



Learning Project WEEK 3: GLADIATORS

Age Range: Y5/6

Weekly Maths Tasks (Aim to do 1 per day)

- Get your child to play on [Times Table Rockstars](#). TT Rockstars weekly sessions now set, children need to play a minimum of 5 garage and 3 studio sessions per week.
- Look at the [daily BBC Bitesize lesson](#) and complete the tasks set.
- Ask your child to show everything they know about fractions on a piece of paper. This could be pictures, diagrams, explanations, methods etc. Get them to be as creative as they want to be.
- Allow your child to play on [Hit the Button](#) - focus on times tables, division facts and squared numbers.
- Direct your child to practise [matching fractions](#) on this game. Get them to work on the mixed numbers.
- Daily [arithmetic](#) for different areas of maths. Ask your child to work on level 4, 5 and 6 activities and try to focus on fractions.
- Get your child to work on their [reasoning and problem solving](#) by practising past SATs questions that are broken down into topic areas and have videos linked to them that can be watched if needed. As these are older papers these are suitable for both years 5 and 6. Click on one of the topic areas listed to gain access to the questions.

Weekly Reading Tasks (Aim to do 1 per day)

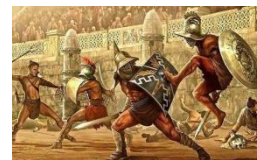
- Ask your child to read a chapter from their home reading book or a book that they have borrowed from the library.
- Following this, ask your child to create a set of multiple choice questions about what they have read.
- Encourage your child to note down any unfamiliar words from the chapter they have read. Explore the meanings of these words by using a dictionary, reading around the sentence or using print conventions.
- Listen to, read or watch the story of the real life gladiator, Spartacus, who was captured by the Romans and sold as a slave to fight as a gladiator. Discuss what kind of a man Spartacus was, given that he escaped, attracted over a 100,000 slaves to run away and join him, and evaded the Romans for over a year until, it is thought, he died in battle. **Note:** Children could watch extracts from the 1960 film *Spartacus* (certified PG rating), particularly the capture scene where all of the slaves claim to be him. Discuss what this says about how the other slaves thought and felt about Spartacus.
Useful links: [Spartacus – BBC History](#); [Spartacus, The Grecian slave warrior who threatened Rome - History Net](#); [I'm Spartacus – YouTube](#)

Weekly Spelling Tasks (Aim to do 1 per day)

- Encourage your child to practise the Year 5/ 6 Common Exception Words (see list)
- Then ask your child to choose 5 Common Exception words. They can then write a synonym, antonym, the meaning and an example of how to use the word in a sentence.
- Practise spellings on [Spelling Shed](#).
- Ask your child to create a word bank of feelings that they have felt over the week. They may be able to identify any spelling rules the adjectives contain. Encourage them to try and include an adjective with a silent letter.
- Get your child to proofread their writing from the day. They can use a dictionary to check the spelling of any words that they found challenging. This will also enable them to check that the meaning of the word is suitable for the sentence.

Weekly Writing Tasks (Aim to do 1 per day)

- Watch a film clip of gladiator fight scenes (Latin: gladiator, 'a swordsman', from *gladius*, 'a sword') and discuss what happens. Consider words that could be used to describe the scene and list them in pairs. Use a dictionary or thesaurus to extend their lists, sorting words into adjectives and verbs, and discussing and comparing their choices with other pairs. **Note:** Watch a different scene, considering whether their word choices are also appropriate for this scene or whether the scene suggests other words to include. **Useful link:** [The Story Behind the Colosseum's Greatest Battle - YouTube](#)
Note: Adult viewing advised first
- Imagine they are Roman commentators watching a gladiator combat at the famous Colosseum in Rome, either gladiator to gladiator, or gladiator versus animal. Consider and collect ideas as to what kind of things a Roman commentator might see and report on, making notes on a battle from the entry into the arena to the grisly end! **Note:** Before writing, listen to examples of commentary for different types of sports including horse racing, football, swimming and athletics. What are the features of commentary? What is its purpose?
- Draft a script for two commentators as they observe and report upon a gladiatorial combat. Refer back to their verb and adjective lists and try to weave these words into their scripts. Practise reading their scripts aloud to see how they sound. **Note:** The Romans found it very entertaining to watch men being killed! The Colosseum could seat 45,000 spectators. Some people were not lucky enough to have a seat and would either stand or listen from afar. The children's commentary could be used to inform those Romans who were unable to enter the Colosseum to watch the fight. Record the children's commentaries on 'Radio Rome' and listen back to them for entertainment! Add Roman jingles and interviews with gladiators to spice up their programmes.



- [Gladiator combat commentary](#)

Learning Project - to be done throughout the week

The project this week aims to provide opportunities for your child to learn more about Gladiators.

- Find out about the life of a gladiator using the web and a range of historical artefacts, images and texts. Research topics such as food, exercise, weapons, the lifestyle of slaves, combat and ultimately their fate. **Note:** Provide children with a good range of historical books and other source materials so they can research independently. Ask the children how they would like to record their findings: perhaps a mind map, a mini book or a digital presentation?

