

**STAGE III:  
MODEL ASSESSMENTS  
FOR LATIN  
GRADES 9-12**

## Communication

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students read, understand, and interpret Latin or Greek. (Standard I.1)

**Expectation #1:** Initiate and sustain spoken and written communication by providing and obtaining factual information, expressing feelings and emotions, and exchanging opinions.

**Benchmark:** Exchange, support, and discuss their opinions and individual perspectives with peers and/or speakers of the target language on a variety of topics dealing with contemporary and historical issues.

### Stage III (9 – 12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Presentational (writing, speaking)

**Description:** Students will be given a choice of topics (i.e. relationship between Aeneas and Dido in Book IV of the *Aeneid*) and will be asked to prepare an essay in English defending one specific point of view. The paper will then be presented to the class. This can also be done in a debate format.

**Prompt:** Choose either Dido or Aeneas and carefully re-read Book IV of the *Aeneid*, both in Latin and English, to gather as many details as possible. Then write a one-page paper defending the position of the character. In writing your paper, you must reference the Latin text to substantiate your argument. You may add your own interpretation of the events. Your argument should be convincing and sway the audience in your favor. You will present this paper to the class using the first person. You should also have a one-page, typed list of the quotations that you used in your defense to hand out to the class.

**Grading:** Use the holistic writing rubric for the essay. Use the oral presentation rubric, focusing on the usage and pronunciation of Latin passages.

## Communication

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students expand their knowledge through the reading of Latin or Greek and the study of ancient culture. (Standard 3.2)

**Expectation #2:** Comprehend the main ideas and significant details in written, live, and recorded messages prepared for a general audience of native speakers of the target language.

**Benchmark:** Analyze the main plot, subplot, characters, their descriptions, roles, and significance in literary texts.

### Stage III (9-12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Interpretive (listening)

**Description:** After studying the story of Aeneas, read the following passage two times to the students. Then place the students in pairs. Each student in turn picks out and explains a detail of the story in a full Latin sentence to the other student, who writes the detail down. Even the simplest element of the story is acceptable. The students will then turn the recorded responses in to the teacher. It would be helpful to find a visual, such as a picture of Aeneas carrying his father from Troy.

Any story can be adapted for this purpose. It should be a story with which students are familiar, and the vocabulary and sentence structure should be simple. This example uses only the imperfect tense, but it could be re-written to include perfect tenses.

**Prompt:** Listen as you hear the story of Aeneas. You will hear the story two times. Then you will work with a partner to reconstruct aspects of the story. Each partner will provide one detail from the story, and the other partner will record it. Make sure your partner writes down everything you say exactly! You will then switch roles until each of you has given five details.

### Story of Aeneas

*Ubi Graeci Troiam capiebant, Dei Aeneae dicebant: "Effuge ex urbe! Duc familiam tuam et discede!" Aeneas igitur ducebat uxorem Creusam et filium Ascanium ex urbe. Pater Aeneae, Anchises, erat senex. Non poterat currere. Ergo Aeneas patrem Anchisen portabat.*

**Grading:** Student must provide 3 correct details to pass.

## Communication and Comparisons

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students use orally, listen to, and write Latin or Greek as a part of the language learning process. (Standard 1.2)

**Expectation #3:** Present information and ideas on topics familiar to the presenter to general audiences of listeners and readers.

### Stage III (9 – 12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Presentational (writing)

**Benchmark:** Create stories, poems, short plays, or skits based on themes, ideas, and perspectives from the cultures studied.

**Description:** After the students have read some stories of mythology in Latin, they should write a five-sentence description of a metamorphosis of their choice in Latin using figurative language. Students must write a paragraph in English describing to the teacher their choices. They must decide if they will write in prose or poetry; whose standpoint they will take (the point of view of the ‘victim’, i.e. Arachne’s version, or the changer, i.e. Athena), and the choice of figurative language they will use.

