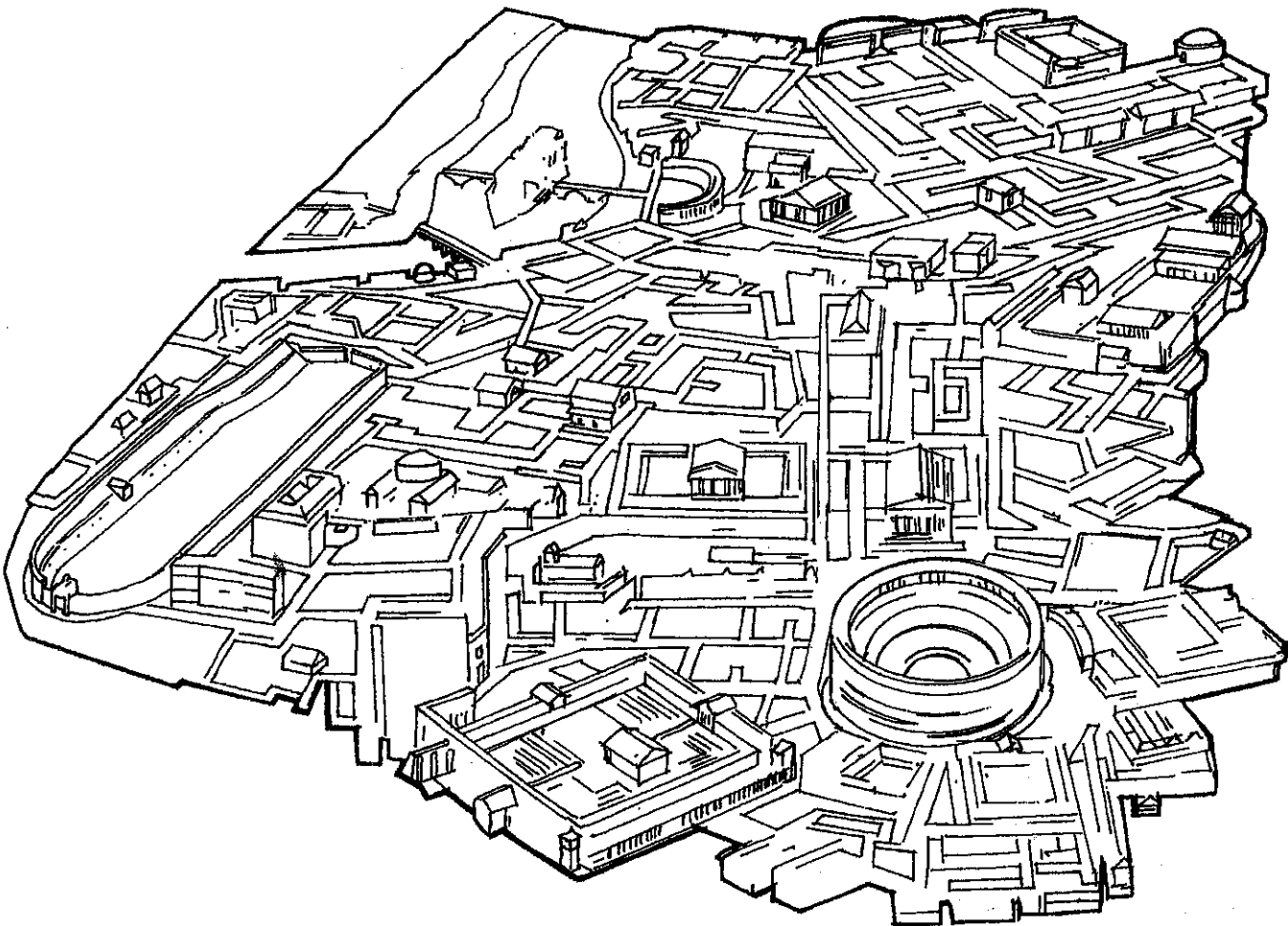


# Legacies of the Ancient Romans

The Ancient Romans were a practical people able to adopt and adapt ideas to suit their needs. Since their main goal was expansion, they mastered the skills necessary for building and governing a vast empire. Part of their lasting legacy to the modern world is embodied by their achievements in many diverse areas.

