

GLADIATOR (film, 2000, directed by Ridley Scott)

Characters:

☞ write descriptive words beneath each name

Maximus, a Roman General

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Commodus, son of Roman Emperor

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Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor

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Lucilla, daughter of Emperor, sister of Commodus

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Proximo, gladiator owner / manager

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Juba, African gladiator

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Hagen, Germanic gladiator

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Senator Gracchus

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Actors:

Russell Crowe

Joaquin Phoenix

Richard Harris

Connie Nelson

Oliver Reed

Djimon Hounsou

Ralf Moeller

Derek Jacobi

☞ **Jot down points to answer the following questions.**

1. What year is the movie set?
2. Who are the opponents of the Roman army?
3. Describe the first image that you see as the movie begins.
4. List four points to describe the setting of the opening of the movie:
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5. What weapons to the Romans have (list 3).
6. What weapons does the enemy have?
7. What is the mood--what emotions does the film want the audience to feel?
8. The soldiers have a motto that they say to one another:
"Strength and _____"
9. Maximus gives the order, "At my sign, unleash _____."
10. In his speech to the troops, Maximus says "if you find yourself alone, riding in green fields, with the sun on your face, do not be troubled. For you are in _____ and you are already _____."
11. Maximus also says, "**what we do in life echoes in eternity.**" What does this mean?

Gladiator worksheet

NAME: _____

12. Maximus seems to ride off before the battle begins. Where is he going? What is his strategy?
13. Who is the old man watching the battle from a distance?
14. List three abstract words to describe the emotions the audience feels during the battle scene.
15. Towards the end of the battle, the movie switches into slow motion and the music becomes more melodic. Why did the director do this? What new emotions are prompted in the audience (list two).
16. Emperor Marcus Aurelius asks Maximus, "how can I reward Rome's greatest general?" Maximus replies, "Let me go _____."
17. The Emperor's son arrives and asks, "Have I missed the battle?" What does this reveal about Commodus's character?
18. What character CONFLICT is emerging at this point in the movie? Why are they in conflict?
19. After the battle, we see Maximus WASHING THE BLOOD OFF HIS HANDS. What does this symbolize? (* When we read Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the symbolism of washing blood off of one's hands will also be important.)
20. When asked if he is going back to the barracks or to Rome, Maximus replies that he desires to return to his home, wife, son, and _____.
21. A political conflict is important in this film. With the passing of the Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, Rome can either remain an EMPIRE, in which power is held by the _____, or it can become a REPUBLIC, in which power is held by the _____ who rule on behalf of the _____.

22. Maximus tells Marcus Aurelius that they have fought for the “_____ of the Empire. The Emperor replies that in 25 years of conquest, he has brought “the sword, nothing more.”
23. Marcus Aurelius tells Maximus that he has one more DUTY: to become the “protector of Rome. To give power back to the _____.”
24. Why does the Emperor choose Maximus for this task?
25. Marcus Aurelius tells his son, Commodus, that he will not become Emperor. How does Commodus react to this news?
26. Commodus says he lacked the virtues that his father valued most: WISDOM, JUSTICE, TEMPERANCE (moderation), FORTITUDE (strength). But Commodus says he does possess AMBITION.

