

Roman Archaeo-Box (HI00050)

This collection contains a variety of Ancient Roman replica artefacts ideal for investigating evidence, encouraging historical enquiry and role-play of an archaeological dig.

Contents: -

1. 11x Roman Coins
2. 1x Roman Spoon
3. 1x Roman Thimble
4. 1x Roman Strigil
5. 1 x Roman Oil Lamp
6. 1x Chatelaine Set
7. 1x Wax Tablet, Stylus
8. 1x Set of Tile Pieces
9. 1x Set of Knucklebones
10. 1x Set of Archaeology Tools, Archaeology Book and CD, Archaeology Cards.

(Contents may vary)



Questions you could ask children about the artefacts

Initial Discussion

- What is this object?
- Does it resemble anything the children have seen?
- What do you think the item was used for and by whom?
- Does anyone know what it is called?

Collect any other questions the children might have about the artefacts and display them as you try to find the answers through your learning sessions.

Other questions to consider:

- Where does the object come from?
- Who might have made this object? And how were they made?
- Why were they made?
- **What do the objects tell us about Roman life?** *This last question can be returned to at the end of the investigation.*

All About the Artefacts

1. Roman Coins

Made from different materials such as copper, bronze, silver or gold. Featured images of emperors, gods and other symbols. Coins would have been used to exchange for goods and services. A **denarius** was a silver coin, **sestertius** made from a yellow metal like a £1 coin, **as** copper like a 2p. 1 denarius was equal to 4 sestertii which was equal to 16 asses. There was also a gold coin called **aurei**. These were the same size as a denarius but much more valuable. It was worth 25 denarii, or 100 sestertii, or 400 asses.

A legionary soldier earned about 300 denarii a year. The army kept more than half of this for food, equipment and savings but still legionaries were richer than most ordinary people.

Design your own coins. Note that Roman coins weren't perfectly round like modern coins.

2. Roman Spoon

Use as a starting point to research Roman culture and lifestyle finding out about the food eaten by the ancient Romans and Roman dining. Wealthy Romans would have banquets to show how rich they were. Guests would have their feet and hands washed by servants and then serve plate after plate to the guests who would lay on couches around the table. The main meal of the day was called 'cena'.

Learn about the different types of food Romans would have eaten and design a menu.

3. Roman Thimble

Thimbles are often found in archaeological excavations. You can use the thimble to talk about daily life of Romans and learn how thimbles were used for sewing.

Use thimbles to sew small square pattern designs. Learn how to wear a toga.

4. Roman Strigil

A small, curved metal tool used by Romans to remove oil and dirt when bathing.

Someone would pour oil over you, and you would use the strigil to scrape to remove the oil and remove the dirt. Then you would go into the water to rinse off.

This can lead to discussions about the importance of bathing in ancient Roman culture and how bath houses were popular places where people would meet, relax, talk and even conduct business.

Find out about the Roman Baths in the city of Bath.

5. Roman Oil Lamp

Oil lamps were used for various purposes and can provide an insight into Roman life, how they worked and worshipped.

Design own oil lamps and have a go at making oil lamps from clay.

6. Chatelaine Set

A collection of small tools worn on a belt. It would contain items like tweezers, nail cleaner and ear scoops. An authentic artefact to engage and inspire children's curiosity and questioning about Roman daily life, routines, personal hygiene and body care.

7. Wax Tablet, stylus

Learn about the Roman writing system, record keeping and the importance of written communication. The wax tablets were used with a stylus to scratch letters into the wax. Romans would use them to make lists, leave messages, write letters and keep records. You could erase writing by smoothing over the wax using the blunt end of the stylus.

In 1973 at the fort of Vindolanda near Hadrian's Wall, over 200 Roman writing tablets were found. They were made of very thin slices of wood which had been preserved by the waterlogged ground. They are a rich source of evidence about life in Roman Britain.

8. Roman Tile Pieces

Many tile pieces have been found that date back to Roman times. Mosaics would have adorned floors and walls of homes and public buildings. They can give an insight into Roman art, daily life, mythology and mathematics with the patterns and symmetry.

Create own mosaics of Roman scenes. These could include animals and Roman myths and legends.

9. Set of Knucklebones

Known also as 'astragali'. A popular game played by Roman children and adults. The presence of knucklebones in archaeological sites sheds light on the daily activities of Romans and encourages questioning and research into the children in Roman Britain. The knucklebones were made from sheep or goat bones.

Learn how to play the game. Write instructions and set up own class competitions to enjoy playing the game.

10. Archaeology Resources

Turn your class into an archaeological dig and encourage questioning and historical research. Uncover physical evidence to learn about the Romans and how they lived. By carefully examining the artefacts you can piece together a more complete picture of what Roman life was like. Create a mock dig site and learn excavation techniques. Section up the dig into square areas so that each child or group can work on one area. Make it clear that the artefacts are fragile and need to be excavated with care. Plastic pallet knives and paint brushes are ideal for this activity.

When they have found their artefact task them to fill out an 'artefact report' where they draw the artefact and describe its features and likely uses. Encourage them to do further research and then report back what they have found out, labelling and displaying their artefact to create a classroom museum of finds.

The cards included in this collection will give you lots more information about the artefacts and can be used in a variety of ways.

Reference Websites:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zynj6rd>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zwmpfg8>