

## **LATIN COMPOSITION, WRITING OWN NARRATIVE PROSE FORMATION AND USAGE**

**Introduction.** The value of learning another language is achieved when you write your own thoughts for **you stand in the other man's shoes, sta in alterum hominis calceamenta**

Writing, composing own thoughts, as for Classical Greece and Rome, as for our era, is a skill that can be taught, learned, and achieved. Let us look briefly at rhetoric, how it is a literary base to expression

**Rhetoric and composition.** The ultimate art of leadership is rhetoric. For rhetoric is a public art, the art of persuasion. In the ancient Greece of Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle; the ideal venue to persuade was the city-state, the *polis*. Rhetoric was seen as guiding all decisions of the *polis*

Hellenic society opined public speaking as the be-all and end-all of civic life. Early Greek philosophers, known as sophists, travelled and taught youth all they needed to know; to succeed in the Athenian Assembly and the law courts

**Ethos, logos, and pathos.** In our era, rhetoric is needed more than ever. Not just dexterity of the tongue, but also of the pen. To compose own thoughts is a learned skill that is gained through patience and practice. Antiquity stressed three principles inherent in rhetorical discourse : **ethos, logos, and pathos**

**Ethos** is your *character* as communicated through your speech. *What you say* is central. To be persuasive, your ethos must inspire confidence, and rhetorical ability is present in three qualities : *good sense, good morals, and good will*. Lack one of the three and your argument collapses. To attack an opponent's character is a fallacy of **logic, ad hominem**; but may be forgiven within rhetoric. The second principle is **logos**. To succeed you must cover substance and style. Substance and style include ideas and words. A persuasive speech assembles 'what' and 'how' as seamlessly and as tightly as a carpenter constructing a house to weather winter winds. **Pathos** is the third and final principle. Pathos refers to the emotions of your audience. Audience emotions may include anger, pity, patriotism, sympathy and so forth. Emotions colour judgments and affect the outcome. Thus, the speaker's role and duty is to guide as surely as a goose to her goslings line-a-tail

Composition takes the tripartite division of **ethos, logos, and pathos** and uses the three oral principles as her own. **Ethos** is the writer's voice. Language and lexicon are two gymnasts throwing and catching the other in the play of invention, arrangement, diction, genre, and perspective. **Logos** is the sum of linguistic skills. Here, the writer is master and mistress in a writhing wrestle. **Pathos** is the matinee audience on the cheap... *Who listens to words of dialect and dialogue ?*

### **THE LATIN WAY**

**Verbs glorious verbs.** Latin prose is direct, brief, concrete, unmetaphorical, exact, and interested in the actions and thoughts of people rather than in things. The Romans had an empire to govern. There was no idling-about. Their zest and zeal for life is reflected in their thoughts. And, since you are a German tribal chieftain, naturally you are familiar with Rome's edicts and sword

English is different from Latin. Example :

**Every advance made by the Roman cavalry was accompanied by a retrograde movement on the part of the Parthian archers**

To translate this sentence word-for-word will result in something foreign to Latin idiom and style. Forget the English wording. Put the English sentence on a weight-loss diet. Pare the sentence to its essential thought. Example : **Whenever the Roman cavalry advanced, the Parthian archers fell back**

**The Roman cavalry** (persons) and **the Parthian archers** (persons) are the subjects of their respective clauses. The nouns **advance** and **movement** are converted to verbs : **advance** and **fall back**. The Latin sentence is direct and brief. Example :

**quandocunque equites Romanorum promoverunt ut sagittarii Parthorum recurrent**

What if the sentence is metaphorical, **Death stared Lucius in the face**. Again, make the person the subject and state concretely the facts of the situation. Example :

**Lucius was in the greatest danger, or Lucius was about to die, or Lucius was in the greatest danger of his life**

**Lucius verebatur ne maximum periculum esset**

By rewording a sentence we can express an idea accurately

Latin is a language of verbs. English is rich in nouns containing a verbal idea, Latin has relatively few such nouns, example : **adventus, discessus, profectio**. English relies on nouns to bring out the meaning, Latin uses verbs

Latin with a person as the subject. Example :

**omnia confitebor** I will make a complete confession [I will confess everything]

**errat** He is making a mistake [He errs]

**hoc pollicitus es** You made this promise [You promised this]

**semper nobiscum pugnant** They are in constant conflict with us

Latin impersonally in the passive. Example :

**ad vesperum acriter pugnatum est** The contest was fiercely maintained until evening

**ad portas concurritur** Crowds are gathering at the gates

Latin often uses an indirect question when English uses an abstract noun or a noun containing a verbal idea. Example :

**quale ac quantum sit periculum demonstrat** He explains the nature and the magnitude of the danger

**quae facturi essent cognovit** He discovered their intentions

The infinitive often takes the place of an abstract noun to express a general concept. Example :

**scire est posse** Knowledge is power

**humanum est errare** Error is human

The perfect participle passive, when combined with a noun, often has the force of an English noun containing a verbal idea. Example :

**ante urbem conditam** before the founding of the city

**illi libertatem civium Romanorum imminutam non tulerunt, vos vitam ereptam neglegetis ?** They would not brook any restriction on the liberty of Roman citizens; will you pass over the taking of their lives?

Latin prose is rarely metaphorical, it is best to avoid the use of even simple metaphors. Example :

**rex factus est, regnum excepit** He ascended the throne

**e vita excessit** He breathed his last

**quae volumus ea credimus** The wish is father to the thought

Latin avoids the use of inanimate things or of qualities as subjects of verbs of action. Example :

**itinere decem dierum confecto ad Rhenum pervenerunt** A march of ten days brought them to the Rhine

**quod Romanos timebat, nobiscum Romam ire noluit** Fear of the Romans led him to refuse to accompany us to Rome

Latin allows a noun to act as an abstract personification so long as it is the subject of a transitive verb. Example :

**fortes fortuna adiuvat** Fortune helps the brave

In instances of an English abstract noun, the best approach is to express the concept as a concrete noun. Example :

**auctore hoste** on the advice of an enemy [an enemy being the advisor]

**Caesare duce** under Caesar's leadership [Caesar being leader]

A concrete noun may be expressed by an antecedent and a relative clause. Example :

**ei qui Caesarem interfecerant a Cicerone laudati sunt** Caesar's assassins were praised by Cicero

**ei qui ea videbant nos suspicabantur** The spectators suspected us

Latin is exact in naming nations. Example :

**Britanni cum Germanis bellum gerunt** Britain is at war with Germany

**dent operam consules ne Romani fame pereant** Let the consuls save Rome from famine

### LATIN WORD ORDER

**Latin word order.** Latin, unlike English; has relatively a free ordering of words. A sentence's word order does not determine the grammatical role of those words. However, Latin word order cannot be in *any* sequence. Latin has many principles which guide and control the sequence of words and phrases. Word order arranges words to permit the speaker to clearly, concisely, and completely state his request so that the receiver of these words may perform the requested act. People getting on with their lives...

