

Name/Period: _____

The Roman Republic

In 500 B.C., Rome was just one of many small towns in Italy. But by 133 B.C., the town had gained control of all Italy, and had conquered foreign lands as well. Roman armies won victories in Spain, Greece, Macedonia, Asia Minor (present day Turkey), and N. Africa.

There were several reasons for the success of the Romans. First, Rome was located in the center of the Mediterranean World. This made it easy for its army and navy to move quickly in any direction. Second, soldiers were courageous and well trained, and battles were carefully planned ahead of time by able generals. Third, the Romans had the ability to make friends out of their defeated enemies. Eventually, conquered people accepted wise and capable Roman rule and the peace that it brought.

The government in the early years of the Roman Republic had 3 branches—The Consuls, The Senate, and The Assembly. Each branch had various powers. Study the diagram and the information below, and then answer the questions on the following pages.

3 Branches of Early Roman Government

2 Consuls

Senate (Patricians)

Assembly (Patricians & Plebeians)

Separation of Powers Among the 3 Branches

<u>2 Consuls</u>	<u>Senate</u>	<u>Assembly</u>
<i>Oversaw the work of other government officials</i>	Held office for life	<u>Voted on laws suggested by government officials</u>
<i>Acted as judges</i>	Were advisors to the consuls and other govt. officials	<u>Could declare war or make peace treaties</u>
<i>Directed the army in Wartime</i>	Could approve or disapprove laws passed by Assembly	<u>Elected the 2 Consuls</u>
<i>Elected for 1 year term</i>	Decided how money should spent	<u>Elected government officials</u>
<i>Both consuls had to agree before the government could take action</i>	Made decisions concerning relations with foreign countries	
<i>In an emergency, Consuls could choose a "Dictator" to make quick decisions</i>	Had influence over the consuls and army	
<i>They chose the Senators</i>		

Over

Answer all Questions

1. Instead of having a king, the Romans preferred having these at the head of their government. _____
2. A “Republic” is a type of government where representatives make the laws. Was Rome a republic? _____
3. They were rich landowners who controlled the Senate. They also had the most power in the Assembly? _____
4. They were the “common people” of Rome who belonged to the Assembly, but had little influence in the government. _____
5. These people suggested laws for the Roman Republic. _____
6. This group elected the 2 Consuls? _____
7. Rich, well to do citizens who often owned large tracts of land were called “nobles”. What is another name for these people? _____
8. Which 2 branches of govt. had a part in making laws?

9. Which branch controlled the spending of \$? _____
10. Which branch would decide whether or not Rome should go to war with another country? _____

Answer all questions thoroughly.

1. Before 509 B.C., a king ruled Rome. Then, the city established the Roman Republic with power divided among 3 branches of government. Why do you think the Romans wanted to govern themselves in this way?

2. Which branch of government—Consuls, Senate, or Assembly—had the most power? Explain your answer.

3. In what 2 ways was the power of the 2 Consuls limited?

4. Why was a dictator chosen to head the government in time of emergency?

5. The government of the United States has a President, Congress, and Supreme Court. Explain how the American government is like the ancient Roman Govt, and how it is different.

5. When the Roman Republic 1st began in 509 B.C., power was in the hands of the wealthy landowners—the Patricians. The common people, or the Plebeians, had many complaints. They had little voice in the govt. They were treated unfairly under the law, and punishments were often severe. They had to pay high interest rates on loans, and could not marry patricians. Between 494 B.C. and 287 B.C. the plebeians struggled to gain equality with the patricians. This period of time was known as the “Conflict of the Orders”. The main reason equality was finally achieved was that plebeians were needed for the army and navy. Why do you think this forced the patricians to give plebeians the rights they demanded?
