

# ACL/NJCL NATIONAL LATIN EXAM



## SYLLABUS

The goal of the National Latin Exam is to provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge of Latin and the Roman world on a test consisting of 40 multiple-choice questions. The exam focuses on the student's ability to read and comprehend Latin as outlined in the American Classical League's *Standards for Classical Languages*.

The first section of the exam tests a student's knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in the comprehension of Latin. The next section of the exam assesses a student's knowledge of the Roman world as outlined in the syllabus. The questions on the final section are based on information contained in a passage in Latin. The Latin V-VI exam is based entirely on passages in Latin.

The NLE Syllabus describes in general terms the level of reading comprehension and content included on each level of the exam.

Please note the following:

- Since the exam is given during the second week in March, the syllabus is not designed to serve as a curriculum for a full year's work.
- Any level may contain questions based on the content of lower levels.
- In general, the exam is designed to emphasize comprehension of Latin rather than the production of forms.
- Except on the Level V-VI exam, students are not required to identify grammatical constructions.

The National Latin Exam Syllabus is meant to be a descriptive guide and not a finite list of items to be tested.

# INTRODUCTION TO LATIN EXAM

## I. WHO SHOULD TAKE THIS EXAM?

Students who are enrolled in an Introduction to Latin class or who are in the **first** year of a two-year Latin I class should take the Introduction to Latin Exam.

## II. READING LEVEL

Students read words, phrases, simple sentences and dialogues occasionally associated with pictures. The reading comprehension passage incorporates high frequency vocabulary with use of repetition to assist comprehension. Texts are composed to narrate a short story with a title, an introduction, series of events, and conclusion.

## III. LANGUAGE

NOUNS: Declensions I and II

N.B. For reading comprehension purposes, a limited number of common third declension nouns may occur, e.g., *dux, canis, frater, mater, mons, navis, pater, rex, sol, soror, urbs*

Nominative: subject and predicate nominative  
Genitive: possession  
Dative: indirect object  
Accusative: direct object  
object of prepositions *ad, ante, circum, in, inter, per, post, prope, trans*  
Ablative: object of prepositions *ab, cum, de, ex, in, sine, sub*

PRONOUNS:

personal: *ego, tu, nos, vos* (nominative, dative, and accusative only)  
interrogative: *quis* (nominative only), *quid* (nominative and accusative only)

ADJECTIVES: Declensions I and II

noun/adjective agreement  
interrogative *quot*  
numbers: cardinal numbers *unus-decem*, Roman numerals I-X

ADVERBS: *bene, male, hodie, non, semper*

interrogative *cur, ubi*  
positive forms from first and second declension adjectives

CONJUNCTIONS: *aut, et, quod, sed, ubi*

ENCLITIC: *-ne*

VERBS: Conjugations I and II

N.B. For reading comprehension purposes, a limited number of common third and fourth conjugation verbs may occur, e.g., *audio, cupio, curro, dico, mitto, scribo, venio*

two tenses of the indicative mood, active voice:  
present and imperfect  
present active imperative  
irregular verb *sum*: present and imperfect tenses  
present active infinitive

## IV. CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

GEOGRAPHY: the Roman world, e.g., *Roma, Italia, Gallia, Graecia, Britannia, Hispania, Mare Nostrum*, Tiber River

MYTHOLOGY: Olympian deities (Greek and Roman names) and associated attributes; founding of Rome, e.g., Romulus and Remus

ROMAN LIFE: city of Rome, e.g., *Forum, Circus Maximus, Colosseum*; basic housing, e.g., *villa, cubiculum, atrium*; clothing, e.g., *toga, tunica, stola*; Roman household, e.g., *pater, mater, servus, filius*

## V. LATIN IN USE

THEMATIC VOCABULARY: animals, e.g., *equus, canis, porcus, feles*

ORAL LATIN: e.g., *Salve, Quid agis? Quid est nomen tibi? Quis est? Quid est? Salve! Salvete! Vale! Valet! Ita vero; Minime*

DERIVATIVES: English words based on Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes, e.g., agriculture, aquarium, portable, lunar, octet

EXPRESSIONS, MOTTOES, ABBREVIATIONS: e.g.; *e pluribus unum; tempus fugit; N.B.; carpe diem; a.m.; etc.*

# LATIN I EXAM

## I. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LATIN I EXAM?

Students who are enrolled in a Latin I class or in the **second** year of a two-year Latin I program should take the Latin I exam.

