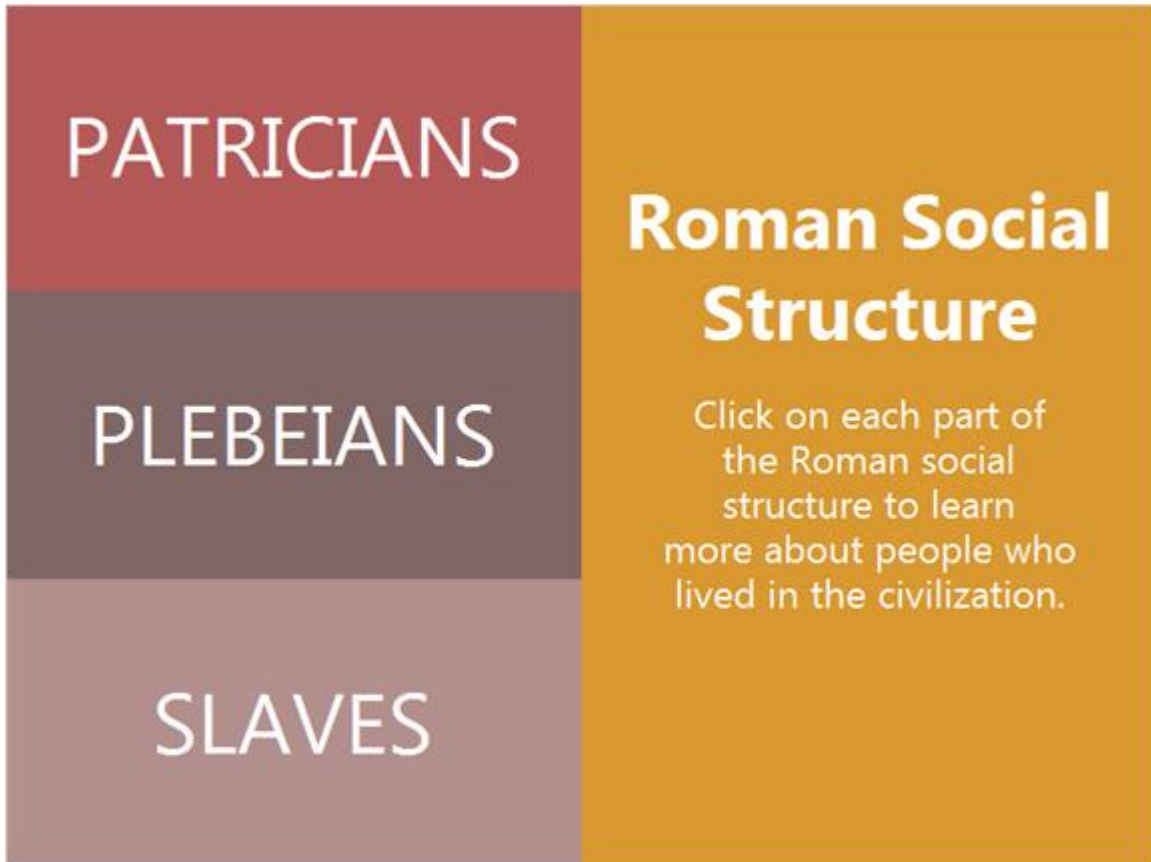


Module 5: Ancient Rome
Topic 3 Content: Roman Social Structure

Introduction

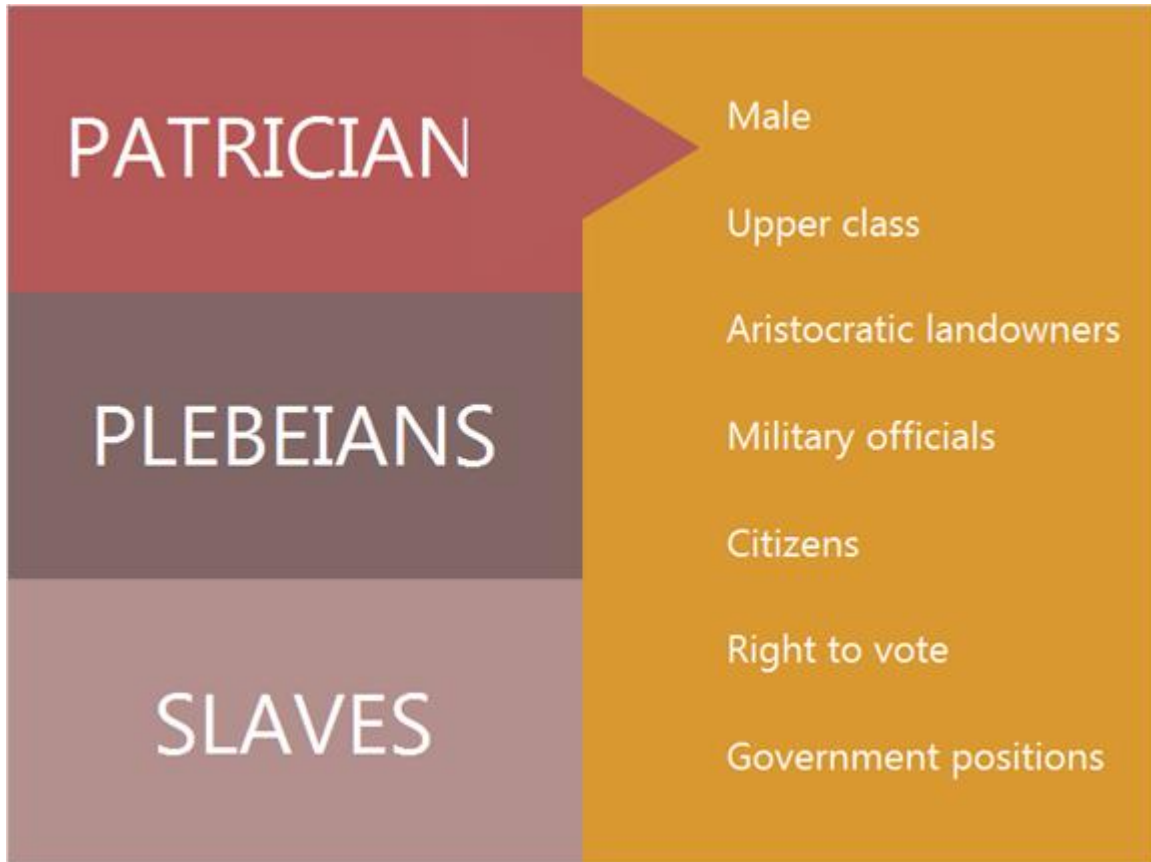


Citizenship in the Roman Republic was granted to two classes of Roman men: patricians and plebeians. However, the social structure consisted of more than just citizens. Click on each part of the Roman social structure to learn about people who lived in the civilization.

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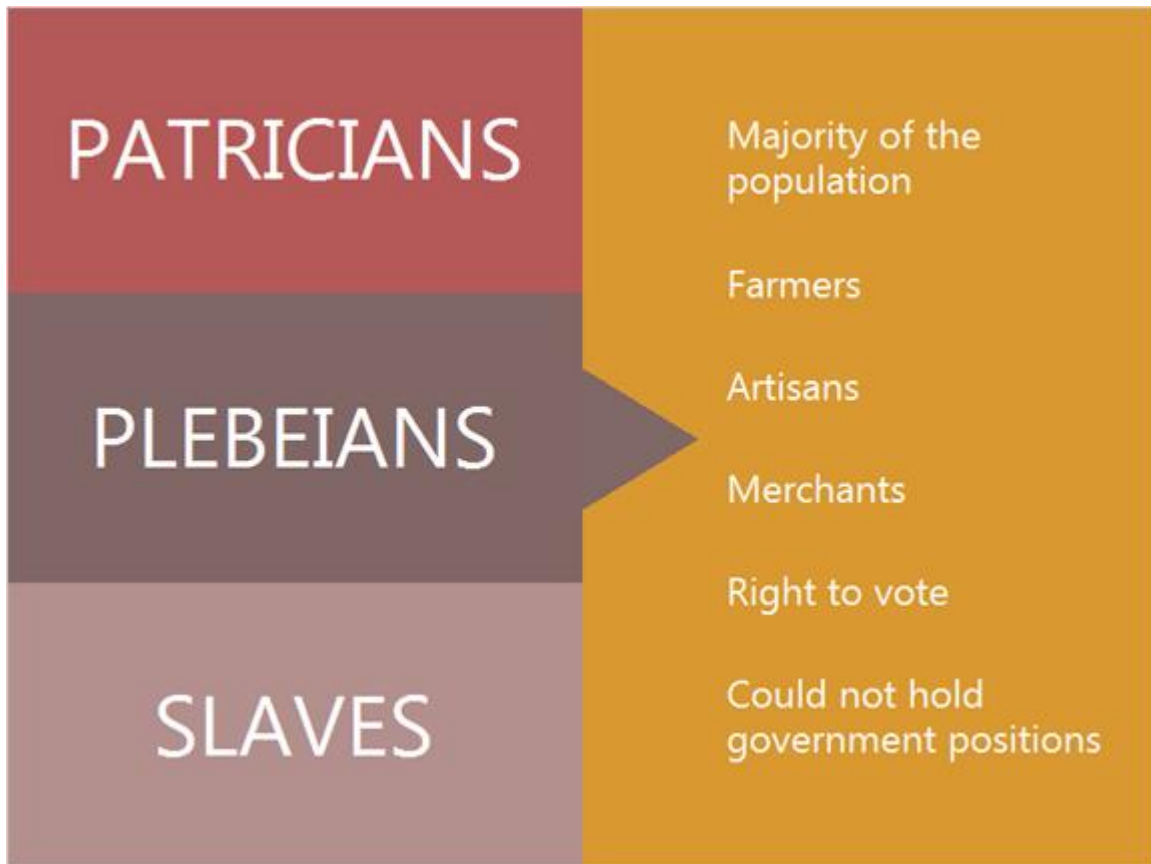
Patricians



Patricians were male members of Rome's upper class, and were typically aristocratic landowners and military officials. Patricians were considered citizens, and had the right to vote. These men could hold government positions.

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Plebeians



Plebeians were next in the social hierarchy, and they made up the majority of Rome's population. Typically, plebeians were farmers, artisans, and merchants. While plebeians were citizens and could vote, they could not hold government positions.

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Slaves



While slaves did not have citizenship, slavery played an important role in the Roman economy. Slavery in ancient Rome was not based on race; instead, Roman slaves were typically individuals who were captured as prisoners of war, those born to enslaved parents, and those who failed to repay their loans and debts. As the Roman Republic grew in size and conquered other populations, slavery grew as well. In Rome, slaves were considered property, and any property owned by a slave was also considered the property of the slave's master.

Romans highly desired Greek slaves, because many were educated and could serve as teachers, artists, and in other skilled trades. Other slaves completed domestic duties like cleaning and cooking, or agricultural jobs like farming. The Roman Republic, and later the Roman Empire, used slaves to complete public works projects like building roads, bridges, and other important construction projects.