ROMANS

**A simulation of the history
and culture of ancient Rome**

The authors:

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Introduction
In many ways, the heritage of Rome is that of a transformer and transmitter of ideas, rather than that of a creator. Rome borrowed heavily but wisely from the Greeks, basing philosophy, literature, art, and science on Greek models. In many ways, however, the Romans made better practical use of what the Greeks knew.

ROMANS is a simulation which allows students to learn about and participate in many of the aspects of ancient Roman life that have, subtly and significantly, influenced our present institutions and way of life.
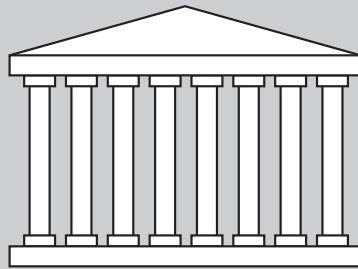
Students " learn about and participate in many aspects of ancient Roman life that have, subtly and significantly, influenced our present institutions and way of life."

What happens in this simulation?
ROMANS is organized into seven phases called Vias. Each Via takes approximately one week and is focused on a particular aspect of Roman life and history. These Vias are briefly described below:

- **Via I: Daily Life** begins with students becoming members of a Roman extended family called a "gen" in Latin or clan in modern English. They acquire Roman names, build a Roman domus (house), read Roman myths, are introduced to Roman history, complete several cooperative learning exercises on Roman daily life, and make wooden standards to hang the badges of honor called "corona" won by their groups.

- **Via II: Forum of Roma** begins with a historical overview emphasizing Roman government and the Roman system of elections. In preparation for the election, students travel back and forth on a *Forum of Roma* gameboard, using knuckle-bones, answering questions, doing research, and making small projects while testing their fate and collecting VOTE CARDS. After the election, students try to discover what hap-pened to the republic and why it became a dictatorial empire.

Seven Vias ...

- **Via III: Temple of Apollo** provides students an opportunity to demonstrate their artistic skills while applying what they learn about the Roman arts. They have choices in the presentation of projects that include the theater, mosaic art, and mythology. They also begin a long-range individual project in which they select a famous or infamous historical figure to be their guest at a Banquet given during the last Via.

- **Via IV: Pax Romana** has the gen groups first create various maps that show the stages of the expansion of the Roman Empire. They then cooperate to produce a large-scale map that incorporates the geography and characteristics of the provinces. They make enlarged maps of one region, including the roads, products, geographic features, cities, landmarks and points of interest, etc. These region maps then are joined into a large and comprehensive classroom map. Next, the gens do an essay analysis concerning the causes of the fall of Rome. They then complete, with your guidance, an Historical Timeline showing the rise and fall of the Roman Empire. Finally, this Via ends with a take-home test that deals with the Roman emperors and military figures as well as bringing together all the geography and general history of the empire.

- **Via V: History/Mystery "Who Killed Mama Roma?"** is designed to be a playful, yet very academically serious, reinforcement of the understandings students gained regarding the fall of Rome in Via IV. This Via is in the form of a one-act play focusing on a "wake" for Mama Roma. The characters who speak are stereotypical creations of each of the major factors that were involved in Mama Roma's life and in her demise. The vocabulary exercise helps students understand the dialog as well as the emotion of the moment.

- **Via VI: Circus Maximus** is designed to be an overview quiz or test covering data from all the previous Vias in which one group is pitted against another in answering questions to earn travel moves in their "chariots" around the Circus Maximus gameboard. This Via also acts to tie together the daily life, the government, the art, and the rise and fall of the empire in a highly motivating atmosphere.

- **Via VII: Banquet** provides a real up-beat way to end ROMANS. The gen having the most denarii points is declared the Grand Gen of Rome and becomes the guest of honor at a fine banquet prepared by various gen committees. This Via provides

Flexibility for everyone ...

students with an opportunity to introduce their guests—that is, their *Life-Sizers*—to the rest of the class, feed on the food of the gods, listen to speeches of praise about the Grand Gen of Rome, and, finally, be entertained by various talented Romans.