**Prompt:** Having read several myths about changes, write a five-sentence paragraph describing a metamorphosis of your choice using the figurative language we have studied. In a one-paragraph English introduction tell me 1) the change you will describe, 2) whether you will write in prose or poetry, 3) whose viewpoint you will take (from the ‘victim’s’ point of view, i.e. Arachne now tells her side of the story, or from the changer, i.e. Athena), and 4) what figurative language you will use in your description.

**Grading:** Use the holistic writing rubric. As an alternative, you and the students can decide ahead of time on specific points of the rubric. In this case, you can make the poem more grammar specific by requiring certain forms such as one, deponent verb, an ablative of manner, a vocative, two subjunctives, etc.

## Communication

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students read, understand, and interpret Latin or Greek. (Standard 1.1)

**Expectation #4:** For students of Latin and Greek, read, understand, and interpret authentic texts (e.g., Vergil and Cicero).

### Stage III (9 – 12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Interpretive (reading)

**Benchmark:** Recognize, explain, and interpret content and features of style and meter of authors they read.

**Description:** After the students have studied Book I of Vergil's *Aeneid*, they should be able to answer the following questions about style, content, and meter for the following introductory passage. They will be asked to respond to twenty-five questions about the passage. (Teachers may also choose other passages.)

**Prompt:** After reading the introductory seven lines of Book I of Vergil's *Aeneid*, answer the following questions about style, content, and meter.

**Grading:** At least 16 correct answers out of 20 is necessary to pass.

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris    | (1) |
| Italiam fato profugus Laviniaque venit           | (2) |
| Litora, multum illet et terris iacatus et alto   | (3) |
| Vi superum, saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram,      | (4) |
| Multa quique et bello passus, dum conderet urbem | (5) |
| Inferretque deos Latio, genus unde Latinum       | (6) |
| Albanique patres atque altae moenia Romae.       | (7) |

## Questions

1. What is the meter of the *Aeneid*?
2. In line 1, *arma* refers to what?
3. In the same line, *virum* refers to whom?
4. In line 3, *multum ille et* is an example of what literary device?
5. In line 4, *superum* is what case and what number?
6. The *Aeneid* opens in the middle of the story. What is the literary term for that?
7. In line 3, the repetition, of *et...et* would be an example of what literary device?
8. *Oris* in line 1 is an example of which ablative?
9. *Fato* in line 2 is an example of which ablative?
10. In line 2, *profugus* is what part of speech?
11. *Profugus* refers to whom?
12. What is the inferred antecedent of the pronoun *ille*?
13. What is the case and number of *multa* in line 5?
14. In line 5, *passus* (*patior, pati, passus*) is what kind of verb?
15. In line 5, *dum conderet* is what construction?
16. What is the tense of *conderet*?
17. In line 1, who is the actual subject of *cano*?
18. *Italiam* in line 2 is an example of what case and what use?
19. *Multum* in line 3 is what part of speech?
20. In line 4, the crisscross construction of *saevae memorem Iunonis...iram* is an example of what poetic device?

## Answers

1. Dactylic Hexameter
2. the Trojan War
3. Aeneas
4. elision
5. genitive plural
6. *in media res*
7. anaphora
8. ablative, place from which
9. ablative, cause
10. perfect passive participle
11. Aeneas
12. Aeneas
13. accusative, direct object
14. deponent verb
15. subjunctive of cause (or anticipation)
16. imperfect tense
17. Vergil
18. accusative, place to which
19. adverb
20. synchysis

## Cultures and Comparisons

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students compare and contrast their own culture with that of the Greco-Roman world. (Standard 4.2)

**Expectation #5:** Demonstrate an understanding of commonly accepted behaviors, beliefs, and points of view of the target language cultures and compare them with their own.

