

# CITIZENS AND SENATORS

As far as the Romans were concerned, there were two kinds of people - citizens and non-citizens. Citizens had special rights and privileges, and were given extra protection under the law, so citizenship was highly prized. But in return, all citizens were expected to serve Rome by voting in elections, fighting in the army, and perhaps working for the government.

## CITIZENS AND NON-CITIZENS

Originally, in order to qualify as a citizen, you had to have been born in the city of Rome and have parents who were Roman citizens. Non-citizens included people known as provincials - who lived outside Rome itself but within Roman territory - and slaves. Provincials couldn't vote in elections and, unlike citizens, they had to pay

taxes. Slaves were owned by other people and had no rights at all of their own.



Roman women, like the one shown here with her slave, weren't classed as full citizens and weren't allowed to vote.

## PATRICIANS AND PLEBEIANS

Roman citizens were divided into two groups - the patricians and the plebeians. In early Rome, the heads of the richest and most powerful families were known as *patres* - or 'fathers'. The patricians were descended from these men and they were the leading citizens in the city of Rome.

A statue of a patrician holding busts of two of his ancestors

Everyone who wasn't a patrician was classed as a plebeian. Many plebeians had no land or skills and were extremely poor. Others made their living as shopkeepers or craftworkers, while one group - known as *equites* - were bankers or merchants. These wealthy men were descended from the first Roman cavalry officers.

