

## J. The Legend of the Beginning of Rome

1. The Romans believed that their city had been founded by a pair of brothers called Remus and Romulus.
2. The legend says that the two boys were the children of the Roman god Mars and a priestess of the goddess Vesta.
3. When the king discovered that the priestess had had children (which was illegal), he ordered her and the children killed, but a servant took the boys and placed them on the river Tiber in a basket.
4. They floated downstream, to be discovered by a she-wolf who suckled them, and then they were discovered and raised by a shepherd.
5. When the boys returned to Rome as men, they competed to see who would be king. Romulus killed his brother, and became the city's first legendary king.

## K. The Early Roman Republic

1. Rome was ruled by kings until **c.509 BC**, when it became a government called a "republic."
2. It was a government controlled by the aristocracy, called "patricians." (Only members of the patrician families could participate in the government.)
3. The commoners, known as "plebeians," had no control over the government.
4. The patricians elected two officials to enforce the laws, known as "consuls."
5. There were two consuls, and they both had to agree when enforcing a law, so this limited their power.

## L. Tribunes

1. The plebeians would sometimes rebel against the patricians the same way the commoners rebelled in Athens.
2. To stop a rebellion, the patricians agreed to allow the plebeians to be protected by two government officials, called "tribunes" who were like police officers and lawyers for plebeians.
3. Tribunes could stop a consul from arresting or harming a plebeian.
4. The plebeians still could not make any laws, but they were protected *from the government* by the tribunes.

## M. A Written Constitution for Rome

1. The plebeians also wanted written laws, so they rebelled a second time.
2. This forced the patricians to create a set of written laws, or constitution, called the "Laws of the Twelve Tables."
3. The laws were placed on display in the Roman Forum (the central marketplace of Rome.)

### N. The Rise of the Roman Empire

1. Unfortunately, if there was one thing the Romans were better at than making good laws, it was conquering!
2. The Romans conquered so many of their neighbors that they had many slaves.
3. The Romans treated slaves very badly, because they could easily be replaced as they conquered more and more people.
4. Some of them were even made to fight to the death in stadiums for entertainment. These slaves were known as “gladiators.”

### O. The Fall of the Roman Republic

1. Many Romans did not like slavery and did not like having an empire, but they did not know how to change Rome back into a republic.
2. A charismatic leader named Julius Ceasar promised he could do it after he conquered Gaul (France), but what he really want to do was become king.
3. To stop him from becoming king, the Romans assassinated him, but killing such a great leader only led to a terrible civil war, and the rise of a worse one!

### P. The Roman Empire

4. The first Roman emperor was Augustus. His title was “princeps,” which means “first citizen.”
5. Since he had no son, Augustus chose his son-in-law Tiberius to be the next emperor, but after that Rome became a “murder monarchy.”
6. Tiberius was killed by the next emperor Caligula, who was killed by the next emperor Claudius, etc. etc.
7. After this, Rome really didn’t do anything positive. It just got bigger and bigger, until 117 AD.



Map of the Roman Empire at its greatest extent (c.117 AD) — and shown compared to the present-day United States.

## Q. The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire

1. Starting in 376, the Germanic barbarians appeared on Rome's northern border, begging to be allowed into the empire. They were being driven into Roman territory by a terrifying enemy known as the Huns!
2. Rome could not fight all the barbarians at once. By 476, the date we have used for the Fall of the Roman Empire, all of Rome's territory had been seized by invading barbarians, and the last emperor was kicked off the throne.