



## AP Latin: Vergil 1999 Sample Student Responses

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EVEN THOUGH TURNUS AND HIS ARMY MUST LOSE, VIRGIL TAKES ~~THE~~ TIME TO ALLOW THE READER TO FEEL SYMPATHY FOR THEM BY CREATING ~~THEM~~ THEM AS THREE-DIMENSIONAL CHARACTERS. BY PROVIDING COMPLETE DESCRIPTIONS OF THEM AND THEIR TROUBLES, THESE CHARACTERS HAVE JUST AS MUCH SUBSTANCE AS THEIR TROJAN COUNTERPARTS. IN FACT, ONE MAY SEE HOW THESE PEOPLE SERVE AS A FOIL FOR THE TROJANS.

FIRST OF ALL, VIRGIL CREATES A JUST CAUSE FOR THIS WAR AND ~~THE~~ <sup>THUS</sup> DOES NOT ALLOW EITHER SIDE TO SEEM ~~TO~~ <sup>BARBARIC.</sup> ~~THE~~ <sup>THE</sup> TROJANS FIGHT OVER A WOMAN - LAURICA - WHOM TURNUS WAS TO MARRY. YET, LATINUS DID NOT WANT THIS TO OCCUR BECAUSE IT WAS FATED THAT SHE WED A FOREIGNER. THEREFORE, ONE MAY ACTUALLY SAY THAT FATE IS THE CAUSE OF THIS WAR; ONCE AGAIN, VIRGIL REMINDS US THAT ~~THE~~ <sup>THESE</sup> CHARACTERS ARE MADE ~~TO~~ <sup>PUPPETS</sup> WITH THE GODS AND FATE AS THEIR PUPPETEERS. IN EFFECT, THE READER FEELS MORE SYMPATHY FOR TURNUS AND HIS ARMY, FOR THEY ARE FATED TO FAIL FROM THE BEGINNING - ANYTHING THEY DO WILL NOT CHANGE THE FACT.

SECONDLY, VIRGIL MIRRORING THE DEATH OF IMPORTANT ~~THE~~ TROJAN FIGURES WITH SIMILAR FIGURES ON THE ~~THE~~ <sup>THE</sup> OPPOSITION AND THUS, GENERATING A SIMILAR SENTIMENT FOR THEIR LOSSES. WHEN PALLAS DIES AT THE HANDS OF TURNUS,

LAUSUS DIES AT THE HANDS OF AENEAS. THE SIMILARITIES ARE NUMEROUS. MOREOVER, VIRGIL DEPICTS THESE OPPONENTS WITH THE SAME HEROISM AND COMPASSION. LAUSUS DIES BECAUSE HE WANTS TO PROTECT HIS FATHER; SIMILARLY, PALLAS FOLLOWS AENEAS AS THE LEADER OF HIS FATHER'S PEOPLE. FURTHERMORE, BY INCREASING THE FURY IN AENEAS' CHARACTER AT TIMES AND THE MALICIOUSNESS WITH WHICH HE KILLS HIS FOES, VIRGIL CREATES THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SYMPATHY - SUCH AS IN THE FINAL LINES OF BOOK XII (IN QUESTION V3)

MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, VIRGIL ~~FROM~~ CREATES A HIATUS IN THE WAR IN ~~THE~~ THE OPENING OF BOOK XI. BOTH SIDES ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO MOURN THEIR DEAD; AND THE TROJANS' OPPONENTS HAVE JUST AS MUCH TO MOURN OVER AS THE TROJANS THEMSELVES. THIS SHOWS THE REALITY THAT THEY ARE <sup>NOT</sup> INHUMAN AND BLOODTHIRSTY, BUT HAVE THE SAME FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS AS ANY OTHER HUMAN.

BY CREATING SUCH ROUNDED CHARACTERS ON THE OPPOSITION, VIRGIL INCREASES THE READERS' SYMPATHY FOR THEM AND ALSO INCREASES THE DYNAMIS IN THE BOOK. MOREOVER, WE ARE REMINDED OF THE GODS' ROLE IN THE CAUSE OF THIS WAR - ESPECIALLY JUPITER AND AEGLETO - AND ~~REMINDED~~ VIEW OF TURNUS AND HIS PEOPLE AS UNFORTUNATE HUMAN PUPPETS.

Vergil chooses not to present the battle between the incoming Trojans and the native Italians as a conflict between "good" and "evil"; because neither side is the "bad guy." The Trojans are certainly not meant to be taken as the wrongdoers, and their ultimate goal is to live with the Italians, not eradicate them from the land. Thus, Vergil takes care to present the Italians in a manner inducing sympathy, not hatred.

His effort is most clear in Book 7, which describes the beginnings of the war. Juno sends Allecto, a fury, to incite all of Italy to war. Allecto turns Amata into a raving Bacchant and turns to a hostile, jealous foe by putting serpents within their breasts. Allecto also causes Ascanius to kill a sacred stag; she guides his arrow to this poor creature in order to incite the peasants to war. She is so successful in stirring up anger that she can blow the horn that begins the battle. This makes it clear that the Italians would not fight and would not become angry on their own accord. The blame for starting the war is placed on the meddling fury, not on the Italians.

King Latinus refuses to rule if such a war is to be fought; he hides himself in the castle and ignores the war. Since he won't open the Gates of War himself, Juno does it for him. This again creates the impression that the gods are at fault, not the Italians. ~~The king of the Latins is being dragged against his will into the war by the meddling and hostile gods.~~  
The king of the Latins is being dragged against his will into the war by the meddling and hostile gods.

Vergil continues this theme throughout the second half of the Aeneid. The dead are listed for both sides,

and the glorious fighters of both armies are honored.

Neither army is favored by Vergil, but both are presented in a way meant to induce the reader's sympathy and heartfelt pity for the horrors of war.

In the second half of the poem although they are enemies of Aeneas, Vergil ~~does not~~ does not make them out to be bloodthirsty savages. He lets the reader know all angles of the story and explains the reason why the Latins are fighting the Trojans. He ~~is~~ makes it seem that the Latins do have a good reason for fighting. Turnus is fighting for his homeland and his wife. He is not going to let some foreigner come in and take both from him. Turnus did not do anything wrong to Aeneas <sup>at first</sup> and that is why one feels bad about him.

Another ~~is~~ opponent whom the reader feels bad about is Camilla. She was a great fighter but got caught ~~in~~ up in glory and died. One always feels bad about a superb warrior when he or she dies.

As for the Latins in general, they feel the same way Turnus does. Although Aeneas is destined to come to Italy Vergil shows that the Latins' reason to fight is a valid one. Also, they do not even start the war, Juno does. But the Latins can't stop because they are enraged ~~by~~ by the Furies.

At the same time we feel sympathy for Aeneas and the Trojans, Vergil does a wonderful job of making us feel the same way about Turnus and the Latins.