

## Romans on the Don Worksheet 3 – The Romans – Questions and Answers Pack

In preparation for Worksheet 3 download the worksheet ([WORKSHEET 3.doc](#)) and print one copy for each pupil. Either write summaries of each question on a white board or download to interactive white board. As suggestions are made by pupils they can be written on the board and, if preferred, the best answer or key word can be entered by the pupils on their sheet. You will also need to download 8 pictures: [Worksheet 3 Q6 leather vessels.jpg](#), [Worksheet 3 Q10 Picture 1.jpg](#), [Worksheet 3 Q10 Picture 2.jpg](#), [Worksheet 3 Q10 Picture 3.jpg](#), [Worksheet 3 Q10 Picture 4.jpg](#), [Worksheet 3 Q10 Picture 5.jpg](#), [Worksheet 3 Q10 Picture 6.jpg](#), [Worksheet 3 Q10 Picture 7.jpg](#). These can be printed or used on the interactive whiteboard.

### Q1. Clothes Ask what tool Iron Age people used to spin wool?

Iron Age people would have made their own clothes, sometimes from animal skin but mainly from wool. Before being woven the fleece wool would have to be spun and the main way of doing this was by using a drop spindle. A drop spindle is simply made, being a notched stick with a weight at the bottom to help the spindle to turn when spun round. The weight is known as a spindle whorl and many examples of these have been found on Iron Age sites in Britain.

### Q2. Origins Ask where the “Romans” in *Danum* came from?

The original Romans were from Rome in Italy but as they took over other countries so people from those countries became part of the Roman Empire and many of their men became Roman soldiers. It is unlikely that soldiers on the edge of the distant province of Britain would be from Rome so “Roman” soldiers in *Danum* would most likely originate from Europe and/or northern Africa. In the 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> century AD the soldiers at *Danum* were from a unit that was originally raised in Hungary.

### Q3. Money Money vs Barter

Iron Age Britons around Doncaster did not use money and so exchange would have been the normal economic practice.

Have someone in the role of Iron Age farmer, and someone else in the role of a Roman. Let the Roman try to use money to buy a cow from the farmer. The farmer will ask for three sheep instead, as this is the value he/she understands for the cow. Play the roles until agreement is reached or the farmer refuses to sell. Let the pupils ask questions of the farmer and the Roman. Ask the pupils whether they think money or goods exchange is better. Use prompts to generate ideas – for example:

### **Pro-Money**

Easier to carry three coins than a cow – creates opportunity for greater freedom of movement and exchange over a distance  
Easier to save money over a long period of time  
Livestock could all be killed by disease  
Whoever you buy from may not want what you offer (e.g. a sheep)  
Money can be lent/borrowed/given in small amounts (“lend me three coins” is easier than “can I borrow the cow’s leg for a week”).

### **Pro-Exchange**

Easier to lose three coins than a cow  
Impossible to eat money (at time of famine)  
Romans on the Don Worksheet 3 – The Romans – Questions and Answers Pack

Difficult to know value of money (see below)  
Impossible to exchange money with people who did not understand it  
Money could be easily forged when recipients are unaware of its appearance  
Easier to steal and hide money (how does someone prove that the money you have belonged to them? Cows could be branded, dyed, or clipped)

### **Q4. Romanisation** Why did people adopt Roman ideas?

Explain what Romanisation means (the adoption of Roman practices by existing populations) and that archaeological evidence shows it seems to have taken two or three generations for Roman ideas to have been adopted in the area on a wide scale. Ask the pupils for their ideas as to why this may have been.

Possibly due to natural resistance to change – in a classroom children will get used to sitting in the same place, next to the same people, and having the same routines. Getting them to break away from the comfort of such routines is difficult. Also, the areas we are looking at are rural and there seems to be little that the Romans could offer in terms of improvement in farming practice. Another aspect could lie with religious belief. The Romans had different gods and Iron Age Britons may have feared failed harvests or being outcast if they abandoned their own religion. If placing pots in ditches in the Iron Age had a religious meaning this could also influence the slow adoption of general use of pots.

**Q5.** Ask the pupils for their ideas as to why Roman ideas were adopted eventually.

One answer may lie in education of the sons of Iron Age chiefs. If they were educated in Roman ways including dress, writing, eating, drinking,

and use of money, then they may have acted as role models for their generation. Compare with today's role models and how they are copied.

In terms of religion, if after two or three generations those adopting Roman gods suffered no ill effects then the fear of wrathful Iron Age gods is reduced. Economics may play a part too. If over time one farmer makes more fields he can become both wealthy and in favour with the Roman rulers. Others seeing this may then be tempted to do the same rather than get left behind. Eventually also, as more and more people adopted the idea of money so those who refused to do so would become more isolated until they eventually have to use money as well.

### Q6. Pottery

Explain that there was very little Iron Age pottery for the South Yorkshire area. This is because Britons used other materials for basic utensils such as plates, drinking vessels, bowls, and storage vessels. Ask what else could they have used?

Examples could include leather for water carrier, wood for bowls or bottles, leaves/twigs for bowls/baskets, animal parts – stomach lining or treated skin for holding water, leaves for wrapping meat/fish before roasting in hot coals/charcoal, tree bark for baskets or bags.

Show the picture of the leather vessels ([Worksheet 3 Q6 leather vessels.jpg](#)). The picture shows a leather water carrier, a tree bark arrow quiver and a wood and leather milk bottle.

