# Movie Worksheet

## Instructions

Refer to the “Movie Guide”[[1]](#footnote-1) which can be found on our class web page, and identify the themes, motifs, stakes, and narrative structure using this work sheet.

### Themes:

Masculinity, virtus (the Roman ideal of honor), Rome (What is Rome? What is the greatness of Rome?), life and death, survival, violent struggle

### Motifs:

SPQR (“the senate and people of Rome”) on the Eagles, birds, Elysium, dirt/earth (the dirt Maximus rubs between his hands before battle), rose petals

### Stakes:

Strength and honor, power and glory of Rome, life and death

### What is the emotional need plot line?

Maximus’ desire to get home and see his family

### What is the material goal plot line?

1. To restore Rome to a Republic, thus fulfilling Marcus Aurelius’ wish
2. To avenge Maximus’ family // kill Commodus

## Narrative structure:

#### Act 1:

Begins with which scene? Far From Home (see attached list of scenes)

Ends with which scene? A Soldier’s Death

What are the initiating events?

1. Marcus Aurelius’ appointment of Maximus as Rome’s Protector
2. The murder of Marcus Aurelius and Maximus’ family

What is the complicating event?

1. The attempted murder and subsequent enslavement of Maximus

#### Act 2:

Begins with which scene? Mark of The Legion

Ends with which scene? Win the Crowd

What are the adjustments in material and emotional goals?

At the beginning of Act 2, the material goal (Protect Rome and avenge his family) seems all but unattainable, and the emotional goal (Return to Family) is attainable only through death.

By the end of Act 2, when Maximus realizes he will have a chance to “meet the emperor,” he has reason to believe he may at least be able to attain the material goal of avenging his family before his death.

#### Act 3:

Begins with which scene? I Shall Cheer for YOu

Ends with which scene? Home Again

What is the goal climax?

Both material goals become possible when Maximus wins the crowd (and thus Rome) and the Senators Gracchus and Gaius along with Lucilla realize Maximus’ potential as a revolutionary. In killing Commodus Maximus can both avenge his family and restore the Republic. These material goals are met at the same time that he achieves his emotional goal of reunion with his family, when he meets Commodus in the gladiatorial arena.

#### Epilogue:

As Juba buries the icons of Maximus’ family in the black dirt of the Coliseum, the sun sets, the Coliseum is darkened, and the camera pulls away for a long shot.

**"Gladiator" dir. By Ridley Scott (2000)**

**List of Scenes**

I Far From Home (Main Title)

II Hell Unleashed

III You Have Missed the War

IV A Pleasant Fiction

V One More Duty

VI You Will Not Be Emperor

VII Hail Caesar

VIII A Soldier’s Death

IX Mark of the Legion

X Gladiators, I Salute You

XI Battle in Chains

XII The Greatness of Rome

XIII Win the Crowd

XIV I Shall Cheer for You

XV The Battle of Carthage

XVI My Name is Gladiator

XVII Terribly Vexed

XVIII A Man for the People

XIX Maximus the Merciful

XX You Simply Won’t Die

XXI The Last Wish of a Dying Man

XXII I’m an Entertainer

XXIII Busy Little Bee

XXIV Shadows and Dust

XXV Am I Not Merciful?

XXVI Death Smiles at Us All

XXVII Home Again

XXVIII Now We Are Free (End Credits)

**Cast of Characters**

Maximus (Russell Crowe), Marcus Aurelius’ Spanish general

[Marcus Aurelius](http://www.roman-emperors.org/marcaur.htm) (Richard Harris), emperor of Rome 161-180.

[Commodus](http://www.roman-emperors.org/commod.htm) (Joaquin Phoenix), son of Marcus Aurelius, emperor 180-192.

Lucilla (Connie Nielsen), the daughter of Marcus Aurelius and sister of Commodus.

Juba (Djimon Hounsou), Maximus’ fellow gladiator

Proximo (Oliver Reed), a former gladiator and the magister (owner) of Maximus’ ludus (gladiatorial school)

Gracchus (Derek Jacobi), senator (pro-Republic)

Falco (David Schofield), senator (pre-Empire)

Gaius (John Shrapnel) senator (pro-Republic)

Lucius (Spencer Treat Clark), the son of Lucilla.

1. http://faculty.sgc.edu/rkelley/Classical%20Hollywood%20Screenplay%20Structure.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-1)