Work for 2 lessons:

History lesson: Tuesday 19th December 2021

English Comprehension: Friday 22nd December 2021

LO - To know what happened to Pompeii and understand why archaeologists study it

Task: Read and respond to the prompt questions.

These are the ruins of the Roman city of **Pompeii.**

Pompeii was a busy Roman city that was built near to the volcano mountain, **Mount Vesuvius**.

In the year **A.D. 79** Mount Vesuvius erupted and buried Pompeii and many of its Roman citizens under a 9 metre thick layer of burning hot ash.

The remains of Pompeii have been **excavated** (dug out) by **archaeologists** to show us what the Roman city originally looked like 2000 years ago, and how Romans lived their lives.





Pompeii was an important and busy Roman city 2000 years ago.

It is located 200 kilometres south of Rome, in the Bay of Naples on the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea.



Q 1: When was the Roman city of Pompeii destroyed?

In AD 79 Pompeii was a beautiful city.

Its grand public buildings, the Temple and the Forum were built of carved stone.

Its shops and houses were built of concrete. It had paved streets with pavements, running water and gardens.



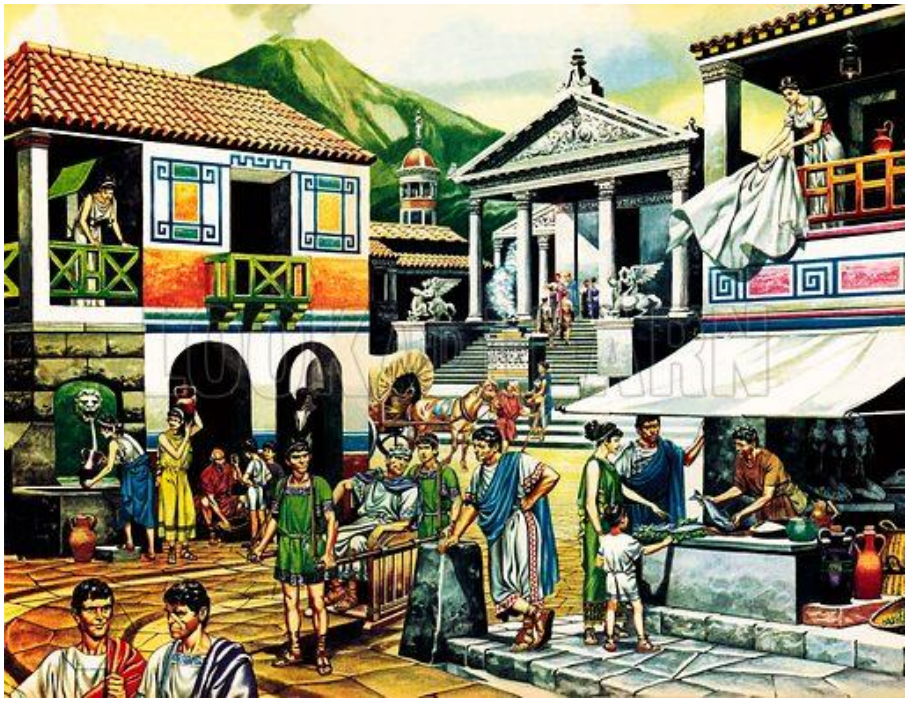


Q2: What were the shops built from?

The streets of Pompeii would have been thriving with Romans shopping, buying fish, fruit and vegetables, meat, bread, clothes and household items.

Some would be going to the temple to pray to their Roman gods, or on their way to the forum to hear the senators and councillors discuss news they had heard from Rome and talk about how to run their city of Pompeii.

Q3: Who met at the forum?



Archaeologists in Pompeii, the city buried in a volcanic eruption in 79 AD, made an extraordinary find last December,(27th December 2020.) They discovered a frescoed hot food and drinks shop that served up the ancient equivalent of street food to Roman passers by.

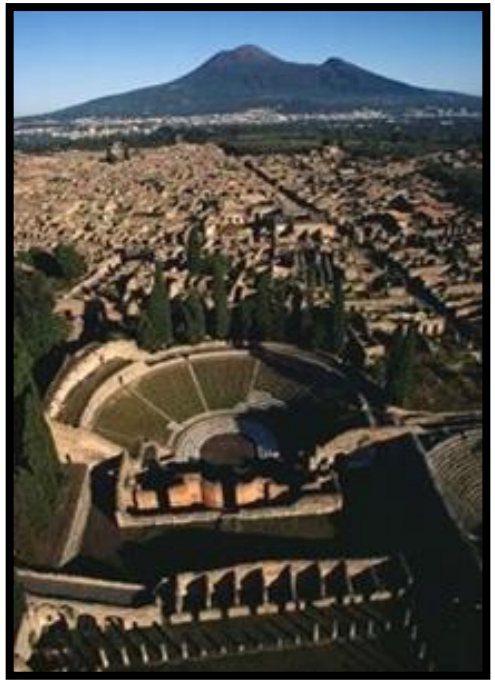
Q4: What does this new evidence tell us about life in an Ancient Roman town ?



