CLOTHES AND HAIRSTYLES

You know what it's like. All you want to do is leave the house so you can get to that new zombie-themed ice cream parlour – the one that does BRAIN SUNDAES – but Mum and Dad are taking aaaaaaaaaaaaaages getting ready.

Mum's spent roughly **FIVE YEARS** so far putting her make-up on, while Dad's making sure his "cool" new jacket is zipped-up *just* right and his hair is brushed at a special angle so it hides that **SHINY BALD BIT** on top of his noggin.

It's a **MAHOOSIVE** pain in the bottom waiting for grown-ups to get ready . . . but if **YOU THINK *YOU'VE* GOT IT BAD**, just say a big-old "thanks bro" that you weren't kicking around in the days of ancient Rome.



Back then, your parents could have taken a lot longer to get their hair styled perfectly, and your mum's make-up might have left you reaching for a **SICK BUCKET!**

For instance, bear fat was used to make hair grow, while a **mixture** made from **ANTS' EGGS** was used to blacken women's eyebrows. Some people even used a lovely face cream made from – wait for it – **SQUISHED SUN-DRIED SNAILS** mixed into a bean broth! If you think that's bad, at least **SNAIL FACE CREAM** couldn't kill you. Many other face creams contained lead, a type of poisonous metal that can build up in the body over time causing brain damage and even death!





A Roman woman's hair was very important to her. So much so that special slaves were trained to look after their mistresses' lovely locks. And if a woman didn't have enough hairy stuff on her headbox for her liking, she could simply pop a **BIG WIG** on.

These allowed women to achieve the super-tall styles that were popular during certain periods in ancient Rome. The writer Juvenal even compared them to multistorey buildings! Imagine how long it would take your mum to build a **SKYSCRAPER** on her head.

FANCY THAT!

Roman emperors didn't want to be thought of as kings, so they didn't wear golden crowns. Instead, they popped laurel wreaths on their heads to symbolize their success and power. Why not try wrapping some twigs round your coconut and telling your pals that you're SUPER-POWERFUL?



Your dad might slap some hair gel on, but at least he doesn't sprinkle GOLD DUST on his thatch, which is what the Emperor Lucius Verus did to make himself appear blonder than he actually was.

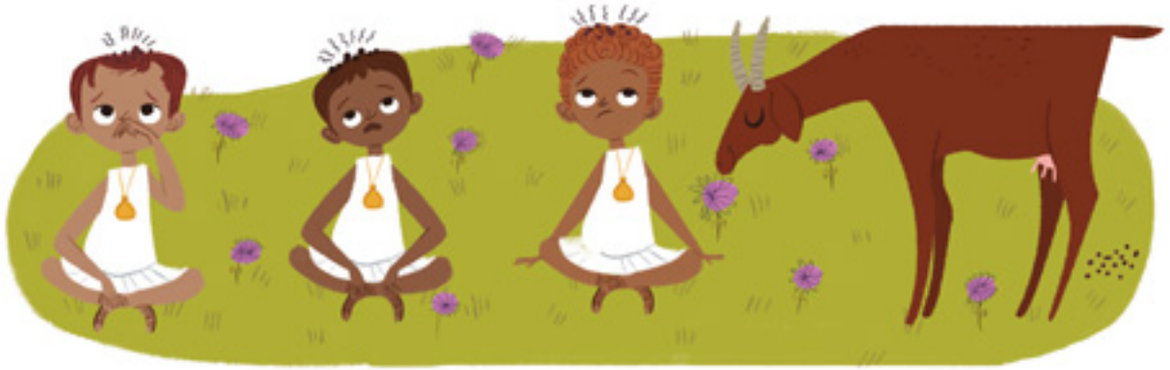
Very nice until it rained — then it was bye-bye golden hair, hello golden **FACE**.





And if your dad is a bit funny about going grey, nowadays he just has to dye his hair. But back in ancient Rome, some people wore a paste on their heads at night that was made from ground herbs and **EARTHWORMS** to keep the grey away!

If you think that sounds bad, **PIGEON POOP** was used to lighten hair, and to dye hair black the writer Pliny the Elder reckoned rubbing in **LEECHES** that had been rotted in red wine for 40 days was the way to go!

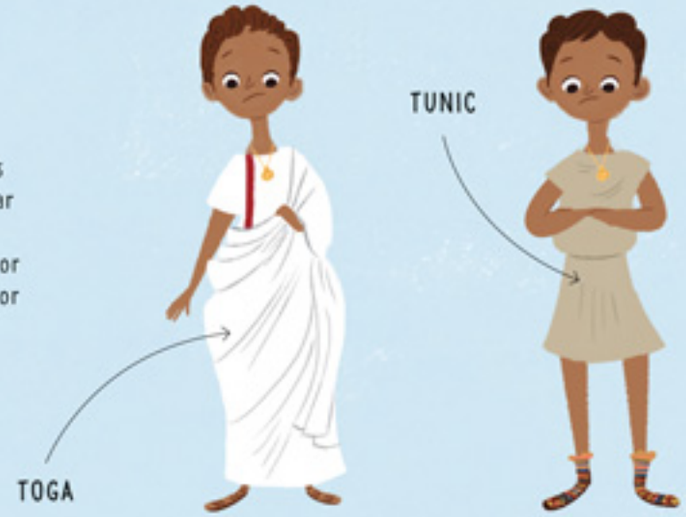


Oh, and if you have a little case of head lice (nothing to be ashamed of — happens to lots of peeps), while some (sensible) ancient Romans used lice combs, others used **GOAT DUNG** to combat the annoying little beasties instead!