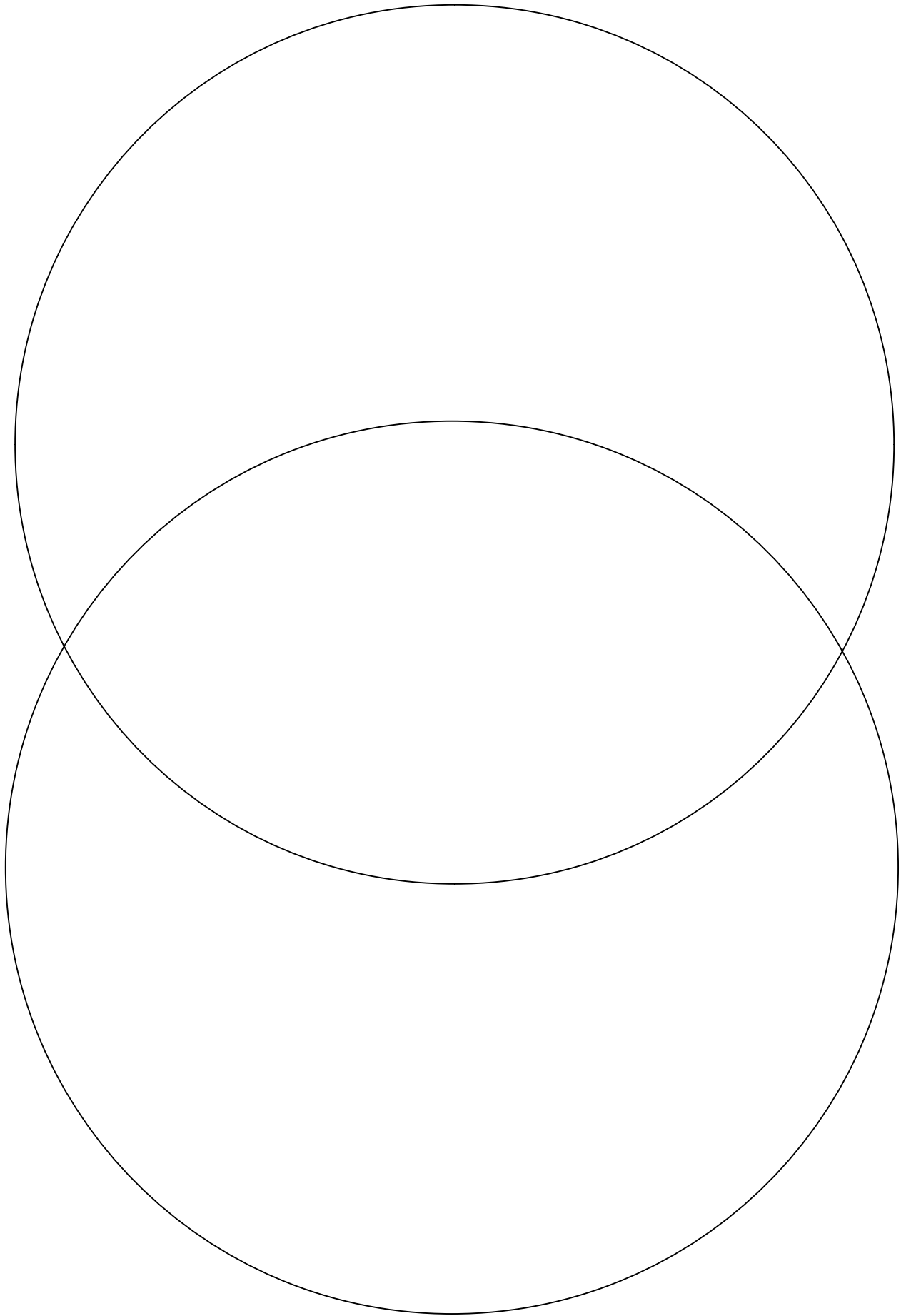
Define WISDOM (use a dictionary):

Define AMBITION:
27. How does Maximus react when Commodus offers his hand?
28. What happens to Maximus in the woods?
29. What does Maximus discover when he arrives home?
30. What emotions does Maximus feel? When he is delirious with exhaustion, what images does Maximus see?

31. Maximus has a tattoo of the letters **SPQR** on his arm. What does this mean?
32. “I am Proximo. I shall be closer to you for the next few days... which will be the last of your miserable lives... than that bitch of a mother that brought you screaming into this world. I did not pay good money for you for your company. I paid it so that I could profit from your death.”

Write three abstract words that describe Proximo, based on this quote. (You are making an **inference** about his character.)

33. As a gladiator, Maximus is known by what name?
34. What does one gladiator do before the fight that shows he is afraid? What happens to him?
35. What allows Juba (the black gladiator) and Maximus to survive the first match?
36. What reward do the surviving gladiators receive?
37. Make a connection to your world: Who are the “gladiators” in today’s society? (List at least 3 points.)
38. What rewards do today’s gladiators receive?
39. The setting shifts to ROME, a city that not even Maximus has visited before. What techniques does the film director use to make us feel that ancient Rome was an AWESOME place?
40. Senator Gracchus says of Commodus, “He enters Rome like a conquering hero. But what has he conquered?” What can we infer from this remark? (In other words, what does Gracchus think of Commodus?)



