***Roman Achievements***

***ARTS:***

**The Romans adopted aspects of other cultures. They modified and blended them into their own culture. This was true of Roman art. The Romans were especially influenced by the Greeks. In fact, historians often speak of Greco-Roman Art (Greco-Roman – having the characteristics of Roman art with a strong Greek influences.**

**The Romans were skilled in creating realistic statues. They imitated Greek sculpture, but were particularly good at making their sculpted images lifelike.**

**The homes of wealthy Romans were decorated with murals and mosaics. Again, the Romans took existing art forms and make them their own. They painted beautiful frescoes, a type of mural. Frescoes are painted on moist plaster with water based paints Roman frescoes often showed three-dimensional landscapes and other scenes. Looking at one of these frescoes were almost like looking through a wall at a scene outside. You’ve probably seen similar murals in banks, restaurants and other buildings.**

**Romans were also great patrons (financial supporters) of the arts, they paid thousands of painters sculptors and craftspeople to create their works. As a result, the Romans left behind many examples to inspire future generations. A thousand years ago after the fall of the Roman Empire, Roman art was rediscovered during the period called the Renaissance. Great artists like Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo revived the Greco Romans style in their paintings and sculptures, A good example is the famous ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. The ceiling has scenes from the Bible painted by Michelangelo in the 1500’s A Romans would feel right at home looking up at this amazing creation.**

**Roman art has continued to influence painters and sculptors. Roman styles were especially popular during the early days of the United States.. Americans imitated these styles to give their art dignity and nobility. You can still see statues in Washington D.C. that reflect a strong Roman influence.**

**The Romans also brought a sense style and luxury to everyday objects. They made highly decorative bottles of blown glass. A bottle for wine might be made in the shape of a cluster fo rapes. Romans also developed the arts of gem cutting and metal working. One popular art form was the cameo. A cameo is a gem that is carved to show a portrait of a person’s head or a scene. The Romans wore cameos as jewelry and used them to decorate vases and other objects. You can find examples of all these art forms today**

 

  ***Roman Achievements***

**Architecture and Engineering:**

**The Romains’s greatest contributions to science and technology came in the practical fields of architecture and engineering. Roman builders learned from the Greeks, Etruscans and others. Then they added their own genius to take feats of construction to new heights.**

**Architecture: The Romans leaned how to use the arch, the vault, and the dome to build huge sotone structures. A vault is an arch used to support a ceiling or roof. A dome is a vault in the shape of a hemisphere that rests on a circular wall**

 **The Romans were the first to make widespread use fo concrete. They made concrete by mixing broken stone with sand, cement and water and then allowing the mixture to harden. With concrete, they were able to build much bigger arches than anyone had attempted before. Roman baths and other public buildings often had great arched vaults. The Pantheon, a magnificent temple that still stands in Rome, is famous for its huge dome.**

**The Romans also invented a new kind of building, the stadium. There were large, open-air structures, The Romans used concrete to build tunnels in to the famous Coliseum in Rome. The tunnels made it easy for spectators to reach their seats. Modern football stadiums still use this feature.**

**The grand style of Roman buildings has inspired many architects through the centuries. One of the innovations that was widely copied was the triumphal arch. This was a huge monument built to celebrate great victories or achievements. A famous modern example is the Arc de Triomphe (Arch of Triumph) in Paris, France. This monument celebrates the victories of the French emperor Napoleon in the early 1800’s. Today it is the national war memorial in France.**

**You can also see a Roman influence in the design of many modern churches, banks, and government buildings. A fine example is the Capital building, the home of the US Congress in Washington D.C.**

 

 ***Roman Achievements***

**Engineering:**

**The Romans changed engineering as well as architecture. They were the greatest builders of roads, bridges, and aqueducts in the ancient world.**

**Nearly 53,000 miles of roads connected with the frontiers of their empire. The romans built their roads with layers of stone, sand, and gravel. Their techniques set the standard of road construction for nearly 2,000 years. Cars in some parts of Europe still drive on freeways build over old Roman roads.**

