

Latin I-A

Mr. Webb, Instructor

I. Introduction to the Class

“Latin is a dead language, dead as it can be. First it killed the Romans, now it’s killing me!” This song used to describe many students’ beliefs and fears about the Latin language. However, today we are seeing a great revival in the teaching of Latin (and, by necessity, the teaching of Classics, the study of all aspects of the world in which the ancient Romans lived).

More and more parents, teachers, and students recognize the benefits of learning about the ancient world. Aside from the often-heard argument that knowledge of the Latin language raises SAT scores, studies have illuminated the positive effects that Latin has on reading, vocabulary, and math skills, as well as critical thinking and grade point averages. In fact, Latin has also been shown to advance students in such wide and varying fields as world knowledge, spelling, science, and social studies.

Part of the Classics’ far reaching impact is its unique position as a truly interdisciplinary field. Not only do students learn the language, which by itself can vastly improve their English grammar and vocabulary skills, but they also become immersed in ancient culture, history, technology, philosophy, and mythology. All are areas that have profoundly shaped the development of the Western world. Latin and the Classics can easily be viewed as the bedrock of a true education – students develop a better understanding and appreciation of their modern world through investigations into the world of the past.

Latin I-A is the first course in a two year sequence. Once students have completed the sequence of Latin I-A and Latin I-B, they will have completed the equivalent of one year of high-school Latin.

II. Introduction to the Instructor

Your instructor is Mr. Matthew Webb. Students and parents may contact Mr. Webb in these ways:
telephone: (301) 249-5000 ext. 454
electronic mail: mwebb@queenanne.org (school) or magister@magisterwebb.com (home)
website: <http://www.magisterwebb.com>

Be sure to check the website frequently, as important information about projects, field trips, homework, and Certamina (Latin Competitions) will be posted.

III. Grading Policy

Grades are very important, but they should not be your sole goal in this class. Rather, you should strive to learn as much as possible while enjoying yourself and your studies.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

Class Participation	=	20%
Homework	=	15%
Quizzes	=	25%
Tests	=	20%
Projects	=	20%

On homework:

Homework will be checked for completion every day. Each quarter, the student will start out with 60 homework points. For each homework assignment not completed, the student will lose 5 points. For example, a student who does not complete three homework assignments in the first quarter will lose 15 points, thus receiving 45 out of 60 points total for the quarter in the homework category. Interims are sent home to parents periodically throughout the quarter when students fail to complete several homework assignments.

Honesty is valued highly in this class. A student who is asked if he has completed his homework and does not respond honestly will lose 10 points (instead of 5) from the homework category.

On class participation:

Each student begins each quarter with 100 class participation points, 50 of which are allocated to classwork, discussions, and preparedness, and 50 of which are allocated to classroom behavior.

If a student does not participate in class for the day by not completing assigned work, joining in discussions, etc, that student will lose 5 points from the class participation category. Failure to come to class prepared to learn and work will also result in a loss of 5 points.

If a student misbehaves in class (see below for more on classroom rules and procedures), that student will lose 5 points from the class participation category.

On quizzes and tests:

Students can expect to receive a quiz every two or three days. The contents of this quiz may or may not be announced beforehand. Therefore, students should continually review their notes to ensure success on these quizzes. Quizzes may not be re-taken. Tests will generally be administered at the conclusion of each chapter in the textbook. Therefore, students can expect approximately twelve chapter tests per year, or approximately three per quarter. Tests may be re-taken once (but must be re-taken within the same quarter in which they were originally administered). The higher of the two grades will be accepted. There will not be a midterm or final exam.

On extra credit:

Occasionally, special extra credit opportunities will arise. These opportunities generally take the form of Certamina (Latin Competitions), lectures, concerts, operas, plays, re-enactments, or museum exhibitions somehow related to ancient Rome and Greece. More details about extra credit opportunities will be distributed to students as appropriate. A complete, quality extra credit

assignment will count as a 100% grade in either the homework, class participation, quiz, or project category. This 100% grade will be factored in with the other grades in that category (that is, it does not replace a low grade).

IV. Rules and Procedures

On behavior:

Proper behavior in class should be a common sense matter. Nothing should keep the students from learning, and nothing should keep the teacher from teaching. Any student who does not allow the idea in that simple statement to take place is misbehaving. Most importantly, your instructor and your classmates deserve respect at all times. Students must raise their hands and wait to be called on before speaking. Only one student may talk at a time, and students may not interrupt the instructor or another student.

Students who misbehave will earn one warning per class. If they continue to misbehave after the warning, they will lose 5 points from the class participation category. Students who continue to misbehave will earn demerits.

On tardiness:

Students must be on time to class each day. Late students must have a pass or they will earn a written warning. Students who are late after their third warning will earn a demerit, and will continue to earn demerits for each instance of tardiness thereafter. This rule applies to first period also – class starts at 8:05 am!

On using the restroom:

Students have ample time during break and lunch to use the restroom. Therefore, no student will be able to use the restroom during class time unless it is an emergency. An emergency means that you are sick.

On eating and drinking:

Brain research shows that middle school students work and learn better when they drink lots of water (which helps keep the brain cells from dehydrating). Thus, students will be allowed to drink water and juice (only) during class time, provided that all trash is cleaned up from the floor.

On cheating:

Cheating is a grievous offense. It is a breach of trust. Students found to be cheating will earn an immediate grade of “zero” on the assignment. All work on which the student places his name must be the student’s own work! Talking during quizzes and tests is unacceptable. Students may lose points if they talk during assessments.

V. Things Especially Likely to Get You into Trouble

1. Disrespecting Mr. Webb, other teachers, or your fellow classmates. This particularly includes interrupting Mr. Webb when he is speaking.
2. Touching things that do not belong to you, especially those things that belong to Mr. Webb.
3. Saying the phrase “not fair.”
4. Not pushing in your chair. Leaving the classroom dirty.
5. Becoming fussy and unsportsmanlike during the games we play in class.
6. Cheating.
7. Lying about whether or not you cheated. Teachers are smart. We know.

VI. What to Bring to Class

Every day, please come to class prepared with the following items:

- *textbook: 2nd edition of “Oxford Latin Course Part I” by Balme and Morwood
- *pencil and pen
- *looseleaf paper
- *a sock and a thin dry erase marker
- *vocabulary/derivative flash cards (written on 3x5 index cards) stored in a pencil pouch
- *your notebook, with a folder or section for Latin

Unprepared students may receive a zero for class participation, which results in a loss of 5 points.

I have read this handout in full and understand its contents.

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date