

AP[®] Latin: Vergil

Syllabus 2

Overview

During the first three quarters of the year students will translate into English, analyze, interpret, and discuss the selections on the AP Latin: Vergil syllabus. They will read the intervening passages in English and discuss the *Aeneid* in its entirety as a work of literature. The fourth quarter will be devoted to review and test preparation. The topics and methods of teaching described below are designed to meet the requirements of the course listed in the *AP Latin Course Description* booklet, also known as the “Acorn” book. [C1]

C1—The teacher has read the most current *AP Latin Course Description*.

Topics to Address and Methods of Teaching Each Topic:

The topics listed below will be addressed in class through lecture and discussion. Skills such as the recognition of stylistic devices, scansion of dactylic hexameter, the ability to analyze and interpret specific passages, the ability to render Latin into an accurate and literal English translation, the ability to write convincing essays, etc., will be developed through practice all year long.

1. Background of Vergil’s life in the setting of Augustan Rome
Assign the reading of introductory material in the textbook about Vergil’s life. Spend one or two full class periods highlighting and discussing the important historical events that occurred during Vergil’s lifetime, paying special attention to those events that contributed ultimately to Augustus’s rise to power. Spend several class periods each quarter discussing the political, historical, cultural, and social background of the *Aeneid*. [C5]
2. Circle of Maecenas” and Vergil’s role
Discuss Maecenas and the other members of his literary circle, the pros and cons of literary patronage, particularly in an imperial setting, and the works of Vergil other than the *Aeneid*. [C5]
3. Literary development of the epic
Discuss the epic: (1) major characteristics; (2) development of the genre since Homer; and (3) how Vergil made the epic relevant and palatable to the Romans of his day. [C5]
4. Scanning dactylic hexameter
Explain the mechanics of scanning dactylic hexameter. Assign scansion of lines to students. Play the first section of Stephen Daitz’s tape (see reference above). Read metrically in class with students. Have each student prepare 7–10 lines to be read aloud in meter. Read aloud throughout the year, as much as time permits.

C5—The course examines the historical, social, cultural, and political context of Vergil’s *Aeneid*.

5. Figures of speech and stylistic devices

Distribute a list of figures of speech and their definitions to students. Review each definition and example with them. Encourage students to think of examples in English. Stress the fact that figures of speech produce an effect. Train students not only to identify figures of speech in a Latin passage but also to be aware of how that figure enhances the meaning of the words.

6. Poetic usage and grammatical forms

Teach peculiarities of poetic expressions, e.g., alternate endings, archaisms, perfect active indicative (third-person plural), syncopated forms, ellipses.

7. Techniques for analyzing and interpreting poetry

For any given poem, teach students how to comment effectively on: meaning, tone, mood, imagery, theme, structure, figurative language, stylistic modes of expression characteristic of Vergil, and meter. [C4] Students must learn not only to make observations but to support them convincingly by quoting Latin appropriately.

C4—Students have frequent opportunities to practice written analysis and critical interpretation of Vergil's *Aeneid*, including appropriate references to the use of stylistic and metrical techniques by Vergil.

8. Prepared Translation

Assign a comfortable amount of prepared translation daily. If a teacher sets a goal of 25 lines for a particular day, for example, students may be asked to prepare 10–15 lines and read the rest at sight. Prepared translations, whether written or oral, must be as literal as good English allows. [C3] Verbs in the passive voice are to be kept in the passive voice; tenses must be rendered accurately; correct use of case must be preserved. A student should be able to answer brief grammatical questions about a prepared translation, e.g., identify the case and reason for a noun, or the tense and mood of a verb. Similarly, a student should be able to identify salient figures of speech in a prepared translation. (The total number of lines to be read each day, as well as the amount students will be required to prepare, can vary according to the difficulty of the passage and the ability of the student.)

C3—Students have frequent opportunities to practice reading and translating as literally as possible from Latin to English the required passages from Vergil's *Aeneid*.

9. Sight Translation

Read at sight as often as time permits. If sight reading is done orally, help students with unfamiliar vocabulary. If it is done as a written exercise in class, allow them to use a dictionary. Working with a partner or in a small group often improves the quality of the sight translation. [C6]

C6—The course provides frequent practice in reading Latin at sight.

