

Women's Fashion During the Roman Time Period

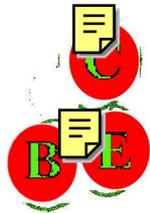
Every period of time in history has its own unique characteristics, such as a style of dress. The ancient Roman time period is well known for its uniform style of the toga. The Roman women actually developed several variations of the toga along with creative accessories.



Clothing was an important part of Roman life. Clothing could be used to reveal one's social status as well as marital status. For example, upper class women wore more valuable jewelry than the lower class and married women wore a tunic called a stola. Since the basic Roman outfit was simple, small additions could help one personalize her looks.



As a Roman female went through the process of getting dressed, she put on the undergarments first. Roman women wore a simple loincloth for underwear. To serve as a bra, they used a band of cloth or leather called a strophium or mamillare.



The next article of clothing put on by a Roman female was the tunic. Tunics were usually fairly simple articles of clothing which were knee length. They were very functional, since tunics were used not only as daywear, but also sleepwear.

There were two styles of tunics. The first, peplos, was constructed of two rectangular cloths sewn together along the sides. The open top sections were folded down in the front and back to create a sleeveless dress. The peplos was put on by pulling it over one's head. It was then fastened at the shoulders with pins. To complete the outfit, a belt was worn around the waist, either under or over the folds of the peplos.

The second type of tunic was the chiton, inspired from the typical dress of ancient Greek women. This type was made from two wide cloths which were sewn together, leaving room for

armholes. The chiton was put on by pulling it overhead. It was then fastened every so often with pins in order to form sleeves. Chitons were similar, yet somewhat different from peplos.

Stolas were also common in the ancient Roman society. These sleeveless tunics were worn by married women as a tradition and to show respectability. Stolas were full length, from neck to ankle, and high-waisted. They were fastened at the shoulders with clasps. The wool stola was either left undyed or was colored from vegetable dyes to produce a white, brown, or gray color. Although they were plain, stolas were an important symbol of tradition and respect.



Roman women had their own version of today's cloak called a palla. This large sheet-like article of clothing was typically worn outdoors by respectable women. Not only did Roman females wear a palla to show their respectability, but it also kept them warm. A palla worked much like a shawl. It was a rectangular piece of fabric which was draped over the left shoulder, under the right arm, across the body, and carried by the left arm or shoulder. The palla could also cover one's head if necessary. It came in various colors, but the upper class women usually owned pallas with a purple border. Pallas were simple, but functional.



The next step for getting ready would be fixing the hair. Many Roman women liked to dye their hair golden red. They also enjoyed using fake hairpieces, often made from the hair of slave girls, to make their hair appear longer and thicker. The usual styles were to fix hair in elaborate updos or wear it down in ringlets.



Shoes were an important part of the Roman dress. The shoes were typically leather and sandal style. They came in an assortment of colors, such as white, green, and yellow. During a time without cars, shoes were vital for walking around a lot.



To complete her outfit, a Roman woman almost always wore some form of jewelry. Since the tunics were so simple, women could personalize their look by adding their favorite piece of



jewelry. Fibulas, decorated safety pins to fasten clothes, were very popular. Gold coin jewelry called aurei was also frequently worn. Roman women owned jewelry such as earrings, necklaces, pendants, bracelets, and friendship rings. These beautiful pieces added individuality to one's look.

Roman women took their looks seriously, just like many modern women still do today. They were able to express their own style through accessories while still wearing the typical outfits of the time. Roman women took already existent clothing designs from civilizations, such as the Greeks, and modified the styles to make them their own.

The Task:

A summary of the task is provided:

Students were asked to research the period of time in which Julius Caesar was emperor of the Roman Empire. Then they were asked to meet in a small group to summarize their research and determine a topic on which to focus. Students were to take this topic and continue their research in order to complete a comprehensive overview and write a narrative report. These narratives were collected for a portfolio of the life and times of Julius Caesar.

Circumstances of Performance:

X Alone	X In a group
X In class	X As homework
With teacher feedback	X With peer feedback
Timed	X Extended project
No opportunity for revision	X Opportunity for revision

What the work shows:

Writing

E2a. -- The student produces a report that:

- E2a.1** engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a persona, and otherwise developing reader interest; **(A)**
- E2a.3** creates an organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience, and context; **(B)**
- E2a.4** includes appropriate facts and details; **(C)**
- E2a.5** excludes extraneous and inappropriate information. **(C)**

E2c. -- The student produces a narrative (fictional or autobiographical) account that:

- E2c.1** engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest; **(D)**
- E2c.3** creates an organizing structure; **(E)**
- E2c.5** excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies. **(E)**

Conventions, Grammar and Usage of the English Language

E4a. -- The student independently demonstrates an understanding of the rules of the English language in written and oral work, and selects the structures and features of language appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context of the work. The student demonstrates control of:

- E4a.1** grammar; **(F)**
- E4a.2** paragraph structure; **(F)**
- E4a.3** punctuation; **(F)**
- E4a.4** sentence construction; **(F)**

E4a.5 spelling; (F)

E4a.6 usage. (F)

E4b -- The student analyzes and subsequently revises work to clarify it or make it more effective in communicating the intended message or thought. The student's revisions should be made in light of the purposes, audiences, and contexts that apply to the work. Strategies for revising include:

E4b.1 adding or deleting details

E4b.3 clarifying difficult passages

E4b.4 rearranging words, sentences, and paragraphs to improve or clarify meaning

E4b.5 sharpening the focus

E4b.6 reconsidering the organizational structure.

A/D The writer creates interest by referring to everyday life. In the second paragraph, the writer gives an outline of all the kinds of clothing that were worn and subsequently describes each. Several times the Roman clothing is compared to that of today.

B/E A clear focus on Roman women's clothing is matched by a clever organization. The writer takes us through the process of a woman dressing, weaving styles and descriptions of clothing with the action. The piece moves from underwear to sleepwear to outerwear to hair, shoes, and jewelry.

C Facts and details make the writing engaging.

F. The few mechanical and grammatical errors in the piece do not detract from the overall quality of the piece. Colloquial language ("elaborate updos") and sentence variety make the writer very accessible and interesting. (Note: The sources of the information should have been cited in the text and not just listed on the Works Cited page.)

Rubric Bank Traits Used: Ideas and Content; Organization; Conventions, Grammar and Mechanics