

## Seneca, *dē beneficiīs* 5.5: *The debt we owe to our parents*

### Introduction

Lucius Annaeus Seneca (c. 4 BC – AD 65), known as Seneca the Younger, was a Stoic philosopher and the tutor and political adviser of the Emperor Nero. After becoming implicated in a plot against Nero, he was forced to commit suicide. He was a prolific author, and among his many works were several philosophical treatises, including *de beneficiis* (*On Benefits*). The subject of this work is the nature of benefit, gratitude and ingratitude, and various problems concerned with the giving and receiving of benefits.

### Text

This is an extract from a much longer work. A few small changes have been made to the text.

### Suggestions for reading and teaching

The sentence structure is quite straightforward. However, vocabulary is a potential cause of difficulty, because several words which are probably known to the students require unfamiliar translations. These are pointed out in the notes. It would, therefore, be good to start by running through some of the vocabulary on the board. In three columns, first write the Latin word, ask the students what it means and put this meaning in the second column, put the new meaning in the third column. For example:

**vincō** conquer, win, surpass

### Notes

- 1-2 **ā ... intellegimus**: the syntax of the first two sentences is straightforward. Difficulties arise from the vocabulary, specifically some familiar words with unfamiliar meanings. It would therefore be a good idea to begin by running through the vocabulary.
- 1 **ferē**: here = 'generally, 'usually'. Students may have come across the meaning 'almost'.  
**vincimur**: here = 'outdo', 'surpass'. Students will know the meaning 'conquer, win'.  
**tam diū ... quam diū ... quam diū**: 'for as long as ... for so long'
- 2 **gravēs**: add **illōs esse, iūdicāmus [illōs esse] gravēs**, with **illōs** referring to 'parents'. Students will be familiar with the meaning 'heavy' or 'serious'. Here **gravis** = 'harsh', 'severe'.  
**beneficia**: translate as 'kindness' or 'support'. In the title of Seneca's treatise **beneficium** is conventionally translated as 'benefit'. The word covers a wide range of meanings involving reciprocal acts of giving, favour, service and kindness.
- 3 **iam**: translate here as 'at last'. Students will know the meaning 'now, already'.  
**aliquid prūdentiae**: 'some [of] wisdom'. Partitive genitive: the genitive case indicates the whole of something, part of which has been mentioned. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 50, Section 14.4b.  
**collēgit**: students may have met **colligō** with the meaning 'collect'. Translate here as 'gain' or 'acquire'.  
**appārēre**: another word which requires a slightly different translation from the one with which students will be familiar. Translate here as 'be evident, clear' rather than 'appear'.  
**coepit**: 'it has begun'. The verb has an impersonal subject.
- 3-4 **eōs ... dēbēre**: students may not recognise the indirect statement (accusative and infinitive). Help by asking:
- Which word refers to parents?
  - Which word refers to children?
  - When children grow up, what do they realise about their parents, according to Seneca? If students answer, 'that parents are loved by their children', ask 'How does **dēbēre** fit in?'
- 4 **illa ipsa**: accusative neuter plural, 'those very things', 'those very reasons'

**quae:** add **propter**, 'on account of which'. 'for which'.

**amābantur:** take care with the tense. The imperfect suggests habitual behaviour, 'used not to ...'.

**6 nōbīs:** the dative case is used to express the idea 'from' with the verb **rapiō**.

**nōbīs rapiuntur:** ensure students understand that Seneca is referring to the death of parents. Check by asking them to put the phrase 'they are snatched from us' into other words.

**6-7 paucōs ... perdūxit aetās:** the usual word order would be **aetās paucōs ... perdūxit**. In Latin, unusual word order can be used to highlight a particular word or phrase, and a word can be emphasised by being placed either first or last in the sentence. Here, **paucōs** is stressed because of its position and because of the inversion of subject and object (*only* a few). The alliteration of *p* (**paucōs ... percipiendum perdūxit**) intensifies the stress. There is some, but lesser, emphasis on **aetās**. After translating, read aloud again and ask:

- How does Seneca emphasise that only a few parents derive any benefit from their children? (Hint: look at the order of the words.)

**ad vērum frūctum ... percipiendum:** 'to getting a real benefit'. Translate as 'to get a real reward'. **percipiendum** is a gerundive.

**7 cēterī:** notice the contrast with **paucōs** in the first part of the sentence.

**onerī:** 'to be a burden'. Literally, 'for a burden'. This is a predicative use of the dative case. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 52, Section 14.5c. There is a second contrast in this sentence, between **frūctum** and **onerī**. Teachers could ask students:

- Look at the sentence **paucōs ... sēnsērunt**. How does Seneca, by his choice and position of words, highlight the contrast between the two groups of parents?

**filiōs:** Seneca varies his vocabulary by using a form of **filius** ('son') here rather than repeating **liberī**.

### Questions

1. **ā parentibus ferē vincimur.** What do you think Seneca means by this?
2. What **three** complaints do children have about their parents, according to Seneca? Would you agree with any of them? What, if anything, would you add?
3. Seneca says that few people live long enough to reap any benefit from having children. Bearing in mind that the average life expectancy for a Roman was shorter than today, do you agree with this?
4. Compare Seneca's view of the relationship between parents and children in Roman society with modern attitudes. To what extent do you think they are similar? In what ways are they different?

## Pliny, *Letters 8.14: The traditional Roman education*

### Introduction

Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus (c. AD 61- c. 112) had a successful career in Rome as a lawyer and politician, culminating in the governorship of the province of Bithynia. He is known as Pliny the Younger to distinguish him from his uncle, Pliny the Elder, who adopted him on his father's death. Pliny's letters, collected in ten books, give a valuable insight into the people and events of his times, and the life of a wealthy member of the Roman élite. Although most are personal letters to friends and family, Pliny wrote them self-consciously with publication in mind, and he published them himself at regular intervals. Some of the letters were rewritten and edited before publication. Unlike non-literary letters, nearly all of them are restricted to a single subject, so they resemble essays.

### Summary

Pliny writes to his friend, the eminent legal expert Titius Aristo, asking for his advice about a detail of senatorial procedure. In this extract he says that his contemporaries have not benefited from being able to observe the conduct of their elders in the army, senate and lawcourts, as was the practice in earlier generations. The reason for this is that, under the tyrannical regime of the Emperor Domitian, the army was undisciplined and the senate had no freedom to act.

### Text

This is an excerpt from a longer letter. The text has been adapted slightly to make it more suitable for students at GCSE level: the syntax has been simplified in a few places and a short section has been omitted.

### Further reading

#### Commentary

A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny: A Historical and Social Commentary* (Oxford University Press, 1966)

#### Translations

Betty Radice, *The Letters of Pliny the Younger* (Penguin, 1963; 2nd edition 1969)

P.G. Walsh, *Pliny the Younger: Complete letters* (Oxford University Press, 2006)

### Notes

**1-3 erat ... trāderēmus:** the syntax of the first sentence is quite complex. Teachers can help students by first reading the sentence aloud with careful phrasing, then breaking the sentence into parts and using comprehension and linguistic questions. For example:

- **erat ... īnstitūtum: īnstitūtum** means 'custom'. Which word shows that the custom was an ancient one? (**antīquitus**)
- **ut ... discerēmus:** According to the custom, what should the Romans do? When you answer this, look carefully at the endings of the verbs. (Pliny refers to the Romans as 'we'). Who would they learn from? In which two ways should they learn?
- **quae ... facerēmus:** what should the Romans learn?
- **ac ... trāderēmus:** once they had learnt what to do what should the Romans do with this knowledge?

After the whole sentence has been read and understood, students could be asked:

- In your own words explain the difference between the two ways of learning Pliny mentions, **auribus** and **oculis**.
- Which four words emphasise that both kinds of learning are important?

**erat ... īnstitūtum ut ... discerēmus ... ac ... trāderēmus:** 'it was the custom that we should learn ... and pass on'. When **erat** is the first word in a sentence it is usually translated as 'It was' or 'There was'. **ut** + subjunctive verb (**discerēmus**) = 'that...'

- 1 **maiōribus nātū**: '(our) elders'. Literally 'people greater in birth'. (But students should use natural translation if asked to translate in an exam.)
- 1-2 **nōn ... modo vērum etiam**: 'not only ... but also'. The phrase emphasises the contrast between ears and eyes, **auribus** and **oculīs**.  
**auribus ... oculīs**: 'with (our) ears ... with (our) eyes'. The ablative case without a preposition is used to express the means by which something is done. The extensive use of the ablative is something that students will gradually become familiar with as they read more Latin literature. At this stage it is unnecessary, indeed counterproductive, to burden them with an analysis of the various uses of the ablative. They could be given a useful rule of thumb: "the ablative is used to tell you something about the action, i.e. where or when or how it happened, or the reason, or any other circumstance" or "often you can translate the ablative as 'in', 'on', 'by', 'with', 'from' or 'at'". After the initial literal translation, students could be asked for an alternative translation such as 'by hearing ... by watching'. Ask students:
- How does Pliny emphasise the contrast he is making between two ways of learning?
- 2 **quae**: add **ea**. [**ea**] **quae** = 'the things which', i.e. 'what'.  
**ipsī**: '[we] ourselves'
- 2-3 **per vicēs quāsdam**: there are two ways of interpreting this phrase:
- (i) 'in turn'
  - (ii) 'with some changes'
- The translation in the *Eduqas Resources* ('after certain changes') follows (ii). Walsh has (i).
- 3 **minōribus**: 'descendants', 'the younger generation'. Literally 'younger people'.
- 3-4 **castrēnsibus stīpendiīs**: upper class young Roman men were expected to serve in the army as soon as they reached adulthood, before embarking on a political or legal career.
- 4-5 **ut ... adsuēscerent**: a good approach here would be to ask a comprehension question: 'What was the purpose of military service?' If students answer 'so that they would obey', encourage them to read to the end of the sentence. They may need the hint that **ut**, when it indicates purpose, has a subjunctive verb. Then ask:
- Which two things did they become accustomed to do?
  - How did they learn to give orders?
  - How did they learn to lead?
- 4 **pārendō**: 'by obeying'. A gerund in the ablative case. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 82, Section 26.1.
- 4-5 **pārendō ... dum sequuntur**: the gerund and the temporal **dum** clause both express the means by which young men are trained (to give orders and to lead). In fact, Pliny could have written **dum pārent ... dum sequuntur** or **pārendō ... sequendō**. Syntactical variation is a way in which Pliny gives elegance to his style of writing: it is an example of the rhetorical figure **variātiō**.
- 5 **eī quī honōrēs petitūrī erant**: 'those who were going to seek public office', i.e. the young men who aimed to become candidates for office as magistrates. **petitūrī** is a future participle, 'going to seek', 'intending to seek'.
- 6 **adsistēbant**: the imperfect tense here conveys the idea of habitual action, 'used to stand by'.  
**cūriae**: the **cūria** was the building where the Roman senate met, the senate house. It was in the forum.  
**cōsiliī pūblicī**: 'public council', i.e. meetings of the senate.
- 6-7 **ante quam**: = **antequam**
- 7-8 **suus ... parente**: a difficult sentence to construe. Comprehension questions will help students to elicit the meaning. For example:
- What was the rôle of the father?
  - What happened if a young man no longer had a father?
- 7 **suus cuique parēns**: add **erat**, = [**erat**] **cuique suus parēns**, 'each boy had his own father'. **erat** + a noun in the dative case is a way of expressing the idea of possession. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 52, Section 5e.

