

ESCAPE From POMPEII

Almost 2,000 years ago, a volcano buried the city of Pompeii. Experts

AS YOU READ

Name one item found in Pompeii. What does it tell us about the ancient city?

Imagine it's the year 79. You're walking in the city of Pompeii (*pahm-PAY*), in what is now Italy. Suddenly, you hear an explosion! A giant cloud of ash shoots from a nearby volcano. The ash heads your way. Can you escape?

This scary scene describes the eruption of Mount Vesuvius (*veh-SOO-vee-uhs*) long ago. When this volcano blew its top, ash, rock, and deadly gases rained down on Pompeii. Most people escaped, but about 2,000 people were killed. The city was covered by up to 20 feet of rock and ash.

As the ash cooled, it hardened. It formed a shell over Pompeii and **preserved** much of the city. Before long, Pompeii was forgotten.

Fast-forward to 1748. In that year, Pompeii was

rediscovered. **Archaeologists** began unearthing buildings and other items. This work continues today. It's providing amazing new clues about Pompeii.

Just Like Us

Experts have uncovered hundreds of Pompeii's buildings. They include homes, shops, and theaters where plays were performed. Many of these buildings are now open to visitors.

One recent find was an **ancient** fast-food shop called a *thermopolium*. It

GO
ONLINE

Watch a video to learn more about Pompeii.

Frozen in Time

Items found in Pompeii give experts a glimpse of what life was like in the city.

Burned Bread

The person baking this bread must have fled in a hurry. The loaf was found in an oven.



Ancient toilet

Pompeii Poop

Steven Ellis's team dug up human waste. They studied the poop to learn about what people ate. Plenty of fruits and veggies were on the menu!

They really liked figs!



OMPEII



are still digging up clues about the doomed city.

once sold snacks like cheese and fish.

“Today we often go out for food,” says archaeologist Steven Ellis. “People of Pompeii did too!”

On the Walls

Other new discoveries have been made on walls. Experts recently found a painting of gladiators. Gladiators were fighters who battled with swords and other weapons. Watching them fight was popular in Pompeii.

On other walls, experts

found notes that people wrote. Some are greetings to friends. Others are advertisements for people running in elections. Some experts compare them to today’s social media posts.

Will even more secrets escape from the city? Archaeologists still have some exploring to do. But they plan

MAP IT OUT

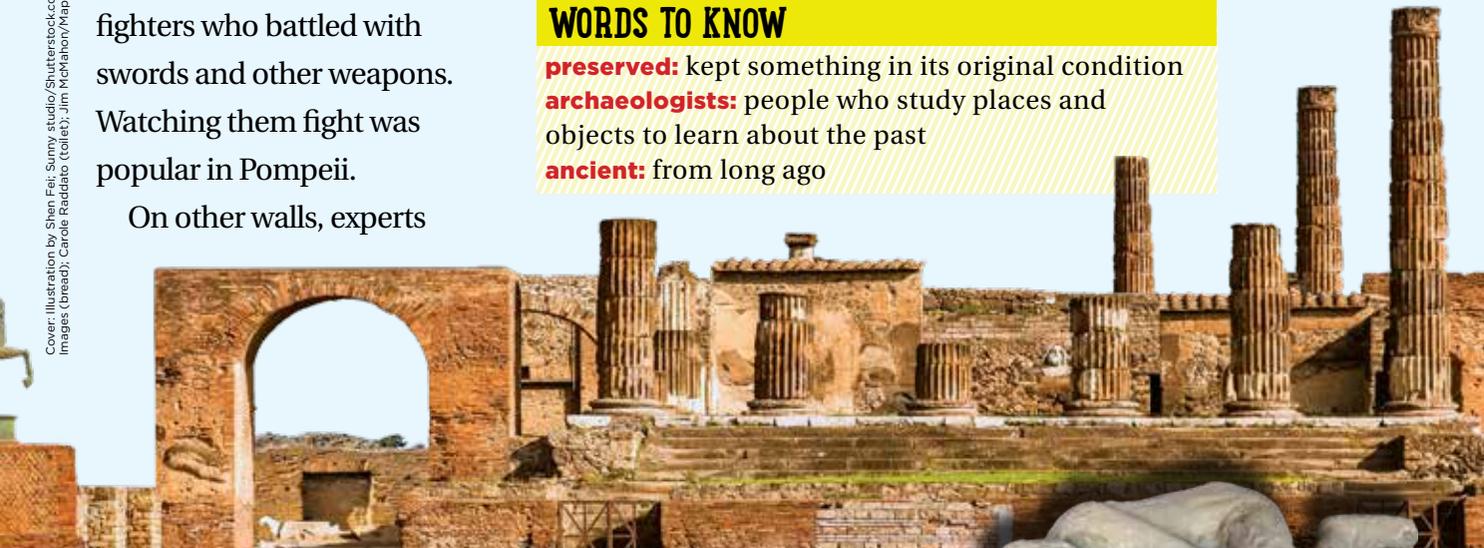
Pompeii was part of the Roman Empire, an area ruled by a leader in Rome. Circle Rome. In what direction would you travel to get there from Pompeii?

to leave about one-third of Pompeii buried. That way, people can someday study it with better tools.

Ellis says, “It’s important to preserve Pompeii for the future.”

WORDS TO KNOW

- preserved:** kept something in its original condition
- archaeologists:** people who study places and objects to learn about the past
- ancient:** from long ago



Ancient Helmet

This helmet belonged to a gladiator. Most gladiators were prisoners or enslaved people. They were forced to fight each other or fierce animals like lions.



Just as They Were

Some people and animals didn’t escape. Ash covered their bodies and hardened. As the bodies rotted away, holes in the ash were left behind. Scientists filled the holes with plaster to make casts, or statues. They show the poses people and animals were in when they died.

