Lesson 4

MAIN IDEAS

1. **Culture**  Aspects of Roman culture influenced later societies.

2. **Science and Technology**  The Romans made a lasting contribution in the field of engineering.

3. **Government**  A number of nations today base their political and legal systems on Roman ideals.

TAKING NOTES

**Reading Skill: Finding Main Ideas**

Finding the main ideas of a lesson involves identifying its key points. Create a graphic organizer like the one shown below to highlight the lasting achievements of the Roman Empire.

![Diagram showing Lasting Achievements with branches for Law, The Arts, Building, and Government.]

**Skillbuilder Handbook, page R2**

**Roman Mask**  This Roman wall painting of a theatrical mask shows the Romans’ appreciation for the theater.

**CALIFORNIA STANDARDS**

7.1.1  Study the early strengths and lasting contributions of Rome (e.g., significance of Roman citizenship; rights under Roman law; Roman art, architecture, engineering, and philosophy; preservation and transmission of Christianity) and its ultimate internal weaknesses (e.g., rise of autonomous military powers within the empire, undermining of citizenship by the growth of corruption and slavery, lack of education, and distribution of news).

**HI 3**  Students explain the sources of historical continuity and how the combination of ideas and events explains the emergence of new patterns.

**REP 4**  Students assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them.
The Legacy of Rome

Build on What You Know  Look at the buildings in your community. Do some have columns or domes? Are there bridges with arches? If so, these structures may have features that developed during the Roman Empire.

The Impact of Roman Culture

ESSENTIAL QUESTION  What lasting contributions of Roman culture influenced later societies?

As Roman culture developed, it borrowed many aspects of Greek civilization. The Greeks, as you recall, were the dominant civilization in the Mediterranean before the Romans. The Romans conquered the Greeks but kept alive many of their ways. In addition, Roman artists, philosophers, and writers created their own styles that would influence many societies to follow.

Roman Art  The Romans popularized an earlier type of floor art called mosaic. A mosaic is a picture made out of many small, colored tiles or pieces of glass. Examples of mosaics can still be found in churches and government buildings around the world.

Sculptural styles from the Roman era are also a regular sight in modern times. The Greeks were the first to create statues based on realistic forms. The Romans adopted this style. The Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor is one example of a modern statue whose style dates back to Greek and Roman times.
Primary Source

Background: One of the most important Stoic thinkers of the Roman era was the scholar and politician Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.). He stressed the importance of citizenship and believed that Romans should work for the good of each other and Rome.

from “On Duty”
By Marcus Tullius Cicero
Translated by Walter Miller

As the Stoics hold, everything that the earth produces is created for man’s use; and as men, too, are born for the sake of men, that they may be able mutually to help one another . . . we ought to . . . contribute to the general good by an interchange of acts of kindness, by giving and receiving, and thus by our skill, our industry, and our talents to cement human society more closely together, man to man.

Philosophy and Citizenship The Romans borrowed much of their philosophy from the Greeks. The philosophy of Stoicism was especially influential in Rome. It was developed by the Greek philosopher Zeno. Stoicism stressed the importance of virtue, duty, and endurance in life. These were all values that many Romans prized.

The beliefs of Stoicism helped create a strong sense of citizenship in Rome. Citizenship refers to the relationship individuals have with their country. As part of this relationship, a country provides protection and security for its citizens. In return, citizens are expected to take an active part in society in order to strengthen their country. Today, these aspects of Stoicism are viewed by many as necessary qualities for being a good citizen.

Roman Language Another lasting aspect of Roman culture was its language, known as Latin. Because the Romans conquered most of Europe, Latin is the basis for several European languages. These include Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese, and Romanian. In addition, more than half of the words in English have a basis in Latin. What’s more, Latin was the official language of the Roman Catholic Church into the 20th century.
 Architectural and Engineering Feats

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION** What advancements did the Romans make in the field of engineering?

The Romans were talented engineers. Their styles have influenced architects and builders throughout history.

