

Introduction to the Georgia Performance Standards for Latin

Philosophy

The purpose of the study of Latin is to read and understand Latin. Therefore, the focus is comprehension rather than oral and written competence.

Organization

A committee of current and former Georgia Latin teachers developed the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) for Latin. The guiding principle of this committee was to ensure achievable competencies for each level of Latin. As a resource, the committee consulted Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century, a collaborative effort involving all of the modern and classical language associations. These standards guided the development of the Georgia Performance Standards for Latin, which contain the following components:

- State standards for each level
- A framework for each level which provides the instructional areas and concepts which should be taught
- Assessment tools for each standard
- A “Can Do” list of achievement expectations for each level

Teachers, parents, and administrators should find these components especially helpful in understanding the Latin curriculum for all levels. The standards, framework, assessment tools, and “Can Do” lists are interdependent and require the reader to consider them as a whole.

During the sequence of Latin courses, the students will accomplish the following:

Communication (CO):	Read, comprehend, and pronounce Latin.
Culture (CU):	Develop a cultural awareness of the ancient Roman world.
Connections and Comparisons (CC):	Recognize the influences of Roman civilization on the modern world and of the Latin language on English and the Romance languages.

Latin Proficiencies

The Latin proficiencies of reading, writing, listening, and speaking may be defined as follows:

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Reading

Since Latin is a non-conversational language, the greatest emphasis is placed on the student's ability to comprehend the written word. As students progress from beginning to advanced study, they must consistently increase their ability to read Latin texts. Most reading texts in the first and second levels are adapted or edited passages, but *sententiae*, mottoes, phrases, inscriptions, graffiti, light verse, and epigraphy may still be introduced.

Writing

Writing proficiently helps students develop their reading skills. In the early stages of learning Latin, writing simple sentences increases comprehension of a highly inflected language and thus hones skills in processing these 'signals' for reading and understanding Latin passages. As students progress through the study of Latin, the emphasis on writing in Latin decreases. However, in advanced Latin studies, students analyze and evaluate writing styles of the authors they study and write extensively in English about Latin literature.

Listening

Listening is an important skill because Latin literature was written to be read aloud. Some teachers find simple conversational Latin to be a helpful tool in developing listening and pronunciation skills. Students should be able to comprehend simple utterances in Latin and respond appropriately.

Speaking

Students should be able to read aloud, answer simple questions, respond to visual stimuli, and read in meter (at advanced levels).

Cultural Understanding

An understanding of Roman culture and history increases student insights into Latin reading selections. Students also gain the ability to evaluate the Roman influence on other civilizations.

English Language Skills

The acquisition of linguistic forms and vocabulary is a progressive development through which students perceive Latin's influence upon the English language structure and vocabulary. Through the acquisition of Latin vocabulary, students are introduced to word development, derivatives, and word study in English. Through the acquisition of Latin reading skills, students develop the skills of critical thinking and analytical reading for English.

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ADVANCED LATIN

The selection of materials for Advanced Latin will vary from course to course. The Advanced Latin courses are not sequential, but represent different genres of Latin literature. In Advanced Latin students progress through a series of Latin literary works and authors. Since these courses are no longer levels but independent units of literature, the class may consist of students who have taken Latin for various numbers of years. For instance, third year Latin students may be in the same course as fourth and fifth year Latin students. The third year students will simply study the authors in a different sequence. The variety of authors in Advanced Latin may include, but need not be limited to: Catullus, Cicero, Horace, Juvenal, Livy, Martial, Nepos, Ovid, Plautus, Pliny the Younger, Sallust, Terence, Vergil.

ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Foreign Language teachers should view assessment as an on-going practice with both formative and summative assessment opportunities, as well as continuous measurement of student performance growth. Assessment serves the following purposes:

- Directs instruction: Teachers should be able to determine from ongoing assessment how better to plan their instruction to ensure student's continuous acquisition of language skills.
- Provides student feedback: Ongoing assessment of student performance helps students stay on track and get assistance when needed as well as prepare for summative assessments.
- Provides parent feedback: Ongoing assessment of student performance helps parents understand how their child is progressing, which would include the student's strengths and weaknesses.

The list of assessment tools for the Georgia Performance Standards for Latin simply suggests modes by which the teacher may assess students' progress. Many of the assessments described in this document are also learning activities that become assessments when measurement scales are applied. Learning activities can be measured in the following ways: percentage correct, checklist of performance objectives, or rubrics with defined performance levels.