

## SCHOOL DAYS

Children from poor families had to go out to work at an early age, but families who could afford it sent their children to school when they were seven. Girls and boys were taught together at a school called a *ludus*, where they learned reading, writing and arithmetic. Younger pupils had to recite the alphabet and copy out simple proverbs, while older children read the works of Greek or Roman authors.

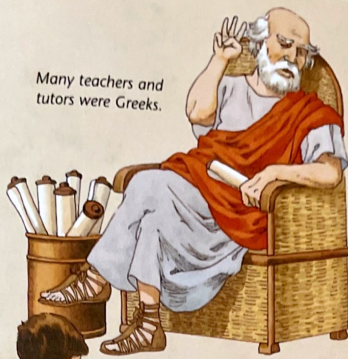
A scene in a typical Roman *ludus*



Most pupils wrote on a wax tablet using a pointed metal pen - called a *stylus*.

A slave called a *paedagogus* took the children to school and kept an eye on them in class. Most schools only had about 12 pupils, and the school day lasted from dawn until noon without a break. Discipline was very strict, and beatings were common.

Many teachers and tutors were Greeks.



A wooden counting frame - called an *abacus*

Scroll made of papyrus



Small children scratched writing on pieces of broken pottery.



Pupils left the *ludus* at the age of 11. Boys could continue their education at a secondary school - or *grammaticus* - where they studied Greek and Roman literature, history, geography, astronomy, music, mathematics and athletics. Girls stayed at home and began preparing for marriage. Most Roman men didn't like their women to be too well educated - the poet Juvenal declared: "I hate a woman who reads."

A portrait of a young girl holding a wax tablet and a *stylus*



## BOYS TO MEN

When a boy was about 14, he officially became an adult at a special ceremony held in the forum. He put aside the clothes and *bulla* he had worn as a child and was given an adult's toga. He also had his first shave and was registered as a Roman citizen.

Most young men then began training for the army. Those who wanted to enter politics also had to learn the art of public speaking and were sent to a teacher called a *rhotor*. The richest families sent their sons away to Athens or Rhodes to study with the best Greek teachers who lived there. This training could continue throughout life - even an experienced politician would take time off work if a good teacher was in town.