

Applications of Cargoes from Three Continents to the Latin Classroom

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BELOIT MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

BELOIT ACADEMY AT BELOIT COLLEGE

BELOIT, WISCONSIN

Subject: Latin

Levels:

Beloit Memorial High School (Grades 9–12)
Beloit Academy at Beloit College (Grades 4–7)
Beloit, Wisconsin

Special Topics:

1. Using material from *Cargoes* to supplement the textbook series *Ecce Romani*.
2. History of Writing and Alphabets (Cultural Enrichment).

Length of planned activities: Varies with number and depth of activities used.

Textbook Series: *Ecce Romani: A Latin Reading Program*. 2d ed. Books 1, 2. Ed. Gilbert Lawall. White Plains: Longman, 1995.

Readings:

“Alphabet.” *Encyclopedia Americana*. 1991 ed.
Atlas of Languages. New York: Facts on File, 2003.
Ballard, R. D., R. Archbold, and A. M. McCann. *The Lost Wreck of the ISIS* (see General Bibliography).
Bikai, Patricia M. “The Phoenicians” (see General Bibliography).
Daniels, Peter J., and William Bright, eds. *The World’s Writing System*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
Haley, Allen. *History, Evolution and Design of the Letters We Use Today*. New York: Watson-Guptill, 1995.
Harrison, Steve and Patricia Harrison. “Writing and Printing” (in *BBC Fact Finding Series*). London: BBC Educational Publishing, 1991.
“History of Making Books.” In *Voyages of Discovery Children’s Series*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1996.
Hooker, J.T. *Reading the Past: Ancient Writing from Cuneiform to the Alphabet*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1998.
“Make Your Own Papyrus Kit, Paint Your Own Papyrus Kit”. Discoveries—Egyptian Imports, 1994.
Moorhouse, A. C. *The Triumph of the Alphabet: A History of Writing*. New York: Henry Schuman Publisher, 1953.

Wemyss, Stanley. *Languages of the World*. Philadelphia: Stanley Wemyss, 1950.
“Writing Systems.” *Academic American Encyclopedia*. Danbury, Conn.: Grolier, 1994.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

Beloit is a blue collar community on the Illinois- Wisconsin border. It has a higher than average minority population. It has suffered economic woes, but maintains a strong spirit of community pride and support for education. The Department of Public Instruction is currently struggling with an unfriendly state administration and oppressive revenue caps. The School District of Beloit is determined to provide a quality education and to celebrate the diversity of its student body. Beloit Memorial High School is a beautiful, newly remodeled, state-of-the-art school with 1,200 students in grades 9–12. It offers a complete program to meet the needs of its diversified student body. It offers a full range of courses from remedial to Advanced Placement, school-to-work programs, and a program that offers a Beloit College class to qualified seniors. Many students go on to higher education with admissions to prestigious institutions and a yearly total of over a million dollars in scholarships. Beloit College, which is in the same community as the high school, offers a program called “Help Yourself.” It is designed for students with high potential but limited opportunities for special study.

The Academy is the elementary school portion of the “Help Yourself” program. Academy students attend after-school, Saturday, and summer classes from fourth through seventh grade. The program provides educational and cultural enrichment as well as motivation toward higher education and ambitious career choices. The basis for the Academy’s curriculum is John Wyatt and Betty Tardola, *Meet us in Alexandria* (a former version of a program now known as *Keepers of Alexandria*). Using these materials, students learn about Roman Alexandria with historical, cultural, and Latin lessons. The program is privately funded by Beloit College and various grants from educational foundations. I am the former principal and current seventh grade teacher/Latin consultant of the Academy. At present, the Academy has an enrollment of just under 100 students.

