Speaking of Volcanoes

Directions: View the vocabulary slideshow for the paired texts “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” and “The Lost City Is Found,” which will help you learn the meanings of the boldface words in the articles. Then check your understanding by completing each sentence below, being sure that it makes sense.

1. For the school play about ancient Rome, Jared made his tunic by hand using ______________________________.

2. The empire used to be huge, but after the powerful emperor died, ________________________________________.

3. The detective’s anger about the case was festering because ____________________________________________.

4. The smell of something delicious wafts from the kitchen, so I ____________________________________________.

5. Luckily, the townspeople evacuated before the flood, but when they returned they found ___________________.

6. The class made a time capsule and included in it ______________________________________________________.

7. After closely examining the decayed buildings discovered in the town, we guessed that ____________________.

8. The wildfires seared the farmland, so now all that is left is ____________________________________________.

9. The molten lava was bright orange because ________________________________________________________.

10. When the archaeologists excavated the fragile ancient statue, they accidentally ________________________.
Directions: Watch the video “Behind the Scenes: The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius.” Then answer the questions below.

1. In the first section of the video (0:10-0:48), what details help you understand why the eruption of Mount Vesuvius was such a terrible disaster? Consider the narration, sounds, and visuals.

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2. Based on the video, name at least three ways that author Lauren Tarshis researches her articles and books. Which way is her favorite? Why?

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3. What did archaeologists find when they dug up the city of Pompeii? Why were these discoveries important?

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4. Consider the questions Lauren asks at 5:30 of the video. What point of view is the story written from? Why might Lauren have written it this way?

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Close-Reading Questions: After reading the articles “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” and “The Lost City Is Found,” go back and reread sections to answer the questions below.

1. In the article “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius,” how does author Lauren Tarshis help you feel as if you were witnessing the action in Pompeii?

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2. Based on the beginning of the article and the map on page 15, what was the Roman Empire? When and in what city does the story take place?

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3. Reread the first section of the article on page 16. What are three details you learn about life in ancient Rome?

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4. Based on “The Volcano,” what do we know about Vesuvius today that the people of Pompeii didn't know? What signs could have helped them avoid disaster if they had understood them?

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5. Reread “A Boiling Avalanche.” What were some of the effects of Vesuvius’s eruption?

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6. In “A Vanished World,” what does the article suggest about Vesuvius’s future activity? How might people’s reactions differ from last time?

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### Close Reading & Critical Thinking

"The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius"

December 2019/January 2020

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#### Think About It! p. 3

**7.** Based on the first article and "The Lost City Is Found," how did Pompeii become a "lost city"? When and how was it found?

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**8.** How did scientists make plaster statues of people who had died in Vesuvius’s eruption? What do you think we can learn from these statues?

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Critical-Thinking Questions: After answering the close-reading questions, answer the critical-thinking questions below, thinking about the meaning of both articles.

9. Based on both articles and the text features, how was life in ancient Pompeii similar to life today? How was it different?

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10. The second article states that 3.5 million people visit Pompeii each year. Would you like to go there if you were to have the chance? Answer using details from the articles.

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Think About It!

**Directions:** After reading the articles “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” and “The Lost City Is Found,” go back and reread sections to answer the questions below. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

**Close-Reading Questions:**

1. In the article “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius,” how does author Lauren Tarshis help you feel as if you were witnessing the action in Pompeii?

2. Based on the beginning of the article and the map on page 15, what was the Roman Empire? When and in what city does the story take place?

3. Reread the first section of the article on page 16. What are three details you learn about life in ancient Rome?

4. Based on “The Volcano,” what do we know about Vesuvius today that the people of Pompeii didn’t know? What signs could have helped them avoid disaster if they had understood them?

5. Reread “A Boiling Avalanche.” What were some of the effects of Vesuvius’s eruption?

6. In “A Vanished World,” what does the article suggest about Vesuvius’s future activity? How might people’s reactions differ from last time?

7. Based on the first article and “The Lost City Is Found,” how did Pompeii become a “lost city”? When and how was it found?

8. How did scientists make plaster statues of people who had died in Vesuvius’s eruption? What do you think we can learn from these statues?

**Critical-Thinking Questions:**

9. Based on both articles and the text features, how was life in ancient Pompeii similar to life today? How was it different?

10. The second article states that 3.5 million people visit Pompeii each year. Would you like to go there if you were to have the chance? Answer using details from the articles.
Think About It!

