

Amazing Aqueducts

Week 11 • Wednesday • Rivers in the Sky

Reading Time

A big city needs LOTS of water — for drinking, cooking, fountains, and those famous Roman baths. But how do you move water from mountains far away into the city? The Romans built **aqueducts**: long channels that carried water for miles and miles.

Here's the genius part: aqueducts used NO pumps and NO motors. The Romans tilted the channel down just a tiny bit the whole way — so gravity did all the work! The water simply flowed downhill, sometimes for over 50 miles.

Most of the channel ran underground, but when an aqueduct crossed a valley, engineers built tall bridges with rows of stone arches. The city of Rome had eleven aqueducts bringing in fresh water every day. Some, like the Pont du Gard in France, still stand today!

Reading Questions

1. What did an aqueduct carry?

2. What force made the water move, since there were no pumps?

3. Why did aqueducts need tall arched bridges in some places?

Vocabulary Grid

Write what each word means in your own words.

aqueduct

gravity

channel

fountain

downhill

valley

True or False

Write T for true or F for false in each circle.

- ☐ Aqueducts carried water to Roman cities.
- ☐ Aqueducts used big electric pumps.
- ☐ Gravity made the water flow downhill.
- ☐ The city of Rome had eleven aqueducts.
- ☐ Some aqueducts are still standing today.
- ☐ Aqueduct bridges were held up by arches.

Hands-On: Build an Aqueduct

You need: foil or a cut paper-towel tube, books, and a little water (do this over a sink or outside!).

Make a channel from foil or the tube. Prop one end slightly higher on books. Pour water in the high end and watch gravity carry it 'to the city' (a cup at the bottom). Tilt it more — does the water rush faster?

- **Draw It!**

Draw an aqueduct crossing a valley: tall stone arches with water flowing along the top toward a city.



Think About It

1. How does water get to YOUR house today?

