



Discovering ROMAN VERULAMIUM



Welcome to the Roman town of Verulamium, which stood here 2,000 years ago! My name is Tessa Wheeler and I worked with a team of archaeologists to dig up the ruins of the town in the 1930s. You can see many of the Roman treasures we discovered on your visit to the Museum today.

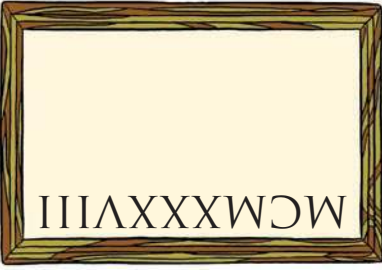
INSIDE
Park Explorer's Activity Map



Walk along the Colonnade

and stop to read Tessa Wheeler's memorial tablet. Notice how the date is written the Roman way, using letters for numbers.

Can you work out the year by adding up the Roman numbers?



M = 1000
C = 100
X = 10
V = 5
I = 1

Hint: take away any smaller numbers put before larger numbers.
For example, CM is 1000 - 100 = 900.

Head for the Central area

and look closer at the small bronze statues. Can you find the messenger god Mercury and Venus the goddess of love?

Why do you think Romans had statues like these?

- for worship
- for decoration
- for playing with



Peek at the small pottery lamps.

These were used to burn olive oil by lighting a wick placed in the nozzle.

How much light do you think these lamps could give out?

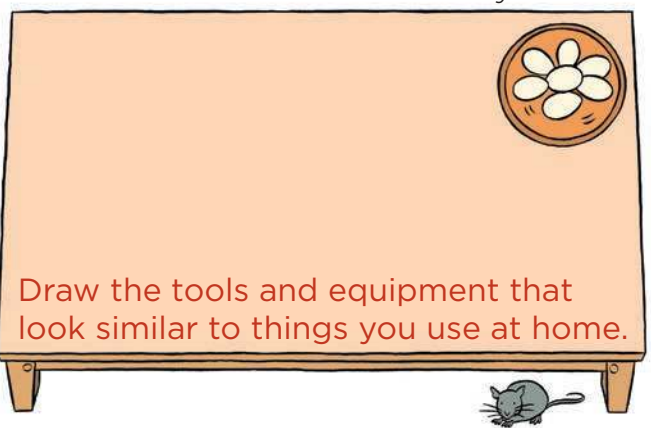


This tiny mystery object helped the Romans keep clean and look good!

Can you give it a label?



Look around the Roman kitchen. What's different to a modern-day kitchen?

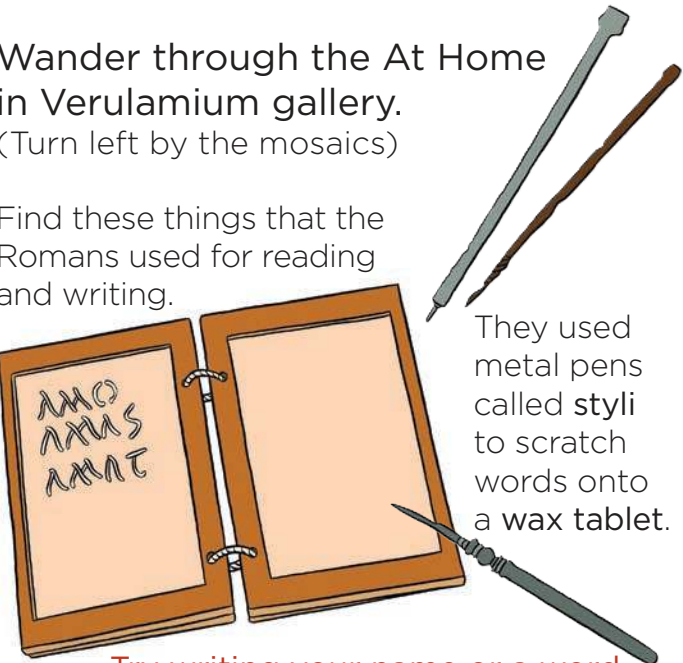


Draw the tools and equipment that look similar to things you use at home.

Wander through the At Home in Verulamium gallery.

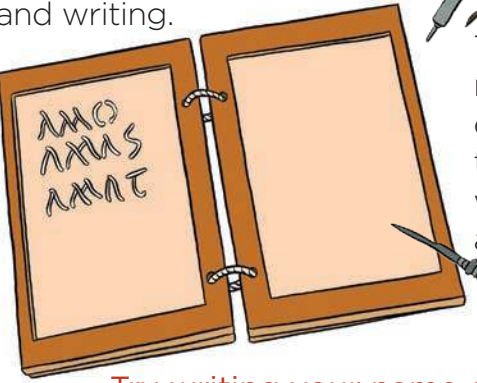
(Turn left by the mosaics)

Find these things that the Romans used for reading and writing.

