

SO YOU WANT TO BE A

# ROMAN SOLDIER?

## TEACHER NOTES

This series of learning activities uses this great book, full of fun, facts and humour, to give opportunities for children to get immersed in historical enquiry, applying many cross-curricular skills. The skills and content covered are targeted at KS2 pupils.



## LEARNING SEQUENCE 1

### A ROMAN CAREERS FAIR

Discussion starters:

- What job do you want in the future?
- What makes you suitable for this role?

### PART 1

The first part of this task is based on research skills. You may like to split your class into 5 groups or set children off to work in pairs. The 5 roles children will research are:

- The Cavalry (pages 30–31)
- The Auxilia (pages 32–33)
- The Navy (pages 34–35)
- The Praetorian Guard (pages 36–37)
- The Top Bosses (page 44–45)



**CHILDREN CAN USE THE  
'KEY QUESTIONS' SHEET TO  
JOT DOWN THEIR FINDINGS**

You may also encourage children to research further, beyond this book.

### EXTENDED RESEARCH:

Give further challenges by asking children to also find out about the roles on pages 62–65: the scouts, the covering force, the engineers and navvies, the pioneers etc...



# ROMAN CAREERS

## KEY QUESTIONS TO RESEARCH

Make your notes in each box.

What will you be doing?

What are the best parts?

What are the worst parts?

Who is suitable for this job?

# PART 2

Share the poster on page 11. Annotate together to identify the purpose of each part and the writer's tools used.

1.

2.

3.

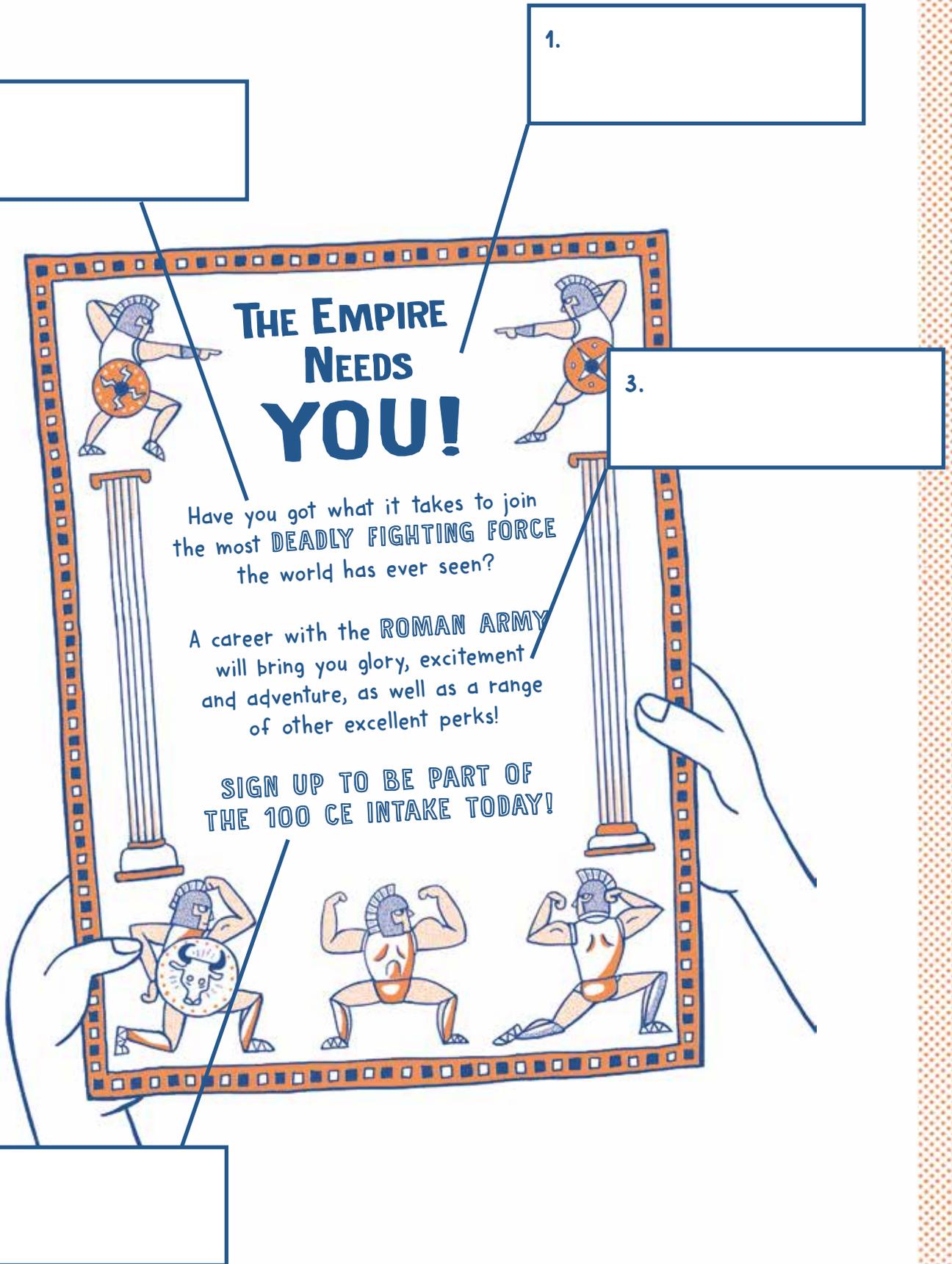
## THE EMPIRE NEEDS YOU!

