



Who Were The Ancient Romans?

Who were the Ancient Romans? It's an interesting and valid question. It all started a long time ago. 753BC, to be precise. When the city of Rome was first formed, it was a small village in the heart of Italy. Over time, it grew to be the largest empire in the world. At its peak, the population of the empire accounted for roughly 20% of the world's entire population.

In the beginning, Rome was a kingdom. It was ruled by a king and had a royal family. This continued until 509BC. Not much is known about Rome's time as a kingdom. Almost all of the history was passed on orally (by speaking to each other).

In 509BC, Rome became a republic. A group of senators were elected to rule the city and the empire. It was in this period that Rome started to take control of Europe. In 264BC, Rome waged war against Carthage. The war lasted for 118 years. By the end, Rome had taken control of large parts of the Mediterranean. At the time, these wars were some of the largest the world had seen. By the time Rome became an empire in 27BC, it was in control of most of Europe. Their power reached as far as Arabia and North Africa.

The death of Julius Caesar in 44BC sparked another change in Ancient Rome. When Caesar Augustus took the throne in 27BC, Rome was already at war with Persia. The wars with Persia began in 92BC and went on for 721 years. This was long after the Empire had started to collapsed.

Ancient Rome reached its peak in 117AD. The Emperor ruled between 70 and 100 million people at this time and covered over 5 million square kilometres.

Eventually, the empire of Ancient Rome came to an end. The leaders of the cities started to fight amongst themselves and smaller tribes in the west soon started to invade and the Romans lost control of the western side of their empire in the 5th century. They managed to hold on to the eastern part of the empire for another thousand years. That fell in 1453AD. This part of history is often referred to as the Byzantine Empire, rather than Ancient Rome.



VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. Which word or phrase, in the text, means to be exact?
2. Which word or phrase, in the text, means not to be exact?
3. Which word or phrase means that Rome was at its strongest?
4. What does the phrase “the empire had collapsed” mean?
5. Which word or phrase means that Roman leaders fought with each other?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

- S** List the three different types of ruler that Rome went through.
- I** Rome’s history as a kingdom was passed on orally. Why does this make it harder to know what happened?
- R** For how long did the wars with Persia continue?
- S** Why isn’t the population of Rome in 117AD more precise?
- E** The author has used lots of technical vocabulary in this text. What effect does that have on the reader?