LESSON PLANS

PART TWO: APPLICATION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL LATIN CLASS OF MATERIAL FROM CARGOES FROM THREE CONTINENTS

Like most Latin teachers, I must struggle to promote Latin and strengthen my program. The material from the Institute will be a great help in this task. I now teach Latin I, II, and III with a growing number of Latin IV students in Independent Study. All Latin classes are on a four-block system. Classes meet ninety minutes a day, five days a week for one semester. The ninety-minute classes offer wonderful opportunities to teach supplementary lessons. On the other hand, the fact that each class lasts only a semester makes it very difficult to cover all of the material one would like to cover. I use the *Ecce Romani* series. It is a colorful, attractive, "modern" approach to the study of Latin. Listed below are some examples of ways in which I intend to enrich, with material from the Institute, my teaching of the various chapters in Books I and II of this series.

Book I (Latin I)

1. Introductory material on the Latin language and writing in ancient Rome (ch. 1): one of my major units is based on these topics and is discussed in detail in Part Three below.
2. Family life and dress (ch. 3, 4): discussion of fabrics and imports; metals for jewelry; purple dye from murex (see Bikai article in General Bibliography and article on murex in same issue of *Archaeology*).
3. Story of Aeneas (ch. 5): excavation of Troy; pictures and discussion of "Troy's Gold" (see Bass articles in General Bibliography for Late Bronze Age).
4. Roman travel (ch. 19), inns (ch. 21), North Africa (ch. 21): introduce trade on sea and land (see books by Casson, and Ballard et al., in General Bibliography).
5. Spartacus, the film: first year project based on this, with discussion, testing, writing (see books by Bradley and Haynes in General Bibliography).

Book II (Latin II)

1. Dinner preparations (ch. 32), recipes and menus (ch. 33), banquet scene (ch. 34): information on trade in olive oil, wine, and garum; information on amphoras.
2. "Helge's Spinning" (chs. 6, 36, 41): one of a number of stories about a Roman soldier who married a provincial woman and the development of a town around the army camp; lends itself to discussion of bases of trade and its growth (Helge spins wool and makes cloaks for soldiers and gradually learns Roman systems of trade and about Roman coins).
3. Pyramus and Thisbe (ch. 45): Babylon and Roman possessions in the Near East.
4. Augustus (ch. 39), Early Empire (ch. 46), circus and games

(chs. 47, 48), gladiators (ch. 49), Late Empire (ch. 52): trade during the period of the Roman Empire, importing of animals; slavery; the extents of trade (Casson book in General Bibliography; for general historical information, see Freeman book in General Bibliography).

5. Writing, Books, and Letters (ch. 40): to be used with major unit, "Writing and Alphabet," described in Part Three, below (unit may be taught, with the necessary variation, at any level, grade 4–grade 12).

PART THREE: SOME EXAMPLES OF USING INSTITUTE MATERIAL TO ENRICH LATIN CLASSES, GRADES 4–7

The following examples apply to my teaching of the materials *Meet Me in Alexandria* in the Academy program of Beloit College. Books in the General Bibliography by the following authors will be among those that will be helpful in researching these subjects: Casson, Freeman, and Grant.

1. Alexander the Great (his empire, including map study).
2. Shipping and ships (shipbuilding activity for students).
3. People in Alexandria (the peoples of the Mediterranean world- Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Spaniards, Gauls, Ethiopians, Cretans, Libyans, and other s mentioned in stories).
4. Alexandrian Library (Ptolemy's goals and practices; other great libraries and centers of learning in antiquity- for example, Rhodes, Athens and Ephesus).

PART FOUR: UNIT ON WRITING (ENRICHMENT UNIT FOR ALL LEVELS, GRADES 4–12)**Goals**

1. To make students aware of the importance to humans of written communication and recordkeeping.
2. To acquaint students with the development of alphabets, writing materials, and systems.
3. To examine the spread of the Latin language through trade and conquest.
4. To stress the Latin language as a real spoken and written vehicle of communication, not just a system of grammar and vocabulary.

