**Lesson Concepts for Exploring the Roman Forum!**

**Designed for grades 9th - 12th**

Introduction and Project Background:

The Roman Forum virtual tour you are about to explore began as an international initiative in 1997, called Rome Reborn. Its mission was to recreate the ancient city of Rome in 3D using digital technology as it appeared at the peak of its urban development in approximately the year 320 AD. We think that at that time, the population of Rome was about a million people, who lived and worked in about 7,000 buildings.

Rome Reborn’s partner, Flyover Zone, uses the latest version of the model of the city to create individual virtual tours through Yorescape, to present well-known monuments and areas in the city, as in this case, the Roman Forum. The idea is to make it possible for you to freely visit these landmarks, teleporting from point of interest to point of interest!

**INTRODUCTION TO TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE:**

**FIRST STEPS:**

Make sure you and your students can access the [Yorescape.com](https://www.flyoverzone.com/virtual-tours-2/) virtual tours and the Roman Forum virtual tour. This can be done via a web browser or downloaded through Google Play or the App store for mobile devices.

The following lesson concepts are approached through the following selected thematic lenses outlined by the [National Council for Social Studies](https://www.socialstudies.org/):

* Culture
* Time, Continuity and Change
* Power, Authority and Governance

**What is included in this guide?:**

Background information on the Roman Forum

Vocabulary list for key terms

4 Lesson Concepts with thematic approaches, objectives, suggested stops and essential questions.

**What is the Roman Forum?**

**Background information for teachers and students**

**Show students stops 50 *What is a forum?* and 21 *The Impact of the Roman Forum* Virtual Tour and/or introduce the following background information.**

The Roman Forum, or Forum Romanum, was the main public square, or plaza, of the city. While not the only forum in the city, it was certainly the most important. What does the word “forum” really mean? First, let’s note that this wasn’t the only space called a forum in Rome. In early times, there was also a forum for the cattle market and others for vegetables, pigs, fish, fowl, and flour. Starting with Julius Caesar, other forums were added by Rome’s leaders in the area just north of the Roman Forum.

What do all these places have in common? Etymology helps. “Forum” is related to the word “foris”, which means “outside,” “out of doors.” A “forum” is a large, open-air civic space used for a variety of purposes. In English, we would call such a space a “plaza” or a “square.” The Roman Forum was undoubtedly the most versatile, as well as the most significant, of the public plazas in Rome.   
  
Located between the Capitoline and Palatine hill, the forum served as the hub of daily life. There were law courts, shops, meeting places, open air markets, temples and monuments. The forum was also a place for public elections, ceremonies, triumphs, gladiatorial games, religious celebrations and—last but not least—monuments to important leaders and historical events.

The Roman Forum developed gradually over time, the site having been drained for use in the late 7th century BC. By 500 BC or so, scholars think people began meeting in an open air forum which served at first as a marketplace. It was connected to the urban street grid by a number of roads, including the Argiletum entering on the north side, the Vicus Jugarius and the Vicus Tuscus entering on the south, and the Via Sacra running through the Forum in an east-west direction. The Clivus Capitolinus and the Clivus Argentarius linked the Forum to the Capitoline Hill.

This project has the mission of re-creating in 3D the ancient city of Rome as it appeared at the peak of its urban development in approximately the year 320 AD. We think that at that time, the population of Rome was about a million people, who lived and worked in about 7,000 buildings.

Now that you and your students know more about the Roman Forum, you can explore some of the monuments in more detail through the following themes and associated lesson concepts. Choose the activities that catch your attention and adapt them to fit your needs.

**LESSON CONCEPT 1**

**CULTURE**

**ESSENTIAL GUIDING QUESTION:** How is the art, architecture and monuments of the ancient Roman Forum an expression of Roman culture?

**INTRODUCTION:**

Using the lens of Culture as defined by the National Council for the Social Studies, students will Explore, Synthesize, Connect, Reflect and Share what they learn through multiple stops on a virtual tour of the Roman Forum.

**Culture** is defined as the socially transmitted beliefs, values, institutions, behaviors, traditions and way of life of a group of people encompassing other attributes and products, such as language, literature, music, arts and artifacts, and foods.

* Cultural Expressionism is valuing and conveying culture through the creation and communication through art, literature, music, linguistics, folkways, customs, cuisine, architecture, and economy.
* Individual Development and Identity is shaped by an individual’s culture, by groups, by institutional influences, and by lived experiences shared with people inside and outside the individual’s own culture throughout her or his development.