Gladiator worksheet

NAME: _____

41. CONFLICT emerges between the Senate (especially Senator Gracchus) and the Emperor (Commodus). Gracchus argues the poor sanitation is leading to outbreak of _____. And he insists that the Senate speaks for the PEOPLE.
42. Commodus disagrees with Gracchus. He thinks that the Senate had forgotten the people. Commodus insists that he, the Emperor, loves the people. He says he is like a father and the people are his _____.
43. Commodus talks with his sister about the GLORY, GREATNESS, and TRADITION of Rome. He tells her, "I will give the people a vision of Rome, and they will love me for it." What will this vision be?
44. One Senator says, "I think Commodus knows what Rome is. Rome is the _____. Conjure magic for them and they'll be distracted. Take away their freedom and still they'll roar. . . . He'll bring them death and they will love him for it."
45. After defeating his opponents in the ring, Maximus does what with his sword? What is his emotion?
46. As the crowd chants "Spaniard," Maximus yells at them, "Are you not _____?"
47. Proximo, a former gladiator, received his freedom from Marcus Aurelius. Maximus says that he, too, wishes to stand before the Emperor. What do you think Maximus wants to do? Why?
48. What does Lucius (son of Lucilla and nephew of Emperor Commodus) tell Maximus?
49. Before they fight, the gladiators proclaim, "We who are about to _____ _____ _____."
50. How does Maximus show LEADERSHIP as the fight at the Colosseum is about to begin?

51. After the gladiators defeat the attackers on chariots, they are surrounded by real Roman soldiers. When Commodus asks his name, Maximus replies, "My name is _____."
52. Why does Maximus not kill Commodus?
53. Why does Commodus not kill Maximus once he reveals his true identity?
54. Lucilla says, "Today I saw a slave become more powerful than the Roman Emperor." What does she mean?
55. Proximo says, "We mortals are but shadows and _____."
56. When Maximus defeats the former champion gladiator, and when he is given the "thumbs down" signal from Commodus, what does Maximus do? Why?
57. Instead of committing an act of violence (execution), Maximus shows _____" How does the crowd respond?
58. What does Commodus say to make Maximus truly angry?
59. Later, Proximo tells Maximus, "I know that you are a man of your word, General. I know that you would die for _____, you would die for _____. You would die for the memory of your _____."
60. Proximo says, "But I, on the other hand, am an _____."

Gladiator Worksheet

NAME: _____

61. Commodus has weird, unnatural feelings for his sister, Lucilla. He forces her to say that she loves him. This kind of relationship is called _____ .
62. We learn that Maximus and Lucilla loved each other in the past. Why did the film-makers include this “love story” sub-plot? Why do many movies have a love story sub-plot?
63. Commodus sees Lucius practice fighting. Commodus assumes he’s pretending to be a legionnaire (a Roman soldier), but Lucius says he’s a _____
64. Commodus says, “Wouldn’t you rather be a great Roman warrior like _____ Caesar?”
65. Lucius says he’s says he’s Maximus, the _____ of Rome.
66. Proximo give keys to Maximus to allow him—and other gladiators— to escape. Why does Proximo do this? How has his character changed?
67. Maximus escapes and finds his loyal lieutenant Cicero waiting for him on a horse. What happens?
68. What does Commodus plan to do with Lucius and with Lucilla?
69. Commodus describes Maximus as “the general who became a _____. The _____ who became a _____. The _____ who defied an _____.

70. Commodus describes this as “a striking story. Now the people want to know how the story ends. Only a famous death will do.” What is Commodus’s plan?
71. During the final fight, Commodus is wounded and asks the legion commander, Quintus, for a sword. What happens? What orders does Quintus give to his men? Why does Quintus do this?
72. How does the crowd react when Commodus falls and Maximus is left standing? Why do they react this way?
73. Although Maximus dies, why is this a happy ending for him? What images does the film show us to imply that death is a positive thing for him?
74. Maximus’s final words: “Free my men. Senator Gracchus is to be reinstated. There was a dream that was Rome. It shall be realized. These are the wishes of Marcus Aurelius.” What is this dream?
75. The very last thing we see is the African gladiator Juba. What does he do? What does he say?
76. What is the overall lesson or “moral of the story”? List three possibilities:
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