

Roman Rich



Would you serve fried
ants and roast ostrich at
your feasts?



If you were rich in Ancient
Rome what choices would
you make?

Fill in the questionnaire and
find out what kind of Roman
you might be.

Roman Rich Man's World Choices

We're reviving this activity as a follow up to Fat Cat Wednesday. We hope that the rich poor gap does not grow as large as it did in the Roman world, but you will notice that many of the practices of the rich in Roman times resemble those of the rich nowadays.

The activity was first developed by Susan Hart and Stuart Scott in 1980 when most of our work was hand written. I have scanned the handwriting since it was so neat that it seemed worth preserving, especially since children are still expected to produce handwritten versions before they may type them.

You may want to separate the score sheet from the scores so that they don't influence the choices made.

Webaddress: www.collaborativelearning.org/romanrich.pdf

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Basic principles behind our talk for learning activities: Oracy in curriculum contexts!

Build on children's own prior knowledge.

Move from concrete to abstract.

**Ensure everyone works with
everyone else.**

**Extend social language towards
curriculum language.**

**Provide motivating ways to go over the
same knowledge more than once.**

**It's empowering to talk an idea through
before you write about it!**

Good for all pupils!

Vital for EAL pupils!

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROJECT

Project Director: Stuart Scott

We support a network of teaching professionals to develop and disseminate accessible talk-for-learning activities in all subject areas and for all ages.

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Roman Rich Man's World Choices

What would you do? Make your choices and score them.

1. You have made huge profits from your land and mines. Do you:
 - a) pay out huge sums towards a new amphitheatre?
 - b) Buy a new mining contract in the provinces to make your profits even bigger?
 - c) Give your slaves a day's holiday as a reward for hard work?
 - d) Bribe as many clients as you can to vote for you at the next election?
2. You hold a gigantic banquet for all your friends and clients. Do you:
 - a) Provide just enough food for people to eat their fill?
 - b) Provide such a spread of food that everybody has to make themselves sick to eat it all up?
 - c) Provide a large feast and give the leftovers to your slaves and the poor?
 - d) Buy very unusual and expensive food such as fried ants or roast ostrich to serve on your best gold plates, and hire musicians and dancing girls?
3. You own a tall block of flats where many poor people live. It falls down one night because it was badly built and many are killed. Do you:
 - a) Build a taller block of flats on the same foundations and charge higher rents?
 - b) Build the flats again just as they were and use the same bricks and wood?
 - c) Build a better, stronger block of flats which hold fewer families?
 - d) Build a fine arch in honour of the Emperor on the site of the flats?
4. There is going to be an election and you want to be elected tax collector. Do you:
 - a) Put on a big feast and invite all your clients to get them to vote for you?
 - b) Promise all your electors that you will give them a share of your tax collecting profits?
 - c) Take on more poor citizens as clients and give them presents?
 - d) Pay a few poor men to go around the city telling lies about the other people in the election?
5. You receive a letter. It says you have enemies in Rome and your life is in danger. Do you:
 - a) Leave Rome and go to stay in your country villa?
 - b) Hire some famous gladiators to protect you?
 - c) Hire some spies to find out who your enemies are. Then pay some killers to remove them?
 - d) Take no notice because as far as you know you have done nothing wrong.



6. A contract to deliver supplies to the army is for sale. Do you:
- a) Offer a low price for the contract and deliver poor quality goods to the army?
 - b) Force your slaves to work longer hours to produce the supplies at low cost?
 - c) Offer a fair price and buy some more slaves to help with the extra work?
 - d) Do not worry about the contract, because you live well enough already?
7. A new Emperor is proclaimed. There will a month of games at the Colosseum. Do you:
- a) Give some wild animals to the games?
 - b) Arrange for your spies to discover some Christians, and give them to be eaten?
 - c) Get your agents in the provinces to ship wild animals to Rome. Then sell them to your fellow senators and make big profits?
 - d) Give the biggest and most expensive elephant you can find to the Emperor?
8. The Emperor commands that more should be done to keep the poor happy and well fed. Do you:
- a) Pay out huge sums of money to put on a mock naval battle complete with whales in the Colosseum?
 - b) Shorten your slaves food rations and give the extra to the poor?
 - c) Pay for a chariot race at the Circus Maximus, and bribe the riders to lose so that you will win bets?
 - d) Pay for a day's free grain for everyone.
9. The Emperor asks all wealthy men to help pay for drains and a new aqueduct for the city. Do you:
- a) Pay your money with extra for fountains carrying your name?
 - b) Force your slaves to work extra hard in your stone quarry to provide the dressed stone needed?
 - c) Give some money to the Emperor, but give bribes to the Senate. Then you get the building contract and make a big profit?
 - d) Pay up cheerfully because you know it will improve people's lives?
10. You are sent the provinces for a year as proconsul. Do you:
- a) Squeeze as much money as you can from the people in taxes?
 - b) Try to collect a fair tax from everyone so that there is no bad feeling against Rome?
 - c) Use the tax you collect to build fine theatres and temples in the province?
 - d) Make as much money as you can from taxes, stealing and taking bribes?