**Order of words and clauses.** Latin word order is discussed. Example :

- (a) any expression that connects the sentence with the proceeding thought
- (b) the subject with its modifiers
- (c) the indirect object with its modifiers
- (d) the direct object with its modifiers
- (e) adverbs and adverbial phrases connected with the verb
- (f) the verb

tum ----- Caesar ----- castra ----- ex eo loco ----- movet  
(a) (b) (d) (e) (f)

Then Caesar moved his camp from that place

Cicero ----- servo ----- praemium ----- dedit  
(b) (c) (d) (f)

Cicero gave a reward to the slave

laborantibus nostris ----- Germanos ----- submittit  
(c) (d) (f)

As our men were in difficulties, Caesar sent the Germans to support them

omnes alacres et fiduciae pleni ----- ad Alesiam ----- proficiscuntur  
(b) (e) (f)

All set out for Alesia in high spirits and full of confidence

hac victoria sublatus Ambiorix ----- statim cum equitatu in Atuaticos ----- proficiscitur  
(a + b) (e) (f)

Elated by his victory, Ambiorix set out at once with his cavalry for the country of the Atuatici

triginta annos ----- regnavit  
(e) (f)

He reigned for thirty years

agros Haeduorum ----- ferro et igni ----- vastavit  
(d) (e) (f)

He laid waste the lands of the Haedui with fire and sword

sum or a similar weak verb seldom is last in the sentence. Example :

reliquae naves sunt inutiles

The rest of the ships are useless

A dependent infinitive commonly precedes the verb on which it depends. The object of the infinitive precedes the infinitive. Example :

gladium educere conatur

He tries to draw his sword

Cardinal numerals, adjectives of size, and pronominal adjectives except possessives, usually precede the noun they modify; adjectives of quality usually follow the noun; proper adjectives follow. Example :

decem milites

hoc proelium

oppidum copiosissimum

magnus numerus

frater meus

senatus populusque Romanus

Adverbs usually precede the words they modify. Example :

minus celeriter currunt

They ran less swiftly

Relative and interrogative pronouns come first in their clauses, preceding even a conjunction; when used as adjectives they may precede a preposition. Example :

<b>trecenti milites, quorum nemo mortem timebat</b>	three hundred soldiers, not one of whom feared death
<b>quod ubi Caesar cognovit, profectus est</b>	When Caesar learned this, he set out
<b>quibus de causis venisti ?</b>	For what reason have you come?

Prepositions regularly precede the words they govern. **cum** however is suffixed to the ablative of some pronouns : **mecum, tecum, secum, nobiscum, vobiscum, quocum, quacum, quibuscum**. A monosyllabic preposition is frequently placed between an adjective and a noun : **magno cum periculo, hanc ob rem, summa cum laude**

Negatives regularly precede the words they modify. **ne...quidem**, not even, frames the word to be emphasized. Example :

<b>ne Caesar quidem</b>	not even Caesar
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The normal order of words in a Latin sentence may be varied to connect the sentence with what precedes. Example :

<b>eo cum venisset, Caesar naves paratas invenit</b>	On his arrival there, Caesar found the ships ready
<b>hoc proelio facto, pontem in Arari fecit</b>	After this battle had been fought, he built a bridge over the Avar
<b>eodem tempore Haedui Caesarem certiozem faciunt</b>	At the same time the Haedui inform Caesar

Often emphasis is effected by placing a word out of its normal position, in fact, the more unusual the position in which a word is put, the more emphasis the word gains. The two most emphatic positions in a Latin sentence are the beginning and the end. Example :

<b>angustos se fines habere arbitrantur</b>	They think that the territories they hold are narrow
<b>aliud iter habebant nullum</b>	They had no other road [other road had they none]
<b>eodem convenient undique frequentes</b>	From all sides delegates flocked thither in numbers
<b>ad unum omnes Vercingetorigem probant imperatorem</b>	They unanimously approved the appointment of Vercingetorix as commander-in-chief
<b>Haedui equites ad Caesarem omnes revertuntur</b>	The Haeduan cavalry – all of them – return to Caesar

A word serving as a common subject or object of the principal clause and a subordinate clause may serve both parts of the same sentence. Example :

<b>Haedui, cum se suaque defendere non possent, legatos ad Caesarem mittunt</b>	Since the Haedui could not defend themselves and their possessions, they sent envoys to Caesar [Note the position of the Haedui in English]
<b>Catilinam, si non potero interficere, eiciam</b>	If I cannot put Catiline to death, I will drive him out [Note the position of Catiline in English]

The subject of a Latin sentence should be kept unchanged, if possible, throughout the sentence. Example :

<b>Cato, rogatus a consule sententiam, hanc orationem habuit</b>	When the consul asked him his opinion, Cato delivered the following speech
<b>Atuatucis concitatis, postero die in Nervios pervenit</b>	The Atuatucis were aroused, and next day he reached the country of the Nervii

### ORDER OF CLAUSES

Indirect statements, indirect questions, and indirect commands, if brief, may precede the verb on which they depend, but usually follow the verb. Example :

<b>dicit Dumnorigem magnum numerum equitatus habere</b>	He says that Dumnorix has a large number of cavalry
<b>cognovi quantum numerum habeat</b>	I know how large a number he has
<b>milites hortabatur ne pedem referrent</b>	He urged the soldiers not to fall back

Verbs of fearing and doubting usually precede the clauses they govern. Example :

<b>vereor ne veniat</b>	I fear he is not coming
<b>dubitamus quails sit futururus eventus</b>	We are in doubt as to what the outcome will be

