

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Roman Gladiators



**T**he word gladiator comes from the root gladius, meaning sword. Gladiators fought to entertain others. They didn't just fight each other. Sometimes they fought animals like lions. They were expected to fight a few times each year—if they lived!

Most gladiators didn't have a choice to fight. All gladiators were from low classes. Many were slaves. They could be Roman enemies defeated during battle. Some were criminals sentenced to die. Others were only poor people looking for a chance at training and money. Almost all of them were men.

Gladiator fights were held in many places. One of the most famous was the



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3. In the context of the second paragraph, what is a *sentence*?
- a. a punishment      b. a written idea      c. a length of time

4. Why didn't a defeated gladiator want a thumbs down?

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5. Why do you think gladiator fights were so popular?

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## ANSWER KEY

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Gladiator fights were held in many places. One of the most famous was the Colosseum in Rome. Crowds of people sometimes helped decide whether a



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