



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL CLASSICS PROJECT

Cambridge Latin Course

Book III Stage 22

Teacher's Guide

FOURTH EDITION

The information contained within this guide comprises advice and guidance for teachers on the use of the Cambridge Latin Course. It does not represent a definitive or 'correct' way of teaching the course, and all teachers should feel confident in adapting their practice to their own classrooms and contexts.



Faculty of Education,
184 Hills Road,
Cambridge
CB2 8PQ

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STAGE 22 *dēfixiō*

<i>Cultural Background</i>	<i>Story line</i>	<i>Main language features</i>	<i>Focus of exercises</i>
Magic and curses	Vilbia, infatuated with Modestus, a Roman soldier, jilts her boyfriend, Bulbus. He puts a curse on Modestus, who beats him up. Modestus makes a date with Vilbia at the sacred spring. Bulbus and his friend, Gutta, trick him and he is thrown into the water. In fear of drowning, Modestus repudiates Vilbia. Hearing this, she flings herself into Bulbus' arms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perfect active participle• Genitive: partitive and descriptive. <p><i>Word patterns</i> Adverbs ending in -ter formed from 3rd declension adjectives.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Genitive and dative of nouns, singular and plural.2. Agreement of adjectives, nominative and accusative, singular and plural.

Opening page (p. 21)

Illustration (best studied with **amor omnia vincit**, p. 27). The Vilbia curse tablet (The Baths Museum, Bath). As in the story in the model sentences, curses were thrown into the sacred spring, as well as prayers and thank offerings. For detailed information see Cultural Background material in this Stage.

Model sentences (p. 22)

Story. A thief at the sacred spring watches an old man throw in a gold amulet. Fishing it out, he discovers that it is a curse on thieves.

New language feature. The perfect active participle. This term is used rather than 'perfect deponent participle' to ensure that students concentrate on the distinction between active and passive participles. Deponent verbs are introduced in Stage 32, and use of the term 'deponent' should be postponed until then.

New vocabulary. *ingressus, cōnspicātus, columnam, precātus, regressus, adeptus.*

First reading. This short tale has the qualities of a Roman epigram. Read it right through in Latin, and then translate it quickly with the class as a whole, letting the momentum of the story carry them as far as possible before stopping to discuss the language.

The new feature is readily grasped, since each example is preceded by a finite verb which gives a strong clue to meaning, e.g. (sentence 2) **fūr circumspēctāvit** precedes **fūr, senem cōspicātus**.

Consolidation. Avoid contrasting the perfect active participle with the perfect passive participle met in Stage 21 until you discuss 'About the language' (p. 26).

Concentrate on relating the participle to the main verb, and start by using the standard literal translation, in order to emphasise that the action of the participle precedes the action of the main verb, e.g.:

Sentence 1. Having entered the baths, the thief hurried to the sacred spring.

Sentence 2. Having caught sight of the old man, the thief hid behind a pillar.

Alternative translations (when he had prayed, after praying, etc.) may be introduced once you are sure students have a clear understanding of this relationship and should be in use by the end of this Stage.

It is common in English to use the present participle in a past context, and students may translate sentence 2 as *Catching sight of the old man, the thief hid behind a pillar*. If this happens, ask the question 'Did the thief catch sight of the old man and hide behind the pillar at the same time? If he caught sight of the old man before he hid how could we make that clear in English?' At this early stage it is essential to stress that the tense of the participle is perfect.

Illustrations. The scene takes place in the hall between the Great Bath and the sacred spring. The windows in the line drawings can still be seen today, a central arched window with square-topped windows on either side.

The story lends itself to acting. You will need a narrator, thief, old man and a sepulchral voice (to utter the words inscribed on the amulet).

Vilbia (p. 24)

Story. While washing up in her father's bar, Vilbia shows her sister a brooch given to her by Modestus, and raves about his bravery and attractiveness. Rubria cautions her against Roman soldiers and reminds her that her boyfriend, Bulbus, understands magic.

