

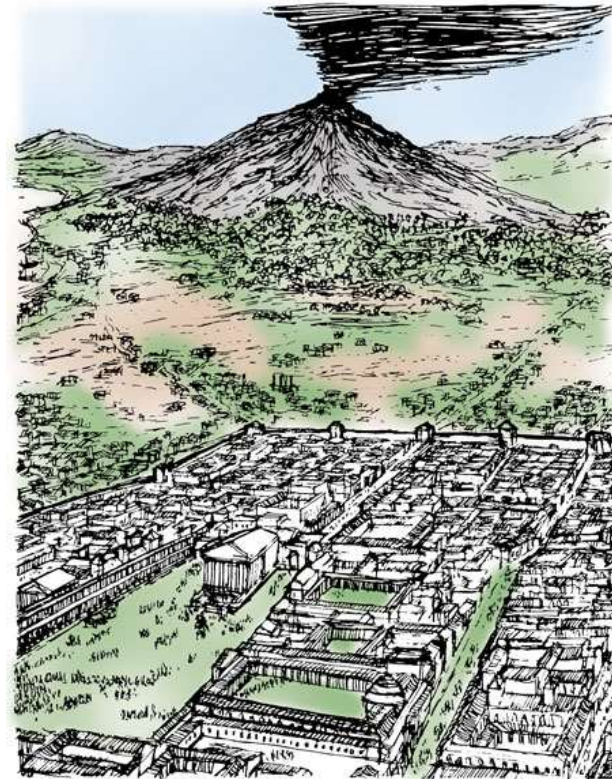


CSCP Support Materials: Translation

Eduqas GCSE Latin
Component 3A

Latin Literature (Narratives)
Pliny, *The Eruption of Vesuvius*

For examination in 2020 and 2021



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Using this Document

Each section of the Latin text is displayed in three columns.

In the left hand column is the Latin text. Line numbers corresponding to the official examination text are indicated in square brackets.

In the centre column is an accessible interpretation of its English meaning (not a literal translation).

Where this interpretation is **significantly** different from a literal translation of the Latin, a literal translation is provided in the right hand column. Where this occurs the relevant words of the Latin text, English meaning and literal translation are all marked with a dotted line underneath.

Where a word in the English meaning column enhances readability, but is not explicitly included in the Latin, it is given in square brackets: [...].

There are also a number of occasions where, in order to make the passage read more naturally in English, Latin verbs in the (historic) present tense have been translated as if they were in a past tense.

Again, to aid readability, translation of a Latin word equivalent to English 'and' has sometimes been omitted in the English meaning.

Summaries in *orange italics* are intended to support understanding and are not part of the specification. These are taken from the [Eduqas produced set text booklet](#).

The English section of the prescription (*Letters VI.20*) is included after the Latin (*Letters VI.16*)

Latin Text ~ *The Eruption of Vesuvius* (from Pliny the Younger, Letter VI.16)

On 24th August AD 79 Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus (Pliny the Younger) was staying with his uncle and his mother at a villa on Cape Misenum, in southern Italy. His uncle, known to us as Pliny the Elder, was in charge of the Roman fleet stationed at Misenum. He was also a notable scientist, whose *Natural History* can still be read today. Many years later, the historian Tacitus asked the younger Pliny to write an account of the eruption of Vesuvius, in which his uncle died.

Latin	English Meaning	Literal Translation
[1] petis ut tibi avunculi mei exitum scribam, quo <u>verius tradere posteris</u> [2] possis.	A <i>You ask that I write for you [an account of] my uncle's death so that you can <u>hand down a really true account</u> for future generations.</i>	<i><u>hand [it] down more truly</u></i>
gratias ago; nam video morti eius si celebretur a te immortalis [3] <u>gloriam esse propositam.</u>	<i>I am grateful to you; for I [can] see that everlasting fame <u>will be guaranteed</u> for his death if it is recorded by you.</i>	<i><u>has been intended</u></i>

Latin

[1] erat Miseni classemque imperio praesens regebat.

nonum kal. [2] Septembres hora fere septima mater mea indicat ei adparere nubem [3] inusitata et magnitudine et specie.

usus ille sole, mox frigida, gustaverat [4] iacens studebatque;

poscit soleas, ascendit locum ex quo maxime [5] miraculum illud conspici poterat.

nubes – incertum procul intuentibus ex [6] quo monte (Vesuvium fuisse postea cognitum est) – oriebatur, cuius [7] similitudinem et formam non alia magis arbor quam pinus expresserit.