Have you got what it takes to join  
the most **DEADLY FIGHTING FORCE**  
the world has ever seen?

A career with the **ROMAN ARMY**  
will bring you glory, excitement  
and adventure, as well as a range  
of other excellent perks!

**SIGN UP TO BE PART OF  
THE 100 CE INTAKE TODAY!**

4.



## PART 3

Children can now design their own poster following the model for the specific role they have researched. Use the following sentence starter prompts to guide children's writing:



- The..... needs/wants/requires you!  
(This is great chance to explore synonyms for the words need and want)
- Can you...? Are you...? Have you...? Will you...?  
(Children may like to use a cluster of questions together)
- A career as a..... will bring/make/show you....., as well as.....!  
(Here you can discuss abstract nouns and discuss calls to action and using imperative, or bossy, verbs and command sentences.)

Children can add a border and images to create an eye-catching **POSTER**. This can be copied and displayed on their careers fair stall.

## PART 4

Children can now create a leaflet to give to the delegates at the careers fair.

- The front cover should **INVITE** the reader to the job: 'Become a.....'
- The back cover should include **SIGN-UP** details. Children can have fun here by making it modern with a phone number and email, or use the base camp map on page 53 to direct soldiers to a specific place.
- The middle 3 pages should share 3 **PROS** for that role with a short paragraph and image.
- The fold-over page can use the sentence starter: 'This is the role for you, if.....'

