

Punch a dedication to a god

In this activity, Children learn about jobs that people could do in ancient Rome and about Roman gods. They imagine they are a Roman, choose a job and then make a dedication to the right god to help them with that job.

For this activity, you will need:

- Tinfoil
- Cardboard (any kind will do, but corrugated works best)
- Embossing tools (if you do not have special embossing tools, old biros that have run out work well)
- Worksheets

Before the session cut the card into small pieces (1/4 A4 works well) and wrap them in tin foil so one side gives a nice smooth working surface. You will need one per pupil.

Introduction

If you haven't already done so, use the Roman Names Kit to help children choose a Roman name. For a quicker activity, use pupils' own names. There is a PowerPoint presentation that you can use to help introduce this session. It has a brief warm-up quiz on which gods were in charge of which jobs. If you have already done Roman gods, you can get the class to guess from memory. Otherwise, they can look up the gods and their roles from the worksheet. Talking points:

- Which jobs do we still have today? Which jobs do we not have?
- Why are Roman jobs gendered? Women did not have the same legal rights as men. They were not allowed to do lots of jobs. Roman elite women often managed their household. They could also make money from business ownership (see slides). Poor women and slaves often had no choice but to work.
- Note that female gods could be in charge of things usually done by men (like Diana hunting or Minerva wearing armour and carrying weapons).

Making an inscription

Children pick a Roman job from the list on the sheet. They decide which god would be most relevant to someone doing that job. They then make an inscription of their own.

Get them to make little dots on the tin foil wrapped card like the ones in the Hercules inscription. They should write their job (in Latin) first, then the god. If you have done the Roman Name picking activity, they can also add their Roman name. They can also decorate the edges of their inscription.

If children already have a favourite Roman god, it is ok to pick a profession to suit the god. Similarly, you can be flexible about which gender does which jobs, if they are very keen on keeping their own gender, but want a profession from the other column. For an extension activity, you could get them to suggest pairs of jobs for men and women that use the same skills (e.g. midwife for doctor, politician for actress).