

Roman Women

Introduction

Throughout the history of Ancient Rome, women had little freedom and were considered second to men. They had little official role in public life. *Despite this*, women played an important part in the culture and history of Ancient Rome. Poor women worked for a living, *whereas* rich women were *rarely* allowed to have important jobs. *Neither could* they vote, *nor* were they allowed to own land.

Marriage



Whilst Women were owned by their husbands, men married only so they *could* pass on their money and land to a son *though* this changed when Rome became an Empire in 27 B.C.

On her wedding day, a bride *would* wear:

- a tunic;
- a saffron cloak; and
- a flaming orange veil.

Afterward the wedding, a pig *would* be sacrificed so that the couple's future *could* be read in its entrails (insides of the pig). *Some* women also held jobs outside the home. They worked a variety of jobs including merchants, wet nurses, midwives, scribes and dancers. *In 216 BC*, the senate passed the Oppian

Law, *which* limited the amount of money a woman *could* own. *To get the law repealed or cancelled*, Roman women took to the streets in 195 BC.

Fashion

In general, women *usually* wore a tunica (a long tube dress, with no sleeves) and a belt. *Quite often*, many wealthy women *could* afford dresses dyed in rich colours such as purple, *while* slave girls wore shorter dresses of un-dyed, white fabric.



Conclusion

Although women were never treated as equal to men, their status improved over time. *Some* women gained power as the wives of Emperors whilst many *others* trained as doctors, hairdressers, teachers and vegetable sellers. *However*, life *could* still be tough for Roman women.

Language features:

Fronted Adverbial examples: Text in **red**.

Subordinate clauses: Text in **purple**.

Relative pronoun: Text in **green**.

Alan Peat: **Some others.... Text in blue.**

Other language features in this text: conjunctions: though, neither... nor, whereas, while, however. Adverbs (-ly): rarely Generalisers: In general, usually, often, many, etc. Modal verbs: would, could Other Punctuation: Colon – to introduce a list, semi-colon, commas in a list. Features of report: Introduction, Headings, Sub-Headings, Paragraph, Third Person, Technical Language e.g. Empire, merchants, tunica.