

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Spartacus Study Guide

We are watching this movie for several reasons:

1. It is very accurate historically, and we are learning about the Roman Empire.
2. A movie engages your emotions and understanding in a way that history books might not.
3. We are examining the moral issues of slavery and rebellion, in order to write an essay.

As you watch the movie, answer the Study Guide questions, as a way of focusing your attention and noting important details. Complete sentences are not necessary, but specific details are.

You will be writing an essay afterward, and this Study Guide is your main resource. Also visit my "Spartacus" web page for historical details and quotes from the script.

<<http://www.vhinkle.com/rome/spartacus.html>>

### Cast of Characters:

<b>Spartacus</b>	slave gladiator in 73 BC
<b>Batiatus</b>	owner of the gladiator school in Capua, Italy
<b>Marcellus</b>	trainer in the gladiator school
<b>Varinia</b>	slave who marries Spartacus
<b>Crixus</b>	slave gladiator
<b>Draba</b>	slave gladiator
<b>Crassus</b>	Roman aristocrat, general, and later consul
<b>Glaberus</b>	Roman army commander
<b>Helena &amp; Claudia</b>	Roman ladies
<b>Gracchus</b>	Roman senator
<b>Antoninus</b>	slave
<b>Tigranes Levantes</b>	Cilician pirate

### Vocabulary to Know

Gladiator _____	arena _____
Consul _____	crucify _____
Trident _____	crucifixion _____
Garrison _____	withdraw _____
Cohort _____	defeat _____

## Questions to Answer During the Movie

Preview these questions so you will see them coming.

1. As the movie begins, listen to the narrator's voice-over. The "disease" which plagues Rome in the first century BC is **h**\_\_\_\_\_ **s**\_\_\_\_\_.
2. In the first scene, we are in a salt quarry. Spartacus stops working and is punished. Why does he stop working? \_\_\_\_\_  
What does this show about his character? \_\_\_\_\_
3. During Spartacus's first days in the gladiator school, the trainer Marcellus dares him to "kill me." How does Spartacus act? \_\_\_\_\_  
What does this show about his tactics? \_\_\_\_\_
4. As a reward for good behavior, Spartacus is allowed the company of a woman. (After the scene is over, we will pause the movie, so you have time to write your answer.) Notice his initial reaction, and the moment when he decides not to force her.  
What does Varinia say that makes him change his mind?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
What does this show about his character?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Carefully watch the faces of Spartacus and Draba as they await their turn in the arena. Imagine what they are thinking. (After the scene is over, we will pause the movie. Then write what each one is thinking.)  
Spartacus: \_\_\_\_\_  
Draba: \_\_\_\_\_  
Why does Draba attack? \_\_\_\_\_
6. List two destructive activities the slaves do in the days and months after they escape.  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
Are they justified? \_\_\_ Give your reason. \_\_\_\_\_
7. What does the Senate do in response to the slave rebellion? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Notice the arrival of Antoninus. Whose slave is he? \_\_\_\_\_

9. A few evenings later, Spartacus suggests how Antoninus can help: \_\_\_\_\_

10. What deal does Spartacus make with Tigranes, the Cilician pirate? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Why is Glaberus defeated? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What happens to the deal with Cilician pirates later?

\_\_\_\_\_

What does Tigranes offer Spartacus?

\_\_\_\_\_

What does Spartacus reply, and why?

\_\_\_\_\_

13. In the final battle, compare the Roman and slave armies. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14. After the battle, why do many men shout, "I am Spartacus"?

\_\_\_\_\_

15. Near the end of the movie, Antoninus asks, "Are you afraid to die, Spartacus?" Why is Spartacus not afraid? \_\_\_\_\_

16. When Spartacus and Antoninus are in the ring, what two alternatives does Spartacus face?

\_\_\_\_\_

17. Why does Spartacus decide as he does?

\_\_\_\_\_

18. What do Gracchus and Batiatus do for Varinia and her baby? \_\_\_\_\_

19. Why does Varinia say, "Please die"?

20. At the end, to what extent would you say that Spartacus achieves his goals?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Use the space below to brainstorm ideas for your essay:**

Look for moments of moral dilemma:

- ❖ When a character faces a decision of right or wrong (not smart or stupid)
- ❖ When both choices may lead to a result of someone getting hurt
- ❖ When the “right” choice is difficult

Start making notes about these, so you can choose one to write about.

Decision #1: (Character) \_\_\_\_\_ asks himself:

Should I \_\_\_\_\_

or \_\_\_\_\_

The issue in 1-3 words (The *issue* is the topic or abstract idea behind the question, such as: freedom, the price of freedom, loyalty, love, friendship, murder, killing, justice, bravery, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

Setting/scene (time & place) \_\_\_\_\_

Decision #2: (Character) \_\_\_\_\_ asks himself:

Should I \_\_\_\_\_

or \_\_\_\_\_

The issue in 1-3 words \_\_\_\_\_

Setting/scene (time & place) \_\_\_\_\_

Decision #3: (Character) \_\_\_\_\_ asks himself:

Should I \_\_\_\_\_

or \_\_\_\_\_

The issue in 1-3 words \_\_\_\_\_

Setting/scene (time & place) \_\_\_\_\_

## Critical Essay: Moral Issues in “Spartacus”

“Moral” is defined as the judgment of right and wrong, whether an action is good or bad behavior. An “issue” is the subject or abstract idea to be discussed. In this story of struggle for freedom, the characters are faced with moral issues, such as: injustice, slavery, killing, and loyalty. The characters face choices about these issues, such as:

Is it right or wrong to kill this person under these circumstances?  
Should I disobey an immoral command, or do as I am told?  
May I do something wrong, to prevent a greater wrong?

