



Chapter 8: Comprehension

EXERCISE 8.12: PLINY PREFERS TO STUDY



Read lines 1-4: *Plinius erat vir ... nōn stultus erō!*

Summarise the story so far.



1. lines 5-6: prope villam avunculī erat mōns ingēns, Vesuvius nōmine. subitō ex hōc monte flammae altissimae ērūpērunt.

a. What are we told about Vesuvius? Give three details. _____

_____ [3]

b. How does the style of writing here make the eruption of Vesuvius seem dramatic? Consider the language used and explain how word choice, sound or word order emphasises the drama. You should discuss one Latin word or phrase. _____

_____ [1]

2. lines 6-7: Plīnius et avunculus clāmōrēs audīvērunt. 'fortasse multī pereunt,' inquit avunculus. 'fortasse perīculum maximum est.

What did Pliny's uncle think was happening when he heard shouts? _____

_____ [2]

3. line 8: ego tamen nōn perterritus sum. hīs hominibus auxilium dabō

How does the style of writing emphasise Pliny's uncle's bravery? Consider the language used and explain how word choice, sound or word order creates this emphasis. You should discuss one Latin word or phrase. _____

_____ [1]

4. lines 8-10: Plīnius tamen, ubi clāmōrēs audīvit, librum legēbat. 'vīsne ad montem īre?' rogāvit avunculus. 'nōlō,' respondit Plīnius.

What impression do you get here of Pliny's character? Explain your answer with reference to details from this text. _____

_____ [2]

5. line 11: Plīnius ad montem īre nōlēbat quod avunculus librum optimum eī dederat.

Why did Pliny not want to go with his uncle? _____

_____ [1]



6. lines 11-14: 'hic liber,' inquit Plīnius, 'est optimus. Līvius hunc librum scrīpsit. Līvius hunc librum ēlegantissimē scrīpsit. Līvius multōs librōs ēlegantissimē scrīpsit quod Līvius ipse librōs multōs lēgerat.

Pliny was very impressed by Livy's style of writing: what reason does he give to explain why Livy was able to write so well? _____

_____ [1]

7. line 14-15: Līviō illī librī erant magistrī, sed nunc mihi Līvius est magister meus. Līvius est magister optimus.

a. Whom did Pliny say were teachers to Livy? _____ [1]

b. Whom did Pliny say was teacher to him? _____ [1]

8. line 15-16: ego quoque multōs librōs et ōrātiōnēs ēlegantissimē scrībere volō.

What did Pliny say he wanted to do? _____

_____ [2]

9. line 16-17: nōn ad montem ībō sed hīc - hunc librum optimum legēns - manēbō.

What did Pliny say he would do instead of going to the mountain? _____

_____ [2]

10. This story is based on one of the letters Pliny chose to publish. Do you think he expected his Roman audience to be impressed or unimpressed by his decision not to go on the rescue mission with his uncle? Explain your answer with reference to details from the story.

_____ [3]

Grammar questions

1. line 7: fortasse multī pereunt.

Write out the principle parts of the verb *pereunt*. _____

_____ [1]



2. line 11: Plīnius ad montem īre nōlēbat quod avunculus librum optimum eī dederat.

a. Identify the main clause and the subordinate clause in this sentence. _____

_____ [1]

b. Identify the tense of the verb *dederat*. _____

_____ [1]

3. line 13: Līvius multōs librōs ēlegantissimē scrīpsit

Identify and explain the form of the word *ēlegantissimē*. _____

_____ [1]

4. Give an example of a superlative adjective from this story. _____ [1]