

CATULLUS AND THE WOMAN HE LOVES: A Group English-to-Latin Translation Activity

[R. LaFleur, 4-2-12]

Work as a group to translate this one sentence assigned to you; each group will have 5-10 minutes to complete the sentence translation:

- ✓ If you are not sure of the right Latin word to use, consult the summary vocabulary list provided, which is divided into parts of speech and also into 1st and 2nd declension and 1st and 2nd conjugation.
- ✓ Choose the right case for each noun, depending on its use in its sentence, and make sure adjectives agree with the nouns they modify and that you have the right personal ending for each verb.
- ✓ Use normal Latin word order.
- ✓ EVERYONE in your group should participate—do **not** just let/make one person do all the work.
- ✓ Select a **scrība** (“scribe”) to write out the sentence’s Latin translation on the worksheet below and also, when you are done/satisfied that it is correct, to write it on the board next to the sentence’s number.
- ✓ When all **quīnque sententiae**/five sentences are on the board, we’ll read aloud and translate the whole story and see if it has a HAPPY ENDING!! ☺

1. The poet Catullus loves a woman, but the woman does not always love the poet.
2. The good woman calls Catullus today—what should the Roman poet think?
3. The man has a great plan: he gives an ancient box (**arca, -ae, f.**) of beautiful roses to the woman.
4. The woman sees the gift and thinks, “What is in the beautiful box (**arca, -ae, f.**)?”
5. She sees the many roses and calls, “Oh Catullus, today you are my man!”

To the instructor:

Ask students before the day of class to review all relevant vocabulary (*Wheelock’s Latin*, CAPITA I-IV). In class divide the class into several groups (with 3-4 students per group) and distribute to all members a copy of the necessary vocabulary list (in this case the Ch. 1-4 cumulative list, pp. 5-6 in LaFleur and Tillery, *Cumulative Vocabulary Lists for Wheelock’s Latin*); then distribute a different form of the above worksheet, each with only one of the 5 sentences, to each member of the group (e.g., each member of Group 1 gets a copy of the above but with just sentence 1; members of Group 2 get the worksheet with just sentence 2; etc.), and go over the above instructions with the class. Allow 5-10 minutes for students to complete the activity, circulating from group to group as they work, to see if they have questions. Put the numbers 1-5 on the board, one above the other, allowing room for a student to write each Latin sentence. As the groups finish, have their scribe put their completed Latin sentence (NOT the English) on the board. When all 5 sentences are on the board, read the entire passage aloud with appropriate dramatic flourish. Then ask for a volunteer who was NOT in Group 1 to read aloud sentence 1, and maybe a different volunteer to translate it, receiving help, if any is needed, only from other students who were NOT in Group 1. Address any problems/errors in the Latin sentences, positively and encouragingly, via class discussion (say, e.g.: “Great Latin!—but who sees one small problem in the Latin? Hint: it’s a problem with adjective-noun agreement.” etc.). After working through all 5 sentences, read the passage aloud expressively one last time, or have a student volunteer do so—and, of course, issue an enthusiastic *plaudite, vōs omnēs* to the entire group.