- prō magistrō:** ‘acting as a teacher’, i.e. ‘as his teacher’
- 7-8 cui parēns nōn erat:** add **eī**, = [eī] *cui parēns nōn erat*. Again, the dative case with **erat** indicates possession. See the note on line 7 above.
- 8 maximus ... parente:** add **erat eī**, *maximus quisque et vetustissimus [erat eī] prō parente*. **maximus quisque:** ‘one of the most revered men’. Literally ‘each man according as he was most revered’. **maximus** here = ‘most revered’ or ‘greatest’.
- prō parente:** ‘instead of a/his father’
- 9-10 quae ... docēbantur:** one way of helping students with this sentence is to explain that Pliny lists the things that young men learned by example in a series of clauses dependent on **exemplīs docēbantur** at the end of the sentence. **quae/quod** = ‘what’. Use comprehension questions to elicit meaning, such as:
- How did the young men learn?
  - Which four things does Pliny say they learnt specifically? Start by picking out the four two-word phrases Pliny uses. Perhaps put them on the board before discussing how to translate them. Supply *esset*, e.g. *potestas [esset] referentibus*.
  - Pick out the word which shows Pliny is summing up his list of what the young men learn.
  - Pick out the three word phrase in which Pliny sums up what was learnt? Translate it.
- 9 potestās referentibus:** ‘the authority for proposing a motion’. Literally, ‘the authority for those proposing a motion’. **referentibus** is a present participle in the dative plural. **referō** here has the technical sense of ‘proposing a motion in the senate’.
- cēnsentibus iūs:** ‘the rights of voters’. Literally ‘the right to those voting’.
- vīs magistrātibus:** ‘the power of the magistrates’
- 10 dēnique:** ‘in short’. This word indicates that Pliny is now summing up his list of senatorial conventions.
- omnem ... senātōrium mōrem:** ‘all the customs of senators’. **mōrem** is singular, but can be translated here as plural. An alternative translation would be ‘the entire practice of the senate’, or ‘every custom of senators’ / ‘every practice of senators’.
- 11 quod ... genus:** add **est**, *quod [est] fidissimum percipiendī genus*. **quod** refers forward to the whole idea expressed in **exemplīs docēbantur**.
- percipiendī genus:** ‘method of learning’. **percipiendī** is a gerund in the genitive case. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 82, Section 26.1.

## Discussion

Pliny is contrasting his own society with earlier Roman practices. He says that in the past young men learnt from their elders by example. In the rest of the letter he explains why this is no longer the case. The tyrannical regime of the Emperor Domitian (AD 81-96) restricted the freedom and activities of the senate and the law courts, and was characterised by indiscipline in the army. During his reign, therefore, when Pliny himself was young, there was no opportunity for young men to learn from their fathers and elders about the workings of the senate, the legal system and the army. Although teachers may want to mention this briefly to students in order to explain Pliny’s reference to past tradition, it should not be the focus of attention. The main interest will lie in discussing what Pliny says about how a young Roman was prepared for a career and comparing this with what happens nowadays.

Pliny’s focus is narrow. He is concerned only with his own class and gender. There is nothing here about how young men of the lower classes might prepare for working life as, for example, legionaries in the army, farmers, craftsmen, labourers, merchants or shopkeepers, and nothing at all about women or slaves of either gender. The young men Pliny has in mind will start their careers as junior officers (**tribūnī**) in the army, followed by standing for office as junior magistrates, then entering the senate. Pliny assumes that boys will follow the same career path as their fathers, and they will be helped to do this by their fathers, or, in some cases another senior man (who would be a friend of their father).

The passage will provide plenty of material for comparing Pliny's views with modern attitudes and practices. Topics for discussion could include the relative merits of going to university versus apprenticeships; the best way of training for various careers, e.g. law, medicine, accountancy or engineering; the value of internships; the role of patronage and nepotism in finding a job and pursuing a career.

### **Questions**

1. What indications are there that Pliny is thinking only about the élite male members of Roman society? How do you think the education of other members of society might have been different?
2. Do you agree with Pliny that learning 'on the job' is the best way of preparing for a job or career?
3. How would a young person today prepare for a career in politics or law?

### Martial, *Epigrams* 11.39

This is a whole poem. The metre is elegiacs.

- 1 **cunarum fueras motor, Charideme, mearum:** Martial addresses Charidemus and states a detail about the earliest part of the relationship between him and Charidemus, which had started when Martial was a baby in his cradle. The pluperfect is frequent in Martial for the perfect tense.  
The cradle from Herculaneum was a highlight of the recent exhibition at the British Museum.
- 2 **et pueri custos assiduusque comes:** Martial moves onto his boyhood when Charidemus became his *paedagogos*. Does the word *assiduus* hint that Charidemus was good at his job or at some resentment by Martial?
- 3 **iam mihi nigrescunt tonsa sudaria barba:** *sudaria* are the barber's towels, used either to catch the shavings or to wipe the razor. There is alliteration of 's' and 'r'. *mihi* is dative, but can be slipped into the translation as 'my'.  
In the use of the present tense and inceptive *nigrescunt* Martial presents himself as being at the age when a boy begins to visit the barber's shop for a shave. You may or may not choose to tell your students now that at the time of publishing the poems Martial was in fact over 50. A boy's first shave was considered an important event and the clippings were sometimes dedicated to the household gods.
- 4 **et queritur labris puncta puella meis:** despite only just starting a beard, Martial says that his girl-friend is complaining about it. The alliteration of 'p' in *puncta puella* adds to the humour.
- 5 **sed tibi non crevi:** *tibi* is dative of the person judging – in your eyes. It follows closely on *meis* in the previous line.
- 5-6 **te noster vilicus horret, te dispensator, te domus ipsa pavet:** Martial declares that everyone is afraid of Charidemus. Martial uses an ascending tricolon of nouns interspersed with repeated '*te*'. The *vilicus* was the bailiff or overseer of the slaves, although he was a usually slave himself. The *dispensator* was the household manager, steward, accountant; he was usually a trustworthy slave but sometimes was free-born. Even if they were slaves, there is no reason why these people should fear Charidemus – nor should Martial!
- 7 **ludere nec nobis nec tu permittis amare:** a direct criticism of Charidemus. At first it looks like *ludere* could refer back to a childhood when Charidemus wouldn't let the boy Martial play, but use of the present tense and the addition of '*amare*' shows that Charidemus is trying to prevent Martial indulging in adult forms of play, such as drinking, gambling or writing poetry or sexual encounters.
- 8 **nil mihi vis et vis cuncta licere tibi:** the hyperbole in *nil mihi vis* sounds like the caricature of a sulky teenager as does the accusation that Charidemus apparently however wants all pleasures for himself.
- 9 **corripis, observas, quereris, suspiria ducis:** the list of signs of disapproval from Charidemus begins in quick succession with these four verbs in asyndeton in the 2nd person. Charidemus is as *assiduus* in his criticism now as he had been a companion to the boy.
- 10 **et vix a ferulis temperat ira tua:** Martial then takes a whole line describing how Charidemus can scarcely refrain from using the cane. Martial makes *ira* the subject, rather than Charidemus.  
For *ferula* see notes on Martial Epigram 10.62.
- 11 **si Tyrios sumpsi cultus:** Tyrian dye was made from shellfish and was very expensive. It gave a reddish or brownish purple colour. The wearing of purple clothes would be considered extravagant. It would be sure to draw comment from old Charidemus.  
See the following websites for more:
  - [Chris Cooksey](#)
  - [Saudi Aramco World](#)
  - [Ancient History Encyclopedia](#)

- unxive capillos:** Martial has used product on his hair: this would be perfumed oil. This advertisement portrays shock at a hairstyle:
- 12 exclamas 'numquam fecerat ista pater':** This is the only time that Charidemus gets his own say in the poem. Charidemus expresses disapproval by invoking the authority of Martial's father. Tennick writes that it is a 'remark carefully calculated, given the prominence of the paterfamilias, to deflate the young man about town'. The position of **pater** at the end of the line and end of the sentence give it impact.
- 13 et numeras nostros astricta fronte trientes:** the unit measurement was a *cyathus* (*kyathos*). A *triens* was a cup which contained three *cyathi* i.e. about one fifth of a litre.  
See a *kyathos*:
- [Met Museum](#)
- Buy a *kyathos*:
- [Alexander Ancient Art](#)
- Roman cups
- [British Museum](#)
  - [Met Museum](#)
- 14 tamquam de cella sit cadus ille tua:** *sit* is subjunctive because this is hypothetical – the jar and the *cella* do not belong to Charidemus, although he counts the cups as if they were. Perhaps once he was ordered to keep an eye on the young master's drinking. Is Martial's remark a put-down to the old slave not to get above his station? The first half of the line contains long syllables giving a measured weight to it.
- 15 desine:** an abrupt order.  
**non possum libertum ferre Catonem:** Marcus Porcius Cato (the one who said *Carthago delenda est*) and his grandson Marcus Porcius Cato Uticensis were known for their uncompromising strict judgement. Cicero praised the younger Cato as being *gravissimus*. The second, third and fourth feet in this line (*non possum libertum*) are spondees as Martial slowly declares his view.
- 16 esse virum iam me dicet amica tibi:** Martial now says that his girlfriend will tell Charidemus that Martial is a man. *Virum* can mean both an adult and a sexually active man. Are they the same thing? Tennick writes 'No doubt the girlfriend, an outsider to the family, will be better able to get home to Charidemus'. Alternatively some humour lies in the climb-down from Martial's pomposity of the previous line - now Martial seems to need corroboration for his adult status.

### Discussion

In the poem Martial presents himself as a youth and gives a one-sided conversation with his paedagogos. We hear Charidemus' voice once in direct speech '*numquam fecerat ista pater*'. Yet it is possible to tell quite a lot about Charidemus from what is said about him, even if it is from one point of view. If you did not tell your students earlier that Martial was old when he published the poem, when you reveal this at the end, you can ask if it makes a difference if you know that this poem was not written by a teenager. This poem is the most obvious passage in the selection to illustrate the use of persona. The tone with which Martial speaks changes through the poem; students should look closely at the Latin for evidence for this.

Issues raised include:

- What it means to be a man or to be an adult
- Slavery

### Further Reading

This poem is discussed in the *Libellus Handbook* pages 103-105



## Cicero, *prō Caeliō* 43: *Boys will be boys*

### Introduction

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC) was an eminent lawyer, orator and politician. He was born in Arpinum, about seventy miles south-east of Rome, but lived most of his life in Rome. He was a prolific author of political and forensic speeches, letters, and treatises on philosophy and oratory. This passage is part of a speech he made in defence of Marcus Caelius Rufus, a young man who was on trial in 56 BC on several charges, including murder and trying to poison his former mistress, Clodia. At the time of this speech, Caelius was twenty-five. He was a lawyer and aspiring politician, who, according to the prosecution, enjoyed a colourful and extravagant lifestyle. Although there may have been more substance to the charges than Cicero allowed, Caelius was acquitted. In a Roman court the three prosecutors made their speeches first, followed by the three speakers for the defence. For the defence, Caelius himself spoke first, then Crassus and finally Cicero. Cicero's is the only one of the six speeches that has survived. He does not say much about the actual charges against Caelius. Instead, he focuses on countering the prosecution's attack on Caelius' character and lifestyle. Roman courts allowed the speakers to make personal attacks which in a modern UK court would be disallowed as irrelevant. In the section of the speech included here Cicero is arguing that allowances should be made for youthful misdemeanours.

### Text

This passage is an extract from a speech. Only very minor changes have been made to the text; three words have been omitted from the first sentence.

### Suggestions for reading and teaching

In order to understand and appreciate this text students do not need to know anything about Cicero or the background to the case against Caelius. It would, however, be helpful to tell them that the passage is part of a speech in a law court and Cicero, speaking in defence of his client, Caelius, is addressing the jury. A good way to start would be to ask students what they think the title means and what they expect the passage to be about. The first sentence is challenging and students will need help with the word order. Guide students by breaking it down into its constituent clauses and phrases, as demonstrated in the *Notes*.

