

Colosseum

By Aysegul Liman Kaban

Subjects: History, Social sciences, Social Studies

Ages: 9-11

Ireland, Turkey



At the end of the lesson learners will be able to:

1. **Identify** what the Colosseum was used for in Ancient Rome.
2. **Describe** key facts about the Colosseum's structure and capacity.
3. **Explain** how entertainment in Ancient Rome was different from today.
4. **Create** a fact card about the Colosseum.

Standards

Irish Primary History Curriculum (SESE – History, 2023)

- Strand: Life, Society, Work and Culture in the Past.
- Strand Unit: Romans → Explore buildings, culture, and everyday life.

Turkish Sosyal Bilgiler Curriculum (4. sınıf)

- SB.4.2.1: Tarihte önemli uygarlıkları ve eserlerini tanır.
- SB.4.2.2: Kültürel mirasın korunmasının önemini kavrar.

Materials

- Colosseum fact sheet
- Map of Ancient Rome (Augmented Activity)
- Visuals (Augmented Activity)
- Video (Augmented Activity)
- Worksheet: *Fill in the blanks & "True or False" facts about the Colosseum*

Steps

Introduction

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Teacher question: "Have you ever been to a stadium to watch football or a concert?"
- Show a picture of the Colosseum.

Say: "2,000 years ago, Romans also went to watch events — but they looked very different!"

Activities

Activity 1 – Fact Hunt (10 minutes)

- Read aloud short sections from the fact sheet.
- Ask guided questions:
 - “How many people could the Colosseum hold?”
 - “What was under the arena floor?”
 - “What is the Colosseum used for today?”

Activity 2 – Compare & Discuss (10 minutes)

- On the board, create two columns: **Then (Ancient Rome)** vs **Now (Today)**.
- Students brainstorm differences between entertainment (gladiators vs football, public executions vs concerts).

Activity 3 – Creative Task (15 minutes)

- Students choose one:
 - Draw the Colosseum and label parts (arena, seating, trapdoors).
 - Write a mini “tour guide script” as if they were showing tourists around.
 - Make a fact card with 3–5 interesting facts.

Wrap-Up & Sharing (10 minutes)

- Volunteers share their drawings, scripts, or fact cards.
- Teacher highlights the importance of **preserving cultural heritage**.

Evaluation

Informal: Teacher observes contributions during fact hunt and comparison discussion.

Formal Exit Ticket: Students write down:

1. One fact they learned about the Colosseum.
2. One way it is similar or different from a modern stadium.

Notes

Differentiation

- **Support:** Provide fact cards with pictures for students who need more scaffolding.
- **Challenge:** Ask advanced students to research another Roman building (e.g., aqueduct, bathhouse).

Activity 3 – Creative Task (15–20 minutes)

Students choose **one** of the following three options. Teacher encourages variety so the class produces a mix of drawings, scripts, and fact cards.

Option A – Draw & Label the Colosseum

Task:

- Draw the Colosseum from the outside (round shape, arches) OR the inside (arena with seating).
- Use the fact sheet for accuracy.
- Add at least **three labels**:
 1. **Arena** (where gladiators fought).
 2. **Seating** (up to 80,000 people sat here).
 3. **Trapdoors/Underground Tunnels** (used for animals and gladiators).
- **Scaffolding Questions**:
 - Where would the emperor sit?
 - Why do you think Romans built so many arches?

Expected Outcome: A labelled diagram showing that students understand the main parts of the Colosseum.

Option B – Tour Guide Script

Task:

- Imagine you are a **tour guide in Rome** today.
- Write 5–7 sentences as if you are showing a group of visitors around the Colosseum.
- Include:
 - A **greeting** (“Welcome to the Colosseum, the largest amphitheatre ever built!”)
 - At least **three facts** (size, age, uses in the past, visitor numbers today).
 - A **closing line** (“Thank you for visiting this amazing piece of history!”).

Scaffolding Prompts:

- What would you show first — inside or outside?
- How would you make your tour exciting?

Expected Outcome: A short, persuasive script that demonstrates knowledge while practicing speaking/writing skills.

Option C – Fact Card

Task:

- Create a **fact card** about the Colosseum.
- Title: “The Colosseum”
- Write **3–5 key facts** in bullet points.
- Add one small drawing or symbol (e.g., gladiator helmet, Roman arch).

Scaffolding Prompts:

- Which fact surprised you the most?
- Which fact would make a visitor want to see the Colosseum?

Expected Outcome: A clear and concise fact card, showing selection of key information.

Differentiation

- **Support:** Provide sentence starters (“The Colosseum was built in ... It could hold ...”).
- **Challenge:** Ask advanced students to add a comparison (Colosseum vs modern stadium).

Homework / Follow-Up

- Write a short diary entry as if you were a Roman child visiting the Colosseum for the first time.