

Title Page 19 – Patricians and Plebeians

- First thing is we need to define two groups that we'll talk about in this lesson; plebeians and patricians
- Create two boxes of equal size and define the two groups

PATRICIANS

A member of the upper, ruling class in Ancient Rome. Land owners, held offices in the government

PLEBEIANS

One of the commoners in Ancient Rome. Craftspeople, shopkeepers, farmers, peasants.

Objective

- Students will trace the evolution of political leadership in Rome from the Etruscan Kings to the Plebeian revolt by viewing a video and creating a visual timeline.

Word association

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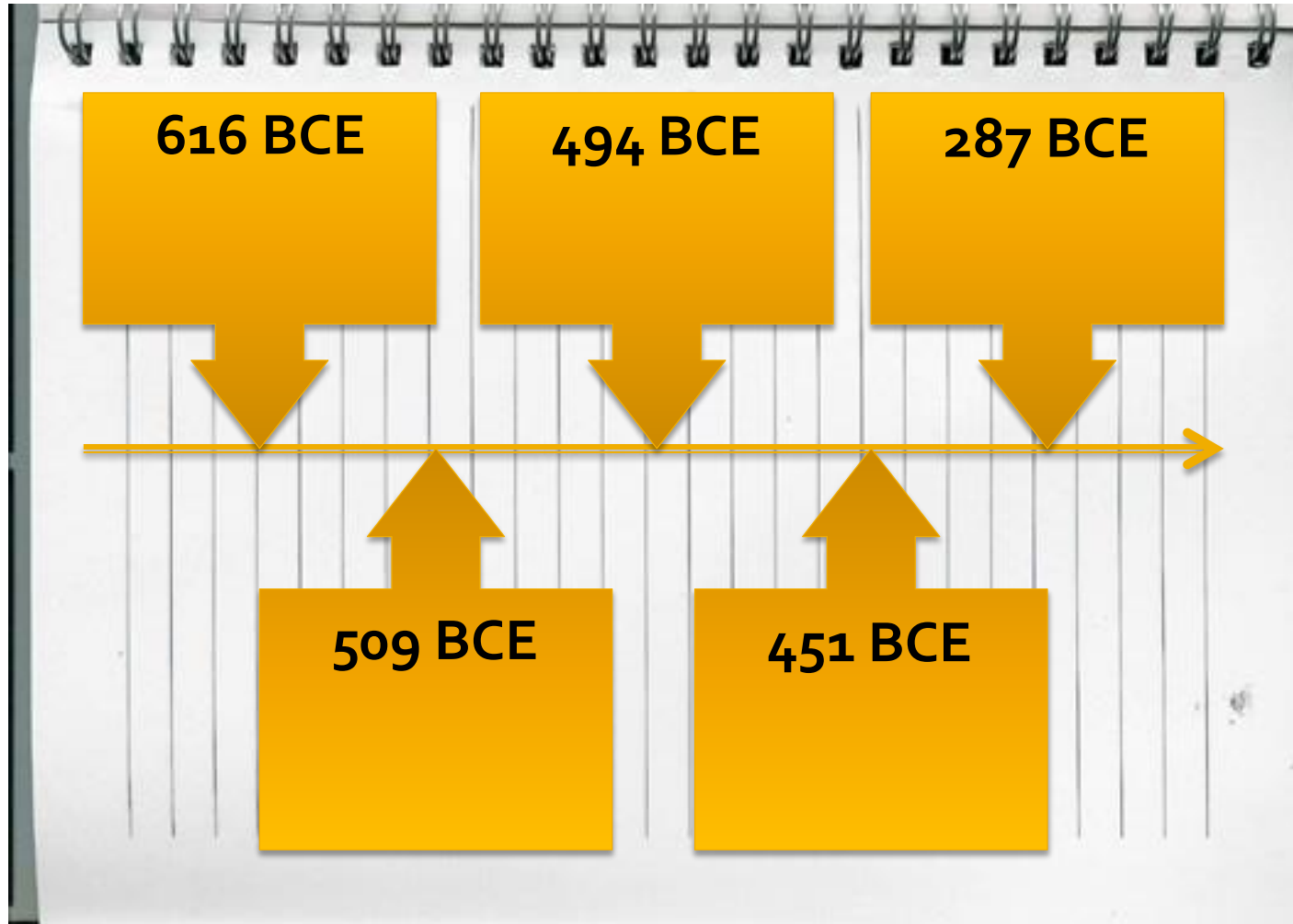
Page 19– Patricians and Plebeians

