

# Beginning Latin I: A Tutorial for *Wheelock's Latin* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.), Chs. 1-20

Professor Richard A. LaFleur © 2017 [rev. April 20, 2025]

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## Introduction and Overview

*Salv !*—and *GR TI S* for your interest in my online supervised independent study class, “Beginning Latin I: A Tutorial for *Wheelock's Latin* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.), Chs. 1-20.” Having taught what I affectionately call “The Mother Tongue” for many years at the University of Georgia, both on campus and through its distance education program, I am now, in quasi-retirement, offering online tutorials in beginning Latin via my latest edition of the classic *Wheelock's Latin*, a textbook that is widely used in colleges and is especially well suited to motivated adult autodidacts. I am offering tutorials to only a very small number of highly motivated, enthusiastic adult learners—if you do not fit that description, then no need to read further. ☺

A list of all the books and materials required for the tutorial and a brief description of content and procedures is provided below; if after reading this you are interested in applying for enrollment and/or want information on the fees or have other questions, please send an email to me at [laflleur922@hotmail.com](mailto:laflleur922@hotmail.com) with some information about yourself, including your academic background, prior Latin or other foreign language study (if any), occupation, reasons for wanting to learn Latin, state or country of residence, and any other relevant details you may wish to share. Although the content of this tutorial is equivalent to that of a semester-long college class, your work will not earn college credit or a grade—I can, however, provide a Certificate of Completion indicating the material covered in your supervised independent study.

## Class Materials

Here are the materials you will need for this tutorial; most are available on AMAZON or at <http://www.bolchazy.com/>:

### Required Textbooks

- Comeau, Paul, and Richard A. LaFleur. *Workbook for Wheelock's Latin* (3d ed., rev.). New York: HarperCollins, 2000. (ISBN 0060956429)
- Beard, Mary. *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome*. New York: Liveright/Norton, 2015 (ISBN 978-0-87140-423-7).
- LaFleur, Richard A. *Scribblers, Scvlptors, and Scribes*. New York: HarperCollins, 2010. (ISBN 978-0-06-125918-0)
- Miner, Mark. *Readings from Wheelock's Latin*. MP3s from original four-CD set. Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2006. (ISBN: 978-0-86516-638-7)
- Wheelock, Frederic M., and Richard A. LaFleur. *Wheelock's Latin* (7th ed.). New York: HarperCollins, 2011. (ISBN 0061997226)

### Recommended Materials

- LaFleur, Richard A. *Latin for the 21st Century: From Concept to Classroom*. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman/Addison Wesley, 1998. (For current or prospective teachers, professors, or graduate students of Latin: buy ONLY if you are planning to TEACH Latin, K-12, college, or home-school, and note that some of the material is out of date. The book does contain, along with much else, a chapter on teaching classes using the textbook *Wheelock's Latin*.)
- LaFleur, Richard A., and Brad Tillery. *Cumulative Vocabulary Lists for Wheelock's Latin*. Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2011.
- ———. *Wheelock's Latin GrammarQuick!* Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2011. (ISBN 978-0-86516-666-0) All the grammar (forms and syntax) in Wheelock, summarized on 6 laminated cards.
- ———. *Vocabulary Cards and Grammatical Forms Summary for Wheelock's Latin*. Wauconda, IL:

Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2011.

- *Grammaticus* (Android phones) or *Principium* (iPhone), apps specifically for *Wheelock's Latin*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed.; the apps follow the text chapter by chapter, helping you to practice the grammatical forms for the model words, as well as all of the vocabulary. Both apps also have a handy glossary of the entire Wheelock's vocabulary. Available at <http://grammaticvs.com/> or <http://principium.com/>.
- *Latin Vocab Drill* and *Latin Flash Drill*. Centaur Systems, 2011. Specify Wheelock 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. version. Available individually or as the combined *Latina* program, at <http://www.centaursystems.com/catalog/latina.html>.

### Web Site

A wealth of information on Latin and on the ancient Mediterranean world is available at my introductory Latin web site ([http://www.wheelockslatin.com/tutorials/elem\\_latin/index.htm](http://www.wheelockslatin.com/tutorials/elem_latin/index.htm)) and on The Official Wheelock's Latin Series Website (<http://www.wheelockslatin.com/>). Be sure to avail yourself regularly of these invaluable resources.

### About the Class Materials

Each of the required texts for this tutorial serves a distinct purpose. The readings in Beard should adequately provide the background in ancient Roman culture that would normally be developed through comments on the Latin readings in a classroom course, while the Wheelock textbook (and my supplementary notes) will introduce Latin's place in the Indo-European language family and its relationship to English, the Roman alphabet and pronunciation, the fundamentals of Latin grammar, Latin vocabulary and English derivatives, and will provide extensive experience in reading and translating Latin texts. The *Workbook for Wheelock's Latin* will help assess your mastery of grammar, translation, and English derivatives; and from the very beginning chapters of both *Wheelock's Latin* and my companion text *Scribblers, Sculptors, and Scribes*, you will be reading excerpts from authentic classical Latin, including a wide range of literary texts, inscriptions, and even graffiti. Finally, the CD set *Readings from Wheelock's Latin* will introduce you to the pronunciation of Latin and to the reading and performance of Latin prose and poetry.

