

# Roman Calendar and Numerals

No one knows who invented the first calendar.

No one knows when the first calendar was invented.



Notched bones recording moon phases have been found in Africa and Europe, dating from as early as 20,500 B. C.



Our calendar and the Roman calendar started with the ancient Egyptians. The Egyptians based their calendar on the sun because of their belief in the sun god Ra.



Julius Caesar was a famous Roman Emperor.

When he wanted to establish a new calendar for his empire, he picked the Egyptian calendar and changed it a little bit.



Julius Caesar expanded the Roman empire until it covered parts of Africa, Asia and Europe.

As the empire grew, the calendar went with it, which is why European countries and the US use this calendar.

Months (Menses)



Julius Caesar renamed the Egyptian months of the year to fit his Roman empire:

Januarius- named for the Roman god Janus

Februarius- named for the Roman purification festival Februa

Martius- named for the Roman god Mars

Aprilis- named for an Etruscan goddess Aprilis

Maius – named for the Roman goddess Maia

Iunius- named for the Roman goddess Juno

**Julius**- originally named Quintilis, meaning 5<sup>th</sup> month; later renamed after Julius Caesar

**Augustus**- originally named Sextilis, meaning 6<sup>th</sup> month; later renamed for the Roman emperor Augustus

**September**- from the Latin *septem* which means seven

**October**- from the Latin *octo* or eight

**November**- from the Latin *nove* or nine

**December**- from the Latin *decem* or ten



**So why does the ninth month mean seven, the tenth month mean eight, the eleventh month mean nine and the twelfth month mean ten?**

**Julius Caesar's calendar started with the month of Martius and ended with the month of Februarius.**

# Days of the Week

**Sollis**

**the sun's day**

**Lunae**

**the moon's day**

# Martis

**Mars' day**

**Mars was the Roman god of war**

# Mercurii

**Mercury's day**

**Mercury was, among many other things, the Roman god of communication and prosperity**

# Jovis

**Jove's day**

**Jupiter was the king of the Roman gods**

# Veneris

**English for Venus' day**

**Venus was the Roman goddess of love**



# Saturni

**Saturn's day**

**Saturn was the Roman god of  
agriculture and renewal**

# Important Days of the Roman Calendar

- There were three main days, dependent on the phases of the moon
  - The **Kalends** (thus, the word “calendar”) was the first day of the month (when the moon would first appear in a sickle shape, first day after a new moon)
  - The **Ides**, the middle of the month, (usually the 13<sup>th</sup> day but sometimes the 15<sup>th</sup> corresponding to a full moon)
  - The **Nones**, nine days before the Ides (which is usually the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the month but the 7<sup>th</sup> in long months, and indicating the fourth quarter of the moon).

# How did they name their days?

- If only three days had names, how did they tell the rest of them apart?
  - They would always figure out how many days there were until the next named day, and count backwards from there.
  - The day before a named day was known as the “pridie” or literally “day before”
    - For example, the day before the nones of January (Ianuarius) would be January 4<sup>th</sup> in modern times, but pridie nones ianuarius in ancient times.

# How did they name their days?

- They counted differently than we do – they always included the first and last in a series when they counted, in modern times we only include the end of the series.
- Two days before the nones would be January 3 today, but ante diem (days before) III in ancient times.
- Three days before the nones would be January 2, or ante diem IV.

In March, July, October, May

The Ides fall on the 15<sup>th</sup> day

The Nones, the 7<sup>th</sup> and all besides

Have two days less for Nones and Ides

# Writing Roman Numerals

- Roman numerals are written as combinations of seven letters.

I = 1      V = 5      X = 10      L = 50

C = 100      D = 500      M = 1000

- The letters can be written as capital (XVI) or lower-case letters (xvi).

# As a general guide:

- Roman Numerals are made up by adding or subtracting numbers like this:
  - $11 = 10 + 1 = \text{XI}$
  - $9 = 10 - 1 = \text{IX}$
  - $40 = 50 - 10 = \text{XL}$
  
- If you want to say **1,100** in Roman Numerals, you would say M for **1000** and then put a C after it for **100**; **1,100 = MC**
  
- **900 = 1000 - 100** so the C comes before M = **CM**

# Pensum:

- Complete the Activity on the bottom of the Calendar page!