Close-Reading Questions: Read “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” and “The Lost City Is Found.” Then go back and reread sections of the texts to answer the questions below. We’ve started the first two answers for you.

1. Based on the beginning of the article, what was life like in the Roman Empire?

Life in the Roman Empire was

2. Based on “The Volcano,” why weren’t the people of Pompeii worried about living near a volcano?

The people of Pompeii weren’t worried because

Continued on next page >
Think About It! p. 2

3. What signs did Mount Vesuvius give that it was going to erupt?

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4. The section “A Boiling Avalanche” ends by saying “Pompeii is all but forgotten, wiped off the face of the Earth.” What does this mean?

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5. According to “A Vanished World,” might Vesuvius erupt again like it did before?

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6. What was one major effect of Vesuvius’s eruption, based on the section “A Vanished World” and the article “The Lost City Is Found”?

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Critical-Thinking Question (a big question about both stories):

7. How was life in ancient Pompeii like life today? Use information from both articles in your answer.

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Find the Evidence

Directions: Read each question below carefully. Some will ask you to select text evidence—or details in the story—to support a statement. Others will ask you to respond in your own words, supporting your ideas with text evidence.

1. Both articles say that life in ancient Pompeii wasn't so different from life today. Circle the letters of the THREE pieces of text evidence that best show how Pompeii was similar to modern cities:
   a. “It has a library, shops, and restaurants.”
   b. “... women swishing by in long robes, men in tunics, children with leather sandals ...”
   c. “... many scientists of the time believe that natural disasters are caused by angry gods.”
   d. “They even found the remains of a basket of eggs and a bowl of chicken soup.”
   e. “What remained were detailed statues of the people of Pompeii, frozen in their terrifying final moments.”
   f. “The Romans kept pets, shopped at stores, and ate lunch at fast-food restaurants ...”

2. The people in ancient Pompeii did some things differently than the way we do them in the modern world. In your own words, explain ways life in Pompeii was different from life today. Use text evidence to support your answer.

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3. Circle the letters of the TWO pieces of text evidence that best describe the warning signs that pressure was building in Mount Vesuvius and that it would soon erupt:
   a. “Maybe by now you've noticed it—the massive mountain that looms behind the city.”
   b. “And Vesuvius has been dormant—asleep—for 1,500 years.”
   c. “The extreme heat underground has caused springs to dry up.”
   d. “... the Romans believe that gods and goddesses control everything in the world.”
   e. “Small earthquakes have erupted throughout the city, a sign of growing strain on the land.”
   f. “The people of Pompeii should have evacuated weeks before.”

Continued on next page >
4. Both articles say that after the volcano erupted, most people forgot that the city of Pompeii had ever existed. In your own words, explain why people forgot about Pompeii. Use text evidence to support your answer.

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5. When people began to dig up Pompeii, they realized they had a chance to learn how ancient Romans lived. Circle the letters of the THREE pieces of text evidence that best explain methods experts have used to find out more about ancient Romans:

a. “At first, the main goal of the digging was to unearth Pompeii’s riches . . .”

b. “Today, one-third of the city is still waiting to be uncovered.”

c. “Scientists poured plaster into these holes, then chipped away at the rock around them.”

d. “They have created digital 3-D models of buildings.”

e. “They’ve even studied poop from ancient toilets.”

f. “ . . . 3.5 million people visit each year, drawn by the chance to step into an ancient world.”

6. In your own words, explain why scientists worry that Pompeii could be buried by ash again. Use text evidence to support your answer.

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Find the Evidence

**Directions:** Read each question below carefully. Some will ask you to select text evidence—or details in the story—to support a statement. Others will ask you to respond in your own words, supporting your ideas with text evidence.

1. Circle the letter of the piece of text evidence that best shows how Pompeii was similar to modern cities:
   a. “The capital of the Roman Empire was the city of Rome.”
   b. “It has a library, shops, and restaurants.”
   c. “Even many scientists of the time believe that natural disasters are caused by angry gods.”
   d. “They have examined the plaster statues with lasers and X-rays.”

2. In your own words, explain ways life in Pompeii was different from life today. Use text evidence to support your answer.

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3. Circle the letter of the piece of text evidence that best shows that gladiator fights were dangerous:
   a. “He’s a famous gladiator, a special kind of fighter.”
   b. “…tonight he will fight in Pompeii’s amphitheater…”
   c. “Romans love to watch gladiators fight each other…”
   d. “Sometimes men are pitted against ferocious lions or bears.”