I strongly recommend the *Vocabulary Cards and Grammatical Forms Summary for Wheelock's Latin* and the *Wheelock's Latin Grammar Quick* cards, as you can carry them anywhere for convenient study and review of each chapter's vocabulary and grammar, and the *Cumulative Vocabulary Lists for Wheelock's Latin* are also very helpful for lesson review. You may also wish to purchase the excellent *Grammaticus* app for Android phones and/or the computer software (for IBM or Mac) published by Centaur Systems: *Latin Vocab Drill*, which provides invaluable drill and self-testing of the vocabulary in *Wheelock's Latin*, and the *Latin Flash Drill*, which gives you practice with such forms as verb conjugations, noun declensions, etc.

If you are a current or prospective teacher, you will also want to read my methods text, *Latin for the 21st Century: From Concept to Classroom*, and look through the materials on my "Methods and Materials for Teaching Latin" pages (<http://www.wheelockslatin.com/tutorials/TeachingMethods/index.htm>).

### Lesson Preparation and Pacing

Each of the 20 lessons in this tutorial contains a list of objectives and clearly detailed procedures for mastering the chapter(s) assigned. Usually this will include (1) close study of all the new material, especially grammatical constructions and concepts, presented in Wheelock and this tutorial guide, (2) thorough memorization of vocabulary and paradigms (i.e., sample declensions and conjugations), (3) completion of the appropriate "Optional Self-Tutorial Exercises" towards the end of Wheelock's text, (4) translations from assigned texts, (5) exercises in the *Workbook*, (6) listening to readings from Wheelock, and, in the first several lessons, (7) readings from Beard's *SPQR*.

Master each new concept, word, form, or grammatical construction when it is first presented. Important new terms are printed in **boldface** when introduced and should be carefully studied, with definitions and examples committed to memory. Language learning is cumulative: careful daily study will repay you again and again. You should keep a computer file for this tutorial, so that notes and exercises can be added or revised at any point.

Pacing is up to you, but you should work thoroughly and thoughtfully, not too quickly but steadily (at least one lesson every two weeks is advisable, and at least SOME work with the language, 10-15 minutes, EVERY SINGLE DAY)—expect to invest eight to ten hours per lesson, including study, memorization, drill, translation practice, and written work, as this is about the amount of time you would spend if you were taking this tutorial in a traditional classroom. One lesson per week will, for most tutorial students with other obligations, be the maximum feasible rate for adequate study and retention—in no case will more than two assignments per week be accepted. Be sure to keep a copy of all work you submit in the event that your emailed assignment does not transmit properly.

You may discontinue work at any time; and I reserve the right to terminate the tutorial at my discretion (with a full refund for any ungraded assignments), particularly if it appears you are not making satisfactory progress or are finding the work too difficult (NOT a negative—learning Latin, or ANY foreign language, is NOT for everyone, just as I found learning the dreaded CALCULUS was an insurmountable task for me, despite my earlier love of algebra, geometry, and trig.!).

## Written Assignments

Only a portion of your work for each lesson will actually be emailed to me for feedback. This work will generally consist of exercises in declension or conjugation, translation, and your answers to questions on the vocabulary, translation, grammar, or other points raised in the textbooks or the tutorial guide. Modifications can be made to the assignments, depending upon your prior experience with Latin or other special needs; teaching tips can be provided, if you are a prospective Latin teacher, especially if you are planning to use *Wheelock's Latin*. All assignments must, needless to say, be prepared on your own without outside help; if you find answer keys for the textbooks, you obviously should refrain from using them. Virtually all questions that might arise in the course of your work for each chapter will be answered in either the textbooks or lesson notes, but if you find some vital question unanswered in those sources, you may e-mail me before submitting your written assignment. ***All assignments must be submitted as attached WORD documents, being sure to retain your originals.***

## Pr n nti ti

The first lesson in this tutorial has an oral/aural component (and all lessons require listening practice via the CDs). When you email me that initial assignment, be sure to suggest a few times (EST) that best suit your schedule for a 60-90-minute telephone meeting, during which we can get acquainted, go over the pronunciation assignment, and briefly address other questions you may have (if you are in the Athens area, we can try to schedule an appointment on campus or in a local coffee shop).

## Lat na Est Gaudium! (“Latin is Fun!”)

At the end of some lessons, I will share with you some mottoes, famous quotations, or other Latin tidbits for your interest and delectation. Often these will be related to the new vocabulary or other material in the current lesson. Together with the *Lat na Est Gaudium et tilis* sections at the end of each Wheelock chapter, and emails on English derivatives and other such topics that I often send out to the tutorial group, this material will augment what you learn in the tutorial—and sometimes may even make you chuckle!