Ask the pupils how they would feel about drinking from a cow's stomach. Ask why we don't find evidence for what they may have used (*relate to "organic" on Worksheet 2*).

Ask if they would want to use pottery instead once they saw Romans using it. What disadvantages are there to using pottery?

Pottery may have to be bought and it can break. Leaves, wood, bark, and animal parts would be available for nothing.

### Q7-Q9. Writing and Storytelling

Iron Age Britons did use writing which was first introduced to Britain by the Romans. Get the pupils to think about what they would have known about the Romans and how they would have known it.

**Ask “How do you know things today?”**

**Answers include books, internet, TV, radio, school, newspapers, comics, magazines.**

By AD 71 the Romans had been in the south of the country for nearly 30 years so what would people living in Doncaster have known about them? They probably depended on what they were told, possibly by travelling storytellers and their understanding would be influenced by how it was told.

**Be an Iron Age storyteller who has arrived at a round house near Brodsworth. The pupils are Iron Age Britons. Tell them about the Romans. Here are two different stories.**

Romans on the Don Worksheet 3 – The Romans – Questions and Answers Pack

**Ask the class to think about what is being said and how it is being said.**

“I’ve travelled for fifty days from the south of the country where the land meets the water of the sea. From over the sea have come people known as Romans. They are people just like us, although they speak a different language. They use pottery to eat from and are able to pass on messages through marks made on wood or wax. When they want some food they exchange it for metal discs called coins that are considered to be valuable. Some of the Romans are soldiers who never grow crops or tend cattle. The leader of the Romans is called *Vespasian\**”.

**What would the pupils think of the Romans?**

**Now ask them to listen again.**

“I have travelled for fifty days from the furthest reaches of the south of the country where the land meets the dark and dangerous waters of the sea. Crossing the wild seas have come the terrible Romans, men who speak in different tongues and who have conquered all people that they have met. I barely escaped with my life to bring you this tale. They are fierce soldiers who wear metal to protect themselves in battle and who never farm, spending all their time learning how to make war and taking whatever food they need from farmers they meet. They have mysterious ways of magic, making marks on wood or wax that none but they can understand. And yet those marks can be looked at and understood by other Romans so that they know what has happened elsewhere without anyone speaking of it. They do not act as we do with pots – ours are holy and must only be used as special gifts to the gods, to be buried in water. They do not believe in our gods and instead use pots to eat and drink from. They have small metal discs that they offer in exchange for things such as food or weapons. These metal discs also have great magic for all the Romans want them and fights will start if someone is thought to have taken another’s magic discs. Here is such a disc that I bravely took from a fierce Roman soldier who stood as tall as a small tree and fought for two days against me. But the

### Romans on the Don Worksheet 3 – The Romans – Questions and Answers Pack

magic of the disc does not work for me – no-one other than another Roman will exchange it for food. They have a great and terrible chief named *Vespasian*\* who lives so far away that if you walked for a year you still would not have reached him, and yet to all Romans he is as a god whose very word is law and must be obeyed”.

(\**Vespasian* reigned as Roman Emperor from AD69 to AD79, the period during which the fort at *Danum* was built).

**Now what would the pupils think of the Romans?**

#### Q10. Iron Age/Roman Artefact Recognition

Show the pupils pictures 1 – 7 and ask them to guess what they are looking at.

#### Picture 1 – Roman oil lamp/lamp holder



This one is from Brough in the Peak District, is made of lead and could have been either a lamp or lamp holder. As a lamp it would have had a fibre wick in the spout and been filled with olive oil. As a lamp holder it would have held a ceramic oil lamp that worked in the same way.

**Picture 2 – Roman *stylus***



A *stylus* was a Roman writing implement, usually made of metal and used with a wax tablet. The pointed end of the *stylus* was used to write in the wax and the flat end to erase mistakes or the full text.

**Picture 3 – Spindle whorl**



A spindle whorl was a weight used to spin wool. It was used in conjunction with a notched stick, or spindle, which would go through the hole in the whorl. Wool thread would be wound round the spindle and attached to fibres teased from a combed fleece. The spindle would be spun to form the fibres into thread. This one dates from the late 1<sup>st</sup> or early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, is made of pot that has been clipped to shape, and was found in Doncaster.

**Picture 4 – Roman surgeon's tools**



The Romans had doctors who looked after both military and civil personnel. Doctors were also responsible for cutting people's hair. There was no licensing of doctors and it's likely that those who gained a good reputation would attract more custom. They would have then charged more for their services so poorer people would have been left with the less reputable ones. In terms of surgery, many of the tools used and procedures followed were little different from those of 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain and America. These are bone levers used to reposition broken bones and remove teeth.

**Picture 5 – beehive quernstone**



A quernstone was used to grind grain corn into flour. A complete quernstone would actually be two stones, one sat on top of the other. Grain would be poured into the top hole and a handle in the side of the quern was used to turn the stone round so that the grain would be ground between the stones, producing flour. This one is made of Derbyshire millstone grit and was found in Doncaster.

**Picture 6 – Roman trumpet brooch**



A Roman equivalent of a safety pin, worn at the shoulder to fasten a cloak or tunic. This one dates from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD and was found in Rossington.

**Picture 7 – the Doncaster shield**



In 1971 excavations south east of the Parish Church in Doncaster found the remains of a shield that is thought to have been used by an auxiliary cavalryman around the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. It was made of glued plywood boards covered with metal studded leather with a central metal boss. It had an unusual handgrip that is angled rather than horizontal which may be an innovation to allow easier handling when riding a horse.