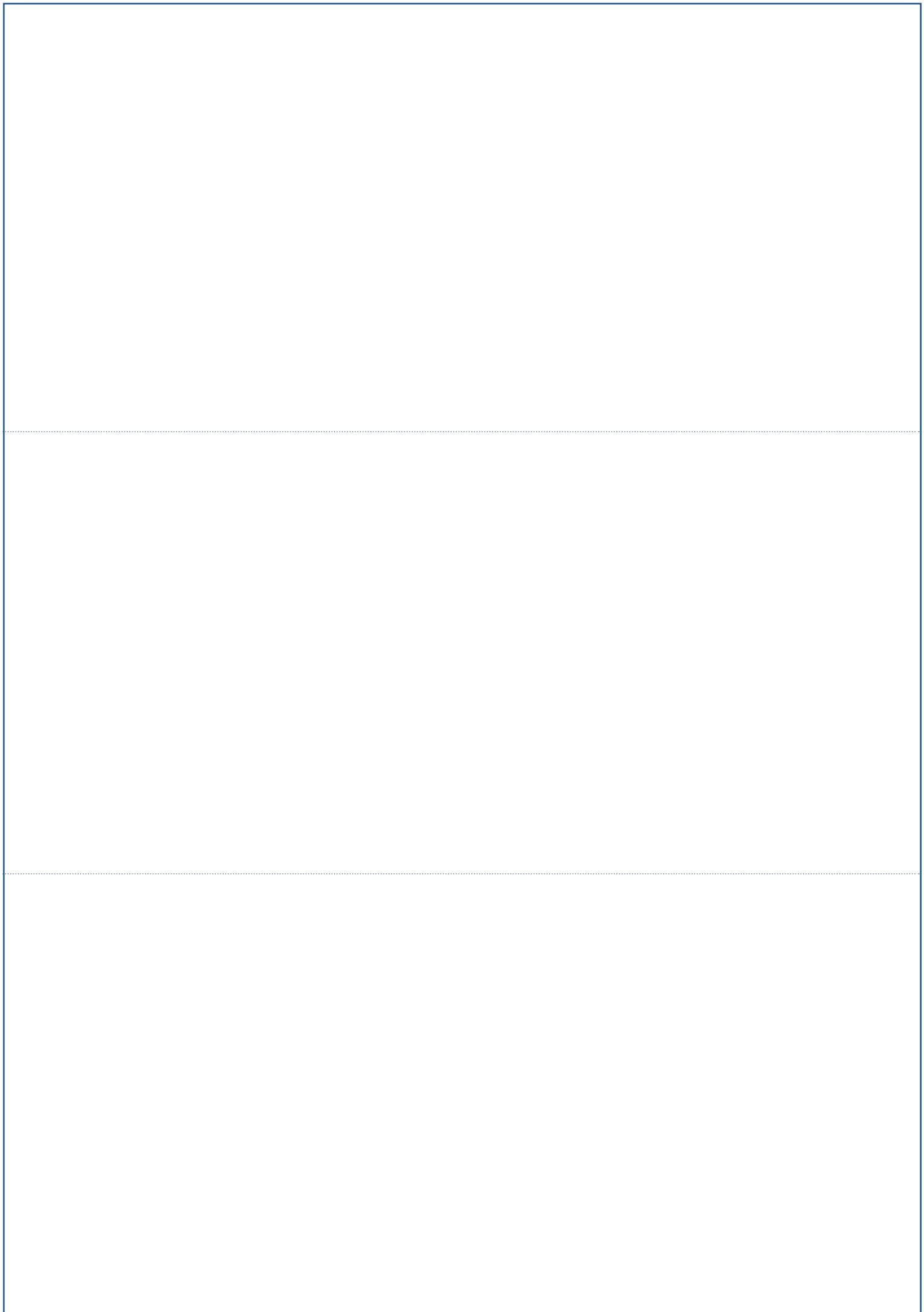
### SIDE 1

Fold over page	Back cover	Front cover

### SIDE 2

Fold over page	Back cover	front cover

Print the following pages back to back as a template for the leaflets.





# PART 5

Now children are experts in one role, they are ready to set up their careers fair stall. They have posters to put up and leaflets to give out. Give each team a stall, either with your classroom or the hall set up as a **MARKETPLACE**. Children may wish to add to their stall with a banner and props.

Children should take turns to be the stall holders and the delegates.

As a **STALL HOLDER**, they have to talk to other children about the role they have researched.

As a **DELEGATE**, children have to gather information about all the others' roles, before deciding which role suits them best.

They can gather their findings on the sheet (see over).

Complete this learning sequence by asking children to decide on the **ROMAN ROLE** for them. What made them choose their role?





# LEARNING SEQUENCE 2

## ROMAN ARMY ADVERT

Discussion starters:

- Why do you think people wanted to be Roman Soldiers?
- How do we convince people to do things that are tricky or unpleasant?

### PART 1

- Read pages 12–13 in pairs and ask children to summarise the benefits for each section.
- Now read pages 14–15 and ask children to create a list of all the criteria you need to match to be a Roman Soldier.



### PART 2

Now we need to persuade the right people to join up. Link back here to the persuasive tools we saw used on page 11.

