

Engineering the Roman Way with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To understand the structural features of Roman architecture and the significance of their engineering advancements in Britain.

Use your historical knowledge and the word bank to create a detailed annotated drawing of a Roman villa or aqueduct. Ensure you include the key architectural features that made Roman construction so durable.

Draw: Create a detailed, labelled diagram of a Roman villa scene. Include a central courtyard with a mosaic floor (using small square patterns), an arched aqueduct in the background, and a cross-section showing a hypocaust system beneath the floorboards. Use a clean, technical drawing style similar to an architectural blueprint. Ellie the Elephant should be standing in the corner with a scroll, measuring the dimensions of the arch.



Label words: mosaic · hypocaust · aqueduct · toga · arch · tesserae · column · villa

Steps:

1. Step 1: Draw a large Roman arch. Label the 'keystone' at the very top. Why was the keystone essential for the stability of the arch?
2. Step 2: Illustrate a section of a Roman floor. Label the 'tesserae' used to create the mosaic. Describe the process of creating a mosaic.
3. Step 3: Draw a cross-section of a villa floor. Label the 'hypocaust' system. Explain how this system

provided underfloor heating.

4. Compare and contrast: How does a modern house heating system differ from the Roman hypocaust?
5. Justify your answer: Why were aqueducts considered one of the most important Roman engineering inventions for British settlements?
6. What might happen if a Roman architect failed to include a keystone in their arch design? Explain the consequence.