

## LOWER SIXTH LATIN - AN INTRODUCTION

Congratulations for choosing Latin at A Level! You have taste. The purpose of this booklet is to give you an idea about what you will be studying next year and also to outline some holiday work that you will be expected to undertake. It is particularly important that you learn the new Lower Sixth vocabulary as early as you can. However, the two papers you will sit at the end of the year are very straightforward, and they contain exactly the same elements (translation and set texts) that you found at GCSE.

At the end of the Lower Sixth, you will sit two internally-set examination papers designed to make sure that your knowledge of the work we have covered is tip-top: this will enable you to approach the more challenging Upper Sixth work with confidence. You will sit papers in both **Latin Language** and **Latin Verse and Prose Literature**. Each paper will be **1 hour 30 minutes** in length (to be confirmed). You will be relieved to know that Latin A Level involves no coursework.

All your **formal** Latin exams come at the end of the Upper Sixth where you will sit four papers: two involving language (translation etc. from Latin to English) and two involving literature (i.e. the set texts which you have studied in the Lower and Upper Sixth).

### Latin Language

This paper contains two sections and carries a maximum of 100 marks. In **Section A**, you will have to translate one passage of Latin prose into English. The passage will be adapted from one originally written by an author such as Caesar, Pliny or a historian such as Livy or Tacitus. The passage set will have a full title and the first few lines will be in English, in order to help you understand the context of the story. The passage is approximately 130-150 words in length and is worth 50 marks.

**Section B** consists of another passage of Latin prose, again based on Roman history, where you will be asked a mixture of translation, comprehension and grammar questions (rather similar in style to those you have been answering for homework exercises in the Fourth and Fifth Year). The passage is approximately 130-150 words long and is worth 50 marks.

For both Sections A and B, you have to know **all** the words on the AS wordlist (approximately 800 words, but this includes the GCSE vocabulary which you have already learnt); the meaning of other Latin words will be given to you on the paper.

To help you prepare for this paper, you will receive a specially written Latin textbook, *Discenda V*, in September. This contains a step-by-step approach to approaching Lower Sixth Latin grammar and constructions, and contains numerous practice passages as well as a complete summary of all the vocabulary and grammar which you need to learn for Sixth Form language exams.

Over the course of the year, you will hone your translation skills on Latin passages of gradually increasing difficulty, but over time you will find that the translation questions you face in the Lower Sixth are, apart from an increased range of vocabulary, only a moderate step up in difficulty from the difficult Latin GCSE translation question which you attempted this year. So, if you have revised your vocabulary carefully, then you should be confident of gaining an excellent score on this paper.

## Latin Verse and Prose Literature

This paper also contains two sections and carries a maximum of 100 marks.

**Section A** contains questions on the Lower Sixth prose author. We will be studying the work of the famous Roman statesman and lawyer Cicero, as he delivers what has become known as one of his most famous speeches, the *Pro Cluentio*, otherwise known as *Murder at Larinum*. This is a story with everything: intrigue, passion, murder ... if you've ever wondered how modern-day lawyers and speakers manage to win their audiences over, then Cicero is the Daddy of them all.

**Section B** contains questions on the Lower Sixth verse author. Here, you will find yourself on more familiar ground, as we re-visit Virgil's *Aeneid*, this time a classic extract from Book 12. After much travelling, Aeneas has landed in Italy and now goes head to head with his arch-enemy Turnus, to win the hand of the beautiful Lavinia and wrest control of Italy. Book 12 contains the much-discussed and very famous climax to the *Aeneid*, and contains much of Virgil's best and most moving writing.

Questions on this exam paper contains a Latin passage or passages with sub-questions including a short essay. You might be asked to translate short extracts, comment on the author's style, or answer straightforward comprehension questions on the text. If you have revised both the set texts carefully then you are well in your way to gaining a tremendous grade at A Level. Each section is worth 50 marks, and the total mark for the paper is 100.

