**Knowledge Organiser  KS2 History- Romans in Britain**

**At a glance:**

The Roman army first tried to invade Britain in 55 and 54 BCE. However, they were back almost one hundred years later in 43 CE under the command of Emperor Claudius. The Romans travelled as far as modern-day Scotland but were unable to keep this area under control, building a wall to keep the northernmost tribes out.

**Main Events and Where they Fit:**

- 54BCE Julius Caesar’s invasion attempt
- 43CE Successful invasion ordered by Claudius
- 51CE Defeat of Caratacus
- 61CE Iceni revolt led by Boudicca
- 122 CE Construction of Hadrian’s wall
- 200 CE Introduction of Christianity
- 306 CE Constantine proclaimed emperor in York
- 406 CE Suevi, Alans, Vandals and Burgundians attack Gaul, and break contact between Rome and Britain: Remaining Roman army in Britain mutinies
- 408 CE Devastating attacks by the Picts, Scots and Saxons
- 409 CE Britons expel Roman officials and fight for themselves
- 410 CE Britain is independent

**Big Ideas**

**Cause and Consequence:**

The Romans brought many wide-reaching changes to Britain. They built over 10,000 miles of roads and built houses, forts and temples from stone rather than wood. Before the Romans arrived, most Britons had lived in the countryside. The Romans also brought bathhouses, central heating, *aqueducts* and better *sanitation*. They also built one of the most famous set of defences in history: *Hadrian's Wall*, built by 15,000 men over 6 years.

**Conflict:**

It was not easy for the Romans to establish themselves as leaders in Britain at first. Nevertheless, the Roman army was very powerful and despite *resistance* from many British tribes, came to control most of England and Wales by about 100 CE. The most famous *resistance* to Roman rule was led by *Queen Boudicca*, the leader of the Iceni tribe. She led a huge army against the Romans in the cities of Colchester, London and St Albans. Her army was finally defeated by a skilful and well-trained group of 1,200 Roman soldiers who defeated almost 80,000 men.

**Power:**

Like many *empires*, the Romans were always looking for other regions to conquer. By expanding their territory, they were able to increase the money they received from *taxing* local people. Trade made the Roman empire even more powerful because vast amounts of money were made importing and exporting goods. During the Roman period Britain’s trade was directed across the Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel. Imports included: coin, pottery, olive oil, wine, olives, salt fish, & glass. Exports (more difficult to prove archeologically): metals (silver, gold, lead, iron & copper), salt & agricultural products.

**Society**

Quick Quiz
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**440-500 CE** Civil war and famine in Britain; Pictish invasions: Many towns and cities are in ruins.

c. 480 – 550 Arrivial of Anglo-Saxons

**Location**

Roman Britain 200 CE

![Map of Roman Britain 200 CE]

The wealthiest Romans owned **slaves**. Houses for the wealthy often contained, large paintings and murals made from tiny pieces of tile (mosaics) often showed scenes from history, and daily life. The Romans introduced the idea of a town as a centre of power and **administration**. Towns often contained an **amphitheatre**, which was a large outdoor theatre for competitions, sports and performances. Some had a **hypocaust**, which was underfloor heating.

**Beliefs:**

Romans were initially influenced by the Ancient Greeks, believing in many gods to represent different things. When Christians refused to worship Roman gods, they were persecuted and killed. Often Christians met in secret and used the ichthys sign to indicate that a meeting was taking place. By the fourth century CE, Romans had embraced Christianity, and it became the Empire's official religion.

**Evidence and Artefacts:**

There are many different accounts of what Boudicca was like and why she acted as she did. She is represented as a heroine of **resistance** in Britain and has a statue in central London. Tacitus wrote about her in 118 CE, but these were not eyewitness or primary accounts. These accounts say that her army killed innocent people not just soldiers.

There are many sites of Roman remains in Britain. Among the most famous are the bathhouses in Bath. Also, there are sites of Roman houses at Fishbourne and Chedworth, sections of Hadrian's Wall and the remains of around 320 **amphitheatres** such as Caerleon Amphitheatre in Wales.

**Legacy**

New towns (eg. place names - chester or caster.) Straight roads; aqueducts; central heating; food like apples, pears and peas; drains; the beginning of Christianity; forts; public baths; Hadrian’s Wall.

**Why did the Romans invade Britain?**

**How did they establish control?**

**How did Boudicca’s rebellion change power in Britain?**

**How did the Roman invasions change the way people lived, traded and socialised?**

**Did the Roman invasion improve Britain?**

**How did what people believed change during Roman times?**

**What is the legacy of the Roman invasion?**

**When was Britain conquered by the Romans?**

**What is a primary source?**

**When did Christianity become the main Roman religion?**