



Student Performance Q&A: 2001 AP[®] Latin Literature Section II

The following comments are provided by the Chief Faculty Consultant regarding the 2001 free-response questions for AP Latin Literature. *They are intended to assist AP workshop consultants as they develop training sessions to help teachers better prepare their students for the AP Exams.* They give an overview of each question and its performance, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student performance in these areas are also included. Consultants are encouraged to use their expertise to create strategies for teachers to improve student performance in specific areas.

LL 1

What was intended by the question?

The question required students to translate as literally as possible the entire 11 lines of Catullus' poem 46.

How well did students perform?

Despite some excellent translations, the students in general produced disappointing results, especially because one might have expected Catullus' "spring poem" to be among the poems most familiar to them. The full range of scores emerged, yet relatively few students earned scores in the highest range (9-7) or intermediate range (6-4), and a disconcertingly large number of translations fell into the lowest range (3-0). Although very few students produced "off-task" responses and most attempted a complete translation, nevertheless a large number of these earned little or no credit because the question called for a *literal* translation. Many students received credit only for their renditions of segment #10 (*ad claras Asiae urbes*) and segment #13 (*iam laeti ... pedes*). Curiously, a large number of students fared poorly on the first 15 segments but then produced accurate translations of the final three "segments" which, from the criterion of syntax, were the most difficult lines of the poem.

What were the common errors or omissions?

A number of nouns were often mistranslated: thus, *ver* ("spring") was mistranslated as "truth"; *campi* as "camps"; *mens* as "men", "months", or "tables"; *studio* as "study" or even "studio"; and *via* as "life". Of those students who did not confuse *linquantur* with some form of *loquor*, few translated the verb correctly as a passive subjunctive in the third person plural. Many mistook the hortatory subjunctive *volemus* for the indicative *volumus* and translated "let us fly" as "we want". Many students misconstrued the cases of nouns, such as the ablative *aureis* (mistakenly taken as an accusative instead of an ablative), the nominative *campi* (misconstrued as a genitive), and the

nominative *diversae viae* (mistaken for an accusative). In addition, otherwise good translations often omitted words necessary for credit, such as the imperative *valete*, the adverbs *iam*, *longe*, *simul*, and *varie*, the adjective *uber*, and the plural noun *coetus*.

Are there common threads of errors?

In addition to confusing vocabulary, as indicated above, students commonly mistranslated the tenses of verbs and the cases of nouns, thus construing present tenses as past tenses or subjects as direct objects. Very few correctly translated the passive subjunctive *linquantur* despite knowing the basic meaning of the verb. And many translated scattered words in isolation, thus forfeiting credit because they did not translate complete word *groups* as required by the standards of the question.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

Students need practice in translating *every word* in a given Latin selection to reflect accurately the Latin grammar and syntax. In a *literal* translation, they must translate verbs in the correct tense, voice, and mood as well as in the correct person and number. They must also take care to translate Latin nouns in the correct case and number, adjectives as modifiers of the correct nouns, and adverbs as adverbs. Students need as much exposure as possible to lines of Latin *without glosses* and should practice translating with a view to rendering not individual words in isolation but, rather, phrases and thought units. In addition, AP teachers should assess their students' translations by grading related *word groups* so that the students realize that the random translating of scattered, unconnected words does not automatically confer credit.

LL 2

What was intended by the question?

Students were asked to write a well-developed essay, first describing Catullus' observations about Rufus, the addressee in Poem 77, and Arrius, the object of ridicule in Poem 84, and then contrasting the ways Catullus expresses these observations.

How well did students perform?

While the full range of scores was used, most fell in the 4/3 range. The main distinction between these was the accuracy of the Latin cited and whether the student adequately discussed both poems. Most students recognized both poems (more or less), especially Poem 84. Even if they did not recognize precisely or could not translate Poem 77, they often could pick up on word clues to write something about the contrast between an attack poem and a light-hearted satire. Most students included some statement of contrast, though often the analysis was minimal, somewhat superficial and pat.