IT'S A RICH MAN'S WORLD



SCORE SHEET



write in the names of the people in your group.

Participant number	Rich man 1		Rich man 2		Rich man 3		Rich man 4	
	Letter	Score	Letter	Score	Letter	Score	Letter	Score
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
/	Total		Total		Total		Total	

* What sort of rich Roman would you have been?
Answer the questions and find out your rating in wealth, power and popularity.

* Choose one person to read the questions and one to write in the answers. Then ask for the score.

IT'S A RICH MAN'S WORLD



SCORES

1	(a) 2	(b) 3	(c) 1	(d) 4	6	(a) 3	(b) 4	(c) 1	(d) 2
2	(a) 3	(b) 4	(c) 2	(d) 3	7	(a) 1	(b) 3	(c) 4	(d) 2
3	(a) 4	(b) 3	(c) 1	(d) 2	8	(a) 2	(b) 3	(c) 4	(d) 1
4	(a) 2	(b) 4	(c) 1	(d) 3	9	(a) 4	(b) 2	(c) 3	(d) 1
5	(a) 3	(b) 2	(c) 4	(d) 1	10	(a) 1	(b) 1	(c) 1	(d) 4

35-40

wealth ***

power ***

popularity **

You would have been extremely rich and powerful. You knew exactly what to do to make as much money as possible, to win admirers and to gain the top job in government. You probably had many enemies, but with your wealth and power, you did not worry about them.

26-34

wealth ***

power *

popularity -

You would have been very successful at making money, but this was the only thing you were interested in. You made so much money because you worked your slaves so hard, but you did not enjoy your wealth. You were not popular because you did not spend much, and you did not try to win power in government.

16-25

wealth *

power **

popularity ***

Everyone would have liked you because you spent your money like water. But you spent more money than you made, because you were only interested in enjoying yourself and impressing people. You would have lost your friends as fast as your money ran out.

10-15

wealth *

power *

popularity *

You weren't the sort of rich man who would have become very wealthy, powerful or popular in Rome. You were honest, fair and kind to your slaves and the poor. You did not spend money or give bribes to win admirers and votes. But with few enemies, you might have lived longer!

RICH MAN-POOR MAN



- * Go to the barber for a shave
- * Do odd jobs for his patron
- * Go to the baths for exercise and a chat
- * Discuss menu for a dinner party and give his wife orders.
- * Write up money accounts with a slave
- * Eat breakfast in a cookhouse
- * Go to the forum to meet friends
- * Go to get free corn in the forum
- * Go to see gladiators fight in the Coliseum
- * Go to a public reading of poetry
- * Go and try to get work
- * Stroll in the gardens
- * Have an afternoon nap
- * Go to court to hear cases
- * See business partners and discuss money affairs

Here is a list of things Romans might do in a day. Write [R] for rich man [P] for poor man or [B] for both next to each one, saying who you think would do them.

- | | |
|---|--|
| * Wait outside his patron's door until it opens | |
| * Go to the baths for a bath and some wrestling | |
| * Hold a magnificent feast for friends | |
| * Get some money and presents from his patron | |
| * Go to see a play at the theatre | |
| * Receive clients and give them money and jobs to do. | |
| * Buy a book of Caesar's writings | |
| * Do odd jobs for his patron | |
| * Go to watch chariot races in the Coliseum | |
| * Go and collect water from public fountain. | |



Write about a day in the life of a rich or poor man. Use some of the words below to join up your sentences. Try not to use 'and'.

when / while / after / afterwards / later / next