

DVD LESSON PLAN: *ROME—POWER AND GLORY*

DVD Title: *Rome—Power and Glory*

Content: Combining impeccable scholarship with almost Indiana Jones–style adventure, this engrossing documentary series makes good use of sumptuous location footage, loads of genuine artifacts, no-pains-spares reenactments, plenty of footage from old casts-of-thousands silent film classics, gorgeous special effects, flamboyant music, Peter Coyote’s world-weary narration, scholars who step in to explain the big picture, and a flair for the colorful story dramatically told. Six 52-minute programs divide Rome’s history into rise, conquest, dynastic struggle, overextension of empire, the Christian challenge, and division and fall. **Note: mature topics, nudity in classical art.** Total time: 312 minutes. Questar. ©1998.

Standards correlation: Content correlates with National World History Standards 3A and 3B and California World History Standards 6.7 and 7.1.

Special Features of this DVD: (Both discs contain the same extra features)

- four-page timeline
- six virtual reconstructions (the Baths, Circus Maximus, Colosseum, buildings by the Palatine Hill, House of the Vestal Virgins, the Forum) that run in full motion video for about one minute each
- read-only profiles of 12 Roman emperors

Suggested Grade Level: Grades 7 and up

Time: Two DVDs contain six 52-minute programs with six chapters each. The first chapter in each program (1, 7, & 13) is an introduction that runs 50 seconds. All other chapters run approximately ten minutes each. Programs I, II, and III are on disc one. Programs IV, V, and VI are on disc two. Total running time is 312 minutes.

NOTE: For Disc Two (programs iv, v, vi) discussion questions are not yet available. However, bonus questions have been included for these programs.

THE RISE (Program I)

Chapter 2–Reflections of Glory. An overview of Rome at her height plus Rome’s contribution to American political thought.

Focus question: Explain the meaning of Napoleon’s statement that the story of Rome is the story of the world. (answers will vary)

Chapter 3–Etruscans. A quick review of the Etruscan civilization and its ties with Rome.

Focus question: In what area of technology did the Etruscans excel? (mining and metal working)

Chapter 4–Savage Beginnings. Livy’s history of early Rome; story of Romulus and Remus; treachery against the Sabines.

Focus question: What motivated Livy to write a history of early Rome? (his hope to reform the decadence of his own time)

Chapter 5–Birth of a Republic. Rise of the Roman Senate following the reigns of Etruscan kings Servius Tullius and Tarquin.

Focus question: What was the great contribution of Servius Tullius? (the census)

Chapter 6–Setting the Stage. War with Etruscans; invasion by Celts; heroism of Cincinnatus.

Focus question: Why did George Washington regard Cincinnatus as a role model? (Cincinnatus gave up power voluntarily)

LEGIONS OF CONQUEST (Program II)

Chapter 8–War Machine. Structure, training, tactics, and weapons of the Roman army; defeat of Carthage in First Punic War.

Focus question: Give at least three reasons the Romans were successful in battle. (training, discipline, superior weapons, a will to fight and never retreat, healthy and well-fed soldiers)

Chapter 9–The Second Punic War. Hannibal’s campaigns against Rome; battles at Cannae and Zama; Scipio’s success against the Carthaginians; ascent of Gaius Marius and rise of professional armies loyal to their generals.

Focus question: What tactic did Scipio employ so successfully against Hannibal and the Carthaginians? (invasion of Carthage to force Hannibal to leave Italy)

Chapter 10–A Soldier’s Loyalty. Lucius Cornelius Sulla’s march against Rome; Julius Caesar’s political ambitions and military success in Gaul; capture of Gaul’s leader Vercingetorix; Caesar’s power sharing with Pompey.

Focus question: What qualities of leadership did Caesar display? (daring, boldness, and a willingness to live closely with his men)

Chapter 11–Allegiance to the Empire. Caesar crosses the Rubicon; Caesar’s assassination and civil war; Augustus as Rome’s first emperor; rebellions in the provinces; uprising in Judea; siege of Masada.

Focus question: How did Augustus bring an end to civil war and stabilize the empire? (patronage)

Chapter 12–End of Conquest. Hadrian’s shoring up of the empire; barbarian migrations into Rome; army’s role shift from conquest to occupation and patrol duty; wavering army loyalty; “barracks-room” emperors; Valerian’s humiliation in Persia.

Focus question: Why did Rome’s leaders suspend further conquest and pursue a policy of stabilization in the third century AD? (empire was growing too large and becoming ungovernable)

SEDUCTION OF POWER (Program III)

Chapter 14–Fatal Precedent. Review of Sulla’s bullying of the Senate and bloodbath against political enemies; establishment and operation of the republic; social imbalance, patronage, and corruption; compromising of republican ideals.