**The Romans also set new standards for building aqueducts. They did not invent the aqueduct, but once again the Romans learned the technique and expanded on it. They created a system of aqueducts in Rome. The aqueducts brought water from about 60 miles away to the homes of the wealthiest citizens, as well as to the city’s public bath houses and fountains. The Romans built aqueducts in other parts of the empire as well. The water system in Segovia, Spain, still uses part of an ancient Roman aqueduct. Roman arches from aqueducts can still be found in Europe, North Africa, and Asia**

 

 ***Roman Achievements***

**Language**

**One legacy of Rome that affects us every day is the Roman language, Latin. We still use the Latin alphabet (although Roman Latin used 23 letters and the English alphabet uses 26.) many of our words come from Latin. Even Latin proverbs are still used today. For example, look at the reverse side of a dime, You see the United States motto E pluribus unum (Out of many, one)**

**Several modern European languages developed from Latin, including Italian, Spanish, and French. English is a Germanic language, but it was strongly influenced by the French speaking Normans., who conquered England in 1066. English has borrowed heavily from Latin, both directly and by way of the French.**

**You can see the influence of Latin on many of the words we use today. For example, recall that our calendar comes from the one created by Julius Caesar. The names of several months come from Latin. August honors Caesar Augusts, September comes from the Latin words meaning “seventh month” (The Roman year started in March). October means “the eight month” in Latin. Can you guess the meanings of November and December?**

**Many English words start with Latin prefixes, A prefix is a set of letters at the beginning of a word that carries its own meaning. Attaching a prefix to a root word creates a new word with a new meaning. In fact, the word prefix is formed this way. It comes from pre (“in front of “) and fix (“fasten” or “attach”)**

**Finally, we still often use Roman numerals, The Roman used a system of letters to write numbers. Look at the table on the previous page. You may have seen Roman numerals used on clocks, sundials, and the first pages of books. You might spot Roman numerals on buildings.**

**The Roman combined the seven letters shown in the table to express larger numbers, Putting letters after another adds the values of the additional letters. For example, VIII= 5+3+=8. Putting a letter before a letter with a greater value subtracts its value. For example, IV = 5-1=4.**

 

 ***Roman Achievements***

**Philosophy and Law:**

**Stoic was a philosophy that came from the Greeks, many upper class Romans made it their own. Stoics believed that a divine (godly) intelligence ruled all of nature. A person’ goals was a spark of that divine intelligence. “Living rightly” meant living in a way that agreed with nature To the Stoics, the one truly good thing in live was to have good character. This meant having virtues such as self-control and courage. Stoics disagreed with those who said that happiness meant only avoiding pain and experiencing pleasure. They prized duty and the well fare of the community over their personal comfort. They said that true happiness was the peace of mind that came from living up to the Stoic ideals.**

**The most famous Roman Stoic was the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Aurelius wrote down his private thoughts in a book he called “To Himself” later it was given the title Meditations. In his writings, Aurelius constantly reminded himself of Stoic ideals. “Do not worry,” he wrote, “if you encounter ungratefulness, insults, disloyalty, or selfishness, If you think and act rightly, none of these things can hurt you”**

**Stoics were famous for hearing pain and suffering bravely and quietly. To this day, we call someone who behaves this was “Stoic”**

 

 ***Roman Achievements***

**Law and Justice:**

**The Stoics’ beliefs about justice and nature fit very well with Roman ideas about law. Roman law covered marriages, inheritances, contracts (agreements) between people and countless other parts of life, Modern law codes in France and Italy are based in part on ancient Roman laws**

**Another legacy of the Romans was the idea of justice. The Romans believed that ere was a universal law of justice that come from nature. By this natural law, every person had rights, Romans spread this idea by applying it to all citizens in their empire. Judges in Roman courts tried to make just, or fair, decisions that respected people’s rights. The idea of “innocent until proven guilty was a key component of Roman Law.**

**Like people everywhere, the Romans did not always live up to their ideals, Their courts did not treat the poor or slaves as equal to the rich. Emperors often made bad laws. But the ideals of justice and natural rights live on. Like judges in Roman courts, modern day judges make decisions based on these ideals as well as on written law. Similarly, many people today believe that all humans have basic rights that no written law can take away**

 