

What's happening in the news this week?



Let's have a look at this week's poster!

16th - 22nd February 2026



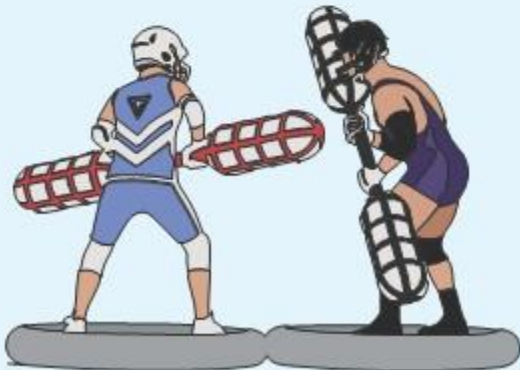
Do gladiators make good role models?



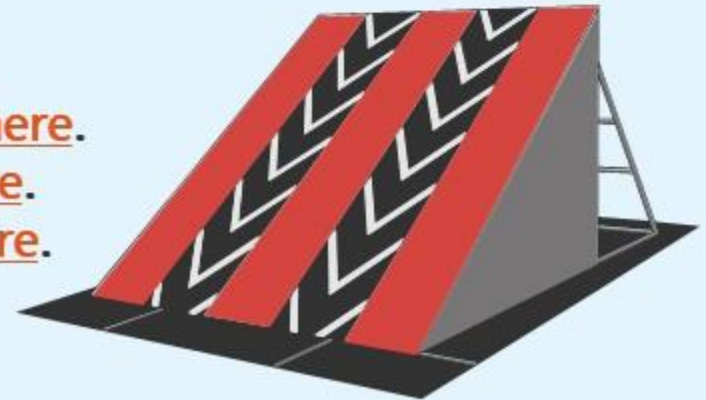


Let's look at this week's story

A new series of the television programme, Gladiators, has recently returned to screens. The show features athletes competing in physical challenges such as strength, speed, and endurance events. The show is broadcast on the BBC and has attracted large audiences, including families and children. Gladiators train for many years to compete at a high level and often speak about discipline, teamwork, and preparation.



Learn more about this week's story [here](#).
Watch this week's useful video [here](#).
This week's Virtual Picture News [here](#).



How does it make me feel?



sad

despondent
disconsolate
dismal
doleful
downhearted
forlorn
gloomy
melancholic
miserable
woeful
wretched

angry

aggrieved
annoyed
discontented
disgruntled
distressed
exasperated
frustrated
indignant
offended
outraged
resentful
vexed

happy

beaming
buoyant
cheery
contented
delighted
enraptured
gleeful
glowing
joyful

confused

addled
baffled
bemused
bewildered
disorientated
indistinct
muddled
mystified
perplexed
puzzled

excited

animated
elevated
enlivened
enthusiastic
exhilarated
exuberant
thrilled

worried

agitated
anxious
apprehensive
concerned
disquieted
distraught
distressed
disturbed
fretful
perturbed
troubled
uneasy

overwhelmed

engulfed
inundated
overburdened
overloaded
saturated
submerged
swamped

afraid

alarmed
apprehensive
daunted
fearful
frantic
horrified
petrified
terrified

guilty

ashamed
compunctious
contrite
culpable
penitent
responsible
rueful

jealous

bitter
covetous
desirous
envious
envying
resentful
wary

thankful

appreciative
grateful
gratified
indebted
obliged
relieved

shocked

astonished
astounded
disconcerted
distressed
dumbfounded
horrified
staggered
startled
stunned
surprised

disgusted

affronted
appalled
horrified
repelled
repulsed
revolted
sickened

inspired

activated
encouraged
exhilarated
galvanised
influenced
motivated

embarrassed

ashamed
awkward
chagrined
demeaned
discomposd
humiliated
self-conscious
uncomfortable
uneasy
unsettled

interested

absorbed
captivated
curious
engaged
enthralled
fascinated
gripped
intrigued
riveted

This week's story looks at events related to ...





Read through the information below all about Gladiators.