A relative clause is usually placed next to the noun it modifies, but it may be placed earlier and nearer the centre of the sentence than is possible in English. Example :

<b>Mandubii, qui eos oppido receperant, exire coguntur</b>	The Mandubii, who had admitted them into the town, were compelled to leave
<b>in his, quae nunc instant, periculis</b>	in these perils which now threaten us

Temporal, conditional, causal, and concessive clauses more commonly precede the main clause. Example :

<b>cum haec dixisset [postquam haec dixit, his rebus dictis], profectus est</b>	After saying this, he set out
<b>cum tempestatem vereatur [tempestatem veritus], domi manet</b>	Since he is afraid of the storm, he is staying at home
<b>quamquam vulnerati sunt, castra audacter defendunt</b>	Although they have been wounded, they are defending the camp boldly

Purpose and result clauses, and causal clauses where the emphasis is on the reason advanced, more commonly follow the main clause. Example :

<b>milites fortiter pugnabunt ut urbem capiant</b>	The soldiers will fight bravely to take the city
<b>domus tam male aedificata erat ut ceciderit</b>	The house had been so badly built that it collapsed
<b>domum ii quod fessus sum</b>	I have come home because I am tired

### VOCABULA

The noun **res** takes its specific meaning from the context. It rarely means simply **thing**; under varying conditions it may be interpreted to mean : **thing, object, event, circumstance, matter, situation, act, property, possession, fact, interest, cause, reason, business, task, understanding, case, et cetera**. Example :

<b>res, rei.</b> 5f. <b>thing, matter, property, business affair</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> declension noun, feminine	<b>res publica, rei publicae.</b> 5f. <b>state, republic, commonwealth</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> declension noun, feminine with a 1 <sup>st</sup> declension adjective	
N <b>res</b>	<b>res publica</b>	<b>res publicae</b>
G <b>rei</b>	<b>rei publicae</b>	<b>rerum publicarum</b>
D <b>rei</b>	<b>rei publicae</b>	<b>rebus publicis</b>
Ac <b>rem</b>	<b>rem publicam</b>	<b>res publicas</b>
Ab <b>re</b>	<b>re publica</b>	<b>rebus publicis</b>

Latin has many phrases constituted of **res** with an adjective or a participle. Example :

<b>res divina</b>	the service of the gods
<b>res extensa</b>	things / matters of the physical world
<b>res gestae</b>	things done
<b>res inter alios acta</b>	a thing done between others
<b>res ipsa loquitur</b>	the thing speaks for itself
<b>res iudicata</b>	a matter [already] judged
<b>res nullius</b>	an unknown thing
<b>res secundae</b>	good fortune, prosperity
<b>res adversae</b>	bad fortune, adversity

<b>res communis</b>	<b>the common interest</b> [the interest of both parties]
<b>res frumentaria</b>	<b>the supply of grain, provisions</b>
<b>res militaris</b>	<b>the science of warfare</b>
<b>res novae</b>	<b>revolution, change of government</b>
<b>res familiaris</b>	<b>things / matters pertaining to the family</b>
<b>suffragiis res permittitur</b>	<b>the question is put to the vote</b>
<b>commutatio rerum</b>	<b>a reverse of fortune</b>
<b>imperitus rerum</b>	<b>ignorant of affairs</b>
<b>eius rei testis</b>	<b>a witness of this fact</b>
<b>desperata re</b>	<b>despairing of success</b>
<b>re impetrata</b>	<b>when they had obtained their request</b>
<b>qua re nuntiata</b>	<b>when this movement was reported</b>
<b>ob eam rem</b>	<b>on that account / matter</b>
<b>repentina re perturbati sunt</b>	<b>they were alarmed by the suddenness of the news</b>
<b>rebus sic stantibus</b>	<b>as things stand</b> [in the current situation]
<b>vexatio est res privata, caedes res publica</b>	<b>vexation is a private matter, murder a public matter</b>

English uses expressions in which a noun is modified by an adjective expressing a quality peculiar to the noun. In Latin the range of picturesque adjectives is small; hence Latin falls back on an adjective of quantity, the exact significance of which depends on the modified noun. Example :

<b>magna vox</b>	<b>a loud voice</b>
<b>magna controversia</b>	<b>a bitter dispute</b>
<b>magna tempestas</b>	<b>a violent storm</b>
<b>summa fides</b>	<b>supreme confidence</b>
<b>summa virtus</b>	<b>signal valour</b>

English uses phrases consisting of a preposition and a noun or a pronoun, which has adjectival value : **war** [*with a king*], **the battle** [*in the forest*], **the messenger** [*from you*]. The Latin equivalent of such a prepositional phrase is a simple adjective, a phrase with a participle, or a relative clause. Example :

**bellum regium, bellum cum rege gestum, bellum quod cum rege gestum est, bellum quod cum rege gessimus**

**proelium in silva factum, proelium quod in silva factum est**

**nuntius tuus, nuntius a te missus**



### SENTENCE STRUCTURE IN CLASSICAL LATIN

Caesar primum suo, deinde omnium ex conspectu remotis equis, ut aequato omnium periculo spem fugae tolleret, cohortatus suos proelium commisit

Caesar first removed his own horse from sight, then the horses of all his officers, in order that, by making the danger of all equal, he might take away any hope of flight; then he harangued his men and joined battle

The above sentence, taken from Caesar's **Bellum Gallicum**, contains three participles : **remotis**, **aequato**, **cohortatus**, one finite verb [finite verb : a verb having a specific tense, number and person] in a subordinate clause, **tolleret**, and one finite verb in a principal clause, **commisit**. In the arrangement of the various clauses the order of time is observed. The sentence is in Historic Sequence. The subject, **Caesar**, is kept unchanged throughout the sentence

Main verb : 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular perfect indicative active  
Subordinate verb : 3<sup>rd</sup> person imperfect subjunctive active

Caesar, impedimentis in proximum collem deductis, duabus legionibus praesidio relictis, secutus hostes quantum diei tempus est passum, circiter tribus milibus ex novissimo agmine interfectis, altero die ad Alesiam castra fecit

