



DID THE ROMANS CHANGE THE LAKE DISTRICT? A boulder's view

This session aims to develop empathy skills and look at how life for the Brigantes might have changed during the Roman occupation. It also looks at whether the Romans had a lasting impact on the Lake District.

CURRICULUM LINKS: HISTORY 2C, 2D, 5C, 6, 7, 8A, 9

ENGLISH 2A, 2B, 2E, 3

OVERVIEW

LEARNING ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY DETAILS	LEARNING INTENTIONS	RESOURCES
STARTER whole class	<i>Remembering the Brigantes</i> Ask pupils who played the part of Brigantian children in Session IV to tell the class what they can remember about their lives. Ask other children to share what they remember too.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help all the class imagine the lives of Brigantian children. To recall and apply prior knowledge to a new activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Session IV role-play cards for reference (CD Resource 32)
PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN whole class	<i>Imagining the arrival of the Romans</i> Ask the class to sit in a circle and close their eyes. You read them a short account, in which a Brigantian child sees the Romans are marching to Ambleside, while the children imagine themselves to be a Brigantian child. Pupils then record their feelings and questions on worksheets. As a class, they then discuss the feelings, and debate which are the best questions and why they would want to ask them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To empathise with the Brigantes and to use this as a way of approaching the changes brought by the Romans. To develop the skills inherent in the Philosophy for Children approach – listening, discussing and making class choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thought-bubble worksheets (CD Resource 55)
SHORT- AND LONG-TERM CHANGES whole class individual	<i>How much change did the Romans bring?</i> Read through the Bryn the Boulder sheet, with his observations on the time of the occupation and afterwards, and the sample poem. Review the questions generated in the philosophy session. Working alone, children write their own poems about the occupation and its effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand that there were some short-term and some longer-lasting changes. To understand that, on the whole, the Brigantes' lives went on as before. To develop creative writing skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bryn the Boulder worksheet (CD Resource 56) Sample poem (CD Resource 57)
PLENARY whole class	<i>Sharing poems</i> Pupils share their poems with the class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consolidate the key ideas about the type of changes that took place and how long they lasted. 	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE ROMAN IMPACT

The official Roman administration in the north-west ended in the early fifth century, when Romans in Britain were ordered to come to the aid of those defending France and Italy against a great attack from tribes like the Brigantes. By this time the Romans had been here for some 350 years and their presence made a mark on the Lake District and Britain as a whole.

The impact in the Lake District:

- Large forts were built across the region and remained when the Romans left.
- The Romans established major routes across the Lake District which are still in use today. Examples include High Street, which is now a public footpath, and Hardknott/Wrynose pass.
- They fought with the Brigantes for the first hundred years or so they were here.
- They also traded with the Brigantes, exchanging provisions and introducing new materials and foods.

Across Britain:

- They introduced taxation.
- They introduced new foodstuffs, including radishes, onions, garlic and several herbs.
- They introduced new standards for ceramic tableware. In the Lake District, some pottery was made before the Roman invasion, but most people drank from cups made of leather, wood or animal horn.
- They introduced reading and writing to Britain.

After the first hundred years of conflict, the Romans and Brigantes lived their different lives side by side within the region. Changes to the landscape, and the introduction of new products, foodstuffs and customs were important but did not mean the end of the Celtic way of life.

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

IMAGINING THE ARRIVAL OF THE ROMANS

From the point of view of a Brigantian child the arrival of Roman soldiers would presumably have been a major event, both fascinating and alarming. It would have felt very different to seeing other Celtic tribes, and the Romans would have been an obviously intimidating presence with their military organisation and weapons. A Brigantian child might well have wondered what all this meant for their own, and their family's, lives.

For those Brigantian families who were directly affected by fighting with the Romans, or who had land taken away for the building of Roman forts, the impact of their arrival were highly significant. However, for families whose land was more remote from the new Roman settlements and roads, life would not have changed a great deal.

Read out the story opposite, describing the Romans' appearance at a Brigantine settlement in the Lake District.

Ask the class to imagine that they are Carey, Anyon or Brigit (characters from the Session IV role-play). Encourage them to think in detail about what they might be feeling, and what questions they would have. The ideas below may be useful as prompts:

- Who are these men?
- How many are there?
- Where have they come from?
- Why are they here? What do they want?
- Are they staying, or passing through?
- Do they want to hurt us?
- Are we in danger?
- Can we beat them in battle? Should we attack them now?
- What weapons do they have?
- Is my life going to change?

Ask the children to write down their own thoughts and questions about the arrival of the Romans on the **thought bubble worksheet** (CD Resource 55).

Finally lead a whole-class discussion in which children talk about their feelings and debate which of the proposed questions are most worthwhile.

SOLDIERS!

Carey sees them first. He is gathering berries, high up on the fell, when he sees the groups of men crossing the ford. The men are marching in lines, and all dressed the same, in uniforms with shining helmets. The sun glints off their long spears as they splash through the shallow water.

Carey knows he must warn the tribe. He drops his basket and starts to run, leaping over boulders, tumbling through thickets of blackberries, until breathless, with eyes full of fear, he stumbles into the village. He speaks in short bursts, all the while pointing urgently towards the river.

“Men... soldiers... many... with spears... at the ford...”

Anyon and Brigit hear the shouts of their younger brother. They leave their work and rush out of the house. They have heard Father talk of these soldiers, who come from the south, from lands far away, who are building a fort in Ambleside. The elders call them ‘Romans’, and now they are here...

BRYN THE BOULDER

Pupils study a copy of the **Bryn the Boulder** sheet (CD Resource 56). The boulder’s perspective allows for a continuous viewpoint from before, during and after the Roman invasion. Bryn is an old Celtic (Welsh) name and means ‘hill’ or ‘mound’.

Ask pupils to imagine Bryn sitting on a hillside with a view of the Lake District, including one of the Roman forts and roads, as well as some Brigantian settlements. Bryn will have seen the Romans coming and going, witnessed some of the fighting, observed the trading and watched how the Brigantes adapted to their new neighbours, and finally witnessed the Romans leaving.

This should help give children an understanding and feel for the lengthy passage of time.

The **poem** (CD Resource 57) gives the pupils a sample style in which to write their own poems. It deals with the arrival of the Romans, rather than the changes they brought, so as not to limit their creativity when writing about the changes. The sample poem could be used as opening lines, with the pupils adding their own ideas about the changes that happened during the next 350 years.