### Further reading

#### *Commentary*

R.G. Austin *pro Caelio* (Oxford University Press, 3rd edition, 1960)

#### *Translations*

D.H. Berry, *Cicero: Defence Speeches* (Oxford World Classics, Oxford University Press, 2000)

Michael Grant, *Cicero: Selected Political Speeches* (Penguin, 1969)

### Notes

- 1-2 **multī et nostrā et patrum maiōrumque memoriā, summī hominēs et clārissimī cīvēs fuērunt:** add **memoriā** and read in the order *et nostrā [memoriā] et memoriā patrum maiōrumque fuērunt multī summī hominēs et clārissimī cīvēs*. Students may have difficulty with the word order. Rather than showing a rearranged word order, teachers could use punctuation and reading aloud to guide students. It may be helpful to suggest that they imagine a comma after **multī**: this will show clearly that the words **et nostrā et patrum maiōrumque memoriā** are separate from the rest of the sentence. Then, read aloud with a strong pause before and after the phrase **et nostrā et patrum maiōrumque memoriā**. Careful pronunciation of the long final *-a* in **nostrā** and **memoriā** will help students identify the ablative case – the macra are not marked in the GCSE text, so students are likely to interpret these words as nominative singular. Follow up with linguistic and comprehension questions, for example:

- **multī**: Translate, but wait until later in the sentence to find out who the word refers to.
- **et ... memoriā**: Whose memory is being referred to? (Hint: there are three groups of people.)
- How does the phrase about memory show that Cicero is talking about the relatively recent past?
- **nostrā et patrum maiōrumque memoriā**: translate.
- Now go back to **multī**: which two groups of people does this word describe? (Hint: look carefully at the endings of the nouns and adjectives before answering.)
- Now it should be clear that the first **et** can't mean 'and'. How else can it be translated? (Hint: there is another **et** soon afterwards.)

- 1 multī ... summī hominēs ... clārissimī cīvēs**: the adjective **multī** is separated from the two adjective + noun phrases which it qualifies.  
**et ... et**: 'both ... and'. Students may have difficulty with the double **et**. See the note above on lines 1-2 for how to approach this.  
**maiōrumque**: **maiōrēs** = 'ancestors' or 'grandfathers'  
**nostrā ... memoriā**: split adjective + noun phrase. It is common for an adjective to be separated from the noun it describes by one or more words.
- 1-2 summī hominēs et clārissimī cīvēs**: the distinction between 'great men' and 'very famous citizens' is insignificant; the phrases are, in effect, synonymous here. Using a pair of words or phrases with the same or similar meaning is a way of adding emphasis and trying to ensure that the audience (here the jury) understands the point. This is a favourite rhetorical technique of Cicero. The use of the superlative form of the adjective also stresses the importance of these men. Alliteration of the letter *c* in **clārissimī cīvēs** adds further emphasis by drawing attention to the words by their similarity of sound. Several times in this passage Cicero emphasises that he is talking about important men.
- 2 fuērunt**: 'there have been'
- 2-3 quōrum ... eximiae virtūtēs**: 'whose outstanding virtues'. The subject of the relative clause is postponed. After determining that **quōrum** means 'whose' tell students to wait until later in the sentence to find out how the relative clause continues.  
**cum adulēscētiaē cupiditātēs dēfervissent**: the temporal **cum** clause is embedded in the relative clause. Ask students what they think **cum** means here, 'with' or 'when'. Most should spot the subjunctive verb **dēfervissent**.
- 3 dēfervissent**: a colourful choice of verb. **dēfervēscō** means 'to cool down after coming to the boil'. Here it is used metaphorically for the wearing off or cooling down of desire. The word suggests the intensity and strength of youthful passions.  
**firmātā iam aetāte**: 'at a settled age'. Literally, 'with age settled'. Reading this phrase aloud will help students recognise the ablative absolute. After an initial literal translation, seek suggestions for a more natural English version, e.g. 'when they reach maturity', 'at a mature age'.
- 2-3 quōrum ... exstitērunt**: following the order of the Latin clauses produces very awkward English, on the lines of 'whose, when the passions of youth have subsided, outstanding virtues, at a now settled age, have stood out'. Encourage students to rearrange the order into a more natural English version, e.g. 'whose outstanding virtues have stood out after the passions of youth have subsided, now they have reached a mature age'.
- 1-3 multī ... exstitērunt**: since this is such a long and complex sentence, it would be a good idea to follow up the initial translation by asking students to put the idea into their own words.
- 3-4 ex quibus**: = **ex eīs**, '[out] of these [men]'. Forms of the relative pronoun are often used at the start of a sentence with the meaning 'he', 'them', etc. to make a connection to the previous sentence. This is known as the connecting use of the relative pronoun. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 21, Section 5.7.
- 4 mihi libet**: 'it is pleasing to me'. **libet** is an impersonal verb. Translate as 'I don't wish'.

- vōsmet:** emphatic form of **vōs**. Students may need reminding that Cicero is speaking to a jury in a court of law.
- vōbīscum:** ‘for yourselves’. Literally ‘with you’. Another way of emphasising ‘you’ (the members of the jury).
- vōsmet vōbīscum:** by placing the two words next to each other Cicero adds to the stress, and further highlights the contrast he is drawing between himself (**mihi**) and the jury (**vōsmet vōbīscum**).
- 5 **recordāminī:** this could be interpreted as either:  
 (i) 2nd person plural present indicative, ‘you recall’  
 (ii) plural imperative, ‘recall!’  
 The *Explorer* in the *Eduqas* online materials opts for (i). In either case, the translation required here is ‘You can recall’.
- enim:** this word shows that Cicero is explaining what he has said in the previous sentence, his disinclination to name anyone.
- cuīsq̄uam fortis atque illūstris virī:** some students may be tempted to ignore the word endings and try to take this phrase as the object of either **nōlō** or **coniungere**. To anticipate this, ask students to translate the phrase and identify the case of the noun and adjectives. Then, tell them that the explanation of the genitive case will be revealed later in the sentence.
- fortis atque illūstris virī:** another example of a pair of adjectives used for emphasis.
- 5-6 **nē ... quidem:** ‘not even’
- 6 **laude: laus** here = ‘glory’, ‘achievement’.  
**quod sī:** ‘but if’
- 6-7 **sī vellem:** the imperfect subjunctive verb could be translated as ‘if I were to want’ or ‘if I should want’, but ‘if I wanted’ is less formal.
- summī atque ōrnātissimī:** another pairing of similar words for emphasis. See the note on **summī hominēs et clārissimī cīvēs** (line 2). The superlative form of the adjective **ōrnātissimī** adds further emphasis. Ask students:
- How does Cicero emphasise how distinguished these men were?
- praedicārentur:** ‘might be mentioned’, ‘could be mentioned’. **praedicāre** means ‘to make public’.
- quōrum partim ... partim: partim ... partim** means ‘some ... others’. Here it is used loosely with **quōrum** to mean ‘in connection with some of whom ... in connection with others’. When writing out a translation it would be easier to start a new sentence here: ‘For some of them excessive wildness could be mentioned, for others ...’.
- 9 **aeris aliēnī: aes aliēnum** = ‘debt’. The literal translation is ‘money belonging to someone else’.  
**sūmptūs:** ‘lavish expenditure’, ‘extravagance’. Plural, but translate as singular.  
**libīdinēs:** ‘lust’. The plural could be translated as ‘debauchery’.
- 10 **quae:** ‘which things’, referring back to the list of youthful misdemeanours Cicero has just listed. Translate as ‘and these actions’. In a written translation it would be good to start a new sentence.  
**multīs ... virtūtibus:** split adjective + noun phrase
- 10-11 **quae ... dēfenderet:** before attempting a translation of this part of the sentence with the class, teachers could use the familiar tripartite approach: break down into parts, read aloud, and ask comprehension questions. Suitable questions are:
- Pick out the word which shows Cicero is referring now to a time when these men were no longer young.
  - What does Cicero say happened to the youthful actions of great men once they were no longer young?
  - On what grounds could someone defend this youthful behaviour?
  - **quī vellet:** Who might defend this behaviour?

- 11 **quī vellet:** ‘anyone who wants’. The subjunctive adds a sense of possibility, ‘anyone who might want’.

### Discussion

This passage provides ample material for comparison with attitudes today. Several strands could be picked up. First, the idea that young people are expected to ‘sow their wild oats’. (It would be interesting to see if students are familiar with this phrase.) Students should be able to come up with plenty of examples, e.g. the way school and university students are portrayed on television and in the newspapers (e.g. TV comedies such as *Fresh Meat* or *The Inbetweeners*.) A second topic for discussion is whether youth is an excuse for poor behaviour. If so, what kinds of behaviour? Thirdly, is it of public interest to publicise the youthful indiscretions or bad behaviour of politicians and other public figures or do you agree with Cicero that reputations should not be tarnished in this way? Can the class think of any examples, e.g. taking drugs (Bill Clinton’s admission that he smoked marijuana but ‘didn’t inhale’), excessive drinking and vandalism (David Cameron and Boris Johnson’s membership of the Bullingdon Club)? In the age of Facebook and YouTube do young people have to take care in case evidence of poor behaviour affects their job prospects with future employers?

### Questions

1. In your own words explain why Cicero does not want to name any of the great men who indulged their passions when they were young.
2. Cicero is here talking about “great men”. Find **three** examples of words or phrases where Cicero, by his style of writing, emphasises this to the jury. In each case, explain how the word or phrase you have chosen is effective.
3. Do you agree with Cicero that youth is an excuse for bad behaviour?
4. Do you think that young people nowadays are perceived by their elders as behaving badly? Think of the way young people are portrayed in the media. Find some examples from newspapers or magazines or TV and discuss how young people are portrayed.
5. Should politicians and other public figures today be excused for mistakes they made when they were young?

## Apuleius, *The three phases of education* (Florida 20.4)

### Introduction

This is an extract from a speech.

Lucius Apuleius Madaurensis was born in about AD 125 in Madaurus, in North Africa. He was educated at Carthage, Athens and Rome. His most well-known work is *The Golden Ass* (also known as the *Metamorphoses*), the only Latin novel to survive complete. During the 160s Apuleius was a public speaker and teacher of philosophy in Carthage, in North Africa. The *Florida* is a collection of excerpts from the speeches and lectures he gave then.

### Further reading

*Cambridge Latin Course*, Stage 10, pages 140-143, *Schools*

### Notes

- 1 **sapientis viri**: an unidentified wise man; the source of the quotation is unknown. Take care that students recognise the genitive case and read on to the end of the sentence to find the subject, **dictum**.  
**super mēsam**: 'at table', i.e. 'at dinner' or 'over dinner'  
**crēterra**: = **cratēra**, a vessel in which wine was mixed with water. The Romans drank their wine diluted with water. Here it must mean 'cup' or 'drinking bowl'.
- 2 **ad sitim pertinet**: **pertineō ad** = 'takes care of', 'leads to'. A good translation here would be 'satisfies' or 'quenches'.  
**secunda ad hilaritātem**: = **secunda [crēterra] ad hilaritātem [pertinet]**. Understand **crēterra** and **pertinet** in the next two clauses as well. Students should not find the concise expression difficult, as it can be reproduced in English.
- 1-3 **p̄ima crēterra ad sitim pertinet, secunda ad hilaritātem, tertia ad voluptātem, quārta ad īnsāniam**: as explained in the previous note, the verb **pertinet** has to be understood in the second, third and fourth clauses of this sentence. But different translations of **pertinet** are required to produce natural English. For example, 'The first cup quenches thirst, the second produces good humour, the third brings on passion and the fourth madness'. Encourage students to make their own suggestions.
- 3 **Mūsārum**: the Muses were the goddesses who inspired poetry, other literature, the arts and science. Traditionally there were nine Muses, each responsible for a branch of the arts or science: Calliope (epic poetry), Clio (history), Euterpe (flute-playing and lyric poetry), Thalia (comedy and pastoral poetry), Melpomene (tragedy), Terpsichore (dance), Erato (love poetry), Polyhymnia (hymns and sacred poetry; oratory), Urania (astronomy). Here, they stand loosely for literature in general, including oratory.  
**Mūsārum crēterra**: the Muses were associated with the springs of Hippocrene and Pirene in Greece, and consequently drinking from the water of these springs became a common metaphor for poetic inspiration. Keats, in his *Ode to a Nightingale*, refers to drinking a cup of Hippocrene (although he conceives it as wine rather than water):  
O for a beaker full of the warm South  
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
And purple-stained mouth;  
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
with thee fade away into the forest dim:
- 3-4 **versā vice**: 'on the other hand', literally 'with turn reversed'. This Latin phrase is still used in English: *vice versa*.
- 4 **quantō crēbrior**: add **est**. 'The more frequent [it is]', i.e. 'the more often it is drunk'. Literally 'by how much more frequent it is'. The ablative case is used with the comparative to express the degree of difference.