**Benchmark:** Identify and analyze cultural perspectives as reflected in a variety of literary genres.

### Stage III (9-12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Interpretive (reading)

**Description:** “In politics, two and two do not always make four.”  
Alexander Hamilton (1789)  
Federalist No. XXI

“In fiction, two and two is always more than four.”  
Flannery O’Connor (1958)

Placing mathematical concerns aside, both the colonial constitutionalist and the modern writer would agree that there is a kind of synergy present in many aspects of society. Certain words, symbols, or actions, when placed within a particular context, take on added meaning or more sophisticated significance. The following is an example of the classical influence upon American literature. Or, if mathematical proof is required:

Classical                      Colonial                      Modern  
Elements                      +                      Foundations                      =                      Identity

Students are asked to compare the two poems below, the first written by Allen Tate and the second from Vergil’s *Aeneid*. They then answer the questions that follow.

**Prompt:** Here are two poems for you to compare. The first is written by Allen Tate, the second is an excerpt from the national epic of Rome, Vergil’s *Aeneid*. Read both and then answer the questions that follow.

**Grading:** Use the following point system to assign grades to individual segments of the assessment. Use the holistic reading rubric to grade students’ understanding of the poems.

Accuracy of Latin translation of Vergil	(40 points)
Quality of written responses to questions	(50 points)
Meaningful participation in discussion of topic	(10 points)

“Aeneas at Washington”

Allen Tate

I myself saw furious with blood  
Neoptolemus, at his side with black Atridae,  
Hecuba and the hundred daughters, Priam  
Cut down, his filth drenching the holy fires.  
In that extremity I bore me well,  
A true gentleman, valorous in arms,  
Disinterested and honourable. Then fled:  
That was a time when civilization  
Run by the few fell to the many, and  
Crashed to the shout of men, the clang of arms:  
Cold victualing I seized, I hoisted up  
The old man my father upon my back,  
In the smoke made by sea for a new world  
Saving little – a mind imperishable  
If time is, a love of past things tenuous  
As the hesitation of receding love.

(To the reduction of uncited littorals  
We brought chiefly the vigor of prophecy,  
Our hunger breeding calculation  
And fixed triumphs.)

I saw the thirsty dove  
In the glowing fields of Troy, hemp ripening  
And tawny corn, the thickening Blue Grass  
All lying rich forever in the green sun.  
I see all things apart, the towers that men  
Contrive I too contrived long, long ago.  
Now I demand little. The singular passion  
Abides its objects and consumes desire  
In the circling shadow of its appetite.  
There was a time when the young eyes were slow,  
Their flame steady beyond the firstling fire,  
I stood in the rain, far from home at nightfall  
By the Potomac, the great Dome lit the water,  
The city my blood had built I knew no more  
While the screech-owl whistled his new delight  
Consecutively dark.

Struck in the wet mire  
Four thousand leagues from the ninth buried city  
I thought of Troy, what we had built her for.

“The Aeneid”

Vergil

Selections from Book II

(lines 497-502, 708-722, 793-799)

exiit oppositasque euicit gurgite moles  
fertur in arua furens cumulo camposque per omnis  
cum stabulis armenta trahit uidi ipse furentem  
caede Neoptolemum geminosque in limine Atridas  
uidi Hecubam centumque nurus Priamumque per aras  
sanguine foedantem quos ipse sacrauerat ignis

ipse subibo umeris nec me labor iste grauabit  
quo res cumque cadent unum et commune periculum  
una salus ambobus erit mihi paruus Iulus  
sit comes et longe seruet uestigia coniunx  
uos famuli quae dicam animis aduertite uestris  
est urbe egressis tumulus templumque uetustum  
desertae Cereris iuxtaque antiqua cupressus  
religione patrum multos seruata per annos  
hanc ex diuerso sedem ueniamus in unam  
tu genitor cape sacra manu patriosque penatis  
me bello e tanto digressum et caede recenti  
attrectare nefas donec me flumine uiuo  
abluero

haec fatus latos umeros subiectaque colla  
ueste super fuluique insternor pelle leonis

ter frustra comprehensa manus effugit imago  
par leuibus uentis uolucrique simillima somno  
sic demum socios consumpta nocte reuiso  
atque hic ingentem comitum adfluxisse nouorum  
inuenio admirans numerum matresque uirosque  
collectam exsilio pubem miserabile uulgus  
undique conuenere animis opibusque parati

