

AP[®] Latin Literature Syllabus 4

Course Overview

At the beginning of the semester I give my students the following course description:

The principle objectives of this course are to improve our Latin and to arrive at an appreciation of the works of two of the most important authors of Roman antiquity. Our efforts in this course are directed toward the AP[®] Latin Literature Exam in May, though it will be your decision (which we can discuss in detail as the year progresses) whether or not to take this exam. *The AP Latin Course Description* lists the abilities needed for the AP Latin Literature Exam. [C1]

C1—Evidence of Curricular Requirement: The teacher has read the most current *AP Latin Course Description*

Students who take it must be able to:

1. write a literal English translation of a Latin passage on the syllabus;
2. explicate specific words or phrases in context;
3. identify the context and significance of short excerpts from Catullus's poetry;
4. identify and analyze characteristic or noteworthy features of the author's modes of expression, including [his] use of imagery, figures of speech, sound, and metrical effects, as seen in specific passages;
5. discuss particular motifs or general themes not only suggested by passages but also relevant to other selections;
6. analyze and discuss structure, and demonstrate an awareness of the features used in the construction of a poem;
7. scan the meters specified in the syllabus; and
8. read, understand, and answer questions about Latin "sight passages" that they have not seen before.

C3—Evidence of Curricular Requirement: Students have frequent opportunities to practice reading and translating as literally as possible from Latin into English the required passages from the reading list.

To realize these goals, our classes will be devoted in large part to translating and analyzing Latin from the syllabus as well as passages to be read at sight.[C3] Of equal importance will be the discussion of major themes and motifs, as well as relevant topics of Roman literary, cultural, social, and political history. [C5]

C5—Evidence of Curricular Requirement: The course examines the historical, cultural, and political context of the literature on the reading list.

For the Catullus portion of the syllabus, we will read and study the following poems: [C2]

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

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14a, 22, 30, 31, 35, 36, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 60, 64 (lines 50–253), 65, 68 (lines 1–40), 69, 70, 72, 76, 77, 84, 85, 86, 87, 96, 101, 109, and 116

We will consider other poems as interest and time allow. Only the poems printed here, however, are fair game for the AP Latin Literature Exam.

For the Cicero portion of the syllabus, we will read and study the following:

Pro Archia Poeta (entire)

De Amicitia, sections 17–23 and 100–104 (in Latin); the parts of *De Amicitia* not read in Latin will be read in English.[C2]

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

Our pace must be swift, our focus on the Latin words themselves! We have a lot to read, both in Latin and in English. Combine this with the variety of ancillary readings, research, and discussion necessary to understand Catullus’s poetry and Cicero’s rhetoric and it becomes apparent that we must be prepared to commit ourselves to a sustained effort in order to get the most out of this course and ensure that (if you so elect) you will receive college credit for your performance on the AP Latin Literature Exam in May.

I am optimistic that everyone will make an honest effort to participate and not lapse into invisibility in the crowd. To ensure our success, you are expected to:

1. arrive punctually to class and ready to think and talk about our material;
2. prepare your assignments conscientiously and on time;
3. ask questions for clarification whenever you are unsure of a point of translation, interpretation, or analysis; and
4. be a decent person in the matter of respecting the varying abilities of your classmates.

Homework: Homework will be assigned almost nightly. It will usually consist of rereading and studying the Latin we have already translated and discussed in class, and will frequently follow up on the sight reading conducted in class. Your homework assignment will, however, sometimes require you to translate new material.[C3, 6] When this is the case, you are urged not to write nonsense! It is better to earn credit for your homework by translating what you can and then jotting down some questions to ask in class the next day to help you make sense of the parts of the Latin text that were too difficult for you to work out on your own.

C3—Evidence of Curricular Requirement: Students have frequent opportunities to practice reading and translating as literally as possible from Latin into English the required passages from the reading list.

Grading: Grading will be done on a cumulative basis with points adding up as the quarters progress. Your daily work in class will be assessed, your homework will be checked, and there will be lots of Quick Quizzes (QQs) and tests on sight reading and your ability to translate, understand, and interpret the Latin. [C6] During each 10-week quarter you will take two full-period exams, one in the

C6—Evidence of Curricular Requirement: The course provides frequent practice in reading Latin at sight.

middle of the interim (at five weeks) and one at the end. These will treat all of the material covered thus far and feature translations as well as questions from released AP Latin Literature Exams. They will count for 30 percent of your quarter average.

Your homework grade will be determined primarily by your performance on the QQs, which will be given two or three times per week and count for 60 percent of your quarter average. A QQ tests your knowledge of the poetry we have already translated and discussed in class. Each QQ, given at the beginning of class and lasting no longer than 10 minutes, will require you to do some translating of a short, prepared passage excerpted from our recent readings as well as answering questions—short answer and brief essay—on a variety of topics: grammatical, interpretive, reference, and historical. [C4]

C4—Evidence of Curricular Requirement: Students have frequent opportunities to practice written analysis and critical interpretation of works by Catullus and either Cicero, Horace, or Ovid, including appropriate references to the authors' use of stylistic and metrical techniques.

Ten percent of your quarter grade will be a reflection of your participation, cooperation, and attitude as assessed by your teacher. This is mostly a subjective matter, and you are urged to play convincingly and righteously the role of an eager young scholar to ensure a high mark in this category.

Texts: In addition to the Latin, we will read a novel in English as part of our required course reading this year. Closely tied in with our curriculum; *The Key*, by Benita Kane Jaro (Dodd, Mead, 1988), imaginatively treats Catullus's life and friendship with Marcus Caelius. The novel is extremely useful for getting a feel for life in first-century B.C. Rome and understanding the literature we are reading. [C5]

C5—Evidence of Curricular Requirement: The course examines the historical, cultural, and political context of the literature on the reading list.

Course Outline

Please bring your three-ring notebook, Latin dictionary, and texts with you to class every day!

First Five-Week Interim

Introduction to Catullus, Cicero, and first-century B.C. Roman life.

We will immediately start our daily translations of poetry. We will begin to explore the rhythms of Latin poetry and learn to scan lines. We will begin to investigate the various devices, tricks, and “figures” used by ancient writers and speakers to maximize the emotional impact of their words.

Second Five-Week Interim

Continue daily translation of Catullus's poetry.

Third Five-Week Interim

Continue daily translation of Catullus's poetry.

Fourth Five-Week Interim

Continue daily translation of Catullus's poetry.

Fifth Five-Week Interim

Complete daily translations of Catullus's poetry. Start translation of *Pro Archia Poeta*. Read *The Key*.

Sixth Five-Week Interim

Continue daily translations of *Pro Archia Poeta* until finished. Begin reading and translating *De Amicitia*.

Seventh Five-Week Interim

Complete reading and translation of *De Amicitia*. Review all material. Practice old multiple-choice AP Latin Literature Exam questions.

Eighth Five-Week Interim

Post-AP Latin Literature Exam projects (to be discussed in the spring)

You will do one of the following:

1. Select a Roman author whose works may be sampled in Latin for translation and in published translation.
2. Do an online research project on a topic of your choice from Mediterranean antiquity.
3. Develop teaching materials on grammatical subjects to help younger Latinists in the program.
4. Read more widely in Catullus and/or Cicero.
5. Eleventh-graders who plan to study the *Aeneid* next year may start their preparation for the course by beginning to read this poem.

You may also submit an idea for a project of your own design.