What is Gladiators

Gladiators is a TV programme in which athletes, called gladiators, compete against contestants in physical challenges.

When did it start?

The original Gladiators first appeared on TV around 35 years ago. Since relaunching two years ago, it has recently returned with a third new series.

What happens on the programme?

Contestants take on gladiators in events that test strength, speed, balance and stamina. Each challenge has clear rules and points.

Are the challenges real?

Yes, the events are physical, but they are carefully planned with safety rules and referees.

What qualities might people use to describe the gladiators?

- determination
- confidence
- teamwork
- discipline
- resilience



Pictured above: The Gladiators 2026
Picture and information source: BBC Media

Do gladiators train?

Yes! Gladiators train for many years. They practise strength, fitness, teamwork, and focus to prepare for the challenges.



Do you believe gladiators make good role models?

Are gladiators famous?

Yes – because they are on TV, many people recognise them and talk about them.





Look at the resource below, which shows some information of the gladiators.

Fury - Jodie Ounsley

Age: 23

Job: England Rugby Union player

Jodie Ounsley was a professional rugby player and won titles in other sports like Brazilian jiu-jitsu. She is the first deaf gladiator on the show.

Picture source: @jodieousley on Instagram.



Legend - Matt Mohsia

Age: 38

Job: Fitness YouTuber and personal trainer

Matt Mohsia used to be a track and field athlete who ran, jumped, and lifted heavy weights. He also made fitness videos to help people stay healthy.

Picture source: @mattdoesfitness on Instagram.



Phantom - Toby Olubi

Age: 37

Job: Bobsledder

Toby Olubi was an Olympic athlete, competing in bobsleigh at the Winter Olympics in 2018. He has also competed in sprinting events and been part of Team GB.

Picture source: @tonyolubi on Instagram.



Athena - Karenjeet Kaur Bains

Age: 28

Job: Powerlifter and chartered accountant

Before becoming a gladiator, Karenjeet Kaur Bains was a champion powerlifter and won many medals for lifting heavy weights. She has also broken a Guinness World Record for doing the most bodyweight squats in one minute!

Picture source: @karenjeet_bains on Instagram



Which skills help you when you try sports or challenges?
How does it feel to try something you haven't done before?





Look at the resource below, which shares different challenge tv programmes from around the world.

Mastermind (UK)

Mastermind is a quiz show where contestants answer questions about general knowledge and a special topic of their choice. They need to show focus, memory, and quick thinking to score points and move to the next round.



Culinary Class Wars (South Korea)

Two classes of chefs compete each week: White Spoons (experienced cooks) and Black Spoons (people new to the show). They are given different ingredients and cooking challenges to see who can make the best dishes. Contestants need creativity, teamwork, and speed to impress the judges and win the round.



Survivor South Africa (South Africa)

In Survivor, contestants live in remote locations and compete in physical and mental challenges. They need to survive with limited supplies, work with others, and make clever choices to stay in the game.



Amazing Race Australia (Australia)

Teams of two travel across cities and countries whilst completing physical and mental challenges. They must solve puzzles, follow clues, and reach checkpoints as fast as possible.



Would you rather take part in a physical challenge or a mental (thinking) challenge? Why?



Do gladiators make good role models?



Reflection



Role models can inspire us, but it's important to think carefully about why we admire them. We can choose role models who show kindness, respect, and fairness, as well as strength or success.



Media Literacy

I know that some stories share news, some are for entertainment, and some are to share opinions.



Explanation: Let's look at the facts provided in the news story about Gladiators to see if the goal is to inform, entertain, or share an opinion.



Analyse



Evaluate



Research



Act

Questions to Discuss

- Why did the author choose to tell this story now?
- Are the words used to excite, give facts or persuade?
- What is the impact of using these words?
- How does this story want you to feel? Why do you think this is?

Reflection

To discover if a story is news, entertainment, or an opinion, we should look for clues in the vocabulary, our emotions, and the reasons for it being written.

