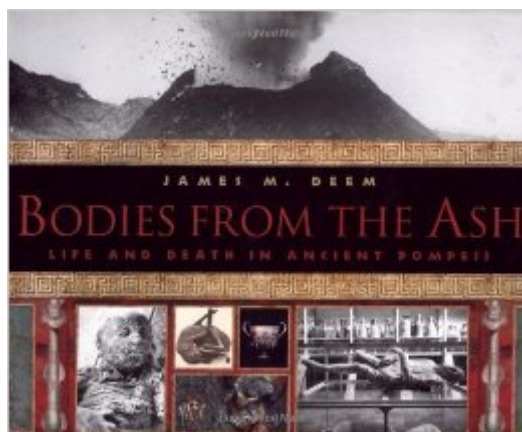


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Bodies From The Ash: Life And Death In Ancient Pompeii



Synopsis

In ancient times, Pompeii was one of the largest cities in the Roman Empire. Its 20,000 inhabitants lived in the shadow of Vesuvius, which they believed was nothing more than a mountain. But Vesuvius was a volcano. And on the morning of August 24, A.D. 79, Vesuvius began to erupt. Within twenty-four hours, the entire city of Pompeii "and many of its citizens" had been utterly annihilated. It was not until hundreds of years later that Pompeii saw daylight again, as archaeological excavations began to unearth what had been buried under layers of volcanic rubble. Digging crews expected to find buildings and jewelry and other treasures, but they found something unexpected, too: the imprints of lost Pompeians, their deaths captured as if by photographic images in volcanic ash.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1120L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 64 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (October 24, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0618473084

ISBN-13: 978-0618473083

Product Dimensions: 11 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (20 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #386,248 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #34 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Archaeology](#) #45 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Earthquakes & Volcanoes](#) #162 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Europe](#)

Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

Customer Reviews

Having only just begun his examination of the ancient dead with, "Bodies From the Bog" (a title that bears more than a passing resemblance to a kitschy 1950s horror flick), Mr. James M. Deem returns to look at the ancient dead of an entirely new region. As a child I was fascinated by mummies and the bodies of human beings from so very long ago. History was never my favorite subject and often I found that unless I could see a person in the flesh (rotting, decomposing, flaking flesh though it

might be) I was unable to understand how similar to us the people of the past were. Pompeii, naturally, is a fascinating subject in and of itself. How could it not be? You've three-dimensional images of people in the last throes of death. I challenge anyone to come up with anything half as gripping (i.e. feeding on our more macabre instincts) when talking about any other ancient civilization. With plenty of amazing photographs, clear concise writing, and a plot that will keep many a kid spellbound, this is probably one of the finest non-fiction titles to grace library bookshelves in years. "On August 24, the last Tuesday that they would live in their town, the people of ancient Pompeii awoke to a typical hot summer's morning". And we're off! No long drawn out Preface on why Deem wrote this book or dull page long sermon on the history of archeology itself. Nope. Instead we are treated to a highly accurate encapsulation of the events that lead up to Mount Vesuvius erupting and the good people of Pompeii perishing. With some reliance on the accounts of Pliny Jr., Deem tells us what happened on August 24 and 25, A.D. 79. There's even a timetable of events marking the different stages in the eruption.

I am a home-schooling parent and also own a business offering classes for home-schooled students. I purchased this book for a class on Ancient Greece and Rome aimed at K-2nd grade students. It is an excellent resource for this time period. The text of the book is simple enough to read out loud to younger children, but is not dumbed down or simplified, so don't be afraid to purchase for an adult or older child. Older students will enjoy reading the book independently. However, don't expect to use it as a read-aloud in a class situation for younger students, as the book is about 50 pages and the text is dense on each page. It's more useful as a reference text to show students photos, or would be a great addition to a school library for the children to read at home. I thought the text was interesting and well written, with lots of details and good explanations of more difficult concepts (such as making of the plaster casts of the victims.) The book is laid out gorgeously and is filled with full page photographs of Pompeii, artifacts and especially the casts and skeletons. I don't think the photos selected are particularly disturbing, unless you have an extremely sensitive child who wouldn't like ANY skeleton photos. The book has six chapters. Chapter 1 focuses on what we know of the actual eruption on Aug 24 and 25, AD 79. The text explains how historians use physical evidence and primary sources to create a timeline of events. Chapter 2 tells the history of excavations. Chapter 3 tells about the history of making the plaster casts of the victims, while chapter 4 tells about individual casts and how historians can tell about the actual people from these casts.

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