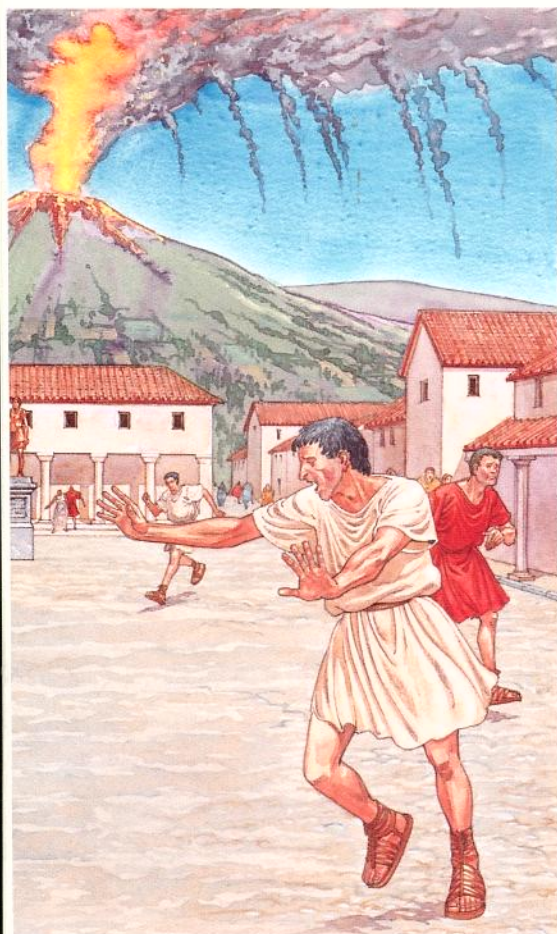


12 MARVELS OF GREECE AND ROME

The Greeks were famous for their skill at building, not only temples and palaces, but theatres and arenas too. They were also marvellous sculptors. The Romans copied Greek buildings, and made improvements – the dome, for instance. The Romans imitated the Greeks in making lifelike figures in bronze, marble, gold and ivory.



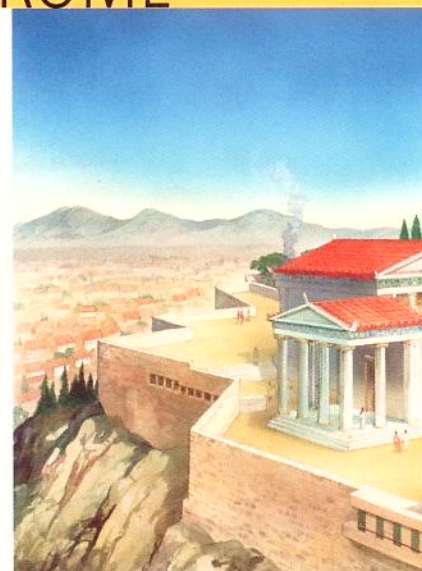
Why did the Greeks build temples?

Everywhere they settled, the Greeks built temples to honour their gods and goddesses. A temple usually had a statue of its own particular god inside. People came to the temple to bring gifts to the god and to pray for the god's help. Priests looked after the statue inside the temple.

Which Roman town disappeared under hot ash?

A Roman port called Pompeii in Italy – close to the foot of a volcano. In AD 79, the volcano, Vesuvius, suddenly erupted. Hot ashes, stones and cinders rained down on Pompeii. The layers of mud and ash preserved the Roman buildings so that today you can walk through the streets of the ruined city.

☞ Pompeii was only rediscovered in the 1700s. Archaeologists have now uncovered about 75 per cent of the city.



☞ The Parthenon stands on the Acropolis. Greeks thought the goddess Athene watched over the city of Athens.

Where is the Acropolis?

The Acropolis is a rocky platform on a hill in Athens, Greece. The term 'acropolis' means 'upper city'. Many of the cities of ancient Greece are built around an acropolis where the people can flee to in times of invasion, and the most sacred buildings usually on an acropolis. Other Greek cities had an acropolis but Athens' is the most famous. The rock is about 350 m long and 150 m across. On top the Athenians built a royal palace and temples. The ruins of the most famous temple – the Parthenon – are still there.

