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READING JUMP Plus 2

Casey Malarcher

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Acquisitions Editor: Tamara Gaskill
Copy Editor: Katy Kosek
email: info@compasspub.com

Content Editor: Andrea Janzen
Cover/Interior Design: Design Plus
<http://www.compasspub.com>

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The following writers are gratefully acknowledged for contributing materials to this series:
Kelly Daniels, Randy Lewis, Scott Lichtenstein, Karl Nordval, Kelli Ripatti, April Sanders, and Adam Worcester.

ISBN: 978-1-59966-630-3

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
15 14 13 12 11

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Unit
01

The Story of Gladiators

WARM-UP

Discuss and answer the questions.

1. Do you like watching a fight between two strong people? Why or why not?
2. What do you know about gladiators?

Vocabulary Preview

Write each word next to its meaning.

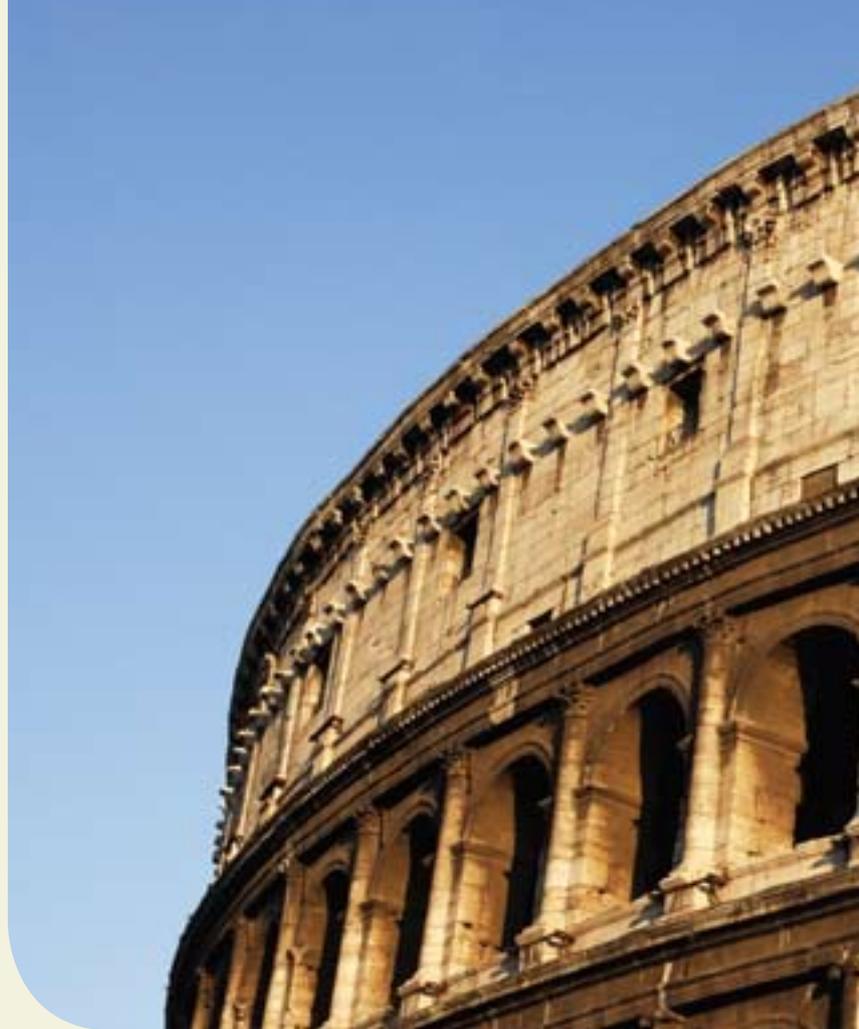
arena | sacrifice | debt | training | audience | accompany

1. _____ a crowd that watches a show
2. _____ to go together with; to join
3. _____ money owed to somebody else; money you have borrowed
4. _____ the repeated exercise done to become good at something
5. _____ an oval area where gladiators fight each other
6. _____ a person, thing, or animal being offered as a gift to a god

> The Story of Gladiators

Before You Read

Today, ultimate fighting is a popular sport. People gather around their televisions and watch as two willing contestants fight in a cage. It is a brutal and violent sport. However, ultimate fighting is mild compared to the gruesome gladiator fights held in ancient times, which thousands of Romans filled the amphitheaters to watch.



In ancient Rome, there were accomplished, professional warriors who fought for public entertainment. They were known as gladiators. Their job was to fight each other in the **arena** to entertain the Roman people. They all had to endure hours of **training** so that they could win. Most gladiators were slaves, criminals, or prisoners of war. However, free men sometimes decided to become gladiators, especially if they had a lot of **debt** and needed to make money. These men were not very careful.

The first famous gladiator fight occurred in 264 BCE. Two brothers, Marcus and Decimus Brutus, organized three fights in honor of their father who had died. The fights were part of a ceremony to make sure that their father would be **accompanied** into the “next world” by strong, armed men. Romans believed that their gods liked seeing gladiator fights. When a gladiator was killed in a fight, he was considered a **sacrifice** for the gods. So, when a dead person was accompanied by a dead gladiator, the gods of the “next world” would be happy. They would give good treatment to the dead person. Moreover, gladiators who conquered their enemies might become celebrities.

