

# The Roman Banquet

A lot has changed since the height of the Roman Empire.

What can our understanding of food tell us about how the Romans used to live?



# Nutrient group

Can you work out which nutrient group each food belongs to?

What are the nutritional benefits of each group?

Use the next sheet to match the types of food (numbered 1-5 below) and nutritional benefits (lettered a-e below) to each of the Nutrient groups in the boxes on the next page.

Food	1	2	3	4	5
	cereal lentils nuts fruit wholegrain bread	eggs beans nuts meat, fish and chicken	milk lassi (yoghurt drink) butter chocolate ghee paneer (cheese)	bread rice pasta chapatis aloo (potatoes)	fish fresh fruit & veg saag (spinach) milk eggs mango, bhindi (okra), starfruit

Nutritional benefits	a	b	c	d	e
	An immediate source of energy	A long-term energy store	Keeps waste moving through your digestive system	Important in small amounts to keep the body healthy	Important for growth and repair to the body



## Nutrient Groups

## Food

## Nutritional benefits

# Nutrient group **triple crossed**

Protein

Fats

Vitamins  
and  
Minerals

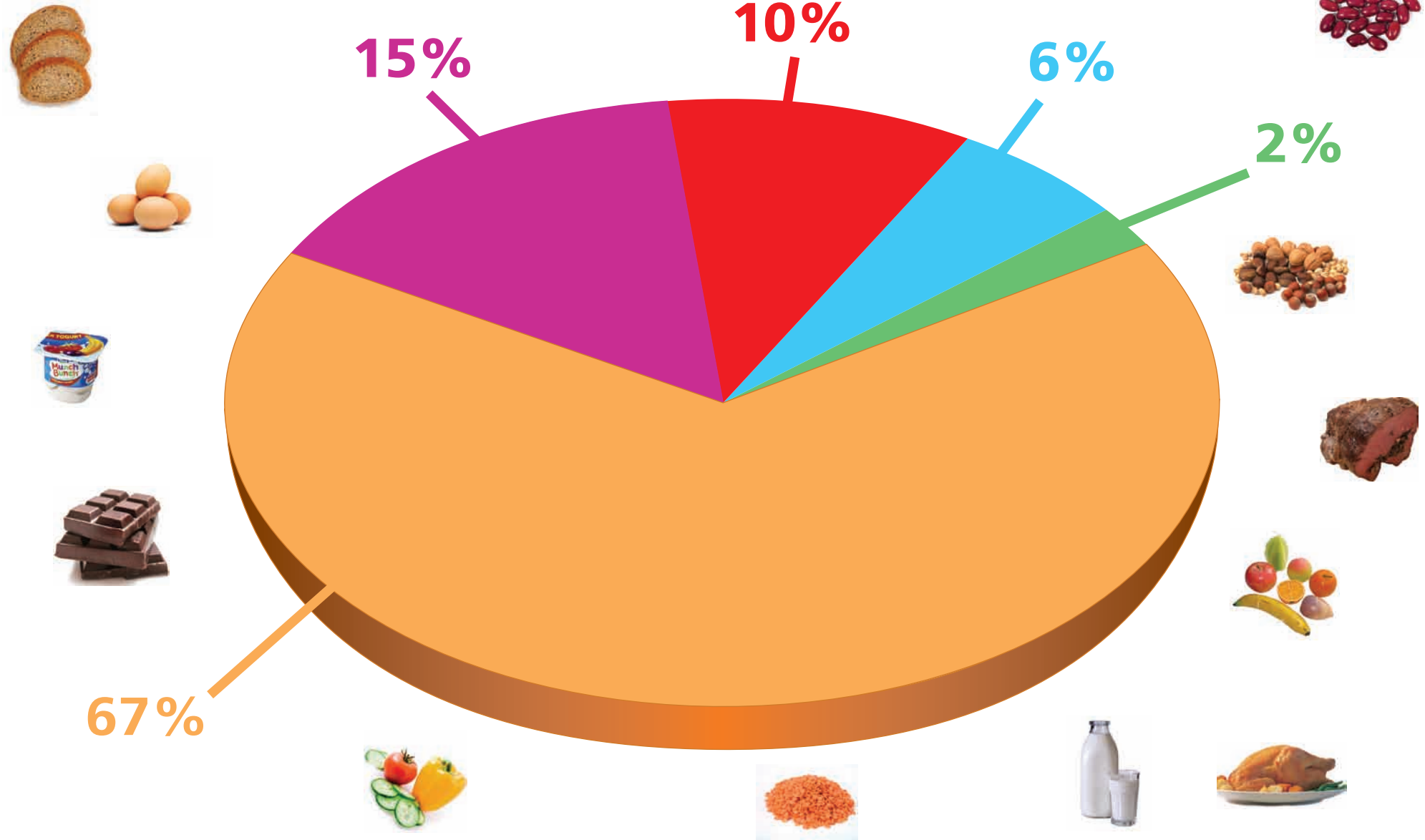
Fibre

Carbohydrates



Which **nutrient group** do you think is represented by each slice of the pie?

# A balanced diet



Look at each of the foods served in this typical Roman banquet.

For each item on the menu, decide whether it is a good source of a particular nutrient group (e.g. carbohydrates).

Use a **colour code** (or other method) to highlight the sources of different nutrient groups.

Decide whether this banquet represents a balanced diet.

Which nutrient groups (if any) are lacking?



