

FOUNDATION OF ROME

Archaeologists believe the mighty Roman Empire started before 1000 B.C. It probably began as a small cluster of wooden huts on the hills near the River Tiber on the west coast of central Italy. As the settlement, built on fertile farmland, grew in size and population, the powerful kingdom of Etruria to its north became interested. Soon the Etruscans took control of the region and built the city of Rome.



The Etruscans were religious, artistic people who produced fine paintings, ceramics and sculptures. They traveled widely and traded with far-off lands while the Romans were just simple farmers. Seven kings ruled Rome until 509 B.C. when Roman nobles led the people and drove out the last Etruscan king, Tarquin. The nobles then declared Rome was a republic where its citizens would elect their rulers. The Romans gradually conquered most of Italy, including the Greeks who had settled in the south. At the height of its power the Roman Empire stretched from Britain to the Middle East and included 80 million people of many nationalities.

Activity Box

1. What helped the original settlement to grow? _____

2. Who was the last ruler of the Etruscans? _____
3. How does a republic benefit its citizens? _____
4. In which part of Italy were the Greek settlements? _____
5. What outer boundaries of the Empire were mentioned? _____
6. Why do you think the Etruscans became interested in the original settlement of Rome?

7. In one sentence describe the Etruscan people.

FOUNDATION OF ROME (2)

8. Use an atlas and write the modern names of conquered countries in the Roman Empire next to their ancient names.

- Macedonia • • _____
- Cyrenaica • • _____
- Cappadocia • • _____
- Gallia • • _____
- Britannia • • _____
- Hispania • • _____
- Numidia • • _____
- Thracia • • _____



9. Using your atlas, suggest reasons why the Roman empire did not spread further south into Africa and further north into what is now called northern and eastern Europe.