Gladiator fights took place in amphitheaters. The largest built was the Colosseum in



Rome. It held 50,000 people and had 80 entrances. During a gladiator show, there were usually several fights. Some fights were between a gladiator and a large animal, like a tiger or lion. There were also other
20 types of fights, like fights between female archers or between a large group of dwarves and a smaller group of full-grown soldiers. Sometimes, regular people were forced to fight as gladiators as a punishment for their religious beliefs. It was important for gladiators to die
25 with dignity, without begging for their life when they lost. Usually, the fascinated people in the **audience** got to vote about whether the losing gladiator should be killed or not.

Time Limit 02:15 Reading Time _____ minutes _____ seconds 320 words



- 14 **conquer** to defeat
15 **amphitheater** large building with many seats organized around one central area
26 **fascinated** being strongly interested in

Choose the best answer.

1. What is the main topic of the passage?
 - a. What the biggest amphitheaters of the world are
 - b. Who gladiators were and what they did
 - c. What the Roman people believed
 - d. What Marcus and Decimus Brutus did to honor their father

2. Why was the first gladiator fight held?
 - a. To entertain the citizens
 - b. To honor a dead man
 - c. To kill enemy soldiers
 - d. To scare the gods

3. What role did women sometimes play in gladiator fights?
 - a. They determined who would fight each other.
 - b. They chose the weapons that would be allowed in each fight.
 - c. They shot arrows at each other.
 - d. They fought against a group of dwarves.

4. How did the spectators participate in the outcome of gladiator fights?
 - a. They set the rules for each fight.
 - b. They threw objects at the fighters.
 - c. They were able to join in the fight to help the gladiator of their choice.
 - d. They got to decide if the loser should live or die.

Answer these questions.

5. What types of people were gladiators?

6. What did Romans believe about their gods?

7. Where did gladiator fights take place?

Step 1. Draw a line between A and B to complete each sentence.

A

B

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. This is because a gladiator | • | • a. gladiator fights became much more common. |
| 2. Marcus and Decimus Brutus | • | • b. their father who had died. |
| 3. After 264 BCE, | • | • c. to accompany him to the “next world.” |
| 4. They wanted a strong gladiator | • | • d. was a sacrifice to the gods. |
| 5. These fights were in honor of | • | • e. organized three gladiator fights in 264 BCE. |

Step 2. Put the sentences in the correct order.

The Story of Gladiators

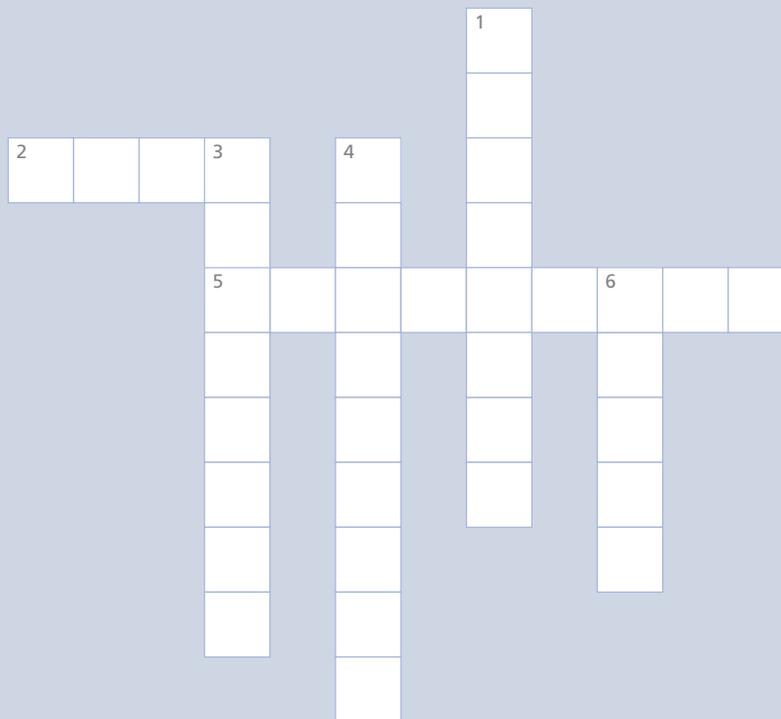
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Discuss and answer the questions with your friends.

1. What do you think of gladiators? Why?
2. Would you like to see a gladiator fight? Why or why not?
3. Do you think it is a good idea for men to fight animals?

Vocabulary Practice

Complete the puzzle with words from the unit.



Across

2. the amount of money that you borrowed from someone else
5. to go along with someone; to go together

Down

1. formal activity for a special occasion
3. exercising over and over to become a better and stronger fighter
4. a human, animal, or plant offered to a god for thanks
6. the oval space where gladiators fight each other