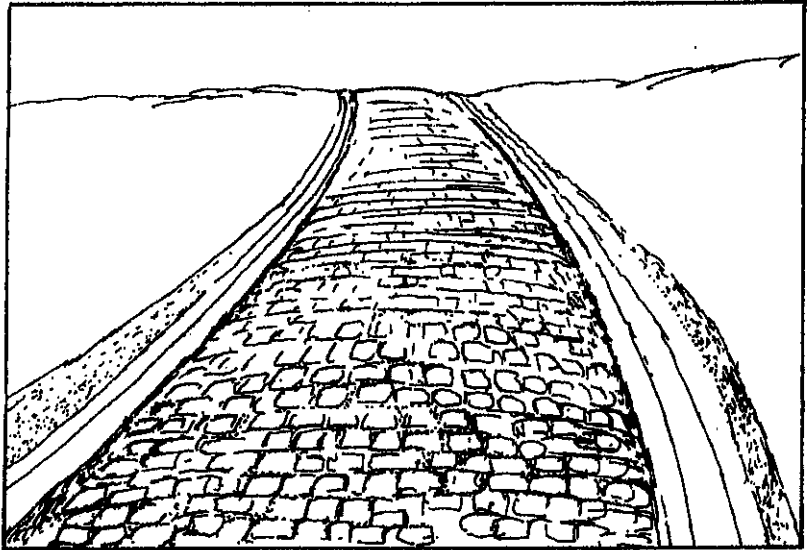
**Designing and Building Great Cities**—In places such as Gaul (France) and Britain, there were no organized towns. The Romans encouraged them to build cities in the Roman fashion. Roman towns were made up of networks of streets and blocks. The different blocks contained residential houses, stores, workshops, and bars or saloons. The blocks toward the center of the town were reserved for magnificent public buildings and the open forum, or marketplace, where people could gather to conduct business and discuss local events.



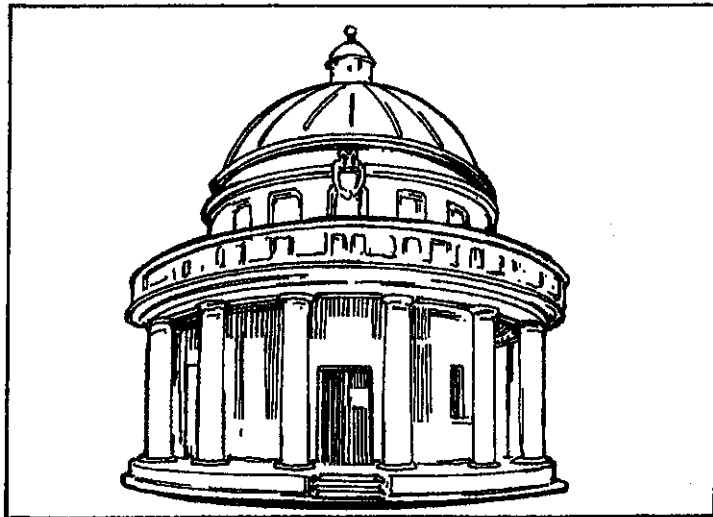
The forum often contained the main temple dedicated to the Roman gods. Around town were other temples dedicated to local gods or other local religions. Public buildings included the bath house and public fountain. Near the open forum was the basilica, or town hall, where meetings could take place. Other structures in a Roman town included theaters, stadiums, and racetracks.

# Legacies of the Ancient Romans (cont.)

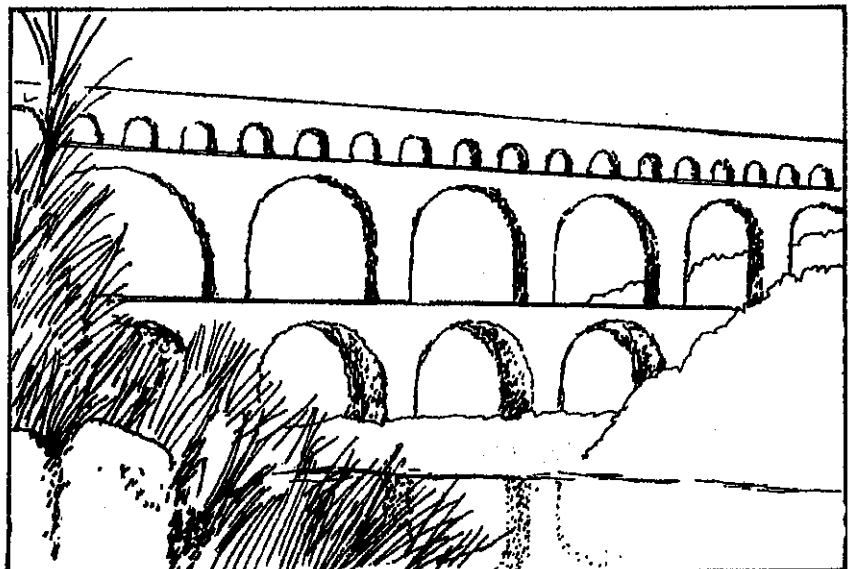
**Master Road Builders**—To unite their vast empire, the Romans built over 50,000 miles of roads. These roads helped to improve trade and communication throughout the Roman Empire. Many of these roads were paved with layers of stone and concrete. The roads were usually very straight, with a slight hump in the middle so water would drain down the sides into shallow ditches. Roman roads show advanced engineering skills. The Appian Way, constructed in 312 B.C., is still used today by tourists and local residents.



**Architecture**—Other examples of fine engineering and skillful building are found in the public works of Ancient Rome. Romans perfected the Etruscan arch and combined it with Greek architectural elements such as columns and triangular pediments. These design elements, along with a new building material called concrete, enabled the Romans to create elaborate cities with beautiful temples, coliseums, stadiums, theaters, bridges, and domed buildings.