## Questions

1. Why does Tate borrow so extensively from Vergil in his introduction? Why would he seek to associate his work with Vergil's?
2. What is the "new world"? Why has Aeneas fled to this place?
3. For Americans in the New World, "Anchises" represents their European traditions, which could not be fully abandoned. Explain this analogy with respect to the English roots of the U.S. Constitution.
4. Aeneas is constantly looking back toward Troy while attempting to forge a future for his followers. How did George Washington face a similar challenge?
5. Colonial Americans struggled to maintain their pious continuity with history, while allowing for the influence of rationalist Enlightenment political thought. How does the poem convey this tension?
6. What will make the founding of Washington different from that of Rome or Troy? How could the colonials know whether they were condemned to repeat history? Did the colonial know something new about history or human nature?
7. What philosophical view is described by the phrase, "I see all things apart"? Is this view primarily Classical or Enlightenment?
8. When George Washington retired from military service, he ordered a bronze for his chimney piece at Mount Vernon, "A Groupe of Aeneas Carrying his Father out of Troy." What does this suggest about his philosophical and political beliefs.
9. Read the account of Cincinnatus written by the Roman historian Livy. How does it compare with the life of George Washington? Is Washington's career closer to that of the farmer/commander Cincinnatus, or is he more of an "American Aeneas"?
10. In the "Aeneid," how does Aeneas exhibit piety in his relations with his family members, his fellow man, and the gods? How do the Founding Fathers demonstrate a reverence for these relations?
11. How are the colonials similar to the "new refugees" in the "Aeneid"? Is there a difference in the collective spirit or mood of the "new Americans" which distinguishes them from the followers of Aeneas? What is their sense of purpose?

## Cultures and Comparisons

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through their study of classical languages. (Standard 3.1)

**Expectation #5:** Demonstrate an understanding of commonly accepted behaviors, beliefs, and points of view of the target language cultures.

**Benchmark:** Identify and analyze cultural perspectives as reflected in a variety of literary genres.

### Stage III (9-12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Interpretive (reading)

**Description:** In teaching history or classical languages, it is often necessary to define and give evidence of the connection between modern society and classical civilizations. This can be accomplished by providing students information on a variety of topics. The information may be concerned with establishing sublime relationships, often philosophical or religious ones, between ancients and moderns. These topics are useful for generating discussion and developing a more sophisticated articulation of the relationship between “us” and “them.” For this assessment, students will compare contexts from modern American history with similar contexts from the ancient world. Then, they will answer the questions that follow.

**Prompt:** A continuum exists between certain aspects of classical civilization and modern society. In exploring the classical tradition in America, we find many commonalities between the values of the Romans and the perspectives of Americans. As G.K. Chesterton observed, “Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead.”

1. In colonial times, more specifically, during the American Revolutionary War, the fort at West Point, New York, was referred to as the “American Thermopylae.” Consult an English translation of the Greek historiographer Herodotus for the history of Thermopylae. What symbolic connection would American colonials have sought to establish between Thermopylae and West Point?
2. During his funeral oration at the burial of George Washington, General Harry “Light-Horse” Lee stood in the pulpit of the German Lutheran Church in Philadelphia and quoted this ode from the Roman poet, Horace:

*justum et tenacem propositi virum*

*non civium ardor prava jubentium*

*non vultus instantis tyranni*

*mente quatit solida*

Why are these ideal verses to describe a model patriot?

How do they reflect the character of Washington?