[8] nam longissimo velut trunco elata in altum quibusdam ramis [9] diffundebatur,

English Meaning

B

He was at Misenum, controlling the fleet and actively in command.

At around the seventh hour on the 24th August my mother pointed out to him that a cloud of both unusual size and appearance was becoming visible.

He had been sunbathing [and] soon took a cold bath; he had had a meal lying down and was then studying;

he asked for his sandals [and] climbed up to a place from which that phenomenon could best be seen.

A cloud was rising up – it wasn't clear to those viewing it from a distance which mountain it was coming from, although it was later found to have been Vesuvius. Its shape was more like a pine than any other tree.

For it rose up high with, as it were, a very long trunk and then spread out with several branches.

Literal Translation

commanding the fleet being present with power

He, having used the sun, then the cold [water], had eaten a little lying down and was then studying

whose likeness and appearance no other tree modelled more than a pine

Latin

**credo quia recenti spiritu evecta, dein
senescente eo [10] destituta aut etiam
pondere suo victa in latitudinem vanescebat,**

**candida [11] interdum, interdum sordida et
maculosa prout terram cineremve
[12] sustulerat.**

English Meaning

B (continued)

I believe this is because it had been carried upwards by a fresh blast of air and then, as that died away, it was unsupported or even overwhelmed by its own weight and so drifted away horizontally.

Sometimes it was white, at other times dirty and stained, depending on the amount of earth and ash it had carried up.

Literal Translation

earth or ash

Latin

[1] magnum propiusque noscendum ut eruditissimo viro visum.

iubet [2] liburnicam aptari; mihi si venire una vellem facit copiam;

respondi studere [3] me malle, et forte ipse quod scriberem dederat.

egrediebatur domo; [4] accipit codicillos Rectinae Tasci imminenti periculo exterritae

(nam villa [5] eius subiacebat, nec ulla nisi navibus fuga): ut se tanto discrimini eriperet [6] orabat.

vertit ille consilium et quod studioso animo incohaverat obit [7] maximo.

English Meaning

C

It seemed to him – being a highly educated man – important and worth investigating at closer quarters.

He ordered a fast boat to be prepared; he gave me the opportunity to go as well if I wanted;

I replied that I preferred to study and, as it happened, he himself had given me something to write.

As he was just leaving the house, he received a short note from Rectina, [wife] of Tascius, who was terrified by the threatening danger

(for her house lay close to the mountain and there was no escape except by boat). She begged him to snatch her away from such great peril.

He changed his plan and accomplished in a heroic way something he had begun in a spirit of investigation.

Literal Translation

he makes the opportunity for me if I was wanting to come along with him

for her house was lying at the foot of [the mountain]

what he had begun with an enquiring mind he accomplished with a very great [one]

Latin

**deducit quadriremes, ascendit ipse non
Rectinae modo sed [8] multis (erat enim
frequens amoenitas orae) laturus auxilium.**

**properat illuc [9] unde alii fugiunt, rectumque
cursum recta gubernacula in periculum tenet
[10] adeo solutus metu, ut omnes illius mali
motus omnes figuras ut [11] deprenderat
oculis dictaret enotaretque.**

English Meaning

C (continued)

He launched some warships [and] boarded [one] himself, intending to bring help to not only to Rectina but to many others (for the attractiveness of that coast made it popular with people).

He hurried to that area from which others were fleeing and steered a straight course with a straight rudder into danger – so free from fear that he dictated notes and scribbled down all the movements and features of that dreadful thing as he observed them with his own eyes.

Literal Translation

(for the loveliness of the coast was populous)

Latin

[1] iam navibus cinis incidebat, quo propius accederent, calidior et densior;

[2] iam pumices etiam nigrique et ambusti et fracti igne lapides; iam vadum [3] subitum ruinaque montis litora obstantia.

cunctatus paulum an retro [4] flecteret, mox gubernatori ut ita faceret monenti 'fortes' inquit 'fortuna [5] iuvat: Pomponianum pete.'

Stabiis erat diremptus sinu medio (nam [6] sensim circumactis curvatisque litoribus mare infunditur);

ibi quamquam [7] nondum periculo appropinquante, conspicuo tamen et cum cresceret [8] proximo,

sarcinas contulerat in naves, certus fugae si contrarius ventus [9] resedisset.

