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Ancient Rome

Mr. Donn and Maxie's Always Something You Can Use Series

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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 978-1-59647-410-9

Product Code: GDY837

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Preface

I am a teacher. With “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) being the law of the land, and with every teacher required to help raise test scores on standardized tests, we are all looking for ways to improve our teaching. Today there are national Common Core State Standards for teaching as well as various state standards that students are expected to meet. Maybe your state or school district has exit exams students are required to pass. Your circumstances will be different from mine but we all have the same goal in mind. Help our students reach their goals.

The Mr. Donn and Maxie’s Always Something You Can Use series was written in part because when I went looking for help as a new teacher there was nothing there. The lessons you are about to use are ones that I have used in the classroom myself, with input from my colleagues, friends, students, and especially my wife.

I currently teach in an urban school with all its challenges and difficulties. I teach both language arts and social studies. I have been in various levels of secondary school grades 6–12.

Focus: This book, and the rest of the books in the series are for teaching Ancient History. Each book is a separate unit that deals with each of the different ancient civilizations. Each book has within it a complete unit on ancient history. Within each unit there are various types of lessons. Each unit will contain vocabulary lessons, writing lessons, and activity lessons. The variety will hopefully keep all your students involved, entertained, and learning.

In *Classroom Instruction that Works*, Marzano et al list ten research based strategies. The ancient history series uses these ten strategies, as well as other concepts, ideas, and strategies, to build lesson plans and instruction around. For those who are unfamiliar with Marzano et al, here is a quick recap of those strategies.

- Identifying Similarities and Differences
- Summarizing and Note Taking
- Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition
- Homework and Practice
- Nonlinguistic Representations
- Cooperative Learning
- Setting Objectives and Providing feedback
- Generating and Testing Hypotheses
- Cues, Questions and Advanced Organizers

These strategies and concepts are imbedded into the lessons. You won't find a place where it says "We will now use the strategy of Cooperative Learning." Instead you will find cooperative learning within the lesson. An example of this is in the Ancient China unit; students are divided into groups, and each group chooses or is assigned one of the dynasties. That group is given an opportunity to research, create a presentation, and then present their product to the class. This project is monitored by the teacher as to progress and deadlines. Their product is then placed in the classroom for all to see, share, and use. This same project includes Marzano's strategies of "Reinforcing effort and providing recognition," "Nonlinguistic Representation," and "Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback."

The Mr. Donn and Maxie Always Something You Can Use series also uses ideas and concepts to help make teaching and learning enjoyable—ideas such as "Word Walls" to help build vocabulary, various writing ideas to stimulate interest in writing, and games, pictures and graphic organizers to increase efficiency and retention.

We worked very hard to bring you the best ideas we could to make history a subject that students would want to learn.

Rome Was Not Built In a Day

Introduction

Subject: Ancient Rome

Level/Length: This unit was written with sixth graders in mind, but can easily be adapted for grades 5–9. The unit is presented in seventeen sections; some sections are mini-units and will take longer than one class period to complete. Lessons are based on a 55-minute class period or they can be adjusted to fit any time frame. As written, time frame needed to complete this unit: 4–6 weeks.

Unit description: This unit explores the rise and fall of ancient Rome. It is built on one central theme: Rome was not built in a day. Activities are varied and include classifying, abstracting, map work, dramatizing, writing, reading, speaking, researching, interpreting, and other higher level thinking activities. A final activity is built over the course of the unit, a Roman Festival with entertainment, including the original play *Gossip at the Forum*.

Rationale: In view of the latest government guidelines on education with “no child left behind,” this unit was developed to meet standards applicable in most states. Lessons are designed to address various learning styles and can be adapted for *all* students’ abilities.

Ongoing Project/Graphic Organizers: Using bulletin boards or wall space as graphic organizers supports critical thinking activities and fits the theme of the unit. At the end of the unit, each graphic organizer board should be completed and will support the final activity. To complete each, students will need to be directed to add information as it is discovered in your unit study.

Ancient Rome

Setting up the Room

Graphic Organizers: Using bulletin boards or wall space as graphic organizers supports critical thinking activities and fits the theme of the unit: Rome was not built in a day. At the end of the unit, each should be completed and will support the final activity. To complete each, have students add information as it is discovered in your unit study.

Word Wall:

Design: This is consistent for all units, but each has its own look.

Use: Once a week, have the kids pick a word, any word, and define it, then use it in a sentence. Use the word wall to fill in short periods of time throughout the unit. Direct the kids to select any five words from the word wall and create a news article. Or select any six words to form a group and be able to define the group. (Examples: buildings, words that begin with A.)

The Forum:

Design: The forum was the city center, the plaza. Every Roman city had a forum. Put a sign above an open wall area marked “The Forum.” Add a small table to hold handouts. If you position the forum between your word wall and your timeline, it will give the forum a look of surrounding buildings.

Use: Use the forum as the Romans did, as an information dispersal center. This is where you can post papers with no names, stack copies of reproducibles and homework assignments for pick up by students who were absent, post information about school happenings such as a school play or concert, etc.

Some Roman Gods and Goddesses:

Design: Ten circles composed of one large yellow circle, with nine smaller circles. The smaller circles should be proportioned to represent the nine planets in our solar system.

A note on Pluto: In 2006, the International Astronomical Union downgraded the status of Pluto to a “dwarf planet.” In planning, it could be left out entirely, or, conversely, all the dwarf planets could be included. However, only two of the other four dwarf planets are named after Roman deities (namely, Ceres and Eris).