## **LESSON GOALS:**

Students will:

* **explore** the Roman Forum virtually and understand its importance in antiquity;
* **synthesize** information learned from each virtual stop;
* **connect** the information they learned to activate prior knowledge and **reflect** on what they learned and what questions they still have;
* recognize the ways in which specific monuments and monuments in general played a key role in ancient Rome and more broadly, how these ideas are relevant today to different communities around the world;
* **share** observations and inferences about ancient Roman culture.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

* Introduce the essential guiding question: *How are ancient Roman monuments an expression of Roman culture?*
* Go over the Roman Forum background information and definitions for culture. You might also want to show or assign Stops (in this order): 1 *Welcome to Rome Reborn*, 50 *What is a Forum?* and 20 *Impact of Forum*.
* Assign the following stops for students to EXPLORE or lead them through yourself.

Stops 15 and 16: *The Curia Julia Exterior* and *The Curia Julia* *Interior*

Stops 29 and 28: *Marsyas Fig Sculpture* and *Marsyas Fig Interpretation*

Stop 9: *Castor and Pollux*

* Refer students to vocabulary list for use during their exploration if needed.
* Ask students to take notes on observations as they explore each stop.
* Once students have completed the stops move on to the **SYNTHESIZE, CONNECT, REFLECT AND SHARE** activities. These activities can be written, worked on in small groups or pairs, or shared with the class:

**SYNTHESIZE:**

Considering all of the stops and sites you visited:

* How are the monuments you explored examples of cultural expressionism?
* How do the monuments express Roman culture?

Give concrete examples considering the following categories:

* Beliefs
* Values
* Institutions
* Behaviors
* Traditions
* What did they have in common? How were they different?
* From what you learned, can you describe or list any factors that led to the development of Roman cultural achievements and social norms?

### 

### **CONNECT AND REFLECT**

Thinking about and reflecting on your virtual touring experience can help connect to people and ideas across time and place.

Use these prompts to reflect on your experience as related to the theme of **culture**:

* What more do you know about the Forum and ancient Rome? How do you imagine the lives of the people for whom the monuments were created? How is anything you saw or learned about today similar to or different from your own life and experiences?
* What are you still curious about? What did the experience NOT answer for you? Name three things that you wish you knew more about and why. How might you go about finding out the answers to your questions?
* Compare the art and architecture in your life (home, school, place of worship) to what you saw in the Roman Forum tour you explored. Consider materials used, presentation, audience, intended use, value, etc. What similarities and differences can you think of?

**SHARE**

Have students share their reflections in pairs, small groups or with the class.

**LESSON CONCEPT #2**

**TIME, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE**

**ESSENTIAL GUIDING QUESTION:** How do the art, architecture and monuments of the ancient Roman Forum demonstrate continuity and change over time? How can meaning change over time?

**INTRODUCTION**

Cultures are not fixed, they continually adapt and change over time. Studying the Roman Forum provides a unique opportunity for understanding patterns of continuity and change through time and allows us to better realize how the past affects the present.

**LESSON GOALS**

Students will:

* **explore** the Roman Forum virtually and understand the history over time of selected buildings and monuments;
* **synthesize** information learned from each virtual stop;
* **connect** the information they learned to activate prior knowledge and make connections between what they learned about ancient Rome and life today;
* **reflect** on what they learned and what questions they still have;
* identify the function of monuments in their original context; and recognize the ways in which things stayed the same or changed over time;
* **share** observations and inferences about ancient Roman culture.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

* Introduce the essential guiding questions: *How do the art, architecture and monuments of the ancient Roman Forum demonstrate continuity and change over time? How can meaning change over time?*
* Go over the Roman Forum background information and introductory section on Time, Continuity, and Change. You might also want to show or assign Stops (in this order): 1 *Welcome to Rome Reborn*, 50 *What is a Forum?* and 20 *Impact of Forum*.
* Assign the following stops for students to EXPLORE, alternatively, ask students to choose 3-4 stops on their own:

Stops 15 and 16: *The Curia Julia Interior* and *Exterior*

Stop 19: *Harmonious Gods Introduction*

Stops 29: *Marsyas Fig Sculpture* and 28: *Marsyas Fig Interpretation*

Stops 27: *Marforio* and 26 *Marforio Later History*

* Refer students to vocabulary list for use during their exploration if needed.
* Ask students to take notes on observations as they explore each stop.
* Once students have completed the stops move on to the **SYNTHESIZE, CONNECT, REFLECT** AND **SHARE** activities. These activities can be written, worked on in small groups or pairs, or shared with the class:

**SYNTHESIZE:**

Considering all of the stops and sites you visited:

* How do the buildings and monuments you explored demonstrate continuity or change?
* Giving concrete examples and using what you learned explain how some of the categories below changed or stayed the same over time:
* Physical Space (ie a building itself)
* Beliefs
* Values
* Institutions
* Religion
* Were there similarities you picked up on between stops? Were there differences? What can you attribute those similarities and differences to?
* How do some of the changes reflect various motivations and conflicts? What were some of the motivations and reasons for conflict you saw examples of?

