

# AN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF THE ROMAN PANTHEON

## History Lesson Plan

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### HISTORY INTRODUCTION

Video Compilation edited by John De Frank

### OBJECTIVES

**Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies/Texas Learning Standards for World History (Secondary**

WHS (c) Knowledge and skills. (1) History. The student understands traditional historical points of reference in world history. The student is expected to: (B) identify major causes and describe the major effects of the following events from 500 BC BCE to AD 600 CE : the development of the classical civilizations of Greece, Rome, Persia, India (Maurya and Gupta), China (Zhou, Qin, and Han), and the development of major world religions;

WHS 3) History. The student understands the contributions and influence of classical civilizations from 500 BC BCE to AD 600 CE on subsequent civilizations. The student is expected to: (A) describe the major political, religious/philosophical, and cultural influences of Persia, India, China, Israel, Greece, and Rome, including the development of monotheism, Judaism, and Christianity; (B) explain the impact of the fall of Rome on Western Europe; and (C) compare the factors that led to the collapse of Rome and Han China

WHS (25)(24)(22) Culture. The student understands how the development of ideas has influenced institutions and societies. The student is expected to: (A) summarize the following fundamental ideas and institutions of Eastern civilizations that originated in China and India: Hinduism, Confucianism, Daoism, the Mandate of Heaven, Legalism, and Buddhism; (B) summarize the fundamental ideas and institutions of Western civilizations that originated in Greece and Rome

WHS (26) Culture. The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created. The student is expected to: (A) identify significant examples of art and architecture that demonstrate an artistic ideal or visual principle from selected cultures; (B) analyze examples of how art, architecture, literature, music, and drama reflect the history of the cultures in which they are produced;

WHS (27)(25)(23) Science, technology, and society. The student understands how major scientific and mathematical discoveries and technological innovations have affected societies throughout history prior to 1750. The student is expected to: (A)(B) identify the origin and diffusion of major new ideas in mathematics, science, and technology that occurred during the Greco-Roman, Indian, Islamic

WHS (25)(27)(29) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to: and Chinese civilizations in river valley civilizations, classical Greece and Rome, classical India, the Islamic caliphates between 700 and 1200, and in China from the Tang to Ming dynasties (B) explain and apply different methods that how historians, when examining use to interpret the past, including the use of primary and secondary sources, points of view, analyze frames of reference, and historical context, and point of view to interpret historical events; (C)

explain the differences between primary and secondary sources and examine those sources to analyze frame of reference, historical context, and point of view

WHS (26)(28)(30) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to: (A) use social studies terminology correctly; (B) use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation; (C) interpret and create databases, research outlines, bibliographies, and visuals including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps; and written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information; and (D) transfer information from one medium to another

WHS(27)(29)(31) Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to: (A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and (B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.

#### College and Career Readiness Standards

I. Interrelated Disciplines and Skills A. Spatial analysis of physical and cultural processes that shape the human experience 1. Analyze how physical and cultural processes have shaped human communities over time. B. Problem-solving and decision-making skills 1. Use a variety of research and analytical tools to explore questions or issues thoroughly and fairly. II. Interdependence of Global Communities A. Spatial understanding of global, regional, national, and local communities 1. Distinguish spatial patterns of human communities that exist between or within contemporary political boundaries. 2. Connect regional or local developments to global ones. III. Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation of Information A. Critical examination of texts, images, and other sources of information 1. Identify and analyze the main idea(s) and point(s)-of-view in sources. 2. Situate an informational source in its appropriate contexts (contemporary, historical, cultural). 3. Evaluate sources from multiple perspectives. 4. Understand the differences between a primary and secondary source and use each appropriately to conduct research and construct arguments.

#### **GUIDING QUESTIONS**

1. When and why was the Pantheon built?
2. How does the Pantheon reflect the vast power and diverse culture of the Roman Empire?

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Analyze and understand the story and significance of the Roman Pantheon throughout its existence and explain why it continues to be important today.

#### **Background**

The origins of the Pantheon go back to the civil war between Octavian and Mark Antony (supported by Cleopatra) culminating in the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C. This decisive naval battle was won in large part by Octavian's very able commander Marcus Agrippa. In the aftermath of the battle Octavian was able to win his war against Antony and Cleopatra and

consolidate his rule over the entire Roman Empire. He eventually became known as Caesar Augustus and initiated the greatest period of Roman history known as the Pax Romana. During this time Marcus Agrippa built the first Pantheon in circa 25 B.C. during his third Consulship. The temple was originally dedicated to Julius Caesar. Unfortunately the Pantheon did not survive for long and was destroyed in fire in 80 A.D. Thirty years later the temple again burned down (reportedly from a lightning strike) but the Romans re-built the Pantheon for a third time. This time it was the Emperor Hadrian who commissioned what is now the third and present incarnation of the Pantheon Temple. Most historians put the date of the Pantheon's dedication to about 126 A.D.

After the decline and fall of the Roman Empire the Pantheon was spared the fate of most Roman temples of being torn down or cannibalized for construction material. This was due to the fact that the temple was consecrated into a church in 609 A.D. when the Byzantine Emperor Phocas gave the edifice to Pope Boniface IV. The Pantheon was renamed Santa Maria ad Martyres (Saint Mary and Martyrs). However even though the Pantheon was now a church it was not completely spared the looting of its material. In 663 A.D. Byzantine Emperor Constantine II robbed the temple of its gilded bronze tiles which covered the dome and shipped them off to Constantinople where they were promptly stolen by Arab pirates while in route. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century Pope Urban VIII reportedly took 200 tons from the Pantheon's portico to make 80 cannons for the Castel Sant'Angelo. Some of this bronze was also used for the altar in St. Peter's Basilica. There is some dispute to the veracity of these accounts but it did lead to the famous statement, "Quod non fecerunt barbari fecerunt Barbarini", which translates into, "What the barbarians did not do the Barbarini did". Barbarini is the family name of Pope Urban VIII.