What were the common errors or omissions?

Many students did not follow the instructions to refer to the Latin throughout the poems and so omitted discussion of important aspects of Catullus' observations on the two people. Some students discussed only the contrast at the expense of a coherent look at the poems themselves. Some key vocabulary mistakes were common: "pest" for *pestis* and "river" for *fluctus*; *Ionios/Hionios* were commonly thought to be people. The subject of Poem 84, Arrius, was fairly often replaced by any nearby capitalized word, usually *Chommoda*, the first word in the poem, but also *Eripuisti* and even *Credo*.

Are there common threads of errors?

In Poem 77, the twice repeated *frustra* often led students to conclude that someone, either Catullus or Rufus, was frustrated about something or someone, and this miscue got their essay off the track from the beginning. The force of *immo* in line 2 was infrequently understood and so the financial metaphor of lines 1-2 went unnoticed. Few students remarked on the serpent metaphor in *subrepsti...venenum* and its surrounding sibilant alliteration. This is strange because a large number of essays gave prominence to figures of speech over discussion of content and meaning and in particular weighed the emotional impact of consonants and vowels, which seemed to be capable of expressing just about anything. The instances of anaphora, particularly the *heu heu...heu heu*, were very frequently cited, but very rarely connected to a discussion of Catullus' observations about Rufus.

In Poem 84, almost all students observed Catullus' playfulness with the sound of "h", some in a very sophisticated way (elision of *haec*, the *nuntius horribilis*), but many failed to discuss any of the other characterizing elements in the poem (his aspirating family; the rest everyone's ears got when he was out of town).

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

The most important one is greater accuracy in Latin skills. In addition, some test-taking skills could use improvement by practicing:

- covering the whole passage;
- balanced treatment of both passages in a comparative question with an explicit statement of the contrast;
- better use of the pre-reading period to organize answers by determining the most important issues and the most important segments of the planned answer.

LL 3

What was intended by the question?

Students had to discuss Catullus' comparison of two women and show how his use of language and structure emphasized the differences. They had to give Latin support from each of the three couplets.

How well did students perform?

They did well (from good to better). Although 4's seemed the most common, there were many scores both above and below that. There were scant 1's and 0's. Almost anyone could say something meaningful about Quintia and Lesbia because of the familiarity of the poem and the question prompt.

What were the common errors or omissions?

- Students left one couplet out or only did one task.
- Latin support was limited to obvious words (*formosa*) and this became a discriminator between a 4 and a 5.
- Students confused this poem with another.

Are there common threads of errors?

- The majority could not translate/accurately paraphrase the last couplet.
- The poem lent itself to falling into narrative (“then he said...”), with the result that students did no analysis/discussion.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

Careful reading (literal translation or paraphrase) of the poem.

Teachers need to give students practice following directions for questions like these (circling the prompt(s), planning their answer and writing concise essays which answer the question).

LL 4

What was intended by the question?

Using a passage from the *Pro Caelio*, the student had to explain a contrast, name several actions prosecutors perform, write out and name a figure of speech, and tell what jurors should and should not rely on in judging the case. The readers considered the question fair although difficult. To answer the question fully, students should recognize the passage in the context of the *Pro Caelio* and recognize figures of speech.

How well did students perform?

Students who could translate and who recognized the passage performed very well on the question, and those who could not manage these tasks received low scores. There were few scores in the middle range.

What were the common errors or omissions?

There was confusion regarding the names of figures of speech. The most common vocabulary words that were misunderstood were *laesi*, *efferruntur*, *laccessiti*, *suos*, *funguntur*, *faciunt quod viri*, *alieno*, and the *non* in line 4. There was also great confusion in understanding the contrast required to answer part 4: “the jurors should rely on *vestrae fidei*; they should not rely on *alieno dolori*.”

Are there common threads of errors?