Wealthy Romans lived in beautiful houses, richly decorated with painted walls. They had lovely gardens with pools and fountains. These wealthy Pompeii citizens would have had many servants and slaves looking after them and their houses.



Q5: What buildings were there in the city of Pompeii ?





The city even had its own amphitheatre where the citizens of Pompeii would go, in the afternoons and evenings. They watched plays about Greek and Roman Gods and about famous Greeks and Romans.

Q6: What can you learn from these photographs and our English text about how these plays were performed?

But all of this busy living by the Roman citizens of Pompeii in AD 79, was done in the shadow of Mount Vesuvius. The mountain volcano had not erupted for so long (hundreds of years) that the Romans did not know that it was a volcano.

The people of Pompeii grew crops and fruit on the slopes of the mountain because the soils was very good for growing plants.



Q7: Why do you think the people of Pompeii settled and lived in the shadow of a volcano?

On 24th August AD 79, in the afternoon, Mount Vesuvius erupted with a massive explosion that hurled rock, ash and molten lava hundreds of metres into the air.

Lava started to run down the slopes of the mountain, destroying all the fields of crops and fruit that the Romans had been growing in the fertile volcanic soil.





Q8: Why do you think the citizens of Pompeii did not react to the lava flow immediately?

The lava was flowing down the mountain, destroying all their crops, but the citizens of Pompeii, were not really worried.

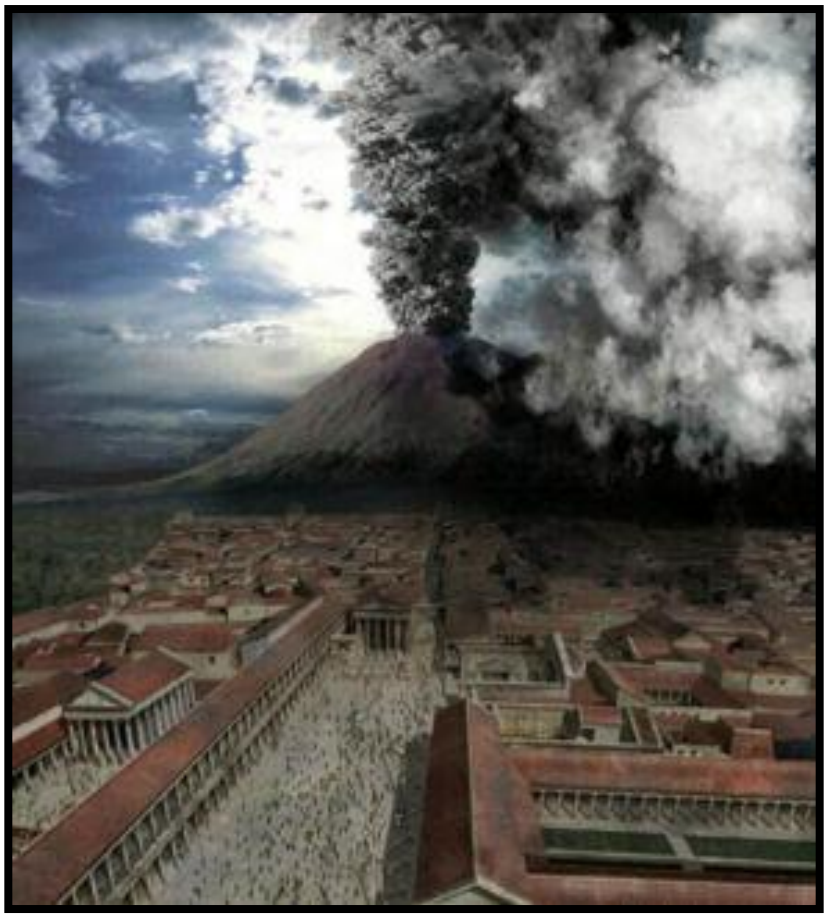
They carried on with their everyday business, thinking the eruption would not last very long, and the lava would not reach their city.



But then, 18 hours after the volcano had first erupted, there was an enormous explosion, bigger than the first.

It blew half the side of the mountain off and a huge cloud of red hot ash, rock and gas, hurtled down the side of the volcano and straight over the city of Pompeii.

The citizens tried to run to escape it, but it was too fast.



Q10: How long was it before the citizens of Pompeii realized the severity of the eruption?



Plinian eruption of Mt. Vesuvius



Stone Pine Tree



Pliny

An important Roman who witnessed the Vesuvius eruption was a writer called Pliny. He tried to rescue some of the Pompeii citizens but he himself died from breathing in the hot ash and gas. He managed to write notes about the eruption before he died and he described the cloud of ash as like the branches of a Stone Pine tree.