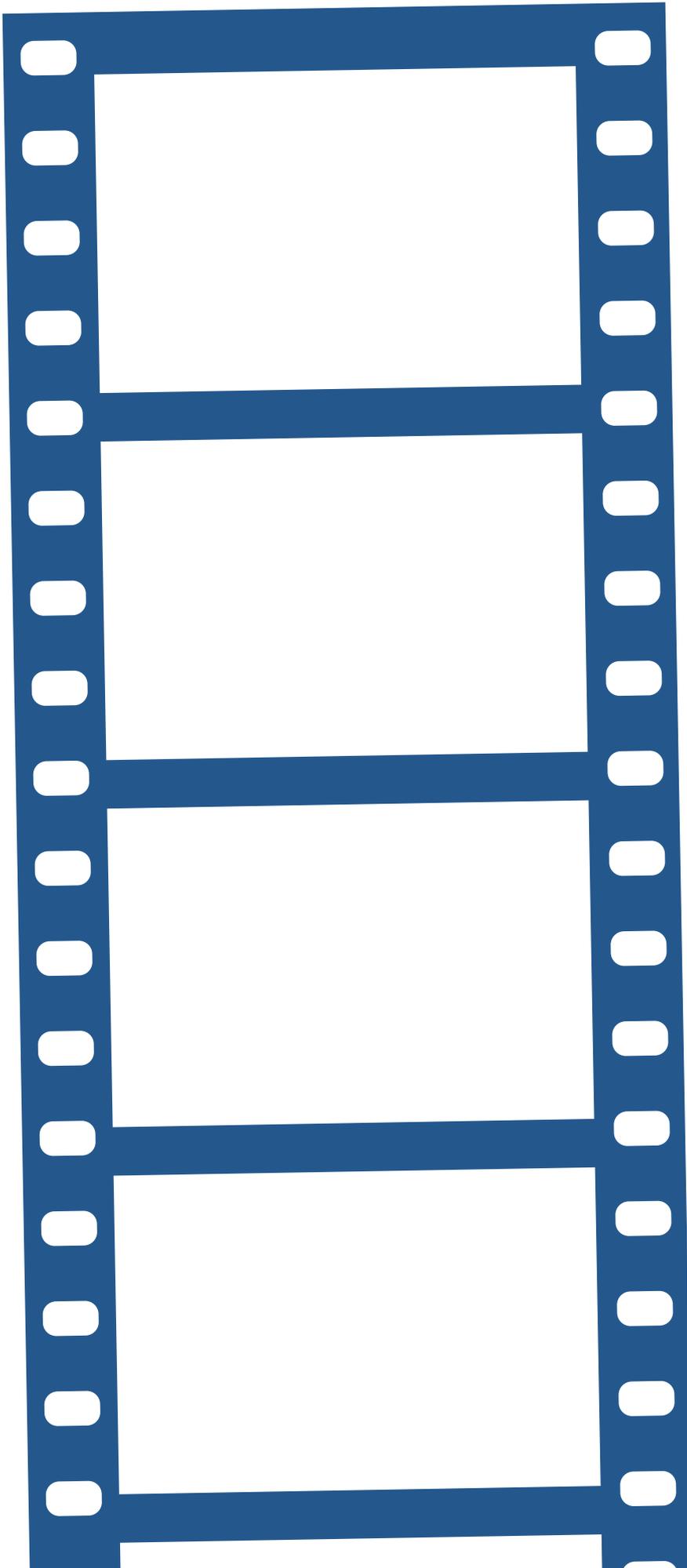
It would be great to see some current TV adverts at this point for the Army, the Royal Airforce and the Royal Navy. Check them out on YouTube. Discuss how they try to convince you to join.

You can find some here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnwgjTVObrm6SuUvJ9QyhwQ>

Task children with creating a TV advert, using the benefits from pages 12–13 and criteria from pages 14–15. Children can plan out their advert on the film strip planner (see over).

# ROMAN RECRUITMENT ADVERT



## QUESTIONS

Grab the attention of suitable candidates.  
(Think about pages 14–15)

## BENEFITS

What will the candidates get out of it?  
(Think about pages 12–13)

## CALL TO ACTION

Try a command sentence.

## SLOGAN

Create a snappy slogan that people will remember.

## PART 3

Ask children to perform the adverts to the rest of the class. You may like to create them as videos using Adobe Spark, iMovie or Windows Movie Maker. With a green screen and a few props, you could really make something exciting!

Children can score the persuasive powers of each advert out of 10, using **ROMAN NUMERALS** on wipeboards for a bit of fun!



## PART 4

Now children are convinced about joining up, they need a **LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION** to get them in (see the bottom of page 15).

Generate a list of characteristics that a soldier would need, such as fitness, strength and resilience.

Ask children to discuss in pairs times they have shown 3 of their chosen attributes.

Then, task children with writing a recommendation letter. They could write for themselves, but it may also be nice to write about a friend or partner, showing the times they've demonstrated these characteristics.



XII Roman Street  
Roman Town  
Rome  
Italy  
R VII M XII

Dear Roman Centurion,

I am writing to recommend ..... as a most  
excellent candidate for your army.



## PART 5

Now children have been recruited, they need a lead tablet to identify them. (check out page 17)

Get yourselves some craft foil and use pencils to 'engrave' soldier names. Children could make up a Roman name for themselves, adapting their own name by adding -ius:



Maybe look up the Latin alphabet and use this to create an authentic-looking ID tablet.