Comment. This is the first of a series of stories about Modestus, a boastful soldier, and his sidekick Strythio, based on the characters in Plautus' comic play, *Miles Gloriosus*.

First reading. Aim to build up interest and anticipation by your handling of the first part of the story, and then set students to tackle the rest in small groups. For example:

Read the first paragraph in Latin, and translate it with the whole class. Then discuss briefly what is implied about the new characters, e.g. the boss' daughters doing the washing up, chattering over their boring job, and their over-worked and explosive father. Draw students' attention to the fact that these young women are working in the family business, as no doubt many women did in this period.

Then read lines 5-7 (*multa ... exiit*) in Latin and ask for translations of individual sentences. Invite comment on the likely result of Latro's intervention.

Read the remaining dialogue aloud in Latin, and then ask students to prepare a translation in small groups. Circulate, noting the structures which cause problems. If there is time, write the problem words or phrases on the board and go through them with the class as soon as they finish, giving the groups time to correct or improve their versions before they share them with the class. Or store the list as a basis for quick consolidation exercises at the beginning or end of subsequent lessons.

Discussion questions

- Why do you think the scene is entitled *Vilbia*?
- Do you think *Rubria* sympathises with *Vilbia*, or is she out to make mischief?
- There are two unseen characters in the story. What impression do you form of them?
- How does *Vilbia* refer to *Modestus* in line 31? Let students know that **suspīrium** means literally (and onomatopoeically) sigh, and encourage them to produce the contemporary equivalent.
- How do you think the situation might develop?

Consolidation. Like the other passages in this Stage, this story lends itself to acting or dramatic reading in English and Latin. If there is time, each story could be allocated to a different group of students to prepare for a grand performance at the end of the Stage.

Modestus (p. 25)

Story. *Strythio* flatters *Modestus* about his inimitable achievements in love and war, and his impact on *Vilbia*. As they approach *Latro*'s bar, he recounts that he gave *Vilbia*, as a gift from *Modestus*, a brooch given him by another girl.

First reading. Draw attention to the heading; then ask students to look back at p. 24 and list all the statements about *Modestus*:

mīles Rōmānus (line 14).

eam (fibulam) ... dedit (lines 14-15).

vir maximae virtūtis (line 18).

ōlim tria mīlia hostium occīdit (lines 18-19).

lēgātum custōdit (line 19).

Herculēs alter est! (line 20).

probus (line 22).

quantī erant umerī eius! quanta bracchia! (line 24).

fortissimus et audācissimus est (line 30).

Ask them which of these statements are facts and which are opinions. Whose opinion? Tell them to keep their lists so that you can ask the same question again after reading the passage.

Take the scene in two parts, breaking off at 'frāter eius,' respondi (line 13). Read the first part aloud and then ask comprehension questions which will help students to explore and appreciate the text, e.g.:

dērīdet (line 2). What is Strythio doing? Is that what you expect a friend to do?

Read Modestus' first speech (line 3). Is there a word there which surprises you in a man speaking to a friend? Why does he tell Strythio to stand near him?

hercle! quam fortūnātus sum! (line 4). What tone do you think Strythio uses here? What evidence have you for his attitude?

vērūm dīcis (line 7). What do these words mean? Do you believe Modestus?

In Strythio's next speech (line 8), is there a word which suggests he is exaggerating?

What does he say Vilbia did (line 9)? What did she want to know (line 12)?

If you were acting Modestus in this play, what expression would you put on after Strythio says **estne Herculēs?** (line 12)?

How would your expression change after he says **minimē** (line 12), and then after **frāter eius** (line 13)?

The second part of the story (from **tum fibulam**, line 13) is straightforward, and students might be asked to explore it individually or in pairs.

Now look back at the list you made before starting this scene. Which of the statements do you think are true?

End by asking the class:

Do you think the soldier's name suits him?

What do you think is going to happen next?

Consolidation

Ask the class to look back at the two scenes, Vilbia and Modestus, and pick out examples of the genitive case, writing down the whole phrase containing the genitive, and its meaning. They could be referred to 'Language information' p. 146, if necessary.