- 4-5 **quantō crēbrior quantōque merāciōr, tantō propior ad animī sānitātem**: **quantum ... tantum** = ‘as much ... as’. Used as here in the ablative case with comparative adjectives = ‘by as much as ... by the same amount’. Translate as: ‘the more often [it is drunk] and the stronger [it is], the closer [it brings you, lit. it is] to soundness of mind’.
- 4 **merāciōr**: this suggests that Apuleius is thinking of the cup of the Muses as containing wine, not water. Bacchus, the god of wine, and drinking wine were commonly associated with poetic inspiration.
- 4-5 **animī sānitātem**: the opposite of **īnsāniam** in line 3.
- 5 **litterātoris**: the **litterātor** (sometimes called **lūdī magister**, ‘schoolmaster’) taught reading and writing (Latin and Greek), and perhaps some simple arithmetic, to boys (and some girls) from the age of about seven. This was the first stage of education. The word means ‘teacher of the basics’ (**litterae**, ‘elements’, ‘basics’). There was no legal obligation for parents to send their children to school, and education was not free. However, since the fees of the **litterātor** were not high and literacy conferred such great advantages, many ordinary people sent their sons to school for the first stage.  
**rudimentō eximit**: ‘takes [the pupil] beyond the basics. The object of **eximit** has to be supplied by the reader. **rudimentō** is ablative because the verb **eximō** takes an ablative noun.  
**secunda**: add **crēterra**.
- 6 **grammaticī**: boys from wealthy families went on to the second stage of education, the school of the **grammaticus**, between the ages of about eleven and sixteen (depending on their ability). The word is a transliteration of the Greek = ‘literate/educated’, ‘literary scholar’.  
**doctrinā instruit**: ‘equips [the pupil] with learning’. The **grammaticus** taught Greek and Latin literature, especially poetry; the main authors studied were Homer (in Greek) and Virgil and Horace (in Latin). The students had to read passages aloud, learn them by heart, and analyse the grammar. The **grammaticus** would give a detailed line-by-line explanation and analysis of the passage.  
**tertia**: add **crēterra**.  
**rhētoris**: a few boys, from wealthy families, went on to study at the school of the **rhētor**, where they were trained in rhetoric (the art of public speaking) and received more advanced lessons in literature. The **rhētor** taught the rules for making different kinds of speeches and made his students practise by arguing for and against a point of view. Students who have studied the *Cambridge Latin Course* may remember the debate between Quintus and Alexander on the subject ‘The Greeks are better than the Romans’ (*Cambridge Latin Course*, Stage 10, **contrōversia**). Oratory was an essential skill for young men who aimed to participate in public life. They would need to be able to speak at public meetings, argue a case in the law courts, and make speeches at elections.  
**ēloquentiā armat**: ‘arms [the student] with eloquence’

## Discussion

The interest of this passage lies in the account of the three stages of education: primary (the **litterātor**), secondary (the **grammaticus**) and tertiary (the **rhētor**). In the school of the **litterātor** the pupil learned his ABC and perhaps some basic arithmetic, and began to study literature. The **grammaticus** taught literature, both Greek and Latin. Finally, a few boys went on to study oratory at the school of the **rhētor**. The metaphor of drinking from the cup of the Muses to describe the increasing power of education is appropriate because Roman education was almost exclusively literary and rhetorical. According to Apuleius, education produces soundness of mind (**animī sānitātem**), in contrast to drinking wine, which leads to madness. It isn’t clear exactly what Apuleius means by **animī sānitātem**, but perhaps it is the capacity for rational thought. In the final military metaphor (**ēloquentiā armat**) there is a suggestion that the study of rhetoric is going to be a useful weapon in the battle of life.

## Horace, *Satires* 1.6, lines 71-88

### Introduction

This is an extract from a poem. It is in dactylic hexameter.

The poem 1.6 starts saying that Maecenas does not despise Horace as some people do for being a freedman's son. Maecenas has said that parentage is irrelevant to gaining honour, (*honos/honor*) by which he seems to mean going up the *cursus honorum*, gaining high office in the state. Horace at first deals with the word in this meaning with examples of other people, then talks about himself: he explains how some people have shown resentment against him for two reasons. The first is his being a tribune commanding a Roman legion: he says *ut forsit honorem iure mihi invideat* - that someone may perhaps rightly resent this honour. The other is that he is a friend of Maecenas: he says that people should not resent that he has Maecenas' friendship because Maecenas only chooses worthy people - *vita et pectore puro*. Horace is thus treating friendship with Maecenas as a kind of honour, one for which the qualification is a good character. Horace describes himself as a generous, clean-living, decent man. It is just after this that our passage comes.

### Notes

- 1 pater:** Horace's father was a freedman.  
**causa fuit pater his:** this refers to the fact that Horace's nature, he says, has only a few slight blemishes (*vitiis*) and he cannot be accused of avarice, meanness or sexual immorality (*mala lustra*<sup>2</sup>) and he is pure and innocent and that he is loved by his friends.
- 2** For *lustrum*, see the notes on the Cicero passage line 15 in this document.  
**macro pauper agello:** the farm was on Mount Vultur, Apulia. Horace states that the farm was small and his father poor; he does not mean that he was destitute – just that he was not wealthy. He had enough money to send his son to school in the local town. As Horace did not have this farm, it may be presumed that it was confiscated to provide land for veterans at the end of the civil war.
- 2 Flavi ludum:** at Venusia – Flavius was probably a *litterator*, a teacher of reading, writing and basic arithmetic.  
For information about Roman schools, see the [CSCP website](#).
- 3 magni ... pueri magnis e centurionibus orti:** Venusia was a colony, a town established for ex-soldiers. It had been founded in 262 BC. The centurions and their sons could be *magni* because they are physically large, or they could be *magni* because centurions, even retired centurions, would be considered more important than other soldiers within that community. The sons of these centurions might have looked down on the lowly son of a freedman. On the other hand Horace describes himself as slight (*corporis exequi*) in *Epist.* 1 20.21, so perhaps the boys were bigger than him.  
In the greater scheme of Roman status, centurion was not a high rank in the army. Horace himself, as he mentions in this satire, had obtained the much higher rank of tribune.
- 4 laevo suspensi loculos tabulamque lacerto:** the boys in Venusia carried their own satchels. There are pictures of schoolboys, satchels and writing tablets here.
- 5 octonos referentes Idibus aeris:** the boys took the school fees of eight asses to the teacher on the Ides of each month. An alternative reading is *octonos Idibus aera* which would mean that the boys took the fees eight times i.e. on the Ides of eight months of the year which were term time and not on four months which were holidays. Gow rejects this reading on the grounds that Horace's point is that the school was cheap: the teacher charged only eight asses a month.
- 6 est ausus:** Horace suggests that it took courage to do what his father did - move from settled life on a farm in a small provincial town to foster his aspirations for his son in Rome.  
**portare:** some people have suggested that the word *portare* suggests that Horace was very young at the time, but this should not be taken literally. Horace had probably started school at

the usual time aged about seven. It is not clear when the move to Rome took place. Elsewhere Horace describes his school in Rome as being that of a *grammaticus*.

- 7 **artes quas doceat quivis eques atque senator:** an eques or senator would need to know literature and public speaking.  
**doceat:** generic subjunctive. Horace writes as if within the tradition that Roman fathers taught their children themselves.
- 8 **semet prognatos:** *semet* is ablative of separation – descended from themselves. The start of this line is heavily spondaic.  
**servosque sequentes:** like the other schoolboys in Rome, Horace now had slaves accompanying him: usually this consisted of a *capsarius* to carry the satchel and a *paedagogos*, a guard.
- 9 **in magno ut populo:** Gow takes these words to mean *ut fit in magno populo* – as happens in a large population - and meaning that people would see him without knowing who he was. But the words may refer to the large number of slaves accompanying Horace to school – slaves following as in a large retinue. There is an elision *magn(o) ut*.
- 11 **ipse mihi custos incorruptissimus:** Horace's father went with his son as a *paedagogos*, a guard to protect his son. If taken with the plural in the words *servosque sequentes* in line 8, does this mean that his father would walk behind young Horace to school and could then be mistaken for a slave?  
The usual *paedagogos* was a slave who might be considered untrustworthy because he would be susceptible to bribery and might abandon his charge in exchange for a reward.
- 12 **quid multa:** a standard expression to put an end to detailed exposition, lit: 'why (say) many (words)?'
- 12-13 **pu dicum ...servavit:** Horace makes it clear what his father, as his *custos*, was protecting – he was keeping his son chaste, i.e. safe from sexual predators.
- 13 **qui primus virtutis honos:** *qui* is masculine attracted by the gender of *honos* but it refers to *pu dicum servavit* and *quod* could have been used. Students may need help to understand the concepts here. The idea refers back to the beginning of the poem where Horace mentions Maecenas' remark about honour. The addition of the word *virtutis* here with *honos* shows that Horace is thinking less of the idea of *honos* as political office or rank, but as something more akin to respect for his pure character and life, which is the reason that he is acceptable to Maecenas. Horace says in lines 62-64 of this Satire: *magnum hoc ego duco, quod placui tui, qui turpi secernis honestum non patre praeclaro, sed vita et pectore puro*. The usual slur on a Roman man to discredit his character was to suggest there had been an improper relationship in his early years. It is due to Horace's father that this was prevented. Hence his father's act of keeping him safe was *primus virtutis honos*: it was *primus* in the sense of first and essential and most important; it was an honour in the sense of a duty which his father did for him but also the first rung on the ladder towards *virtus* – a good character - which has in turn led to his rise in society as a friend of Maecenas.
- 14 **ab omni non solum facta, verum opprobrio quoque turpi:** *turpi* goes with *facta* as well as *opprobrio*. Horace's father kept him safe not only from any action, but also from the shame from rumour of any wrong. In the *Pro Caelio* Cicero says that any good-looking young man was likely to have rumours spread about him.  
The final syllable of *verum* is elided.
- 15 **nec timuit sibi ne vitio quis verteret olim si praeco parvas aut, ut fuit ipse, coactor mercedes sequer:** Horace mentions these two occupations as being those for which someone might reproach his father: *parvas ... mercedes* suggests that these were lowly paid occupations, but they were also despised as not being high-status professions. As the *praeco* and *coactor* probably worked on commission, a percentage of the monies collected, their income would depend on their skill and success.



In Satire II.2 Horace mentions a *praeco*; called Gallonius who had been criticised by Lucilius for serving a huge expensive fish to his guests. Presumably Gallonius had made enough money from being a *praeco* to afford the fish. Another fabled wealthy *praeco* was Q Granius.

Auctioneering was one of the jobs of Caecilius Iucundus, who was like Horace the son of freedman, and he had become relatively wealthy in Pompeii.

A *praeco* was an announcer – at games, auctions, in court, public assemblies. A *coactor* was a collector – of debts, taxes, money paid at auctions – an agent between the payer and payee. Modern equivalents of these jobs could include bankers, brokers, estate agents, announcers.

**17 neque ego essem questus:** although Horace says that he would not have complained, clearly he had at some point decided that he did not want to follow these careers but wanted to make it as a poet if he could. There are two elisions here *nequ(e) eg(o) essem*.

**hoc:** Gow takes this with *maior* as an ablative of the measure of difference = 'by this much all the more'. But it is possible to see *hoc* as an ablative of cause meaning 'for this reason' or as an accusative of respect.

**nunc:** now = 'as it is'. Horace means that he had in fact done well for himself, better than he would have been as a *praeco* or *coactor* and he was reasonably well off. After studying at Athens for a while, Horace had joined Brutus' army. When this was defeated and Augustus took power, he forgave Horace. Horace returned to Rome and found that his father was dead and the farm had been confiscated. He found a job in the public treasury. He was, however, writing poetry and becoming friends with other poets. As he explains in this Satire, it was Virgil and Varius, who introduced him to the great patron Maecenas. In 38 BC Horace was well within Maecenas' circle of friends and probably no longer had to worry about money or work at anything except poetry: not long after this he was given his Sabine farm.

The caesura in the fifth foot and the two monosyllables give line 17 an unusual rhythm.

## Discussion

The first book of the *Satires* was probably written in 35 BC when Horace was aged 30. Horace is writing about himself in this passage. There is no reason to doubt the general truth of what he says about events: it is consistent in most of his works and plausible. We may, however, be sceptical about some of the spin which Horace puts on his account. In the part of the poem which comes after this, Horace argues that he enjoys his life as it is and does not seek the burdens of wealth or influence. Niall Rudd discusses this poem in the *Satires of Horace* (BCP). He sees it as an attempt by Horace to redefine the concepts of *nobilitas*, *dignitas* and *libertas*.