## II. READING LEVEL

Students read words, phrases, and simple sentences designed to assess their ability to comprehend the Latin. The reading comprehension passage is composed of mostly familiar vocabulary with glosses provided where appropriate.

## III. LANGUAGE (in addition to items on previous level)

NOUNS: Declensions I-III

- Nominative: subject  
predicate nominative
- Genitive: possession
- Dative: indirect object
- Accusative: direct object  
object of the prepositions *ad, ante, circum, contra, in, inter, per, post, prope, trans*
- Ablative: object of the prepositions *ab, cum, de, ex, in, pro, sine, sub*;  
means/instrument  
manner
- Vocative: direct address

PRONOUNS:

- personal *ego, tu, nos, vos* (nominative, dative, accusative, ablative)
- relative *qui, quae, quod* (nominative for reading purposes only)
- interrogative *quis* (nominative only), *quid* (nominative and accusative only)

ADJECTIVES: Declensions I and II

- noun/adjective agreement
- possessive
- interrogative *quot*
- numbers: cardinal numbers *unus-decem, centum, mille*; Roman numerals I-M

ADVERBS:

- e.g., *cras, heri, ibi, mox, numquam, saepe, statim, subito, tum, ubi*
- positive forms from first and second declension adjectives
- interrogative *cur, ubi, quomodo*
- quam* with adjectives and adverbs

CONJUNCTIONS: *aut, et, neque, quod, sed, ubi, et...et, neque...neque*

ENCLITICS: *-ne, -que*

VERBS: Conjugations I-IV

- four tenses of the indicative mood, active voice:  
present, imperfect, future (I & II only), perfect
- present active imperative singular and plural;  
negative imperative with *noli, nolite*
- irregular verbs *sum* and *possum*: present,  
imperfect, future, perfect
- present active infinitive

IDIOMS: e.g., *gratias agere, memoria tenere, prima luce*

## IV. CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION (in addition to items on previous level)

GEOGRAPHY: important Italian locations, e.g., Ostia, Pompeii, Mt. Vesuvius, Brundisium, Apennine Mts.; provinces and major cities, e.g., Africa, Athens, Gaul, Carthage, Asia Minor, Troy

HISTORY: basic historical divisions (Monarchy, Republic, Empire) and associated terms (king, consul, emperor); kings of Rome and early Roman heroes, e.g., Romulus, Tarquinius Superbus, Horatius, Cincinnatus

MYTHOLOGY: Olympian deities and associated myths, e.g., Daphne and Apollo, Arachne and Minerva, Midas

ROMAN LIFE: city of Rome, e.g., Forum, Palatine Hill, Via Appia, Pantheon, Campus Martius; architectural structures and their functions, e.g., *aquaeductus, thermae, circus, amphitheatrum, curia, basilica*; housing, e.g., *triclinium, insulae*; meals, e.g., *cena, culina*; clothing, e.g., *toga, tunica, stola*

## V. LATIN IN USE (in addition to items on previous level)

THEMATIC VOCABULARY: parts of the body, e.g., *caput, oculus, manus, pes*

ORAL LATIN: e.g., *Quid est nomen tibi? Salve! Salvete! Gratias tibi ago; Sol lucet; Adsum*

DERIVATIVES: English words based on Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes, e.g., sedentary, sorority, puerile, quadruped

EXPRESSIONS, MOTTOES, ABBREVIATIONS:  
e.g., *veni, vidi, vici; summa cum laude; per annum; i.e.; A.D.; e.g.; etc.; S.P.Q.R.*

# LATIN II EXAM

## I. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LATIN II EXAM?

Students enrolled in a Latin II class should take the Latin II exam.

## II. READING LEVEL

Students read and understand Latin sentences and passages heavily adapted and simplified from the original authors or composed specifically for the exam. They interpret the meaning of the passage based on their knowledge of the Latin language and Roman culture.