We will be giving you more information on the set texts in September. In the meantime, some initial preparation on your part is strongly recommended! See the section on *Holiday Reading* below.

## Holiday Preparation

You should view the holiday as an important way of chipping away at the donkey work that would otherwise make your first half-term's assignments rather vocabulary-heavy. By learning the new Lower Sixth words in the summer holiday, you will also save yourself a lot of time on translation work when you return, because you will need to look up fewer words.

Therefore, during the summer you should learn (from Latin to English) the Lower Sixth vocabulary list included in this folder. You will already know some of the vocabulary in this list. Knowledge of these words will put you at

a great advantage when we re-start in September. You will be expected to pass all vocabulary tests next year at the first time of asking, so an early start on the vocabulary revision is essential.

Your only other recommended element of holiday revision is to learn the perfect tenses and perfect passive participles of the new Lower Sixth verbs included in this folder.

### **Holiday Reading**

Put the summer to good use by getting some reading done! We recommend that you should buy the following books in the holiday and do as much background research as possible. The books listed can easily be found on Amazon, or can be ordered through any good bookshop.

### **CICERO**

#### **To Start With...**

The best way in to Cicero's life and times is:

**Imperium** by *Robert Harris* (Arrow)

*This is story of Cicero, as seen through the eyes of his secretary Tiro. One of the most widely praised novels about Roman history and the fall of the Roman Republic in recent years; its sequels, Lustrum and Imperium, have also been bestsellers. They are all gripping reads and come highly recommended.*

#### **Other Recommended reading**

The entry for Cicero on Wikipedia offers a good, readable biography.

### **THE ROMANS AND ROMAN HISTORY**

For general background to Roman history, here are some other very worthwhile tomes:

**The Dream of Rome** by *Boris Johnson* (Harper Collins)

*A brilliant and very amusing introduction to Roman history by the legend (and legendary Oxford Classicist) that is Boris Johnson: this will bring you up to speed with the historical background behind the Cicero set text in a couple of hundred pages. I read it in two sittings!*

**SPQR** by *Mary Beard* (Profile)

*A brand new and long awaited history of Ancient Rome and the Romans, tying in with a recently acclaimed BBC TV series, and a Sunday Times bestseller. If you've got a long plane journey this summer and need one book to relieve the boredom then this one is it: this is popular history at its best, and doesn't hold back on the juicy bits either. The perfect holiday*

*read: if you are even remotely considering Classics as a University course then you should blag a copy without delay.*

**Rubicon** by Tom Holland (Abacus)

*A potted history of the rise and fall of the Roman Republic, this one's a critical favourite and very good on Cicero's life and times. Well worth reading if you like your history (and if you enjoy this, then its sister book Persian Fire does the same thing in admirable fashion for the Greeks).*

## REFERENCE BOOKS

If you don't already own them, then you will find it invaluable from now on to own a good Latin dictionary and grammar which you should keep at home. We strongly recommend the following; they are reasonably priced paperbacks, new editions, and by far the best available on the market in the ten pound price range. Again, you can order them from any bookshop or through the new-fangled power of the internet.

### Dictionary

*Pocket Oxford Latin Dictionary*, edited by James Morwood (Oxford University Press, ISBN 0-19-861005-X).

### Grammar

We recommend that you also purchase this book *quam celerrime*:

*Latin Grammar* by James Morwood (Oxford University Press, ISBN 0-19-860199-9).

This book cover all the essentials (noun declensions, verb tenses etc.) and cover all the grammar and constructions that you could ever need, right up to university level.

### The Oxbridge Supplement

Further information about Classics at Oxford and Cambridge - for those of you considering an application in this area - can be found on a separate file in this folder. Better still, get yourself over to Oxford over the summer, go round the colleges and find out what it's really about. It's only 75 minutes away by road, so what are you waiting for?

Have a relaxing summer break, and we look forward to seeing you in September!

*Mr Waite*

*Mr Owen*

Caterham, June 2022