

ANSWER KEY & MARKING SCHEME · CBSE CLASS 11

An Empire Across Three Continents (The Roman Empire)

History · Chapter 2 · Use this with the Board Paper · Companion to Quick Drill

HOW TO USE

Attempt the Board Paper first (closed-book, full time). Then come here. For 2-mark+ questions, compare your answer to the model. For 3-4 mark questions, also consult the **Topper Templates** below — these show the exact step-by-step structure that scores full marks per CBSE marking-scheme conventions.

MODEL ANSWERS · BOARD PAPER**Section A — Very Short Answer (1 mark each, 5 Qs)**

Q1. Across which three continents did the Roman Empire stretch, and around which sea? [1 mark]

Ans: Across Europe, North Africa and West Asia, around the Mediterranean Sea (which the Romans called 'mare nostrum', 'Our Sea').

Q2. Who established one-man rule (the Principate) in Rome, and in which year? [1 mark]

Ans: Augustus, in 27 BCE; he ruled as the 'princeps' (leading citizen), not as a king.

Q3. What was the paterfamilias? [1 mark]

Ans: The senior male head of a Roman family, who held great legal authority over the household.

Q4. What is meant by 'manumission'? [1 mark]

Ans: The freeing of a slave by the master; the freed person became a 'freedman' with some rights.

Q5. Which emperor legalised Christianity, and roughly when? [1 mark]

Ans: Constantine, in the early fourth century CE; he ended its persecution and himself converted.

Section B — Short Answer (3 marks each, 4 Qs)

Q6. Explain the difference between the Roman Republic and the Principate. [3 marks]

Ans: For centuries Rome was a REPUBLIC, governed by the SENATE (a council of leading families) and elected magistrates, with NO single ruler — Romans claimed to hate the very idea of a king. After long civil wars, AUGUSTUS established one-man rule in 27 BCE, beginning the system called the PRINCIPATE. In the Principate the emperor held real supreme power, but he was careful to call himself only the 'princeps', the leading citizen, and to keep the outward forms and institutions of the Republic, including the Senate. So the Republic and the Empire are different phases: shared aristocratic rule under the Republic, and the rule of an emperor (disguised as 'first citizen') under the Principate from 27 BCE.

Q7. Describe the position of slaves in Roman society. [3 marks]

Ans: Slaves were legally PROPERTY — bought, sold, owned and punished by their masters — and many became slaves through war and conquest; slavery was central to Roman society and economy. Their work was extremely VARIED: slaves laboured in fields, mines and workshops, but also served as household servants, cooks, tutors, doctors, clerks, craftsmen and even managers of estates and businesses. Treatment ranged from brutal conditions in mines and large estates to relatively comfortable household roles. Importantly, a slave could be freed by the master — a process called MANUMISSION — after which the person became a 'freedman' with some rights. Roman slavery was therefore harsh but varied, and freedom was sometimes possible.

Q8. Describe the main features of the Roman family and the position of women. [3 marks]

Ans: The typical Roman family was NUCLEAR — a married couple and their children — rather than a large joint family, though slaves and servants lived within the home. At its head stood the PATERFAMILIAS, the senior male, who held great legal authority over the household. Marriages were usually arranged and often involved a DOWRY given by the bride's family. Yet women were NOT without rights: a married woman kept ownership of her own property and her dowry, which returned to her family if the marriage ended; DIVORCE

was relatively easy; and women could own, inherit and bequeath property in their own name. So Roman society was patriarchal and the father powerful, but women retained important legal and property rights.

Q9. How did Christianity spread in the Roman Empire, and what was the role of Constantine?

[3 marks]

Ans: CHRISTIANITY began as a small religious movement within the empire and, despite periods of PERSECUTION, spread steadily over the first three centuries CE, especially in the cities and among ordinary people, carried along the empire's roads and through its cities. For a long time it remained a minority faith that was sometimes blamed and punished. The decisive change came with the emperor CONSTANTINE in the early fourth century CE: he LEGALISED Christianity, ended its persecution, favoured the Church and himself converted — though he did NOT invent the religion. Later in the fourth century, Christianity became the dominant, effectively official religion of the empire. Constantine thus turned a persecuted faith into a protected and rising one.

