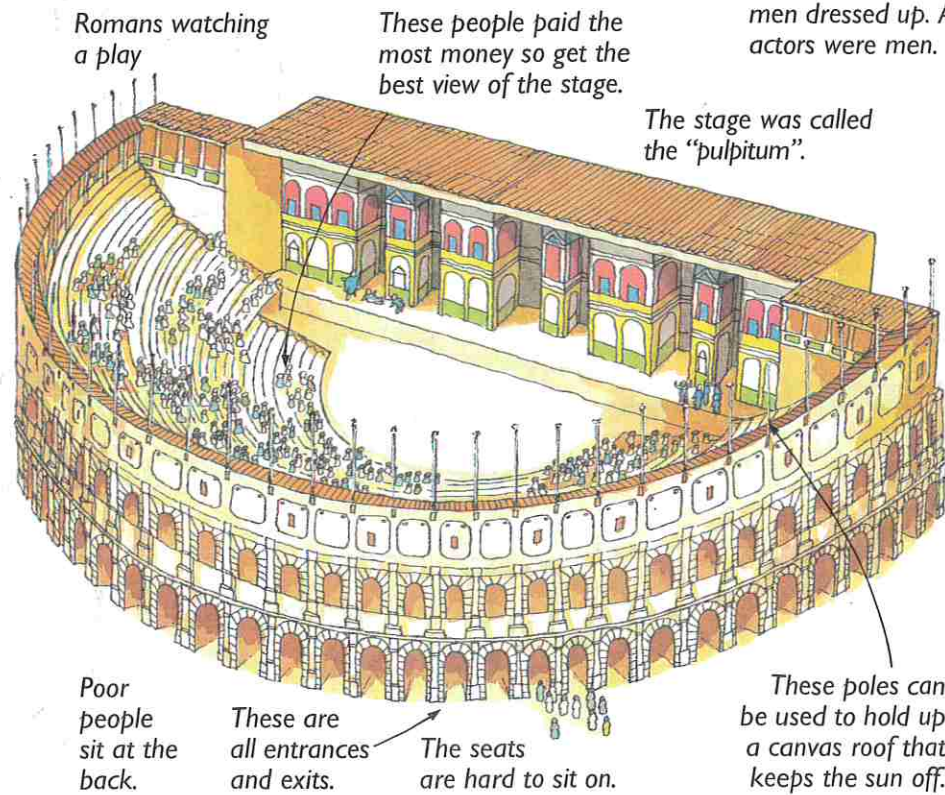


## What were theatres like?

In the early days of Rome, they were made of wood. Later, they were much bigger and built of stone. In the older ones, people had to stand up to watch the plays. This must have made their legs very tired. Later, stone seats (like steps) were built.



Romans watching a play

These people paid the most money so get the best view of the stage.

The stage was called the "pulpitum".

Poor people sit at the back.

These are all entrances and exits.

The seats are hard to sit on.

These poles can be used to hold up a canvas roof that keeps the sun off.



This marble carving, called a relief, shows two actors in a play. They are both wearing masks.

## What were the plays about?

Early Roman plays were copied from Greek ones. There were two types: tragedies and comedies. A tragedy was a play with a sad ending. A comedy wasn't always a play full of jokes, but one with a happy ending. The Romans did like jokes, though.

These "women" are men dressed up. All actors were men.



This mosaic shows a scene from a play.

## Could they buy snacks?

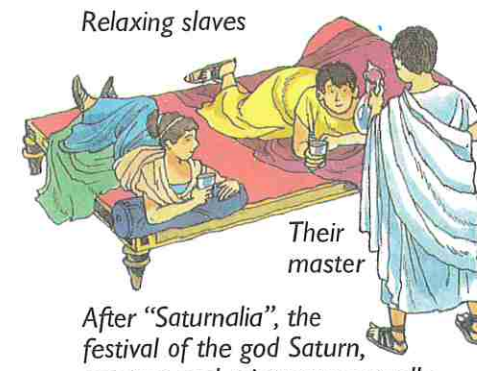
Yes. At big public events, there were usually people selling different kinds of food. Snacks were often fruit or vegetables. Romans wouldn't have been able to buy popcorn or ice cream.

## Why did the actors wear masks?

Many Roman plays used the same characters, such as "the smiling fool" and "the wise old man". The actors wore masks so that it was easy to tell who they were playing from a distance. It must have been difficult to see much from the seats at the back anyway.