3. Read this anonymous poem composed in Charleston, South Carolina in 1769:

Parent of Life! true Bond of Law!  
From whence alone our Bliss we draw,  
Thou! who did's't once in antient Rome,  
E'er fell Corruption caus'd its Doom,  
Reign in a Cato's godlike Soul,  
And Brutus in each Thought controul;  
Here, here prolong thy wish'd for Stay,  
To bless and cheer each passing Day,  
Tho' with no pompous Piles erect,  
Nor sculptur's Stones, thy shrine is deckt;  
Yet here, beneath thy fav'rite Oak,  
Thy Aid will all thy SONS invoke.  
Oh! if thou deign to bless this Land,  
And guide it by thy gentle Hand,  
Then shall AMERICA become  
Rival, to once high-favour'd Rome.

This poem is an invocation. What is being called for?

How do these lines praise Roman republicanism?

Why are Cato and Brutus cited as worthy models?

(You may need to consult the biographies of Cato and Brutus written by the moral historiographer Plutarch.)

What does colonial America lack compared to ancient Rome in terms of majestic splendor?

What is the implied destiny for "AMERICA"?

What does the symbol of the oak tree represent?

**Grading:** Use the following point system to assign values to individual segments of the assessment. Use the holistic reading rubric to grade student understanding of the Latin text.

Accuracy of Latin translation of Horatian Ode	(30 points)
Quality of written responses to questions	(40 points)
Meaningful participation in discussion of topic	(30 points)

## Cultures and Comparisons

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives of Greek and Roman culture as revealed in the products of the Greeks or Romans. (Standard 2.2)

**Expectation #6:** Apply knowledge of the target language cultures to explain the relationship between their products and perspectives and compare them with those of their own.

**Benchmark:** Identify the relationships among the products, practices, and perspectives of the cultures studied and compare them with their own.

### Stage III (9-12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Interpretive (reading); presentational (writing)

**Description:** You will need to provide samples of Roman coins and American paper money and coins. If authentic Roman coins are not available, inexpensive replicas can be acquired from several sources, including the American Classical League or museum bookstores. Pictures of coins can be obtained from [Roman History From Coins](#) by Michael Grant and.

You should have students locate and translate the various Latin phrases on American money, e.g., “*e pluribus unum, novus ordo seclorum, annuit coeptis.*”

Students should also be provided with an image of a Roman coin as well as the standard abbreviations used on Roman coinage with their meanings. Students should translate the Latin inscriptions and attempt to explain the symbolism of images on the coins. Then, students should research the production methods Romans employed in minting coins. They should also be encouraged to explain the absence of paper money from Roman society and the importance associated with the iconography of Roman coins as political propaganda.

**Prompt:** The coins Romans minted and circulated reveal much about Roman culture. A close examination of Roman coins will provide important insights concerning Roman government and values.

First, you will find Latin on almost all American coin and paper money produced today. The United States Treasury department determines what should be represented on American money. The images and inscriptions reveal that of all cultures, Roman culture exercised the most prevalent and significant influence on American culture.

The *sestertius* was the basic unit of Roman money. It was a silver coin worth 2.5 *asses*. The denarius, also a silver coin, was worth four *sestertii*, and the *aureus*, a gold coin first minted by Julius Caesar, was worth 25 *denarii*. Coins less in value than the *sestertius* were made of copper.

What is the root word of the Latin word for money, “*pecunia*”? Consult a Latin dictionary and

define the noun "*pecus*." Explain the etymological connection between "*pecus*" and "*pecunia*." What does the English adjective "impecunious" mean?

What class of society is represented on most American currency? Why do you feel it is important to Americans to depict politicians on money?

Why were likenesses of Roman emperors placed on coins during their reigns while American politicians are portrayed on coins only after their term of office? Does this reflect a change in the use of money for political propaganda?

Why were Roman coins more powerful images of prestige in the ancient world than are American coins in the modern world? (Consider the fact that the ancient world lacked television, radio, newspapers, and the internet.)

Does the presence of Latin inscriptions on American money suggest to you that many colonial Americans were able to read Latin?