Ironically there was some significant restoration started by Pope Urban VIII and finished by Pope Alexander VII which included restoring the columns of the eastern end of the portico. The restored capitals and entablature show the insignia of these popes such as the Bee and the flower.

Early in the 17<sup>th</sup> century twin bell towers were added to the front of the temple by Carl Maderno (often mistakenly attributed to Bernini) but were so incongruent with the structure they were known as the "ass ears" and were eventually removed in 1883.

In 1520 the great artist Raphael was buried in the rotunda at his request. The temple also serves as a tomb for the first king of a united Italy, Victor Emmanuel II, and his son Umberto I who were buried there in 1878 and 1900 respectively.

Today the Pantheon stands one of the great architectural wonders in the world and is considered the one of the best preserved Roman temples from antiquity. Most of its structure and material is original from circa 126 A.D. when its construction was believed to have been finished. It is

Rome's oldest continuously used building where it has served as a temple, church, tomb and place of wonder for almost 1900 years. This remarkable building has been emulated many times but never copied or duplicated on any scale. Its design has served as "muse" for many designs such as Monticello, the Jefferson Monument, The U.S. Capitol Building and most state capitol buildings.

### **PREPARATION**

Materials needed include construction paper, scissors, glue, and colors.

### **LESSON ACTIVITIES**

#### ACTIVITY 1: The Pantheon RAFT

Begin the lesson with a RAFT Activity to introduce the topic. Project an image of the outside of the Pantheon building. The students will then write a short letter making and explaining their educated guess about why they think the Pantheon was built on the provided handout.

- **R:** Role of the writer (Archeologist)
- **A:** Audience who will read the writing (professors, teachers, history buffs)
- **F:** Format of the writing (Advice Letter, ex. Dear Abby)
- **T:** Topic (Why do you think the Pantheon was built?)

This activity is designed to get students to offer logic-based hypotheses about why the Pantheon might have been originally built.

#### ACTIVITY 2: Historical Biography- If These Pillars Could Talk...

To help students begin to understand the life of the Pantheon structure and the people who have lived beneath its shadow, place students into groups of 3. Have each group build a timeline in story format using primary and secondary resources to find facts. The story of the Pantheon should then be written on 3 pillars, each representing the different chapters in the life of the Pantheon: the original Pantheon, the Restored Pantheon, and the Christian Pantheon.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: Have the groups present as pillars of the Pantheon. Each student should pretend to be one of the three pillars in front of the class. They should then tell their story, including what they saw, how they felt, and what happened to them, at different parts of history.

#### ACTIVITY 3: Manual for the Everyday Empire Stonemason

To help students understand the power and wide-range control of the Roman Empire, have the students analyze the materials used to construct the Pantheon's interior floor by creating an illustrated booklet tracing the various materials used and still being walked upon today.

First, help students create a 4 page minimum booklet using either construction paper or lightly colored paper. Directions for this foldable can be found at:

[http://www.halfhollowhills.k12.ny.us/uploaded/SummerSchool/folding\\_mini-book.pdf](http://www.halfhollowhills.k12.ny.us/uploaded/SummerSchool/folding_mini-book.pdf)

Next, create the title page. Title the booklet: "The Four Corners of the Roman Empire."

The cover illustration should be a picture of the Pantheon floor. Allow the students to research on the internet and print their choice image.

The interior 4 pages of the booklet ought to be dedicated to the 4 types of marble present in the Pantheon floor. Students should provide a picture of each material, provide the official name of the marble, a description of it, a description of where the marble came from (Egypt, Carthage, Gaul, and Asia), and a short summary of how Rome acquired that territory for the Empire.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: Have the students create a map of the Roman Empire showing from where each of the materials used to construct the Pantheon hailed. They should then construct lines connecting each location (Gaul, Egypt, Carthage, and Asia) to show the four corners of the Roman Empire.

### ACTIVITY 3: Historical Marker: Why is this Building Important?

To help students synthesize the historical background of the Pantheon, give each student a large piece of construction paper. Have them each draw an outline of a historical marker, large enough to cover their page. Show them several examples of existing historical markers they might find in their community or state. Now have them create a marker for the Pantheon, telling details of its origins, significance, story through time, and role today to answer the question, "Why is this building important?" The marker must trace the timeline of the Pantheon from Agrippa to Hadrian and finally to the Catholic Church, telling the story of the building.

### **ASSESSMENT**

Have students create an online review game in groups of three using the online game Kahoot!

<https://getkahoot.com/>

### **RESOURCES**

Hughes, Robert. *Rome: A Cultural, Visual, and Personal History*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011.

Joost-Gaugier, Christiane L. *The Iconography of Sacred Space: A Suggested Reading of the Meaning of the Roman Pantheon* 19 (2009): 21-42. <http://www.jstor.org>. IRSA S.c. Web. 11 Apr. 2009. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1483585>>.

MacDonald, William L. *The Pantheon: Design, Meaning and Progeny*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976

Vitruvius, Marcus. *De Architectura*. Public Domain, 1<sup>st</sup> Century BC.

*Ancient History: Rome If You Want To, The Pantheon (EP2) - Drive Thru Histor*. You Tube, 2 May 2013. Web. 26 July 2015. <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X5b\\_ifTU0ko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X5b_ifTU0ko)>.