Which nutrient groups are well represented?

# What did the Romans eat? triple crossed

## STARTERS

IX

STUFFED DORMICE IN A HONEY AND POPPYSEED DIP

SAUSAGES ON A BED OF POMEGRANATES

PEAHEN EGGS WITH A BAKED BLACKBIRD FILLET INSIDE

## FIRST COURSE

ROAST HARE AND CRISP YOUNG PIG IN A RICH WINE SAUCE WITH GIBLETS AND BLOOD PUDDING

DEEP SEA FISH IN GRAVY

WHOLE MEAL BREAD AND BEETROOT

## MAIN COURSE

VI

ROASTED WILD BOAR, SURROUNDED BY PASTRY PIGLETS

**WARNING:** SPECIAL SURPRISE INSIDE *(a number of live thrushes will be released from within its belly to be caught and cooked to your requirements by our slaves)*

X

MMV

## THIRD COURSE

PORK SCULPTED INTO THE SHAPE OF A GOOSE

CHEESE BASTED WITH WINE, SURROUNDED BY SNAILS, CHITTERLINGS AND LIVER SLICES

## DESSERT

XVI

HONEY CAKES

PASTRY BIRDS WITH NUT STUFFING

VII

XII

### Glossary

GIBLETS

Animal intestines

BLOOD PUDDING

A sausage made of blood, suet (fat) and spices

CHITTERLINGS

Spicy sausages made from pigs' intestines

V

## A Day in the Life of a Roman Senator

What a lovely day I've just had! I spent most of it in the bath house at home – I don't like having to share with strangers in the town baths. The slaves added oils and perfumes to the water so it was too easy to fall asleep in the warm pool!

Soon it will be time for dinner. We're expecting guests so I hope that the slave has put out my new toga.

The cook has a special treat for us tonight – my favourite little sweet honey cakes. Even better, I've just had a delivery of the best red wine to wash it down. Let's hope the guests enjoy the meal. They won't have to do a thing – the slaves will bring everything to them and even peel their grapes!