4. In your own words, explain why people in Pompeii did not know they were in danger of a volcano erupting. Use text evidence to support your answer.

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5. Circle the letter of the piece of text evidence that best shows the warning signs that Mount Vesuvius was about to erupt:

a. “Except Mount Vesuvius is not just a mountain.”

b. “And Vesuvius has been dormant—asleep—for 1,500 years.”

c. “The extreme heat underground has caused springs to dry up.”

d. “The people of Pompeii should have evacuated weeks before.”

6. In your own words, explain why people forgot about Pompeii after the volcano erupted. Use text evidence to support your answer.

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7. Circle the letter of the piece of text evidence that best explains one way experts study Pompeii to find out how ancient Romans lived:

a. “. . . he soon came face-to-face with a giant, staring marble statue.”

b. “At first, the main goal of the digging was to unearth Pompeii’s riches . . . ”

c. “A new type of science was born, known as archaeology.”

d. “They’ve even studied poop from ancient toilets.”

8. In your own words, explain why scientists worry that Pompeii could be buried by ash again. Use text evidence to support your answer.

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### Putting It All Together

**Directions:** To synthesize means to combine parts from different sources. Answer the questions below to synthesize information from the articles “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” (EMV) and “The Lost City Is Found” (LCF). We've indicated where you can find each answer.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Where is the city of Pompeii? What ancient empire was it part of? (both texts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>What were the streets and shops of Pompeii like 2,000 years ago? (both texts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>What are gladiators? (EMV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>How and when was the buried city of Pompeii discovered? (both texts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>What things have archaeologists discovered in the ruins? (both texts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>How did scientists make lifelike statues of people who died in Pompeii? (LCF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>What do scientists worry might happen to Mount Vesuvius and Pompeii? (both texts)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Write Now!** Use your answers above to help you respond to the writing prompt at the bottom of page 19.
Exploring Text Features

Directions: Answer the questions below to help you explore the photos, captions, map, and other text features in the paired texts “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” and “The Lost City Is Found.”

1. Look at the title, subtitles, and image at the top of page 15. How do these text features help you get interested in reading the article?

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2. Study the map and caption on page 15. Find Mount Vesuvius and the city of Pompeii. Write a description that tells where they were located within the Roman Empire.

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3. Study the images and captions on page 17. How do these text features help you understand what life was like for rich people in Pompeii?

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4. Read the title of the article on page 19. What can you guess about the article by looking at the shapes of the letters in the title?

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5. Study the photograph in the center of page 19. How does the red arrow help you understand what is in this photo?

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Storyworks S-T-R-E-T-C-H Imagine that you are creating a magazine ad for the unearthed city of Pompeii today. What title and images would you use in the ad to get people interested in visiting?

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Research Kit

Directions: Read the article “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” in the December 2019/January 2020 issue of Storyworks. Then follow the steps below, which will lead you on a research journey inspired by the story.

STEP 1: Reread the section “A Boiling Avalanche.” Think about how Mount Vesuvius affected the city of Pompeii. Then consider the following question:

How have volcanic eruptions shaped our planet?

This is the big question that will guide your research. Start by getting some background information from these resources:


To further explore the question, choose one of the two research paths below:

STEP 2:

**Research Path 1**
Choose another volcanic eruption that had a big impact on Earth. Find out what scientists know about it and how the eruption changed our planet.

You can choose an eruption such as:
- The 1815 eruption of Mount Tambora
- The eruptions of Mount Kilauea, starting in 1983
- The 1883 eruption of Krakatoa
- or choose another eruption

**Research Path 2**
Major volcanic eruptions can cause other disasters to occur. Choose one of them. Research why it happens and the damage it can cause.

You can choose a disaster such as:
- an earthquake
- a mudflow
- a tsunami
- or choose another

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STEP 3: Think about the questions you’ll need to answer to complete your project. Then start to hunt for answers! Visit your school or public library and ask your librarian or your teacher to help you find nonfiction books about your topic. You can also search for information online—but make sure you’re using trustworthy resources. See the Online Research Helper on the next page to guide you. Here are some sites that can help get you started on your research path:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDNlu7Qf6_E
- https://storyworks.scholastic.com/issues/2018-19/120118/Beauty-and-Disaster.html#tab1
- https://naturalhistory.si.edu/education/teaching-resources/earth-science/when-volcanoes-erupt

STEP 4: Turn the information you’ve collected into a dazzling final product! Select one of the choices below.

