**The Legend of Romulus and Remus:**

* According to legend, ***Romulus and Remus*** were twin sons of the Roman god Mars.
* There were plots afoot that the other gods wanted to harm the boys.
* To protect them, their mother Rhea sent them afloat in a basket down the Tiber River.
* They were found by a female wolf and she fed them and took care of them.
* Eventually a shepherd adopted the boys and raised them.
* As the twins grew older, they decided they didn’t want to tend sheep, they wanted to be something greater.
* They built a city along the banks Tiber River.
* However, they both wanted to be king.
* They quarreled and in a fit of rage, Romulus killed Remus.
* The city was then named after its first king, Romulus.

**The origins of Rome:**

* In reality, Rome was built by the Latin people between 1000 BC and 500 BC.
* The city was founded along the Tiber River located on the Italian peninsula in center of Mediterranean Sea.
* The site of Rome was chosen for its fertile soil and strategic location.
* The land Rome was built on had several advantages.
* The city was built on seven hills, making it difficult to attack.
* Located on the Tiber River and the Mediterranean Sea meant that the people could easily conduct trade throughout the region.
* Two other groups also lived on the Italian peninsula, the Etruscans in the north and the Greeks in the South.
* Both the Greeks and the Etruscans have a strong influence on the development of Rome.
  + (ex. culture, architecture, military, religion, etc.)
* All three groups competed for control of the region.

**Etruscan Rule:**

* Around 600 BC, Etruscan kings take control of Rome and they rule over the Latins (Romans).
* The Etruscan kings order temples and public centers to be built, including the Forum, the center of Roman politics.
* Rome becomes a large, prosperous and commercially active city.

**The Fall of the Etruscans:**

* King Tarquin assumes power.
* He uses violence, murder and terrorism to maintain control over Rome.
* The Romans resent the Etruscans.

**The Fall of the Etruscans: (Continued)**

* According to legend, Tarquin allowed his son to rape a Roman woman.
* This enrages the Romans and they overthrow the Etruscan king in 509 BC.
* The Romans vowed to never be ruled by a king again.

**The Roman Republic:**

* Following the expulsion of the Etruscans, the Roman people create a republic from the Latin term res publica or “public works”.
* In this system, Roman citizens were allowed to elect the leaders of their government.
* Only free-born males were considered citizens.

**Patricians and Plebeians:**

* Two groups struggled for power in the new republic—the patricians and the plebeians.
* Patricians were the wealthy, land-owning class that held most power.
  + Made up a very small portion of the population
* Plebeians were common farmers, artisans and merchants
  + Most people fell into this class
* In time, plebeians were able to win more rights.
* Plebeians elected tribunes to represent them.
* Tribunes protected the rights of common people from the unfair acts of the patricians.
* Laws at this time were unwritten so the people developed the Twelve Tables.
* The Twelve Tables became the basis of law in Rome and protected all citizens, including the plebeians.

**Roman Government:**

* Roman government had three parts.
* First, Romans elected 2 consuls.
* Consuls were like kings. One led the government, the other led the army.
* They could veto each other’s decisions.

**Did you know?**

* The word veto comes from the Latin term meaning, “I forbid”.
* In the United States, the president has veto power over the Senate and may “forbid” any law or act passed by the Senate.

**Roman Government:**

* The second part of the government was the Senate.
* Senate members were elected by the people; however, most Senators were patricians.
* The Senate passed laws and also controlled the treasury (money).
* The Senate is the most powerful group in the government of the Roman Republic.
* Lastly, there were citizen assemblies.
* Any citizen could belong to an assembly and they elected tribunes and made laws that applied to the common man.

**Dictators:**

* Dictators were leaders appointed in times of crisis.
* They were chosen by consuls then approved by the Senate.
* Dictators had absolute power to make laws and control the army.
* Their power would only last 6 months.

**The Story of Cincinnatus:**

* Cincinnatus was a humble farmer but was held in high regard by the citizens of Rome.
* Rome was threatened by invading enemies.
* The people called upon Cincinnatus to be their dictator in this time of crisis.
* Cincinnatus put down his plow and picked up his sword to lead the army.
* He defeated the enemy, and immediately resigned his position of dictator and returned to his farm.
* He is considered a Roman hero.

**American Cincinnatus?**

* George Washington is sometimes called an American Cincinnatus because he too held his command only until the defeat of the British.
* At a time when he could have chosen to exercise great political power, he instead returned as soon as he could to cultivating his lands.

**The Roman Military:**

* Romans placed a great value on their military.
* All landowning citizens were required to serve in the military.
* Some political positions even required 10 years of military service.
* Roman soldiers were organized into large military units known as legions.
* Therefore, soldiers were known as legionaries.

**Roman Legions:**

* The Roman legions were based off the infamous Greek phalanx.
* However, legions were smaller and therefore could maneuver much more quickly and easily.
  + Usually around 5,000 soldiers.
* Units would usually be broken down even further into groups of 60-120 soldiers led by an officer.

**Roman Expansion:**

* In the fourth century B.C., Rome began to expand.
* The Romans defeat the Etruscans in the north and the Greeks in the south.
* Within 150 years, it had captured almost all of Italy.
* Rome treated the conquered peoples justly. They even allowed some of the conquered peoples to enjoy the benefits of citizenship.

**Rome vs. Carthage:**

* With full control of the Italian peninsula, Rome establishes a prosperous trade network throughout the Mediterranean Sea.
* This brings Rome into conflict with the Punics.
* The Punics were from Carthage, a powerful trading city located in North Africa (Tunisia).

**The Punic Wars:**

* From 264 to 146 B.C., Rome and Carthage fought three bitter wars.
* The conflict is better known as the Punic Wars and was fought over control of trade in the Mediterranean Sea.
* In the first war, Rome won control of the island of Sicily, Corsica and Sardinia.
* The war lasts 23 years and Rome was able to defeat Carthage and gain control of the valuable islands.
* In the second war, a young general from Carthage named Hannibal marches on Rome.
* Hannibal wanted to avenge Carthage from its defeat years earlier.
* Instead of a head on attack, Hannibal marched his enormous army (which included 50,000 men, 9,000 cavalry and 60 war elephants) through Spain and France, over the Alps and into Italy.
* This is a daring move.
* Hannibal loses half his army and nearly all of his war elephants crossing the Alps.
* Despite this, Hannibal marches through Italy for nearly 10 years and scores many major victories.
* However, he is unable to capture Rome.
* Led by General Scipio, the Romans attack Carthage and Hannibal is forced to return to defend his native homeland.
* It is in Africa where Scipio and the Romans finally defeat Hannibal.
* Lastly, in the third and final Punic Wars, Rome once again attacks the hated rival Carthage.
* Rome burns the city to the ground and enslaves its 50,000 inhabitants.
* It was even said that the Romans covered the ground in salt so that the earth would not be able to produce any more crops.
* With Carthage finally destroyed, Rome gains dominance over the western Mediterranean

**Rome Triumphs:**

* In another few decades, Rome would also conquer Greece, Macedonia, Spain, and parts of modern Turkey.
* Rome now controlled the Mediterranean Sea.