Roman Names 2: Women and Girls

When we think of famous Romans, we often only remember one of their names. In fact, Roman citizen men often had three names, and citizen women often had two.

A Roman woman’s name was often linked to the names of other family members, usually her father’s. She might have two names:

1. **First name**: usually a feminine version of her father’s nomen (clan name).
   e.g. The daughter of Gaius Laelius Sapiens had the first name “Laelia”.

   If there were lots of women in a family, they might all have the same name! We know, for example, of three sisters from the Julii clan, all called Julia: Julia Agrippina, Julia Drusilla and Julia Livilla. Second names could be very useful!

2. **Second name**: her family might choose:

   a. To “number” her, e.g. Major (“Elder”), Minor (“Younger”) or Tertia (“Third”)
      e.g. One of the daughters of Lucius Aemilius Paullus was called Aemilia Tertia

   b. To give her a feminine version of her father’s cognomen
      e.g. The daughter of Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus was called Pompeia Magna

   c. To give her a name in honour of a relative. The endings –illa or -ina mean “little”.
      e.g. The daughter of Marcus Plautius Silvanus was called Plautia Urgulanilla after her grandmother Urgulania.

   d. To call her “Postuma” if her father had died before she was born.
A. Fathers and daughters

Look at the Roman names below. Using your knowledge of Roman names, match these Roman women to their fathers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Daughter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marcus Livius Drusus</td>
<td>o  Pompeia Sulla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucius Caecilius Metellus</td>
<td>o  Mucia Tertia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintus Mucius Scaevola</td>
<td>o  Laelia Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaius Laelius Sapiens</td>
<td>o  Clodia Pulchra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintus Pompeius Rufus</td>
<td>o  Cornelia Postuma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publius Clodius Pulcher</td>
<td>o  Livia Drusilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucius Cornelius Sulla</td>
<td>o  Caecilia Metella</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Reading Latin Inscriptions:

You are going to see some pictures of real Latin inscriptions. Can you read the names that have been highlighted?

1. _____________________________________________________________________________
2. _____________________________________________________________________________
3. _____________________________________________________________________________
4a. _____________________________________________________________________________
   b. _____________________________________________________________________________
5. _____________________________________________________________________________

C. Choose your own Roman name:

If you were a Roman woman, what would your name be? __________________________________

Hints:
• For your first name, you could use your surname (with an added –a, -ina, –ia or –illa to make it sound a bit more Latin).
• Then choose a second name:
  a. If you have siblings, what “number” are you? Major or Minor, or even Tertia, Quarta or Quinta?
  b. If you’ve already devised a cognomen for your family, add a feminine ending.
  c. If you’d like to be named after a favourite relative, add –illa to show you’re the “little” version.