History highlights

Greek and Roman gods

Greek	Roman	
Zeus	Jupiter	King of the gods
Ares	Mars	War
Artemis	Diana	Moon and hunting
Hera	Juno	Wife of Zeus
Athena	Minerva	Wisdom
Demeter	Ceres	Good harvests
Hades	Pluto	Underworld
Aphrodite	Venus	Love and beauty
Eros	Cupid	Love
Apollo	Apollo	Music and arts

Up Pompeii

Today, visitors to Pompeii walk into houses and down lanes, just as the Pompeians did. In museums, they can see domestic items and the remains of people killed by the volcano. Volcanic ash hardened around victims' bodies, and formed a mould. As the bodies decayed, a shell was left. By filling the shells with plaster, archaeologists have made copies of the bodies.

☞ Pompeii was destroyed when red-hot lava erupted from Vesuvius.

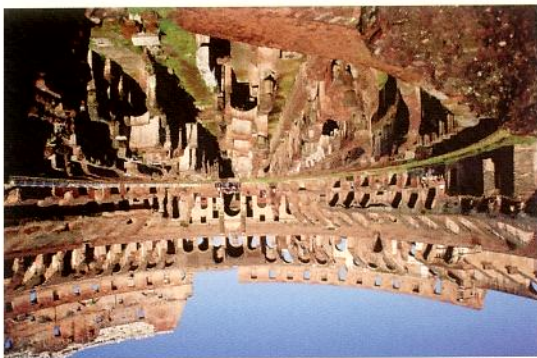




➊ The Pantheon is a remarkable feat of engineering.

Which Roman wonder had a hole in it?

One of the most remarkable buildings in ancient Rome was the Pantheon, a temple built during the rule of the emperor Hadrian (AD 117–138). The Pantheon was the largest circular building in the ancient world. It was topped by a dome measuring 43 m across. The dome had an opening in the top to let in light and air.



➋ The mighty Colosseum in Rome was over 180 m long and 156 m across. It was supported by 80 arches.

Amazing facts

Five ways to get famous in Greece or Rome...

- Be a successful gladiator
- Be a top chariot racer
- Win lots of battles
- Be a philosopher
- Be a star athlete

...or get killed

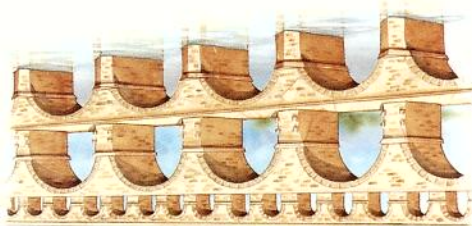
- Be an unsuccessful gladiator
- Lead a slave revolt
- Fall off an aqueduct
- Annoy the emperor

➌ Gladiator fights were usually fights to the death.



Why did the Romans build aqueducts?

To allow towns access to fresh water. Roman engineers built pipes and arched bridges called aqueducts – raised channels that carried water from streams in mountains to cities. One of the most famous Roman aqueducts is the Pont du Gard, built in southern France about 2,000 years ago. It has three tiers, the topmost carrying water.



➍ The Pont du Gard soars 47 m above the Gard River.

How did the Colosseum get its name?

The Colossus of Rhodes, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, gave its name to anything gigantic. The Ancient Romans crowded the Colosseum, an oval amphitheatre seating 50,000 spectators. The huge seating area was divided into 80 sections and had lifts and tunnels to let gladiators and wild animals into the arena. The Circus Maximus, a chariot race track in Rome, was even bigger, holding 250,000 people.

Which Roman column tells stories?



Trajan's Column, which stands in Rome. It is a tall column of stone, erected in AD 113 to honour the Roman

emperor Trajan. The column has a spiral staircase inside, and the outside is covered with carvings showing how the Roman army conquered Dacia (Romania and Hungary) under Trajan's command.

➎ The relief carvings on Trajan's Column show us what Roman soldiers wore, and the equipment they used when going to war.



Key dates

- 1200s BC Trojan War between Greeks and Troy
- 509 BC Rome set up a republic
- 479 BC Greeks defeated the Persians
- 461–429 BC Pericles led Athens; he ordered the Parthenon to be built
- 431–494 BC Athens and Sparta at war: Sparta won
- 334–326 BC Alexander the Great conquered a vast empire
- 1405 BC Rome conquered Greece
- 55–54 BC Julius Caesar landed with an army in Britain
- 27 BC Augustus became Rome's first emperor
- AD 43 Romans invaded Britain, making it part of the empire
- 117 End of reign of Emperor Trajan, when Rome was at its peak
- 476 Fall of the Roman empire