# LEARNING SEQUENCE 3

## TRAINING CAMP

Before you start:

- Ask children to each take the quiz on pages 18–19 to find out which legion they are assigned to.
- Check out on the map (pages 88–89) where you'll be going.

### CIRCUIT TRAINING

Now you are split into legions, children can move around the different training challenge stations, based on pages 28–29.

## CHALLENGE 1 MARCHING

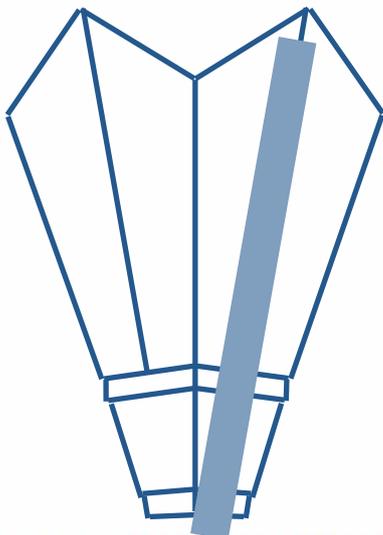
Make this hard work, as if you're carrying heavy armour, by asking children to complete the marching with coats and backpacks on. This will soon get them warmed up!

Can they march in formations? 40 miles may be a little too far, so let's try 4 minutes to start off!

## CHALLENGE 2 BATTLING A POST

Use the mug shot pictures (printed on A3 paper) at the end of a short relay race.

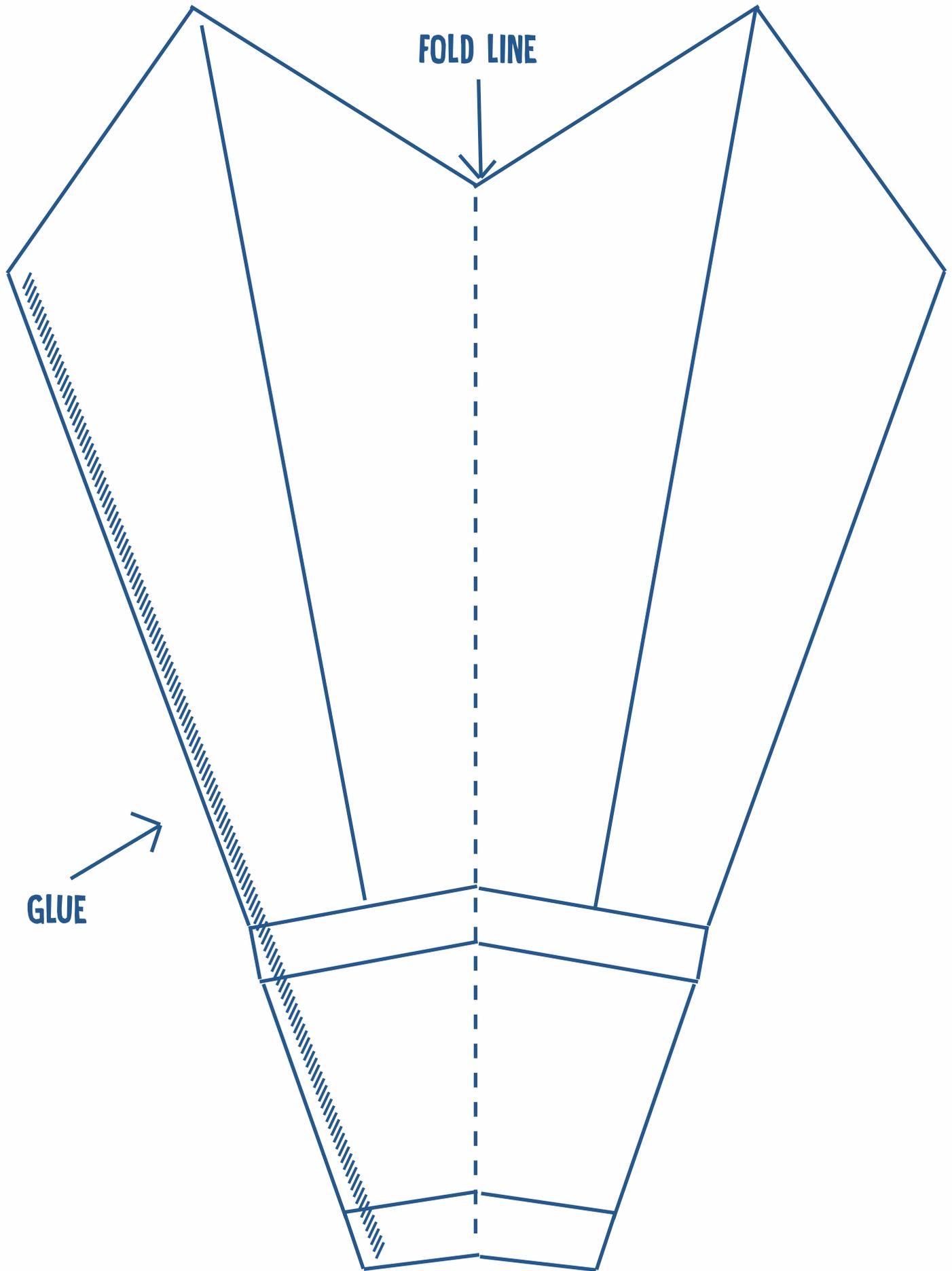
Children run up to the post. To battle the enemy, they should tap each corner of the picture, then the centre with their 'sword'. Then they can run back and pass the sword on to the next soldier in the legion line.