Illustration. Trumpet brooches, from Chorley, Lancs (British Museum). Named from the shape of the head (nearest the ring), they are a distinctively British style of brooch, a more ornate development of the earlier, plain 'safety pin' style. The pins are missing on both brooches. They were always worn in pairs, linked by a chain, as in the photograph, so Modestus' present must be an odd one, of limited value on its own.

About the language 1: perfect active participles (p. 26)

New language feature. Perfect active participle.

Discussion. It is better to read through paragraph 1 quickly, or omit it altogether, and concentrate initially on the perfect active participle (paragraphs 2-4).

Take paragraph 2 with the class, and then go back to the model sentences (pp. 22-3) and ask students to translate them again. Keep to a literal translation of the participle until paragraph 3 has been completed; then remind students of the range of other translations they previously worked out with your help.

Consolidation

- 1 Perfect active participle. Pick out examples of the perfect active participle in the two scenes they have so far read (three examples in Vilbia, two in Modestus), and ask students to identify the noun each one describes and to translate the relevant phrase or sentence.
- 2 Perfect participles, active and passive. In a later lesson, or after the next scene, go back to paragraph 1, which reminds students of the perfect passive participle. The primary aim for students at this stage is to recognise the participles and translate them correctly. Discussion of the meaning of 'active' and 'passive' is postponed until Stage 29 when the passive tenses of the verb are introduced.

Show students how the overall sense of the sentence helps them to translate the participles correctly, e.g. *ā Rōmānīs* and *ā patre* guide them to a correct translation of the two examples given in paragraph 1. They often find it helpful to compile a list of the perfect active participles they have met so far.

It is worth explaining to students that they will find participles more commonly in Latin than in everyday English. The coming stories will give them more experience of participles and they will quickly become adept at recognising and translating them correctly.

If you think they need more practice, they could translate the following examples, which form a continuous story.

Modestus, deam Sūlem precātus, ad tabernam festināvit. Modestus, cum Strythiōne tabernam ingressus, Vilbiam vīdit. Vilbia, Modestum cōspicāta, suspīrium magnum ēmisit. 'vīnum, puella!' inquit Modestus.

Modestus, haec verba locūtus, cōnsēdit. Vilbia, ā Modestō dēlectāta, vīnum effūdit.

Strythiō vīnum, ā Vilbiā effūsum, Modestō dedit.

vīnum adeptus, Modestus colloquium cum Vilbiā habuit dōnumque dedit. Vilbia, in culinam regressa, Modestum laudāvit.

Vilbia dōnum, ā Modestō datum, Rubriae ostendit.

****amor omnia vincit: scaena prīma (p. 27)**

Story. In Latro's bar, Gutta teases Bulbus for losing money as well as his girl. Bulbus says the money does not matter, but Vilbia does. He has put a curse on Modestus and is joyfully awaiting his death. Seeing Modestus arrive in time to hear this, Gutta slips away.

First reading. This scene should go with a swing. Read it through in one sitting, emphasising the escalation of Bulbus' bad luck (*infēlix*, line 3, *infēlicior*, line 17 and *infēlicissimus*, line 26). Use discussion to clarify points and enhance appreciation before asking students to translate the scene in pairs.

Discussion

Mood. Do you find this scene sad or funny? Give reasons for your opinion.

Magic and curses. Ask students to read pp. 34-5, and examine the large photograph of the Vilbia curse on the opening page (p. 21). Notes are in Cultural Background of this Stage.

Bulbus' character. Invite students to compare him with Modestus. He is direct in speech (line 5), shrewd about girls, and about soldiers (lines 10-14), genuine in his feelings (line 19), and quick to act (lines 21-5).

Consolidation

- 1 Ask students to find the four perfect participles in this story, to identify the nouns they describe, and translate the sentences which contain them. Students may need help with *scrīpta* (line 23), since it is not preceded by a related verb or agent.
- 2 Use shortened sentences containing the 1st and 2nd person verbs to consolidate endings and tenses: *infēlix es* (line 3), *puellam amīsisti* (lines 3-4), *Vilbiam monuī* (lines 11-12), *tabulam in fontem iniēcī* (line 22), *mortem Modestī exspectō* (lines 24-5).