Caesar removed his baggage to the nearest hill, and, leaving two legions to guard it, pursued the enemy as far as the time of day permitted, killing about three thousand of their rearguard, and encamped next day in the neighbourhood of Alesia

In this sentence there are four participles, **deductis**, **relictis**, **secutus**, **interfectis**, one finite verb in a subordinate clause, **est passum**, and one finite verb in a principal clause, **fecit**. The order of time is observed. The sentence is in the Primary Sequence. The subject, **Caesar**, is kept throughout the sentence

Main verb : 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular perfect indicative active  
Subordinate verb : 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular perfect indicative passive

The two above sentences are typical examples of Latin historical narrative prose. The Roman historian selected an important essential idea, and made it the core around which he grouped all the lesser ideas connected with it. Accordingly, the Latin author used principal clauses sparingly, limiting their use to the central idea, with subordinate clauses and participles for the lesser ideas

The above sentences are **periodic sentences** or **periods** : in **rhetoric**; a complex sentence consists of several clauses constructed as part of formal speech or oration

Central to Latin historical narrative prose is the sentence's subject. In both examples, the subject appears at the beginning. A change of subject may result in a new sentence. Example :

The Nervii were subjected to the dominion of the Roman people. Thereupon the Eburones, the neighbours of the Nervii, began to fear that Ceasar would invade their lands. Accordingly they sent envoys across the Rhine to ask the Germans to come to their help. News of this reached Caesar. He at once set out for the Rhine to prevent them from crossing the river

The above historical account focuses on the subjects, the Eburones and Caesar. The first three sentences recount what the Eburones did and under what circumstances. The last two sentences recount Caesar's reaction. The paragraph may be rewritten as two periodic sentences. Example :

Nerviis sub populi Romani imperium redactis, Eburones, finitimi Nerviorum, veriti ne Caesar in fines suos iter faceret, legatos trans Rhenum miserunt qui a Germanis peterent ut auxilio venirent. his rebus nuntiatis Caesar statim ad Rhenum profectus est ut Germanos flumen transire prohiberet

The above passage is in two sentences

The first periodic sentence has one participle, **redactis**, and three finite verbs all in the imperfect subjunctive active voice, **faceret**, **peterent**, and **venirent**. The first verb, **faceret** is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, the remaining two verbs are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural. Since all sentence verbs, main and subordinate, are in the imperfect subjunctive, the order of time is observed. The sentence is in the Historic Sequence

Main verb : **faceret**. 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular imperfect subjunctive active  
Main verb : **peterent**. 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural imperfect subjunctive active  
Subordinate verb : **venirent**. 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural imperfect subjunctive active

The second periodic sentence has one finite verb, the main verb, **profectus est** being in the perfect indicative. The subordinate verb is in two parts, **prohiberet**, being in the imperfect subjunctive with the complementary infinitive **transpire** to complete the action. Since the main verb is aorist, perfect without 'have' or 'has', and the subordinate verb is in the imperfect subjunctive, the order of time is observed. The sentence is in the Historic Sequence

Main verb : 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular perfect, aorist, indicative active  
Subordinate verb : 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular imperfect subjunctive active with a complimentary infinitive in the present active

The Latin periodic sentence is characterized by directness, precision, unity, compactness, balance, and melody. If own composition were a meal, the main dish consists of understanding the fundamentals with a side dish of Caesar and Cicero

Not all Latin writing is in the form of periodic sentences. Caesar's writings include sentences of varying length and complexity. A short sentence is variety and rhetorical effect

At the close of a narrative. Example :

**hac oratione habita discessit Ambiorix**

After delivering this speech Ambiorix departed

A recounting of detailed facts. Example :

**mittuntur de his rebus ad Caesarem legati. iubet arma tradi, principes produci. ipse pro castris consedit, eo duces producuntur. Vercingetorix deditur**

Envoys were sent to Caesar in this connection. He ordered the arms to be surrendered and the chief men brought out. He himself took his seat in front of the camp, the leaders were conducted to him. Vercingetorix surrendered

An emotional situation. Example :

**o di immortales ! ubinam gentium sumus ? in qua urbe vivimus ? quam rem publicam habemus ?**

O ye immortal gods! Where in the world are we? In what city are we living? What sort of government do we possess?



## CONTINUOUS LATIN PROSE

**Introduction.** A paragraph of narrative prose consists of a succession of sentences. Latin is more explicit than English concerning the connection between sentences. In Latin, except where there is a complete change in the subject matter, every sentence should have at or near the beginning a word or group of words which refer to the preceding sentence to show the continuity of thought. Latin composition uses connectives of various kinds much more than English.

The common connectives and other parts of speech are cited below. Example :

- i. **The coordinating relative pronoun.** The relative pronoun is a very busy part of speech, for it may also act as a conjunction, the joining of clauses. In Latin the relative pronoun serving as a conjunction often serves to join a new sentence to the preceding one. When it is used as a coordinating relative, **qui** is equivalent to a conjunction with **is** or **hic**, it may mean : **and he, but he, now he, and this, but this**, et cetera. Example :

Caesar equitatum omnem praemittit. qui, cupidius  
insecuti, alieno loco cum equitatu Helvetiorum proelium  
committunt

Caesar sent all his cavalry ahead. But they pursued too  
eagerly and joined battle with the cavalry of the Helvetii  
on unfavourable ground

iter nostrum impedire coeperunt. qua re nuntiata Caesar  
suum equitatum contra hostes ire iubet

They began to hamper our march. Now when this was  
announced Caesar ordered his own cavalry to advance  
against the enemy

The English expression **the same as** is translated by **idem qui**. Example :

sum idem qui semper fui

I am the same as I have always been

eosdem legatos, quos antea, misit

He sent the same envoys as [he had sent] before

- ii. **The coordinating adverb.** An adverb which modifies a verb may also connect the action in the following sentence with the preceding one. Example :

in Italiam ii. ubi multos amicos vidi

I went to Italy. And there I saw many friends

Athnenas pervenerunt. unde ad Italiam profecti sunt

They reached Athens. From that city they set out for Italy

- iii. **'hic, ille, is; the pronouns'**. The following pronouns may serve as sentence connectives. Example :

erat Nervius, nomine Vertico, qui a prima obsidione ad  
Ciceronem perfugerat. hic [= Cicero] servo spe libertatis  
persuadet ut litteras ad Caesarem deferat. has [= litteras]  
ille [= servus] in iaculo illigatas effert et ad Caesarem  
pervenit. ab eo [= servo] de periculis Ciceronis  
cognoscitur