Activity

Rewrite the headline 'Gladiators Series 3 Returns to BBC' to fit each purpose:

- News (just the facts)
- Entertainment (make it exciting)
- Opinion (share a belief)
- Which headline would you be most likely to read? Why?



Individual Liberty

Gladiators celebrates our freedom to choose who we want to be by working hard and developing our strengths. We can all respect the rights of others and play fairly.

Protected Characteristics



By welcoming everyone equally, the programme, Gladiators, proves that true champions are defined by the different qualities they possess.





UN Rights of the Child



Each gladiators' focus on practising their skills shows children they can develop their own talents. Adults should support children to discover and nurture their talents.



Useful Vocabulary



Admire

To look at someone or something with great respect and approval.

Why do you imagine some people might **admire** or look up to the gladiators?

Determination

To keep trying to reach a goal, even if it is difficult, takes a long time, or you fail the first few times.

What qualities might people use to describe the gladiators? **Determination**...

Discipline

The ability to choose to do what you should do, rather than what you want to do in the moment.

Gladiators train for many years to compete at a high level and often speak about **discipline**, teamwork, and preparation.

Possess

Something that belongs to you, or to have a specific quality or talent.

Discuss some of your role models and the qualities they **possess**.

Resilience

Having the tools to handle challenges and keep trying, even when something feels difficult.

Label how the contenders will be tested on their patience, **resilience**, and courage etc.

Stamina

Your ability to keep going for a long time without stopping.

Contestants take on gladiators in events that test strength, speed, balance, and **stamina**.

Can you use them in your conversations this week?

Picture News



Do gladiators make good role models?

A new series of the television programme, *Gladiators*, has recently returned to screens. The show features athletes competing in physical challenges such as strength, speed, and endurance events. The show is broadcast on the BBC and has attracted large audiences, including families and children. *Gladiators* train for many years to compete at a high level and often speak about discipline, teamwork, and preparation.



- Look at this week's poster. Does anyone know what programme it is from? This week's story is all about *Gladiators*. Has anyone seen it?
- What are some of the things you enjoy watching together with your family and friends?
- Watch this week's useful video, which shows a trailer from the programme. Lots of families enjoy watching it together. What do you think it is about the show that people enjoy? E.g., the competition, the gladiator characters, the challenges?
- For some, the gladiators are role models. What do we mean by role model – what is your definition? Why do you imagine some people might admire or look up to the gladiators? What skills do you think gladiators need?
- Read through the information found on the **assembly resource** all about *Gladiators*. Do you believe gladiators make good role models?
- Discuss some of your role models and the qualities they possess. Talk about how role models can show strength in different ways. Whilst gladiators may be physically strong, other people may show their strength through other qualities, such as kindness or patience.

Reflection

Role models can inspire us, but it's important to think carefully about why we admire them. We can choose role models who show kindness, respect, and fairness, as well as strength or success.

Picture News



KS1 focus

Who are some of the gladiators?



- Do you watch *Gladiators*? If so, who is your favourite gladiator? Why?
- *Gladiators* are athletes who compete in challenges that test strength, speed and teamwork. Some gladiators were already professional sportspeople before joining the show. Can you imagine being a gladiator?
- Think about sports or games you like to play. What skills do you use? Is it strength, speed, intelligence or teamwork? Can you give some examples?
- Look at **resource 1**, which shares information about some of the gladiators. What skills do they have? How might these skills help them in the games?
- What do you think motivates the gladiators to win their games?
- *Gladiators* train for a long time to be ready for the show. How do you think training and practice can help you get better at something you want to be able to do?
- Sometimes gladiators work together in the games and sometimes they compete on their own. Can you think of a time when you needed to work with others or on your own to complete a task? How did it feel to work alone compared to when you worked with someone else? Which do you prefer?

Reflection

Each gladiator shows us that practising our skills can help us to succeed. By watching programmes like *Gladiators*, we can learn about working hard, trying new challenges, and supporting each other when playing games or sports.

Picture News



KS2 focus

What other TV programmes have challenges for people to take part in?



