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off

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Here are more examples of the ploy of making history palatable by making it funny. Anderson has written and drawn two cartoon stories about boys' adventures in different periods of history which, incidentally, give plenty of information about life in Roman and Tudor times. Both tales ramble about and exhaust credulity and historical plausibility, out of the necessity to include the maximum amount of information. In the desire to engage a modern child's interest, they sometimes distort historical reality. It is unlikely, for instance, that a Roman child would have wanted to grow up to be a gladiator in the same way that a modern child might fantasise about being a pop star. However, as long as they are not taken too seriously, and offered as support for (or relief from) more serious study, they offer a lot of fun and bad jokes along with the facts, particularly **Rob the Roman**, which owes something to 'Up Pompeii'. Anderson manages to pack a lot into some very small pictures. The standard paperback black and white format does him no favours, but his unflinching enthusiasm makes up for a lot, and children will enjoy picking out the footnoted details in the cartoons.

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