Because Pliny was the first person ever to describe this type of volcanic eruption, scientists have named it after him – so we now have *Plinian eruptions*.

Q11: What is this type of eruption called? How did it get its name?

This is how Pliny actually described the eruption of Vesuvius in his letters which were saved and copied by his son after Pliny's death.

"I cannot give you a more exact description of its appearance than by comparing to a stone pine tree; for it shot up to a great height in the form of a tall trunk, which spread out at the top as though into branches. ... Occasionally it was brighter, occasionally darker and spotted, as it was either more or less filled with earth and cinders."

Q12: Why is Pliny's account important to archaeologists?







Q13:What is meant by Pyroclastic flow?

When the side of the mountain blew off, the citizens of Pompeii could not escape.

Red hot ash, rock and gas rushed down over the city at a speed of 400 km per hour. This rush of hot ash is called a *Pyroclastic Flow.*

The citizens of Pompeii and their city were buried in seconds beneath a layer of ash and rocks 9 metres thick.

Archaeologists discovered Pompeii in 1748, and the whole city was finally dug out of the thick layer of ash and soil in 1997, nearly 2000 years later.



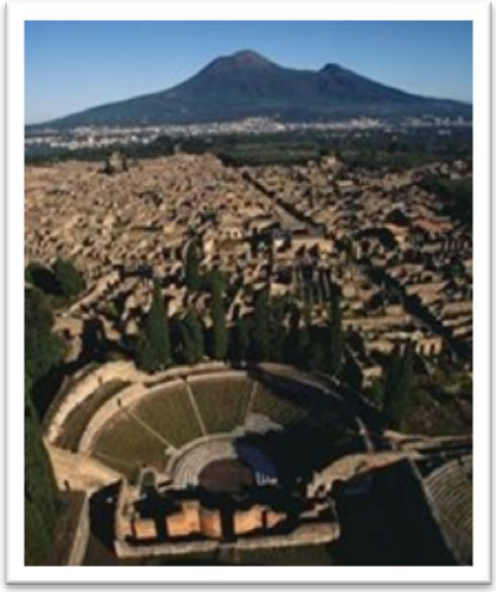
Q14: How long did it take from when Pompeii was discovered, until it was excavated?
Why do you think this was?

This photo shows that many of the city's buildings survived being buried. This is because so many of them were made of stone or concrete. Only wooden buildings or wooden parts of buildings were burnt away by the hot ash in AD 79.





The ruins of Pompeii revealed the Roman streets and statues of Pompeii that were buried 2000 years ago.



Surviving buildings include the amphitheatre

Q15: What do these pictures of the excavated buildings tell you about life in Pompeii in AD79?

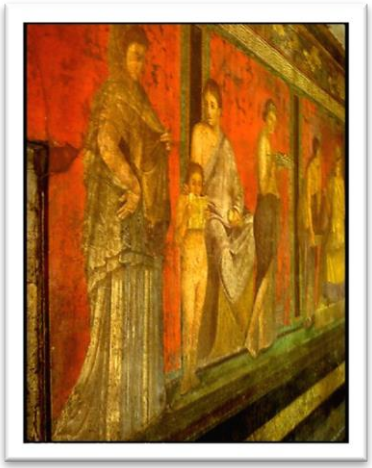
Archaeologists also discovered the imprints of bodies in the volcanic ash.

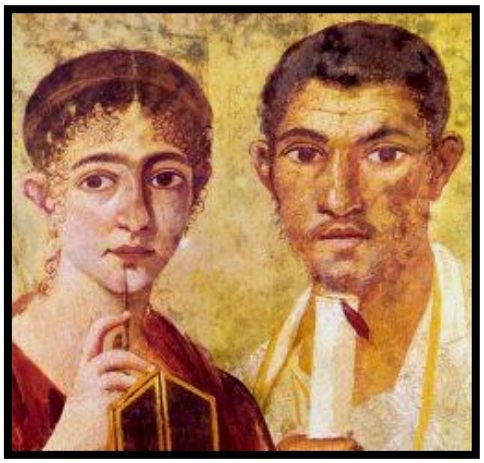
These were the citizens of Pompeii who had been buried by the burning hot ash in AD 79.

The archaeologists made plaster casts of the body imprints.



Q16: What does this upsetting evidence tell us about the surprise and speed of the eruption?







Archaeologists also found many beautiful Roman remains that had been *preserved* by the volcanic ash.

Paintings on the walls of houses show a Roman man and his wife, a Roman God (Bacchus) and a fawn, and paintings of Romans doing different activities.

These paintings told the archaeologists a lot about how the Romans lived 2000 years ago.

Q17: What do these paintings teach us about life in Pompeii in AD79?