- When you hear the word 'challenge', what comes to mind?
- Can you think of some challenges you've seen in real life or on TV? Are they physical, creative, mental, or teamwork-based? What makes them challenging?
- Other than *Gladiators*, do you watch any TV programmes that challenge people? What are they? Why do you like them?
- Look at **resource 2**, which shows some different TV programmes from around the world that include challenges. What similarities and differences can you spot between them? What different skills do contestants need for each type of programme?
- Some challenges test strength or speed, while others test knowledge, creativity or teamwork. Which type of challenge do you think is the hardest? Why?
- Not all challenges are completed in the same way. Some are done in teams and some individually. How might working in a team change the way someone approaches a challenge?
- Do you think challenge programmes are only about winning? What else might contestants gain from taking part?

Reflection

Challenges can test many different skills, not just physical strength. Taking part in a challenge can be a chance to learn, improve, and discover new talents.



KS2 follow-up ideas

Option 1

Research someone who you consider to be a role model.

Draw an outline of this person and label their different strengths.

Consider: What gave them strength to keep going? How did they talk to themselves when things got hard? What was the hardest moment where they refused to give up?

What can you learn from your role model?

Think about:

What is a role model? What makes someone a role model? Is it their physical strength, mental strength or both? Why? Discuss that while physical strength can be inspiring, a true role model often demonstrates inner strength.

Option 2

Have you ever given up on something because you thought it was too hard? How did it feel at the time?

Discuss that those feelings are not always a sign to stop – it can be a sign to use your inner strengths. What are some inner strengths that we could use when things get challenging?

Think about the word 'yet'. It can change how you think about challenges and can help you keep going when things get tricky.

Imagine your friend has told you they are finding something hard and they want to give up. Write them a letter to explain how they might use the word 'yet' and what inner strengths they will need to help them overcome their challenge.



KS1 follow-up ideas

Option 1

In the TV show *Gladiators*, each character matches their real-life skills and personalities. For example, Giant is tall and strong and Legend is confident in his abilities.

Discuss the difference between inner strengths and physical strengths. What are some examples of inner strengths?

Design a brand-new gladiator that celebrates inner strengths. You will need to choose a name, an outfit and a special skill.

How might your gladiator inspire others when they are finding something challenging? If your gladiator was standing next to you today, how might they help and encourage you?

Option 2

What is a role model? Who are some role models in your life? Why? What are some words we can use to describe role models? Can anyone be a role model? How?

Create an acrostic poem using the letters in your name to start each line. Each line should describe a way you are a good example or role model to others.

E.g.,

Always kind

Makes people feel welcome.

Acts responsibly.

Listen to others.



This week's useful websites

This week's news story

www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/articles/2026/gladiator-s-series-3

This week's useful video

Gladiators is back

<https://youtu.be/rhtUJOmDeR8?si=2WkPctY5Nx4YoEJl>

This week's Virtual Picture News

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss

This week's vocabulary

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TAKEHOME

16th - 22nd
February



Do gladiators make good role models?

BBC Media

In the news this week

A new series of the television programme, Gladiators, has recently returned to screens. The show features athletes competing in physical challenges such as strength, speed, and endurance events. The show is broadcast on the BBC and has attracted large audiences, including families and children. Gladiators train for many years to compete at a high level and often speak about discipline, teamwork, and preparation.

Things to talk about at home ...

- > Do you watch Gladiators at home, or are there other TV programmes you enjoy watching together as a family? What do you think makes someone on TV a good role model?
- > What skills or qualities do you believe are most important in a role model?
- > Share and talk about some of the people you look up to at home, and explain why you admire them.

Please note any interesting thoughts or comments

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss



Lunar New Year Celebrations

All around the world, people are celebrating Lunar New Year, a festival that marks the start of a new year in the lunar calendar (which follows the Moon). In 2026, Lunar New Year begins on 17th February. For many families, Lunar New Year is a time to come together, share special food and decorate their homes. Some people also give small gifts to wish each other good luck for the year ahead. Each Lunar New Year is linked to an animal from the zodiac, which follows a repeating cycle. The year 2026 is the Year of the Horse, and many people believe the horse is linked to energy and moving forward. Last year was the Year of the Snake. Celebrations can look different



Pictured: Lunar New Year 2026, the Year of the Horse.
Source: Canva.

in different places, but often include music, dancing and colourful decorations. Events and parades take place in cities around the world, including Beijing, Hanoi, Seoul, London and San Francisco!

