

## Key Stage 2: Hands-on Roman Britain

The final page of these notes can be copied and given to students who you think may need additional support during the workshop or to adult helpers.

### Before your visit: preparing for your workshop

- Key themes for the workshop are how we learn about the past through objects and how money reflects the society in which it is used. Explore the idea of money with your students by looking at the coins and banknotes we use today – e.g. the material, value, issuing authority, design and inscription. Where we can use it and what do we use it for?
- Key vocabulary includes: observation, identification, inscription, legacy, denomination. You might like to discuss these words before the workshop.
- Use the Explore section of the British Museum website ([www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org)) to search for money in the Museum's collection and objects from Roman Britain.
- Look at the Ancient Civilisations website at [www.ancientcivilizations.co.uk](http://www.ancientcivilizations.co.uk)

### During your visit

- The session consists of two parts. In the first part students will explore money in various forms from around the world and explore how you would use them as money. In the second part, students will handle genuine Ancient Roman coins and use the visual clues to identify them.
- The Museum would very much appreciate it if students wash and dry their hands before the session to help conserve the workshop objects. We also recommend that students wash their hands after the session, particularly if they go straight into their lunch break.
- Galleries with objects relating to the workshop include
  - Room 68: Money Gallery (Roman coins are in cases 1-2 and 3-6. Look for the Roman coins that were used as weights in case 11)
  - Room 49: Roman Britain
  - Room 70: Roman Empire

### Hands On Roman Britain continued...

#### After your visit: follow-up activities

- You may like to continue looking at money from Roman Britain in the British Museum's collection via the Explore section of the Museum's website at [www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org)
- Use the Portable Antiquities Scheme's Finds database to research archaeological objects that have been found in your local area at [www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)
- Coinage was an important symbol of authority for the Roman emperor. Discuss how people in power today make their image and authority known.
- Consider how the images and inscriptions on ancient coins are used to provide information about the past. Design a coin to celebrate or commemorate a recent event. Would your coin be a reliable source of information in the future?
- When the Roman army and administration had withdrawn from Britain, coinage fell out of use. How would our daily lives change if we had no coins? Create a display of all the objects we can use as money.

#### Curriculum links

Romans in Britain: *An overview of how British society was shaped by the movement and settlement of different peoples*

Historical interpretation: *Pupils should be taught to recognise that the past is represented and interpreted in different ways, and to give reasons for this.*

Citizenship - developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people: *Pupils should be taught to think about the lives of people living in other places and times, and people with different values and customs.*

developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities:

*Pupils should be taught to look after their money and realise that future wants and needs may be met through saving.*

This workshop takes place in the study room of the Department of Coins and Medals.

You will learn about:

- a department in the museum and identifying objects
- forms of money that have been valued by different cultures
- the money used in Britain when it was part of the Roman Empire

## Key words

observation

identification

metals – gold, silver, bronze, copper, iron

inscription – the writing on the coin

denomination – the name that is given to a unit of money

legacy – something handed down by an ancestor

archaeology – studying the past from the things that are left behind

## Introduction

- We will talk about the Museum and the different objects that are held in the Department of Coins and Medals
- We will discuss the different kinds of money that we use today

## Different sorts of money

- You will work in a group and handle money objects from different cultures and times.
- You will try to identify them by asking: What is it made of? Where does it come from? When was it used?
- Some money objects might seem unusual. How would they be used as money?

## Ancient Roman coins

- In your groups you will handle real coins from Roman Britain. These coins are nearly 2000 years old!
- You will sort the coins according to value and learn their denominations - the names the Romans gave to their coins.
- We will look at the images and inscriptions on one of the coins and identify the emperor.
- We will talk about who might have owned these coins and what they could have been used for.