10. The *Aeneid* as a whole

Always consider the *Aeneid* as a whole. Read it in English in its entirety, either at the beginning or the end of the course, or fill in the gaps as students proceed through the sections of the syllabus that are to be read in Latin. Include questions based on the parts read in English on tests.

11. Hints for effective essay writing

Pattern test questions throughout the year on published free-response questions. Grade responses according to rubrics published in grading reports. Use recent free-response sections for review with students. [C4] Distribute grading reports and samples of student responses to students and discuss them.

12. Strategies for answering multiple-choice questions

Review the format of the multiple-choice section of the AP Exam. Explain each item type and inform students of the frequency of its use on the exam. Discuss strategies to avoid common pitfalls. Encourage students to visit the AP Central® Multiple-Choice Item-Writing Tutorial (<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/members/article/1,3046,151-165-0-34466,00.html>) to familiarize them with item types and to provide them with practice questions. Encourage students to take the National Latin Exam at Level 5 (poetry) in March.

C4—Students have frequent opportunities to practice written analysis and critical interpretation of Vergil's *Aeneid*, including appropriate references to the use of stylistic and metrical techniques by Vergil.

Expectations and Assessment

Students will prepare translation assignments in advance and will show evidence of preparation when called upon to translate in class.

Students will participate actively in classroom discussions.

Students will complete a minimum of four full-period tests (to include grammar, translation, analysis and interpretation, and essay writing) each quarter. Students will practice sight translation using passages from Vergil as well as other authors in each of the four full-period tests each quarter. In the fourth quarter students will complete 7–10 sight translations similar to the published multiple-choice questions. [C6]

C6—The course provides frequent practice in reading Latin at sight.

Quarter grades will consist of the average of test grades (90 percent) and classroom participation (10 percent).

Students will take the AP Exam in May.

The final grade will be the average of four quarter grades.

Quarterly Schedule [C2]

First Quarter

In-class translation and discussion of *Aeneid* 1.1–519, 2.1–56

Second Quarter

In-class translation and discussion of *Aeneid* 2.199–297, 2.469–566, 2.735–805, 4.1–448

Third Quarter

In-class translation and discussion of *Aeneid* 4.642–705, 6.1–211, 6.450–476, 6.847–901, 10.420–509, 12.791–842, 12.887–952

C2—The course is structured to enable students to complete the entire required reading list, as delineated in the *AP Latin Course Description*.

Fourth Quarter

Review and AP Exam Preparation

Review of AP Exam format

Practice answering sight-passage-based multiple-choice questions

Practice translating passages from the entire syllabus

Practice writing essay questions that demonstrate support for observations

Practice scanning

Practice translating passages at sight

Texts (*) and References:

*Boyd, Barbara, ed. *Vergil's Aeneid: Selections from Books 1, 2, 4, 6, 10, and 12*. 2nd edition. Wauconda, Ill.: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2004.

*Mandlebaum, Allen, tr. *The Aeneid of Virgil: A Verse Translation*. New York: Bantam Books, 1981.

Anderson, William S. *The Art of the Aeneid*. Wauconda, Ill.: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1989.

Anderson, William S. and Lorina N. Quartarone. *Approaches to Teaching Vergil's Aeneid*. "Approaches to Teaching World Literature" series. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2002.

Commager, Steele, ed. *Vergil: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1966.

Daitz, Stephen. *The Pronunciation and Reading of Classical Latin: A Practical Guide*. Guilford, CT: J. Norton, 1984.

Frenkel, Emily. *Aeneas: Virgil's Epic Retold for Young Readers*. Newburyport, Mass.: Focus, 2003.

Harrison, S. J., ed. *Oxford Readings in Vergil's Aeneid*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Johnson, W. R. *Darkness Visible: A Study of Vergil's Aeneid*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.

Quinn, Stephanie and Michael C. J. Putnam, eds. *Why Vergil? A Collection of Interpretations*. Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2000.

Williams, R. D. *Virgil: Aeneid I-VI*. Newburyport, Mass.: Focus, 2004.

Williams, R. D. *Virgil: Aeneid VII-XII*. Newburyport, Mass.: Focus, 1997.