If you want to find out more about Lunar New Year, check out the Picture News Global resource on your Members Area!

Pangolin Competition Time!

It's World Pangolin Day on 21st February, a special day to help people learn about pangolins and why they are important. Do you know what a pangolin is? Pangolins are shy animals that live in parts of Africa and Asia. They are covered in strong scales and curl up into a tight ball when they feel scared. Pangolins use long,



Pictured: A pangolin searching for ants!
Source: Canva.

sticky tongues to eat ants and termites and are very quiet movers! Pangolins are currently endangered, which means there are not many of them left in the wild. To help spread the message about these wonderful creatures, Picture News is holding a competition for schools! **Everyone is invited to create an informative poster filled with facts and information, which can help other people learn about pangolins and why they need protecting.** The winning poster will receive a Picture News Peter Bear! **Entries should be sent to help@picture-news.co.uk by Friday 27th February.**

Does seeing yourself in a toy or story help you feel like you belong?



I feel joyful because the barbie has ear defenders like me!
Luke

Let us know what you think about this week's news



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[@HelpPicture](https://twitter.com/HelpPicture)

Colourful Carnival

The 2026 Venice Carnival officially began with a colourful water parade, called the Festa Veneziana. The opening parade was led by a giant paper-mâché rat sculpture on a gondola (a light flat-bottomed boat). The 'Pantegana', a traditional symbol of the carnival, was followed along the Grande Canal by lots of decorated boats and floats. The huge rat then 'exploded', releasing streamers and colours into the air in front of crowds of spectators at historic Rialto Bridge. Tourists from all over the world



Pictured: The water parade opening the Venice carnival. **Source:** Carnevale di Venezia - Official Page on Facebook.

travelled to the Italian city, to experience the festival fun with dancers, music, and traditional feasts. People dressed up for the occasion, wearing Venetian masks, connecting to different history and fairytale characters, bright colours and fancy dress. Organisers say that this year, the celebrations will put special emphasis on Venice's oldest traditions. Parade participant, Monica Cavaliere Lanzilao, said, 'For me, it means being Venetian and being part of an active, lively, and intelligent community, and above all, one with strong traditions. So today has been a special day, commemorating our very traditions.'

Do you know any facts about Venice?
Have you ever seen a carnival?



Pictured: The water parade opening the Venice carnival. **Source:** Carnevale di Venezia - Official Page on Facebook.

Trash Talk



Pictured: Some of the new refuse trucks. **Source:** South Tyneside Council on Facebook.

South Tyneside Council has unveiled its new refuse vehicle fleet, and they all have very interesting names! The bin lorries have been named by locals, who submitted over 200 creative suggestions last November. These were whittled down by waste crews, who shortlisted their favourites. The 16 new rubbish trucks had their names chosen by 640 residents who cast their vote to choose the most popular names. Councillor Tracey Dixon, from South Tyneside Council, said, 'Giving the vehicles their own names adds a bit

of fun, but it also helps build pride in the service and strengthens the connection between the Council and our local communities.' The winning names are listed below:

Obi One Binobi, Donald Dump, Binny McBin Face, Trash Gordon, Bin Diesel, The Bin Reaper, Wor Hinnny Binnies, Rubbisharus Rex, Waste Howay, Bindiana Jones, Benjamin, Batteries Not Included, Bin There Done That, The Flying Dustman, Dustbin Hoffman and Thomas the Trash Wagon.

Do you think these are good names?
What would you name a bin lorry?

Does seeing yourself in a toy or story help you feel like you belong?



I don't need the characters in my books to look like me. I can still feel involved in the story and enjoy the adventure if they are different from me.

Lola

Let us know what you think about this week's news



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help@picture-news.co.uk



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