

Civilizations: Expansion and Conquest

Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 9-10

Curriculum Focus: Ancient History

Lesson Duration: Two class periods

Program Description

Rome's Conquests (31 min.) – Traces the path and battles of Roman legions in their quest to conquer the world. *Peter the Great* (3 min.) – Looks at how this Russian leader brought Western influence and power to his struggling nation. *Rise of Nationalism* (6 min.) – Examines how ideas replaced wars in Russia's battle against its oppressive czars. *Communism & the Soviet Union* (5 min.) – Shows the fall of czarist Russia and the birth of the first communist state.

Onscreen Questions

- How did Rome expand its empire?
- What problems did Rome face by expanding?
- How can ideas expand a country's power?
- How can ideas conquer regimes?

Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Examine a map of the Roman Empire at its height.
- Learn about important rulers who led Rome's expansion.

Materials

- *Civilizations: Expansion and Conquest* video and VCR, or DVD and DVD player
- Internet access
- Classroom map

Procedures

1. After watching the video, tell students that this video featured Rome's expansions during two periods of history: the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire. Explain that unlike the

republic, the empire was a dictatorship in which one man, the emperor, ruled. At its height, the Roman Empire stretched north to Britain and south to Egypt. Show students the map at <http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/graphics/romanempiremaplarge.jpg>. Compare it with a current world map and ask students to name the continents and other modern-day countries that are included in Rome's territory.

2. Explain that although most of Rome's expansion took place during the empire, important conquests also took place during the republic. Ask students to name Rome's biggest rival during the republic. (*Carthage*) What were the wars with Carthage called? (*The Punic Wars*) Name some groups that the Roman army fought during the empire. (*Jews, Germans, Goths, Franks, Persians, Parthians, and Visigoths*)
3. Tell the class that many figures helped expand Rome's borders. As a class, discuss leaders mentioned in the video and briefly explain the role each had in Rome's expansion:
 - Scipio: Defeated Hannibal, the military leader of Carthage, in the Punic Wars
 - Gaius Marius: Made the Roman military professional, so people joined the army as a career; the army was well trained, with the best equipment; soldiers became more loyal to the general than to the state.
 - Julius Caesar: Fought against the Gauls, conquering more and more land, and eventually took control of Rome.
 - Emperor Augustus: Rome's first emperor; added Egypt, but slowed growth of the Roman Empire.
 - Emperor Claudius: Conquered Britain
 - Emperor Trajan: Last emperor to conquer new lands
 - Emperor Hadrian: Pulled back the Roman army and built large fortifications, including a wall in Britain (later known as Hadrian's Wall).
 - Emperor Valerian: Fought against the Persians to the east; taken prisoner and forced to negotiate with Persian king Shahpur.
4. Ask students to choose one figure above or another Roman general or emperor and write facts about the ruler in the form of an obituary, a short biography, a news article, or a letter or journal entry written in the first person. All forms of writing should include this information:
 - Name
 - Years in power
 - Role (general, dictator, emperor)
 - Impact on Roman expansion (lands conquered or protected)
 - Other significant events or important facts about his rule
5. Provide students with print and online resources. The following Web sites provide a good starting point:

- Illustrated History of the Roman Empire
<http://www.roman-empire.net/index.html>
 - A Visual Compendium of Roman Emperors
<http://www.roman-emperors.com/>
 - An Online Encyclopedia of Roman Emperors
<http://www.roman-emperors.org/>
6. Have students exchange their written pieces with those who covered different rulers. Hold a class discussion about the rulers' similarities and differences. Which ones conquered the most land? Which ones worked to contain the empire instead of expanding it? Who would they consider the most successful leaders of ancient Rome, and why?

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students were active in class discussions; essays reflected a strong understanding of their selected leader and included most the requested information.
- 2 points: Students participated in class discussions; essays reflected a satisfactory understanding of their selected leader and included most the requested information.
- 1 point: Students did not participate in class discussions; essays reflected a weak understanding of their selected leader and included little or none of the requested information.

Vocabulary

barbarian

Definition: The Roman word for people without a written language

Context: The Roman legions were weakened by barbarian attacks on the empire's frontiers.

Bolsheviks

Definition: A revolutionary party in Russia made up of radical socialists

Context: Vladimir Lenin led the Bolsheviks, promising the Russian people "peace, land, and bread."

czar

Definition: A king, or ruler, in Russia before 1917

Context: When Peter the Great became czar of Russia, he inherited a country that was isolated from the Western world.

empire

Definition: A large territory governed by a single authority, such as an emperor

Context: Rome established one of the largest and most powerful empires in history.

Legion

Definition: The main unit of the ancient Rome's army

Context: Each legion consisted of 3,000 to 6,000 soldiers.

Academic Standards**Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)**

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Historical Understanding— Understands and knows how to analyze chronological relationships and patterns
- World History: Across the Eras— Understands long-term changes and recurring patterns in world history
- Language Arts: Viewing— Uses a range of strategies to interpret visual media

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

NCSS has developed national guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands/>

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Culture
 - Time, Continuity, and Change
 - Power, Authority, and Governance
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Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>

