

Reliable Romans: make a bulla



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What is a bulla?

A bulla is a necklace with a pouch worn by Roman boys to ward off evil spirits and bad luck. The pouch could be made from gold, leather or woven wool cloth, depending on the wealth of the family. The inside of the bulla contained charms, a spell or a magic word. The bulla was presented to a boy at birth and it would be worn until he was considered an adult. A Roman girl had something similar called a lunula, which was a necklet with an amulet shaped like a crescent moon, that she wore until she married. You are going to make a bulla and include a coin (such as a 5p) for good fortune along with a magic word or spell for luck.



You will need:

1 piece of felt or fabric (approximately 11cm x 11cm), approximately 60cm length of cord or thin ribbon, 1 coin (e.g. 5p), a slip of paper, a pair of scissors, and a pen or pencil.

Instructions:

1. Fold the felt or fabric square in half and then *near* the edge along the fold cut a small cut on each side (approximately 0.5cm-1cm).
2. Refold in half (the other direction) and make two more small cuts. Fold across each corner of the felt or fabric and make a small cut in each corner.
3. Take the cord or thin ribbon and thread it through the holes.
4. Write a magic word or spell on a slip of paper and then put this (folded or rolled) and a coin onto the centre of the felt or fabric square. Pull the cord or ribbon tight and then knot to form a pouch. Knot the two loose pieces of cord or ribbon to make a necklace.
5. Your bulla is complete! Put it on to bring you good luck and fortune!