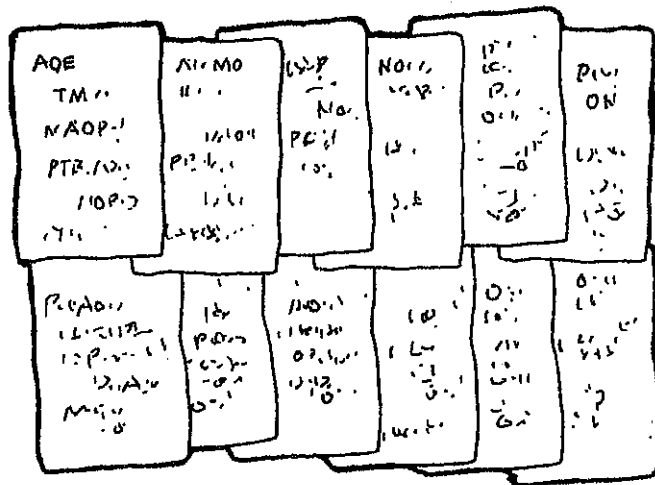


**Plumbing**—The Romans were also master plumbers. They designed and built complicated water-supply systems to bring fresh water into their cities. This was done through a series of special channels called aqueducts. Drains and pipelines were constructed to carry rainwater and sewage away from the cities. Most plumbing was made from lead pipes and worked because of gravity. Examples of plumbing systems in bathhouses, public fountains, and household sinks and toilets can still be observed to this day.



# Legacies of the Ancient Romans (cont.)

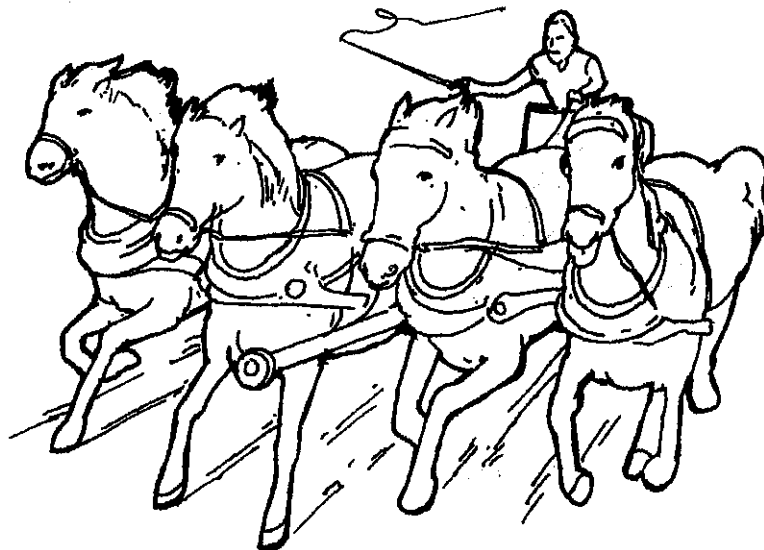
**Legal Administration**—In order to govern their vast empire, it was important for the Romans to develop and enforce consistent systems of laws and justice. The Romans created professional lawyers, judges, courts, and rules of conduct within the legal system. Laws were first publicized on the Twelve Tables in 450 B.C. Later, as the Roman Empire grew, the laws were codified in a series of written volumes. Roman law helped to civilize the world, because wherever the Romans conquered, they took their legal concepts with them.



**Time and Money**—The Romans were great organizers who insisted on accuracy in all things. Our calendars today are based on Julius Caesar's calendar and Latin. Although sundials were invented by the Egyptians and improved by the Greeks, it was the Romans who used them extensively throughout their Empire to record time. It was also the Romans who designed the format of coins with a head on one side and a national symbol on the other.



**Entertainment and the Arts**—Modern-day racetracks and circuses date to Ancient Rome. In grand stadiums and arenas, gladiators and animals fought in bloody combat, while chariots raced for the glory of their homeland. Roman art is still considered some of the finest in the world. The Roman quest for lifelike sculpture and painting was adapted from the Greeks. Such famous Italian artists as Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci used Greco-Roman works as their inspiration. Many Roman works of literature survive today. They are fine examples of creativity and writing skill, and they tell us a great deal about daily life in Ancient Rome.



# Our Legacy

A legacy is something received from someone who came before—an ancestor or a predecessor—or from the past. Use **Legacies of the Ancient Romans** (pages 75–77) to think about our cultural achievements. Below, list five things that our culture may leave as a legacy to future generations.

1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____

From your list, choose the one that you believe has the most potential to be a lasting legacy. Use the outline below to help you organize your thoughts. Then write a paragraph about why you think this achievement will be an important legacy. Share your paragraph with the class.

## Paragraph Outline

Introduction:	_____
	_____
	_____
Supporting Detail #1	_____
	_____
	_____
Supporting Detail #2	_____
	_____
	_____
Supporting Detail #3	_____
	_____
	_____
Conclusion:	_____
	_____
	_____