As you watch the film and take notes on your study guide, reflect about the difficult choices which the characters face. Focus on one moral choice from the story to analyze. **Write a five-paragraph essay according to the following directions. You will have the most success if you follow each step thoughtfully and precisely!**

The **first paragraph** is your **introduction**. Identify Spartacus. Introduce the particular moral **issue** that you plan to analyze. Make your **thesis** statement. (When you give the background of the life and significance of Spartacus, write as if your reader does not know him. However, do *not* retell the plot or details of the movie.)

In the **second paragraph**, set the scene so your reader can picture it: **Describe the setting**. This will get your reader ready for the moment of decision that you plan to analyze. Where are they and why? What is going on?

In the **third paragraph**, identify the **moral choice** that Spartacus faces. Why is it a dilemma? Specify the **consequences** of his alternative choices of action.

In the **fourth paragraph**, describe Spartacus' **decision**. How does he solve the problem? Analyze what you think goes through his mind as he evaluates what is right.

In the **concluding paragraph**, **evaluate** his decision. Explain why you agree or disagree with what Spartacus did. What would you have done if you were in his place? Reflect about the importance of the moral issue being decided. This paragraph should review your thesis and end with a conclusion sentence.

**Formatting & Grading:** The final draft of your essay may be written in ink or typed in 12-point font, and must be double-spaced. (Note: If posted to your blog, ignore the double spacing.) Hand in this packet as well as your essay. The essay will be graded for logical organization, descriptive vocabulary, thoughtful reflection, and correct language, including spelling. A word about verbs: Use all present tense to describe literature and film. Please refer to <<http://www.vhinkle.com/rome/spartacus.html>> and your study guide notes to help with details. I look forward to reading your thoughts about significant issues.

## Student Writing Rubric

Score		Message	Organization	Language
<b>4</b>	<b>Exceeding standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Clearly and eloquently</i> addresses all parts of the task</li> <li>• Demonstrates <i>clear</i> understanding of purpose and audience</li> <li>• <i>Consistent</i> point of view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Clearly</i> focused central idea</li> <li>• Supports central idea with <i>relevant</i> details</li> <li>• <i>Clear</i> paragraph structure</li> <li>• <i>Effective</i> transitions guide the reader in following the sequence of ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few, <i>if any</i>, errors in language: spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization. Any errors do <i>not</i> interfere with the reader's understanding</li> <li>• Vocabulary is precise, vivid, and strikingly expressive</li> <li>• <i>Lively and creative</i> sentence variety</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>Meeting standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Understandably</i> addresses all parts of the task</li> <li>• Demonstrates <i>general</i> understanding of purpose and audience</li> <li>• <i>Mostly consistent</i> point of view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mostly consistent</i> focus</li> <li>• Supports central idea with <i>mostly relevant</i> details</li> <li>• <i>Provides</i> paragraph structure</li> <li>• <i>Some</i> effective transitions guide the reader in following the sequence of ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Some</i> errors in language: spelling, grammar, punctuation, or capitalization. Errors are distracting but do <i>not</i> prevent the reader's understanding</li> <li>• Vocabulary is appropriate, with mostly precise and specific words</li> <li>• <i>Some</i> sentence variety</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Approaching standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addresses only <i>parts</i> of the task</li> <li>• Demonstrates <i>little</i> understanding of purpose and audience</li> <li>• <i>Inconsistent</i> point of view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Inconsistent</i> focus</li> <li>• <i>Suggests</i> a central idea with <i>limited</i> details</li> <li>• <i>Inconsistent</i> paragraph structure</li> <li>• <i>Ineffective</i> transitions may confuse the reading in following the sequence of ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Several</i> errors in language: spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization. Errors <i>may interfere</i> with the reader's understanding</li> <li>• Vocabulary is mostly appropriate, but sometimes not precise or specific enough</li> <li>• <i>Little</i> sentence variety</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<b>Emerging skill</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addresses <i>only one part</i> of the task</li> <li>• Demonstrates <i>no</i> understanding of purpose and audience</li> <li>• <i>Missing</i> a point of view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Missing</i> focus</li> <li>• <i>Missing</i> a central idea, but may contain <i>limited</i> or <i>marginally related</i> details</li> <li>• <i>Missing</i> paragraph structure</li> <li>• <i>Missing</i> or ineffective transitions do not help the reader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Serious basic</i> errors in language: spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization . Errors interfere with the reader's understanding</li> <li>• Vocabulary is too simple or general</li> <li>• <i>Missing</i> sentence variety</li> </ul>