- [Gladiator life](#)
- [Roman gladiators](#)

Useful links: [Life of a Gladiator – Tribunes and Triumphs](#); [Gladiators: Heroes of the Roman Amphitheatre – BBC History](#)

- Enrol in 'Ludus Gladiatorius', the gladiator school where slaves, criminals and other vulnerable people learn to fight as gladiators. Be ready to train with a lanista ('butcher'), an old gladiator whose fighting days are over. Take part in daily exercises to build up body strength and agility. Practise fighting with a fake or wooden sword until you can be trusted with a 'real' sword. **Note:** Lay down ground rules for safe 'combat' and remind children to warm up just like the real gladiators did before taking part in strenuous exercise! If possible, video children performing exercises and mock fights and analyse performance to decide how it could be improved.
- Find out about famous gladiators including Spartacus, Commodus, Crixus, Carpophorus, Marcus Attilius, Priscus and Flamma, Spiculus, Verus and Tetrates. Create a poster about their chosen character, advertising their powerful qualities to other gladiators. **Note:** Famous Roman gladiators won widespread fame and acclaim. In fact, many Romans considered them to be heroes, even worshipping their idols and painting graffiti in their name across the city of Rome!

Useful link: [Famous Gladiators – Tribunes and Triumphs](#)

Look at and compare mosaics depicting gladiator scenes. Talk about what the mosaics show and the evidence they give us about the Roman era. Design a mosaic tile showing a gladiator battle scene. **Note:** Children could use squared paper to plan their mosaic design. **Mosaic tiles can be bought from art material suppliers; alternatively cut up little squares of coloured paper.**

- [Gladiator scene mosaics](#)
- [How to make a mosaic](#)

Additional learning resources parents may wish to engage with

[Classroom Secrets Learning Packs](#) - These packs are split into different year groups and include activities linked to reading, writing, maths and practical ideas you can do around the home.

[Twinkl](#) - to access these resources click on the link and sign up using your own email address and creating your own password. Use the offer code UKTWINKLHELPS.

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Gladiator Combat Commentary

Characters: CASSIA – commentator
FLAVIUS – commentator
AGRIPPA – commentator

Scene: The Colosseum, Rome



Three commentators report on the upcoming events at the Colosseum, as crowds gather to watch the 10th Gladiatorial Games.

CASSIA: You're listening to Radio Rome, the Empire's top sports and news channel. We're going live now to the Colosseum where the action's really hotting up! Flavius and Agrippa, you're the in the heart of it. Can you give us an update?

FLAVIUS: Many thanks, Cassia. Yes, we're here at the arena, reporting live from the 10th Gladiatorial Games and I can tell from the atmosphere, it's going to be a memorable one! What are your feelings Agrippa?

AGRIPPA: Well, Flavius, just look at these crowds! I think we've got upwards of 4000 men and women here, and, by Jupiter, they're a lively bunch.

FLAVIUS: You're right, Agrippa! From our viewing platform, I can see senators, nobles and citizens, all with their families on what promises to be a most auspicious day the games.

AGRIPPA: It is indeed, Flavius. The wine is flowing amongst the spectators and I can see that many have brought their slaves with them to attend to their every need.

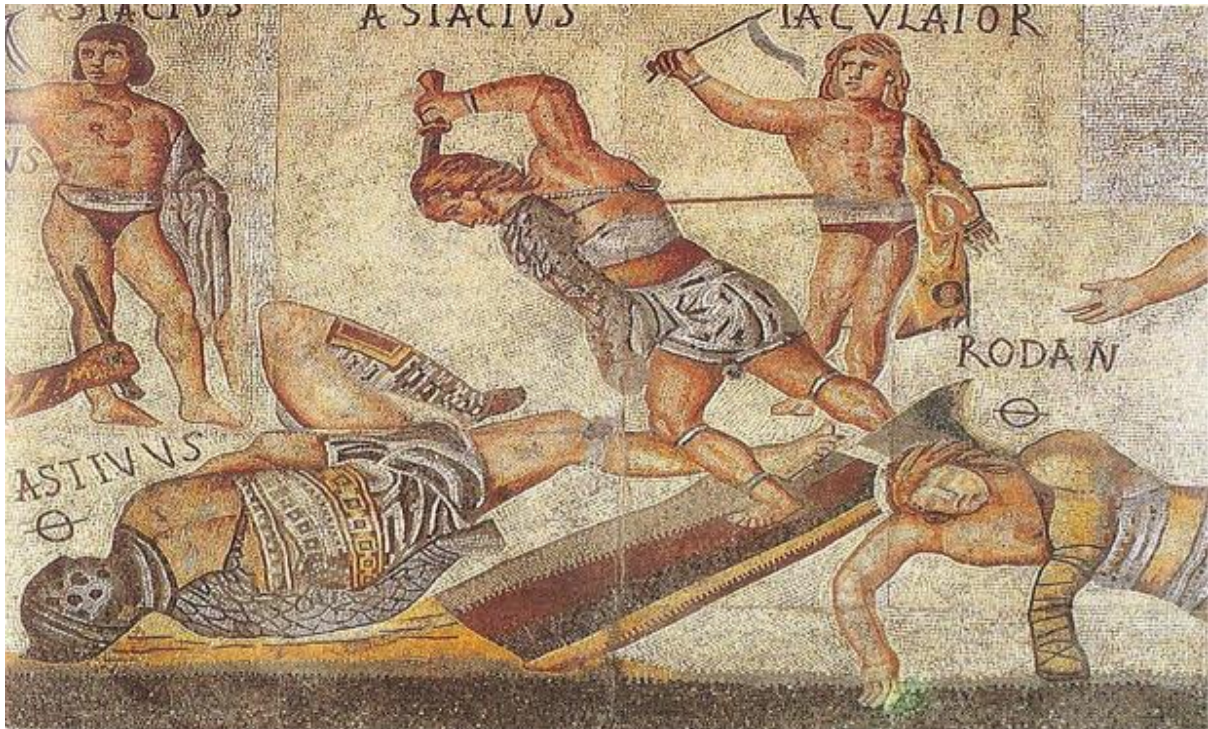
FLAVIUS: Look, Agrippa – there's a group of slaves carrying large sun shades. They are ready to shelter their masters from the blazing sun. It's going to be hot out there!