**New Building Methods** Roman architecture used many arches, vaults, and domes. An arch is a curved opening that holds up a structure. A vault is an arched structure that forms a ceiling or roof. A dome is a large, half-globe-shaped roof. All these structures existed before Rome emerged. However, the Romans used these forms to build higher and larger than anyone had before.

The Romans used arches to create large public buildings, like the Colosseum. This giant outdoor arena is one of the great achievements of Roman engineering and served as a model for many future public stadiums. Roman builders also utilized arches in the building of **aqueducts**. Aqueducts are bridge-like structures designed to bring fresh water into cities and towns.

Countless modern structures include these Roman forms. Highway bridges are often built on arches. The U.S. Capitol and capitols in many states—including California, Texas, and Massachusetts—have large domes, arches, and vaults just like Roman buildings.

**Roman Roads** To improve communications and travel across their far-reaching empire, the Romans built some 50,000 miles of roads. Workers built many roads for the specific purpose of transporting Rome's powerful army. The Appian Way was the first one of these and it is probably the most famous. Today, tourists still visit Rome to walk on it.

The Romans built roads over mountains, across rivers, and over swamps. These roads were so well built that some can still be seen today. In addition, many modern highways in Europe still follow the routes first laid out by the Romans.

**REVIEW** What three architectural styles did the Romans use most often?
Contributions to Religion and Law

ESSENTIAL QUESTION What contributions did the Romans make to religion and law?

Great civilizations, such as that of Rome, have passed on not only things we can touch and see. They have also given us powerful ideas.

Preserving Christianity One of Rome’s key contributions was its support and encouragement of Christianity. Although they resisted Christianity early on, Roman officials later embraced its teachings and even made it the official religion of the empire. As the most powerful empire in the world at that time, Rome was able to give Christianity the strength and support it needed to thrive.

When the Western Roman Empire fell, Christianity prospered in the former imperial lands. Germanic kings and queens became Christians. In addition, the Byzantine Empire promoted Christianity in the East. All of this enabled Christianity to become the force it is today. Currently, one-third of the people in the world are Christians.

Roman Law and Rights Perhaps Rome’s most lasting and widespread contribution was its system of laws. Roman judges and political leaders established laws that reflected the Stoic ideals of duty and virtue. They stressed fairness and common sense.

Roman laws promoted such principles as equal treatment under the law and the presumption of innocence for those accused of crimes. The principles of Roman law endured to form the basis of legal systems in many European countries and in the United States of America.
Finally, Rome established aspects of a representative government that many nations use today. As you recall, Rome began as a republic in which average citizens held great power. During this time, the Romans established various assemblies, including a senate, to make laws and represent the views of the people. Centuries later such a political structure exists in countries around the globe. In the United States, for example, the House of Representatives and the Senate are the nation’s two main representative bodies. The nation’s citizens elect their members. The members of each body work to create and pass laws and address the needs of the people they represent.

**REVIEW** What were some of the principles that Roman law promoted?

**Lesson Summary**
- The Romans mixed aspects of Greek culture with their own to create enduring forms of art.
- The Romans were talented engineers who made many advances in architecture and building.
- The Romans made lasting contributions to the fields of government and law.

**Why It Matters Now . . .**
From its architectural styles to its legal principles, Rome has had a significant influence on modern society.

**Activity**

**Terms & Names**
1. Explain the importance of
   mosaic   Stoicism   aqueduct

**Using Your Notes**

**Finding Main Ideas** Use your completed cluster diagram to answer the following questions:
2. Which of these lasting achievements do you consider most significant? Why? (7.1.1)

**Main Ideas**
3. What art form did the Romans enhance? (7.1.1)
4. In what ways is Roman architecture evident in the United States today? (HI 3)
5. What were some of the rights that citizens enjoyed under Roman law? (7.1.1)

**Critical Thinking**
6. **Making Inferences** How did Stoicism help to promote citizenship in Rome? (REP 4)
7. **Identifying Issues and Problems** What problem did Roman engineering help to overcome? (7.1.1)

**Making a Speech** Use various resources to find examples of Rome’s influence on modern-day public works and architecture. Compare these modern structures with those of Rome in a brief speech. (Framework)