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## Why Study Latin?

Why should you study Latin? There are many reasons. The study of any foreign language has a certain intrinsic interest. What is alien is mysterious, and in language study the mystery is the intricate working of man's mind, the reasoning process, and its outward manifestation, speech. Language is one of the most peculiarly human behavioral phenomena. Complex and overwhelmingly varied as it sometimes appears, the shape and development of language is nonetheless systematic and predictable. Language study, it has been observed, is at once the most

scientific of the humanities and the most humanistic of the sciences.

But why Latin in particular? The reasons and the rewards, I have discovered in my decades of teaching, are as many and as various as the students themselves and their (your!) myriad interests, from the most pragmatic to the esoteric. You may not have based your decision to study Latin on a desire to refine your study habits, and yet, this will be one effect of your work, however disciplined you may think you already are. A survey of law deans some years ago revealed that they were especially impressed by their students who had been undergraduate Classics majors for this reason in particular—their discipline—as well as for their attentiveness to detail, their keen analytical abilities, and their communication skills generally.

Your study of Latin will also ultimately provide insights into the ancient Roman consciousness that no history book can approximate. You will possess the key to a better understanding of our Roman antecedents and of one of the world's oldest and most influential and popular literatures. Ancient Italy produced important authors in virtually every discipline, from agriculture to zoology, with architecture, astronomy, botany, drama, law, medicine, philosophy, religion, and rhetoric in between. And then there are the many great works of Latin literature: satire, a literary genre invented by the Romans; the romantic verse of Catullus and other elegiac poets; Ovid's epic verse "handbook" of Greco-Roman myth, the *Metamorphoses*; the satiric and sometimes scandalous epigrams of Martial; Petronius' *Satyricon*, one of the first novels in European literature; the histories of Livy and Tacitus; the politically resonant speeches and letters of Cicero; Caesar's detailed commentaries on his Gallic campaigns and on the civil war with Pompey; the biographies of Suetonius; the writings of the Church Fathers; and, of course, Vergil's epic of Rome's foundation and imperial destiny, the *Aeneid*, a tremendously exciting, often poignant, romantic, and profoundly moral story and a masterpiece of structural, musical, and even cinematographic effect. You will become increasingly sensitive to the artistic and rhetorical potential of a highly inflected language and to the importance of reading an author's work in the language in which it was originally written. You will gain remarkable insights into the Romans' daily lives through their graffiti and other inscriptions. You will come to appreciate that a great deal can indeed be "lost in translation." Certainly, for purposes of serious research in ancient Roman history or literature, the primary sources must be examined in the original Latin.

On the other hand, you may see Latin primarily as an aid to the study of modern foreign languages. It will be that, of course. The Romance and Germanic languages, for example, are the grandchildren and grand-nephews of Latin, so to speak, within the Indo-European language family. Striking correspondences of vocabulary, morphology, and syntax appear again and again. The "Etymology" sections in *Wheelock's Latin* will be of special interest to you.

Or, to be more mundane, perhaps you are satisfying a college language requirement and hope that Latin at least will help you score a few extra points on your GRE, LSAT, MCAT, or DAT. Those points can be virtually guaranteed, and more than a few. No better understanding of the structure of your native language can be gained than through the study of a second language, toward which your approach must be objective and analytical. The correlation between Latin study and English verbal proficiency has been statistically demonstrated in numerous research studies. One reason for the extraordinary verbal skills of Latin students is, of course, the fact that more than half of our English vocabulary is derived from Latin and many other English words are cognate with Latin. Consider, for example, the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution, reproduced here with the words of Latin origin (nearly all of the important words in the sentence) underlined:

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Without the Latinate words all that remains is "We the of the in to a more for the welfare and the blessings of to ourselves and our do and this for the of"! Pay special attention to the English derivatives found in parentheses after nearly every entry in the vocabulary list in each of *Wheelock's* chapters and in the notes to the Latin readings in both *Wheelock* and *Scribblers*, and your own vocabulary will begin to grow.

Finally, with the renaissance of interest and enrollments in Latin in American schools over the past generation, and the resultant demand for more secondary school Latin teachers, many of my students have been



teachers certified in other fields who are seeking refresher courses as preparation for their new assignments in the Latin classroom. These teacher-students have been particularly successful in our collaboration and have found the recommended text, *Latin for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: From Concept to Classroom*, an invaluable resource for their own classroom teaching.

Whatever your reasons for studying Latin, if you approach your work with enthusiasm and determination, I am confident that you will find this tutorial to be a valuable and enjoyable learning experience. It is my sincere hope that it will serve your needs well; and if you have any suggestions for improvements, I would be very happy indeed to hear them.

***Fort nam bonam! (“Good luck!”)***