This passage reveals a lot about the character of Horace and of his father. Horace's father has concern for his son's schooling but low aspirations for his future career and in this respect he can be compared with Echion in Petronius *Satyricon* 46.

The poem is written in a conversational style, but is in a strict metre. About half the lines enjamb and keep the pace fast. Pupils may wonder about Horace's motive in writing this poem and choosing to include this autobiographical material. It helps to see the whole poem for this but pupils can be encouraged to speculate just from the passage.

Issues arising include:

- How much did parenting matter in Roman times and how much does it matter now?
- How important is a good school?
- How much do parental aspirations and influence matter?
- What is success and honour?

With regards to success, some of the recent discussion around the Woman's Hour Power List may be helpful.

## Further Reading

James Gow, *Horace Satires Liber I*, CUP (1901)

See also *Libellus Handbook* pages 92-95 for a discussion of an earlier passage in the poem.

## Petronius, *Satyricon* 46

### Introduction

This is an extract from a longer work. It is part of the *Cena Trimalchionis*, a work of fiction. Some sentences are omitted from the passage.

Trimalchio has left the room and some guests have a conversation. Most are freedmen who have made a lot of money. Petronius has shown all of them as very interested in money and judging people in terms of their wealth. They do not speak the Latin of the educated upper classes: they use Graecisms, slang and clichés and make grammatical errors. It is likely that this is an attempt by Petronius to portray the local dialect of Campania as spoken by freedmen and the lower classes. Echion, the speaker in our passage, is described as a *centonarius*. This used to be thought of as a rag merchant (Lewis and Short) but it is now thought that he was a fireman who used mats to extinguish fires (Oxford Latin Dictionary).

The conversation has included a recent funeral, the price of bread, the state of the town, and local politicians. Then, Echion talks at length about a forthcoming gladiatorial show which is going to cost a fortune to put on. He notices that another guest, a teacher of rhetoric, Agamemnon, looks bored. He remarks that he is not of the same class as them and is laughing at the words of poor people. This is where our passage begins.

You may need to tell your students that some humour is intended in this passage.

### Notes

- 1 **tu, Agamemnon:** Agamemnon is a teacher of rhetoric. Petronius has shown him as speaking conventional Latin and being pedantic about language use. He is sitting at the top table. Echion and the people he is talking to are on a separate table.  
**prae litteris fatuus es:** these words can be interpreted in several ways and it is not clear whether Echion is being deliberately insulting, or is unaware that his words could be taken as an insult. There are several ways to understand the words: mad about books, crazy from too much literature, a fool for learning, dull with bookishness, off your head with all that reading. As Echion himself has said: that Agamemnon has not actually said anything in the conversation; that Agamemnon was not like them and was laughing at the way that poor people speak; Echion's assumption presumably reflects his own feeling of inferiority at not having had an education in rhetoric.  
Of course the reason may be that Agamemnon has all the learning but can't join in an ordinary dinner conversation. In the first fragment of the *Satyricon*, Encolpius tells Agamemnon: *et ideo ego adulescentulos existimo in scholis stultissimos fieri, quia nihil ex his, quae in usu habemus, aut audiunt aut vident.*  
I believe that college makes complete fools of our young men, because they see and hear nothing of ordinary life there (Loeb translation).  
Agamemnon in his answer did not disagree with this, but said that it was not the teachers' fault.  
The preposition *prae* usually takes the accusative, but Echion uses the ablative – a grammatical error.
- 1-2 **aliquo die te persuadeam ut ad villam nostram venias:** this appears to be a polite invitation to Agamemnon to visit Echion, but the wording is hesitant. Some sentences about the food to be enjoyed on the visit are omitted from the passage here.  
Echion makes another grammatical slip with the accusative *te* instead of *tibi*.
- 2 **tibi discipulus crescit filius meus:** some people see this as the offer of a job from the culturally poor Echion to the financially poor Agamemnon.
- 2-3 **iam quattuor partes dicit:** one clue about the age of the boy? If he has only just learned the four-times table, it would be some time before the boy reaches the right age for the study of rhetoric which Agamemnon teaches. Does Echion have a misguided view of the boy's

educational progress or a lack of knowledge about the stage at which boys learned rhetoric? In Chapter 4 of the *Satyricon*, Agamemnon laments that parents send their sons to learn rhetoric too young and rush children through their studies.

- 3 **si vixerit:** this sound pessimistic, but perhaps it was just realistic in the days of high infant mortality.
- 3-4 **habebis bonum discipulum ... nam quicquid illi vacat, caput de tabula non tollit:** The boy does not lift his head from the tablet. Echion regards this as diligence and an indication of a good pupil. Echion's son was being educated by tutors at home and did not go to school. Echion is dissatisfied with a couple of the boy's present tutors.
- 4-5 **ingeniosus est, etiam si in aves morbosus est:** Echion first praises his son and then points out a fault. Is this typical of some parents? Echion seems to regard his son's pet-keeping or bird-watching as unhealthy.
- 5-6 **ego illi tres cardeles occidi et dixi 'mustella eos comedit':** pupils will form their own opinion of this action!  
Goldfinches were kept as pets by the Romans and also by the British even up to Victorian times. They have pretty colours, a pleasant song and they are easy to feed on small seeds. The child might well believe that a weasel had eaten his pet as weasels were kept on farms and in homes to control mice.
- 6 **invenit tamen alias nenias:** Echion again adopts a dismissive tone when describing his son's interests: *nenias* – some nonsense.
- 6-7 **et libentissime pingit:** painting is not mentioned as a pastime encouraged by Roman parents.
- 7 **litteris Graeculis:** a *grammaticus* would teach Greek as well as Latin literature. The diminutive here is typical of the language which Petronius gives to the freedmen, but it may also show some contempt by Echion of Greek literature.  
**calcem impingit:** some people take this metaphor to mean 'to kick against something' and therefore to give it up, but it seems better here to take it as 'setting one's heel' onto the task, and hence 'get stuck into'.
- 7-8 **et Latinas coepit non male appetere:** the litotes makes this tricky to translate.
- 8 **emi ergo puero aliquot libros rubricatos:** The context makes it clear that the books with heading drawn in red are about law. Echion focuses on the outward appearance to the books. He is vague about the quantity (*aliquot*) of the books and does not mention the author or any detail. Echion does not mention encouraging his boy to read the books nor helping him: seems to think that buying the books for the boy will be enough.
- 9 **quia volo illum aliquid de iure gustare:** *gustare* suggests that Echion considers that just a taste of the law will be sufficient.
- 10 **habet haec res panem:** Echion is concerned only with the financial side of law as an occupation. Again, in the word *panem* he uses a metaphor.
- 9-10 **si noluerit:** how much choice will Echion give his son?
- 10-11 **destinavi illum artificium docere – aut tonstrinum aut praeconem, aut certe causidicum – quod illi auferre possit nihil nisi Orcus:** there is humour in the arbitrary choice of occupations and the order in which Echion puts them. The addition of the word *certe*, makes it look as though *causidicus* is an afterthought, the last and least of the occupations he has decided for this son. This is probably the reverse order of the social status afforded by these occupations, although *causidicus* is sometimes used in a contemptuous sense compared with the word *orator*.  
All the occupations are ones which it would be possible for the son of a freedman to take up, but, out of these, a career in law, even as a *causidicus* would be the most prestigious. It would certainly be the only one of those mentioned for which the boy would need to be pupil with Agamemnon.  
Martial 2.64 is addressed to a man deciding whether to become a teacher of rhetoric or a *causidicus*: the two occupations would require the same level of education.

Echion may believe that work as a *causidicus* would be less profitable than as a barber or *praeco*. There is not enough evidence to know whether he is right or wrong. Horace, in the passage in this selection (qv), mentions small wages in connection with a *praeco*; on the other hand, in Satire II.2 he mentions a *praeco* Gallonius who had been criticised by Lucilius for serving a huge expensive fish to his guests. Presumably Gallonius had made enough money from being a *praeco* to afford the fish. Perhaps times had changed.

**tonstrinus:** Going to the barber was an essential activity for a Roman man. As well as having his hair trimmed, he would have his face shaved and his nails trimmed, both skilled tasks with the tools available at the time and ones which were difficult to do for oneself. The barber's shop was also valuable as a place to hear and pass on all the latest news and gossip.

**11-12 quod illi auferre nihil nisi Orcus:** another reference to death.

**12 ideo illi cotidie clamo:** we might speculate as to why Echion shouts at his son rather than talk to him!

**12-13 'fili, crede mihi, quicquid discis, tibi discis:** Seneca expresses the same idea in Letters from a Stoic, Epistle 7.

**13 litterae thesaurus est:** actually, Echion says *thesaurum*, using the wrong gender for *thesaurus* – another grammatical error. It is surprising that Echion tells his son the literature is a treasure trove, after what he said to Agamemnon earlier.

**et artificium numquam moritur:** a trade never dies – a trade is with you for life - another reference to death, a variation on *quod illi auferre nihil nisi Orcus*.

## Discussion

Although Echion has said that Agamemnon is not of the same class as him and his friends and is laughing at the words of poor people, Echion is not actually poor – all the freedmen in the conversation are rich. Echion has enough money to have tutors for his son, and he has a country estate. Agamemnon, on the other hand, is rather poor – but he has had an education and is a teacher of rhetoric. Echion's 'poverty' then is cultural, a lack of education.

How seriously this can be taken as a description of the thinking and behaviour of a typical Roman father is questionable. As with the rest of the *Cena Trimalchionis* there is a strong element of fantasy and exaggeration. There must be, however, some grain of reality in it; otherwise it would not have been amusing. Echion is being mocked here, but so is Agamemnon. One important theme of the *Satyricon* was questioning whether the sort of training in rhetoric which Agamemnon taught was valuable. At the start of the work Agamemnon is told: *pace vestra liceat dixisse, primi omnium eloquentiam perdidistis*: With your permission I must tell you the truth, that you teachers more than anyone have been the ruin of true eloquence.

This passage can be compared with the passage of Horace in this selection for a father-son relationship and for issues of schooling and parental career aspirations. Horace's father and Echion were freedmen. When comparing the two passages, does it make a difference that one was about real people and the other is fictional?

Issues raised for comparison with modern times:

- Which occupations can be considered low status?
- How important is education?
- Do parental aspirations matter in career choices?
- Is training in public speaking (rhetoric) valuable now?

## Further Reading

*A Companion to Petronius*, by Edward Courtney

## Translations

There are translations on these sites:

- Ancient History

- Sacred Texts
- News Genius
- Picador

**About the Author**

See the [CSCP website](#).

## Juvenal, *Who would be a teacher?* (*Satire 7*, lines 215-232 with omissions)

### Introduction

These lines are taken from near the end of a long poem. Apart from the omission of 5 lines (lines 220-224), the text is unadapted. The metre is dactylic hexameter.

Decimus Iunius Iuvenalis wrote sixteen *Satires*, published in the early part of the second century AD. He lived in Rome, but virtually nothing is known about his life. In the *Satires* Juvenal attacks and mocks the faults of Roman society. The *Satires* are written in verse, often in a highly rhetorical style and with a bitter and pessimistic tone.

*Satire 7* is a complaint about the lack of patronage for poets, historians and rhetoricians, and the resultant poverty of those who practise these professions. In the final section of the poem the theme is the poverty and low status of teachers, first teachers of rhetoric and, then, in this passage, schoolteachers. Immediately before these lines, Juvenal has complained that students no longer respect their teachers as they used to.