To create a sword, fold and stick the sword image (see over) around a classroom ruler.



# SWORD



# LEARNING SEQUENCE 3

## TRAINING CAMP CONT'D



### CHALLENGE 3 SPEAR DUCKING

Use sponge/foam javelins for pilums.

Children should pair up about 5m apart. One partner throws the pilum: the other ducks to miss getting hit!



### CHALLENGE 4 VAULTING

For this station, set up a horse or vault from your gymnastic equipment. Model to children how to safely jump over.

Children can try with and without armour (coats and backpacks) to compare how difficult it is.

### CHALLENGE 4 VAULTING

Following the circuit training, play a drill game to see how coordinated your class is.

Children begin by marching around the hall/playground/playing field. Then blow the whistle and shout a formation, such as "rows of 6", "a square", "a triangle". See how quickly they can get into formation and then continue, marching in that shape.

Not as easy as it sounds! Look out for stepped-on toes!

# LEARNING SEQUENCE 4

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

Discussion starter:

- How hard do you think being a Roman soldier was?

Set up stations for children to move around an experience to help with the writing of a soldier's diary. These activities are based on pages 54–55.

### YOU WILL NEED:

- Chairs set up in a long row
- A garden stick or cane with a sponge attached to the end
- Cheese and ham slices
- Each child's Roman name
- Brushes or cleaning equipment

## PART 1

### STATION 1

Set up the chairs in a long row. Children should sit here and imagine they are all using a toilet together. They can have a chat about what they've been up to in training or out in battle.

Children should then pass along the 'bum sponge' to (imaginary of course) wipe their behinds! Eeew!

### STATION 2

It's breakfast time. Children can have a slice of ham and cheese for breakfast here.



### STATION 3

Time to line up for roll call. Use the list of all the Roman names children have assigned to themselves. As teacher you can be the Centurion, calling out each name, checking they are all present. Children (soldiers) can respond back with a hearty 'Yes Centurion!'

### STATION 4

Jobs time. Task children with guarding the door for a short time or with cleaning up the classroom. A bit of brushing up should give them the idea.

### Ideas for writing

At each station, 'press the pause button'. Ask children to freeze for a moment and think about what it is they are doing; how they feel; what they might be saying or thinking.

# THE DAILY ROMAN GRIND

Press the pause button at each station and jot down some ideas.