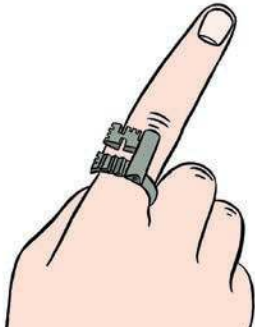


They used metal pens called styli to scratch words onto a wax tablet.

Try writing your name or a word on this tablet using the Roman letters you can see in the case.



Spot the **key rings** amongst the Roman locks and keys. People used these to lock away precious belongings.



What would you choose to lock up for safe-keeping?

Look around the Rites and Recreation gallery, where you can see popular activities and hobbies enjoyed by the Romans.

Which of these activities do you like doing today?

- ☐ listening to music
- ☐ going to the theatre
- ☐ fishing
- ☐ playing games
- ☐ hunting



Explore the green gallery

and learn about the Catuvellauni, the Iron Age tribe who lived here before the Romans.

Can you spot these Iron Age objects?



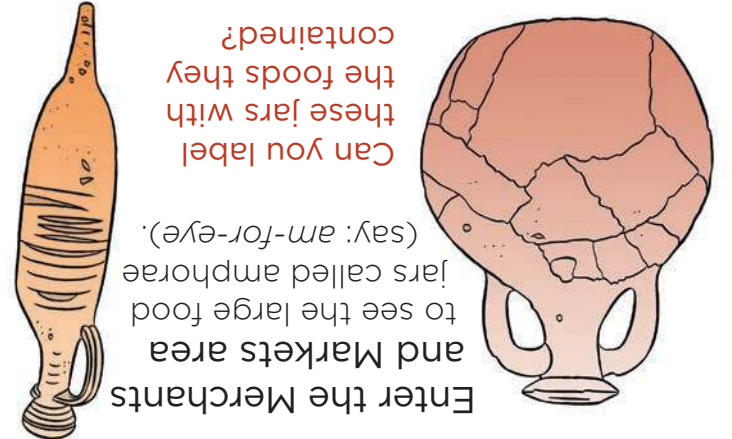
Which of these objects are similar to things you can see in the Roman displays? Circle them.



Enter the Merchants and Markets area

to see the large food jars called amphorae (say: am-for-eye).

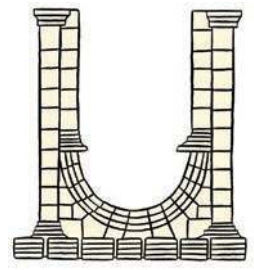
Can you label these jars with the foods they contained?




Visit the Making a Living gallery

and try building an arch just like the Roman builders did.


Find the building blocks!




First position the semi-circular support block called a centring piece.



Next build up the wedge-shaped blocks around the support.


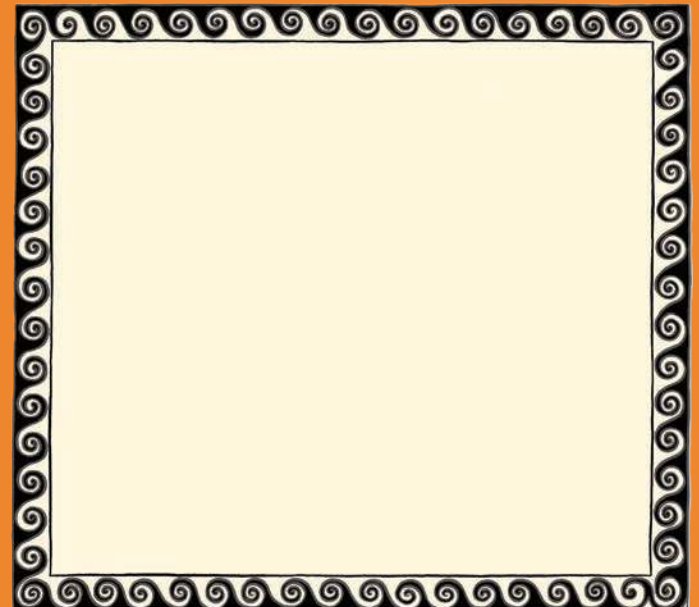


Remove the centring piece carefully. Like magic — your arch will support itself!



Admire the beautiful mosaics

that decorated the houses or villas of rich Romans. The different floor designs were made of small cubes of stone or tile arranged in colourful patterns.

What design would you put on a mosaic to impress your visitors? Draw it here.

Now take a closer look at a real Roman window arch.

Explore the drawers on this side of the gallery to find it.



Position the last block called the keystone in the centre to lock the other blocks in place.