### Further reading

#### Commentary

John Ferguson, *Juvenal: the Satires* (Macmillan 1979; repr. Bristol Classical Press 1998; Bloomsbury 2013)

#### Translations

Peter Green, *Juvenal: the Sixteen Satires* (Penguin, 1967; repr. 1998)

Niall Rudd (trans.) and William Barr (ed., intro. and notes), *Juvenal: the Satires* (Oxford University Press, 2008)

### Notes

- 1-2 quis ... labor?:** the first sentence needs some context. Before attempting an exploration, teachers will need to go over some vocabulary (**quis?**, **gremium**, **grammaticus ... labor**, **mereō**), check that students know what a **grammaticus** was, and explain the proper names. Then, after the initial reading aloud, perhaps start with questions, such as:
- What complaint does Juvenal have about the way schoolteachers are treated?
  - Which two-word phrase in line 1 means 'pays'?
  - Pick out and translate the word which describes Palaemon.
- 1 gremiō:** 'pocket'. The usual meaning of **gremium** is 'lap' or 'bosom'. It is also used for a place where things are put for safe-keeping. Here it refers to the hanging fold of a toga or other garment which Romans used as a pocket, especially for money.
- Celadī:** as we are told in the poem, Celadus was a **grammaticus**; he is not known from elsewhere. Celadus is a common freedman name.
- doctique:** as Juvenal makes clear later, the **grammaticus** was expected to have an extensive knowledge of grammar, history and literature.
- Palaemonis:** Quintus Remmius Palaemon was a famous **grammaticus**, mentioned by Juvenal again in *Satire 6*, line 452. He was active during the reigns of Tiberius and Claudius i.e. in the years between AD 14 and AD 54, so he was not a contemporary of Juvenal. He wrote a grammatical handbook in Latin, but only a few fragments have survived. Like most **grammatici**, Palaemon was a freedman. Palaemon subverts Juvenal's argument. He became a rich man, but squandered his wealth.
- 2 quantum:** 'as much as'
- grammaticus:** boys from wealthy families attended the school of the **grammaticus** between the ages of about eleven and sixteen (depending on their ability). The word is a transliteration of the Greek = 'literate/educated', 'literary scholar'. The **grammaticus** taught Greek and Latin literature, especially poetry; the main authors studied were Homer (in Greek) and Virgil and Horace (in Latin). The students had to read passages aloud, learn them by heart, and analyse

the grammar. The **grammaticus** would give a detailed line-by-line explanation and analysis of the passage.

**grammaticus ... labor**: 'the work of a schoolteacher'. The adjective is separated from the noun it qualifies; such split adjective + noun phrases are common in poetry.

**meruit**: strictly perfect tense (the work has been completed before the teacher is paid), but a present tense is more natural in English.

**et**: 'even'

**hōc**: 'this [amount]'

- 3 **minus est autem quam rhētoris aera**: the **rhētor** was the teacher at the third stage of education. He taught rhetoric, the art of public speaking. Students learned the rules for making different kinds of speeches and practised arguing for and against a case. Rhetoric was a very important skill for middle and upper class Romans who intended to take part in public life, for example arguing a case in the law courts, presenting an argument in an assembly or addressing the people at election times.

A **rhētor** was often a highly-educated Greek. The fees of the **rhētor** were higher than those of the **grammaticus**. Diocletian's Price Edict (AD 301, an attempt to halt inflation) set maximum fees payable to the **ludī magister** (primary school teacher), the **grammaticus** and the **rhētor** in the proportion 1 : 4 : 5. This gives some idea of the relative income of the **grammaticus** and the **rhētor**; the **grammaticus** would earn about four fifths of the **rhētor**'s pay. The final line of the poem compares the earnings of the **grammaticus** with that of a gladiator or charioteer: **cum sē verterit annus, accipe, victōrī populus quod postulat, aurum**; 'at the end of the school year accept the gold which the people demands for the victorious gladiator/charioteer', i.e. the gladiator or charioteer earns in a single fight or race what the **grammaticus** earns in a year.

**aera**: 'wages'. Roman schools were private and parents paid fees directly to the teacher. The extract from Horace in this selection (*Satire* 1.6, line 5) tells us that boys took the fee to their teacher on the Ides of each month.

- 4 **discipulī custōs**: the paedagogus, a slave who escorted a boy to school and was responsible for his behaviour and protection.

**praemordet**: presumably the paedagogus was responsible for giving the fee to the **grammaticus**. Juvenal alleges that the paedagogus would skim off a little for himself.

**acoenoōētus**: a Greek word which means either 'lacking common knowledge or sense' or 'lacking common feeling', i.e. egotistical. The word draws attention to itself by its foreignness and its length, but the effect is difficult to appreciate; it may be contemptuous.

- 5 **quī**: = [is] **quī**. The antecedent has to be supplied.

**quī dispēnsat frangit sibi**: '[he] who pays out [the money] breaks off [a portion] for himself'. Students will need help with the concise expression here. The **dispēnsātor** was the household manager or accountant, responsible for paying out money for his master. Usually he was a trusted slave. Presumably, the allegation is that the **dispēnsātor** took a cut for himself from the money he should have paid as a fee to the **grammaticus**.

- 5-7 **cēde ...puerī**: Juvenal is saying that the **grammaticus** should be satisfied as long as he has received some payment, however little, for each of his pupils.

- 5 **cēde, Palaemōn**: 'Give in, Palaemon', i.e. accept what you are given and don't attempt to get more money. Juvenal addresses Palaemon as a representative of all **grammaticī**. This sentence has been abridged. Five lines have been omitted between **Palaemōn** and **dummodo**. The missing lines are:

'accept some reduction in your wage, just like the hawker who sells winter blankets and white rugs, as long as it does not count for nothing that you have sat for an hour in the middle of the night in a place no craftsman would sit, or no one who teaches how to card wool with a slanting tool'

Juvenal is saying that the **grammaticus** had to bargain for his fee, like someone selling blankets in the market. He also compares the room where the **grammaticus** had his school unfavourably with the workroom of a craftsman.

- 6 **dummodo nōn pereat totidem olfēcisse lucernās: nōn pereat** is followed by an accusative and infinitive (indirect statement); the accusative (**tē**) has to be supplied (**nōn pereat [tē] ... olfēcisse**). Roman schools began very early, before daylight, so each boy would bring a lamp to school. The olive oil used as fuel produced smoke.
- 7 **puerī**: some girls attended school for the first stage of education, but only boys went to the school of the **grammaticus**.
- 7-8 **tōtus dēcolor esset Flaccus et haerēret nigrō fūlīgo Marōnī**: this probably means that Palaemon's copies of the texts he is teaching are blackened by the soot from the smoking lamps. It is possible, however, that the reference is to busts of the poets Horace and Virgil rather than to copies of their poems. The texts were written in columns on papyrus rolls; the reader would gradually unroll the papyrus from left to right as he read. Picture 2 shows two students holding papyrus rolls; the student on the right is unrolling his. Pictures 1 and 3 also show boys holding papyrus rolls. Picture 5 shows a letter written on papyrus. Papyrus was made from the fibres of the papyrus reed which grew on the banks of the River Nile in Egypt. It was quite like modern paper, but had a rougher texture.
- 8 **Flaccus**: Quintus Horatius Flaccus, known in English as Horace. Horace (65 BC - 8 BC) was a Roman poet; his works include *Epistles*, *Epodes*, *Satires* and, most famously, four books of *Odes*. Some of his works were studied in the schools of the **grammatici**. An extract from one of Horace's *Satires* is included in this selection. For more information on the study of Latin literature in schools see the note on **grammaticus** in line 2 above.  
**nigrō ... Marōnī**: split adjective + noun phrase. Publius Vergilius Maro (70-19 BC), known in English as Virgil, was a Roman poet, whose epic poem the *Aeneid* was taught in the schools of the **grammatici**. An extract from the *Aeneid* is included in this selection.
- 9-10 **rāra tamen mercēs quae cognitiōne tribūnī nōn egeat**: 'rare, however, is the pay which does not require investigation by the tribune'. **cognitiō** is a judicial enquiry. The general meaning is clear, although the details are not. Juvenal is saying that usually the **grammaticus** had to appeal to the tribune to get the parents of his students to pay the fees. It is unclear what exactly Juvenal means here by the intervention of the tribune. Usually the praetor was the magistrate responsible for law suits.
- 9 **tribūnī**: the **tribūnus plēbis** (tribune of the people) was a Roman magistrate. Each year ten men were chosen as **tribūnī**. The tribuneship was one of the steps on the **cursum honōrum** (the senatorial career ladder). A man who had served as a **quaestor** could continue his political career by becoming either a tribune or an **aedilis** (aedile). The next step on the **cursum honōrum** was **praetor**. Originally the task of the **tribūnī plēbis** was to act as helpers and advisers to the common people (**plēbs**), but by Juvenal's time their responsibilities had been greatly reduced.
- 10 **vōs**: Juvenal now addresses the parents of the students.  
**saevās ... lēgēs**: 'strict standards'; split adjective + noun phrase  
**inpōnite**: the imperative challenges the parents to impose strict standards on the **grammaticus**, despite their lack of respect for him: 'Go on anyway, demand strict standards'. The tone is ironic.
- 11,12 **ut, ut**: introducing an indirect command: '[tell them] that/to ...'.
- 12 **verbōrum rēgula**: 'the rule of words', i.e. grammar. Grammatical analysis of literary texts was a staple part of the education offered by the **grammaticus**.
- 11 **praeceptōrī ... cōnstet**: '[the rules of grammar] should be known to the teacher'. i.e. 'the teacher should know the rules of grammar'. **cōnstat** is an impersonal verb, meaning 'it is known' to someone (dative). The more usual meaning is 'it is agreed'.



- 12 **historiās**: ‘history books’ or ‘historical works’; but could be translated with the singular ‘history’. The **grammaticus** was expected to have knowledge of history so that he could explain the historical allusions in the literary texts his students were reading.  
**omnēs**: take with both **historiās** and **auctōrēs**.  
**auctōrēs**: see the note on line 2 (**grammaticus**) for the authors studied in the school of the **grammaticus**. The **grammaticus** would give a detailed explanation and analysis of the passages read in class. In the lines which follow this extract Juvenal gives extreme examples of the kinds of obscure questions about literature that parents expected the **grammaticus** to be able to answer, all taken from Virgil’s *Aeneid*: Who was Anchises’ nurse? How old was Acestes when he died? How many jars of wine did he give the Trojans as a present?
- 13 **tamquam**: add **nōvit**; ‘just as [he knows]’, i.e. ‘as well as [he knows]’.

### Discussion

Juvenal complains about the low pay of schoolteachers. The extract opens with a question (Who pays the **grammaticus** what he deserves?) and the lines which follow provide the answer (No one). His fees are low but he doesn’t even receive them in full - the paedagogus and the household manager take their cut first. He has to haggle for his fee and should be grateful that he is paid something, however little. Usually he will have to appeal to the tribune to get paid at all. Despite this, parents expect the **grammaticus** to be well-educated, with detailed knowledge of grammar, history and literature. As this is a satire, some allowance has to be made for exaggeration.

### Question

What does this extract show about the **grammaticus** and the status of teachers in Roman society?

## Quintilian, *A tricky point of law* (*Īnstitūtiō Ōrātōria*, 7.1.42)

### Introduction

This is an extract from a much longer work.

Marcus Fabius Quintilianus was born in about AD 35 in Calagurris in Spain; the date of his death is not known. He was a famous teacher of rhetoric and, under the emperor Vespasian, he was the first rhetorician to receive a salary from the state. He became very wealthy. His *Īnstitūtiō Ōrātōria* (*Education of an Orator*), published in about AD 95, covered the training of an orator from infancy to adulthood.

A few boys, from wealthy families, attended the school of the **rhētor** between the ages of about sixteen and eighteen. This was the third stage of education (after the schools of the **litterātor** and the **grammaticus**), where boys were trained in rhetoric (the art of public speaking) and received more advanced lessons in literature. The **rhētor** taught the rules for making different kinds of speeches and made his students practise by arguing for and against a point of view. Students who have studied the *Cambridge Latin Course* may remember the debate between Quintus and Alexander on the subject 'The Greeks are better than the Romans' (*Cambridge Latin Course*, Stage 10, **contrōversia**). Oratory was an essential skill for young men who aimed to participate in public life. They would need to be able to speak at public meetings, present a case in the law courts, and make speeches at elections.

This is an example of a **contrōversia**, a topic debated in the school of a **rhētor**. This particular example involves a problem arising out of the interpretation of the law.