AGRIPPA: And not just for the spectators. What can you tell us about the combatants, Flavius?

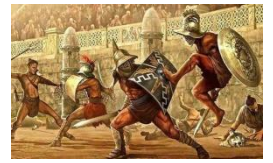
FLAVIUS: Well, Agrippa, as we both know there's o one name people's lips today and that name is Spartacus. He's fresh from the ludi, where he learnt his skills with a thraex and secutor, and he comes with a fearsome reputation. He's strong, quick and has the will to win a fight. I think anyone who opposes him today will feel the sharp end of his gladius and find themselves in the dust.

AGRIPPA: I can tell from the fanfare and drums that he must be about to enter the arena so let's turn our attention to the entrance and raise a great cheer for our gladiator!

CASSIA: Thank you, Flavius and Agrippa – it sounds like we're in for a thrilling afternoon. Tune is for all the action straight after this short break.









St. Giles CE Primary School
Achieving Through Adventure





How to make a mosaic

Equipment

- sheet of A5 paper
- pencil
- scissors
- sheet of A5 cardboard or thin wood
- PVA glue
- coloured paper, foam squares or freestyle mosaic tiles (available from craft suppliers)

Method

- 1 Draw a simple mosaic design on A5 paper.
- 2 Place coloured mosaic tiles on the drawing.
- 3 Trim the tiles to make sure they fit closely together.
- 4 Cover the piece of cardboard or thin wood with a generous layer of PVA glue.
- 5 One by one, place the mosaic pieces on the card or wood to create the design.
- 6 Leave to dry overnight.
- 7 Glaze the mosaic with a thin layer of PVA glue and leave to dry.

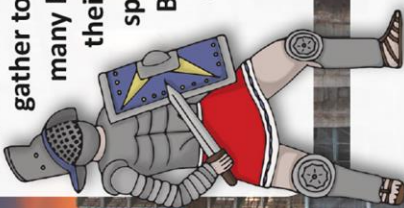


Gladiator life

Gladiators were often slaves, criminals or prisoners of war, who had sworn an oath to fight. They were specially trained to fight each other or wild animals in an open air arena called an amphitheatre. Huge crowds would

gather to watch gladiators fight and many became the celebrities of their time, but it wasn't a sport for the fainthearted!

Being a gladiator was extremely dangerous and often resulted in death.



Food and drink

Gladiators ate very little meat or dairy products. Instead, they ate vegetables, barley, wheat and beans to provide them with vitamins, minerals, fibre and carbohydrates. They drank a special mix of charred wood, bone or plant ashes as a source of calcium.

Lifestyle

Life as a gladiator was very tough and most gladiators were not allowed to leave their barracks. The barracks were more like prisons, as the gladiators had very little freedom.

However, gladiators had a team of staff to look after them including trainers, armourers, cooks and doctors. This meant that gladiators were fed regularly and treated for injuries. In fact, they usually had a better standard of living than many lower class Romans.



Exercise and training

Gladiators lived in special training schools called barracks or ludi, where they would exercise and train every day. They lifted weights to build their strength and learnt how to fight using wooden swords or rudes. Gladiators were often trained by men who had fought as gladiators themselves, and were taught about specific skills and techniques needed for combat.

Weapons and armour

Gladiators were provided with swords, daggers, spears, tridents, shields, armour and nets when they fought. Some gladiators fought in full body armour, which helped to protect them from attacks. However, the heavy armour could also slow them down. Other gladiators wore less armour, which meant they could move quickly but had little defence against blows from weapons or animal attacks.

Combat and death

Gladiator combats were extremely violent and gory, and gladiators often fought to their deaths. As well as trying to defend themselves, the gladiators had to make sure they put on an entertaining show to please the crowds. If a gladiator asked for mercy, the crowd could help to decide whether he should be allowed to live or put to death.



Winners of the fights received prizes and money, and became popular with the crowds. Gladiators who lost their battles were expected to die bravely and with dignity.