Focus question: What was the fatal precedent described in this chapter? (that a general would use his army to seize power)

Chapter 15–Gracchus’ Proposal. Gracchus’s proposal that public land be divided among the poor; Senate’s reaction; death of Gracchus; people power threatens the government.

Focus question: What often happened when soldiers who had served abroad for years returned home to work their farms? (they found their land appropriated by powerful estate owners who used slaves to do the work)

Chapter 16–Julius Caesar. Cincinnatus and Romulus as opposing role models for Rome; beliefs of Cicero; Julius Caesar’s military and political achievements; Caesar’s death and rivals for his power; murder of Cicero.

Focus question: How did Caesar win the affection of the Roman people? (his reputation as a victorious general along with public games and gifts)

Chapter 17–The First Emperors. Octavius (Augustus) defeats Antony to become Rome’s first emperor; rule of Augustus; the Pax Romana; dilemma of dynastic succession; conspiracy of Sejanus; reigns of Tiberius and Caligula.

Focus question: How did Augustus implement his belief that patronage was the secret to holding power? (bonuses for soldiers, food for the poor, civic improvements, more games)

Chapter 18–Nero. Influence of Agrippina; Nero’s personality and excesses; conflicts with the Senate; role of the Praetorian Guard; persecution of Christians.

Focus question: According to the narration, what was the main reason Nero persecuted Christians? (he needed a scapegoat to deflect his own unpopularity and take blame for the fire that destroyed much of the city)

Bonus Questions

Note: In each parenthesis, the Roman numeral indicates the program while the Arabic number indicates the chapter in the program where information can be found.

01 (I-2) What two present-day cities does one historian compare Rome with in terms of noise, confusion, overcrowding, prevalence of poor people, and substandard living conditions. (Calcutta and Rio de Janeiro)

02 (I-2) The narrator mentions that Roman “supertankers” plied the Mediterranean, but their cargos were not petroleum. What did these early trading ships carry? (grain)

03 (I-2) What American sports figure is mentioned by one historian in describing the gladiatorial games in the Colosseum? (Mike Tyson)

04 (I-3) Sailing west from their homeland, where did the Greeks first encounter the Etruscans and what did they call their land? (They found them in Tuscany on the Italian Peninsula. They called the place Hesperia or land of the evening sun)

05 (I-3) Describe the written records that have provided information about the Etruscans. (None, there are no records)

06 (I-3) In what context was the Italian dictator Mussolini mentioned in this chapter? (He used the remains of Etruscan mines to produce weapons.)

07 (I-4) What did Livy discover when he sought to tell how heroic and noble the early Romans were? (He found they were as corrupt and violent as his contemporaries.)

08 (I-4) When Romulus and Remus argued over who should be king, how was the question pursued? (The augurs were consulted.)

09 (I-4) Who were the Sabines, and how did the ancient Romans trick them? (ancient people of Central Italy whom the Romans invited to a banquet where the men were slain and the women raped.)

10 (I-5) According to the narration, what special ability set the Romans apart from other ancient peoples? (the ability to organize)

11 (I-5) Who was Lucretia and how did the crime committed against her aid the establishment of the republic? (She was an esteemed lady whose rape by the king’s son so angered Roman citizens they drove out the Etruscan ruler paving the way for a republic.)

12 (I-5) What do the initials SPQR stand for? (Senatus Populusque Romanus, the Senate and the People of Rome)

13 (I-6) What was the great contribution of Publius to the Roman Republic? (He codified legal ideas that became Roman law.)

14 (I-6) What great disaster befell Rome in 386BC? (Celts from Gaul invaded Rome and sacked the city.)

15 (II-8) How many men comprised a legion? (approximately 5000)

16 (II-8) What practice of the Carthaginians did the Romans find particularly barbaric? (sacrifice of children)

17 (II-8) In what present day country and near what city can the ruins of Carthage be found? (Tunis, Tunisia)

18 (II-9) What allies did Hannibal have in his fight against Rome? (Spaniards, Gauls, Numidians)

19 (II-9) How did Hannibal die? (suicide by poison)

20 (II-10) How was Sulla able to “cash in” on the loyalty of his troops? (persuading them to follow his orders rather than obey the Senate)

21 (II-10) What physical description is given of Julius Caesar? (slightly built, balding, epileptic)

22 (II-10) Why was victory in Gaul so crucial to Caesar’s ambitions? (only victorious generals had credibility with the people)

23 (II-11) What is the symbolism of crossing the Rubicon? (inability to reverse course)

24 (II-11) What warning did the Emperor Augustus place in his will? (beware of overexpansion)

25 (II-11) By what means did the Romans overcome the Jewish defenders atop the Masada? (building a ramp up to the top of the fortress)

26 (II-12) The empire reached its largest extent under Trajan. How large in square miles was Rome in 117AD? (two million square miles)