## Meet the Romans **triple crossed**

### Senator

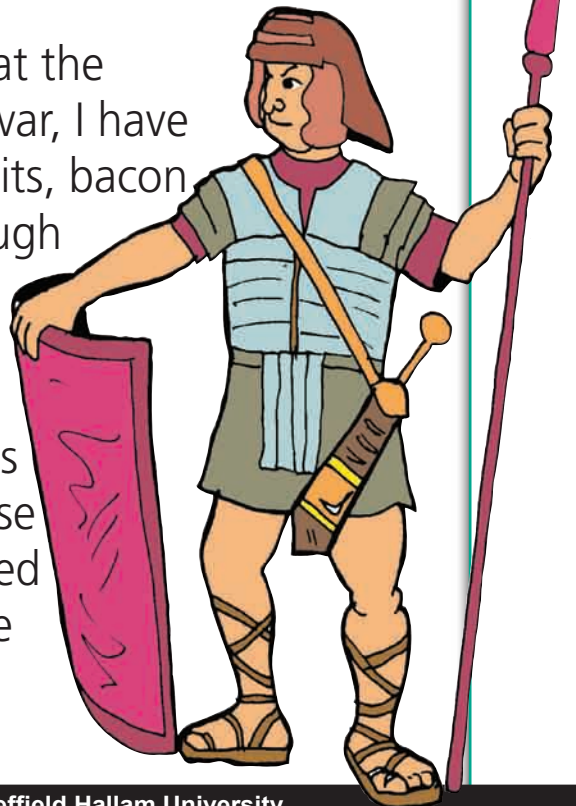
**Use the food cards to plan a day's diet for this person. Think about how their lifestyle would affect the balance of the food groups.**



Vale! I am Marcus Crassus, member of the Ninth Legion, currently on duty in Britannia. As a Roman legionary, I am better paid and better equipped than those poor auxiliaries who come from all over the Empire.

Even so, it's a hard life, marching 30 kilometres a day, carrying all my own equipment – weapons, armour, pickaxe, saw, spade, bucket, cooking pot and food – all I need to fight, to make camp and to live on.

At least we're not fighting at the moment. When we are at war, I have to make do with hard biscuits, bacon and cheese. That's not enough when you're training as we are now, practising our formations, sword fighting, javelin throwing and endless marching, but it's even worse when you're actually involved in hard battles against these blue-skinned Britons!



## Soldier

**Use the food cards to plan a day's diet for this person. Think about how their lifestyle would affect the balance of the food groups.**

## A Day in the Life of a Roman Worker

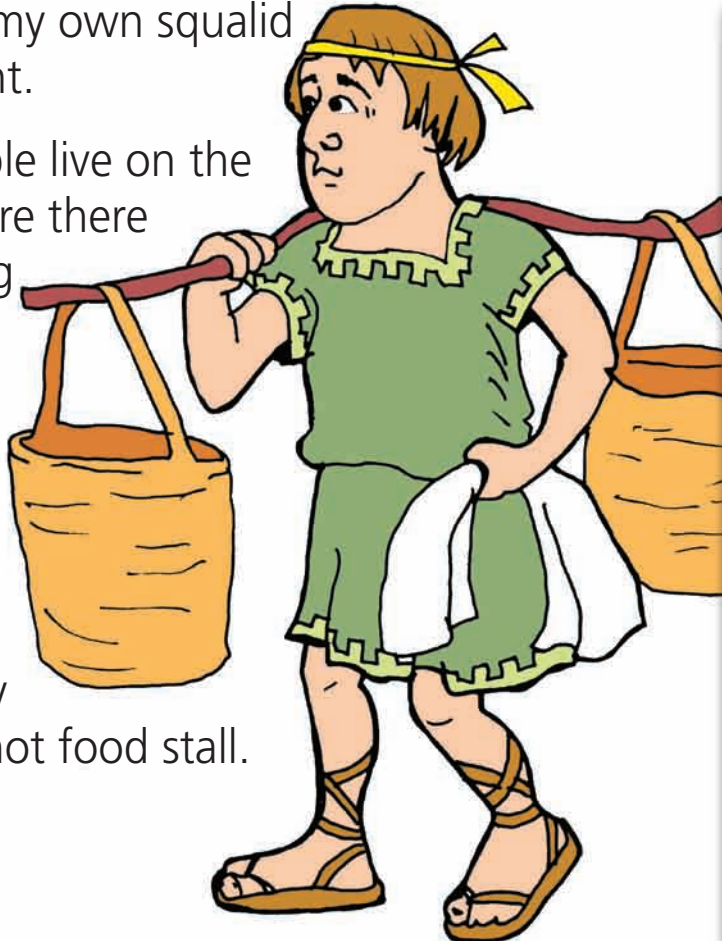
I'm always so tired from my work in the laundry. I could so easily fall asleep!

