Peace and Change

Roman rule in a provincial town

9-12.WC.13 "Describe the process of Romanization and explain the characteristics of Pax Romana."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways Roman practices spread, circle one example of a local tradition continuing, and number two features of the Pax Romana. These marks will help you explain how Roman rule changed life without changing it everywhere in the same way.

A Town Under Roman Rule

1. Imagine walking through a town in Roman-ruled Gaul during the first two centuries CE. A merchant speaks Latin to an official, then uses a local language at home. Stone roads carry soldiers, letters, and goods toward other parts of the empire. The town's leading families may hold local office under Roman rules, while neighbors visit a bathhouse or honor Roman gods alongside older local ones. None of these changes happened at once or everywhere. Romanization was the uneven process by which people in conquered lands adopted, adapted, or resisted Roman language, laws, building styles, and customs.

2. Romanization grew through both pressure and opportunity. Roman armies secured territory, and governors collected taxes and enforced imperial authority. Roads and trade brought travelers and ideas into provincial towns. Some local leaders learned Latin and used Roman law because imperial connections could help them gain status or conduct business. Public buildings, such as baths and theaters, made Roman habits visible in daily life. Yet Roman customs mixed with older traditions; adoption did not erase every local identity. People without wealth or political power might experience Roman rule less as opportunity than as a demand for taxes and obedience.

3. From 27 BCE, when Augustus became Rome's first emperor, to about 180 CE, the empire experienced the Pax Romana, a long period of relative stability in much of its territory. A strong imperial government and military helped protect roads and sea routes, making travel and trade more predictable. This peace was not an end to violence: Roman forces fought at frontiers, and rebellions broke out in provinces. For many residents, stable routes and shared institutions increased contact across the empire and helped Roman practices spread. For others, the same military power enforced an unwanted foreign rule.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Roman authority and local people's choices both contribute to Romanization?

2. What detail from the town shows that Romanization did not erase local traditions?

3. Describe the Pax Romana's stability and one limit to that peace.

4. How could conditions during the Pax Romana help Roman practices spread without making Romanization the same everywhere?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five- or six-sentence recommendation to a town council in Roman-ruled Gaul. Propose two specific choices about adopting Roman practices and one local practice to preserve, then explain how the Pax Romana could help the town and why its peace might not feel peaceful to everyone.

ANSWER KEY

Peace and Change

HIGH SCHOOL · 9-12.WC.13

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways Roman practices spread, circle one example of a local tradition continuing, and number two features of the Pax Romana. These marks will help you explain how Roman rule changed life without changing it everywhere in the same way. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Roman authority and local people's choices both contribute to Romanization?	**Armies and governors imposed Roman authority, while some local leaders chose to learn Latin or use Roman law for status or business.**
2	What detail from the town shows that Romanization did not erase local traditions?	**The merchant uses a local language at home, or residents honor older local gods alongside Roman gods.**
3	Describe the Pax Romana's stability and one limit to that peace.	**Roads and sea routes became more predictable for travel and trade, but frontier fighting and provincial rebellions continued.**
4	How could conditions during the Pax Romana help Roman practices spread without making Romanization the same everywhere?	**Protected routes increased travel, trade, and contact with Roman institutions. People still adapted or resisted Roman customs, so changes varied.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our council should support upkeep of the road to neighboring markets because safer travel can attract merchants. We should post public notices in Latin so traders and imperial officials can read them. We should also keep our local language in community gatherings, where families can pass on familiar stories. During the Pax Romana, protected routes could bring more goods and ideas into our town. But soldiers who guard those routes also support tax collection and imperial control. These choices would let us use Roman connections without pretending that everyone welcomes Roman rule.

Accept other passage-supported examples of adoption, adaptation, resistance, and relative stability. In Part 3, look for two distinct Roman practices, one continuing local practice, a benefit of stability, and a limit to the peace.