Flexibility is a key component

This simulation is designed to offer you considerable flexibility in time, depth, and configuration of study. Your students compete against each other in teams (gens) while making decisions about how they will execute the choices they have made in their exploration of Roman culture and history.

You may decide to spend as little as two weeks or up to six weeks or longer involved in the varied activities—*depending on how many of the activities you choose to have students complete and how much information you elect to give out or have students research on their own.* Consider interrupting and augmenting the unit sequence with appropriate literature, direct lessons about the period, and enrichment materials. Most of all, enjoy yourself. Let your students become as involved and inventive as they are inclined and see what happens. You'll be amazed!

The items listed below are for general use during all phases. In later tab sections, each Via has its own special setup directions.

1. **Set up a classroom library** A classroom library is very useful in facilitating classroom research activities. Books should provide information on the subject of the Romans—arts, daily life, historical costumes, history of the empire, republic, and decline, as well as mythology, famous personalities, traditions, and contributions of Roman civilization, etc. (Often, your school librarian will allow you to use these books if they are kept in your classroom only. If not, have her/him set up a Romans Reserve Shelf for your students in the library.) Another good resource is one of the popular travel guides (found in any good book store) which aid travelers in planning vacations. You can easily find one on Europe that will offer students concise information and tell about famous historical sites. Local travel agents are additional sources of information and resources. They often have old travel brochures that they are happy to give away. Check your public libraries for other resources. Many universities have liberal lending privileges for classroom teachers. The more resources available, the easier time your students will have in researching the topics presented in this simulation.

2. **Acquire activity materials** These include construction paper, 3"x5" cards, yardsticks, rulers, crayons, markers, colored pencils, scissors, unlined paper (8-1/2"x11"), butcher paper, etc., as needed. You may not need or have all of these items available. As you preview the activities, determine what is best for your students. However, the greater the variety of materials available, usually the greater the variety of students' products. *(Note: Each Via's Guidelines/Daily Directions tell you precisely what you will need.)*

3. **Determine quantity of Roman money** Roman money was called *aurei* (singular = aureus) and *denarii* (singular = denarius);1 aureus = 25 denarii. Read through the Vias and decide the quantity of denarii you'll award to students/groups for each assignment in a Via. As you read through Via I, decide at what point you will begin awarding the denarii. If you wish to speed things up a bit or plan to eliminate a number of activities that would allow gens to accumulate money, consider allotting each gen with a minimum bankroll to start the game. In any case, be sure to make an ample amount so you don't run out at an inconvenient moment.
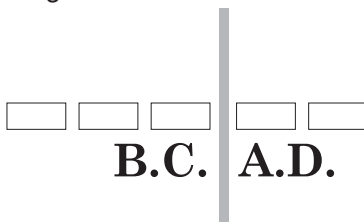
AUREI

DENARII

Duplicate the aurei on yellow (gold) paper, the denarii on white paper.

4. **Study the DENARII BALANCE SHEET** A DENARII BAL-ANCE SHEET is kept by each team and is the official record of a team's score. *It is not a record of the amount of money in the team's possession.* You should emphasize this point to cut down on any "theft" or "counterfeiting" problems. You can eliminate paper denarii altogether if you wish to speed things up, but having tangible money does add excitement to awards.

5. **Prepare a dateline** Prior to Day 1, make a large dateline, beginning with 753 B.C., the founding of Rome. Then proceed with additional cards denoting 100-year intervals, ending with A.D. 476. Place these cards high on the walls around the room. Use a strip of dark-colored paper about two to three inches wide to run vertically between where B.C. becomes A.D. As your lessons and the activities progress, allow for a system whereby students add illustrated and captioned events to the dateline. By the end of the unit your class will have constructed a visual representation of the history of ancient Rome. (This display is particularly helpful when students are asked to develop a Timeline in Via V.)

6. **Set aside a place for storage** Here teams will store their materials. In this way, if students are absent, other students will have the team materials they need to continue with the work. Large manila pockets or the large envelopes that close with an attached elastic band are convenient for keeping group papers, etc.