### Notes

**1 is quī patrī ... nōn adfuerit:** 'the man who has not (literally, will not have) appeared in defence of his father', i.e. anyone who has not spoken in court in defence of his father. **adsum** ('appear in defence of someone') takes a dative case (**patrī**). The future perfect tense is used because the reference is to a situation some time in a hypothetical future, but still in the past in relation to the main verb (**sit**). Translate with an English present tense.

**exhērēs sit:** 'let him be disinherited'. Translate 'should be disinherited'. **sit** is a jussive subjunctive verb. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 48, Section 12.3.

**1-2 is quī prōditiōnis ... abeat:** the construction is parallel to that of the first sentence, so students should find this sentence easier.

**is quī patrī ... abeat:** use questions to elicit meaning. For example:

- **is quī:** ask for a translation of this phrase. Students will probably come up with 'the man who'. Suggest using 'anyone who' here, because it isn't referring to a particular person.
- **is quī patrī prōditiōnis accūsātō nōn adfuerit:** what has the man failed to do? Why does the father need defending?
- **exhērēs sit:** if a man fails to speak in his father's defence in court what should happen to him?
- **is quī prōditiōnis damnātus erit:** 'Anyone who ...'. Complete the translation.
- **cum advocātō in exilium abeat:** what is the punishment for treason? Besides the person who has committed treason, who else is punished?

**2 exilium:** exile was sometimes the punishment for treason.

**3 patrī prōditiōnis reō = patrī prōditiōnis accūsātō** in line 1.

**disertus ... rūsticus:** the contrast between the two sons is that one has received rhetorical training and the other has not. The word Quintilian uses to describe the son who has had no rhetorical training is **rūsticus**, which literally means 'belonging to the countryside' (**rūs**). The schools of the **rhētoris** were located in the cities, so staying at home in the countryside was equated with receiving only a basic education in the schools of the **grammaticus** and, perhaps, the **litterātor**. See the extract from Horace (*Satires* 1.6) in this selection, where Horace says

that his father took him to Rome to be educated. Describing someone as **rūsticus** was the equivalent of saying he was unsophisticated and uneducated.

**rūsticus**: add **filius**.

4 **damnātus**: add **pater**.

**advocātō**: i.e. the eloquent son who had defended his father in court.

**rūsticus**: add **filius**.

4-5 **cum aliquid fortiter fēcisset**: 'after he had performed a brave deed'. Literally 'when he had done something bravely'.

5 **praemii nōmine**: 'as a reward'. Literally 'in the name of a reward'.

6,7 **petit, vindicat**: the verbs are in the present tense, although a past event is still being described. This is called the historic present tense. Usually the historic present tense is used to make events more dramatic and vivid. Here the effect is different. Firstly, it draws attention to this sentence. Secondly, the present tense makes this sentence a statement of the subject of the debate, as well as a continuation of the narrative.

6-7 **petit rūsticus ... orātor ... vindicat**: the usual order of subject and object is reversed in the first clause (**petit rūsticus** rather than the more usual **rūsticus petit**); this is an example of chiasmus (ABBA: verb, noun, noun, verb). The effect is to emphasise the contrast between the two sons. The contrast is further stressed by the absence of a conjunction such as **sed** joining the two clauses (asyndeton).

7 **bonōrum**: **bona** = 'good things', 'estate', 'inheritance'; the neuter plural adjective is used as a noun.

**tōtum**: 'the whole [inheritance]'. The adjective is used as a noun.

### Discussion

Quintilian's handbook includes examples of hypothetical situations involving tricky interpretations of the law or conflicts of law, which teachers of rhetoric used in their classes.

The first two lines state the law (in quotation marks). The remainder of the passage describes a particular, far-fetched situation where the law is being challenged. The final sentence states the two sides of the case that was contended in court. In the classroom, one student would speak in support of the uneducated son and another in support of the educated son. In support of the uneducated son, it could be argued that the strict application of the law would result in unfairness, as he has, in the end, done more to help his father. On the other hand, a case could be made that the law should be supreme. Students might enjoy composing their own speeches on one side or the other, adducing as many arguments as they can, then holding a debate in class. Quintilian continues after this extract to go through the potential arguments on both sides at length. A translation can be found at [perseus.uchicago.edu](http://perseus.uchicago.edu).

Such imaginary situations were often very far-fetched and it could be argued that the resulting debates were artificial and far removed from the reality of arguments in court.

### Activities and questions

1. Look at Picture 3. What do you think the boy is doing?
2. Compose a speech on one side of the debate, thinking up as many arguments as you can in favour of the person you represent. Then hold a debate in class.
3. How valuable do you think this kind of exercise is (a) for a Roman student and (b) for a student today?

## Virgil, *Marcellus* (*Aeneid* 6, lines 860-886)

### Introduction

This is an extract from an epic poem. The metre is dactylic hexameter.

Publius Vergilius Maro (70-19 BC) was born in Mantua in Cisalpine Gaul. His chief work is the *Aeneid*, an epic poem of almost ten thousand lines in twelve books. The *Aeneid* tells the story of the Trojan hero Aeneas, the legendary ancestor of the Romans. In Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas goes down to the Underworld to meet his dead father, Anchises, and find out more about his own destiny.

Anchises gives Aeneas a tour of the Underworld. Finally, Aeneas sees the souls of future Romans yet to be born. Among them is Marcellus, the nephew and son-in-law of the Emperor Augustus.

Marcellus would possibly have been Augustus' heir, but he died of illness in 23 BC when he was just nineteen years old. Marcellus was the son of Augustus' sister, Octavia. He was married to Augustus' daughter, Julia.

In the lines immediately preceding this, Aeneas has seen the soul of an ancestor of Marcellus (also called Marcellus), who fought against Hannibal in the second Punic War and was consul in 222 BC.

The young Marcellus is by his side.

### Further reading

#### Commentaries

R.G. Austin, *Aeneidos Liber Sextus* (Oxford University Press, 1977; repr. 1979)

Keith Maclennan, *Virgil Aeneid VI* (Bristol Classical Press, 2003; repr. 2006)

R.D. Williams, *The Aeneid of Virgil, Books 1-6, edited with introduction and notes* (Macmillan, 1972; repr. Bristol Classical Press, 1996)

#### Translations

Seamus Heaney, *Aeneid Book VI* (Faber & Faber, 2016)

C. Day Lewis, *The Eclogues, Georgics and Aeneid of Virgil* (Oxford University Press, 1966)

W.F. Jackson Knight, *Virgil, The Aeneid* (Penguin, 1956)

David West, *Virgil, The Aeneid, a new prose translation* (Penguin, 1990)

### Notes

- hīc**: 'here'. Not to be confused with **hic** = 'this'. The metre shows that the *i* is long.  
**ūnā**: 'together with [him]', i.e. the elder Marcellus
- 1-2 ūnā namque īre vidēbat iuvenem**: the usual order of words in prose would be *namque vidēbat iuvenem ūnā īre*. **namque** would usually be the first word in the clause. **īre ... iuvenem** is an indirect statement (accusative and infinitive), depending on **vidēbat**: 'he saw a young man (was) walking'.
- 2 ēgregium fōrmā iuvenem et fulgentibus armīs**: 'a young man who stood out for his beauty and his shining armour'. Literally, 'a young man exceptional in his beauty and in his shining armour'. This is the young Marcellus, Augustus' nephew. See the introduction. The ablative case is used to explain in what way Marcellus is exceptional.
- 3 frōns laeta parum**: add **erat**. Forms of the verb **esse** are often omitted in poetry.  
**frōns**: here = 'expression'  
**laeta parum**: 'too little happy', i.e. 'not happy at all'. The understatement (litotes) draws attention to the phrase because it is an unusual way of expressing the idea.  
**dēiectō lūmina vultū**: add **erant**. Literally, 'his eyes were with a downcast expression', i.e. 'his eyes were downcast'. This repeats the idea of **frōns laeta parum**. It is a typical Virgilian mannerism to repeat an idea in other words for emphasis, especially when the repetition fills the whole line; this is called theme and variation.  
**dēiectō ... vultū**: the participle (or adjective) is separated from the noun it qualifies; this is a common arrangement of words in poetry.

- 1-4 **atque hīc Aenēās ... quis:** understand **dīxit** to introduce the direct speech. The long parenthesis before Aeneas speaks builds suspense as the reader has to wait to find out what Aeneas is going to do; the abrupt **hīc** has already created anticipation.
- 4 **quis ... ille:** add **est**.  
**pater:** Aeneas is speaking to his father, Anchises.  
**virum quī sīc comitātur euntem:** read in the order *quī virum euntem sīc comitātur*. The relative pronoun is postponed - usually it is the first word in the clause.  
**virum ... euntem:** 'the man as he walks'. Literally 'the man going'. The noun and participle are split. See the note on line 3, **dēiectō ... vultū**. The man is the elder Marcellus, whom Aeneas has just seen.
- 5 **filius:** add **estne**. 'Is he [his] son?'  
**magnā dē stirpe:** the preposition is sandwiched between adjective and noun. This is a common arrangement of words.
- 6 **quī strepitus circā comitum!:** add **est**. 'What a noise of [his] companions [there is] around [him]!' i.e. Marcellus is surrounded by chattering attendants. When a high-ranking Roman went out in a public place he would be accompanied by a throng of attendants and clients - the size of the crowd was an indication of his social status.  
**quantum īnstar in ipsō!:** add **est**. 'What a great appearance [there is] in him!', i.e. 'What a great appearance he has!' A possible translation is 'How impressive he is!' or 'What an impressive presence he has!'
- 7 **nox ātra:** black night is a metaphor for death, the eternal darkness.  
**trīstī ... umbrā:** split adjective + noun phrase
- 8 **lacrimīs ... obortīs:** ablative absolute. Perhaps start with a literal translation ('with tears having risen'), then encourage students to suggest another, more natural version. The idea is that the tears are blocking Anchises' speech (the **ob-** prefix suggests 'getting in the way of'). A suitable translation would be 'although tears were rising up'. West suggests 'began to speak through his tears' and Heaney has 'Choking back his tears'.  
**ingressus:** add **est**. Here = 'began [to speak]'
- 9 **ingentem lūctum nē quaere tuōrum:** the usual order would be *nē quaere ingentem lūctum tuōrum*. This is a good example of how word order in Latin can be used to enhance meaning. Unusual word order draws attention to a word or phrase, and the first word in the sentence is emphatic. Ask students:
  - How does Virgil emphasise the extent of the grief Aeneas' descendants will suffer?**nē quaere:** = **nōlī quaerere!** Negative command. 'Don't ask about ...!'  
**tuōrum: tuī** = 'your people', i.e. 'your descendants'. The possessive adjective is used as a noun.  
**ō gnāte, ingentem lūctum nē quaere tuōrum:** read this line aloud again so that students can appreciate the way sound echoes sense. The line has the maximum number of spondees (five) and heavy syllables (eleven), which gives it a mournful sound and perhaps indicates Anchises' reluctance to talk about Marcellus. The exclamatory **ō** also expresses Anchises' sorrow.
- 10 **ostendent terrīs hunc tantum fāta:** read in the order *fāta hunc terrīs tantum ostendent*.  
**tantum** goes closely with **ostendent:** the fates will give the world only a glimpse of this young man. Marcellus died young when he was just nineteen.  
**terrīs:** plural, but translate as singular; this is known as the poetic plural and is a common feature of poetry.  
**hunc:** = the young Marcellus  
**tantum:** 'only'  
**ultrā:** 'any longer'
- 11 **esse:** here = 'to exist', i.e. 'to live'
- 11-12 **nimium vōbīs Rōmāna propāgō vīsa potēns:** 'it seemed to you (i.e. you thought) that the Roman race would have been too powerful'. The usual word order in prose would be *Rōmāna*

*propāgō nimium potēns vōbīs visa*. **nimium** goes with **potēns**. Separating the two words so that they frame the clause produces emphasis.

12 **vīsa**: add **est**.

**superī**: vocative; Anchises is now speaking to the gods.

**propria haec sī dōna fuissent**: 'if this gift had been lasting'. Read in the order *sī haec dōna propria fuissent*. The conjunction **sī** is postponed and the adjective **propria** is highlighted by being placed first in the clause.

**haec ... dōna**: poetic plural. The gift is a metaphor for Marcellus, a gift to the Roman race. Students will need help to understand the idea in these two lines. The gods are thought of as being jealous of human power and success; they did not allow Marcellus to live long because he would have brought the Romans such success that they would have become rivals to the gods.

