

The transition from beginning Latin to intermediate and advanced Latin can be a difficult one. When students are promoted to intermediate and advanced level courses, they are suddenly expected to read complex, rhetorically sophisticated texts with rich vocabulary, and also expected to understand the historical and social contexts of what they read. Interactive reading journals and first person epitomes of texts offer students a way to overcome some of the difficulties of this transition.

An interactive reading journal asks students to approach a text at multiple levels, to read and re-read a text, each time for a slightly different reason. Students must first prepare themselves by activating their expectations, and making a prediction of what will happen in the text. Then they must compile a list of ten words that are crucial for understanding the passage, and, using this key vocabulary, they must write a one or two paragraph summary in Latin of what they have read. Both the list and the summary requires students to think carefully about the meaning and salient aspects of a passage. Next the students write two comprehension questions in Latin about the passage that they can then ask their classmates the next day. Their summary should contain the answers to the questions. The next steps involve commentary in English: students delineate a strategy they used to understand the passage (this may pertain to grammar, vocabulary, character, etc.); and they evaluate process of reading, how long it took, and what specific sentences were still unclear. Finally, they read certain sections of each other's journal entries and are exposed to different points of view, different strategies, new questions. They are a community of readers.

The first person epitome allows students to choose a specific point of view of one of the characters in the text. Canonical Latin narrative texts (e.g the *Aeneid*, Livy's *Ab urbe condita*) contain disruptive women, extraordinary leaders, and ordinary people. Yet too often they are told only from an elitist, Roman, and male point of view. Students writing from the point of view of a single character in the narrative, especially from that of a non-Roman, female, or lower class person exercise their imagination and empathize with the less obvious *personae* in the text. They must select what scenes or episodes the character would have been privy to, and then try to recount the episode through the eyes and thoughts of this character. This approach enhances appreciation of the narrative point of the original text, its shaping of readers' sympathies or expectations. This project builds on the interactive reading journal to create a four to six page narrative that can stand on its own with its own point of view and a tale to tell.