The biggest problem the students seemed to have was in understanding the vocabulary.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

Students need to improve translation and vocabulary skills.

LL 5

What was intended by the question?

The students were expected to “translate literally” a portion of Cicero’s *Pro Caelio*.

How well did students perform?

The students performed better on the translation than they did on the spot question and seemed to perform better than students on the previous year’s translation.

What were the common errors or omissions?

Words that were commonly missed were: *instruimur*, *proprium quaestionis*, the *-que* in *eisque artibus*, *capessendam*, *eius modi*, *a lege*, *disciplinae* as a dative instead of the erroneous genitive,

seiunctum and *coniunctum* as opposites, and *vocatur* for the person of the verb. Many students failed to translate *hunc* and *eius*.

Are there common threads of errors?

Students were weak in knowledge of Latin vocabulary and grammar.

LL 6

What was intended by the question?

The student was asked to write a well-developed, well-organized essay analyzing a passage of Latin prose which discussed Cicero's characterization of Clodia and how Cicero used this characterization in his defense of Caelius.

How well did students perform?

The students displayed a familiarity with the characterization of Clodia but not necessarily in the passage cited. Many students built a discussion around a few Latin words that they understood, such as *hortos* and *istam mulierem*.

What were the common errors or omissions?

Students had difficulty recognizing the passage. Many students could characterize Clodia but could not make the leap in their discussion as to how Cicero used the characterization for his defense. Many students did not analyze in their discussions and/or did not adhere to the guidelines of the question, which mandated using the passage "throughout." Very often students could not translate properly.

Are there common threads of errors?

Many students did not have sufficient Latin vocabulary knowledge or translation skills. Far too many students had difficulty writing a cohesive argument with analysis.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

Students should be careful to cite Latin that is appropriate for the discussion. Latin citations should not be too long nor too short.

LL 7

What was intended by the question?

The students were asked to provide specific answers to five questions based on Horace, Ode 4.7, lines 17-28.

How well did students perform?

The students' responses showed the full range of scores from 0-8. The average score was 4-5.

What were the common errors or omissions? Are there common threads of errors?

- 1a. Students often were not specific in their discussion of this question. They often referred to "prediction of the future" rather than recognizing the reference to the length of life span.

- 1b. Students often either omitted this question or completely misread the passage. For example, uncertainly about the meaning of *avidas* resulted in references to birds.
2. Minos was often confused with Midas. His function was most commonly incorrectly expressed as “makes trees” (*arbitria*) or “turns bodies into gold.”
3. Although the identification of a figure of speech was often the only correct answer on a paper, errors most commonly occurred when the students attempted to identify a figure of speech in lines 5-6, rather than in lines 7-8.
4. The warning given Torquatus by the poet was also frequently answered incorrectly by the students.
- 5a. The most common error was a lack of specificity in saying that gods or heroes cannot save a person from death. Instead, many students generalized that “death is inevitable.”
- 5b. Students commonly failed to connect Diana to Hippolytus or Theseus to Pirithous **by name**. In addition, they often failed to provide illustration of Horace’s points by adding detail from either the mythological story or the text.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

Students need to read spot questions carefully in order to answer them succinctly and without extraneous detail. Where further detail is asked for (“briefly explain”), students must then provide additional information or the specific illustration. Students also need to be able to read Latin correctly and to have an understanding of characters from myth who appear in poems.

LL 8

What was intended by the question?

Students were asked to produce a literal translation of Horace, Odes 2.3, lines 13-20.

How well did students perform?

There were very few top scores, a moderate distribution of middle-level translations, and large numbers of very inaccurate translations, even many zeroes.

What were the common errors or omissions?

1. *huc...ferre iube*: It was rare that a student construed all three words. Many omitted *huc* or *iube*, translated *huc* as “this,” or made *ferre* passive.
2. *nimum brevis*: Many mistranslated *nimum* as *non* or omitted it.
3. *amoenae*: Omission or mistranslation of this word was the most common error of the passage.
4. *fila*: This was often mistranslated as “daughter(s).”
5. *patiuntur*: The verb was often translated as passive rather than as a deponent verb.