You can create your own coins in the Roman style using modern technology. Scan an image of yourself in profile and save to a disk. Then, using image editing software (for example, Photo shop) superimpose your likeness on an image of a Roman coin. Add a suitable Latin inscription which describes your position within society. Print a color copy of your coin for display in the classroom. What does the coin tell people about you and your status within society?

**Grading:** Use a basic point system to grade students' answers to the questions. Use the visuals and artwork rubric to grade the students' computer-generated coins.

## Cultures and Comparisons

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students compare and contrast their own culture with that of the Greco-Roman world. (Standard 4.2)

**Expectation #8:** Describe significant influences (e.g., political, philosophical, and sociological) of the target language cultures.

**Benchmark:** Identify, discuss, and analyze such intangible products of the target culture as social, economic, and political institutions, and explore their impact on their own culture.

### Stage III (9-12)

**Mode(s) of Communication** Interpretive (reading)

**Description:** It has been said that the history of the world is the history of Rome because Roman civilization greatly influenced many aspects of European (and later American) society. The Romans made important contributions in language, philosophy, law, education, government, and military science. T.S. Eliot once wrote, “We are all, so far as we inherit the civilization of Europe, still citizens of the Roman Empire.” The old expression “All roads lead to Rome” suggests that many of our modern ways of living can be traced back to Roman roots. The following quotations represent Roman thought concerning philosophy, human nature, and life in general. Students will choose two of the quotations and write an elegant translation. Then, they will answer the questions that follow.

“Multa magis quam multorum lectione formanda mens.” Seneca  
 (“We must form our minds by reading deep rather than wide.”)

“Non omne quod licet honestum est.” Corpus Iuris Civilis  
 (“What is permissible is not always honorable.”)

“Divina natura dedit agros, ars humana aedificavit urbes.” Varro  
 (“Divine nature gave us the country, human art built our cities.”)

“Nescire autem quid ante quam natus sis acciderit, id est semper puerum. Quid enim est aetas hominis, nisi ea memoria rerum veterum cum superiorum aetate contextitur?” Cicero  
 (“To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For what is the worth of a human life, unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history?”)

“Fere libenter homines id quod volunt credunt.” Caesar  
 (“Men readily believe what they want to believe.”)

“Magnos homines virtute metimur, non fortuna.” Nepos  
 (“We measure great men by their virtue, not their fortune.”)

“Beneficium accipere libertatem est vendere.” Syrus  
(“To accept a favor is to sell one’s freedom.”)

“Quaedam iura non scriptis, sed omnibus scriptis certiora sunt.” Seneca  
(“Some laws, though unwritten, are more firmly established than all written laws.”)

“Nullum suscipio, nullum in bonis numero, quod ad aes exit.” Seneca  
(“I respect no form of education or study which exists for the purpose of making money.”)

As an extension of this activity, the teacher may wish to ask students to compose their own philosophical quotation that reflects their own perspectives on some aspect of human nature. These student-produced aphorisms can be translated into Latin and displayed in the classroom to reinforce the connection between classical and modern minds.

**Prompt:** The following Latin quotations provide valuable insights not only into the nature of Roman society but into modern civilization as well. Select one of the quotations and render an elegant translation. Then compose a two page essay in which you address the following questions:

- In the first paragraph, explain what you believe prompted the author to express this sentiment. Consider the times in which the author lived. You may need to do some biographical research on the author to understand the age in which he lived.
- In the second paragraph, examine the meaning of the quotation. What is the author hoping to accomplish through this expression of Roman wisdom?
- In the third paragraph, cite a modern example that closely illustrates the validity of the quotation. Express clearly the connection between people and events in the modern world and the perspective expressed by the Roman author.
- In the fourth paragraph, express your agreement or disagreement with the quotation. Support your opinion with a relevant example.

