

Sixth Grade – Language Arts  
Activity: Latin Language Practice

## The History of the Latin Language

Latin was brought to Italy about 1000 BC by Indo-European immigrants from Northern Europe. It began, as all languages do, as an isolated local tongue of a small territory on the Tiber River called \_\_\_\_\_. As the people in Latium developed into an organized community, the city of Rome was eventually founded in, according to legend, \_\_\_\_\_ BC.

Latin would quickly \_\_\_\_\_ over a larger part of Italy, in direct correlation to Roman conquests. With the foundation of the Roman Empire, a large portion of the western world would come to speak various forms of Latin or have it intermingled with their own tongues. While classical Latin developed in the city of Rome and its environs, a spoken **vernacular** form of Latin was carried by the Legions throughout the Roman provinces. With this development, the use of Latin in these regions would **supercede** the pre-Roman dialects of Italy, Gaul and Spain. However, some expressions of the original languages remained intact and, once mixed with the spoken Latin, gave birth to new languages known as the Romance languages. Only the deeply rooted Greek language would resist Latin **interjection** and continue to be spoken in its original \_\_\_\_\_.

Latin also survived the fall of the Roman Empire. As the centuries passed it continued to be an international language of the \_\_\_\_\_ and social elite, accompanying the modified tongues of the common people. The sole language of the Catholic Church was Latin, and all scholarly, historical, or scientific work was written in it. The replacement of the Romans itself as an international authority, with that of the church, was a key factor in keeping the language alive and in practice. When the Middle Ages ended, and the west experienced a cultural Renaissance, interest in classical Latin as a means of artistic and literary expression grew. During and after this period of re-birth, forms of Latin were even transplanted to the Western Hemisphere. Today, the people of Mexico, Central America, and South America are called \_\_\_\_\_ or Latinos.

The Latin language is the **bedrock** of the language of Western Civilization. The Romance Languages of Spain, France, Italy, Portugal, and Romania developed from a hybrid version of spoken Latin and native tongues. Each would also be influenced in turn by other tongues, such as Slavic, Norse and many Germanic \_\_\_\_\_. Without Latin, very few of the tongues we speak today would be possible or recognizable in their current forms.



Latin today may be a **dormant** language but it remains an important piece of our linguistic puzzle. The use of Latin for names of places, anatomy, biology and others still dominates several scientific and medical fields. People all over the world are studying Latin with enthusiasm and energy. It, of course, is still alive and well within the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church. It is gaining new popularity among modern Italians and Romans; and conventions of Latin speaking people are becoming a regular occurrence in Europe. Latin is anything but a \_\_\_\_\_ language.

### Living Latin

Although both Latin has largely been replaced by the Romance languages, there are still people who speak Latin. In the Roman Catholic Church, ecclesiastical Latin never entirely died out and has seen an increase in recent years. Some organizations deliberately use Latin so people can live or work in a living Latin environment. There has been a radio news broadcast from Finland that is delivered all in Latin. There are also children's books that have been translated into Latin. There are also people who turn to Latin for new names for new objects, but this only requires an understanding of individual words and is not a "living" use of the Latin language.

1. **via** - by way of
2. **in memoriam** - in memory (of)
3. **interim** - meanwhile, interval
4. **item** - likewise, also, although it is now used in English as a bit of information
5. **memorandum** - reminder
6. **agenda** - things to be done
7. **&** - et used for 'and'
8. **etc.** - et cetera used for 'and so forth'
9. **pro and con** - for and against
10. **a.m.** - *ante meridiem*, before noon
11. **p.m.** - *post meridiem*, after noon
12. **ultra** - beyond
13. **P.S.** - *post scriptum*, postscript
14. **quasi** - as if it were
15. **census** - count of citizens
16. **veto** - 'I forbid' used as a way of stopping the passage of a law.
17. **per** - through, by
18. **sponsor** - one who accepts responsibility for another

See if you can figure out which of these Latin words may be substituted for the italicized word in the following sentences:

1. I read the bit of news about the Jesus tomb with more than a touch of *skepticism*.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. He emailed a *reminder* about the Discovery Channel program on Sunday.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. A regent will serve as *substitute* ruler in the meanwhile.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. He came to the *study* of Ancient Greek by way of Latin.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Epitaphs can be written in *memory* of loved ones.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. A tribune had the power of *preventing* the law from being passed.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. He sent a second email as a *follow-up* to the TV alert saying the time he listed was meant to be in the evening.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Vocabulary (see bolded words from the passage)**

Vocabulary Word #1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary Word #2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary Word #3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary Word #4: \_\_\_\_\_

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Vocabulary Word #5: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Independent Practice – Your OWN Dictionary

Do you have any special codes that you use with your friends? These "code words" would be words that you and your friends use so that only you know what or where you are talking about. These codes might be for things like food or money, or might be for places like a friend's house or a certain meeting place in town. You probably use these codes because you don't want anyone else to know exactly what you are talking about or just because it is quicker to say, "Let's meet in the pit," instead of saying, "Let's meet at Brian's house and hang out in his basement." There are also codes that your whole school uses, even if you don't recognize them as codes. For example: How do people in your generation (the age group that you are in) say that something is good? How about something that is bad? When I was in your grade things were either "cool" or they "sucked."

You may not realize it, but most of the "code words" like these that you use are used all over the country by people your age. People hear them in music, movies, websites, and just by word-of-mouth. These words are called "slang" terms.

Your assignment: What kind of slang words do you think kids in the year 2020 will create? I want you to create a brief dictionary of slang terms that you think the next generation might use. For the first five I want you to create slang terms for words that are commonly used and translated into slang. These five words are: **Money, Food, Car, Girls, and Boys.**

Then I want you to create five more slang terms for words that you choose. **Remember to be appropriate for school!** You can look at the dictionaries that we used for the previous assignment for inspiration or you can search the web for other slang dictionaries. Be creative! Think of the kind of things they might have or do in the future. Will they have flying cars? How might that affect the kind of kind of slang term that generation will come up with?

Write your ten slang terms of the future on your paper and turn it in to me. These don't have to be in alphabetical order, but please make sure to write down the common word with the slang word next to it. **Don't forget** to include the definition, and add an explanation for why you think they will use that specific slang term. You have fifteen minutes. Good luck!

Word #1:

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Word #2:

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Word #3:

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Word #4:

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Word #5:

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Word #6:

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Word #7:

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Word #8:

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Word #9:

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Word #10:

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