6. *cedes*: The future tense often was not recognized, and the verb was rendered as present indicative or subjunctive. Many students also failed to get a correct lexical meaning, confusing the verb with *cadere*. It was also common to mistranslate the second *cedes*, even when the first was correctly rendered.
7. *saltibus*: This was mistranslated as “leaps” or “dances” or confused with *sal* and mistranslated as “salt” or “wit.”
8. *flavus*: The word often was omitted.
9. *lavit*: Many translated the verb as perfect tense or did not know the definition of the word.
10. *in altum*: Often the translation of this phrase was not connected to any notion of motion or to the height/depth of the action of *exstructis*.
11. *exstructis*: The meaning of the word was commonly not understood.
12. *divitiis*: This was commonly translated as “gods.”
13. *potietur*: The verb was often translated too loosely as “will receive.”
14. *heres*: Many did not know the meaning or made the word plural.

Are there common threads of errors?

Students often confused this passage with another poem – (e.g., “a worthier heir...will stain” or “the late blooming rose”). Students seemed to have an insufficient grasp of vocabulary to be successful, and they commonly omitted words. Other common errors involved confusion between active and passive voice and the ablative and dative cases, as well as confusing tense and number of verbs.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

Overall skill in accurate translation needs improvement. Many students appeared to have virtually no grasp of the text. Those who confused it with other poems may have relied too much on memorizing the English translation.

LL 9

What was intended by the question?

The question was based on Horace, Odes 1.11. Students were asked to write a short essay in which they identify the advice given in the poem, identify the images, and discuss how the images reinforce the advice. Students were required to refer specifically to the Latin throughout the poem to support their discussion.

How well did students perform?

On the whole, students identified the advice and the images confidently, but many tended to be more descriptive than analytical. Ideally, the task required more than listing images with perfunctory explanations.

What were the common errors or omissions?

Students did have some trouble identifying images *throughout* the poem. They tended to avoid the imagery of Jupiter and the sea if they were unclear about the Latin. Occasionally, students discussed an image but did not provide proper citation; a paraphrase was provided without a Latin anchor, for example.

Are there common threads of errors?

Babylonios numeros were not explained, or digressions on Babylonians resulted from interpreting *Babylonios* as people, rather than as an adjective. Students broadly paraphrased the first part of the poem. Line 5 (*seu...ultimam*) was most often mistranslated, as were *liques* and *invida*. Digressions into Horace's philosophy or Epicureanism were common, and weakened these essays.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

Students need to be able to discuss imagery, not just list it. In addition, they must continue to pay attention to proper citation and accurate translation or paraphrasing. Some students seemed confused about when to paraphrase and when to use quotation marks to indicate an attempt at translation.

LL 10

What was intended by the question?

Students were asked to read closely a passage of *Amores* I.3 and answer individual questions that would indicate a) comprehension based on specific Latin words/phrases and b) recognition of common figures of speech and mythological allusions.

How well did students perform?

Students performed moderately well and the full range of scores was assigned, although it was difficult to score a 0, 1, or 2. Most seemed to fall into the middle range (4-6).

What were the common errors or omissions?

Students answered with reference to only one word (*pura* or *fide* or *amare* or *longos annos*) or mistranslated *deserviat*.

They listed/translated Latin without describing the actual characteristic. They misunderstood Ovid as an *eques* and perhaps did not understand Roman social structure, and also misunderstood the metaphors. Many confused *eques* with *aequus* or *equus* or misconstrued *campus* to make Ovid involved with the military. *Temperat* also seemed to indicate Ovid's bad temper.

The figure of speech, chiasmus, caused much confusion. Synchysis and chiasmus were interchanged. Students also thought ABBA could include *renovatur*. Many failed to name the figure of speech or called it ABAB or a double negative.