Section C — Source-Based + Long Answer (5 + 8 = 13 marks)

Q10. Read the source and answer the sub-questions: 'When Augustus came to power in 27 BCE after years of civil war, he did not call himself a king, which the Romans hated, but the princeps, the leading citizen. He kept the Senate and the old offices of the Republic, while in fact holding supreme power. Yet no emperor could feel safe unless the legions remained loyal to him: the soldiers who guarded the frontiers could also raise a commander to the throne or pull a ruler down.' (a) In which year did Augustus come to power? (b) What title did Augustus take instead of 'king'? (c) Which old institution did he keep? (d) On whose loyalty did an emperor's safety depend? (e) What does this source tell us about Roman political power? [5 marks]

Ans: (a) In 27 BCE. (b) He took the title 'princeps', meaning the leading citizen (not 'king'). (c) He kept the SENATE (and the old offices of the Republic). (d) An emperor's safety depended on the loyalty of the ARMY / the legions. (e) The source shows that Roman political power rested on a BALANCE among the emperor, the Senate and the army: the emperor held supreme power but disguised it under republican forms and the title of 'first citizen', respected the Senate, and above all needed the army's loyalty — because the soldiers who guarded the frontiers could make or unmake emperors. It reveals why the system was both stable when these forces were balanced and dangerously unstable when the army's loyalty was lost.

Q11. Describe the political system of the early Roman Empire, explaining the roles of the emperor, the Senate and the army. Explain. [8 marks]

Ans: The Roman political system changed from shared aristocratic rule to the rule of an emperor balanced by other forces. (1) FROM REPUBLIC TO PRINCIPATE: for centuries Rome was a REPUBLIC, governed by the Senate and elected magistrates, with no single ruler. After long civil wars, AUGUSTUS established one-man rule in 27 BCE — the PRINCIPATE — calling himself the 'princeps' (leading citizen), not a king, and keeping the outward forms of the Republic. (2) THE EMPEROR: the emperor was the most powerful figure — commander of the armies, head of the state religion and final judge — and his image on coins and statues carried his authority across three continents; but his position depended on satisfying the other players. (3) THE SENATE: the Senate, the body of leading wealthy families, remained RESPECTED and influential and was NOT abolished; it supplied governors and generals, and emperors who insulted it were remembered as tyrants. A wise emperor governed WITH the Senate. (4) THE ARMY: the professional, paid LEGIONS were the backbone of imperial power — they guarded the long frontiers along the Rhine, Danube and Euphrates and were the largest cost of the state. Crucially, the army's loyalty decided who ruled: soldiers could proclaim their commander emperor or overthrow a ruler. (5) PROVINCES AND CITIES: the empire was governed through PROVINCES and self-governing CITIES, which ran local affairs and collected the taxes that paid the army and administration. (6) STRAINS AND CRISIS: there was no fixed law of SUCCESSION, so an emperor's death could bring conflict, and a discontented army could overthrow a ruler; in the THIRD-CENTURY CRISIS rival armies raised and destroyed emperors in quick succession while the frontiers were attacked. Thus the stability of the empire depended on keeping the emperor, the Senate and the army — above all the army's loyalty — in balance.

★ **TOPPER TEMPLATE — 8-mark question: 'Describe the political system of the early Roman Empire' OR 'Explain the roles of the emperor, the Senate and the army in Roman politics.'**

Almost every term paper — the single most common long answer

Step 1 [2 marks]	From Republic to Principate	Open with the change of system: Rome began as a REPUBLIC governed by the Senate and elected magistrates, with no single ruler. After long civil wars, AUGUSTUS established one-man rule in 27 BCE — the system called the PRINCIPATE, in which the emperor was officially only the 'leading citizen' (princeps), never openly a king, and kept the outward forms of the Republic. Give the date 27 BCE and the word Principate clearly.
Step 2 [2 marks]	The three players — emperor, Senate, army	State the structure: Roman politics rested on THREE 'players' — the EMPEROR, the SENATE (the body of leading, wealthy families) and the ARMY. The emperor was the most powerful, but he had to keep the respect of the Senate and, above all, the loyalty of the army, which could make or unmake rulers. A wise emperor governed WITH the Senate, not against it. Stress that the Senate was respected, not abolished.
Step 3 [2 marks]	The army and the provinces	Explain how the empire was held together: a large, paid, professional ARMY guarded long frontiers (the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates, the African desert edge) and was the main instrument of imperial power and a heavy cost on the treasury. The empire was divided into PROVINCES, each governed for Rome, and dotted with self-governing CITIES that collected taxes and ran local affairs — the cities were the building blocks through which Rome administered a vast territory.
Step 4 [2 marks]	Strains and the third-century crisis	Conclude with the system under strain: succession was never fixed by clear law, so the death of an emperor could bring conflict, and an army that withdrew its loyalty could overthrow a ruler. In the THIRD CENTURY CE the empire suffered a crisis of repeated wars, rapid changes of emperor and frontier pressure, before being reorganised. End by noting that the balance of emperor, Senate and army — and the loyalty of the legions — was the key to whether the empire was stable or in turmoil.