There was a Nervian, named Vertico, who at the  
beginning of the siege, had taken refuge with Cicero.  
Cicero persuaded the slave by the hope of freedom to  
carry a letter to Caesar. The slave carried the letter tied  
to a javelin, and reached Caesar. From the slave Caesar  
learned of the perils that threatened Cicero

- iv. **Repetition and continuity.** The repeating of a noun or pronoun from the preceding sentence. Example :

Dumnorigem ad se vocat, monet ut in reliquum tempus  
omnes suspiciones vitet. Dumnorigi custodes ponit ut  
quae agat scire possit

He called Dumnorix to him, and warned him to avoid all  
grounds of suspicion in the future. He set spies over  
Dumnorix in order to be able to know what he was doing

**Nota bene** : Note the repetition of the noun, **Dumnorigem, Dumnorigi**

- v. **Adverbs and adverbial expressions of time.** Time and its expression, besides placing events in sequence, time also advances the story. Example :

postero die castra ex eo loco movent

On the following day they moved their camp from that  
place

tum demum Liscus quod antea tacuerat proponit

Then, and not till then, Liscus revealed what he had  
previously concealed

interea, dum haec geruntur, equites qui toti Galliae erant  
imperati conveniunt

Meanwhile, during these operations, the cavalry levied  
from the whole of Gaul assembled

- vi. **Adverbs and adverbial expressions of place.** Place and its expression, citation of geographical names and points of topography, such as the name of a river, or more precisely, the name of a ford across a waterway, advance the story. Example :

eodem convenient undique frequentes

At the same place delegates assembled from all sides in  
large numbers

**ibi Orgetorigis filia atque unus e filiis captus est**

There the daughter of Orgetorix and one of his sons were taken prisoner

- vii. **Postpositive, cause, continuity, contrast, consequence.** Latin possesses a range of connective words and phrases that assist the writer to construct his story. Many of the below cited words have an inherent sense of logic. A Latin postpositive usually does not commence a sentence, but appears after the first clause, before the second to ‘hammer’ the argument. **post hoc ergo propter hoc...** after this, therefore because of, this... ‘Since event Y followed X, event Y must have been caused by event X’ **propter.** prep. + acc. **on account of, because of** Example :

Cited below are common Latin postpositive words. Example :

**autem.** conj. **however, moreover** [see sub-para. : c ]

**quoque.** adv. **also, too**

**enim.** conj. **for, in fact, truly**

**quidem.** adv. **indeed, certainly, at least**

**ergo.** adv. **therefore**

**tamen.** adv. **nevertheless, still**

**igitur.** conj. **therefore, consequently**

**vero.** adv. **truly, really, actually, rightly** [vero : emphasis is on the preceding word, not the following]

**Nota bene :** Cato the Elder and Sallust began sentences with **igitur**. If **igitur** is used postpositively, it cannot be first. The vocabulary list above is divided into two groups : words that introduce words and clauses, and words that qualify words that immediately precede. Example :

**Words that introduce words and clauses**

**Words that qualify words that immediately precede**

**scio enim quis hoc fecerit** – For I know who did this

**tu quoque** – Also you [You too]

**tu autum eras** – But you are wrong

**ego quidem hoc feci** – Indeed I did this

Some words are firm regarding their position within a sentence. **quoque** is one of these words. While **quoque** has the senses of **also** and **too**, do not translate into English : **Also, I went home. quoque, domum ivi.** Instead, **praeterea domum ivi** [use a non-postpositive word]

**Nota bene :** **sed.** conj. **but.** **sed** introduces a phrase or clause contrasting with what has already been cited. **sed** and **autem** usage, both are conjunctions with the sense of **but.** **sed** is a strong contrast with what precedes, **autem** is a weaker contrast

- Cause.** **nam.** conj. introduces the sentence, information not known before. **for**
- Continuity.** **ita.** adv used with adjs, verbs, and advs. **so, thus**
- Transition.** **autem.** postpositive conj. **however, moreover.** **autem** has two opposite meanings. **however**, if the statement the word introduces seems contrary to fact to what may be expected from the preceding statement or **moreover**, if the second statement reinforces the first
- Consequence.** **itaque.** adv. **and so, therefore.** **itaque** and **ergo** both have the meaning of **therefore.** **ergo** in a logical sense. ‘ X therefore Y’, **itaque** in the sense of consequence. ‘ Y as a consequence of X’

**nam propter frigora frumenta in agris matura non erant**

For because of the cold weather the crops in the fields were not ripe

**itaque ad consilium rem deferunt**

Therefore they referred the question to a council of war

Among the most used coordinating conjunctions are **et**, **-que**, **atque.** **et** simply connects words, phrases or clauses. **-que** as a suffix to the last of two words expresses a closer connection than **et.** **parentes liberique, parents and children, fama gloriaque, fame and glory** and may also join related clauses **atque** or before a consonant **ac, and also, and indeed, and in fact** expresses a close connection, and usually emphasizes the second of the two things connected



Caesar used the rhetorical device of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular to recount his frontier exploits. He also used the coordinating conjunction and other stylistic devices to create and sustain narrative interest. **optimus Latine scripto**. Example :

1. **Caesar venit magnis itineribus in Nerviorum fines. ibi ex captivis cognoscit, quae apud Ciceronem gerantur. tum cuidam ex equitibus Gallis persuadet, ut ad Ciceronem epistulam deferat. hanc Graecis conscriptam litteras mittit, ne, intercepta epistula, nostra ab hostibus consilia cognoscantur. si adire non possit, monet, ut tragulam cum epistula ad ammentum deligata intra munitionem castrorum abiciat. in litteris scribit, se cum legionibus profectum celeriter adfore. Gallus, periculum veritus, tragulam mittit. haec casu ad turrim adhaesit, dempta ad Ciceronem defertur. ille perlectam in conventu militum recitat. tum fumi incendiorum procul videbantur, quae res omnem dubitationem adventus legionum expulit**