Students had trouble with the prompt, "identify." A grammatical answer or translation was usually wrong. They should refer to the Course Description ("Acorn booklet") for the meaning of "identify." Many (60% or more) answered the question incorrectly.

Are there common threads of errors?

Common threads of errors were misconstrued vocabulary words such as *deserviat*, *eques*, *sanguinis*, *veterum*, *campus*. Students didn't know the difference between synchysis and chiasmus. We accepted Golden Line but not hyperbaton, zeugma, assonance, consonance,

alliteration, and metaphor. There was too much guessing. Students need to understand allusions (myth and history) and should refer to the notes in their texts.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

Students need to pay attention to close reading of the text for comprehension and accuracy. They should frequently be asked, “What does that mean?” or “What is the poet getting at when he says this?” They should be supporting their answers with appropriate references to the text: i.e., the Latin words that indicate the point they are making. They need to work on vocabulary and translation skills to support their comprehension. Students need practice in identifying and answering the question.

LL 11

What was intended by the question?

A literal translation of a six-line section of Baucis and Philemon from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.

How well did students perform?

Most papers fell within the middle range (4-6). There were very few perfect papers and more off-tasks and zeros than expected. Because of the high number of zero and off-task answers, the readers wondered if teachers were still using the old edition of the LaFleur textbook which does not include this passage.

What were the common errors or omissions?

Mistranslation of the less well known vocabulary words such as *pavent*, *paratibus* (which was usually taken as a perfect passive participle), and *anser*. Students generally did not recognize that *timidus* agreed with *Philemon*. *Domini* in line 5 was often omitted. *Aetate* was often translated as “in summer.” *Preces* (l. 2) was often translated as an infinitive.

Are there common threads of errors?

There were general problems with the -que's in *manibusque*, *Baucisque*, and *timidusque*. Students either left them out or construed them with the wrong word. Noun/adjective agreement posed many difficulties: few students recognized that *timidus* modified *Philemon* and that *tardos* did NOT modify *aetate*. In addition, students did not take phrases such as “*celer penna*” and “*tardos aetate*” as units but translated them as if the components had no relation to each other.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

The vocabulary of this passage was somewhat difficult, particularly the noun *paratibus* which is used only once in Ovid. Nevertheless, students need to learn vocabulary more precisely, as many took vague guesses based on English derivatives. In addition, they need greater skill in the translation of the enclitic, *que*, and interpreting its significance for phrasing. Students should be taught to translate *-que* at the beginning of a phrase rather than at the end. Finally, greater attention to words (particularly ablatives) as units of meaning, rather than in isolation, is recommended.

LL 12

What was intended by the question?

Students were asked to write a brief essay illustrating Apollo's success (or lack of success) in making Daphne his own. The aim of the question was to have students show their ability to recognize the text, to understand the Latin, and to incorporate specific references from the whole passage in crafting their argument.

How well did students perform?

There were few 6s, but a reasonable number of 4s and 5s. There were many 1s, 2s, and 3s.

What were the common errors or omissions?

Common errors occurred in vocabulary, grammar, references and citations, proper names, and translation:

Vocabulary errors included mistaking *lignum* and *lingua*.

Grammar: *Capitolia* = subject of *visent*. Many didn't recognize the form *tuebere* and mistook the cases in *frondis honores*.

Students did not refer to the Latin throughout the passage.

Proper names were mistaken: e.g., *Paeon* mistaken for *Peneus Augustis*.

Translation was based on knowledge of the poem rather than the passage. Students thought the first four lines contained the metamorphosis itself.

Are there common threads of errors?

There was too much summarizing of the entire story. Not enough accurate, specific references to the Latin throughout the passage. Students quoted individual Latin words randomly selected rather than phrases. Lines 8-13 were skipped over or lumped into a summary instead of translated in detail.

What are the general content areas/skills that need improvement?

Students need to work on grammar, translation, and to practice writing short essays.