

# LESSON 2

500 B.C.

250 B.C.

A.D.

about 500 B.C.  
Rome sets up a republic.

264–146 B.C.  
Rome defeats Carthage  
in three wars.

44 B.C.  
Julius  
is killed



## The Roman Republic

### PREVIEW

#### Focus on the Main Idea

Rome's republic became very powerful, but its conquests created major problems.

#### PLACES

Carthage  
Rome

#### PEOPLE

Regulus  
Hannibal  
Scipio  
Julius Caesar

#### VOCABULARY

patrician  
plebeian  
republic  
representative  
Senate  
consul  
dictator  
tribune  
patriotism  
caesar

#### TERMS

Appian Way

#### EVENTS

The Punic  
Wars



You and your friends gather around the storyteller. It's a story you've heard many times before, but you never get

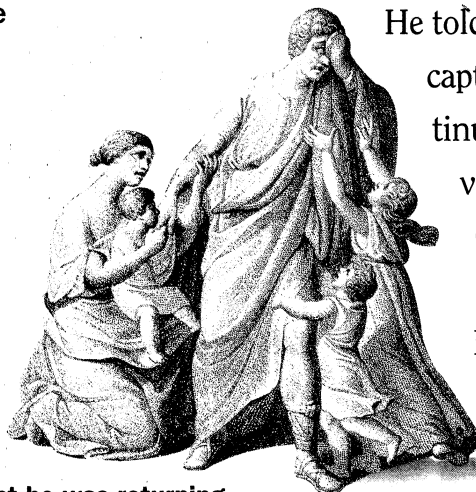
tired of hearing it. It is the story of the brave death of Roman general Regulus.

Regulus fought in the war against Carthage. He was captured in the early stages of the war. The leaders of Carthage sent Regulus back to Rome to convince the Roman leaders to make peace. He was then to return to Carthage.

You and your friends grow quiet when the storyteller comes to the next part of the story. According to the story, Regulus entered the Roman Senate with his head bowed.

He told the Senate that he had disgraced Rome by being captured in battle. He then urged the Romans to continue the war against Carthage until they were victorious. He knew that, once he returned to Carthage, he would face certain death.

You know people who don't believe the story of Regulus. You pay no attention to them. To you, Regulus is one of the greatest of Roman heroes.



- Knowing that he was returning to certain death in Carthage, the Roman general Regulus bid farewell to his wife and children.



**Main Idea and Details** As you read, think about what life was like in the Roman Republic.

## How the Romans Governed Themselves

After the Romans drove out the Etruscan king, they established a republic. In a republic, citizens have the right to vote, or choose their leaders. Those who are elected to represent the people are called **representatives**. Roman representatives served in a governing body called the **Senate**. Not everyone who lived in Rome was a citizen. Slaves and most foreigners were not citizens.

While Roman women were citizens, they had few rights. They could not vote or hold public office. However, Roman women did have more freedom than Greek women. Roman women had the right to own property and testify in court. Many women played major roles in governing Rome.

At first, only patricians ran the Roman republic. For example, the Senate was made up entirely of patricians. Each year, two patricians were chosen as **consuls** (KON sulz), or officials who managed the government and the army. Each of the consuls had the power to stop the other consul from taking an action if he did not agree with that action.

However, in an emergency, the consuls sometimes named one person to rule. This person was known as a **dictator**, or someone who has total control over the people.

Rome was growing larger, and getting more crowded. Roman citizens did not have police or fire protection. The plebeians often spoke out against the power of the patricians. Some worried patricians created their own private armies.

### REVIEW

How was the govern-

ment in Rome different from the government in Athens?

Compare and Contrast

▶ The Roman Senate would select two consuls to manage the government and army. This sculpture depicts a procession of Roman consuls and senators.



## The Roman Spirit

Regulus was a real person. He led Roman forces, and he was captured in battle. However, historians are not sure if the story of his release to Rome and return to Carthage really happened. Still, the Romans believed it happened, and that was important. They expected their leaders to be willing to sacrifice their lives to defend Rome. The Romans were proud of their excellent soldiers. Like Regulus, these soldiers were brave, tough, and loyal to their homeland. The Romans farmed their land in peacetime and defended their country against enemies in war.

Roman citizens were divided into two groups. The wealthiest, most powerful citizens were known as **patricians** (puh TRISH uhnz). All other citizens were called **plebeians** (pluh BEE uhnz). About 90 percent of Roman citizens were plebeians. They included farmers, soldiers, and merchants.

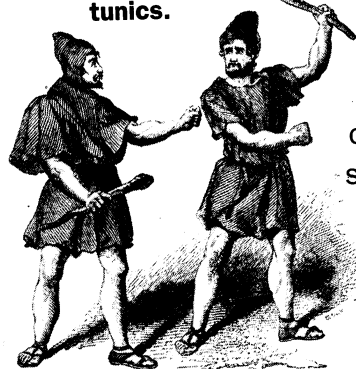
All citizens, wealthy or not, were inspired by stories of Roman courage, honor, and loyalty. All citizens were encouraged to think and behave like the heroes these tales praised. These stories defined the Roman spirit.

**REVIEW** According to these paragraphs, what is "the Roman spirit"? Draw Conclusions

# The Tribunes

As time went on, the plebeians began to demand greater rights. They were facing difficult times. As Rome became more powerful, many patricians became very rich. These patricians bought much of the land around Rome. This forced plebeians to rent land from the wealthy landowners. Many plebeians struggled to survive. They threatened to

► **Because long togas made movement difficult, plebeians began to wear short togas and tunics.**



stop serving in the army until the government treated them more fairly.

To meet their demands, the Senate appointed men to protect the rights of the plebeians. These men were called **tribunes**. Any one of the tribunes could stop an action of the Senate by shouting “Veto!”—a Latin word that means “I forbid.”

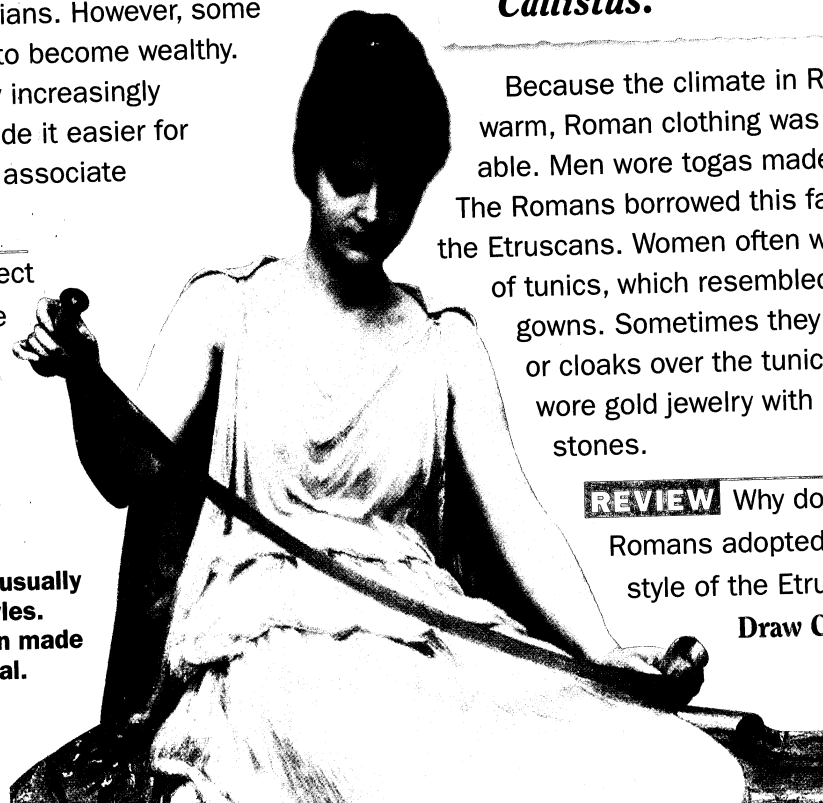
There were only two tribunes at first. Eventually,

the number grew to ten tribunes. The tribunes could also make demands on behalf of the plebeians. In time, the tribunes of the plebeians became very powerful.

The wealthy patricians still had far more power than the plebeians. However, some plebeians were able to become wealthy. Being represented by increasingly powerful tribunes made it easier for wealthy plebeians to associate with the patricians.

**REVIEW** What effect did the tribunes have on the rights of the plebeians?  
**Cause and Effect**

► **Women’s clothing usually imitated Greek styles. Dresses were often made of very fine material.**



► **Fido, a common name for dogs, is a Latin word meaning faithful. However, even faithful dogs got lost, so dog tags were needed in ancient Rome.**

## Daily Life

What was it like living in ancient Rome? Boys and some girls from wealthy families went to school. Some were taught at home by Greek slaves who served as tutors. Children used abacuses to learn mathematics. They wrote down lessons and learned to read and write on wax tablets or sheets of papyrus. After school, many went home and played. Children played with toys such as marbles, dolls, model chariots, and animals.

The main meal was eaten in the late afternoon. Wealthy people consumed fish, birds, olive oil with herbs, dates, and pork. Poor citizens ate wheat and barley, bread, olives, and meat scraps.

Wealthy citizens had dogs as pets to guard their homes. They also used dogs to hunt small animals and birds. Just like our pets today, some dogs had dog tags. The tags were made of bronze and identified the name of the owner. The dog tag pictured above reads:

***“Hold me if I run away, and return me to my master Viventius on the estate of Callistus.”***

Because the climate in Rome was generally warm, Roman clothing was light and comfortable. Men wore togas made of woolen cloth. The Romans borrowed this fashion idea from the Etruscans. Women often wore two layers of tunics, which resembled long shirts or gowns. Sometimes they would drape robes or cloaks over the tunics. They also often wore gold jewelry with colorful precious stones.

**REVIEW** Why do you think the Romans adopted the clothing style of the Etruscans?

**Draw Conclusions**

## Wars with Carthage

Carthage (kar thij) was a

city-state located in North Africa. By about 300 B.C., Carthage had become a great power. The city had a large, powerful navy. Its army was one of the strongest in the ancient world.

It was only a matter of time before Carthage and Rome fought against one another.

Beginning in 264 B.C., these two powerful city-states fought three destructive wars. These wars were known as the Punic (pyoo milk) Wars. Altogether, the Punic Wars lasted nearly 120 years.

The Romans won all three.

The second war included one of the most daring adventures in history. A Carthaginian general named Hannibal (HAN uh bul) launched an invasion from Spain. Hannibal took his army across the rugged and snowy Alps with a herd of elephants. Hannibal surprised the Romans. A historian, Polybius, wrote of Hannibal:

**"His best resource . . . [was] the elephants, for the enemy was terrified by their strange appearance."**

Rome was saved when a general named Scipio (skipee oh) attacked Carthage. Hannibal had to rush back home. It was too late. Carthage was defeated. About 50 years later, a third war began between the two cities. This time, the Romans captured and destroyed Carthage.

**REVIEW** Why is Hannibal remembered as a great general? Summarize

## Problems at Home

▶ In the second Punic War, the Carthaginian general Hannibal crossed the Alps with his troops and a herd of war elephants.



The Romans worked hard to make friends of former enemies. Some of the defeated peoples were granted Roman citizenship. Others were allowed to keep local self-government. The Romans made improvements in the lands they conquered. They built aqueducts, roads, and buildings. These were meant to make the conquered people feel patriotic toward Rome.

Patriotism is a sense of pride in one's country. However, Rome soon faced serious problems that would lead to the end of the republic. Vast wealth poured into Rome. This made the patricians even wealthier. However, the average Roman gained very little. Slaves taken in wartime took many of the jobs the plebeians had held. The fighting in Italy had destroyed the farmlands and homes of thousands of people. The Romans were becoming poorer even as their armies were taking over new lands.

Rival leaders led armies against each other. Many people died, and poverty grew.

**REVIEW** Why would the Romans want to make friends of former enemies? Draw Conclusions

# The Republic Ends

One way to gain great wealth and power in Rome was to lead an army in conquests. One of the most famous generals and **caesars**, or rulers, was **Julius Caesar** (JOOO yus SEEZ ur). He was a person of great energy and talent. Between 58 and 51 B.C., he conquered most of present-day France, the British Isles, and Belgium. He also took over parts of present-day Germany and Spain. After one victory, Caesar announced his triumph in three famous Latin words:


***“Veni, vidi, vici.”***  
***(“I came, I saw, I conquered.”)***

As Julius Caesar won more victories, a power struggle broke out between him and two other Roman

generals. Caesar won the struggle and was made ruler for life.

Caesar tried to control the number of slaves in Rome and worked to increase jobs. However, his growing power worried many patricians. They were afraid that Caesar would destroy the republic by taking total power in Rome. In 44 B.C., Caesar was stabbed to death on the floor of the Senate.

With Caesar’s death, the struggle for power began. Once again, civil war broke out in Rome, as several leaders fought for power. The Roman Republic, founded nearly 500 years earlier, was at its end.

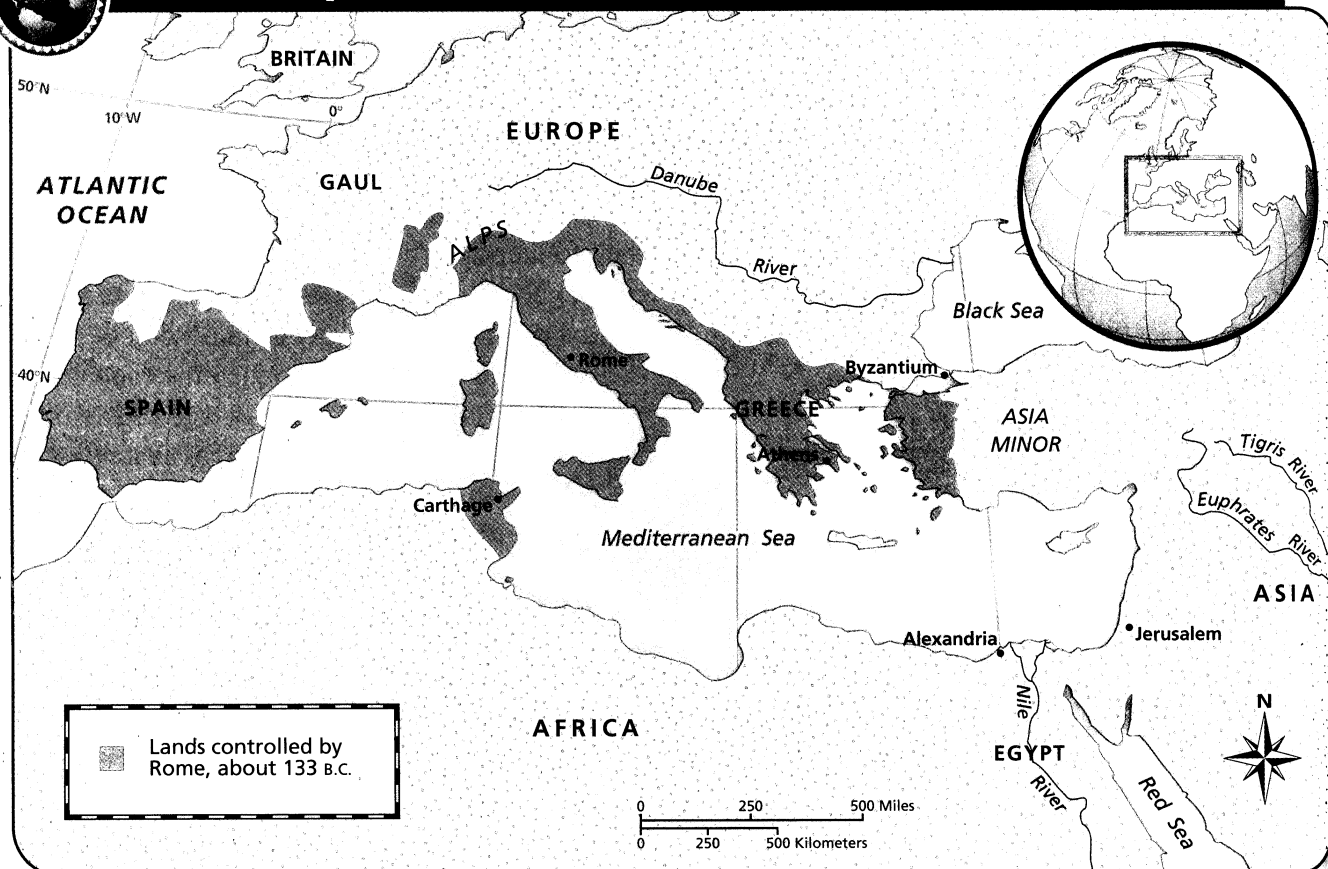
**REVIEW** Why did the patricians worry about Caesar’s growing power?  **Main Idea and Details**



➤ This Roman coin features a portrait of Julius Caesar.



## Roman Expansion, 133 B.C.



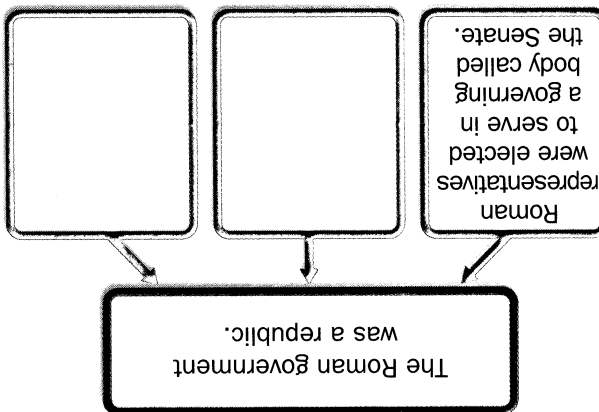
➤ By 133 B.C., Rome was already controlling land on three continents.

**MAP SKILL** Measure Distance Measuring from the farthest points east to west, how many total miles did the Roman Republic stretch in 133 B.C.?

## LESSON 2

### Check Facts and Main Ideas

1. **Main Idea and Details** On a separate piece of paper, write the appropriate details that support the main idea.



2. What is a republic?  
3. Who was Hannibal and what was his greatest accomplishment?

### Summarize the Lesson

**REVIEW** Why do you think the Romans used concrete to build their roads? **Draw Conclusions**

- **c. 500 B.C.** The Romans set up a republic.
- **264-146 B.C.** After three bloody wars, the Romans defeated Carthage.
- **44 B.C.** Julius Caesar was stabbed to death on the floor of the Senate.

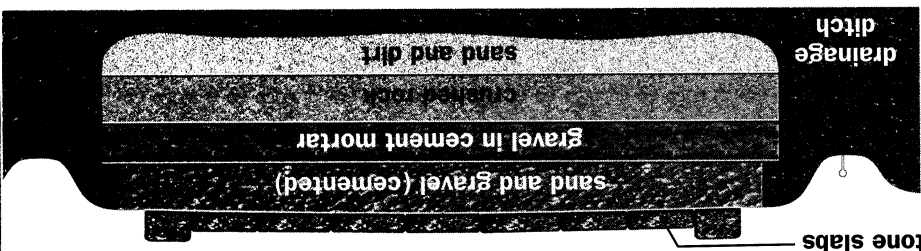
**Link to Reading** Use a Newspaper The verb form of the word veto means "to forbid," or "to refuse to agree." In the United States, the President can veto a bill by refusing to sign it into law. Look in a current local or national newspaper. Find a bill that is being debated. Would you want the President to sign this bill into law? Explain.

4. How did Rome's conquests create major problems for the republic?  
5. **Critical Thinking: Recognize Point of View** Do you believe the patricians shared enough power with the plebeians? Explain your answer.

### Roads in the Republic

During the period of the republic, the Romans began using concrete to build roads. Concrete is a building material made from a mixture of crushed stone, sand, cement, and water. Once it dries, concrete is very strong. The Roman roads were built over all kinds of surfaces: lakes, deep ravines, and mountains. They were even designed to drain water off the road's surface. The most famous of these roads is the **Appian Way**. It stretched for more than 350 miles south and then east of Rome.

Roman roads were built to last. The face was thick, solid stone. Many of these roads lasted more than 1,000 years. A few, including part of the Appian Way, are still used today.



Even today, parts of ancient Rome's road system can be seen in many places.