**Choices for Research Path 1:**

1) Draw pictures of the volcano before and after the eruption you chose, using captions to explain what is happening in each picture. The “after” picture should show the eruption’s effects.

2) Using a free online program like Canva, create a brochure for the area where the volcano erupted. Include images and text to explain the history of the eruption and how it affected Earth.

3) Write a short journal entry from the perspective of someone who survived the day of the eruption. Then write another short entry from the same person visiting the volcano 10 years later, explaining what effects the eruption had.

**Choices for Research Path 2:**

1) Imagine a volcanic eruption has just happened near your town. Write and film a short news video, telling people to be on the lookout for your chosen disaster and why.

2) Using a free online program like ReadWriteThink’s Timeline, design a timeline for a volcanic eruption that focuses on the disaster you chose. Make sure to include what happened both right away and later on.

3) Write a letter to a friend who is thinking of moving near an active volcano. Explain what might happen if it erupts, focusing on the disaster you chose and the damage it could cause.
Online Research Helper

Directions: Read the clues below to help you draw conclusions about whether a website is reliable—one that you can trust to give you true information. Use this with our Research Kit or anytime you’re doing online research.

Name of website: ________________________________________________

1. Think about! Who created the website? Does the person or group have expert knowledge about the topic?

Clues:
• Look at the “About” section of the site to find out who's behind it and what their experience is.
• Look up the person or organization to find out more about them. How did they become experts?
• Sites made by government agencies, museums, libraries, research or educational organizations, and major newspapers are usually reliable.

Your conclusion: Can you trust the creator of the website? Explain.

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2. Think about! Can you find the information in more than one place?

Clues:
• Look up facts you find on one site to see if they're on other sites too.
• Consult books and encyclopedias.
• Ask yourself if the information makes sense considering what you already know. If something seems off, dig deeper to find out if it’s true.

Your conclusion: Can the information be backed up by more than one source? Explain.

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3. Think about! What is the purpose of the website? How might that affect what it says?

Clues:
• Is the site's purpose to inform or educate? Chances are it will try to present reliable information.
• Is it trying to sell you something? If so, it will probably tell you only good things about it.
• Does it want you to support a cause? It might present one point of view—but remember there could be others.

Your conclusion: What is the website's purpose? Explain whether that makes it more reliable or less so.

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4. Think about! Are there signs that the site isn't reliable?

Watch out for:
• Information that's shocking or too good to be true.
• Misspelled words or faulty grammar.
• All capital letters.
• An unprofessional look.
• Old or out-of-date information.

Your conclusion: Does the site show signs that make you think it's unreliable? Explain.

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“The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” Quiz

Directions: Read the articles “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” and “The Lost City Is Found” in the December 2019/January 2020 issue of Storyworks. Then fill in the bubble next to the best answer for each question below.

1. Where are the ruins of Pompeii located?
   A in America
   B in Italy
   C in the Middle East
   D in North Africa

2. Which phrase below best describes gladiators?
   A fighters who battled men and animals
   B the languages spoken in ancient Rome
   C stadiums that hold thousands of people
   D mighty kings who built the Roman Empire

3. How is Vesuvius different from many other mountains?
   A It is very tall.
   B It is a volcano.
   C It has gentle slopes.
   D It is covered in trees.

4. Which phrase from the text supports the answer to question 3?
   A “the massive mountain that looms behind the city”
   B “It’s just a big mountain, silent and still”
   C “A huge lake of magma boils under Vesuvius”
   D “the farmers who tend to the vineyards around Vesuvius”

5. Who discovered the buried city of Pompeii?
   A an archaeologist
   B a farmer
   C a gladiator
   D a shopkeeper

6. Why do scientists study the ruins of Pompeii?
   A to gather up gold and other riches
   B to clear the land so a new city can be built
   C to determine when Vesuvius will erupt again
   D to learn how the ancient Romans lived

Constructed Response

Directions: On a separate piece of paper, write your answer to each question in a well-organized response. Make sure you support your answers with details from the texts.

