

Do You Survive or Die?

Exercise to Accompany Discussion of Pompeii Background

Instructions:

Print out the names and descriptions of each of the following people caught in the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius on August 24, 79 A.D. Separate each of the descriptions and print the name and the description of each person on the back of a 3 x 5 piece of paper. Print the description of each person's fate on the opposite side of the paper. To begin the exercise, divide the class into groups and distribute the descriptions, one to each group. Place descriptions with the printed name side up on the tables of each group. Do not allow students to turn over the descriptions and learn their fates until discussions of the details of the eruption has been completed. See the power point presentation [Pompeii Background](#) for details.

Julius Polybius

You are in the middle of refurnishing your residency to show the world how prosperous you are... Your daughter is pregnant, and her new baby is due in just a few days! It's an exciting time, and you are anxious to show the world how great you are.

Do you die or survive?

Among the most impressive residences found beneath the volcanic ash in Pompeii is the home of Julius Polybius, identified from an inscription on the wall. The story of Julius Polybius and his family is based on a 1975 discovery in Pompeii. Skeletons were found in his house. Among the skeletons discovered was one of a heavily pregnant girl who appeared to be surrounded by her family. The girl's body was found on a bed. The bones of her fetus were also discovered. Julia's husband, Sabinus, most likely poisoned himself and presumably was the skeleton lying near the foot of her bed.

Stephanus the Fuller

Your trade has made you rich, and you are greedy for money.

Do you die or survive?

Unfortunately, you don't escape. You ditch your wife and look for your coins to make sure they haven't gone anywhere. You find them where you left them, but money can't save you. You are discovered preserved, still clutching a handful of coins. Your death is based upon a cast found of a man in the fetal position.

Fortunata

You are married to Stephanus the Fuller. Unfortunately, he is not a nice man and sleeps with his servants. He also loves money more than he loves you.

Do you die or survive?

You can't find your husband anywhere. You try to escape and wind up in the gladiator barracks where you are trapped. You are found in the embrace of a gladiator. The death of Stephanus' wife, Fortunata, is based upon the discovery of the body of a rich bejeweled lady in the gladiator barracks, alongside those of gladiators.

Gladiator

You are one of the celebrated heroes in the town. All the girls and boys fawn over you.

Do you die or survive?

You don't escape. A bejeweled lady is trying to escape and winds up in your barracks. You find solace in her embrace, and the both of you die together.

Dog - You like to chase cats and play catch with your owner.

Do you die or survive?

Unfortunately, you are unable to escape and die, with all four legs in the air.



Pliny the Younger - You are extremely scholarly, preferring to stick to your letters rather than embark on a grand adventure. You say no to your uncle's offer to explore a once in a lifetime experience of a mountain exploding.

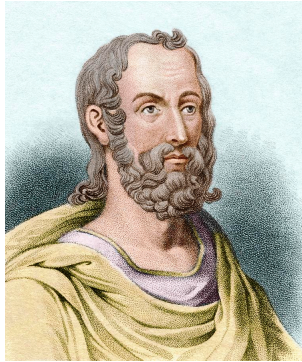


Do you die or survive?

You survive and write an important primary source document detailing what happened. It seems so farfetched, that for many years, people dismiss your writings as being mere fantasy, until scientific discoveries and excavations shed light on what happened in Pompeii in August of 79 AD.

Pliny the Elder - With an unquenchable spirit for adventure, you go

towards Vesuvius after it erupts, hoping to save people escaping by sea.



Do you die or survive?

Curiosity kills the cat. You don't realize how serious the eruption is. You die on a beach, choking on the noxious air.