



## Key Vocabulary

**archaeology** the study of what people made, used and left behind (artefacts) usually by digging

**volcano** An opening in the Earth's crust from which lava, ash, and hot gases flow or are ejected during an eruption

**volcanic ash** a mixture of rock, mineral, and glass particles expelled from a volcano during an eruption.

**pumice** a light and porous volcanic rock formed when lava cools rapidly

**pyroclastic flow** a fast-moving current of hot gas and volcanic matter

**pugilistic attitude** body position after death caused by high temperature

## Links to prior learning:

Romans (Y3)

# Dangerous Earth

## History Y6: Pompeii

### Key Facts and Knowledge

Pompeii was a Roman city located in the south of Italy on the edge of the Bay of Naples. It was fairly typical in its layout and was a popular holiday destination for Romans.

On 24 August 79 AD Pompeii and the neighbouring town of Herculaneum were buried under volcanic ash and rock following the eruption of the volcano, Mount Vesuvius. Most of the people who lived there were killed.

The eruption lasted for more than 24 hours and the column of ash travelled over 20 miles into the air.

The eruption happened the day after the religious festival of Vulcan, who was the Roman god of fire.

The resulting pyroclastic flow travelled at over 450 mph and reached temperatures of around 1000 degrees centigrade.

The ash that buried the city and its people preserved everything where it was at the time of the disaster.

A lawyer and author, Pliny the Younger, witnessed the eruption and recorded a detailed contemporaneous account in letters to his friend, the historian Tacitus.

Pompeii was rediscovered by accident in 1748.



Citizen of Pompeii preserved in a pugilistic attitude

### Links to other subjects:

Geography enquiry on natural disasters.

English – extended writing

735 BC  
Rome founded

509 BC  
Rome becomes a republic

73 BC  
Spartacus's rebellion

0 AD  
Birth of Christ

79 AD  
Vesuvius erupts

410 AD  
Visigoths sack Rome