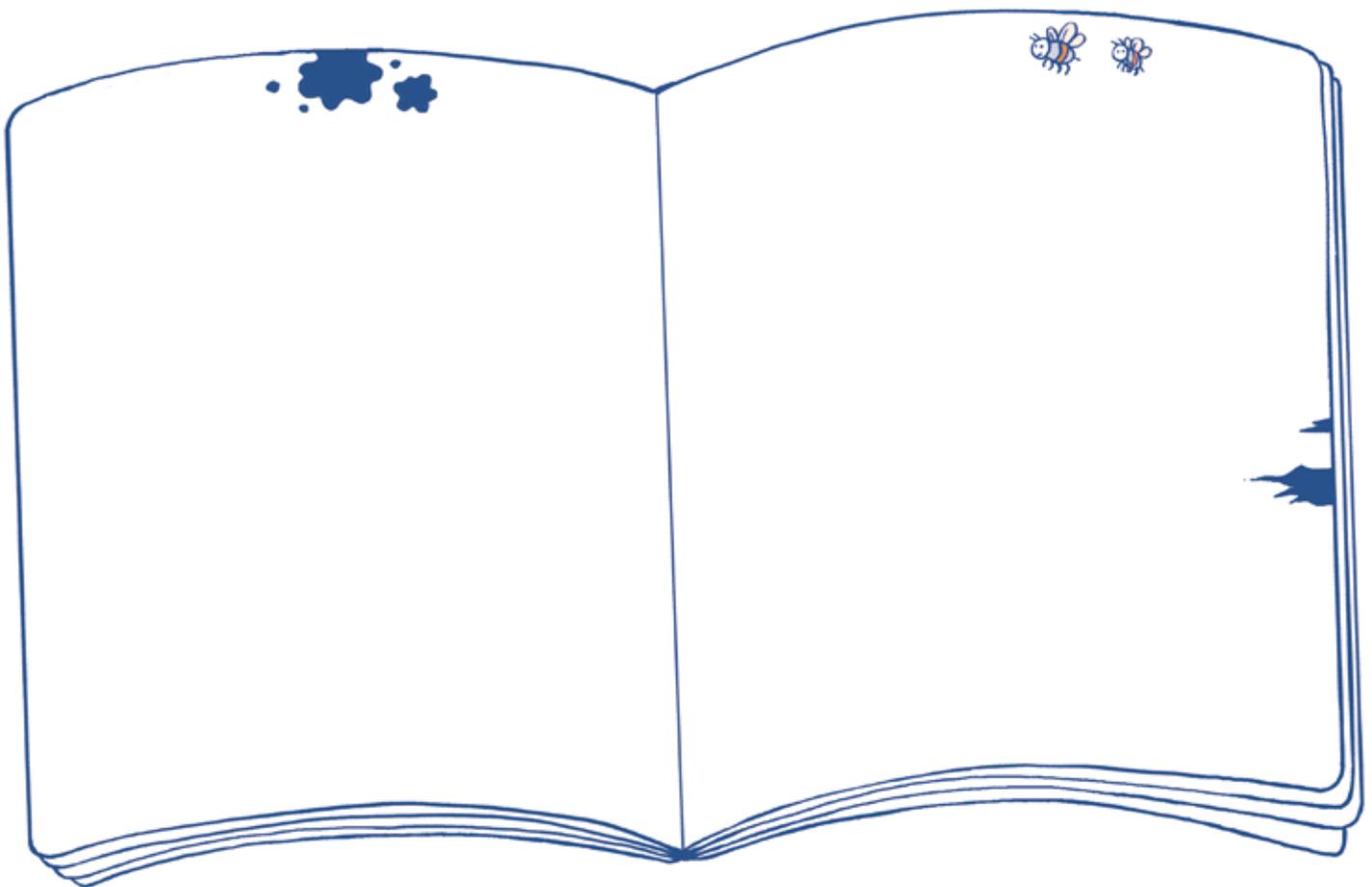
<p><b>LOO BREAK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Time</li><li>o Place</li><li>o Action</li><li>o Feelings</li><li>o Thoughts</li><li>o I said</li></ul>	
<p><b>BREAKFAST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Time</li><li>o Place</li><li>o Action</li><li>o Feelings</li><li>o Thoughts</li><li>o I said</li></ul>	
<p><b>PARADE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Time</li><li>o Place</li><li>o Action</li><li>o Feelings</li><li>o Thoughts</li><li>o I said</li></ul>	
<p><b>JOBS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Time</li><li>o Place</li><li>o Action</li><li>o Feelings</li><li>o Thoughts</li><li>o I said</li></ul>	

# THE DAILY ROMAN GRIND

Model writing a paragraph following this order for children to follow:

- \* fronted adverbial to show time and link paragraphs
- \* where you were
- \* action/what you were doing
- \* how you felt
- \* what you said or thought

Children can follow this format to create a paragraph for each of the daily routine items. This could be written as a Dear Diary piece or a letter home.



Teacher notes written by Heather Wright, Reading Rocks  
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