English Meaning

D

Now ash was falling on the ships, hotter and thicker the nearer they approached;

the next minute there were bits of pumice and even stones, blackened, scorched and cracked by the fire; then there was sudden shallow water and the shore was blocked by debris from the mountain.

Having hesitated for a short time as to whether to turn back, he soon said to his helmsman, who was advising him to do just that, 'Fortune favours the fearless: make for Pomponianus'.

He [Pomponianus] was at Stabiae, cut off by the bay in between (for the shore goes slowly round in a circle and the sea rushes in);

there, although the danger was not yet approaching, it was however visible and when it grew, it would be very close.

He had already loaded his luggage onto ships, determined to flee if the adverse wind subsided.

Literal Translation

now pumices also and stones black and scorched and broken by the fire; now

helps

the sea is poured in to a shore gradually having been turned in a circle and curved;

Latin

[1] quo tunc avunculus meus secundissimo
invectus,

complectitur [2] **trepidantem consolatur**
hortatur, utque timorem eius sua securitate
leniret, [3] **deferri in balineum iubet;**

lotus accubat cenat, aut hilaris aut (quod
aeque [4] **magnum) similis hilari.**

interim e Vesuvio monte pluribus locis
latissimae [5] **flammae altaque incendia**
relucebant, quorum fulgor et claritas
tenebris [6] **noctis excitabatur.**

ille agrestium trepidatione ignes relictos
desertasque [7] **villas per solitudinem ardere**
in remedium formidinis dictitabat.

tum se [8] **quieti dedit et quievit verissimo**
quidem somno; **nam meatus animae, qui**
[9] **illi propter amplitudinem corporis gravior**
et sonantior erat, ab iis qui limini
[10] **obversabantur audiebatur.**

English Meaning

E

*At that moment my uncle was carried in there with the wind
right behind him.*

*He embraced the trembling man, consoled him [and]
encouraged him; he ordered that he should be taken to the
bath so that he could calm that man's fear by his own
composure.*

*Having bathed, he reclined and had a meal, either being
genuinely cheerful or appearing to be (which is equally
brave).*

*Meanwhile from more places on Mount Vesuvius very
extensive flames and fires [rising up] high were blazing out,
their glare and brightness emphasised by the darkness of the
night.*

*To allay their fears he kept saying that these were bonfires
left by farmers in their panic and deserted houses burning in
the abandoned area.*

*Then he devoted himself to peace and quiet and relaxed in
what was indeed a very deep sleep; for his breathing (which
was rather heavy and noisy because of the stoutness of his
body) was heard by those who were near the doorway.*

Literal Translation

*then my uncle having
sailed in with this very
favourable [wind]*

*either being cheerful or
resembling cheerful*

*by/in the alarm of country
folk*

to rest

Latin

English Meaning

Literal Translation

F

[1] sed area ex qua diaeta adibatur ita iam cinere mixtisque pumicibus [2] oppleta surrexerat, ut

But the courtyard from which his room was reached was now so full of a mixture of ash and pumice and its floor level had risen so much that,

now having been filled up with ash and mixed pumices had risen in such a way

si longior in cubiculo mora, exitus negaretur.

if he had delayed any longer in the bedroom, any way out would have been impossible.

if [there had been] a longer delay in the bedroom, a going out would be denied

[3] excitatus procedit, seque Pomponiano ceterisque qui pervigilaverant [4] reddit.

He was woken up and made his way out, returning to Pomponianus and the others who had stayed awake.

having been woken up he advances

in commune consultant, intra tecta subsistant an in aperto [5] vagentur.

They debated whether to stay inside the building or roam around in the open.

they consult together

nam crebris vastisque tremoribus tecta nutabant, et quasi [6] emota sedibus suis nunc huc nunc illuc abire aut referri videbantur.

For the buildings were shaking with frequent, huge tremors and seemed to be swaying now this way, now that as if detached from their foundations.

as if having been removed from their foundations now to here now to there they were seeming to go away or to be brought back

Latin

English Meaning

Literal Translation

F (continued)

sub [7] dio rursus quamquam levium
exesorumque pumicum casus metuebatur,

*In the open, on the other hand, falls of pumice – though
light and porous – were to be feared;*

*the falling of pumice was
being feared*

[8] quod tamen periculorum collatio elegit;

*nevertheless, a comparison of the dangers selected the
latter option.*

*which however a comparison
of the dangers chose*

et apud illum quidem ratio [9] rationem, apud
alios timorem timor vicit.

