

Roman Britain

When the Romans invaded Britain, nearly 2000 years ago, there were already lots of different tribes – often called Celts – living in various parts of the country.

You might have heard of Queen Boudica, who ruled over one of these tribes called the Iceni. Boudica started a rebellion against the Romans but lost despite having more warriors.

So how did the Romans win?

The Roman army is well known for their famous shield formations and Gladius swords. It was by using these weapons effectively that the Roman army defeated Boudica's revolt.

Additional resources

This worksheet is about a type of Roman sword - the Gladius. There is one in the Royal Armouries collection. To get a closer look visit our Collection Online website and type **Gladius** in the search box.

Watch videos about Gladius swords, the Roman invasion and Boudica's revolt on our YouTube channel.



Fascinating Facts

The Gladius

This sword is called a Gladius and it is nearly 2000 years old.

This means it is from around the time of Queen Boudica's revolt against the Romans.

It was found in the 1970s in Germany but is now in the Royal Armouries collection, and is kept at our museum in Leeds.

This sword has two names inscribed onto it:
Centurion Caius Valerius and Caius Ranius

This means that the sword probably had at least two owners.



The scabbard

This sword was kept and carried in a sleeve called a 'scabbard'. It would have been made mostly from wood covered in leather, unfortunately it has decayed so over time and all that is left are pieces of bronze which have been cut and engraved in a design.



Rebellion and Unrest

The Romans were not always friendly, in fact during their invasion they took land, taxes and slaves by force. In AD60, Queen Boudica decided to lead a revolt against the Roman invaders. She even managed to get other Celtic tribes to join her revolt. Her huge army burned down Roman strongholds in Colchester, London and St Albans. However Boudicca was eventually beaten as the Romans were well-trained and had better equipment.



Things to do

Design

Create a wanted poster for Boudica.

Boudica caused a lot of problems for the Romans, draw her and then list all of the reasons they wanted her caught underneath. You could even offer a reward for her capture.



WANTED

Who's sword is it anyway?

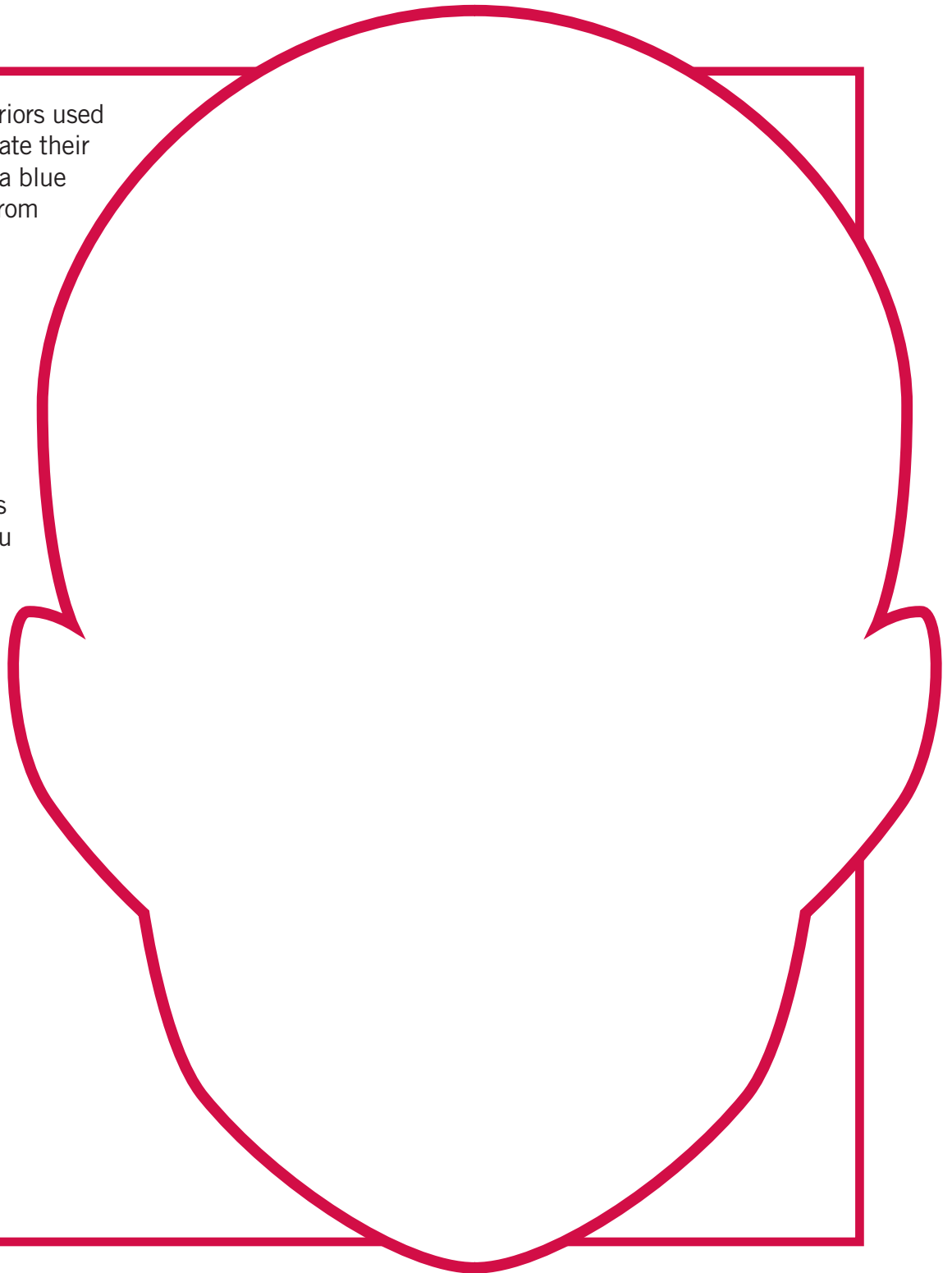
Write a story about how the sword from the Royal Armouries collection changed owners nearly 2,000 years ago. Was it a peaceful gift, or was it taken in a battle?

Lined writing area for the story.

Woad up!

Boudica's warriors used woad to decorate their skin. Woad is a blue paste, made from a plant, which they believed had magical powers.

Design and colour your own woad design on this Celtic warrior's face. Make your design fierce enough to frighten the enemy.



Keep in touch

We would love to read your sword story and see your warrior woad designs. Please email them to educate.leeds@armouries.org.uk