“Multa magis quam multorum lectione formanda mens.” Seneca

“Non omne quod licet honestum est.” Corpus Iuris Civilis

“Divina natura dedit agros, ars humana aedificavit urbes.” Varro

“Nescire autem quid ante quam natus sis acciderit, id est semper puerum. Quid enim est aestas hominis, nisi ea memoria rerum veterum cum superiorum aetate contextitur?” Cicero

“Fere libenter homines id quod volunt credunt.” Caesar

“Magnos homines virtute metimur, non fortuna.” Nepos

“Beneficium accipere libertatem est vendere.” Syrus

“Quaedam iura non scriptis, sed omnibus scriptis certiora sunt.” Seneca

“Nullum suscipio, nullum in bonis numero, quod ad aes exit.” Seneca

**Grading:** Use a basic point system to grade students’ answers to the questions. Use the holistic reading rubric to grade students’ understanding of the Latin quotations.

## Communication and Comparisons

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students compare and contrast their own culture to that of the Greco-Roman world. (Standard 4.2)

**Expectation #9:** Demonstrate an understanding of basic similarities and differences between their own language and culture and the target language and culture.

### Stage III (9 – 12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Presentational (writing)

**Benchmark:** Understand the relationship between word order and meaning and explain how this may or may not reflect the ways in which cultures organize information and view the world.

**Description:** After the students have read some stories of mythology, in Latin, they are to write a five-sentence description of a metamorphosis of their choice using figurative language. Students must write a paragraph in English describing to the teacher their choices. They must decide if they will write in prose or poetry; whose standpoint they will take (the point of view of the ‘victim’, i.e. Arachne’s version, or the changer, i.e. Athena), and the choice of figurative language they will use.

**Prompt:** Having read several myths about changes, you are to write a five-sentence paragraph describing a metamorphosis of your choosing, using the figurative language we have studied. In a one-paragraph English introduction, include the following: 1) the change you will describe; 2) whether you will write in prose or poetry; 3) whose viewpoint you will take (from the ‘victim’s’ point of view, i.e. Arachne now tells her side of the story, or from the changer, i.e. Athena); and 4) what figurative language you will use in your description.

**Grading:** Use the holistic writing rubric. As an alternative, you and the students can decide ahead of time on specific points of the rubric. In this case, you can make the poem more grammar specific by requiring certain forms such as one, deponent verb, an ablative of manner, a vocative, two subjunctives, etc.

## Connections and Communities

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students expand their knowledge through the reading of Latin and the study of ancient culture. (Standard 3.2)

**Expectation #13:** Explain distinctive cultural and linguistic perspectives about information acquired in the target language.

**Benchmark:** Understand ideas and view points that can only be explained in terms of the original language and culture.

### Stage III (9-12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Interpretive (reading)

**Description:** Students can learn much about Roman culture through the examination of Roman tombstones. Many of these tombstones have inscriptions that provide detailed information concerning family relationships, occupations, and even philosophical insights on the nature of life. Students will examine the following image with an inscription, transcribe the inscription to the best of their ability, and then answer the questions that follow.

Here is a transcription of the inscription:

**D·M  
P·CAPRILIO  
IANVARIO  
P·VETRONIVS  
PRIMVS  
IANVARIVS  
ET·PRIMA  
PATRI · B · M**

Transcription with omitted letters supplied

**DIS · MANIBVS  
PVBLIO · CAPRILIO  
IANVARIO  
PVBLIVS · VETRONIVS  
PRIMVS  
IANVARIVS  
ET · PRIMA  
PATRI · BENE · MERENTI**

**Prompt:** Examine the following Roman tombstone inscription. Transcribe every letter as best as you can.



(image from LacusCurtius.com)

After you have translated the transcription, answer the following questions:

Why do you think so many letters have been omitted in this inscription?

What is the meaning of the abbreviation “D.M.”? What does this abbreviation suggest about Roman beliefs about life after death?

What case is “P. CAPRILIO IANUARIO”? Why is this a logical choice for a dedication?