7. How did pumice and ash help preserve Pompeii?

8. What could happen if Mt. Vesuvius has another big eruption? Support your answer with details from both texts.
**“The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” Quiz**

**Directions:** Read the articles “The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius” and “The Lost City Is Found” in the December 2019/January 2020 issue of *Storyworks*. Then fill in the bubble next to the best answer for each question below.

1. What was the capital of the Roman Empire?
   - A. Italy
   - B. Pompeii
   - C. Rome
   - D. Vesuvius

2. Describing what gladiators do, the first article says, “If it sounds gruesome, that’s because it is.” What does gruesome mean?
   - A. very entertaining
   - B. from ancient times
   - C. horrible and disgusting
   - D. requiring great courage

3. Which sentence from the first text supports your answer to question 2?
   - A. “He’s a famous gladiator, a special kind of fighter.”
   - B. “That’s because tonight he will fight in Pompeii’s amphitheater, a stadium big enough to hold 20,000 people.”
   - C. “Does he look nervous?”
   - D. “Sometimes men are pitted against ferocious lions or bears.”

4. How is Vesuvius different from many other mountains?
   - A. It is very tall.
   - B. It is a volcano.
   - C. It has gentle slopes.
   - D. It is covered by trees.

5. Which sentence from the text supports your answer to question 4?
   - A. “It’s just a big mountain, silent and still . . .”
   - B. “A huge lake of magma boils under Vesuvius, steaming with poisonous, explosive gases.”
   - C. “There is not even a word for volcano in Latin.”
   - D. “Talk to the farmers who tend to the vineyards around Vesuvius.”

6. Who discovered the city of Pompeii nearly 1,700 years after it was buried?
   - A. a farmer
   - B. a gladiator
   - C. a scientist
   - D. a tutor

7. How did scientists make statues of the victims trapped in ash and pumice?
   - A. They X-rayed the decaying bodies.
   - B. They printed 3-D models of the people.
   - C. They created monuments out of bronze.
   - D. They filled people-shaped holes with plaster.

8. Which best expresses the main idea of “The Lost City Is Found”?
   - A. Archaeology was born as scientists excavated the buried city of Pompeii.
   - B. Scientists use many methods to study Pompeii and learn how ancient Romans lived.
   - C. Ordinary people have made the most important discoveries about ancient Pompeii.
   - D. Experts wonder if Pompeii will be destroyed again.

**Constructed Response**

**Directions:** On a separate piece of paper, write your answer to each question in a well-organized response. Make sure you support your answers with information and details from the articles.

9. **The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius destroyed the ancient city of Pompeii. Explain how the eruption also preserved it.**

10. **What could happen if Mt. Vesuvius has another big eruption? Support your answer with details from both texts.**
“The Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius”

To the teacher: We suggest using these questions with the lower-Lexile version of the texts, supported by the lower-Lexile audio version. Select the ones that are best for your students, depending on where they are in their acquisition of English. Ask them orally or choose questions to create your own written assignment. If students are ready, prompt them to follow up their answers with more details.

Yes/No Questions
These questions allow students who are new to English to show their understanding with a simple answer.
1. In 79 A.D., did many people live in Pompeii? (Yes, they did.)
2. Did Mount Vesuvius give any warning signs before it erupted? (Yes, it did.)
3. Were there any survivors after the eruption? (No, there weren’t.)
4. Is it likely that Mount Vesuvius will soon erupt again? (Yes, it is.)
5. Do people live in Pompeii today? (No, they don’t.)

Either/Or Questions
These questions allow slightly more-advanced students to use language from the question in their answer.
1. Was Pompeii a volcano or a city? (Pompeii was a city.)
2. Was life in ancient Pompeii similar to or different from life today? (It was similar to life today.)
3. Is Pompeii “The Lost City” because it was burned down or buried? (Because it was buried.)
4. Based on what they found, did scientists make statues of Pompeii or of people? (They made statues of people.)

Language Questions
1. For each of these words, find a synonym (word that means the same thing) in the articles.
fighter, p. 16 (gladiator)
rocky layer, p. 16 (crust)
leaving, p. 17 (fleeing)
disappeared, p. 18 (vanished)
Follow-up: Why would you say fleeing instead of leaving? (Fleeing suggests running away quickly.)
2. The first article says that “An explosion seems to shatter the sky.” (p. 17). What does that mean? (The explosion was huge and violent.)
3. What does “frozen in time” on p. 19 mean? (It means that nothing has changed.)

For short-answer questions, see our Lower-level Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions.