Rome's Lasting Blueprint

Trace how Roman laws and government influenced later societies.

SS24.7.15d "Summarize the influence of Roman legal and political systems on later societies."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two Roman legal practices and circle two Roman political features. Number each one and its matching later effect with the same number to show how the influence continued.

What Later Societies Took from Rome

1. In ancient Rome, a person with a dispute might look to laws that people could read, rather than rely only on what an official said. Around 450 BCE, Romans set out the Twelve Tables, an early written collection of laws displayed in public. The rules did not treat everyone equally, but making them visible helped citizens know what the law said. Centuries later, Roman emperors issued many more laws. These Roman practices helped spread the idea that legal rules should be written down and available to the people governed by them.

2. In the 500s CE, Emperor Justinian ordered scholars in the Eastern Roman Empire to gather and organize centuries of Roman laws and legal opinions. Their work became known as the Corpus Juris Civilis, or Body of Civil Law. Much later, scholars in Europe studied this collection, and its ideas shaped civil law systems in many countries. In these systems, written codes state broad rules that judges use to decide cases. Roman law did not pass unchanged into modern life, but its organized approach to legal rules had a lasting influence.

3. Rome's republic also left a political model. For centuries, male Roman citizens voted for officials who served limited terms, while a Senate advised leaders and held great influence. Centuries later, some constitution writers, including those in the United States, looked to Rome when designing a republic with elected officials and a senate. They did not copy Rome exactly: the United States eventually expanded voting rights beyond the group allowed to vote in Rome. Rome's legacy lies in later societies adapting its political structures, not in repeating every Roman rule.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Twelve Tables help establish an idea about laws that later societies use?

2. How did Justinian's collection influence later civil law systems?

3. What two features of Rome's republic appear in the later U.S. government described in the passage?

4. Why is it more accurate to say later societies adapted Roman systems than copied them? Use one example from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A new island community needs rules and a way to choose leaders. Write five or six sentences proposing how it could adapt one Roman legal practice and one Roman political feature, and explain one change it should make to avoid repeating an unfair part of Rome's system.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 7 · SS24.7.15d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two Roman legal practices and circle two Roman political features. Number each one and its matching later effect with the same number to show how the influence continued. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Twelve Tables help establish an idea about laws that later societies use?	**The Twelve Tables made laws public and readable, helping spread the idea that people should be able to see the written rules that govern them.**
2	How did Justinian's collection influence later civil law systems?	**European scholars studied the organized collection of Roman law, and its ideas helped shape systems in which written codes guide judges.**
3	What two features of Rome's republic appear in the later U.S. government described in the passage?	**Both have elected officials and a senate.**
4	Why is it more accurate to say later societies adapted Roman systems than copied them? Use one example from the passage.	**Later societies changed Roman models. For example, the United States eventually expanded voting rights beyond the group allowed to vote in Rome.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The island community should write its rules down and make them available for everyone to read. This would help residents know what the rules say before a dispute begins. Residents could elect leaders for limited terms, as Roman citizens elected some of their officials. The community should not limit voting to men, as Rome did. Instead, every adult resident should have a vote when leaders are chosen.

Accept accurate connections between a Roman practice and a later use, even if students use different wording. For Part 3, look for one legal practice, one political feature, and a specific change that addresses an unfair Roman limit.