



A Day at the Arena – The Trier Amphitheatre Quiz

Recommended for grade 5 and up

Before the start

- Children can complete the museum quiz alone or in groups.
- Duration of approx. 45 min., discussion of solutions 15-20 min.
- Teachers are instructed to remain with their groups and to supervise them. Please ensure that school-children do not climb on Roman walls or leave the path.
- For the quiz, they will need a pencil.

Thrills and leisure activities – What happened in the amphitheatre?

Go to the black information panel titled „Amphitheatre und city“ to the left of the entrance.

1 Look at the images and circle all of the pictures that have a connection to the amphitheatre.



2 The Romans loved good entertainment – just like we do nowadays! One of the most popular leisure activities was a visit to the amphitheatre. What events were held here?

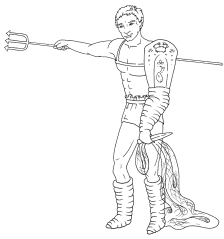
Other than the gladiator fights, there were also the following events that took place in the amphitheatre: animal hunts, public executions, musical recitals and religious festivals.

3 An amphitheatre was an important institution of great Roman cities. Roman Trier evolves as an important place of trade and grows to become a huge metropolis. When was the amphitheatre in Trier built? Note the date.

Approx. 160 – 200 AD

4 More people fit into the Trier amphitheatre than they do into the contemporary Trier football stadium (approx. 10 000 seats). Find out roughly how many spectators could fit into the amphitheatre.

approx. 18.000



Now follow this signpost and climb the stairs until you reach the amphitheatre at the top.

Count the stairs on your way up:

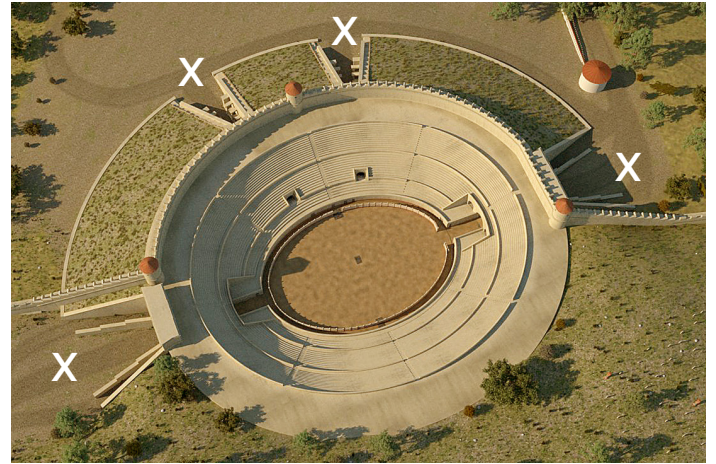
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How was the amphitheatre built?

Information panel "Construction"

- 5 The most famous amphitheatre of the Roman Age is still standing in Rome today: the Colosseum. It was constructed from hundreds of stone blocks. The Romans built the amphitheatre in Trier in a very different way. Explain how.

The Roman master builders commanded to take down the slate rock on one side while the same earth was used on the other side to raise a slope. Steps were then carved into that slope.



- 6 Note how long and how wide the amphitheatre is.

120 metres long and 140 metres wide.

A rush of the masses in the amphitheatre

Information panel
"Entrances and city walls"

- 7 Whenever there were games at the amphitheatre a lot of spectators would gather at once. Write down through which entrances the spectators would enter the amphitheatre or mark the entrances on the model pictured above.

For the spectators from town, there were two entrances – one (a double entrance) to the west and one to the north. The entrance to the south, outside the city walls, was for visitors from out of town.

Now follow the path above the spectators' gallery until you reach the information panel „Entrance from the city“.

Where was the best seat?

- 8 These days, the Latin translation of the entrances to the amphitheatre is funny to us. Write down the Latin and German translation.

Vomitor, which translates to ,spitter'.

- 9 The spectators sat in the seats among the many rows of the balconies which surrounded the fighting pit on both sides as they cheered for the spectacle. Stand on the spectator seating rows and think about which seats had the best view of the arena.

You had the best view of the action in the arena in the front row seats!

- 10 Preferred seats had the names of their occupants carved into the stone seats. The emperor and the city's dignitaries sat on special VIP-seats. Find out where the best VIP seats are and where the common people were seated.

The dignitaries sat in the front row while the common people were seated above and further back.

Follow the signpost and follow the small path down towards the fork in the road. It doesn't matter if you go right or left. Enter the amphitheatre through one of the original public entrances.

Awaited with anticipation

Information panel "Entrances from the city"

- 11 Put yourself into the shoes of a Roman visitor who just walked through the entrance. What could have been on his mind?

Excitement, tense anticipation

You are now standing in the middle of the spectators' gallery. Search for stairs that lead you directly downwards to the fighting pit at the centre of the arena.

How did the gladiators fight?

Information panel "Gladiators"

- 12 The games in the amphitheatre took place according to a set daily routine. Describe the schedule and find out what the highlight of the games was.

Following the festive entering of all agents and dignitaries, the animal hunts (venationes) marked the commencement in the morning. The executions of those under sentence of death were carried out around noon. The fights of the gladiators in the afternoon presented the highlight of the events.

- 13 During a gladiator fight men who had previously been educated and trained at a special school competed against each other. There were different types of gladiators. You can find the four most important ones on the information board. What were they called?

