The Empire of Rome

In about 387 BC, a city on the Italian peninsula began acquiring land and building an empire. That city was Rome. For more than one thousand years, Rome controlled the western world. Rome grew into a powerful empire in part because of how it treated the people it conquered. If a city was defeated by another empire, its citizens were forced from the land if they were lucky, and enslaved if they were not. Initially, the Romans extended the rights of **citizenship** to the people they conquered. Rome conquered many of its allies by force, but once the new people became citizens, they often joined the Roman army. Rome managed to unify most of the modern nation of Italy by 265 BC.

# The Ideal Location

Rome is an ideal place for a city. It is located along the banks of the Tiber River. The river made it easy to travel to and from the sea. The Tiber is very shallow near Rome. A shallow portion of a river is called a ford. The ford made it easier for people to cross the river. Seven hills surround Rome. The hills make it harder for invaders to approach the city and served as lookout areas for the Romans. Rome is also close to excellent farmland and an abundance of wood and stone. Civilizations have grown and prospered in Rome for thousands of years, which is why Rome is nicknamed "the Eternal City."

# Romulus and Remus

The origins of Rome are **steeped** in myth and legend. Many ancient Romans believed twin boys named Romulus and Remus founded the city. A king feared the twins would rob him of his throne, so he tossed them into the frigid Tiber River. Soon after, the brothers were rescued by a she-wolf who nursed them back to health.

Romulus and Remus decided to establish a city on the Tiber River, but the brothers could not agree on a location. Signs from the heavens decreed that each brother would build a city, but Romulus' city would be much larger. Romulus completed his city on April 21, 753 BC. Remus was upset that Romulus had built his city, so he climbed over the wall. The enraged Romulus killed his brother with an ax. The city came to be known as Rome, named for its legendary founder.

1. In the first paragraph, the sentence reads, “Initially, the Romans extended the rights of **citizenship** to the people they conquered.” In this sentence the word citizenship means…
	1. to treat others well
	2. to allow membership
	3. to give freedom
2. In the first paragraph, the author argues that the reason Rome became a great empire was because…
	1. it had a powerful army
	2. included conquered people into the Roman Empire
	3. it enslaved people who it attacked

1. In the space below write some of the reasons the author cites for Rome being an ideal location…
2. In the space below, list four reasons why water would be important to the growth of Rome…

a) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. In the third paragraph, the sentence reads, “The origins of Rome are **steeped** in myth and legend.” In this sentence the word steeped means…

a) sharply declining

b) talked about a lot

c) written about two times

1. The story of Romulus and Remus is most likely a…
	1. work of non-fiction
	2. a parable
	3. a legend
2. The main purpose of the section labeled ‘Romulus and Remus’ is to explain…
	1. how the city of Rome was founded
	2. the way the wolf had raised Romulus and Remus
	3. why Romulus killed his brother
3. The first section, unlike the second and third, has no heading. The most appropriate heading for this section from the list below should be…
	1. A City on the Italian Peninsula
	2. All About Rome
	3. How Rome Became Powerful