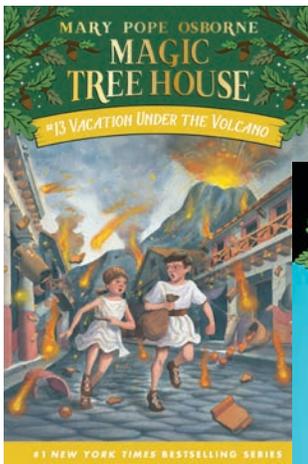


# EDUCATORS' GUIDE

# MAGIC TREE HOUSE®

## ***Vacation Under the Volcano*** and ***Ancient Rome and Pompeii:***

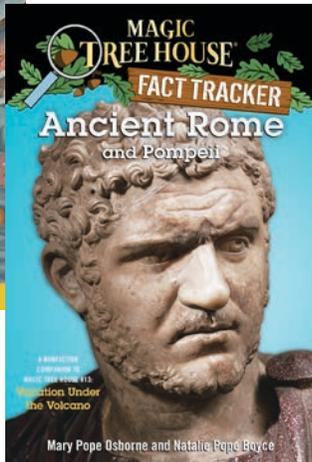
*A Nonfiction Companion to Vacation Under the Volcano*



PB: 978-0-679-89050-8  
EL: 978-0-375-89470-1  
Grades: 1-4  
F&P: M • Lexile: 410L

### **ABOUT *Vacation Under the Volcano***

Jack and Annie go to the city of Pompeii to bring back an ancient story that is in danger of being lost forever. Little do they know they are saving the myth of Hercules! But before they can find it, the town's volcano erupts in a mighty explosion. Just when things look hopeless, Jack and Annie get some unexpected help from a certain mythic hero-and the rest, as they say, is history.



PB: 978-0-375-83220-8  
EL: 978-0-307-97532-4  
Grades: 2-5  
F&P: S • Lexile: 750L

### **ABOUT *Ancient Rome and Pompeii:***

*A Nonfiction Companion to Vacation Under the Volcano*

What was it like to be a gladiator? How many people died in the destruction of Pompeii? How did Roman children spend their days? Find out the answers to these questions and more in this Fact Tracker.

## CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

### **ACTIVITIES FOR *Vacation Under the Volcano***

#### **Make a Volcano**

Jack and Annie are fortunate to escape with their lives when Mt. Vesuvius erupts. Ask students to locate Mt. Vesuvius and other volcanoes such as Mt. Fujiyama and Mt. St. Etna on the map. Note dates on which these volcanoes erupted and the consequences that followed. Then, with a few simple materials, your students can make an “active volcano” of their own.

Place a well-washed gallon milk container in the middle of a flat surface covered with plastic or newspaper.

Dump ½ a large bag of potting soil around the container. Begin shaping the volcano by adding small amounts of water to the soil. Keep adding soil as needed to cover the container up to the neck where the lid will eventually be

screwed on.

Pour 1 cup of concentrated dishwashing liquid, 1½ cups of water, 1 full bottle of red food coloring and three-quarters box baking soda. Screw the lid onto the container. Not too tightly!

After a few minutes, unscrew lid and pour in ¾ large bottle of vinegar, and then stand back!

**CURRICULUM:** *Earth Science • Geography • History*

## **ACTIVITIES FOR *Ancient Rome and Pompeii:*** ***A Nonfiction Companion to Vacation Under the Volcano***

### **Agree to Disagree**

In the Roman Republic, the people elected two consuls who had to agree on everything. Have readers make a list of topics on which there can be agreement and disagreement, such as favorite foods, books, television shows, or sports. Have them interview one another to determine whether they agree or disagree on the topics. Discuss the difficulty of coming to an agreement, and how this might make it difficult to govern.

Students can mount a campaign to get others to agree with their opinion on a topic they are passionate about. Encourage them to make posters, flyers, or write a short speech that could persuade others to agree with their opinion.

**CURRICULUM:** *Social Studies • Language Arts*

### **Roman Gifts**

Many modern conveniences such as roads, baths, and numerals are a result of what the Romans developed. Have students identify a gift from the Romans and wrap a picture or facsimile of the gift in a package. Put the gifts on a table and have students randomly select a Roman gift and write a thank-you note, explaining how that gift is used today and why it is so useful.

**CURRICULUM:** *Social Studies • Language Arts*

### **Roman Hall of Fame/Roman Hall of Shame**

As with any group, there were famous Romans, some for the good they did and some for their evil deeds. Have students “become” one of the Roman gods, goddesses, or human beings and give a biographical talk including their name, special achievements, how their acts helped or hurt others, and how they should be remembered. After hearing each speech, have the class vote the Roman into either the Hall of Fame or the Hall of Shame.

**CURRICULUM:** *Social Studies • Language Arts*

### **Can You Dig It?**

Much of the information about Pompeii comes from archeological digs. Set up a simulated dig featuring artifacts from the classroom. Collect small items and parts of items that represent classroom activities—e.g., a section of a pencil, a small eraser, a paperclip, a part of a crayon, a marker top, etc. Fill a large box with dirt and place the objects at various depths and areas/spaces within the dirt. Let students sift through the dirt using spoons, flour sifters, etc. to find the objects in the dirt. Remind them to be very careful about what they find, so as not to destroy the item. They then write a description for each of the items found for a museum display of classroom artifacts. If you set up several digs, collect materials from other sites (kitchen, playground, etc.), and challenge readers to identify the site and what happens at that location.

**CURRICULUM:** *Science*

*Teaching ideas by Rosemary B. Stimola, Ph.D., former professor of children’s literature at City University of New York, and Dr. Peggy A. Sharp, a national children’s literature consultant.*