Roman Gifts:

Design: Flat pieces of cardboard wrapped in bright, solid-colored wrapping paper, in a variety of colors. Arrange in a scatter. Keep it bright and colorful, but this is background. Do not label the “gifts.” Add labels as you identify the inventions and other gifts from the ancient Romans. You don’t need a wrapped flat package for every “gift.” Use a few for background design. Allow students to use their crayons, add bows, and/or dress up this board as they go along.

Gifts: Romance languages (English, Italian, Spanish, French are all based on Latin); big government—our legislative branch, the Senate and House of Representatives, is based on the Senate and Assemblies of ancient Rome; city planning; public sewers; invention of concrete, grand architecture; aqueducts; arches; roman numerals; many holidays and more.

Roman Times: Timeline. With Rome, I like to put the dates up before the unit begins. That way, students have a seek game going—what events go with what dates.

Door Into the Classroom: On the hallway side of the door into your classroom, use construction paper to frame your doorway, creating an entrance to ancient Rome, if space allows.

Section One:
Welcome To Ancient Rome!

Time frame: 1 class period (55 minutes)

Introduction Room Boards

Map

Jupiter

Preparation:

- Daily Question. Use overhead projector or write question on the blackboard. (This is a student writing activity. Students are to write answers to daily questions in their notebooks upon arrival.)
- Reproducibles:
Application to Become a Roman Citizen
Map of Early Rome
Jupiter

Daily Question: What is a peninsula?

Meet Your Class at the Door: “Welcome To Ancient Rome!”

This is your application to become a Roman citizen!”

Hand out *Application to become a Roman Citizen*.

Room Boards (Graphic Organizers)

Briefly introduce each wall section, the Boards (graphic organizers), to the class.

Transition: *There is an old saying:* Rome was not built in a day. What does that mean?

Activity: Map of Early Rome

- **Say:** Today, you are going to be in charge of city building. There are enemies
- everywhere. But you must feed, shelter, bathe yourself and water your animals. -
Hand out *Map of Early Rome*
- **Say:** Using a pencil, pick the best location for your city and mark it with an x, on this map. On the back of this map, list three reasons you put your city where you did. Remember—there are enemies everywhere.
- Give them a few minutes to do this. Discuss their answers first.
- Tell them where Rome was built and why.

Background: The early Romans built on the seven hills on the Tiber river for protection and for water. Flatland, on the other side of the Tiber, was perfect for farmland. The area offered what they needed. They started their city on the top of one hill. They walled around it. As they expanded, they also expanded their wall. Slowly, they expanded to all seven hills with one wall encircling them all.

Label maps:

- Use the overhead projector (make a transparency of *Map of Early Rome*).
- **Ask:** What is a peninsula?
- Point to places on the map they need to label, and provide the names. seven hills of Rome, Palatine Hill, Tiber River, Mediterranean Sea, marshes, farmland. Add other information you feel is pertinent.
- Let them color their maps.

Activity: It's Time for Pantomime!

Say: Whenever the ancient Romans went to see a play or hear a story, they did not sit quietly and enjoy the performance, as did the ancient Greeks. The Romans chatted and talked and moved about and visited. The actors had to say their lines and pantomime the story, so that people could understand them. What does **pantomime** mean?

Today, you are all actors. Our story is a popular one. It's a story about Jupiter, king of the Roman gods. (Explain the rules.) *No speaking*. Students must stay in their seats. No flailing wildly. Gestures must be pertinent to the story.

Hand out *Jupiter*.

Give them a few minutes to read the story quietly. Then, do a little acting yourself. Look towards the back of the room as if hoards of noisy Romans have gathered to hear you. Clear your throat. Look nervous. Then say loudly: The story of Jupiter! In a more normal voice—because already you'll have enough acting going on in your classroom—read the story aloud to your class, while the students pantomime.

Add Jupiter to your Roman God and Goddesses wall. Be sure the word Jupiter is positioned on the fifth circle from the sun. (But don't tell the students why you put it in that position.)

CLOSE CLASS: Tell the students: Please complete section three of your Application to Become a Roman Citizen KWL chart by tomorrow (now, if time permits). That's all for today. See you tomorrow, at the forum!



Name:
Date:
Class:
Period:

Jupiter

Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto were the three sons of Saturn. When Saturn retired, the boys divided the world up between them. Jupiter took the sky, Neptune took the sea, and Pluto ruled under the earth, the home of the dead. At first, it was great fun. But things had been just a bit slow lately.

Jupiter thought about what he could do.

He could turn himself into an octopus and visit his brother Neptune under the sea, but he didn't feel much like a swim.

He could visit Pluto under the earth, but Pluto was such a gloomy fellow.

He could hurl thunderbolts, but it wasn't much fun without a target.

He could hunt up one of the other gods. But the truth was, all the other gods were terrified of Jupiter. He did have a terrible temper, but only when someone lied to him. Since the gods often lied, they mostly avoided Jupiter.

He could call for his wife, Juno. But the truth was, he was a little frightened of her.

He could find a beautiful woman. But he couldn't let Juno catch him. She was very jealous.

Jupiter flew down to Earth and looked around for something to do. He spotted two men walking along a lane. Jupiter cast his voice to make it sound like somebody else was speaking. He was very good at that.

"Hey, stupid," Jupiter cast his voice loudly, hoping to start a fight.

One man turned to the other angrily. "What did you say?" And before you could say Jupiter, the two men were fighting. Jupiter found that very funny.

A glint on the river caught his eye. It was Io, a lovely river nymph.

"What a lovely young woman," Jupiter said. He promptly fell in love.