Roman History: Conquest of Britain

Today you are going to learn about the Roman emperors who came to Britain with an army. Go through all of the pages to find out more about four emperors and then complete the task below!

TASK: Match each event on the timeline with the Roman general or emperor responsible.

Event 1: 54-55 BC

1st Roman General invades Britain.

Event 2: AD 54-55

Conquest of Britain begins.

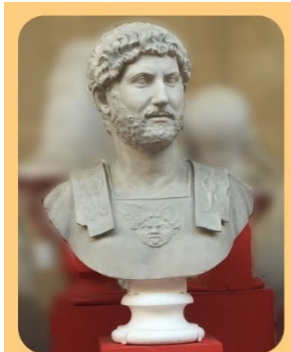**Event 3: AD 60**

Boudicca revolts against the Romans.

Event 4: AD 122

An 80-mile long defensive wall built across Britain.
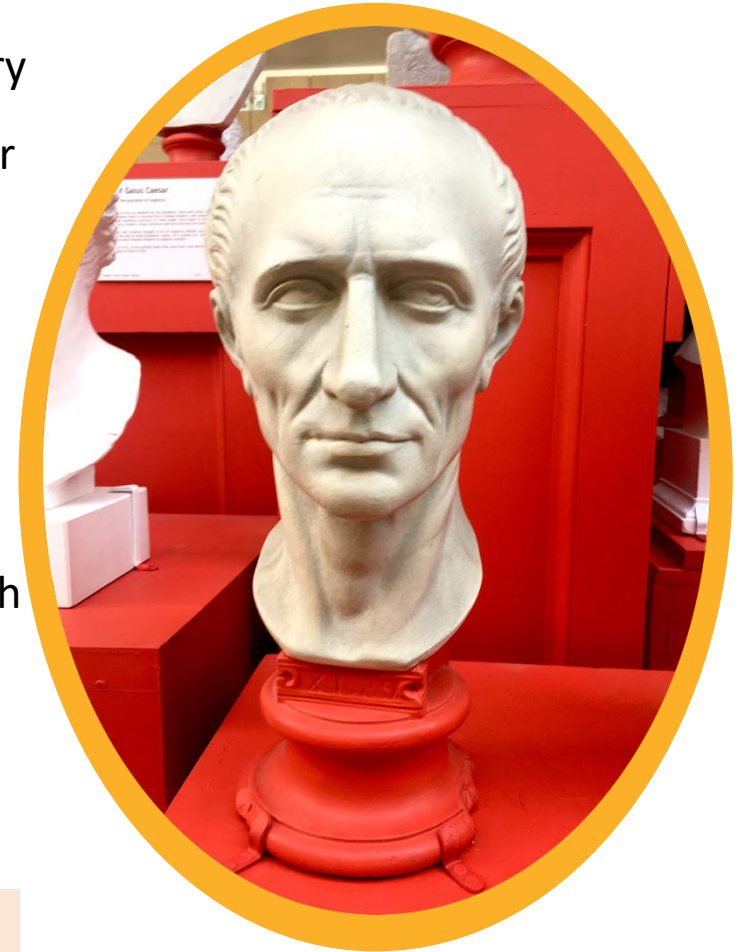
Nero

Hadrian

Julius Caesar

Claudius

The General: Julius Caesar

Julius Caesar was never an emperor of Rome! But he was a very powerful general, some might even say a dictator. Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 55 BC. He landed on the coast of Kent but many of his ships were wrecked and damaged by a storm!

After a few small battles, he had to turn back to France (called Gaul by the Romans). Caesar returned a year later in 54 BC with more ships and more soldiers. He was slightly more successful this time and established Rome's foothold in **Britain**.

TASK: What is the difference between a king, a dictator and an emperor? Discuss and write down at least 3 characteristics of each.

Museum of
Classical
Archaeology

The Emperors: Claudius

Claudius became emperor at the age of 50, after Caligula was assassinated. Before that, many thought he was very foolish and weak. But he claimed it was a survival tactic for living at the imperial court – nobody thought he was a threat.

He was a bookish character and invented three new letters for the alphabet, but they didn't catch on. He wanted a military victory and so launched the invasion of **Britain**.

TASK: This head was found in a river in Suffolk. The ragged edge means the head was violently cut or snapped from the rest of the statue. What might have happened? When? Why?

The Emperors: Nero

Nero became emperor when he was only 17. His statue shows him as young man with downy cheeks: he's not yet shaved his first beard. He was obsessed with music and loved to perform.

To keep his voice in top condition, he would lie on his back with a slab of lead on his chest. He had 5000 young men trained to applaud him when he sang. No one was allowed to leave the theatre during a performance. Some people pretended to be dead so they could **escape!**

TASK: Nero had to deal with a revolt in Britain while he was emperor. What are 3 things you would do if you were in charge of a country protesting against you? What would Nero do?

The Emperors: Hadrian

Hadrian was the first Roman emperor to wear a full beard. As well as fashion this is a sign of how much he prized Greek culture. Many of the Greek politicians and philosophers in the Museum also have beards just like Hadrian. Hadrian spent most of his reign on the move around the different provinces of the Empire. He ordered the building of Hadrian's Wall. This marked the northernmost limit of the Roman Empire in **Britain.**

TASK: Can you see Medusa's head on Hadrian's armour? Find out what her story is! Can you think of reasons why Hadrian included her head on his armour?

Creative Task: Comic

Instructions: Draw a comic about Claudius based on what you learned.

We wrote 4 labels that will help you structure the story. You will need to create a label for 2 boxes yourself!

Step 1.

Use the comic grid on the next page or draw your own. It should have six boxes, and space for labels.

Step 2.

Label the boxes with the four labels below and two of your own to continue the story.

1. Claudius becomes Emperor. He needs to impress his people.
2. Claudius looks for inspiration in his ancestors.
3. He realises he should invade Britain.
4. The Roman army sets out on ships.

Step 3.

 Draw pictures to match the labels and complete your comic!

My Claudius Comic

Claudius becomes Emperor. He needs to impress his people.	Claudius looks for inspiration in his ancestors.	He realises he should invade Britain.
The Roman army sets out on ships.		