Caesar came by forced marches into the territories of the Nervii. There he learned from prisoners what was going on at Cicero's camp. Then, he induces one of the Gallic cavalry to convey the letter to Cicero. This letter written in Greek characters, so that, if it were intercepted, our plans, may not be known by the enemy. Caesar advised the Gaul, if he could not enter the camp, to tie the letter to the javelin's strap-hanger thong and hurl the javelin inside the defence of the camp. In the letter he wrote that he had started with his legions and would quickly speedily arrive. The Gaul, dreading the risk, throws the javelin. This by chance lodged in a tower; it was taken down and brought to Cicero. He read it through, and then recited it aloud to the assembly of soldiers. And now smoke of fires could be seen in the distance, this banished all doubt about the approach of the legions

Line 1

**Caesar venit magnis itineribus ...Nerviorum fines**

**Caesar** : subject of the sentence and subject throughout the account

**venit** : 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, present indicative, active voice **venio, venire, veni, ventum** (4). **To come**. Caesar comes

**magnis itineribus** : **forced marches**. See comment on page 6 : adjectives of quantity : their sense depends on the modified noun

Lines 1 and 2

**ibi, ex captivis cognoscit...**

**ibi** : adverb **in that place** or **there** introduces the sentence, refers to the Nervii territory in the previous sentence

**cognoscit** : 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, present indicative, active

voice, **cognosco, cognoscere, cognovi, cognitum** (3). **To know** [something through acquaintance] versus **scio, scire, scivi, scitum** (4). **To know** [something as fact]. **Nota bene** : Latin's **duality of knowing** either through **acquaintance** or **fact** is maintained by European Romance languages : French, **savoir** and **connaître**; Italian, **sapere** and **conoscere**; or Spanish, **saber** and **conocer**. **ex captivis** : from captives. Is there a better way to learn about the enemy's intentions than through prisoners?

Lines 2 and 3

**tum cuidam ex equitibus Gallis...**

**tum** : adverb **then** introduces the sentence. Caesar asks one of the Gallic cavalrymen to take a letter to Cicero. The Gauls were known for their horsemanship

Line 4

**hanc Graecis conscriptam litteras...**

**hanc** : demonstrative pronoun **this** carries forward the importance of the letter. **Graecis**, in the ablative, followed by a participle, '**This letter written in Greek characters ...**'

Lines 4, 5 and 6

**...ne, intercepta epistula, nostra ab hostibus consilia cognoscantur**

**ne** : the negative conjunction **not** followed by a verb in the subjunctive. The sentence heightens the drama, if the enemy intercepts the letter, he will know Caesar's plans. **cognosco** introduced above, is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, referring to the enemies in the present subjunctive passive voice. For the enemies are **not** acquainted with Greek

Lines 5, 6 and 7

**si adire non possit, monet, ut tragulam...abiciat**

**si** : conjunction **if** introduces the sentence. Caesar dramatically uses a verbal phrase of an infinitive, **adire, to approach** followed by two verbs in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular referring to the Gallic cavalryman, **si adire non possit, monet, if he could not approach, he warns ... the camp, castorum ... hurl the javelin ... abiciat**. What is being hurled? The **javelin** : **tragula, -ae**. 1f. To aid the Gaul's ability to hurl, the javelin has the **ammentum, -i**. 2n. **strap-hanger thong** bound to the javelin's shaft. **Nota bene** : The strap-hanger thong provides ballistic advantage to the thrower : 40 to 50 per cent greater range over brute hurling power, improved flight accuracy, and the javelin strikes the target nose-first to penetrate. The participle, to be bound : **deligata** describes how the **epistula** is fastened to the javelin's shaft

Line 7

**in litteris scribit, se cum legionibus profectum celeriter adfore**

**in** : preposition, takes the ablative. **scribe**, the verb, refers to the 3<sup>rd</sup> per sg present indicative active with the verb's ending referring to Caesar. The letter states the legion marches quickly, citing two adverbs back-to-back : **celeriter, quickly** and **adfore, speedily**

Line 8

**Gallus, periculum veritus, tragulam mittit**

**Gallus** : the **Gaul** introduces the sentence. The sentence describes the dread the cavalry soldier anticipates throwing the javelin. The sentence's verb is **mittit** : 3<sup>rd</sup> per sg, present indicative active, [he] **throws**. **Nota bene** : **mitto**, besides the sense **to send**, has the additional sense **to throw**

Lines 9 and 10

**haec casu ad turrim adhaesit, dempta ad Ciceronem defertur**

**haec** : demonstrative pronoun **this** introduces the sentence and refers to the **javelin** and its flight arc of a downward fall, **casus, casus**. 4m. striking a **tower, turris, turris**. 3f. with the javelin adhering, the verb : **adhaesit**, 3<sup>rd</sup> per sg, perfect

indicative active : **adhaereo, adhaerere, adhaesi, adhaesum** (2). [intransitive] **To cleave to, to stick to.** The letter is brought to Cicero

Line 10

**ille perlectam in conventu militum recitat**

**ille** : demonstrative pronoun **that** dramatically introduces the sentence and refers to the previous sentence's theme : by a hurled javelin Cicero has Caesar's letter. Participle **perlectam, examined** and the verb **recitat, 3<sup>rd</sup> per sg present indicative active** that Cicero read aloud the epistula to the assembled garrison

Lines 10 and 11

**tum fumi incendiolorum procul videbantur...**

**tum** : an adverb, again introduces the sentence, with reference to the previous sentence. **fumi incendiolorum procul** smoke from afar signals Caesar is marching towards Cicero's camp to relieve the enemy pressure. The verb **videbantur** : 3<sup>rd</sup> per pl imperfect indicative passive indicates an on going action of burning

Lines 11 and 12

**...quae res omnem dubitationem adventus legionum expulit**

**res omnem all dubitationem adventus** doubts of arrival of Caesar's legion are banished, **expulit** : 3<sup>rd</sup> per sg perfect indicative active of the verb : **expello, expellere, expuli, expulsus** (3). **To expel, banish, eject**

### **SALVE, AMICUS MEUS**

**Writing Personal Correspondence.** A letter, **epistula, -ae.** 1f begins with the name of the writer in the nominative, followed by the name of the addressee in the dative. The addressee's name may be accompanied with affectionate adjectives or appositives, such as, the participle : **doctus, learned.** After the nominative and the dative, one of the following expressions is appropriate. Example :

