

Meet the ...

# ANCIENT ROMANS



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James Davies

The Romans had a myth, or story, about how their city began. Gather round everyone.



1. Romulus and Remus (sons of the god Mars) were babies when their evil uncle left them to drown in the river Tiber.



2. Thankfully, a she-wolf rescued them and protected them while they grew up.



3. When they were older, Romulus and Remus took revenge on their horrid uncle and killed him.



4. When that was done, they decided to start a new city, but couldn't agree on where to put it.



5. The brothers looked for a sign from the gods to see which of them had the best plan, but that didn't work either.



6. They argued constantly, and one day got into a fight after Remus made fun of Romulus.



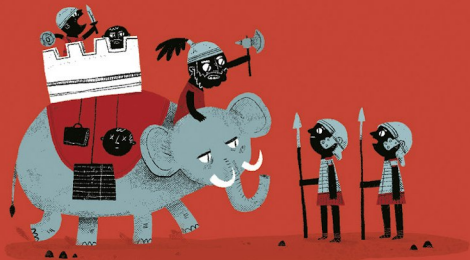
7. Remus was killed in the fight, so Romulus got his way and built the new city overlooking the Tiber. He then modestly named the new place after himself. Way to go, Romulus . . . bad luck, Remus!



At first Rome was ruled by kings, but it later became a republic, which meant no one person was in charge. Instead, a group of rich men called senators ran the empire and made all the decisions.



The senators were greedy and wanted more power and money. Tired of answering to other states, they started fights that lasted hundreds of years. Not good news for the people of Rome.



Rome's greatest rival was Carthage in North Africa. The battles between them lasted for almost 20 years. In 218 BC, the fearsome general Hannibal led a huge army and 37 elephants to attack. But Rome was too tough and Carthage was defeated and burned.



Rome went on to defeat other powerful states, growing bigger, richer and stronger. But as they won more battles, the senators started to fight amongst themselves . . . it would be their downfall in the end.

The only way to bring peace back to Rome was to end the republic and put one person back in charge. This person was called an emperor. He ruled over everything, controlling the government, armies and religion. Emperors ruled Rome for the next 500 years.



With no Internet or TV to show the public what the emperor looked like, statues and coins were produced with his image instead. Hopefully they were flattering, as they couldn't be changed later!



Some emperors were loved by the public, but others were considered monsters, or just a bit weird. The good, the bad, and the mad – here are some of Rome's most famous emperors:

You may be wondering why Julius Caesar isn't here amongst these other famous emperors. Well, that's because although Caesar was a powerful man, he was never actually an emperor. We'll find out more about him on pages 16 and 17.



**AUGUSTUS**  
27 BC – AD 14

Augustus was the first emperor of Rome. He wasn't very loveable, but he rebuilt Rome after all the fighting, established an army and brought peace back to the land. What a guy!



**CALIGULA**  
AD 37 – 41

Caligula was a violent leader who went mad with wealth and power. He once tried to put his horse in charge of the government! He was killed by his own bodyguards who decided to put a stop to him.



**CLAUDIUS**  
AD 41 – 54

Claudius was disabled and had trouble walking and speaking. At first he wasn't taken very seriously, but he turned out to be a great leader, expanding the empire and conquering Britain.



**HADRIAN**  
AD 76 – 138

Hadrian was a clever general. He made the empire easier to defend and built a giant wall between England and Scotland to try and keep the people of the north out. Parts of the wall still stand today!



**NERO**  
AD 54 – 68

Nero wanted to be a celebrity, but when he appeared on stage many people thought it was a bit silly. He didn't seem to care when a huge fire destroyed the city in AD 64, and the people turned on him.



**TRAJAN**  
AD 98 – 117

Trajan was Spanish, and one of the most successful emperors. Rome was at its largest and most wealthy when he reigned. He was declared the best ruler by the Roman council. Cool!