What about clothing? Are you bored with your togs? Fed up with that tracksuit? Sick of the sight of your hoodie? Had it up to here with the same old t-shirt?

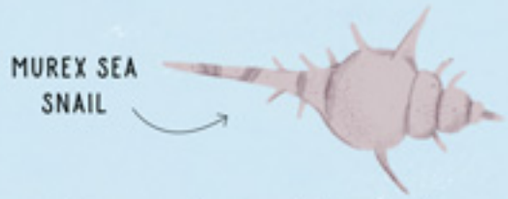
Well, at least you **HAVE** clothes to choose from.

Back in ancient Rome it was pretty much toga-land as far as the eye could see. Your choice was basically a toga or a tunic. Or perhaps a tunic or a toga, if you were feeling particularly funky.



Most Roman clothing was made of wool or linen, although rich folk also had access to **EXPENSIVE** silk from China or high-quality Egyptian cotton. Many Roman clothes could be quite colourful, although purple clothes were only for the super-important or super-rich. The expensive purple dye was made by crushing the shells of thousands of Murex **SEA SNAILS**.





Girls wore a long tunic that reached their feet, while boys wore a shorter tunic, sometimes with stripy socks.

The most important day in a boy's life was when he was given his *toga virilis*, which marked his transition from childhood to being a man. He would give up all his childhood toys at the same time.

That's like hitting your teens and getting a new pair of grown-up tweed trousers but having to bin your games console and skateboard. Sounds **AWFUL!**

FAMILY LIFE

Grown-ups sometimes have pretty weird ideas about what makes a family home look all swanky and stylish, don't they?

They might pop a crazy painting on the wall featuring a few yellow squiggles and a green blob that looks like someone has done a **MEGA-SNEEZE** on the canvas, then they'll stand back, rub their chin and go: "Hmmm, yah, simply **SUPERB** modern art."

Or maybe they'll try some **DIY** art themselves by gluing a twig and a sock to an empty milk carton and spraying it all gold. Hey presto! A magnificent sculpture!

Yeah, whatever you say, Dad.

FANCY THAT!

In the home of the first Roman emperor, Augustus, 18 slaves were employed to make and repair clothes. You probably don't have ANY servants just waiting to fix that hole in the toe of your superhero socks or make you a shiny new pair of pants when your old ones wear out. Poor you!



But while that may well be embarrassing when you bring your pals home from school, if you think you've got it bad, at least you don't have **DEAD ANCESTORS** peering down at you from the walls.

Yes, family was such a big deal to the Romans that in some cases they would make wax moulds of relatives who'd popped their clogs to create "**DEATH MASKS**" that they could put up on the walls of their home.

Most families would also regularly go to the graves of their ancestors to pay their respects to the dead. So next time you feel like launching into a **GRUMBLEFEST** about going shopping for school trousers, just remember you could be going on a fun day out to a cemetery.



Do you ever wish . . .

you didn't have to do laundry?

Don't you just hate tidying your bedroom? It's just SOOOO hard picking up your stinky old clothes off the floor and getting them into the laundry basket. Luckily, the next stop for your whiffy socks and pants is a washing machine, and not an ancient Roman laundry.

Roman clothes were usually washed at laundries where they were placed in large tubs containing old urine (yup, that's wee we're taking about), then squished underfoot by bare-footed workers.



White clothes could be brightened even more by treating them with sulphur fumes, which stink of rotten eggs. So your threads would be lovely and clean . . . but you'd stink of wee and eggy bottom burps. Excellent!

Aside from being stared at by masks of dead relatives, what else did kids in Roman families get up to? In most cases, it was whatever their dad told them to do . . .

The thing is, if your dad decided you had to do something, you **SERIOUSLY** had to do it. That's because the oldest male of the household — which was usually the father — had **COMPLETE POWER** over the family.

He was known as the *paterfamilias* and he decided **EVERYTHING**. He could even arrange the marriages of his family members . . . and for girls that could be at a young age.



The paterfamilias (why not try calling your dad that from now on?) could be a very strict keeper of discipline. Physical punishments could be imposed for being **CHEEKY**, bad behaviour or any kind of disobedience — even for poor schoolwork.

Even more extreme, when a new baby was born it would be laid at its father's feet — if the father picked the baby up it would become part of the family, but if he ignored the baby it would be abandoned, possibly to be raised by a childless family, but more likely to be raised as a slave.

Hey girls! Looking forward to hanging out with your pals and doing all sorts of cool stuff when you're 14? Well think again. In ancient Rome you could have to give up your childhood things and say hello to a hubby (who would be years older).
NO. THANK. YOU.



