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PENGUIN ACTIVE READING

EASYSTARTS

The Slave Boy of Pompeii

Bernard Smith

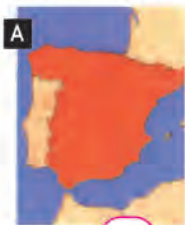


1.1 What's the book about?

Look at the pictures on the front of the book and on page 1.

- 1 Talk about the pictures. What can you see?
- 2 What do you know about Pompeii? Why is it a famous town?
- 3 Tick (✓) the right answers. What do you think?

a What country is Pompeii in?



Spain



Greece



Italy



France

b What is the name of the mountain in the pictures?

Stromboli Vesuvius Krakatoa Etna

c What year is it in the story?

79 1379 1779 1979

1.2 What happens first?

Look at the pictures on pages 1–3. Are the sentences right (✓) or wrong (x)?

- 1 It is winter in Pompeii.
- 2 The boy lives in a big, expensive house.
- 3 The boy and the animal are friends.
- 4 Some people are unhappy about the mountain.



It is one o'clock on a hot summer day in August. In this old Roman town under the **mountain**, people are eating and drinking in their houses. There are people in the streets and in the shops. They are happy. They don't know. But we know.

The year is 79. The name of the mountain behind the town is Vesuvius. And Vesuvius is a **volcano**.

mountain /'mauntən/ (n) Go up the *mountain* and you can see the sea.

volcano /vɒl'keɪnəʊ/ (n) Etna is a famous *volcano* in Sicily.



Marcus Sextus is an important man in Pompeii. He and his family live in a big white house with a beautiful long garden.

Marcus Sextus and his family have fifteen **slaves**. There are eight men and six women, and there is one slave boy. His name is Mico. He works in the kitchen and the garden. Marcus Sextus is good to his slaves. They work all day and they have no money. But they have good food and they sleep in the house.

Young Mico has only one good friend. It is Fortunatus, the house **dog**. He is a big animal, black and strong.



slave /slerv/ (n) A slave works for no money.

dog /dog/ (n) I take my *dog* for a walk every day.

Usually Fortunatus stays in the small room behind the door. He sits there on a **chain** every day and watches the street. Bad people never come into the house. They are **afraid** of Fortunatus.

Today some friends of Marcus Sextus are visiting him in his house. The mountain is making **loud** noises and they are afraid.

‘The **gods** of the mountain are angry,’ a man says.



chain /tʃeɪn/ (n) We can't drive there. There's a *chain* across the road.

afraid /ə'freɪd/ (adj) Small animals are *afraid* of big animals.

loud /laʊd/ (adj) I can't hear you. The television is very *loud*.

Please be quiet. You're talking very *loudly*.

god /ɡɒd/ (n) Jupiter and Mars are names of old Roman *gods*.

The Slave Boy of Pompeii

Bernard Smith

British English

Original

Young Mico is a slave in a big house in the town of Pompeii. His only friend is the house dog, Fortunatus. One quiet summer day, Fortunatus suddenly runs away. He takes Mico with him. What does the dog know? What is he afraid of? Is it, perhaps, the mountain behind the town?

Number of words (excluding activities): 1,311

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