

Character cards:

The Brigantes

<p>Cartimandua <i>Queen of the Brigantes</i></p> <p>You are friendly to the Romans. You are Queen of the Brigantes by birth – your parents were leaders, too.</p>	<p>Venutius <i>King of the Brigantes</i></p> <p>You loathe the Romans. You are King of the Brigantes by marriage – you are only King because you are married to the Queen.</p>	<p>Vellocatus <i>Member of the Brigantes tribe</i></p> <p>You are loyal to Queen Cartimandua.</p>
<p>Bellicus <i>Member of the Brigantes tribe</i></p> <p>You are loyal to King Venutius.</p>	<p>Tasulus <i>Member of the Brigantes tribe</i></p> <p>You can see both Cartimandua and Venutius' points of view.</p>	<p>Vrocata <i>Wife of Tasulus, and member of the Brigantes tribe</i></p> <p>You have two young children who you wish to protect.</p>

The Dumnonii

<p>King of the Dumnonii</p> <p>You own large tin mines which you know the Romans will be interested in. Should you fight, and try to keep the mines for yourself, or sign a treaty with the Romans to share them?</p>	<p>Atavacus <i>Member of the Dumnonii tribe</i></p> <p>You are a brave Celtic warrior, keen to fight for what is yours.</p>	<p>Catus <i>Member of the Dumnonii tribe</i></p> <p>You have heard tales of the Roman army, who are rumoured to be highly skilled soldiers. You are a little afraid.</p>
<p>Lucillia <i>Member of the Dumnonii tribe</i></p> <p>Your husband and sons work in the tin mines. You are worried about how your family would survive if the Romans took over the mines.</p>	<p>Senovara <i>Member of the Dumnonii tribe</i></p> <p>Your husband is a warrior. You do not want him to die in battle with the Romans.</p>	<p>Senovara <i>Member of the Dumnonii tribe</i></p> <p>Your husband is a warrior. You do not want him to die in battle with the Romans.</p>

Character cards:

The Dobunni

<p><i>King of the Dobunni</i></p> <p>You live in the South West of Britain, and your land is mostly farmland. You are peaceful, and do not want to fight the Romans.</p>	<p>Bruceri <i>Member of the Dobunni tribe</i></p> <p>You are a brave Celtic warrior, and you believe that it would be weak to surrender to the Romans.</p>	<p>Catti <i>Member of the Dobunni tribe</i></p> <p>You have heard great things about the Romans, and you think that your tribe could learn a lot from them.</p>
<p>Delana <i>Member of the Dobunni tribe</i></p> <p>You have three small children, and are pregnant with a fourth. You do not want your husband to have to fight the Romans.</p>	<p>Lucanus <i>Member of the Dobunni tribe</i></p> <p>You are a farmer. You do not want to have to fight in a battle against the Romans.</p>	<p>Minura <i>Member of the Dobunni tribe</i></p> <p>You are the wife of Bruceri. You believe he and the other Celtic warriors could win a fight against the Romans.</p>

The Silures

<p><i>King of the Silures</i></p> <p>You live in South-East Wales. You know that the mountains and valleys of your lands will make it hard for the Romans to conquer your tribe.</p>	<p>Lestinus <i>Member of the Silures tribe</i></p> <p>You are a brave Celtic warrior, and you believe that it would be weak to surrender to the Romans.</p>	<p>Sualius <i>Member of the Silures tribe</i></p> <p>You have heard great things about the Romans, and you think that your tribe could learn a lot from them.</p>
<p>Senica <i>Member of the Silures tribe</i></p> <p>You are a farmer of the valleys, and you do not want to have to fight against the Romans.</p>	<p>Ria <i>Member of the Silures tribe</i></p> <p>You are the wife of Lestinus. You believe he and the other Celtic warriors could win a fight against the Romans.</p>	<p>Cunicatus <i>Member of the Silures tribe</i></p> <p>You know these mountains like the back of your hand. You are sure you could outwit the Romans!</p>

Character cards:

The Atrebates

<p>Verica <i>King of the Atrebates tribe</i></p> <p>After being attacked by your neighbours, the Catuvellaunians, you appealed to Rome for help. This gave the Emperor Claudius the excuse he needed to invade!</p>	<p>Exibuus <i>Member of the Atrebates tribe</i></p> <p>You are a brave Celtic warrior. You do not think your king should have asked Rome for help.</p>	<p>Linu <i>Member of the Atrebates tribe</i></p> <p>You are a brave Celtic warrior. You would like to fight the Romans, and the Catuvellaunians too!</p>
<p>Solinus <i>Member of the Atrebates tribe</i></p> <p>You are loyal to King Verica. You understand that the Romans are the best protection you are going to get from the Catuvellaunian tribe.</p>	<p>Velvalis <i>Member of the Atrebates tribe</i></p> <p>You have heard great things about the Romans, and think that the Celts could learn a lot from them.</p>	<p>Catidiosus <i>Member of the Atrebates tribe</i></p> <p>You believe that it would be weak to surrender to the Romans.</p>