I spend hours in a tub of urine and water, trampling clothes to get them clean.

At least I'm not a slave – at the end of the day I go home to my own squalid little apartment.

We poor people live on the top floor, where there are no cooking facilities and no water.

I get a few coins for my long hours in the laundry, which I usually spend at the hot food stall.



## Meet the Romans **triple crossed**

### Laundry boy

**Use the food cards to plan a day's diet for this person. Think about how their lifestyle would affect the balance of the food groups.**





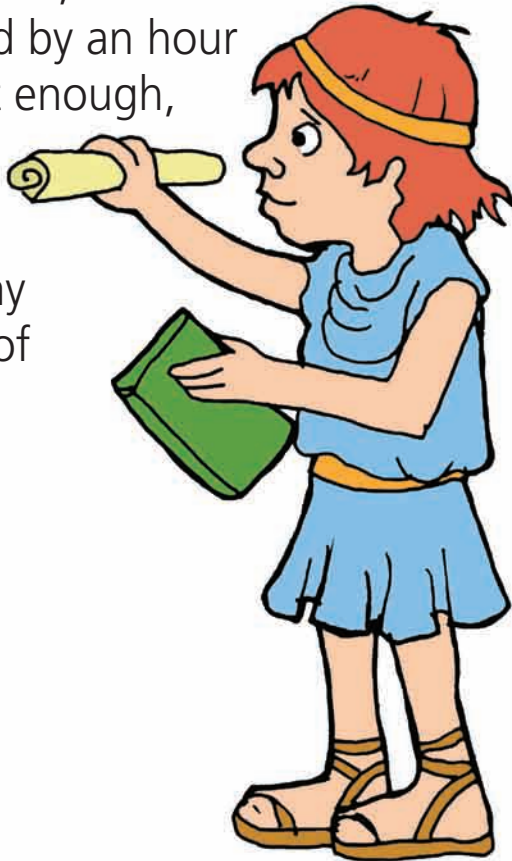
## A Day in the Life of a Roman Child

I'm so tired – what a day!

I had my usual lessons with my tutor, the Greek slave Persius. I hate Greek literature especially as Persius beats me thoroughly with a leather whip when I get my reading wrong. At least I'll be going to school soon when I turn 14 – I'm looking forward to learning public speaking.

When I finished my lessons, I had 2 hours of horse-riding, followed by an hour of boxing. If that wasn't enough, I then had to do an hour's sword practice!

It's all part of learning my future role as defender of the Roman Empire.



## Meet the Romans <sup>triple</sup>~~crossed~~

### Child

**Use the food cards to plan a day's diet for this person. Think about how their lifestyle would affect the balance of the food groups.**

## Thumbs Up

We were **great** at the task because ...



We know the major food groups that form part of a balanced diet, e.g.

We know that a balanced diet can vary depending on a person's lifestyle, e.g.

We understand some ways in which Roman diet could affect health, e.g.

We worked as a team to reach agreements about diets for Roman citizens. Some examples of foods we suggested for different citizens are...

We looked at food miles in Roman and modern times. Transporting food long distances today can affect the environment by...

**Next time we will...**

## Thumbs Sideways

We were **good** at the task because ...



## Thumbs Down

We were **okay** at the task because ...