Women and girls had a particularly tough time — well there's a surprise. Sons were seen as being much more important than daughters, which we know is as silly as a swimming pool full of clowns, but that's what the ancient peeps thought. Even worse, a man could **DIVORCE** his wife if she kept giving him baby girls instead of a son . . . as if she **HAD A CHOICE!**

Women and girls were also expected to **run the home, cook,** clean and raise the children. Many mums **died young, either** because having babies in those days could **be pretty dangerous,** or as a result of disease.







FANCY THAT!

It's believed many poor children were first sent to work by their family between the ages of five and 10. One child was recorded as saying: "Today . . . I am seven years old, and must play no more. Here is my top, my hoop and my ball: keep them all." So stop fiddling with that app and GET TO WORK!

Just to keep the whole "aren't we having fun" levels running high, the Roman day lasted from dawn till dusk.

So you and your family were out of bed super-early and, unless you were rich enough to afford oil for lamps, you all went to bed when it got dark. Or stayed up and played hilarious games of "Try to Avoid Stepping in the Chamber Pot or Falling Down the Stairs".

That said, there were some upsides to Roman family life. The ancient Romans loved animals (although they also loved killing animals for sport — and when we say animals we're not talking about wasps or fleas. We mean big furry ones, which is pretty mean).





If you were lucky enough, you might have had a pet or two around the house. Typical pets included greyhounds, ferrets, parrots and other birds, fish, and even small **MONKEYS!** You may think your little brother is a small monkey, but that's not the same thing. He's hopefully slightly less hairy for a start!

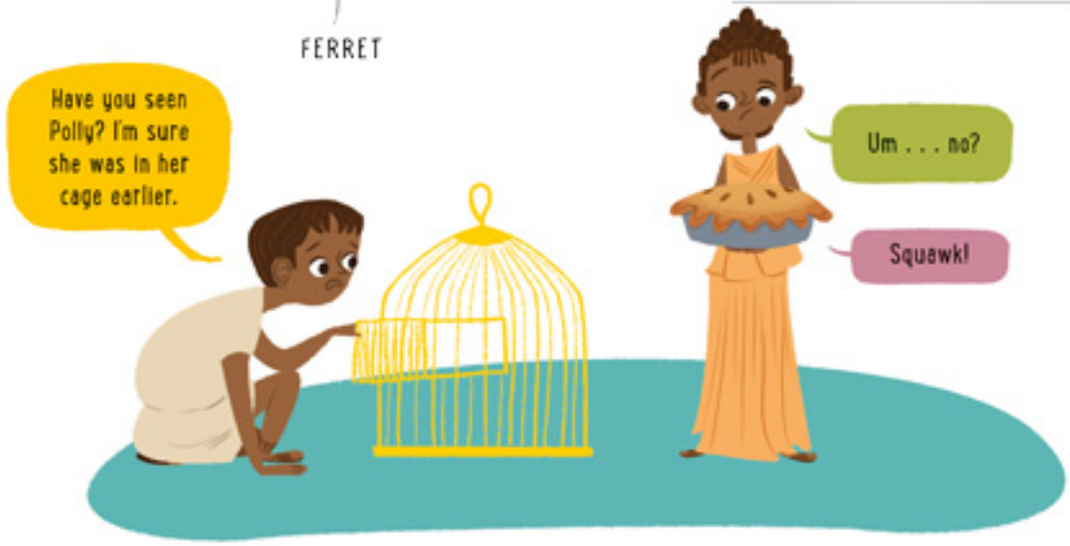
One of the most commonly owned pets was a small white dog with long hair called a Maltese (not to be confused with a Malteser, which would be a very weird pet and rubbish at chasing sticks). Much like today, dogs wore tags in case they got lost, and bigger, fiercer dogs were used as guard dogs to protect people's homes.

Cats however, were not popular pets, and Romans kept ferrets to hunt mice and rats instead.



FANCY THAT!

Unfortunately for many Roman pets, some of them were considered a bit too DELICIOUS by their owners, so a pet bird or fish might end up in the cooking pot. PARROTS' TONGUES were considered a particularly tasty delicacy. BLEUGH!



Do you ever wish . . . your parents didn't make you do boring chores?

Is there anything worse than having to do the vacuuming to earn your pocket money? Anything? Anything at all? No way — there simply can't be!

Unless you count being a slave in ancient Rome (or in any other time or place for that matter). That's worse.

Some children in ancient Rome were slaves and could be treated badly. They had to work extremely long hours, from sunrise to sunset, doing jobs like serving wine or food at their master's table or carrying out hard farm work. They could even be used as actors and dancers!

Rich families had many slaves to cook, clean and do the gardening. There were even cases of poor people selling their children to richer neighbours as slaves when times were tough.

Although many slaves were treated very badly, it wasn't always the case. Some families became fond of their slaves and freed them. Once freed, a "*freedman*" took their master's name and could even become a Roman citizen, and some of them went on to become very rich and powerful.

Still, the vacuuming seems a better bet all round, don't you think?