



CSCP Support Materials for Eduqas GCSE Latin

Component 2: Latin Literature and Sources (Themes)
Theme A: Romans in the Countryside



Introduction For examination in 2024-2026

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Acknowledgement

Mosaic: Piazza Armerina, Sicily. Photograph by Roger Dalladay.

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This document refers to the official examination images and texts for the Eduqas Latin GCSE (2024 - 2026). It should be used in conjunction with the information, images and texts provided by Eduqas on their website:

[Eduqas Latin GCSE \(2024-2026\) Component 2 Theme A: Romans in the Countryside](#)

Useful additional material relevant for this Theme, may be found in the online versions of the 4th edition Cambridge Latin course: [Book V, Stage 35](#)

Theme A: Romans in the Countryside

Specification

Candidates are expected to be familiar with the following aspects of the theme:

- traditional peasant farming;
- country villas;
- hunting.

Candidates should study the pictures in the [Eduqas Prescribed Material Booklet](#) one or more of which will be used as a basis for questions in each question paper. Candidates will also answer questions on the texts in the [Eduqas Prescribed Material Booklet](#)

Exploration of the theme

In this theme, the following topics will be covered. While the main bullet points below coincide with the Eduqas specification, those further indented do not constitute part of the syllabus but are suggested here as a means of exploring the main themes:

- Traditional peasant farming
 - self-sufficiency and the joys of country living
 - looking back to a better, simpler past
 - farmers of the past as leaders
- Country villas
 - luxury of country villas and gardens
 - management of country estates
 - tenant farmers, sharecroppers and farm workers
 - types of produce and farming activities
 - farm animals and farming equipment
- Hunting
 - elite Roman hunting experience
 - hunting equipment and techniques
 - animals hunted and used in hunting

This introduction contains notes on all these topics to assist in the teaching of the literature. **Candidates will only be examined on the content of the prescribed material.**

Some links between texts and images and the theme's three bullet points are suggested in the following sections.

Traditional Peasant Farming

Like most growing settlements, Rome had humble beginnings and agriculture was an important part of supporting early Roman civilisation. In early Roman history, peasants owned smallholdings and worked them to be self-sufficient in producing the variety of products and food they needed to survive. The ideal of self-sufficiency and the benefits of simple traditional farming life can be seen in **Virgil's** account of **the self-sufficient small farm** and **Ovid's** family celebrating *a rustic festival*.

In the early years of the Roman Republic, only landowners could be soldiers and these soldier-farmers showed qualities like diligence, determination and sheer hard work which would later be heralded as important Roman virtues from the past. The idea of Rome's farmer-heroes creating the conditions for the empire enjoyed by later generations can be seen in **Cicero's** and **Livy's** description of consuls called from the plough to serve. They also praise the values that these traditional farmers adopted to help the empire flourish. **Horace**, in *The changing face of the countryside*, criticises the encroachment of vast country estates on land once used for farming and looks back to past generations who spent money on works of benefit to the public rather than on private estates. *The pleasures of country life* again expresses nostalgia for a 'golden age' of the self-sufficient farmer who enjoys the fruit of his labours, free of debt, obligation to a patron, or any other kind of stress. It is evident that, even for Horace (himself a dilettante smallholder), this picture is a pipe-dream and projects the city man's idealisation of what country living might be, but probably never was.

Country Villas

Pliny is an example of a wealthy landowner with several country estates. His account of *The burdens of an estate owner* provides insight into his lifestyle in the countryside, his responsibilities, and the concerns of those who work on his land. He mentions tenant farmers, who paid rent to farm sections of his land, and sharecroppers who paid the owner of the land a percentage of the harvest. Some typical farm-worker activities and the varied produce of large estates can be seen in **Picture 3**. This picture also shows the contrast between the leisure of the wealthy estate owner and the productive work of those who served him. **Picture 4** too illustrates the hard physical work of farm labourers and the use of animals and equipment to till the land. **Picture 5** demonstrates the use of oxen, labour and equipment in wine making, a further example of estate production.

