



Life of a Roman Slave (Way People Live)

By Don Nardo

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Discusses aspects of slavery in ancient Rome, including becoming a slave, its privileges and perils, the use of slaves in farming, business, and public service, and the dark side of the institution.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 7 Up-As Nardo points out, "slavery pervaded and helped to shape all areas of Roman life." The life of a slave, though sometimes filled with danger and brutality, was often an endless round of just plain hard work. The author begins his discussion by detailing how people became slaves, whether through owing debts, being captured during war, or being kidnapped by pirate slave traders. Captives could then expect to toil on farms, in businesses, for the government, or in the relative tranquillity of wealthy households. Some slaves became successful members of society and others eventually won their freedom. The author admits that existing facts about Roman slavery are sketchy at best, but he quotes many sources that lend his work an authoritative tone. He also humanizes the enslaved and reveals details of their lives without glossing over some of the darker aspects. Several black-and-white illustrations and sidebars further illuminate the ordinary workings of daily life. While there are many sources for YAs about ancient Rome in general, this is an excellent choice for specific information on this narrower topic.

Kristen Oravec, Woodridge Middle School, Peninsula, OH

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Users Review

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