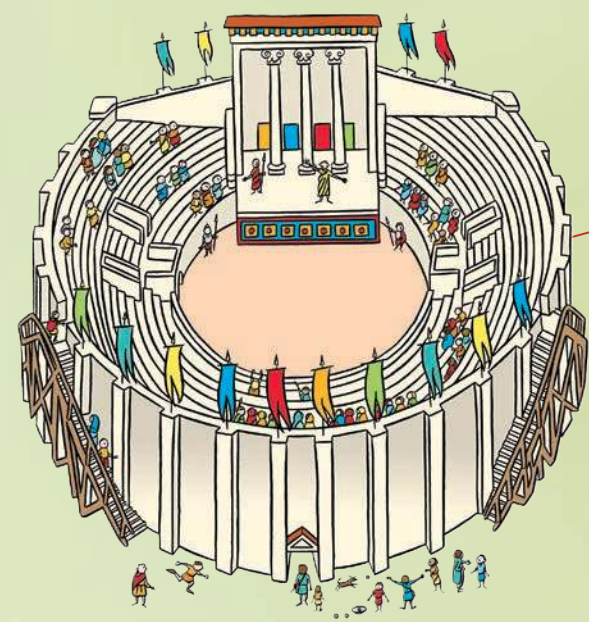
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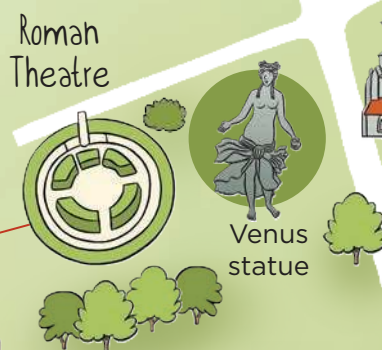
ROMAN VERULAMIUM

Explorer's Map

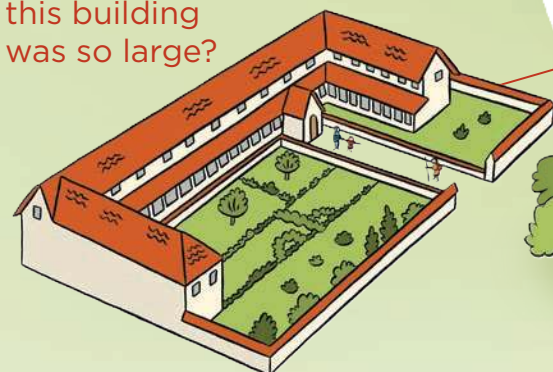
As you leave the museum today, imagine you are stepping out into the bustling centre of Verulamium. This important Roman town stood here for 400 years and covered the whole area you can see and beyond. Explore Verulamium Park to see the excavated remains of the town walls and buildings and discover life long ago in Roman Britain.



Visit the Roman Theatre (separate entrance fee applies), which could seat several thousand spectators in the open air. People came to watch plays and mime shows on stage. The arena was also used for religious processions, sports and entertainments such as wrestling and wild beast shows. **Look at the column and imagine how it might have felt to perform on this stage in Roman times.**



Picture the grand town house that was built here with a sunny courtyard garden. It had over 30 rooms decorated with splendid wall paintings and floor mosaics. **Why do you think this building was so large?**



Discover the site of Verulamium's Forum.

This was the busy town square and market place surrounded by open colonnades containing shops and temples to the Roman gods. The Basilica or town hall and law court was also here, with offices for gathering taxes and keeping town records.

Did you spot the carved fragments of the Basilica inscription inside the Museum?



Basilica inscription



Glebe House and Wildlife Garden



Look for bumps and ditches in the grass marking the remains of the Roman walls, roads and buildings.

Café

Sports area

Playground

Cricket pavillion



Shell mosaic

Verulamium Park



Roman mosaic and Hypocaust



Roman god mosaic

Examine the Hypocaust

or underfloor heating system that warmed the rooms of the villa. Hot air from a furnace or fire flowed under the floor mosaics and up into the hollow walls of the rooms. **Do you think it would have been easy to control the temperature?**

Hunt for the treasure discovery spots!

Did you know that hidden from view under the grass lie the buried remains of Verulamium's streets and buildings, still waiting to be discovered? Use this map to stand on the very spot where some of the town's beautiful treasures were dug up by archaeologists working with me in the 1930s.

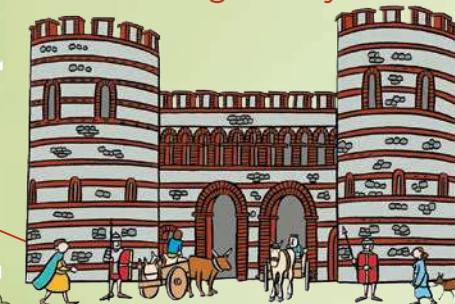
Tessa Wheeler
Archaeologist
1893-1936



Find the London Gate

foundations – one of four huge gateways of the walled town. This gateway let carts and pedestrians in and out from Watling Street, the busy Roman road running from London to Chester.

How many paces wide is the gateway?



Follow the Roman wall made of flint and red brick tiles, which once surrounded the whole of Verulamium to keep the town safe.

Stand next to the Roman town wall and strike a pose! Take a photo and share it @stalbamuseums.



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