

AMGUEDDFA CYMRU

ESOL Level 1

General Visit



National Roman Legion Museum

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About Amgueddfa Cymru

Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales is a charity, and a family of seven national museums and one collections centre located across Wales. But we're more than our buildings. Our sites are vital community spaces that reach far beyond their location on a map. Our aim is to inspire everyone we reach through Wales's story and we recognise that everyone has something to contribute through our museums, collections and the work we do.



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Before your visit

Roman Treasure and Leisure
(instructions on page 2)



The Roman Empire spread into 'Wales' in the First Century CE and the Romans stayed in the country for over 300 years. Wales was a rich source of gold, lead and copper and also smaller amounts of silver. The Romans were good engineers and excavated large amounts of minerals from Wales. Mining was a lucrative business for rich Romans who had villas with wonderful gardens, mosaics on the floors and beautiful murals on the walls.

1 The Roman army did not have an easy life in Wales. They met fierce resistance from Celtic tribes in Wales and it took them 30 years of fighting to gain control of the country. Even then, they had to keep forts along Wales, including one at Caerleon. This was established by the Roman army in 75 CE in the territory of a fearsome tribe in Wales. The fortress lasted for 200 years and a Roman baths and amphitheatre can still be seen at the site.

2 A host of Roman treasures have been found in Caerleon. These include brooches, silver coins, pottery, blue-green glassware and carved gemstones. The gemstones were found in the remains of the Roman baths where they were lost by soldiers.

3 Many of the treasures and artifacts of Caerleon are now on display at the National Roman Legion Museum these show what life was like for Roman soldiers. At the museum there is a recreation of a Barrack room where the soldiers slept.

4 The museum also includes a small garden. Roman gardens were a status symbol and could include pillars, statues as well as ornamental plants. They were a place for wealthy Romans to relax and entertain. The Romans also grew many herbs. These were used for cooking and for medicine.

5 Romans enjoyed hosting feasts and held regular religious festivals. They also enjoyed a visit to the amphitheatre. The remains of the amphitheatre at Caerleon are a short walk from the museum. In Roman times it was used for gory gladiator contests and animal hunts.

Reading Task 1

Go to the text on page one. Read quickly and match the pictures A - E to the paragraphs 1 - 5. Discuss in pairs. Do you agree?

Reading Task 2

Read the text again - more carefully this time. Are the following statements True or False? Explain why.

1. The Romans were not very good at mining?
2. The Romans found it very easy to take control of Wales.
3. The fortress at Caerleon lasted for two centuries.
4. Romans lost gemstones in the baths.
5. The Roman Museum includes artifacts from Roman soldiers.
6. Romans had simple gardens.
7. The Romans used their gardens for leisure.
8. Romans had many uses for herbs.
9. Roman amphitheatres were mainly used for performing plays.
10. Some Romans were very rich.

Task 3: Discussion

Underline a fact in the text that was most interesting to you. Discuss in pairs why you choose that fact.

Now report back to the group the fact that *your partner* found the most interesting and why.

At the museum

Task 1: Treasure Hunt

1A The Romans used lots of different materials. Find six interesting objects made of **stone, metal, gemstone, glass, bone** and pottery. Take a photo of each object. Fill in the table below.

Material	Name of Object	What was it used for
Stone		
Metal		

Glass		
Gemstone		
Bone		
Pottery		

Task 2: Roman coins

Look at the Roman coins on display.

Q1: Which coin was worth the most?

What was it called?

From what was it made?

Q2: Which coin was worth the least?

What was it called?

From what was it made?



Q3: List all the materials from which the coins were made.

Start with the most expensive and end with the cheapest.

Task 3: Roman fashion

The Roman's often wore brooches as decoration and to fix their cloaks. Some they wore every day. The best ones were for special occasions. The brooches had many different shapes and styles. Take a picture of a dolphin, a trumpet and a disc brooch.

Q1: Which is your favourite brooch design. Why do you like it the best?

The Roman's liked to look their best for festivals and feasts. They would spend many hours getting ready for parties. Find the display case with Roman tweezers and nail cleaners.

Q2: Do they look the same as the ones we use today? Does that surprise you? Why?

Task 4: Carved gemstones

Next to the museum is the Roman baths – like a Roman leisure centre where they could go to exercise, socialise, and wash. Some bathers lost their gemstones there. These are now displayed in the gallery. Some of the gemstones were carved with tiny drills.



Q: Make a list of your three favourites below. What is carved on the gemstones?

Task 5: Roman garden

Rich Romans had beautiful gardens with mosaics, bushes, benches, statues and pillars. For building the Romans made a type of concrete that was even stronger than the concrete we use today.

Q: Can you see anything in the garden at Caerleon that is made of concrete. Take a photo. What is it called? What was it used for?

Task 6: Mystery objects

As you go round the museum take photos of **three objects** but keep them a secret. You will use them for a game after the visit. Make notes to help you describe the objects later.



After you visit:

1: 'Adjectives of quality', comparatives and superlatives

'Adjectives of quality' are used to describe positive and negative qualities such as good, bad, fast, slow, strong, weak, hot, cold and so on.

You can add **er** or **ier** to the end of these adjectives to form a **comparative**. This is a word that **compares two things**. For example, the storage jar is **bigger** than the bowl.

You can add **est** or **iest** to these adjectives to form a **superlative**. We use superlatives to describe the **one thing at the top** of a scale.

Adjective of quality	Comparative	Superlative
strong	stronger	strongest
good	better	best
old	older	oldest
fierce	fiercer	fiercest
tiny	tinier	tiniest
warm	warmer	warmest

Use words from the **table above** to complete these **sentences**:

1. The pictures on Roman carved gemstones are _____. (size)
2. Bronze is _____ than gold, but iron is _____. (strength)
3. The Celtic tribe that lived near Caerleon was one of the _____ in Wales. (fierceness)
4. Medieval pottery is old but Roman pots are _____. (age)
5. You can swim in a river, but the swimming baths are _____. (warmth)
6. The Celts were good at mining, but the Romans were _____. (ability)

2: Guess the Roman Object game

Write down information about one of the three mystery objects you photographed at the museum.

- What colour is it?

- What is it made of?

- What is it used for?

- What does it look like?

- Does it have decoration?

- What size is it?

- Who would use this object?

- Is it expensive or cheap?

Now others in the group have to ask questions about the object and guess what it is. When someone guesses correctly it is *their* turn to answer questions about *their* object.

Keep going until everyone in the group has had a go.

3: Email a friend

Write a short email to a friend telling them about the visit. Where was the museum? Who did you go with? Did you enjoy the visit? What things were there? Which was your favourite. Did anything about the Romans surprise you?