Role-Playing Game: Instructions for Teachers

Plying a Trade in *VRoma*

Preparation: Using the contact form, apply for VRoma access for your students. Schedule a class to orient your students to *VRoma,* practicing with them to navigate (using maps and exits) and converse (speaking and acting) in the MOO. Print and distribute the Quick Start Guide showing players how to Quick Jump, Bookmark, and copy, paste and save text in Notebook. Teachers may elect to have the game played entirely in the MOO or in a hybrid environment.

Game Time: Role-playing will require two or three 75-minute class sessions; if fewer than eight characters are used, it will take less time. Before the group meets, players will need to make several private visits to their assigned locations to prepare their presentations.

Scenario: The *praefectus annonae* invited a diverse group of working-class VRomans to lead Coelia Mascellina, a young business owner from Spain, on a tour of their city. He wants her to feel welcome so she will agree to supply olive oil for the troops. Each player will strive to outdo the others with a presentation about his/her occupation and its neighborhood, inviting Coelia to join their VRoma working community.

Character Assignment: **As the teacher, you will play Coelia Mascellina, a young free-born exporter of wine and oil who just arrived from Baetica in VRoma's Emporium (Regio 13)**.

Assign one student (or a pair) to each of the characters (the student need not share the character's gender). If you don't use all the characters, select those associated with cultural activities you wish your class to learn about and in whom they will be most interested.

> **Aurelia Nais**, freedwoman fish seller in *Pisces Ubique*, next to the Horrea Galbana
> **Callistus**, imperial freedman in charge of the Armamentarium at the Ludus Magnus
> **Cantinea Procla**, free-born priestess of Isis, Temple of Isis, Sanctuary of Isis and Serapis
> **Claudia Olympias**, free-born owner of *Faber Argentarius* silver shop, Sacra Via Summa
> **Doctus**, freedman mime actor and mime troupe leader, Orchestra, Theater of Marcellus
> **Fuscus**, slave charioteer for the Greens faction, in the Circus Maximus
> **Glyconis**, fun-and wine-loving freedwoman server in the *Thermopolium* of Scintilla
> **Mus**, freedman secretary of the Praetorian Prefect, Commander's Quarters, Praetorian Camp

Accessing the Game: Connect to *VRoma* with your Teacher account and go to the game room for Teachers, the *Ludi VRomani*, off the *Officina*: to keep the materials secure, only Teacher characters can enter this room.

- Click on the Role-Playing Game Bookshelf, where you will find URLs with printable Acrobat file instructions for each character.
- Click on the descriptions for each character you plan to use and print them out. We recommend that you read the instructions for all the characters before deciding which to use,

since this will give you a comprehensive picture of the whole game, including the personalities of the characters and the tasks they are asked to perform.

- In the Bookshelf, you will also see a scroll with login and password information for all the role-playing characters, including yours. This is not available in a printable Acrobat file since it is confidential information which should not be posted on the web. However, you may email yourself the contents of the scroll by clicking on the bird icon at the top of the scroll window (be sure to check "Use outgoing internet email instead of internal mail where possible" at the bottom of the message screen).
- Give each student the printed instructions for his/her character as well as the connection information for their character in *VRoma*: User ID and Password, noting that the password must be entered exactly.
- Then log out as your registered character and log in as Coelia Mascellina (you will enter *VRoma* at the Emporium). Click on your icon and read the information about Coelia, including the links to her two inscriptions, so you know what personality to assume when you and the students are enacting the scenario.
- The instructions for each character include several clearly defined tasks, so your students should know what to do when leading their part of the tour. However, we recommend that you tell them in advance what order they will follow on the tour.

Game Itinerary: Use the Quick Jump bookmark to meet in **Rome**: the map of Rome's 14 regions and the more detailed regional maps will give players a spatial perspective of the city. Since all players belong to a group ("Role-Playing Characters"), if someone gets lost, an SMS message can be sent by clicking on **Who** in the menu, then "Send SMS to Role-Playing Characters."

You may arrange your tour in any order, but this works well:
    1) Aurelia Nais begins the tour
    2) Mus takes over and gives directions to the Praetorian Camp
    3) Cantinea Procla brings everyone to the Sanctuary of Isis and Serapis
    4) Doctus takes the group to the Theater of Marcellus
    5) Claudia Olympias introduces her shop on the Sacra Via Summa
    6) Fuscus brings the group to the Circus Maximus
    7) Callistus takes everyone to the Armamentarium and Colosseum
    8) Glyconis offers food and drink to the tired group in the Thermopolium of Scintilla

Other Types of Role-Playing: This game is designed to increase knowledge of the city of Rome and various aspects of Roman culture, but these characters can be used by students for other types of role-playing, designed by teachers for their own purposes.

Before and After the Game: Please notify administrator Suzanne Bonefas when you wish to begin and end this game so she can make sure no one else wishes to use it at the same time. After you have completed the game, please let her know how things worked and your suggestions for improvement. Feel free to email her with any questions you have.

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