Exercise 9

Read the following text for questions 1-6.

ROMAN SHIPBUILDING AND NAVIGATION

The success of the Roman Empire was not only due to its strong army and advanced architecture but also to its impressive abilities in shipbuilding and navigation. The Romans controlled large parts of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East, and much of this would have been impossible without their efficient use of ships. Roman ships carried soldiers, food, goods, and even passengers across the Mediterranean Sea and beyond.

Roman shipbuilders developed several types of ships, each designed for a specific purpose. The navis longa was a long warship with many oars and a sharp metal tip at the front, used for fighting other ships. These warships were fast and easy to control during that time. On the other hand, the navis oneraria was a merchant ship, much larger and slower, designed to carry goods. These ships usually had one large square sail and a small group of sailors to manage them.

The materials used for shipbuilding were mostly wood, especially pine and oak. The Romans joined the pieces of wood together with nails and a special glue called pitch, which helped make the ships waterproof. To protect the wooden parts from damage, they also covered the sides of the ships with lead sheets. Archaeologists have found parts of ancient Roman ships at the bottom of the sea, and these discoveries have provided valuable information about Roman shipbuilding techniques.

Navigation was another important skill. Roman sailors used the position of the sun and stars to find their way. They also studied the color of the water, the shape of the waves, and the direction of the wind. Some Roman captains even carried birds with them. If they were lost at sea, they would release the birds and watch the direction they flew to locate the nearest land.

Despite all their knowledge, sailing in Roman times was still dangerous. Storms, pirates, and accidents were common, and many Roman ships never reached their destinations. For this reason, most Roman captains preferred

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to sail close to the coast whenever possible, where they could find a safe harbor if needed.

The Roman tradition of shipbuilding and navigation had a strong influence on later European societies, helping to shape the future of sea travel for centuries.

For questions 1-4, fill in the missing information in the numbered spaces. Write no more than ONE WORD and/or A NUMBER for each question.

Roman **(1)** _____ were essential for moving soldiers, goods, and passengers across the sea.

The navis longa was designed for **(2)** _____ with other ships.

Romans covered parts of their ships with **(3)** _____ sheets to protect the wood.

Some captains used **(4)** _____ to help them find the direction of land when lost at sea.

For questions 5-6, choose the correct answer A, B, C, or D.

5. Why did Roman captains usually stay close to the coast?

A) Because they didn't know how to navigate
B) Because it was easier to trade with local people
C) Because sailing far from land was more dangerous
D) Because their ships could only travel short distances

6. What is the main idea of the text?

A) To explain the dangers of ancient sea travel
B) To describe how the Romans built and used ships
C) To compare Roman ships with modern ships
D) To tell stories of famous Roman sailors

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