COMMON LOSS OF MARKS:

- Treating Republic and Empire as the same thing, or omitting the date 27 BCE and the word Principate.
- Saying the Senate was abolished or powerless instead of respected but reduced — the most common conceptual error.
- Forgetting the ARMY as the decisive force that could make or break emperors.
- No concluding line on succession problems / the third-century crisis.

★ **TOPPER TEMPLATE — 4-mark question: 'Describe the position of slaves in Roman society' OR 'What was the role of slavery in the Roman economy?'**

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Step 1 [1 mark]	Slaves as property, but central to the economy	State the basic point: slaves were legally PROPERTY — bought, sold, owned and punished by their masters — and slavery was central to Roman production and the household. Many became slaves through war and conquest. Open by making clear that slavery was a normal, accepted institution, not a rare one.
Step 2 [1 mark]	The variety of slave work	Show the range: slaves did far more than field and mine labour. They were household servants, cooks, tutors, doctors, clerks, craftsmen and even managers of estates and businesses. A wealthy household kept many slaves; a skilled or trusted slave could hold real responsibility. Stress this VARIETY — it is a favourite examination point against the idea that all slaves did the same hard labour.
Step 3 [1 mark]	Treatment and manumission	Add the human picture: treatment varied widely, from brutal conditions in mines and large estates to relatively comfortable household positions. Importantly, slaves could be freed — MANUMISSION — and a freed slave became a 'freedman' with some rights, though still tied to the former master. So describe slavery as harsh but varied, and remember freedom was possible.
Step 4 [1 mark]	Why it mattered	Conclude with significance: because slave labour underpinned farms, mines, workshops and great households, slavery shaped the whole Roman economy and the comfortable life of the rich. Its scale also shows the inequality at the heart of Roman society. End by linking slavery to both the economy and the social hierarchy of Rome.

COMMON LOSS OF MARKS:

- Saying all slaves were chained field-workers, missing the variety of skilled and household roles.
- Forgetting manumission (the freeing of slaves) and the status of freedmen.
- Listing facts with no concluding line on WHY slavery mattered to the economy and society.

★ TOPPER TEMPLATE — 5-mark source/extract-based question: a short passage on Roman society, the family, slavery or the spread of Christianity, followed by 3 sub-questions.

Annual in the source-based section

Step 1 [1 mark]	Read twice; underline named terms and the key claim	On first read, underline every proper noun and key term in the passage (e.g. 'Augustus', 'Principate', 'paterfamilias', 'Constantine', '27 BCE', 'Mediterranean'). The sub-questions are almost always answered from these underlined anchors plus one line of your own chapter knowledge. Do not start writing yet.
Step 2 [2 marks]	Answer 'identify / state' sub-questions tightly, then 'explain'	For an 'identify/name' sub-question, answer in one line straight from the text. For an 'explain' sub-question, add ONE line of chapter knowledge to the passage's fact — e.g. the passage names the paterfamilias; you add that he held legal authority over the household but that women still kept property rights. Match the length of each answer to its marks.
Step 3 [2 marks]	The evaluate / 'in your view' sub-question	The last sub-question usually asks for reasoning ('Why was this important?' / 'What does this tell us about Roman society?'). Give a judgement supported by a chapter fact — e.g. 'This shows that Roman power rested on a balance between the emperor, the Senate and the army, because an emperor who lost the army's loyalty could be overthrown.'

COMMON LOSS OF MARKS:

- Copying the whole passage instead of answering the specific sub-question asked.
- Ignoring the marks in brackets — writing a paragraph for a 1-mark 'identify' and one line for a 2-mark 'explain'.
- Skipping the evaluate sub-question or answering it with opinion alone, unsupported by a chapter fact.

MARKING SCHEME — GENERAL NOTES

- In History the correct name or term (Augustus, Principate, Senate, paterfamilias, manumission, Constantine, 27 BCE) is itself worth marks; vague phrasing ('a ruler', 'a kind of council') is not rewarded.
- The 8-mark political-system answer must cover the change from REPUBLIC to PRINCIPATE (Augustus, 27 BCE), the three players (emperor, Senate, army), provinces/cities, and the succession/crisis problem; missing the army as the decisive force or saying the Senate was abolished caps the score.
- For source-based sub-questions, award marks for answers drawn from BOTH the passage and chapter knowledge; pure copying of the passage without the asked-for point gets half marks.
- A common conceptual error to penalise: treating the Republic and the Empire as the same thing, or saying Constantine invented Christianity rather than legalising it.
- For full marks on society questions, the answer must balance the authority of the paterfamilias against the property and divorce rights women retained, and must mention manumission and the variety of slave work when describing slavery.