Illustration. The line drawings show Roman dice, identical to modern ones. Double six was the highest throw (Venus), double one the lowest (the dog). Is something suspicious going on here? At Vindolanda a loaded dice was found which produces a six eight times out of ten.

****amor omnia vincit: scaena secunda (p. 28)**

Story. Modestus orders Strythio to beat up Bulbus, who defends himself competently until Modestus knocks him out from behind. Vilbia begs Modestus to be merciful and they make a date for later that night. Bulbus overhears and plans revenge.

First reading. As you read this aloud in Latin, use exaggerated expression and pause at key points to help the class enjoy the ironic twists, and the plunges from high-flown language into bathos, e.g.:

in magnō periculō es. Strythiō! tē iubeō hanc pestem verberāre
(lines 3-5). tū es leō, iste ridiculus mūs (lines 12-13).

victōribus decōrum est victis parcere (line 15).

cūr mē ēlēgisti? . . . necesse est nobīs in locō secrētō noctū convenire (lines 17-19). pater mē sōlam exire nōn vult. ubi est hic locus? (lines 20-1).

ō suspīrium meum! mihi necesse est ad culinam redire (lines 27-8).

It is worth reading the scene aloud in Latin more than once, while students have the text open. They could be invited to share what they have understood at each reading. Keep things moving. As with any farce, speed and timing are crucial.

Discussion

Is Modestus a **vir summae virtūtis**, as described by Gutta (p. 27, lines 7-8)?

Does Vilbia really love Modestus?

victōribus decōrum est victis parcere (line 15) is a common Roman sentiment. What does it mean?

What do you think is going to happen next?

Consolidation

- 1 Ask the class to look back and list four insults used in this scene. This will help them to appreciate the strength of *istum* (line 16).
- 2 Check and consolidate again students' knowledge of verb endings, using an oral substitution exercise (see p. 13 of this Guide). *possum* and *volō* are well represented in this story.

Illustration. Left to right: Two bone dice from Spain (Tarragona Museum); silver dice in shape of little man (British Museum). Other dice of irregular shape (not shown here) include polyhedral dice, and knucklebones.

****amor omnia vincit: scaena tertia (p. 29)**

Story. At the sacred spring in the dark, Bulbus bribes Gutta to distract Modestus by pretending to be Vilbia. Bulbus then surprises Modestus and throws him in the water. Modestus begs for his life and volunteers to give up Vilbia just as she arrives.

First reading. Take each section of the scene separately, working quickly through the first (lines 1-13) with the class to establish the situation. Divide the class into groups and ask them to prepare the next section (lines 14-24). Ask one group to translate, with individuals taking the different parts, and then ask the rest of the class to comment on the translation. Use the same method for the remaining sections, giving each group a turn. Keep up the pace by restricting the time for each section or by introducing a competitive element: 'Which group can produce the first correct translation?'

Discussion questions

What makes the play funny? Answers may include: farcical situations, fast-moving plot, cheeky dialogue, comic characters.

Do Bulbus and Modestus really love Vilbia? How do you know?

What do the students think about the attitude shown towards Vilbia? The two men seem to give little thought to her preferences and choices.

Why does Modestus believe it is easy for Bulbus to kill him as he threatens (line 29)?

At the beginning of this Stage (p. 24, line 16), Rubria asks 'quālis est hic mīles? estne homō mendāx et ignāvus?' What is your view?

Where does Bulbus get his line: victōribus ... parcere (line 36)? What effect does it have on the audience?

Consolidation. Ask all students to make a written translation of lines 1-13. As you go over it, practise some of the language features, e.g.:

Imperatives, starting with *tacē*, *indue*, *stā* (lines 11-12) and prohibitions, *nōlī mē interficere* (line 30), *nōlī lacrimāre* (line 39).