*In the case of my uncle one reason overcame the other
reason, whereas in the others one fear overcame the other
fear.*

*and in his case indeed
calculation defeated
calculation, in the case of
others fear defeated fear.*

cervicalia capitibus imposita [10] linteis
constringunt;

*They placed pillows on their heads and tied them with linen
cloth;*

*they bind with linen cloths
pillows having been placed
on their heads*

id munimentum adversus incidentia fuit.

that gave some protection against falling objects.

Latin

[1] iam dies alibi, illic nox omnibus noctibus nigrior densiorque;

quam tamen [2] faces multae variaque lumina solvebant.

placuit egredi in litus, et ex [3] proximo adspicere, ecquid iam mare admitteret;

quod adhuc vastum et [4] adversum permanebat.

ibi super abiectum linteum recubans semel atque [5] iterum frigidam aquam poposcit hausitque.

deinde flammae [6] flammaramque praenuntius odor sulphuris alios in fugam vertunt, excitant [7] illum.

English Meaning

G

Elsewhere there was now daylight, but there a night darker and thicker than all [other] nights.

However, many torches and different types of lamps helped to dispel the darkness.

They decided to go down to the shore and check at close quarters what the sea would now allow [them to do];

[however], it still remained enormous and threatening.

There, lying on a linen sheet put down [for him], he asked time and again for cold water which he drained down.

Then the flames and the smell of sulphur (which is a warning sign of fires) turned others to flight and roused him.

Literal Translation

which [darkness] however many torches and different types of lamps were relieving.

harsh/desolate and hostile

and he drained [it]

foreteller of flames

Latin

innitens servolis duobus adsurrexit et statim concidit,

ut ego colligo, [8] crassiore caligine spiritu obstructo,

clausoque stomacho qui illi natura [9] invalidus et angustus et frequenter aestuans erat.

ubi dies redditus (is ab [10] eo quem novissime viderat tertius), corpus inventum integrum inlaesum [11] opertumque ut fuerat indutus:

habitus corporis quiescenti quam defuncto [12] similior.

English Meaning

G (continued)

Leaning on two young slaves he got up but at once fell down again,

[because] as I imagine, the fumes were thicker, his breathing was obstructed

and his windpipe closed up, as it was weak, narrow and often inflamed.

When daylight returned (the third day after the one he had last seen) his body was found intact, uninjured and covered just as he had been dressed;

the appearance of the body was more like that of someone asleep than dead.

Literal Translation

and at once fell down

as I infer, with his breathing having been obstructed by the thicker atmosphere

when day [was] restored

Latin

[1] interim Miseni ego et mater – sed nihil ad historiam, nec tu aliud quam de [2] exitu eius scire voluisti.

finem ergo faciam.

unum adiciam,

omnia me [3] quibus interfueram quaeque statim, cum maxime vera memorantur, [4] audieram, persecutum.

tu potissima excerpes; aliud est enim epistulam [5] aliud historiam, aliud amico aliud omnibus scribere.

vale.

English Meaning

H

Meanwhile at Misenum my mother and I – but that's not part of the story and you didn't want to know about anything other than his [my uncle's] death.

So I'll end here.

I will [just] add one more thing:

all the events that I've described were either things which I had either been involved in myself or had heard immediately afterwards (when the truth is recalled most accurately).

You will pick out the most relevant points; for it's one thing to write a letter and another thing to write history, one thing to write to a friend, a different thing to write for everyone.

Farewell.

Literal Translation

Therefore I shall make an end.

that I have recounted everything in which I was present and those which I had heard at once when true things very greatly are recounted

most important [things]

English Text ~ *The Eruption of Vesuvius, AD 79 – continued* (from Pliny the Younger, *Letters VI.20*)

Pliny the Younger's account of the death of his uncle prompted Tacitus to ask for more information about the eruption of Vesuvius. This second letter describes the younger Pliny's own reactions on that day and his firsthand observations of how other people behaved.