**salutem dicit [s.d.]; salutem plurimam dicit [s.p.d.]; or salute [s.]**

**Tullius Terentiae suae, Tulliolae suae, or Ciceroni suo salutem dicit [s.d.]**

The initial greeting is sometimes followed by : **si vales, bene est. ego valeo; si vales, bene est. ego quoque valeo; or si vales, bene est. valeo.** If you are writing to a military colleague, the following salutation is suggested : **si tu exercitusque valetis, bene est**

A letter concludes with final greetings : **vale; valet; cura ut valeas; fac valeas; si me amas, cura ut valeas; etiam atque etiam vale; valetudinem tuam cura diligenter; fac ut valetudinem tuam cures; da operam ut vales; maximam da operam ut valeas, si me vis valere; valetudinem tuam fac ut cures; and vale et mox mihi scribas seu potius scriptites**

The address, either in the initial greeting or near the beginning of the letter, but not in the first sentence; may be accompanied by appositives expressing affection or respect : **meum corculum; meum cor; mi anime; mi animule; mi ocella; mea lux; mea vita; deliciae meae; carissimae animae; desideria mea suavissima et optatissima uxor; vir optime; spectatissime Domine; praestantissima Domina; iucundissima Domiinuula; and Reverendissime Pater.** The addressee's name in the initial greeting may be accompanied by **suo, suis** indicating friendship and respect without being too familiar

At the end or near the end of a piece of writing, the author may inscribe, **ad finem.** An alternate ending, the writer may conclude with **dabam** or **scribebam** The date, day and month, but not the year, is stated and then the name of the city in the locative or ablative. **dabam** and **scribebam** are in the imperfect as a courtesy for the addressee, putting the action in his temporal point of view

Personal letters are often composed in the imperfect or perfect to indicate an action that is taking place at the moment of writing, the pluperfect indicates an action that has taken place before the moment of writing, and the periphrastic conjunction of the indicative imperfect, **-urus eram** indicates an action that comes after the moment of writing. Adverbs of time are used. Often, in private correspondence, **hodie** becomes **eo die, heri** is **pridie**, and **cras** is **postpridie.** Example :

**pridie aliam epistulam a te acceperam or heri aliam epistulam a te accepi**

**postpridie de rebus eo die gestis te certioream eram factures or cras de rebus hodie gestis te certioream faciam**

Dignity in speech, paying a compliment to a leading citizen. *How do you pay a compliment, the dignity owed to a man of stature?* The Romans did not combine an adjective with a man's name. Latin used either **vir** or **homo** with an **adjective** in **apposition** to the **name**. Example :

P. Scipio, **vir amplissimus**, est legatus

The **distinguished** Publius Scipio is ambassador

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Caius Plinius Caecilius Secundus, writes two letters to dear friends.

C. Plinius Fabio Iusto suo s.

Olim mihi nullas epistulas mittis. nihil est, inquis quod scribam. at hoc ipsum scribe, nihil esse quod scribas, vel solum illud unde incipere priores solebant : si vales, bene est. ego valeo. hoc mihi sufficit, est enim maximum. ludere me putas? serio peto. fac sciam quid agas, quod sine sollicitudine summa nescire non possum. Vale

C. Plinius Calpurnio Marco suo s.

bene est mihi quia tibi bene est. habes uxorem tecum, habes filium; frueris marifontibus viridibus agro villa amoenissima. neque enim dubito esse amoenissimam, in qua se composuerat homo felicior, ante quam felicissimus fieret. ego in Tuscis venor et studeo, quae interdum alternis, interdum simul facio; nec tamen adhuc possum pronuntiare, utrum sit difficilius capere aliquid an scribere. Vale

C. Plinius Tacito Suo salute

### **VESUVIUS MONS**

Petis ut tibi avunculi mei exitum scribam, quo verius tradere posteris possis. gratias ago, nam video morti eius, si celebretur a te, immortalam gloriam esse propositam. quamvis ipse plurima opera et mansura condiderit, multum tamen perpetuitati eius scriptorium tuorum aeternitas addet. equidem beatos puto, quibus deorum munere datum est aut facere scribenda aut scribere legenda, beatissimos vero, quibus utrumque. horum in numero avunculus meus et suis libris et tuis erit

Erat Miseni classemque imperio praesens regebat. nonum kal. Septembres hora fere septima, mater mea indicate ei apparere nubem inusitata et magnitudine et specie. usus ille sole, mox frigida, gustaverat iacens studebatque, poscit soleas, ascendit locum ex quo maxime miraculum illud conspici poterat. nubes – incertum procul intuentibus ex quo monte (Vesuvium fuisse postea cognitum est) – oriebatur, cuius similitudinem et formam non alia magis arbor quam pinus expresserit. nam longissimo velut trunco elata in altum quibusdam ramis diffundebatur, candida interdum, interdum sordida et maculosa, prout terram cineremve sustulerat

Magnum propiusque noscendum, ut eruditissimo viro visum. iubet Liburnicam aptari. mihi, si venire una vellem, facit copiam, respondi studere me malle, et forte ipse quod scriberem dederat. egrediebatur domo : accipit codicillos Rectinae Tasci imminente periculo exterritae (nam villa eius subiacebat, nec ulla nisi navibus fuga), ut se tanto discrimini eriperet, orabat. vertit ille consilium et, quod studioso animo incohererat, obit maximo. deducit quadriremes, ascendit ipse non Rectinae modo, sed multis (erat enim frequens amoenitas orae) laturus auxilium. properat illuc, unde alii fugiunt, rectumque cursum, recta gubernacula in periculum tenet, adeo solutus metu ut omnes illius mali motus, omnes figuras, ut deprenderat oculis, dictaret enotaretque

Iam navibus cinis incidebat, calidior et densior, iam pumices etiam nigrique et ambusti et fracti igne lapides. cunctatus paulum an retro flecteret, mox gubernatori ut ita faceret monenti, 'Fortes' inquit, 'fortuna iuvat : Pomponianum pete.' stabiis erat, diremptus sinu medio, sarcinas contulerat in naves, certus fugae, si contraries ventus resedisset. quo tunc avunculus meus secundissimo invectus complectitur trepidantem, consolatur, hortatur, utque timorem eius sua securitate leniret, deferri in balineum iubet, lotus accubat, cenat aut hilaris aut, quod est aeque magnum, similis hilari