Setting the scene

Tell the children about the beginnings of the Roman conquest of Britain:

It is the year 43 AD Emperor Claudius is the ruler of the Roman Empire. He is old and the Romans believe he is weak – he has decided that he needs to prove to them that he is a strong leader by conquering another country to add to his Empire.

In Britain, the Iron Age Celts are living in large tribes, farming and mining the land. The British mines produce iron, tin, silver and gold – all metals which the Romans would quite like for themselves! The Iron Age Celts are fearsome warriors, who carry great shields and spears in battle, and paint their skin blue with woad to terrify their enemies.

However, the Romans are excellent soldiers, too – and what's more, they are highly organised and well-trained. The Celts – particularly those in the South – know of the Romans through their trading networks. They have heard about the Romans' success at conquering other countries.

Meanwhile, Verica, King of the Atrebates tribe in southern Britain, has been defeated by the neighbouring Catuvellaunian tribe. Exiled from Britain, Verica appeals to Rome for help. This is exactly the excuse that Emperor Claudius needs to start an invasion of Britain! Claudius orders a commander called Aulus Plautius to take four legions of Roman soldiers (about 20,000 men) to invade Britain.

Plautius and his men sailed from France to southern Britain, landing in Kent. A two-day battle against the Catuvellaunian tribe commenced. The Romans were efficient and fearless, and the Catuvellaunians were pushed further and further back. They were clearly going to be defeated by the Romans.

Hearing of the plight of the Catuvellaunians, the kings of the other tribes now had to decide what they would do... Would they stand up against the Romans and fight for their land, risking their lives? Or would they surrender to the Romans, and risk losing their land and wealth?

Setting up the activity

Divide the class into groups of five or six. Tell them that each group is about to take on the role of a Celtic tribe – the **Brigantes**, the **Dumnonii**, the **Dobunni**, the **Silures**, or the **Atrebates**. Soon, they will each be given a card with the name of a character and information about that character. Their job will be to hold a debate among their tribe to decide whether they should:

a) fight the Romans, or b) surrender to the Romans.

Explain that each tribe will have a King or Queen, whose job it will be to report their decision and the reasons for reaching that decision to the rest of the class. It may help that person to take notes during the debate.

Starting things off

Ask the children how they think they can make sure that their debate is fair. As the children establish rules, write them on the board for everyone to refer to, e.g. only one person should speak at a time; you should make sure everyone gets a turn to speak.

Getting into character

Give out the character cards, and ask the children to read the information on it. Ask them to think about how their characters would feel about the Roman invasion: would they be for the Romans, or against them? Ask the children to jot down two or three reasons why their character feels the way that they do.

Holding the debates

In their tribes, the children must now hold a debate to decide whether or not their tribe is going to surrender to the Romans, or fight them. Remind them to stick to their character's point of view as far as possible. The King/Queen of each group should control the debate, allowing everyone to have their opinion heard. Having listened to their tribe's point of view, at the end of the debate the King/Queen will make the final decision and present this to the class. This will be tricky with the Brigantes tribe, where the King and Queen have opposing points of view – give these roles to a pair of high ability children and see if they can reach a solution between themselves.

Rounding things up

Once the tribal Kings and Queens have presented their decisions to the class, reveal to the children what the tribes chose to do in real life!

Brigantes: Queen Cartimandua surrendered to the Romans. In 51 AD, she handed over the leader of the Catuvellaunian tribe to the Romans, too, after he tried to seek sanctuary with her. Her husband, King Venutius, was so appalled by this that he separated from his wife.

Atrebates: This tribe was already very friendly with Rome, and happily became part of the Roman Empire, preferring the Romans to the Catuvellaunians!

Silures: This Welsh tribe continued to fiercely resist the Roman invasion until about 78 AD, when they finally became part of the Roman Empire.

Dumnonii: There is no evidence that the Dumnonii fought the Romans. It is thought that they probably accepted the Roman invasion.

Dobunni: A very peaceful tribe, the Dobunni surrendered quickly to the Romans.

In total, eleven tribes surrendered to the Romans shortly after their invasion.

Do any of these decisions surprise you? Why / why not?