

Lucius Caecilius Iucundus – A Typical Day

A recap.....

Read the overview of a typical day for a Roman man



The Paterfamilias and Patron-Client system in Ancient Rome



TOPIC OVERVIEW	
•	<i>Paterfamilias</i> , his rights and duties
•	Patrons and clients

The Roman home and family



LO: to describe the role of the 'paterfamilias' and explain his importance in Roman society.

Families

The family was very important to the Romans. Every family was led by a *paterfamilias* (father), and included his wife and children, his sons' wives and children, and all their property and slaves. When the *paterfamilias* died, each of his sons became the head of a new family. The resulting chain of families formed a clan called a *gens*.

paterfamilias the male head of a Roman family



- **The paterfamilias, role and responsibility**

- **The paterfamilias**

- The word paterfamilias denotes the head of a Roman familia (the family and household)
- Roman law gave the paterfamilias absolute control over his family, financially and legally.
- He would arrange marriages for his children and might even force them to divorce their husband/wife.

paterfamilias the male head of a Roman family

Lares the Roman family's household gods, representing the spirits of the family ancestors

EXAM TIP

Make sure you try to use the Latin words that are given in the specification in your answers, such as **paterfamilias**.

The paterfamilias was the oldest living male in a Roman family, and the head of a Roman household.

Paterfamilias = 'the father of the family'

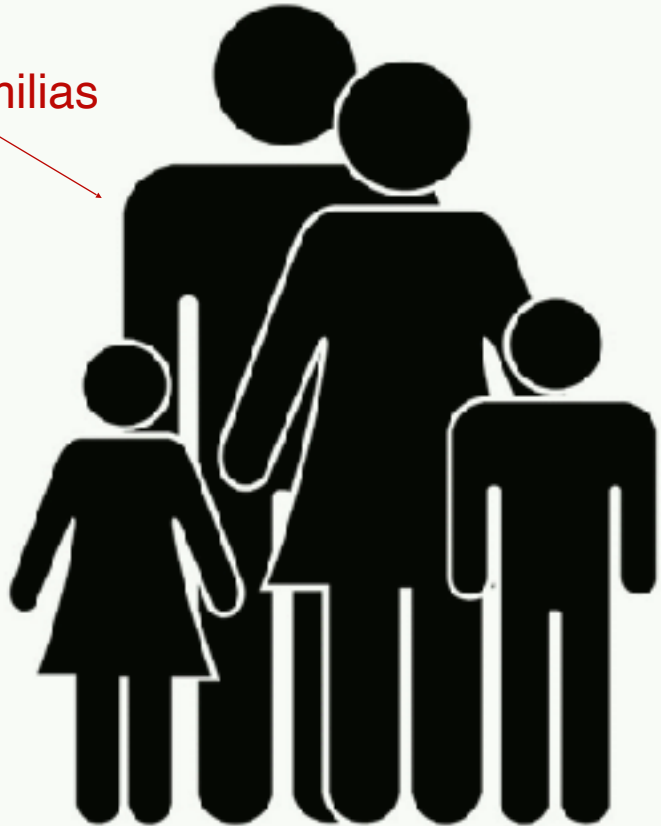
Latin 'familia' = more than just 'family'.

Familia also = slaves and property of the house.

Paterfamilias



paterfamilias



The **paterfamilias** had legal power over his entire household; in early Roman times, this included the power of life and death, although by the time of the empire, this was only really the case for a new-born child.

Indeed, one duty of a **paterfamilias** was to inspect a new-born baby; if it was unwanted or illegitimate, then the paterfamilias could order for it to be abandoned and exposed (left out to die).



The paterfamilias was responsible for the welfare of his family and had to raise his children to be good citizens of Rome.

He cared about the education of his children, especially his sons, and would normally appoint an educated slave to be his children's tutor.

He had to arrange a marriage for his daughters when they entered adolescence – without the daughters having any say in who they married.

He expected his wife to manage the household but he would purchase the slaves that do the work within the house.

He was also the religious head of the family and would lead worship at the household shrine where the spirits of the family's ancestors, the Lares, were believed to reside.

Other religious duties might involve him overseeing suitable offerings to the gods at important moments such as birth, marriage and funerals



paterfamilias the male head of a Roman family

The **paterfamilias** was the oldest living male in a Roman family, and the head of a Roman household. The term meant 'the father of the family', although the Latin word 'familia' meant more than our concept of 'family', because it also included the slaves and property of the house. The paterfamilias had legal power over his entire household;

in early Roman times, this included the power of life and death, although by the time of the empire, this was only really the case for a new-born child. Indeed, one duty of a paterfamilias was to inspect a new-born baby; if it was unwanted or illegitimate, then the paterfamilias could order for it to be abandoned and exposed (left out to die).

paterfamilias the male
head of a Roman family

The paterfamilias was responsible for the welfare of his family. He had a duty to raise his children to be good citizens of Rome; he would therefore want to oversee the education of his children, especially his sons, and would normally appoint an educated slave to act as a tutor. When his daughter reached puberty, he was responsible too for arranging a suitable marriage – very often this happened without the girl having any say at all. He would expect his wife to be loyal and hard-working in the home, and would manage the purchase of any slaves for the household. The paterfamilias was also the religious head of the family, and would lead worship at the family's household shrine, where the spirits of the family's ancestors, the **Lares**, were believed to reside. Other religious duties might involve him overseeing suitable offerings to the gods at important moments such as birth, marriage and funerals.

Watch the video clip.