27 (II-12) What name did the Romans give to any people without a written language? (barbarians)

28 (II-12) In what present-day country can the remnants of Hadrian’s Wall be seen? (Great Britain)

29 (III-14) What group regarded itself as the guardian of Roman traditions? (Senate)

- 30 (III-14) One historian compares which elected position under the republic to the office of president of the United States? (consul)
- 31 (III-15) Who was Gracchus's illustrious grandfather? (Scipio, victor over Hannibal)
- 32 (III-15) What were the politics of Rome's ruling families? (ultra conservative)
- 33 (III-16) Where did Caesar begin his military career? (Spain)
- 34 (III-16) What request did Caesar make of the Senate? (that he be named dictator for life)
- 35 (III-16) Who were the two chief rivals for Caesar's power? (Marc Antony and Octavius)
- 36 (III-17) Who was Tacitus and what did he advocate for the governance of Rome? (historian who wanted one man to govern rather than a triumvirate)
- 37 (III-17) For what crime did Augustus banish his own daughter? (adultery)
- 38 (III-17) How did Caligula insult the Senate? (he named his horse as consul)
- 39 (III-18) Who was Agrippina, and what was her fate? (Nero's mother, murdered by the Praetorian Guard)
- 40 (III-18) Who were the "pop stars" of Nero's day? (charioteers)
- 41 (III-18) What action did the Senate take against Nero in 68AD? (declared him a public enemy)
- 42 (IV-2) What "message" did the gladiatorial games send out to the world? (Rome was all powerful)
- 43 (IV-3) The narration says that while Rome exported few material goods to her conquered provinces, she did export four civilizing elements. What were they? (a common language, a single currency, architectural style, engineering skill)
- 44 (IV-4) What two important functions were served by the Roman system of roads? (movement of armies and tax collectors)
- 45 (IV-4) How does our word trivia relate to the roads of Rome? (trivium meant a place where three roads crossed and messages were posted)
- 46 (IV-5) Where did the first true slave revolt begin in 146BC and what prompted it? (Sicily, harsh practices such as branding of slaves)

- 47 (IV-6) What three barriers to further expansion of the Empire after 106AD are mentioned in the narration? (Sahara, Atlantic, cold northern climate)
- 48 (IV-6) What was the Empire's vegetable boundary? (Romans preferred to live only in lands where olives and grapes could be grown)
- 49 (V-8) When he became emperor Marcus Aurelius sought to bring peace and divine order to Rome. What forces worked against him? (barbarian invasions, plague)
- 50 (V-8) In what way did the death of Marcus Aurelius mirror Rome's decline? (he died of cancer, Rome was dying of moral decay)
- 51 (V-9) What disaster struck the empire in 79AD? (eruption of Vesuvius and the destruction of Pompeii)
- 52 (V-10) What was notable about the emperor Septimius Severus? (he was the first emperor of African descent)
- 53 (V-11) What element of Christian belief was especially appealing to Roman women? (spiritual equality)
- 54 (V-12) By the middle of the third century, how many Christians were estimated to be in Rome? (five million)
- 55 (V-12) Why did Diocletian launch a sweeping persecution of Christians in 303AD? (he believed the unity of empire lay in the people following a common religion)
- 56 (VI-14) While Elagabalus is described as a transvestite homosexual who was killed by his own guard, what word is used to describe the "average" emperor? (bureaucrat)
- 57 (VI-14) How does the narration describe the Circus Maximus? (as a temple for the proletariat who were devoted to drinking, gambling, prostitution, and idleness)
- 58 (VI-15) How did climatic changes in Central Asia affect Rome? (Huns moved west pushing other peoples against the borders of the empire)
- 59 (VI-15) What fate befell Emperor Valerian in 259AD? (his legions were defeated by the Persians, the emperor captured and skinned)
- 60 (VI-16) The words of Constantine's vision of the cross of light were "In Hoc Signo Vincens." What do these words mean? (by this sign you will conquer)
- 61 (VI-16) What watershed changes did Constantine make? (embraced Christianity as a unifying force, moved the capital to Constantinople, focused attention on the eastern empire)
- 62 (VI-17) What occurred at Adrianople in present-day Turkey around 378AD? (Rome's emperor (Valens) and his legions were defeated by the Visigoths)

63 (VI-17) Who was Alaric and what action did he take in 410AD? (king of the Visigoths, sacked the capital after his demands for land and tribute were not met)

64 (VI-17) What misconception do students often have about barbarians? (that they were all bestial and cruel when many were in fact Romanized and well-educated)

65 (VI-18) What ironic name did the last Roman emperor in the west bear? (Romulus)

66 (VI-18) Summarize Rome's most important contributions to western civilization? (answers will vary)