settlements that will be covered in detail in this activity.

Give each small group a copy of the unlabelled **Lake District map** (CD Resource 53) and a set of six **labels** for the settlements (CD Resource 54).

Ask the children to place each labels on the appropriate settlement on the map.

The labels should be set out as follows:

- Ravenglass Fort – A fort built to defend against attacks from the sea.
- Ambleside Fort – This fort was an important part of the supply chain.
- Hardknott Fort – A fort built to police the Roman road from Ravenglass to Ambleside.
- Troutbeck Fort – This fort was built to help control the north-east of the Lake District.
- Muncaster tile and pottery kilns – These kilns made tiles and pottery for the forts in the surrounding area.
- Caermote Fort – A fort to watch for people coming into the north-west of the Lake District.

The first fort the Romans built in Cumbria was at Carlisle. They did not venture into the Lake District until they started to build Hadrian's Wall around AD 117-138 AD. At the same time they also began to build forts along the west coast, at Moresby, Beckfoot and other locations.

Hadrian's Wall was built to protect the Roman Empire from invaders and barbarians from Scotland. The other forts in Cumbria formed an extended network built to assume control over the land, and were all held by auxiliary troops. The forts on the west coast of Cumbria were built to ensure that barbarians did not try and attack England from the sea.

It is said that Roman forts were never placed more than a day's walk from each other, which is why there are so many in the Lake District and Cumbria. There are not as many in the mountainous parts of the northern Lake District because this area was less densely populated and the physical layout of the land meant that the area did not need to be closely controlled.

The forts were connected by a network of roads. We do not know the routes of all the old Roman roads. The ones we do know are marked on the map. The Romans needed the roads between the forts to ensure they had good routes of communication and to allow coastal trade to get through to the mainland. The Romans liked to build their roads in straight lines, as this was the quickest route from place to place. As a result, some of the roads like the Ravenglass-Ambleside road and the Ambleside-Brougham road go over high mountains.

## PLENARY

These are some of the key differences between Romans and Brigantes to highlight in the plenary:

### Houses

Romans built square dwellings using stone and ceramic tiles. Brigantes built round homes using low stone walls and thatch.

### Clothes

Romans preferred plainer styles, Brigantes preferred tartan patterns and bright colours.

### Families

Roman soldiers lived in the forts while the women and children lived outside in houses. Brigantes lived together in extended families.

### Food

Romans ate exotic food from other countries and drank wine. Brigantes ate food that they could grow and catch in the local area and drank beer.

### Culture

The Romans were a literate society who could read and write. The Brigantes passed on information by word of mouth.