Victory's Hidden Costs

Trace how three wars changed the Roman Republic.

9-12.WC.10 "Describe the causes and consequences of the Punic Wars on the development of the Roman Republic."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a cause of each Punic War, circle at least one consequence of each, and number the wars in the order they occurred. Use your marks to trace how conflict changed the republic.

Rome and Carthage: Rivals at War

1 In 264 BCE, Rome and Carthage both sought influence over Sicily, an island between Italy and North Africa. Carthage had a strong navy, while Rome had been expanding across Italy. Their competing interests helped spark the First Punic War. Rome built fleets and learned to fight at sea; after years of costly battles, Carthage surrendered in 241 BCE. Rome took Sicily, its first province outside Italy, and later gained Sardinia and Corsica. Governing territory across the sea changed the republic: Roman officials now collected taxes from distant communities, and competition over Mediterranean power did not end.

2 Carthage rebuilt its strength in Spain, alarming Rome. In 218 BCE, the Second Punic War began after Hannibal attacked Saguntum, a city allied with Rome, and Rome declared war. Hannibal crossed the Alps into Italy and crushed Roman armies, including one at Cannae. Yet Rome kept raising troops and avoided a final surrender. The Roman commander Scipio attacked Carthaginian forces in North Africa, forcing Hannibal home. Rome won at Zama in 202 BCE, and the peace of 201 BCE stripped Carthage of its overseas possessions and much of its military power. Rome gained dominance in the western Mediterranean, but years of fighting had devastated parts of Italy.

3 Even after Carthage lost its empire, some Roman leaders feared it might regain power. Rome declared the Third Punic War in 149 BCE and destroyed Carthage in 146 BCE, making its North African lands a province. Victory increased Rome's reach, but conquest also brought captives sold into slavery and wealth that flowed unevenly. Some landowners expanded large estates worked by enslaved people, while small farmers faced hardship after long military service and wartime damage. These pressures sharpened disputes over land and political power within the republic. The wars had removed a rival, yet their gains and costs helped unsettle Roman society.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What competing interests helped cause the First Punic War, and how did Rome's victory change what its officials governed?

2. What events led to the Second Punic War, and how did its outcome shift power in the western Mediterranean?

3. Why did Rome fight Carthage again in the Third Punic War, and what did Rome gain?

4. How did wartime damage and conquest contribute to disputes within the Roman Republic?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are advising the Roman Senate just after 146 BCE. Write a five-sentence memo proposing a policy to address a problem the wars created; use two details from the passage to explain the problem, then explain how your policy could help.

ANSWER KEY

Victory's Hidden Costs

HIGH SCHOOL · 9-12.WC.10

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a cause of each Punic War, circle at least one consequence of each, and number the wars in the order they occurred. Use your marks to trace how conflict changed the republic. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What competing interests helped cause the First Punic War, and how did Rome's victory change what its officials governed?	**Rome and Carthage both sought influence over Sicily. After winning, Rome governed its first province outside Italy and collected taxes from distant communities.**
2	What events led to the Second Punic War, and how did its outcome shift power in the western Mediterranean?	**Carthage rebuilt its strength in Spain, and Hannibal attacked Rome's ally Saguntum. Rome's victory took Carthage's overseas possessions and much of its military power, leaving Rome dominant in the western Mediterranean.**
3	Why did Rome fight Carthage again in the Third Punic War, and what did Rome gain?	**Some Roman leaders feared Carthage might regain power. Rome destroyed Carthage and made its North African lands a province.**
4	How did wartime damage and conquest contribute to disputes within the Roman Republic?	**Wartime damage and long military service made life harder for small farmers, while conquest brought enslaved captives and unevenly distributed wealth. Growing estates and farmers' hardship sharpened disputes over land and political power.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

To the Senate: Our wars brought captives into Italy, where some landowners use enslaved labor on growing estates. Years of military service and damage to farms have also made life harder for small farmers. I propose granting public land in small plots to citizens whose farms were lost during the wars. These plots could help families support themselves instead of losing their place in the countryside. This policy could ease disputes over land and political power, even though it cannot undo the wars.

Accept other historically plausible policies if the five-sentence memo uses two accurate passage details, connects them to a problem caused by the wars, and explains how the proposed policy could help.