

Proposal for
DC as a Latin Classroom: Modern City, Ancient Lessons

By

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SUMMARY

The legacy of the classical world surrounds us in our day-to-day lives, yet this fact is virtually ignored in many Latin textbooks. The relevance of the ancient world to our modern world should be emphasized through the study of Latin. Washington, DC is filled with references to the Roman world in its architecture, art, and layout. The goals of this workbook are to encourage comparisons between Washington DC and Rome, to teach Latin students about the larger classical world, to show students how their Latin study is relevant to the modern world, and to further translation skills and critical thinking skills in a way that is fun and that will inspire students to continue their Latin careers. As of now the workbook consists of five units, each revolving around a certain theme that connects to both Rome and DC. Each unit includes a narrative about the theme, at least three passages of unadapted Latin, lists of key vocabulary, figures, and concepts, and worksheets for suggested site visits.

AUTHORS

Emily Marcus is a graduate of The George Washington University. She will begin teaching Latin at School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens in the DC Public School system in August 2015.

Suggested Senior Consulting Authors:

Jane Brinley (consulting author) is a graduate of the University of Chicago and holds an MA in Latin from Catholic University of America. After teaching at St. Anselm's School in Washington for thirteen years, she is now the Latin teacher at DCPS School Without Walls.

Elise Friedland (consulting author) is Associate Professor of Classics and Art History at The George Washington University and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, where she specialized in Roman sculpture, the Roman Near East, and museum studies. At GW, she teaches classical art and archaeology and Latin. She has published a co-edited volume, *The Sculptural Environment of the Roman Near East: Reflections on Culture, Ideology, and Power* (2008, Peeters Press), a monograph, *The Roman Marble Sculptures from the Sanctuary of Pan at Caesarea Philippi/Panias (Israel)* (2012, ASOR's Archaeological Report Series), and the just-released co-edited *Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (2015, Oxford University Press). She is currently writing a book entitled *Seeing the Gods: Sculptures, Sanctuaries, and the Roman Near East*.

AUDIENCE

This workbook is written for intermediate (third year) high school Latin students and third semester college Latin students, but could also be adapted for middle school students. As part of my work on this project, during the Spring of 2015, I piloted unit 3 with a third year high school Latin class at DC's magnet School Without Walls and students translated the selected Latin passage with moderate support from myself and their teacher. Therefore, I am confident in the level of Latin passages, the tone of the narrative, and the content of the worksheets. In addition, in April 2015, the project was reviewed by a panel of five Washington area Latin teachers, who read unit 3 before participating in a panel discussion, where I presented this project to GW faculty and majors of Classical Studies, members of the Washington Area Latin Teachers Association (WALTA), and interested members of the public. The project was received with much enthusiasm by the 45 attendees of the event and the panelists. The Washington Area Latin Teachers Association has 125 members on Facebook and even more on their email list. Many members who attended the presentation and panel discussion requested that I share the workbook with them, though I told them that it was still in draft form.

Though as it currently stands, the level of the Latin passages targets intermediate level students, the workbook is adaptable to other levels of Latin, especially middle school, which could be supported through the addition of further Latin passages.

In addition, the workbook not only targets Latin classes in DC. Many of the members of WALTA who attended the presentation and panel discussion suggested the project could be applied to other areas of the country. For example, several weeks after the event, one panelist informed me that a colleague of hers in Denver, whom she told about my workbook, was interested in using the workbook for a trip to DC with her high school Latin students. Thus this project could be adapted to any level of Latin including 8th grade classes who often make trips to DC from all over the country. Thus, there is clearly demand for this supplemental curriculum both in DC and beyond and at multiple levels.

RATIONALE

All panelists agreed that Latin textbooks do not sufficiently address the relevancy of the ancient world to our modern world. Latin is a language that is at times difficult to conquer and seemingly removed from our every day lives. Students need to be reminded of the many ways the classical world shapes our own world today. This supplementary workbook would provide teachers an efficient way of incorporating relevancy into their classrooms. Teachers would have all the materials needed to easily show students the classical references all around them in the city of Washington DC.

Meanwhile, the curriculum stays rooted in learning Latin and connecting the larger discussions to primary texts. Students could gain experience with Latin inscriptions along with authors they would likely not otherwise encounter. Furthermore, all Latin would be fully contextualized in both its ancient and modern setting. The curriculum offers both a breadth of many topics

including architecture, art, Latin, and Roman and American history, along with the depth of connecting all of this information through comparisons and analysis. Students can further their translation skills while also honing the critical thinking skills necessary to make such involved connections.

Students who participated in the piloted program also noted the benefit of learning about their own city of DC. They not only learned about the classical roots of DC and America, but by coupling that with the Latin and ancient history they could garner insights about classical influences on the creators of our nation's capitol.

There were many suggestions at the panel event to expand this sort of project to incorporate cities all over the country. DC area Latin teachers noted that this sort of curriculum would be highly sought after not only by teachers who make trips to D.C., but this format could be applied to other cities and towns. The classical references are there in the architecture, art, city plans, and monuments. Since Latin teachers simply do not have the time to create this type of workbook, this curriculum is necessary to show students the remnants of the classical world that are located all around them.

STRUCTURE

Currently, the workbook comprises five units as follows:

Unit 1: Capitoline Hill vs. Capitol Hill

Site Visit: Capitol Building

Primary Latin: Livy's *History of Rome*, Inscription on the base of Horatio Greenough's *Enthroned Washington*

Unit 2: Pantheon of Rome vs. Pantheons of D.C.

Site Visits: Capitol Building, National Archives, Jefferson Memorial

Primary Latin: Inscriptions on the Pantheon, Pliny's *Natural History*, Augustus' *Res Gestae*

Unit 3: Layout of Rome & D.C. and Triumphal Architecture

Site Visit: Union Station

Primary Latin: Vitruvius' *De Architectura*, Livy's *History of Rome*, Inscription on the Arch of Constantine

Unit 4: Egypt and Greece in Rome & D.C.

Site Visit: Portrait Gallery, Hotel Monaco, Washington Monument

Primary Latin: Inscription on Horologium monument, Pliny's *Natural History*, Varro's *Lingua Latina*

Unit 5: Statuary of Rome & D.C.

Site Visit: Lincoln Memorial, Andrew Jackson statue

Primary Latin: Inscription on the Marcus Aurelius statue, Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*

Suggested Further Units:

- Roman symbols in the Nation's Capital
- Is the National Mall a Forum?
- Wall Paintings of Rome and Pompeii and the Decoration of the Capitol Building
- Military Monuments in Rome & D.C.
- Our Leaders and Theirs: Monuments to Political Heroes