7. **Establish a classroom atmosphere**
   a. To enhance your students' study of ROMANS, take some time to prepare your classroom to provide an atmosphere of ancient Rome by displaying maps, pictures, posters, art work, etc.
   b. Ideally, large group tables or groups of flat desks pushed together in six groups works best. This arrangement facilitates teamwork on larger activity projects as well as encourages group dynamics. If this is impossible, give teams designated classroom work areas and have them arrange their chairs or desks accordingly.

TEACHING TIP

Note: Students must understand the meaning of B.C. (Before Christ) and A.D. (Anno Domini). Emphasize that A.D. does not mean "after death." You may want to give a lesson or short explanation of this concept. Also, you may wish to discuss B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) and C.E. as new terms historians use to differentiate the chronological divisions.

B.C. A.D.

8. **Understand goal of the gens** The gen (i.e., team) of the six used throughout all phases who obtains the greatest number of denarii is honored at the banquet as the *Grand Gen of Rome.* Gens accumulate denarii during the activities you select to use during the time you have allocated for ROMANS. You may award denarii for any of the activities and assignments or even for behavior during this unit. At the end of each Via, collect each group's DENARII BALANCE SHEET to check to see if the gens have recorded their denarii correctly. After determining the count of each gen's denarii, award one corona—see #9 below—to that gen with the most denarii collected in that Via only. The corona's value equals the number of denarii that the winning gen has collected for the activities during that Via and will be added to that group's total on the DENARII BALANCE SHEET. Essentially, this will double the reward for that gen for that Via. Impress upon students the importance of doing well in each Via as their efforts determine who is named the Grand Gen of Rome.

TEACHING TIP

Note: These crowns were held over the head of the conquering general during his triumphal parade by a slave who kept repeating, "Remember you're only human."
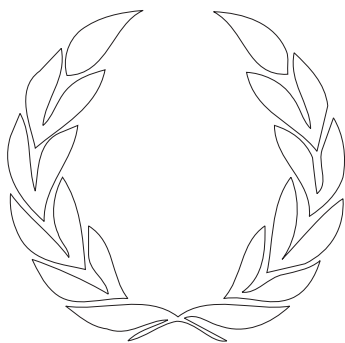
9. **Construct six coronae (wreaths or cardboard circles)** If you wish to construct actual wreaths, make them sufficiently large to fit around an average student's head. Construct them from either plant material or cardboard. They should look somewhat like the wreath on page I:XIII—see art at left. (Consider asking an artistic student to help make such real or cardboard wreaths.) As a minimum, you do have to make simple cardboard coronae. Duplicate a copy of each corona on pages II:XLVI-XLVIII. Cut out the circled wreaths and paste them onto cardboard for the winning gens to place on their standards. *(For a full description of coronae, see page II:XLIII ff.)*

10. **Duplicate the ROMANS GEN CHART** Duplicate the chart below on a poster (or on the chalkboard), one per class. Post the chart in the classroom so all students can see how their gen is doing compared to the other groups. Also, at the end of each Via, have all gens turn in their denarii. In this way, all denarii can be used again in the next Via.

Romans Gen Chart

All gens' names	Denarii total earned before	Denarii earned this Via	New denarii total	Class ranking

Silver Draft
_____
Amount
_____
Official Signature

ONE DENARIUS

Silver Draft
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Amount
_____
Official Signature

ONE DENARIUS

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ONE DENARIUS

Silver Draft
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Amount
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Official Signature

ONE DENARIUS

Gold Draft

_____
Amount

_____
Official Signature

ONE AUREUS

Gold Draft

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ONE AUREUS

Gold Draft

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Official Signature

ONE AUREUS

Denarii Balance Sheet

Gen name: _____

Directions: The gen chairperson (patriarch or matriarch) should enter any award for denarii that the teacher gives the gen. If a gen earns a corona at the end of a Via, enter as a *bonus* an amount equal to the total the gen earned for that Via.

