Name: _____ Date: _____

SG#22: The Pax Romana

Augustus and the Principate. By 29 B.C. Octavian had established a new political system, calling himself *princeps*, or "first citizen," and the government the Principate. In 27 B.C. the Senate renamed Octavian Augustus, or "the revered one." He brought internal peace by dividing power between himself and the Senate and making strong appointments. He undertook military campaigns, revitalized Rome, and encouraged a renewal of religious devotion. In the west he conquered tribes all the way to the Rhine. To the east Rome's greatest opponent was the Parthian Empire. Augustus supported the arts, and great writers such as Horace, Ovid, Livy, and above all, Virgil, author of *The Aeneid*, flourished.

The Julian-Claudians and Flavians. Augustus died in A.D. 14, and for the next 54 years the Julian-Claudian emperors, all related to Julius Caesar, ruled. Tiberius was a good soldier and a strong administrator. Following him, Caligula was brutal and mentally unstable. Claudius followed Caligula, extending citizenship to the provinces. Nero, Claudius's successor, may have been responsible for a disastrous fire that swept through Rome, and in A.D. 68, he committed suicide. After a period of civil war, a general named Vespasian claimed the throne and reestablished order, peace, and prosperity. The Flavians, as he and his sons were known, were not aristocrats and were from Italian provinces rather than Rome.

The Good Emperors. In A.D. 96, the era of the **Good Emperors** began with Nerva. It continued with Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius. The Good Emperors improved frontier defenses and governmental administration to strengthen the empire. All but Nerva were from the provinces and admitted more members of the provincial elites into the Senate and the government. Hadrian in particular spent much of his time touring the provinces and inspecting their administrations. Hadrian also withdrew from some territories in the east in order to build up stronger defenses to guard against invasions.

Roman Imperial Civilization. The period from 27 B.C. to A.D. 180 is called the **Pax Romana**, or the Roman Peace. It was marked by a stable government, efficient military organization, and widespread trade and transportation. Members of the aristocracy participated in government in the central administration and in the provinces, but the emperors made all important decisions. Most wealth remained in the hands of the urban elite during this period. Roman law became more universal as it was split into two legal systems: *ius civilis*, or "civil law," which applied to all

citizens, and *ius gentium*, the "law of peoples," which applied to disputes between citizens and noncitizens.

Farming remained the primary occupation, and the tenant farmer, or **colonus**, replaced slaves on the large estates. Manufacturing increased in the empire's cities, and trade and transportation became more efficient.

Life in the Empire. Citizens did not share equally in the wealth of the Pax Romana. Many of the nearly one million residents of Rome lived in crowded apartment buildings. To combat possible rebellion, free food and public entertainment became a major feature of Roman city life. Chariot racing was the sport of choice in the Circus Maximus, which could hold 250,000 spectators, while gladiatorial combats in the Colosseum drew crowds of up to 50,000 people.

Science, Engineering, and Architecture. Unlike the Greeks, who preferred abstract reasoning, the Romans were interested in scientific research that had practical uses. They were highly sophisticated in the areas of city planning and construction. They developed concrete and created **aqueducts**, or channels for bringing water into the cities. They also learned to use the arch and vaulted dome, both of which enabled them to build new types of architectural structures.

Answer the questions below in your own words and in complete sentence. Highlight your evidence.

1. How did Augustus bring order to the empire?

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2. How did the empire benefit from the reign of the Flavians?

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3. How did the Good Emperors strengthen the empire?

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4. Who controlled Roman government during the Pax Romana?

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5. What two systems made up Roman law?

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6. What aspect of scientific research appealed to the Romans?

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