Relative clauses based on *pallium quod sēcum tulit* (line 2) and *Modestum quem brevī exspectō* (line 6).

All examples of the dative case.

Illustration. The sacred spring seen from above the windows shown in the model sentences.

About the language 2: more about the genitive (p. 31)

New language feature. Partitive and descriptive genitives. Note that these technical terms are not used in the explanations given to students.

Discussion. Work through the paragraphs as set out. It may be advisable to take paragraphs 1-3 in one lesson, revisit them in a later lesson, and then move on to paragraphs 4-5.

Consolidation. The examples in paragraphs 3 and 5 are useful for students to memorise. Use them for oral practice at the beginning or end of several lessons throughout the next few Stages.

Ask students to find further examples of descriptive phrases in the play just read, and say whether they believe them. This is a way of ensuring that they understand, as well as translate, what they read, e.g.:

vir maximae virtūtis (Modestus, p. 24, line 18).

virum summae virtūtis (Modestus, p. 25, lines 4-5).

vir magnae dīligentiae sed minimae prūdentiae (Latro, p. 24, line 3).

In a later lesson, work could be done on examples from Stage 21. It is advisable to consolidate the two types of genitive separately.

Page 6: *nimum vīnī* (line 8), *plūs vīnī* (line 11), *rem huius modī* (line 15), *vir mag-nae dignitātis* (line 17).

Page 8: *aliquid novī* (line 6), *vir summae auctōritātis* (lines 21-2).

Page 10-11: *vir summae prūdentiae* (line 3), *vir octōgintā annōrum* (line 12), *vir summae calliditātis* (line 22).

Students who have met the partitive in French, e.g. *trop de vin*, *assez d'argent*, should make comparisons with Latin.

Word patterns: more adjectives and adverbs (p. 32)

New language feature. Formation of adverbs from 3rd declension adjectives.

Discussion. Read paragraph 1, which consolidates the adverbs formed from 1st and 2nd declension adjectives (see p. 12), and, after reading paragraph 2, do the exercises in paragraphs 3 and 4. Paragraph 5 could be completed as a revision exercise in a later lesson.

Consolidation. For extra practice, write up short sentences about familiar characters and situations. Ask students to translate them and identify the adjectives and adverbs.

morbus Cogidubnum graviter afflixit.

Memor rem difficilem suscipere nōlēbat.

Bulbus infēlicissimus erat.

amīci thermās tacitē intrāvērunt.

Practising the language (p. 33)

Exercise 1. Complete the sentences with a noun in the genitive or dative case.

Exercise 2. Complete the sentences with an adjective in the nominative or accusative, singular or plural. If students are asked to state the number and case of the noun and adjective pair, as they have recently been doing with participles, this reinforces their understanding of agreement in the context of both adjective and participle.

Language information: revision

- 1 Genitive and dative cases of 1st, 2nd and 3rd declension nouns perhaps in conjunction with Exercise 2 above. Get students to turn to the tables on pp. 146-7 and translate the word in italics in such sentences as the following:

The soldier gave jewels *to the girl*.

The *citizens'* anger was intense.

Students could also be asked to change singular to plural and vice versa. Familiar nouns not in the tables could be included in later examples, e.g. dominus, senātor, nāvis.

- 2 Imperatives (p. 157) and nōli, nōlite with the infinitive, possibly in conjunction with amor omnia vincit III, (see p. 25 of this Guide).
- 3 Comparatives and superlatives, pp. 150-1. Refer to p. 27 where the three degrees of infēlix occur (lines 3, 17 and 26). Blackboard illustration works well here, e.g. bonus, melior, optimus can be illustrated by three faces topped by progressively bigger haloes.

Cultural background material (pp. 34-5)

Content. Examples of curse tablets, and how and why they were used. This section and the Vilbia curse (opening page) are best read and discussed in connection with the play, *amor vincit omnia* (pp. 27-30).

