



AP Latin Vergil Exam (REA Test Preps)

By Ronald B. Palma, D. Thomas Benediktson Ph.D., Advanced Placement

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Ronald B. Palma has been teaching Latin and other classics courses at Holland Hall School in Tulsa, Oklahoma, for the past 36 years. He holds an A.B. in Classics from Cornell University and an M.A. in Classics from the University of Cincinnati, where he did doctoral work funded by a Louise Taft Semple Fellowship. He has co-authored *Ecce Romani: A Latin Reading Program* (Prentice-Hall, 2008), now in its fourth edition, and is also the author of REA's *SAT* Subject Test: Latin*.

Palma has received numerous fellowships and awards for both teaching and scholarship, including Rockefeller and Fulbright grants, the Summer Fellowship of the Classical Society of the American Academy in Rome, a Presidential Scholar Award from the U.S. Department of Education, a Special Recognition Award from the College Board, and the Excellence in Pre-Collegiate Teaching Award from the American Philological Association.

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Content and Format of the AP Latin Exam

Content of the AP Latin Exam

For the past decade, the number of students taking the AP Latin Exam has slowly but steadily increased. Whether or not this indicates that more students are studying Latin, it does indicate that more students are studying Latin at the college level while in high school.

The AP Latin Exam tests the proficiency of high school Latin students when compared to college students who have taken a fourth- through a sixth-semester Latin course. The focus of this book is to help you prepare for the AP Latin Exam, that is, to help you expand and assess your skills of comprehending, translating, analyzing, and interpreting the meaning of the Latin you read. The specific content, format, and scoring of the AP Latin Exam, also referred to in this book as “the Exam,” is described in greater detail in succeeding chapters.

General Format of the AP Latin Exam

The AP Latin Exam, the format of which was changed in 1999, now consists of two parts: a multiple-choice section (40 percent) and a free-response section (60 percent). You must read in English those portions of the *Aeneid* that you have not prepared in Latin. The total time for the AP Latin Exam is three hours, plus about one-half hour of administrative and break time.

The Multiple-Choice Section

The multiple-choice section of the Vergil exam consists of 50 multiple-choice questions over three sight readings/passages of poetry and prose, plus one syllabus-based passage covering the lines of the *Aeneid* required in Latin. You have 60 minutes in which to answer all questions.

The Free-Response Section

The free-response section of the Vergil exam consists of five questions, for which you have 1 hour and 45 minutes, plus a 15-minute “reading period” for preparation. These questions, which consist of translations, long and short essays, and a question on the poem as a whole, evaluate your preparation of the assigned syllabus.

The Multiple-Choice Section

Overview

The multiple-choice section is the first of two sections of the AP Latin Exam; the other is the free-response section. As indicated in the previous chapter of this book, these two sections differ in content, format, and length. The multiple-choice section consists of 50 multiple-choice questions on three sight reading passages and one syllabus-based passage, the latter of which comes from the lines of the *Aeneid* prepared in Latin. At the end of this chapter, you will find several examples of the types of passages and questions (with answers) that you will meet on this section of the Exam.

Content

The questions on this section of the Exam approximate those on the Reading Comprehension Section of the SAT Subject Test in Latin. That is, they require demonstration of your ability to translate or interpret a phrase or sentence, to identify in context basic grammatical forms and syntactical uses, and to explicate references, allusions, and words understood. The remaining questions focus on the mechanics of literary analysis, e.g., figures of speech and metrics, which will be presented in later chapters.

of this book. The types of questions found on the multiple-choice section cover translation, comprehension, grammar, reference, figures of speech, metrics, and background.

The Free-Response Section

The free-response section is the second of the two sections of the AP Latin Exam. (Remember that you will be given a short break between the two sections.) As indicated in Chapter 1 of this book, the free-response section differs from the multiple-choice section in content, format, length, and value. The free-response section on the Aeneid consists of five questions. This section, which requires two hours — a 15-minute reading period and 1 hour and 45 minutes for writing — counts 60 percent of your total score.

Content of the Free-Response Section

You are called upon to demonstrate your command of the prepared Latin by answering translation and essay questions that assess your ability both to give a close reading of the Latin text and to express your understanding of that text with regard to a specific question.

As mentioned, there are five free-response questions on the Vergil Exam. The free-response section of the Vergil Exam contains two translation questions, a long essay, and two short essays. One short essay calls for you to be able to produce a comparative analysis of characters or situations in the context of those portions of the Aeneid that you read in English. For specific information about the various types of questions that appear on the free-response section of the AP Latin Exam, see the chapters that follow.

Abilities Tested on the Free-Response Section

The free-response section anticipates that you can:

- write a literal English translation of a prepared Latin passage
- analyze excerpts from the required reading of the Aeneid, compare and contrast different parts of the poem, and draw generalized conclusions about keynote themes and motifs expressed in these excerpts as they relate to the entire work
- examine and interpret the writing style of the author, including characteristic elements such as organization and structure, word choice, mood and tone, imagery and figures of speech, and the relation of sound to sense
- demonstrate knowledge of the Aeneid as a whole

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