Is there any information about Publius Caprius Ianuarius’ occupation? Is it likely that he served in the army or achieved high political office?

What does the absence of any artistic decoration on the tombstone suggest about the economic status of the family who erected the tombstone?

What can you assume about the marital status of Publius Caprius Ianuarius?

Who are Primus and Prima Ianuarius? What does Prima’s name suggest about her marital status and age?

What can you infer about their feelings toward their father based on the last line of the inscription, “PATRI B M”?

Who might Publius Vetronius be? What relationship is suggested by the fact that Publius Vetronius is inscribed in the same case as Primus and Prima?

**Grading:** Use a basic point system to grade students’ answers to the questions. Use the holistic reading rubric to grade student understanding of the inscription.

## Connections and Communities

**Standards for Classical Language Learning:** Students use their knowledge of Latin or Greek in a multilingual world. (Standard 5.1)

**Expectation #15:** Use the target language beyond the school setting.

**Benchmark:** Students participate in club activities that benefit the school or community.

### Stage III (9-12)

**Mode(s) of Communication:** Presentational (speaking)

**Description:** Students can become involved in numerous club activities that benefit their school and enhance the cultural life of their community. There are almost always opportunities for Latin students to host public recitations of Latin poetry, or even attend similar recitations at area schools or colleges. Often colleges host recitations of Greek and Latin epic poetry during weekend “marathons” in which Latin students from surrounding schools may participate. Some Latin programs host performances of “playlets,” short performances of Roman theater with limited Latin. These experiences enable Latin students to understand Latin as a spoken language in a creative way. Students will select a poem and memorize it for public recitation. They will meet with you to discuss stylistics of Roman poetry in preparation for their performance.

**Prompt:** Here are some suggestions for using your classical expertise outside the classroom. Select a poem and memorize it for a public recitation. Arrange to meet with your teacher to discuss stylistics of Roman poetry in preparation for your performance. First, you will recite for the teacher, then your classmates, and, once your recitation is fully polished, you will recite for the school community at a Latin recitation with other Latin students.

April is National Poetry Month. April is also the first full month of spring. To celebrate National Poetry month as well as the change of seasons, here is a poem by Ovid in which the poet asks the god Janus why the year does not begin with the Spring.

“dic, age: frigoribus quare novus incipit annus,  
qui melius per ver incipiendus erat?  
omnia tunc florent, tunc est nova temporis aetas,  
et nova de gravido palmite gemma tumet,  
et modo formatis operitur frondibus arbor,  
prodit et in summum seminis herba solum,  
et tepidum volucres concentibus aera mulcent,  
ludit et in pratis luxuriatque pecus.  
tum blandi soles, ignotaque prodit hirundo,  
et luteum celsa sub trabe figit opus;  
tum patitur cultus ager et renovatur aratro;  
haec anni novitas iure vocanda fuit.”

palmes, palmitis, m. – bough  
gemma, gemmae, f. – bud  
seminis herba – the blade of corn from the seed  
concentus, concentus, m. – song  
pratium, prati, n. – meadow  
hirundo, hirundinis, f. – swallow  
luteum . . . opus – nest built with mud

**Grading:** Use the following rubric for Latin poetry recitation to grade students’ presentations.

### **Poetry Recitation Rubric**

- 9-8 outstanding performance reading Latin poetry with continuity and fluidity;  
use of appropriate intonation and pauses in recitation; proper elision of syllables
- 7-6 impressive performance with relative continuity; occasional hesitation;  
some attention given to intonation and pauses; significant comprehension
- 5-4 adequate performance; several mistakes affecting the flow of the recitation; frequent  
hesitation in reading; inappropriate pauses
- 3-2 unimpressive performance; little attention given to phrasing; no knowledge of elision;  
minimal comprehension
- 1-0 very poor performance; no attention given to phrasing; excessive pauses in  
inappropriate places; lack of comprehension