Secutor

Retiarius

Murmillio

Hoplomachus

- 14 The fights were especially suspenseful to the public due to the different types of armour given to the opponents. Almost all gladiators protected themselves with a shield and a helmet. However, they used completely different weapons to attack. Look for weapons in the pictures and write down those that you recognize.

spear, sword, net and trident.

- 15 Create a possible battle scenario between a Murmillo (left) and a Hoplomachus (right) and describe it.



The more defensive Murmillo was a very popular type of Roman gladiators. His weapon was a short sword (gladius). As protection he was equipped with a helmet, a rectangular shield (scutum) and thick soft padding on legs and an arm guard (manica). He was good at close combat.

The Hoplomachus wore also a helmet, a small round shield, quilted, trouser-like leg wrappings, a pair of long shin-guards. He carried a spear, which the gladiator would have to cast before closing for hand-to-hand combat.

How did one become a gladiator?

Information panel "Gladiators"

- 16 Victorious gladiators could become real celebrities in the Roman Empire, much like football players or movie stars nowadays. That is why there were also voluntary fighters who wished for glory and money. The majority, however, was forced to fight. Find out why people became gladiators.

Most gladiators were prisoner-of-war slaves who were forced to contend.



Here you can see an article of Roman „fan merchandise“: an oil lamp picturing gladiator fighters.

- 17 In the 1990s, a little distance outside of the amphitheatre, archaeologists came upon a burial site where the victims of the games were buried. An examination of the skeletons revealed that without exception the dead were adults of under 40 years of age and of large stature. Think about what implications this discovery could have.

Presumably, these were the skeletons of gladiators. This conclusion is aided by the place of discovery being near the amphitheatre. Additionally, the indication of a large stature suggests that gladiators were in good physical shape as well as well-trained.

“Gladiator training”

- 18 Get fit like a gladiator – how many squats can you do in one minute?

Paddy Doyle from Great Britain is the master of squats. He set the one-minute-record of 44 squats.

Behind the scenes

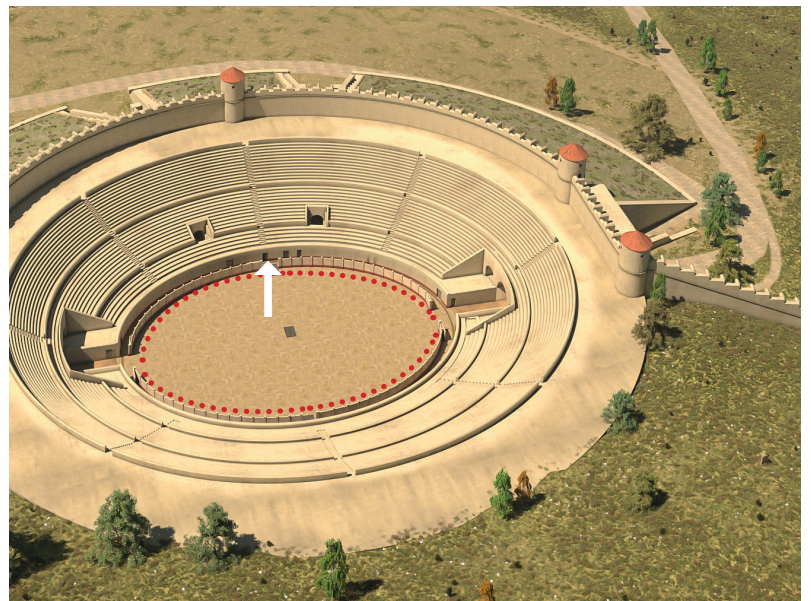
Information panel “Function”

- 19 Additionally, wild animals such as bears and lions often either fought humans or each other in the arena. Prior to their entry they were locked in small cells which nowadays are located below the seating balcony. Search for and count every entry point which has remained intact below the seating balcony.

11 directly connected to the arena, plus 2 sidewise entrances.

- 20 In front of the cages there used to be a wall of planks around the entire arena behind which gladiators and helpers could safely move during performances without being seen by the audience. Mark the wall in the model pictured above.

- 21 There is a corridor that leads from the arena directly towards the spectator balcony. This is where victorious gladiators directly entered the tribune of honour. Search for this corridor and mark it on the model. ↑



Nowadays you reach the cellar through the stairs of the sand square. It is yet unknown where the entrance used to be in Roman times.

- 22** The Romans actually already had real lifts. There was a rising stage installed in the cellar of the arena. Find out what these lifts were used for.

They were used to lift fighters and animals into the arena.

Black magic in the arena cellar

- 23** Archaeologists found many „secret messages“ during excavations of the arena cellar. Find out what material these messages were written on.

Lead, as it was believed to bring disaster.

- 24** Examine what was written on the lead plaques.

Curses laid upon other people.

- 25** The pictured curse plaque was directed at a specific person. Look for the name and write it down.

Eusebio

- 26** This last exercise is tricky. Think about why people put down so many lead plaques in the amphitheatre in particular. Do you have any idea?

It was believed that the violent deaths of many people in the amphitheatre made this place especially attractive to demons.

Now you have collected a lot of information about the amphitheatre in Trier.

Your teacher has the answers with which you can check if all your findings are correct.

We hope that you had a lot of fun in the amphitheatre.

We hope you will come back again!

Impressum

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Abbildungsverzeichnis / Image index

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