Discussion

- 1 *Relations with the gods.* Curse tablets provide evidence of the way Romans tried to enlist the help of the gods and maintain a good relationship with them. In Stage 21 we saw how gifts were thrown into the sacred spring as thank-offerings for cures, or as a way of persuading the goddess to favour the donor.

Why were these practices widespread? Did people feel they needed support against natural forces which they could not understand, or against human powers which they could not influence?

- 2 *Modern comparisons.* Nowadays people often feel great injustice when they suffer burglary, a disabling accident, or a betrayal. What methods do they use to alleviate their own feelings, or to punish the people who have caused the wrong?
- 3 *Curse tablets.* Curses were more than a convention. Many Romans and Celts believed they worked. Several collections have been found in Britain. There were about 40 curse tablets in the spring at Bath. They include the common curse against an unknown enemy 'be he man or woman, boy or girl, slave or free'.

One collection was found in a temple of Mercury some miles north of Bath, perhaps associated with a market. It is possible that these curses were drawn up by the temple clerk at the request of local people, mostly farmers, who may have been seeking support in a legal case against a neighbour. It was probably important for the victim of the curse to know about it. The psychological impact would be profound among people who believed that curses worked.

Illustrations

p. 34

The Vilbia curse (enlarged on p. 21) is the basis for the stories in this Stage. A recent theory suggests that the name does not refer to a girl, but to a brooch (**fibula**). The name Vilbia is not found elsewhere, and if it were a girl, the suspects listed in the curse might all be expected to be males. An alternative interpretation is that a slave had been stolen.

In the following text round brackets indicate letters that were omitted from the original inscription, and square brackets letters that have been lost.

[I]VQ IHIM MAIBLIV TIVALO
[V]NI CIS TAVQIL (OD)[O]MOC
AVQA [A]LLE [ATV]M IVQ
MAE TIVA

[RO]V IS ANNIVLEV
SVREPV SXE
SVNAIREV SVNIREV

ES SILATSVG(V)A
SVNAITI MOC
SVNAINIM SVTAC
[A]LLINAMREG ANIVOI

The backward writing is a common feature of defixio tablets. When the order of the letters is reversed, this inscription reads:

QVI MIHI VILBIAM INVOLAVIT	<i>May he who has stolen Vilbia from me</i>
SIC LIQVAT COMO(DO) ¹ AQVA	<i>dissolve like water.</i>
ELLA ² MVTA QVI EAM VORAVIT	<i>May she be dumb, who devoured her,</i>
SI VELVINNA EXSVPEREVS	<i>whether it be Velvinna or Exsupereus</i>
VERIANVS SEVERINVS	<i>or Verianus or Severinus</i>
A(V)GVSTALIS COMITIANVS	<i>or Augustalis or Comitianus</i>
CATVS MINIANVS	<i>or Catus Minianus</i>
GERMANILLA IOVINA	<i>or Germanilla or Jovina.</i>

¹ **comodo** = quōmodō ² **ella** = illa

p. 35

Charon in the boat. From a tomb at Hadrumetum, North Africa, 3rd Century AD. The text on the reverse of this plaque reads: 'I charge you, demon, whoever you are, and demand of you, from this day, from this hour, from this minute, that you torture the horses of the Greens and the whites, and that you kill and crash their drivers, Clarus and Felix and Primulus and Romanus, and leave them without life. I charge you by the god of the sea, who set you free at the right time, and by the god of the air...'

p. 36

Lead curse, 5.75cm. Many curses were found rolled and then folded in this way, though not the Vilbia curse.

Suggested Activities

- 1 Act Latin and English plays prepared by the students in groups. A medium which enables the students to review and improve their own work is a good idea, and students who prefer to record a re-enactment on audio or video tape should be encouraged to do so.
- 2 Write the first two lines of the Vilbia curse on the board and help the students to transcribe and interpret them.
- 3 Modern comparisons. Make a collection of superstitious rhymes or practices which are still common today among younger children, often passed down from one generation to the next, e.g. not walking on the cracks in the pavement. Discuss how these may have originated, and why they are so persistent. Do people really believe them?