Interim e Vesuvio monte pluribus locis latissimae flammae altaque incendia relucebant, quorum fulgor et claritas tenebris noctis excitabatur. ille agrestium trepidatione ignes relictos desertasque villas per solitudinem ardere in remedium formidinis dicitabat. tum se quieti dedit et quievit verissimo quidem somno, nam meatus animae, qui illi propter amplitudinem corporis gravior et sonantior erat, ab eis qui limini observabantur audiebatur. sed area ex qua diaeta adibatur ita iam cinere mixtisque pumicibus oppleta surrexerat, ut, si longior in cubiculo mora, exitus negaretur. excitatus procedit seque Pomponiano ceterisque, qui pervigilaverant, reddit. in commune consultant, intra tecta subsistant an in aperto vagentur. nam crebris vastisque tremoribus tecta nutabant et, quasi emote sedibus suis, nunc huc, nunc illuc abire aut referri videbantur. sub dio rursus quamquam levium exesorumque pumicum casus metuebatur, quod tamen periculorum collatio elegit. et apud illum quidem ratio rationem, apud alios timorem timor vicit. cervicalia capitibus imposita linteis constringunt, id munimentum adversus incidentia fuit

Iam dies alibi, illic nox omnibus noctibus nigrior densiorque, quam tamen faces multae variaque lumina solabantur. placuit egredi in litus et ex proximo aspicere ecquid iam mare admitteret, quod adhuc vastum et adversum permanebat. ibi super abiectum linteum recubans, semel atque iterum frigidam poposcit hausitque. deinde flammae flammaramque praenuntius, odor sulphuris, alios in fugam vertunt, excitant illum. innixus servulis duobus, adsurrexit et statim concidit, ut ego colligo, crassiore caligine spiritu obstructo clausoque stomacho, qui illi natura invalidus et angustus et frequenter interaestuans erat. ubi dies redditus (is ab eo, quem novissime viderat, tertius), corpus inventum integrum, inlaesum opertumque ut fuerat indutus : habitus corporis quiescenti quam defuncto similior

Interim Miseni ego et mater – sed nihil ad historiam, nec tu aliud quam de exitu eius scire voluisti. finem ergo faciam. unum adiciam, omnia me, quibus interfueram, quaeque statim, cum maxime vera memorantur, audieram, persecutum. tu potissima excerptes, aliud est enim epistulam, aliud historiam, aliud amico, aliud omnibus scribere. Vale



C. Plinius Traiano Imperatori

### *COGNITIONIBUS DE CHRISTIANIS*

Sollemne est mihi, domine, omnia de quibus dubito ad te referre. quis enim potest melius vel cunctationem meam regere vel ignorantiam instruere ? cognitionibus de Christianis interfui numquam, ideo nescio quid et quatenus aut puniri soleat aut quaeri. nec mediocriter haesitavi sitne aliquod discrimen aetatum, an quamlibet teneri nihil a robustioribus differant, detur paenitentiae venia, an ei, qui omino Christianus fuit, desisse non prosit, nomen ipsum, si flagitiis careat, an flagitia cohaerentia nomini puniantur

Interim in iis qui ad me tamquam Christiani deferebantur, hunc sum secutus modum. interrogavi ipsos an essent Christiani. confitentes iterum ac tertio interrogavi, supplicium minatus, perseverantes duci iussi. neque enim dubitabam, qualecumque esset quod faterentur, pertinaciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri. fuerunt alii similis amentiae, quos, quia cives Romani erant, adnotavi in urbem remittendos. mox ipso tractatu, ut fieri solet, diffundente se crimine, plures species inciderunt. propositus est libellus sine auctore multorum nomina continens

Qui negabant esse se Christianos aut fuisse, cum praeunte me deos appellarent et imagini tuae, quam propter hoc iusseram cum simulacris numinum adferri, ture ac vino supplicarent, praeterea maledicerent Christo – quorum nihil posse cogi dicuntur qui sunt re vera Christiani – dimittendos esse potavi. alii ab indice nominate esse se Christianos dixerunt et mox negaverunt, fuisse quidem, sed desisse, quidam ante triennium, quidam ante plures annos, non nemo etiam ante viginti. hi quoque omnes et imaginem tuam deorumque simulacra venerati sunt et Christo maledixerunt

Adfirmabant autem hanc fuisse summam vel culpae suae vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum invicem seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent, quibus peractis, morem sibi discedendi fuisse rursusque coeundi ad capiendum cibum, promiscuum tamen et innoxium, quod ipsum facere desisse post edictum meum, quo secundum mandata tua hetaerias esse vetueram. quo magis necessarium credidi ex duabus ancillis, quae ministrae dicebantur, quid esset veri, et per tormenta quaerere. nihil aliud inveni quam superstitionem pravam, immodicam

Ideo dilata cognitione, ad consulendum te decurri. visa est enim mihi res digna consultatione, maxime propter periclitantium numerum. multi enim omnis aetatis, omnis ordinis, utriusque sexus etiam vocantur in periculum et vocabuntur. neque civitates tantum, sed vicos etiam atque agros superstitionis istius contagio pervagata est, quae videtur sisti et corrigi posse. certe satis constat prope iam desolata templa coepisse celebrari, et sacra sollemnia diu intermissa repeti passimque venire victimarum carnem, cuius adhuc rarissimus emptor inveniebatur. ex quo facile est opinari quae turba hominum emendari possit, si sit paenitentiae locus

### *TRAIANUS PLINIO*

Actum quem debuisti, mi Secunde, in excutiendis causis eorum qui Christiani ad te delati fuerant, secutus es. neque enim in universum aliquid, quod quasi certam formam habeat, constitui potest. conquirendi non sunt, si deferantur et arguantur, puniendi sunt, ita tamen ut qui negaverit se Christianum esse idque re ipsa manifestum fecerit, id est supplicando dis nostris, quamvis suspectus in praeteritum, veniam ex paenitentia impetret. sine auctore vero propositi libelli in nullo crimine locum habere debent. nam et pessimi exempli nec nostril seaculi est

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