

Year 6 Classics

Pupils were asked to write a story about a day at the arena in Roman times, describing a gladiatorial contest or beast hunt. Here is Milo's (6C) superbly written account.

A Day at the Arena

I felt excited. The sun was shining and we were on the way to the amphitheatre. I hadn't seen a gladiator show since last year. I was part of a large crowd, all talking excitedly about the show we were going to see, and who we thought would win. At the side of the road, street vendors were selling food and souvenirs.

As I entered the vast arena, I saw my friends. They had found seats right at the front, as close as possible to the action. They waved me to come and join them. All of a sudden, trumpets blared and the priests began their ceremony. We all carried on talking, waiting for the fighters to come in. The gladiators bravely entered the arena. There were Samnites with their oblong shields, Thracians with their round shields and daggers, murmillones and my favourites the Retiarii with their nets and three pronged tridents.

My favourite fight was the last one of the day. It was our home town champion, against the champion of our arch enemies who were from Herculaneum. By this time the crowd was raucous. Everyone had been drinking lots of wine, there had been many good fights, and people from my home town were shouting insults at people who had come from Herculaneum.

Our champion was a retiarii and the Herculaneum champion was a murmillo. The gladiators saluted the crowd and faced each other. The crowd went silent. Our champion threw his net and caught the shield of his enemy. The crowd went wild. The enemy freed his shield and the gladiators eyed each other warily. They battled long and hard, but finally our champion trapped the sword of his enemy and pulled it from his hand. The enemy surrendered and raised his arm, pleading for mercy. Everyone from our home town raised their thumbs while the people from Herculaneum put their thumbs down. It had been a good fight, and the gladiator did not deserve to die, but the crowd wanted to see their enemies' champion fall.

Our champion raised his trident and swiftly killed his enemy. The people from Herculaneum were furious. Their champion had had many victories. They started throwing rocks. We ran for cover. Lots of people stayed and started fighting them. We heard later that a number of people got killed. I am glad we got home safely.