1. Write down any questions you have about the role of the paterfamilias

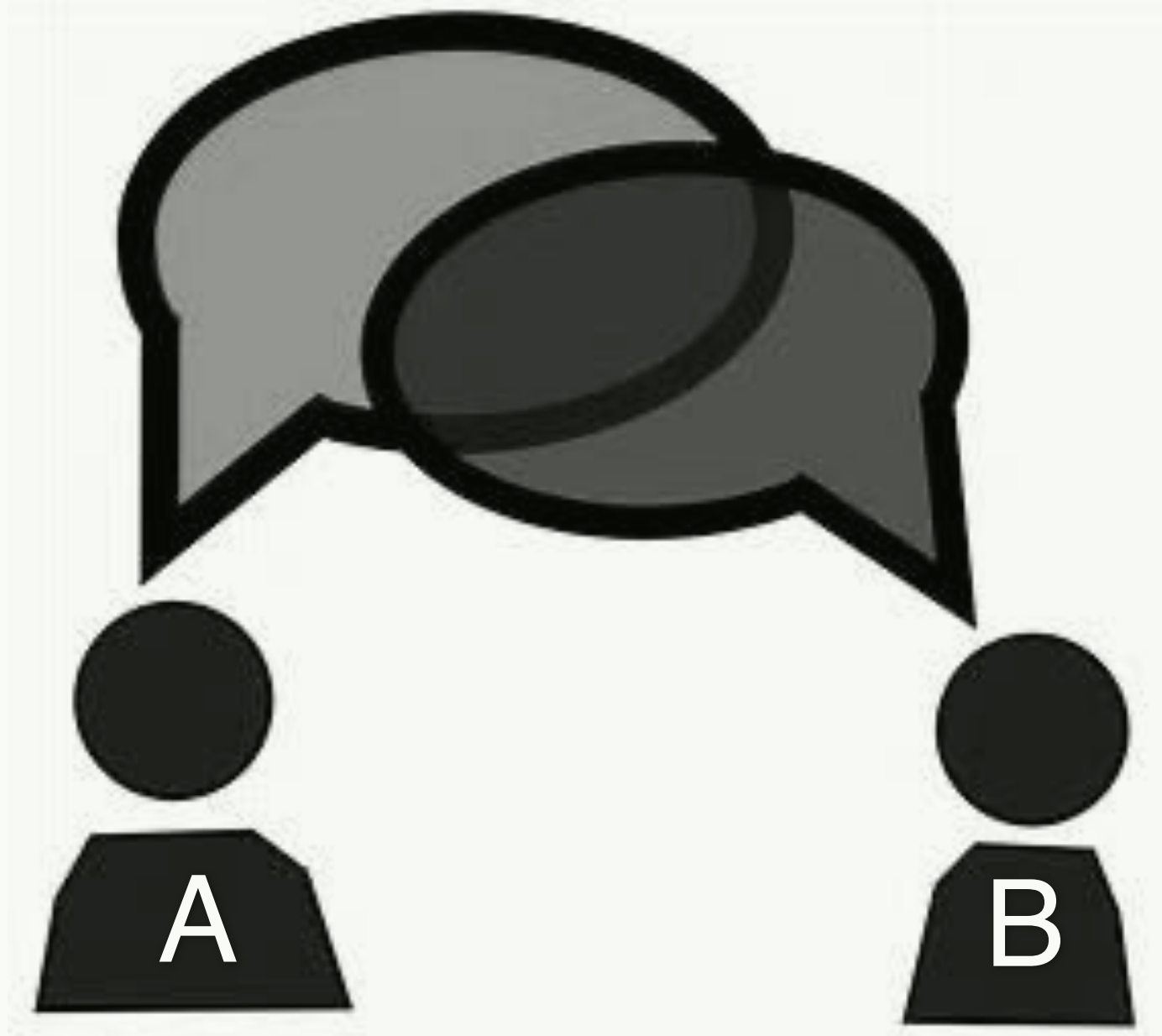
OR

2. Explain the role of the paterfamilias in your own words.



EXT: How similar was the role of a Roman father to the role of a father nowadays, in your opinion?

Person A explains to person B the role of the paterfamilias



Person B repeats back to Person A exactly what Person A said – as close as possible!

familia Caecilia



Caecilius est pater.



Metella est mater.



Quintus est filius.



Lucia Maior est filia.



Lucia Minor quoque est filia.



Caecilius est paterfamilias.

The *paterfamilias* was the _____

of the family. The Roman *familia* was much wider

than our 'family' and included the wife of the

paterfamilias, his _____, his son's

wives and their children, and all of their

_____.

When the *paterfamilias*

died, the family might split up, with the sons

becoming the heads of their own

_____.

In each family, the

paterfamilias had absolute _____

over all the members of his household, including

the right of life and _____.

The

paterfamilias had the right to _____ newborn children (abandoning infants and exposing them to the

elements), and even sometimes to execute wives or sons. The *paterfamilias* was responsible for providing the his children

– the future _____ of Rome – with education, character training, and religious upbringing. Above all,

the *paterfamilias* was respected and _____.

families head death property obeyed citizens children power expose

Romulus granted absolute power to the Roman father over his son, and this power was valid until the father's death. He could decide to imprison him or whip him, to put him in chains and make him work on a farm or even to kill him. Romulus even allowed the Roman father to sell his son into slavery.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus 2. 26-27

What 3 facts do we learn about the significance of the role of the 'paterfamilias' from this source?

1.

2.

3.

A father looks on as his wife feeds their child.

What 3 facts can we learn about the significance of the role of the 'paterfamilias' from this source?

1.

2.

3.