I

You say that the letters which I wrote to you about my uncle's death have encouraged you to want to know not only about the fears but also the dangers I endured while I was left at Misenum – for I broke off when I had begun this part. 'Although my mind shudders at the memory, I shall begin...'

J

After my uncle set out I passed the rest of the time with my studies - I had remained behind for this reason. Then I had a bath, dinner and a brief, restless nap. For many days there had been earth tremors, they were not particularly frightening because they are common in Campania; however on that night they were so strong that everything seemed not just to be moved but to be overturned. My mother burst into my bedroom just as I was rising to wake her, if she had still been asleep. We sat in the courtyard of the house which was placed between the sea and the buildings. I do not know whether I ought to call this bravery or stupidity – I was seventeen. I requested a book of Titus Livy, and I read as though I were at leisure and even carried on with the extracts which I had begun. Then a friend of my uncle who had recently joined him from Spain, when he saw my mother and I sitting, and me actually reading, complained of her patience and my lack of concern. Nevertheless I remained intent on the book.

K

It was now the first hour of the day, and there was as yet a doubtful and weak light. The buildings around about were still shaking and although we were in an open space, it was however narrow and there our fear of the house's imminent ruin was great. Then at last it seemed sensible to leave the town; a terrified crowd followed us, in a state of fear which resembled good judgement, and they preferred the decision of someone else rather than their own; they were going in such a huge group that they crowded around us and carried us away. When we had left the houses, we stopped. There we saw many strange things, many terrors. For the carriages which we had ordered to be brought out, began to move in opposite directions, although they were on the flattest of land, and would not stay still in the same place even when propped up with stones. We also saw the sea being sucked back on itself as if pushed by the earth tremor. Certainly the shore became larger and left many sea creatures high and dry on the sand. From behind us a terrifying black cloud was ripped apart by twisted and quivering bursts of fire and gaped open into long tongues of flame: they were similar to lightning forks and bigger.

L

Not much later that cloud descended onto the ground and covered the sea; it encircled Capreae and concealed it; it rushed upon the promontory of Misenum and stole it away from our sight. Then my mother begged, encouraged and ordered me to flee in whatever way I could; for a young man could do it, and that she being old and slow of body would die happy if she had not been the cause of my death. I, on the contrary, would not save myself unless we were together; and then grasping her hand I compelled her to speed up. She obeyed unwillingly and accused herself of delaying me.

M

Now ash was falling although not thickly at this point. I looked back: pressing on us was a thick fog which spread across the land like a burning flood. 'Let us turn off the road,' I said, 'while we can see, in case we are left sprawled in the road and crushed by the crowd following us in the dark.' We had scarcely sat down, when night fell – not that of a moonless and cloudy night, but as if a light had been extinguished in a closed room. You could hear the shrieking of the women, the wailing of infants, the shouts of the men; some were calling for parents, some for children, some for wives, they were trying to recognise them by their voices; these were lamenting their own fate, those the fate of their relatives; there were those who were praying for death in their very terror of death. Many raised their hands to the gods, more concluded that there were no longer any gods and that this was a new and eternal night for the world. Nor was there a lack of those who increased the real dangers with made-up lies and terrors. There were those who reported that part of Misenum had collapsed and part was on fire, these were false reports but they found people to believe them.

N

At last it grew light again, this seemed to us not to be day but the sign of an approaching fire. However, the fire halted some way off, the darkness returned and there was ash again, a lot of it and heavy. Every now and then we got up and shook it off otherwise we should have been covered and even crushed by its weight. I can boast that no groan, no sound less than brave escaped me in these great dangers, except that I believed the end was nigh for me alongside everyone else and that, alongside poor me, the whole world was ending – which nevertheless was a great comfort in death. At last the darkness thinned as though it disappeared into smoke and cloud; soon real daylight returned, even the sun shone, however it was yellowish as it is in an eclipse. Everything which our frightened eyes encountered was changed and buried deep in ash like in snow.



We returned to Misenum, having attended to our bodies in whatever way we could, and spent a night hanging uncertainly between hope and fear. Fear was uppermost; for the earth tremors continued and very many people, distracted by terrifying predictions, were making fun of their own and other people's misfortunes. However, not even then, though we had been through danger and were expecting it, did we have any intention of leaving until we had news of my uncle. These things, which are certainly not worthy of history, you will read without any wish to write about them and will, no doubt, blame yourself for asking about them if they do not seem worthy even of a letter. Farewell.