### **CONNECT AND REFLECT**

### Thinking about and reflecting on your virtual touring experience can help connect to people and ideas across time and place.

### Use these prompts to reflect on your experience as related to the theme of **continuity and change**:

* How is what you saw or learned about today similar to or different from your own life and experiences?
* What are you still curious about? What did the experience NOT answer for you? Name three things that you wish you knew more about and why. How might you go about finding out the answers to your questions?
* Compare the art and architecture in your life (home, school, place of worship) to what you saw in the Roman Forum tour you explored. Consider materials used, presentation, audience, intended use, value, etc. What similarities and differences can you think of?

**SHARE**

Have students share their reflections in pairs, small groups or with the class.

**LESSON CONCEPT #3**

**POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE**

**ESSENTIAL GUIDING QUESTION:** How do the art, architecture and monuments of the ancient Roman Forum reflect the political values, power and authority of their leaders and governmental institutions?

**INTRODUCTION**

Each culture has a set of beliefs and values that form the foundation of their political thought and systems of government. Governments tend to embody the core social values of a group. By examining the art and architecture of the Roman Forum, we can learn about Roman political systems, the values behind how they governed, how they came into conflict with others, and how they attempted to resolve these conflicts and sought to establish order and security. We can also gain a better understanding of how practices like colonization, imperialism and nationalism have played a role in Roman civilization.

**LESSON GOALS**

Students will:

* **explore** and identify the ways Roman leaders convey ideas of power and authority through art and architecture;
* **synthesize** information learned from each virtual stop;
* **connect** the information they learned to activate prior knowledge and make connections between what they learned about ancient Rome and life today;
* **reflect** on what they learned and what questions they still have;
* **share** observations and inferences about ancient Roman culture;
* Use information sources to examine and describe what the art and architecture tells us about the structure of the Roman’s government.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

* Introduce the essential guiding questions: How do the art, architecture and monuments of the ancient Roman Forum reflect the political values, power and authority of their leaders and governmental institutions?
* Go over the Roman Forum background information and introductory section on Time, Continuity, and Change. You might also want to show or assign Stops (in this order): 1 *Welcome to Rome Reborn*, 50 *What is a Forum?* and 20 *Impact of Forum*.
* Assign the following stops for students to EXPLORE or lead them through yourself:

Stop 5 *Triple Arch of Augustus*

Stops 31 *Rostra Design*, 31 Rostra History*Augustan Rostra*

Stop 22 *Janus*

* Refer students to vocabulary list for use during their exploration if needed.
* Ask students to take notes on observations as they explore each stop.
* Once students have completed the stops move on to the **SYNTHESIZE, CONNECT, REFLECT** AND **SHARE** activities. These activities can be written, worked on in small groups or pairs, or shared with the class:

**SYNTHESIZE:**

Considering all of the stops and sites you visited:

* Explain how they are reflective of power, authority or governance.
* Giving concrete examples and using what you learned explain how some of the following categories relate to the concepts of power, authority and governance or government:
* Physical Space (ie a building itself)
* Beliefs
* Political Values
* Institutions
* State Religion
* Were there similarities you picked up on between stops? Were there differences? What can you attribute those similarities and differences to?
* How do some of the stops reflect various motivations and conflicts the Romans had?

### 

### **CONNECT AND REFLECT**

### Thinking about and reflecting on your virtual touring experience can help connect to people and ideas across time and place.

### Use these prompts to reflect on your experience as related to the theme of **power, authority and government**:

* How is what you saw or learned about today similar to or different from your own life and experiences? Think about how our leaders represent power, authority and government.
* What are you still curious about? What did the experience NOT answer for you? Name three things that you wish you knew more about and why. How might you go about finding out the answers to your questions?
* Compare the art and architecture in your life (home, school, place of worship) to what you saw in the Roman Forum tour you explored. Consider materials used, presentation, audience, intended use, value, etc. What similarities and differences can you think of?

**SHARE**

Have students share their reflections in pairs, small groups or with the class.