13-14 **quantōs ille virum magnam Māvortis ad urbem campus aget gemitūs!**: 'what loud groans of men will that field bring to the great city of Mars!' Read in the order *quantōs gemitūs virum ille campus ad magnam urbem Māvortis aget!*

**quantōs ... gemitūs**: split adjective + noun phrase

**ille ... campus**: the Campus Martius (field of Mars), an area of Rome next to the River Tiber used for public assemblies and parades and as an exercise ground. It is mentioned here because it was where Marcellus' funeral took place and it was also the site of Augustus' Mausoleum, where Marcellus was buried. A Roman of the first century BC would assume **campus** referred to the Campus Martius.

13 **virum**: alternative for **virōrum**, the genitive plural

**magnam Māvortis ad urbem**: the adjective (**magnam**) and the noun it qualifies (**urbem**) are separated by a genitive noun and a preposition; sandwiching a dependent genitive or a preposition (here, of course, both) between an adjective and its noun is a common arrangement of words. This word order is a strong argument for taking **Māvortis** with **urbem** rather than with **campus**. Mars was the god of war. Rome was Mars' city because its founder, Romulus, was the son of Mars. There is also a close association of **Māvortis** with **campus**, but, as stated in the previous note, the word **campus** by itself would indicate the Campus Martius.

14 **Tiberīne**: Tiberinus, the River Tiber, which flowed through Rome by the side of the Campus Martius. Anchises now addresses the river, which was regarded by Romans as a god. Romans believed that many natural phenomena such as rivers, streams, trees and mountains were gods, and would worship them with prayers and sacrifices.

14-15 **quae ... fūnera**: split adjective + noun phrase, 'what funeral rites'. Marcellus' funeral took place on the Campus Martius beside the Tiber.

15 **tumulū ... recentem**: split noun + adjective phrase. Students should be becoming familiar with this arrangement of words. Marcellus was buried in the tomb which at the time Augustus was having built for himself.

**praeterlābēre**: alternative for **praeterlābēris**, 2nd person singular future tense. English uses a present tense here.

16-17 **nec puer īliacā quisquam dē gente Latīnōs in tantum spē tollet avōs**: the interlaced word order will be difficult for students, even though they should be growing familiar with split adjective + noun phrases. The usual order in prose would be *nec puer quisquam dē gente īliacā avōs Latīnōs in tantum spē tollet*.

16 **nec puer ... quisquam**: 'and no other young man' (i.e. besides Marcellus). Literally 'and not any young man'.

**īliacā ... dē gente**: 'descended from the Trojan race'. The Romans traced their descent back to Aeneas, and therefore to the Trojans. When Troy (Ilium) was destroyed by the Greeks, Aeneas escaped and eventually arrived in Italy, where he married an Italian, Lavinia. Their descendants became the Romans.

**16-17 Latīnōs ... avōs:** the Latins were the native inhabitants of Latium, the region of Italy where Aeneas landed. Aeneas married Lavinia, the daughter of Latinus, King of Latium. The Romans were thus descended jointly from the Trojans and the Latins.

**17 in tantum spē tollet avōs:** there are two ways of interpreting this:

(i) 'will raise his ancestors so high by his promise'. **spēs** is taken to refer to Marcellus' promise in the sense of 'expectation of success'. Compare English phrases such as 'a young man of promise', 'a promising young woman', 'a promising career'. Marcellus died too young to have any significant achievements, but expectations of him were great. Even the promise of great achievements reflected well on his ancestors. The underlying idea is that ancestors shared the glory of their descendants. A suitable translation would be: 'will exalt his ancestors so much by his promise'.

(ii) 'will raise his ancestors so high in hope'. **spēs** refers to the hope or expectation the ancestors have for the success of future generations. A suitable translation would be: 'will raise the hopes of his ancestors so high'.

Translators and commentators are divided. Austin, MacLennan and Day Lewis opt for (i); Williams, West, Jackson Knight, Heaney and the translation in the *Eduqas Resources* opt for (ii). The expression is an example of Virgil's characteristic ambiguity; as often both meanings coexist.

**in tantum:** 'to such an extent', 'so high'

**17-18 Rōmula ... tellūs:** 'the land of Romulus'. Romulus, a descendant of Aeneas, was the mythical founder of the city of Rome. According to the myth, Romulus and his twin brother Remus were the sons of Rhea Silvia and the god Mars. The boys' great-uncle had deposed the previous king, who was his brother and the twins' grandfather. He was afraid that the twins would seek vengeance for their grandfather when they grew up, and so, as soon as they were born, he ordered them to be thrown into the River Tiber. But the infant twins were found by a she-wolf, who suckled them as though they were her own cubs. They were later found by a herdsman, who brought them up as his own sons. When they grew up the boys found out their true ancestry, killed their greatuncle and reinstalled their grandfather as king. Later, they founded a city of their own on the site of Rome. They quarrelled and either Romulus or one of his supporters killed Remus. Romulus then reigned successfully for about forty years as the first king of Rome.

**17 quondam:** 'one day' - some indefinite time in the future, from Anchises' perspective.

**18 ūllō ... alumnō:** 'because of any [other] offspring'. The ablative expresses the grounds for boasting.

**sē ...iactābit:** take these two words closely together. **sē iactāre** = 'boast about oneself'. It can be translated simply as 'boast'.

**tantum:** 'so much'. Take with **sē ...iactābit**.

**16-17 Īliacā ... Latīnōs ... Rōmula:** Virgil cleverly includes the three stages of legendary Roman ancestry (Trojan, Italian and Roman) in a single sentence.

**19 heu:** 'alas for'. Anchises then goes on to list Marcellus' virtues, which will all be of little use to Rome because of his early death.

**19-20 pietās ... fidēs ... dextera:** Marcellus' virtues. The nominative case is used here with **heu** for an exclamation - the accusative is more usual.

**19 pietās:** a sense of duty to one's family, one's country and to the gods. The word is hard to translate as there is no English equivalent. 'Piety' has too narrow a meaning and is best avoided. 'Duty' or 'dutifulness' is preferable. **pietās** is the quality which defines Aeneas in Virgil's poem; he is often called **pius Aenēās**.

**p̄risca fidēs:** 'old-fashioned loyalty'. **fidēs** means 'keeping one's word'. **p̄risca** is a reminder that this is a traditional Roman virtue.

- 19-20 invictaque bellō dextera:** **dextera** here = ‘strength’ or ‘courage’. **bellō** (‘in war’) goes closely with **invicta**. Marcellus took part in a military campaign in Spain in 25 BC. Young Roman noblemen were expected to spend some time doing military service.
- heu pietās, heu prīscā fidēs invictaque bellō dextera:** the sentence is composed of three parts (cola), each longer than the previous one. This is a common rhetorical technique used to convey emotion; it is called a tricolon crescendo. The repetition of the word **heu** at the beginning of successive phrases is also emotional: this kind of repetition is called anaphora.
- 20-21 nōn illī sē quisquam impūne tulisset obvius armātō:** read in the order *nōn quisquam obvius illī armātō impūne sē tulisset*. ‘No one (literally ‘not anyone’) would have confronted him when he was armed without being harmed’. Anchises is speculating about the military success Marcellus might have achieved had he lived.
- 20 illī:** ‘him’, i.e. Marcellus. Dative case with **sē ... tulisset obvius** (see next note).
- 20-21 sē ... tulisset obvius:** **sē obvius ferre** = ‘to confront’. Literally, ‘to carry oneself against’. The person one confronts is expressed by the dative case.
- 20-22 tulisset ... iret ... foderet:** subjunctive verbs express the hypothetical (what might have happened if Marcellus had lived). Contrast with an epitaph where indicative verbs would be used to list the dead person’s achievements. The use of the subjunctive mood here creates pathos.
- 21-22 seu cum... seu:** ‘either when ... or if’. **seu ... seu** is generally translated as ‘whether ... or’.
- 21 pedes:** ‘as a foot-soldier’, ‘on foot’
- 23 heu, miserande puer:** Anchises now addresses Marcellus himself. Calling him ‘boy’ stresses his youth and is a reminder of his early death.
- fāta aspera:** plural, but can be translated as singular
- 23-24 heu, miserande puer, sī quā fāta aspera rumpās, tū Marcellus eris:** there are two ways of interpreting this.
- (i) Alas, poor boy (If only in some way you could rupture cruel fate!), you will be Marcellus. **sī + present subjunctive (rumpās)** expresses a wish. **sī quā fāta aspera rumpās** is treated as a parenthesis. Some editors, including Austin and Williams, make this translation clear by punctuating with an exclamation mark after **rumpās**:  
Alas, poor boy, if only in some way you could rupture cruel fate! You will be Marcellus.
- (ii) Alas poor boy, if in some way you could rupture cruel fate, you will be Marcellus. **sī ... rumpās** is interpreted as a conditional clause. But it is difficult to make sense of this.
- The translation in the *Eduqas Resources* has (i).
- 24 tū Marcellus eris:** at last Anchises names Marcellus. The short simple statement has a dramatic impact. A Roman reader would have guessed the identity of the youth before this revelation.
- 24-27 manibus ... mūnere:** gifts, such as wine, oil, cakes and incense, were offered to the dead, either as part of the funeral rites or when visiting the tomb of the deceased. Anchises is imagining himself being present at the funeral of Marcellus.
- 24 manibus ... plēnīs:** ‘in handfulls’. Literally ‘with hands full’.
- 24-25 date līlia ... purpureōs spargam flōrēs:** **spargam** has to be present subjunctive here (not future indicative), as shown by the parallel **accumulem** in the next line. There are two ways of interpreting the construction here:
- (i) = **[mihi] date līlia [ut] spargam purpureōs flōrēs:** ‘Give [me] lilies [so that] I may scatter [their] purple flowers’. Anchises is speaking as if there were attendants present to give him the flowers, and **date** is an imperative addressed directly to them. **līlia** is the object of **date**. **spargam** is subjunctive because it is in a purpose clause, with the conjunction **ut** omitted. This is the interpretation followed by Austin, MacLennan and the translation in the *Eduqas Resources*.



(ii) 'Let me scatter lilies, purple flowers'. Here **date** means 'let' or 'allow' (= **permitte**) and **spargam** is a dependent jussive subjunctive. **purpureōs flōrēs** is in apposition to **lilia**. This is the interpretation followed by Williams.

**25** **purpureōs**: either 'bright' or 'purple'. Lilies are not all white, so either translation is possible.

**25-6** **animamque nepōtis hīs saltem accumulem dōnīs**: 'and, at least, heap these gifts on the spirit of my descendant'. Literally 'and, at least, heap the spirit of my descendant with these gifts'.

**26** **saltem**: this word has the effect of creating pathos.

**inānī**: the idea here is probably that performing this duty is futile because the dead cannot give thanks for the offerings of the living. The adjective has the effect of intensifying the pathos.

**27** **mūnere**: this final word emphasises that Anchises is performing his duty to his family, i.e. he is demonstrating his **pietās**. The word is emphasised by its position: final word in the sentence and the speech, and overrunning the line.

**tōtā ... regiōne**: = **in tōtā ... regiōne** 'in the whole region', i.e. 'in the Underworld'. The ablative case is used without a preposition to express the idea of 'in' a place; this is common in Latin poetry.

**vagantur**: Latin writers often use a present tense to refer to events which took place in the past; this is known as the historic present tense. Translate as either a present tense or a past tense. Marcellus is the last in the procession of his descendants whom Aeneas sees waiting to be born. He and Anchises then continue their tour of the Underworld.

### Discussion

There was a story that Marcellus' mother, Octavia, fainted when she heard Virgil read these lines aloud. Students could be asked to pick out particular details of content or use of language which heighten the emotion and produce a sense of pathos. Topics for discussion could include:

- The ideal Roman young man. What would be the ideal qualities in a youth of today?
- The importance of the family line and the idea of children as an investment in the future. To what extent do people today share these ideas about family?

### Questions

1. What qualities in Marcellus are praised in this passage?
2. Study lines 19 -24 (**heu ... eris**). Examine the language and the style of writing. How does Virgil arouse pity for Marcellus.