Resources

Most of the resources listed under Readings at the beginning of this teaching plan have been chosen with this unit in mind. Titles are self-explanatory.

Strategies and Activities

- I. Importance of writing: discussion.
 - A. Imagine your life without writing.

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- B. Think of ways you used writing the last twenty-four hours (brainstorm).
- C. List the ways civilization uses writing in various categories such as business, personal needs, and record-keeping.
- II. History of writing and alphabets: lecture, discussion, classroom activity.
- A. Progression from picture writing to tablets to cuneiform to hieroglyphs to Phoenician alphabet to Greek alphabet to Roman and Etruscan alphabets, to today's English alphabet.
- B. Examination and discussion of charts of various writing systems.
- C. Students examine charts of each system and practice making the symbols in each.
- III. Alphabet games
- A. Alphabet race (students divide into two teams for this game).
- i. Each team writes words on 10 index cards using Phoenician and Greek alphabets (transcribe as close to English as possible). Teams must write 5 words in each alphabet. Each team writes in a different color. Each word must be something in the classroom. Time limit is 15 minutes.
 - ii. Teams trade cards. If one team was unable to complete 10 cards as instructed, the opposing team receives one point for each incomplete or incorrect card.
 - iii. Teams "race" to tape their opponent's cards to the correct item in the classroom. (No need for speed of chaos.) Team members can take turns placing cards. Count the number of correctly placed cards and add to precious points to determine winners.
 - iv. Play game several times to acquaint students with the alphabets. Each time a different category of words can be used, e.g., items in the home. Put categories on the wall—bedroom, kitchen, living room, and other parts of the house. Teams tape cards underneath the correct headings.
- B. Ancient alphabet mailbox
- i. Place a decorated box in the classroom.
 - ii. Students write notes to each other or to the whole class in any of the alphabets studied.
 - iii. Extra credit points probably are needed to encourage participants. Prizes of food or stickers can be used to encourage participation.
 - iv. Notes must be shared and standards must be set as to courtesy, kindness, and appropriateness.
- IV. Book-making projects.
- A. Lecture, discussion, and demonstration: clay tablets,

papyrus, parchment, wax tablets, codex, reed and quill pens, styluses. (I have preciously made or collected some of these items. Check stationery stores, stores that sell supplies for offices, art work, crafts, and classroom use; also, bookstores.)

B. Hands-on Projects

- i. Clay tablets
 1. Each student receives a ball of self-hardening clay and various sticks they can fashion from twigs, tongue depressors, etc. They experiment with ways to hold and shape the clay and instruments. Mention difficulty of making curved marks, and practice cuneiform-type shapes. Show why many ancient alphabets used only capitals (more linear) and how there were often no separations or punctuation. Finish a clay tablet showing several alphabetic forms, and allow it to harden.
- ii. Papyrus
 1. Purchase a papyrus plant and care for it in class.
 2. Make small pieces of papyrus paper in groups using kits. This project requires several days of care and watching. Do daily checks on progress.
 3. Paint and draw Egyptian, Greek or Roman letters and designs on pre-made sheets of papyrus and/or imitation papyrus, depending on availability. Make sure each student has the opportunity to use at least a small piece of real papyrus.
- iii. Wax tablets
 1. Make tablets in groups.
 2. Use sheets of paneling or plywood, or similar material, cut in 9" x 12" sheets. On tops of sheets, glue 1" frames made from strips of wood or cheap yard sticks. Pour melted wax on tablets. (Teacher pours or carefully supervises this part of the activity.)
 3. Use sharpened sticks with flat ends to write and correct errors by smoothing over wax.
 4. Keep tablets, and use them for work practice the way Roman students did.
- iv. Scrolls.
 1. Use parchment paper and 3/4" dowel rods.
 2. Demonstrate paging and set up of ancient scrolls
 3. Students write on the scroll a story in English or Latin (depending on their level of Latin).
 4. Students finish scroll with leather ties and tags with titles.