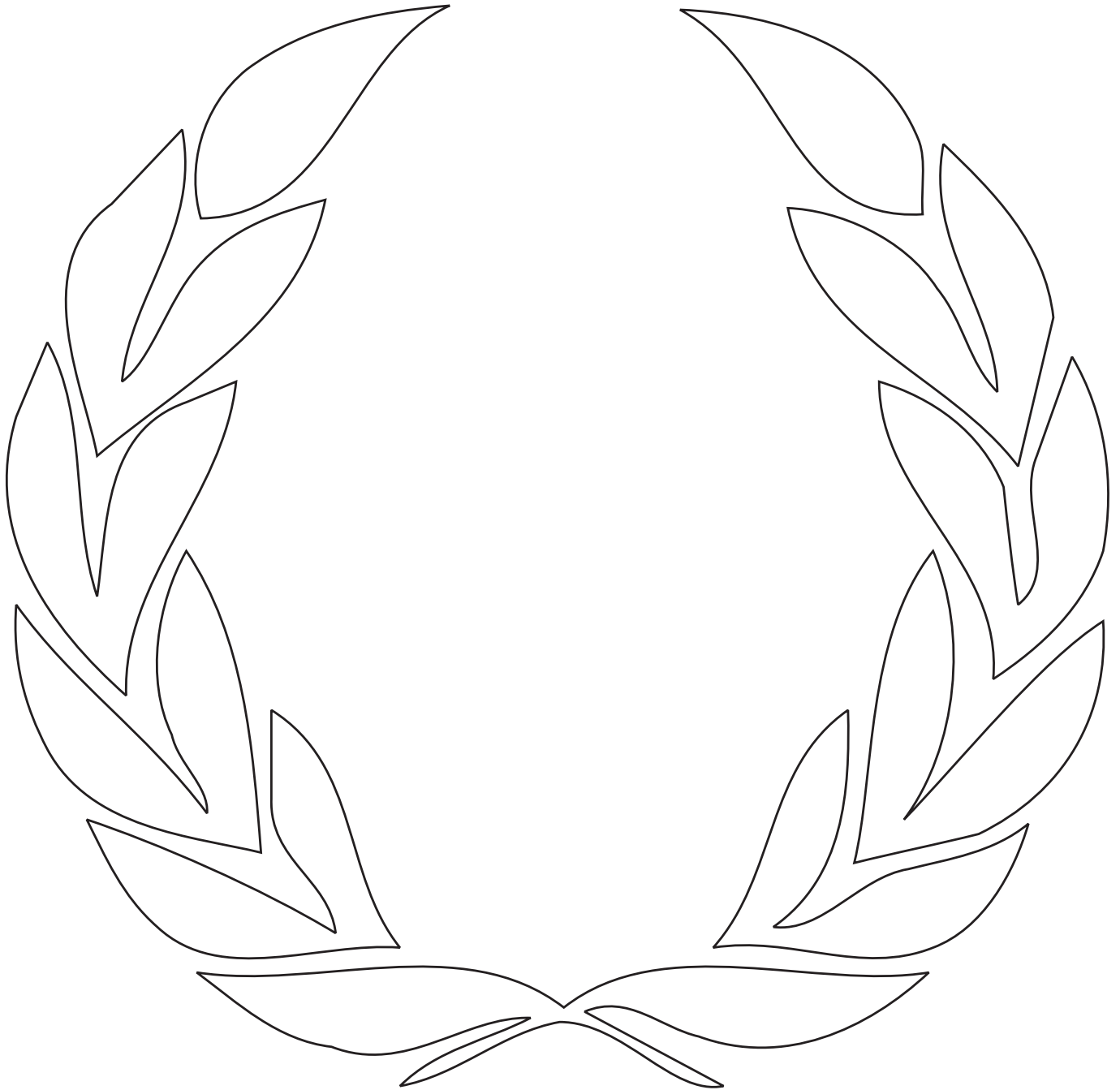| Via	Item	Award	Running Balance

CORONA—wreath model
(plant or cardboard)

See directions on page I:VI regarding how to use this illustration as a model for making a student's head wreath out of plant material or cardboard.