- On page 19, write the following guiding questions:
 1. Why did the Romans kick out the Etruscan King?
 2. How was the replacement Roman government different from rule under the King?
 3. According to the legend, why did the Plebeians leave the city?
 4. Why was the Law of Twelve Tables so important?

Roman Republic Time Line

- Students will create an illustrated timeline to show how the characteristics of the Roman Republic changed over time on Keynote.
- Include the following:
 - the title "Rise of the Roman Republic"
 - these dates: 616 B.C.E., 509 B.C.E., 494 B.C.E., 451 B.C.E., 287 B.C.E.
 - A two-sentence summary for each date, explaining how the event changed government in the Roman republic
 - a simple illustration or symbol for each date

Keynote Presentation



616 BCE

- Between 616 and 509 B.C.E., the Etruscans ruled Rome. During this time, Roman society was divided into two classes, patricians and plebeians.
- Upper-class citizens, called patricians, came from a small group of wealthy landowners. Patrician comes from the Latin word pater, which means "father." The patricians chose from among themselves the "fathers of the state," the men who advised the Etruscan king. Patricians controlled the most valuable land. They also held the important military and religious offices.
- Free non-patricians called plebeians were mostly peasants, laborers, craftspeople, and shopkeepers. The word plebeian comes from plebs, which means "the common people." Plebeians made up about 95 percent of Rome's population. They could not be priests or government officials. They had little voice in the government. Yet they still were forced to serve in the army.

509 BCE

- Over time, the patricians came to resent Etruscan rule. In 509 B.C.E., a group of patricians, led by Lucius Junius Brutus, rebelled. They drove out the last Etruscan king. In place of a monarchy, they created a republic. In a republic, elected officials govern for the people.
- To the patricians, “the people” meant themselves, not the plebeians. The patricians put most of the power in the hands of the Senate. The Senate was a group of 300 patricians elected by patricians.
- The creation of the republic gave Rome a more democratic form of government. But only the patricians could participate in that government.
- Rome was now a republic, but the patricians held all the power. They made sure that only they could be part of the government. Plebeians had to obey their decisions. Because laws were not written down, patricians often changed or interpreted the laws to benefit themselves. As a result, a small group of families held all the power in Rome.

494 BCE

- The struggle took a dramatic turn in the year 494 B.C.E. By then, Rome was a city of twenty to forty thousand people. Most of the population was plebeian. Angry over their lack of power, the plebeians marched out of the city and camped on a nearby hill. They refused to come back until the patricians met their demands.
- The plebeians' revolt led to a major change in Roman government. The patricians agreed to let the plebeians elect officials called Tribunes of the Plebs. The tribunes spoke for the plebeians in the Senate.
- The plebeians had gained some important rights. However, they still had less power than the patricians. Over the next 200 years, the plebeians staged a series of protests to gradually win political equality.

451 BCE

- First, they demanded that the laws be written down. In that way, the patricians couldn't change them at will. Around the year 451 B.C.E., the patricians agreed. The laws were published on tablets called the Twelve Tables.

367 BCE

- Next, in 367 B.C.E., a new law said that one of the two consuls had to be a plebeian. Former consuls held seats in the Senate, so this change also allowed plebeians to become senators.

287 BCE

- Finally, in 287 B.C.E., the plebeians gained the right to pass laws for all Roman citizens. Now, assemblies of all Roman citizens, such as the Citizens' Association, could approve or reject laws. These plebeian assemblies also nominated the consuls, the tribunes, and the members of the Senate. More and more plebeians served alongside patricians in the Senate. After 200 years of struggle, the plebeians had won their fight for equality.

Impact on the United States

5. If Rome was in trouble, what would the government do?
6. How was the Roman government so important to us as Americans?