

# Chapter Summary

## Rome: Republic to Empire

### Lesson 1 *The Founding of Rome*

- Italy's location and climate have attracted people for thousands of years.
- Rome's location on the Tiber River made it easy to move goods through Italy and to and from the Mediterranean Sea. The location also protected the city from pirate raids.
- Between 800 B.C. and 700 B.C., a group of people called Latins settled in Rome's hills in central Italy. This marks the birth of Rome, and the people living there became known as Romans.
- Greeks and Etruscans moved into the area. They influenced Roman culture, architecture, religion, and military style. In time, the Etruscans took control of Rome.
- Around 509 B.C., the Romans overthrew their Etruscan king and set up a republic. A republic is a form of government in which citizens elect their leaders. The United States today is a republic.
- Rome developed a strong army. They formed groups of soldiers called legions. Roman legions were skilled at fighting and could move quickly around a battlefield. By 267 B.C., the Romans controlled most of Italy.
- In general, Rome ruled fairly and effectively. Romans let some people they conquered become full Roman citizens; others became allies, or friends, of Rome.

### Lesson 2 *Rome as a Republic*

- Early Rome had two classes of people: the patricians, who were wealthy landowners, and the plebeians, who were poor.
- At first, plebeians did not share equal rights with patricians. Eventually, they won the right to take part in the Roman government. Plebeians elected officials, called tribunes, to represent them in the government.
- The Roman Republic had three branches of government. One branch, made up of the Senate and an assembly, made laws. A second branch ran the daily affairs of government and was led by two consuls, or heads of government. The

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third branch served as judges, called praetors.

- A system of checks and balances prevented one branch from getting too powerful. For example, one consul could veto, or reject, a decision made by the other consul.
- During a crisis, the Senate could appoint a temporary dictator, or strong leader who was given complete control of the government. That person was expected to step down once the trouble had passed.
- Rome's legal system was based on the rule of law, which meant that everyone was treated the same way under the law. Roman citizens were also expected to fulfill their civic duty, or help their country.
- Rome fought three wars with Carthage, Rome's main rival for control of the Mediterranean region. These wars were called the Punic Wars. In

146 B.C., Rome defeated Carthage and made it a province, or regional district, under Rome's control.

- In the 140s B.C., Rome conquered Greece and began to expand its territory into Asia.

### Lesson 3 *The End of the Republic*

- Small farmers in the Roman Republic began to fall into poverty and lose their land. They could not compete with wealthy Romans who owned latifundia, or large farming estates. As a result, poor farmers moved to Roman cities in great numbers.
- Roman leaders used a "bread and circus" policy to feed and entertain the poor, who were now crowding the cities. These leaders wanted to prevent the poor from revolting.
- Roman military leaders began to seek and gain greater political power.
- In 60 B.C., the first triumvirate, or political group of three people who are equal in power, was formed to rule Rome. These three leaders were Crassus, Pompey, and Julius Caesar.
- By 50 B.C., the triumvirate had ended. Caesar and Pompey struggled for control of Rome.
- In 44 B.C., Caesar defeated Pompey in a civil war. Caesar

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became Rome's first dictator for life, but members of the Senate killed him that same year.

- After Caesar's death, the second triumvirate was formed, led by Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus.
- Antony and Octavian soon became rivals, and another civil war broke out. Octavian captured Alexandria within a year. At the last battle, Antony received false news that Cleopatra had died and killed himself. When Cleopatra heard that Antony had died, she killed herself.
- Octavian became the next dictator of Rome. He renamed himself Augustus.

### Lesson 4 *Rome Builds an Empire*

- The leadership of Augustus was the beginning of a time of peace and prosperity for Rome called the Pax Romana that lasted 200 years.
- Augustus strengthened the army, protected Rome's borders, and rebuilt in marble many of Rome's buildings. He named proconsuls, or governors, to run each of Rome's provinces.
- After Augustus died, his son, Tiberius, ruled effectively. A series of cruel dictators, however, ruled Rome after him.
- During the A.D. 100s, Rome was ruled by the Five Good Emperors. They ruled during a time of peace and prosperity and did not abuse their power. They built aqueducts, or human-made channels, to bring water from the country to the city.
- By the A.D. 100s, the Roman Empire was almost the size of the United States today, making it one of the largest empires in history. Roman system of money was used all over the empire. Due to the use of a common money and good transportation networks, trade grew throughout the Roman Empire.