**EXTENSION IDEAS:**

* Compare and contrast the ideals of the Roman Republic to Athenian Democracy.
* Look closely at the dates of emperors in the vocabulary list. What do you notice? What can this tell you about the government?
* Research some of the events you learned about and analyze the effects of political conflict and national unity.

**LESSON CONCEPT# 4**

**MYTH AND RELIGION: ROMAN GODS, GODDESSES, AND PRACTICE**

**ESSENTIAL GUIDING QUESTION:** How are myth, religion and politics evident together in the art and architecture of the Roman Forum?

**INTRODUCTION:**

The word *myth* comes from the Greek word (*mŷthos*), which literally means “story” or “narrative.” Myths tell stories about gods, goddesses and heroes, but they are different from the way we think about "stories" or “myths” today. Myths are traditional narratives of gods, goddess, and heroes, great deeds and supernatural powers, that also explain various natural phenomena. All cultures have myths that are passed down through oral traditions, texts, and visual sources. These myths have a profound religious significance to the members of the culture that believe in them and they convey commonly held beliefs in a particular society not only about the forces of the world around them, but also proper behavior. Mythology can be considered a collection of myths or stories that are part of a larger, more formal system of religion. The term “religion” generally encompasses some kind of worldview, which usually includes some sort of mythology, but also the attitudes, ritual practices, communal identity, and moral teachings associated with the worldview.

In both Greece and Rome, myth, religion, and politics were all intertwined and evidence of this existed in their beliefs and practices and therefore the art and architecture they built for these purposes.

The lesson below will help students to think more about this and understand how we see evidence of the blending of myth, religion and politics in Ancient Rome.

## **LESSON GOALS:**

Students will:

* **explore** the art and architecture of the Roman Forum virtually and find evidence of where mythology, religion and politics are blended together;
* **synthesize** information learned from each virtual stop;
* **connect** the information they learned to activate prior knowledge and **reflect** on what they learned and what questions they still have;
* recognize the ways in which art, monuments, and monuments in general played a key role in ancient Roman society with relation to myth, religion and politics.
* **share** observations and inferences about ancient Roman culture.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

* Introduce the essential guiding question: *How are myth, religion and politics evident together in the art and architecture of the Roman Forum?*
* Go over the Roman Forum background information and definitions for culture. You might also want to show or assign Stops (in this order): 1 *Welcome to Rome Reborn*, 50 *What is a Forum?* and 20 *Impact of Forum*.
* Assign the following stops for students to EXPLORE or lead them through yourself.

Stops 8 and 9: *Gods* and *The Harmonious Gods History*

Stops 15 and 16: *The Curia Julia Exterior* and *The Curia Julia* *Interior*

Stop 9: *Castor and Pollux*

Stop 23: *Lacus Curtius*

* Refer students to vocabulary list for use during their exploration if needed.
* Ask students to take notes on observations as they explore each stop.
* Once students have completed the stops move on to the **SYNTHESIZE, CONNECT, REFLECT AND SHARE** activities. These activities can be written, worked on in small groups or pairs, or shared with the class:

**SYNTHESIZE:**

Considering all of the stops and sites you visited:

* How do the monuments you explored relate to myth, religion and politics? What did you notice about the relationship of myth, religion and politics?

Give concrete examples considering the following categories:

* Beliefs
* Values
* Institutions
* Behaviors
* Traditions
* Using information from the Intro and the stops you visited describe the influence of Roman mythology, gods and goddesses on the social and religious structure of Roman society.
* What did the stops and places have in common? How were they different?
* How did ambiguity play a role in Roman religion and myth?

### **CONNECT AND REFLECT**

### Thinking about and reflecting on your virtual touring experience can help connect to people and ideas across time and place.

### Use these prompts to reflect on your experience as related to the theme of **myth, religion, and politics:**

* How is what you saw or learned about today similar to or different from your own life and experiences? How are the ideas you explored relevant today to different communities around the world? Consider countries that have separation of church and state and those that do not.
* How is what you learned similar or different to what you studied for ancient Greece? Compare Roman gods and goddesses with what you know of gods and goddesses of ancient Greece.
* What are you still curious about? What did the experience NOT answer for you? Name three things that you wish you knew more about and why. How might you go about finding out the answers to your questions?
* Compare the art and architecture in your life (home, places of business, school, place of worship) to what you saw in the Roman Forum tour you explored. Consider materials used, presentation, audience, intended use, value, etc. What similarities and differences can you think of?

**SHARE**

Have students share their reflections in pairs, small groups or with the class.