

## Ellie's Roman Discovery: Life in Britannia

*Learning objective: To understand the impact of the Roman Empire on daily life in Britain and evaluate the changes introduced during their occupation.*

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions below. Use evidence from the text to support your answers where required.

Ellie the elephant, our history expert, has been exploring the ancient ruins of a Roman villa in the British countryside. When the Romans arrived in Britannia nearly two thousand years ago, they brought significant changes to the way people lived. They transformed small, scattered settlements into organised towns with straight, paved roads that connected distant regions. These roads allowed the Roman army to march swiftly, but they also helped traders transport goods across the province.

Inside the villa, Ellie marvelled at the intricate mosaics on the floor, crafted from thousands of tiny, coloured stone tiles. The Romans also introduced advanced engineering, such as the hypocaust—a clever underfloor heating system that kept rooms toasty during chilly British winters. Life changed dramatically; people began to use Roman coins for buying bread or pottery, and public bathhouses became the centre of social life. While some local people resisted the invaders, others adopted Roman customs, such as wearing tunics and eating new types of food. The Roman occupation left a permanent mark on our landscape, from the layout of our modern towns to the very roads we travel upon today.

*Word bank: Britannia · occupation · aqueduct · mosaic · civilisation · centurion · infrastructure*

**1. What were the two main purposes of the straight, paved roads built by the Romans? (2 marks)**

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**2. According to the text, what was a 'hypocaust' and why was it useful in Britain? (2 marks)**

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**3. Why might the introduction of Roman coins have changed the way people traded goods? (2 marks)**

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**4. Explain why the author suggests that the Roman occupation left a 'permanent mark' on Britain. (2 marks)**

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**5. Do you think the arrival of the Romans was a positive or negative experience for the people already living in Britain? Justify your answer using reasons from the text. (3 marks)**

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**Draw: Draw a scene inside a Roman villa. Include a detailed mosaic floor pattern, a piece of Roman pottery, and a view of a straight Roman road leading towards a town in the distance.**



*Extension challenge: Compare and contrast Roman technology with modern-day equivalents. If you were a town planner in Roman Britain, which invention would you prioritise building first: an aqueduct for fresh water or a stone road for trade? Justify your decision. Finally, imagine you are a local living in Britannia when the Romans first arrive; write a short diary entry describing your initial thoughts on these new arrivals.*