The extravagant scale of some villas is evident in **Picture 1** and **Picture 3** (centre). In *The changing face of the countryside*, Horace describes mansions with comfortable porticos, extensive lakes for recreational fishing, and gardens like the wall-painting shown in **Picture 2**, planted for ornament rather than agriculture. In *The burdens of an estate owner*, it is clear that Pliny thought of his country estates partly as a retreat from the business of the city, an aim also suggested by the tranquillity of the garden in **Picture 2**, painted on the wall of a suburban villa's dining-room.

Hunting

Pliny's description of *A day's hunting*, **Picture 6** and **Picture 3** exemplify the apparatus of men, dogs, nets and spears entailed in hunting. They also give an impression of the meaning of country living for the wealthy and the role of those who served them.

Some suggestions for further reading on *Romans in the countryside*

Pliny, *Letters* 5.6 and 2.17, gives lengthy descriptions of his villas in Tuscany and nearby Laurentum – confusing to follow in detail, but giving a useful impression of their extent and luxury to compare with those shown in **Pictures 1 and 3**.

U.E. Paoli, *Rome: its people, life and customs* (1967), provides extensive detail on these two villas (Ch.3) and on hunting (Ch.22).

The World of Rome (edited by P. Jones and K. Sidwell, CUP 2008) has interesting things to say about Roman agriculture (pages 185-192) .

J. Shelton, *As the Romans did: a sourcebook in Roman social history*, OUP 2022) contains good material on villas (pages 71-78) and agriculture (pages 71-78).

Suggestions for teaching

Key aims are:

- Understanding the meaning of the Latin
- Literary appreciation
- Developing an understanding of the topic.

It is often useful to adopt the following approach when introducing students to original literature:

- Read the Latin aloud to emphasise phrasing and stress word groups
- Break up more complex sentences into constituent parts for comprehension
- Focus on comprehension of the text and understanding the content through questioning and using the vocabulary
- Look closely at how the Latin is expressed and the ways in which the literary devices enhance the meaning.

Although a sample translation is provided in the course resources, teachers might want to encourage their students to make their own version after various options have been discussed and evaluated. The first step is a literal translation, then something more polished in natural English that is as close to the structure and vocabulary of the original Latin as possible. Students will soon see that a degree of paraphrasing may be required when the Latin does not readily translate into correct and idiomatic English.

Students will bring their own knowledge and experience of today's countryside to this topic. Explorations which compare ancient and modern country living and pursuits will help with student engagement and can cast fresh light on attitudes to the countryside in both periods.

It may be useful to tackle the source material thematically. The texts are presented in the booklet in alphabetical order according to author in order that the teacher is free to use their professional judgement in presenting the material to their students in whatever order seems best.

About the Teacher's Notes

The following *Notes* focus on language, content, style and literary effect. The *Discussion and Questions* focus mostly on literary appreciation and interpretation. Rhetorical and technical terms are used throughout the notes. Some of these may be unfamiliar to teachers new to teaching Latin literature; a definition will be supplied. As the teacher is free to teach these sources in any order they wish, there will be duplication within the notes from time to time.

The notes are designed to provide for the needs of a wide spectrum of teachers, from those with limited knowledge of Latin and who are perhaps entirely new to reading Latin literature, to teachers experienced in both language and literature. It is hoped that all will find something of use and interest. **Teachers should not feel that they need to pass on to their students all the information from these notes; they should choose whatever they think is appropriate.**

Some of the information contained in the notes is for general interest and to satisfy the curiosity of students and teachers. **The examination requires knowledge outside the text only when it is needed in order to understand the text.**

The Teacher's Notes contain the following:

- An Introduction to the author and the text, although students will only be asked questions on the content of the source itself.
- Notes on the text to assist the teacher.
- Discussion suggestions for students and overarching Themes which appear across more than one source.
- Suggested Questions for Comprehension, Content, Style and Culture to be used with students.
- Further Information and Reading for teachers who wish to explore the topic and texts further. None of this is intended for examination.
- Acknowledgement of resources used.