## Did they have parties?

Yes. The Romans loved a good party. They often had them on public holidays, and there were plenty of those in Roman times.



Relaxing slaves

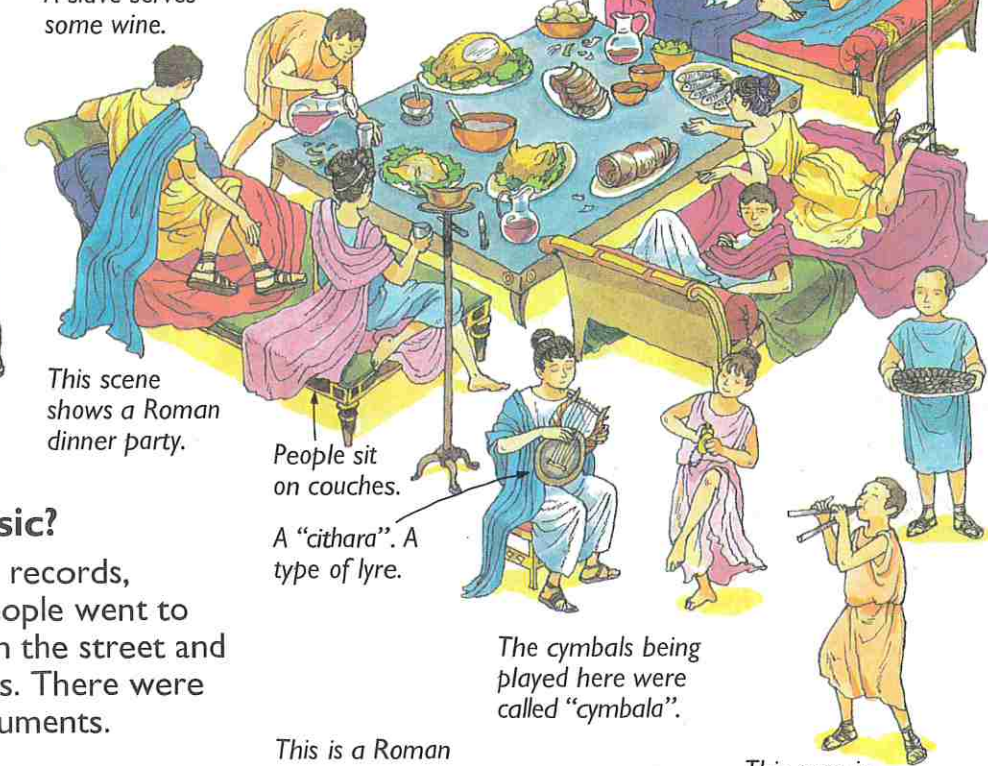
Their master

After "Saturnalia", the festival of the god Saturn, masters and mistresses actually held parties for their slaves!

## What food did they eat?

At parties, rich Romans would have enormous feasts. They ate salads, eggs and shellfish for their first course. This was followed by a main course of up to seven dishes.

A slave serves some wine.



This scene shows a Roman dinner party.

People sit on couches.

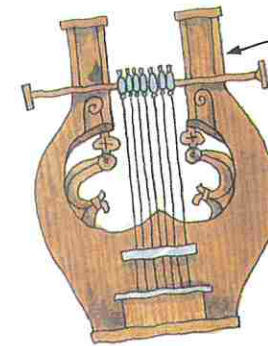
A "cithara". A type of lyre.

The cymbals being played here were called "cymbala".

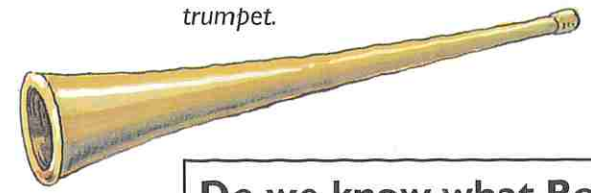
This is a Roman trumpet.

This man is playing a set of double pipes called "tibiae".

This lyre is made out of wood and metal. Some were made from tortoise shells like the one in the party scene.



This is a "sistrum". The musician shakes it like a rattle.



## Do we know what Roman music sounded like?

In a way. Archeologists have worked out what some Roman instruments probably sounded like. How do you think they managed to do that?