## III. LANGUAGE (in addition to items on previous levels)

NOUNS: Declensions I-V

- Nominative: subject, predicate nominative
- Genitive: possession
- Dative: indirect object, with compound verbs, with impersonal verbs
- Accusative: direct object, extent of time and space, object of the prepositions *ob*, *propter*
- Ablative: time, agent, comparison, *-cum* with pronouns
- Vocative: direct address
- Apposition with all cases
- Comparison with *quam*

PRONOUNS:

relative, interrogative, personal, reflexive, and demonstratives *hic, ille, is*

ADJECTIVES: Declensions I-III

- noun/adjective agreement
- substantive
- reflexive
- positive, comparative, and superlative degrees of regular adjectives and *magnus, parvus, bonus, malus, multus, multi*
- interrogative adjectives *qui, quae, quod*
- numbers
  - cardinals *unus-viginti*
  - ordinals *primus-decimus*
  - Roman numerals

ADVERBS:

positive, comparative, and superlative degrees of all regular adverbs and *bene* and *male*  
interrogatives *quando, cur, ubi, quomodo*

CONJUNCTIONS:

e.g., *atque, postquam, quamquam, aut...aut, neque...neque (nec...nec)*

ENCLITICS: *-ne, -que*

INTERROGATIVE PARTICLES: *num, nonne*

VERBS: Conjugations I-IV

- six tenses of indicative mood, active and passive voice
- irregular imperatives, e.g., *dic, duc, fac, fer* and their compounds
- infinitives
  - present, active and passive
- participles (all except gerundives)
- irregular verbs *sum, possum, volo, eo, fero*
- impersonal verbs *licet, placet, videtur*

IDIOMS: e.g., *in animo habere, iter facere, brevi tempore*

## IV. CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION (in addition to items on previous levels)

GEOGRAPHY: the Roman world; important bodies of water, e.g., Adriatic Sea, Aegean Sea, Black Sea; rivers, e.g., Rhine, Po, Nile, Rubicon; important islands and provinces, e.g., *Germania, Aegyptus, Sicilia, Creta*

HISTORY: prominent historical characters from Roman history, e.g., *Augustus, Hannibal, Julius Caesar, Cleopatra, Marc Antony, Spartacus*; major events of Roman history, e.g., Punic Wars, Caesar's conquest of Gaul

MYTHOLOGY: heroes and monsters, e.g., Jason and Medea, Odysseus, Perseus, Theseus, Daedalus, Minotaur, Chimera; Underworld, e.g., Cerberus, Charon, Proserpina, Styx, Pluto

ROMAN LIFE: education; recreation and entertainment, e.g., baths, chariot racing, gladiatorial combats

## V. LATIN IN USE (in addition to items on previous levels)

THEMATIC VOCABULARY: colors, e.g., *ruber, caeruleus, albus*; classroom expressions, e.g., *scribe in tabula, aperite libros*

ORAL LATIN: e.g., *Quid novi? Surge!; Bene respondisti; Mihi placet*

DERIVATIVES: English words based on Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes, e.g., introspection, omniscient, incredulous, benevolent

EXPRESSIONS, MOTTOES, ABBREVIATIONS:

e.g., *caveat emptor; et al.; vs.; ad astra per aspera; status quo; ars longa, vita brevis*

# LATIN III EXAM

## I. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LATIN III EXAM?

Students who are enrolled in a Latin III class and who have not yet made the transition to reading and translating authentic Latin literature should take the Latin III exam.

## II. READING LEVEL

Students read and understand Latin sentences and a passage heavily adapted and simplified from the original authors or composed specifically for the exam. They interpret the meaning of the passage based on their knowledge of the Latin language and Roman culture.

## III. LANGUAGE (in addition to items on previous levels)

### NOUNS:

- Nominative: predicate nominative with passive verbs, e.g., *appello, fio*  
Genitive: partitive  
with *causa* or *gratia*  
description  
objective  
Dative: possession  
purpose and reference (double dative)  
agent  
with special adjectives, e.g., *amicus, carus, similis*  
with special verbs, e.g., *impero, pareo, placeo, praeficio, prosum*  
Accusative: place to which (without prepositions)  
subject of indirect statement  
object of prepositions, e.g., *apud, praeter, super*  
Ablative: place from which (without prepositions)  
ablative absolute  
description  
separation  
cause  
Locative: place where with the names of cities, small islands, *domus, rus, humus*

### PRONOUNS:

*ipse, idem*; indefinite, e.g., *aliquis, quidam, quisque*

### ADJECTIVES:

irregular, e.g., *alius, alter, solus*  
positive, comparative, and superlative degrees of irregular adjectives, e.g., *bonus, facilis, liber, idoneus*

### ADVERBS:

positive, comparative, and superlative degrees of irregular adverbs, e.g., *bene, diu, magnopere quam* with superlative adverb

### CONJUNCTIONS:

e.g., *si, nam, enim, igitur, autem, tamen, neque, ut*  
correlatives, e.g., *sive...sive, vel...vel, nec...nec*

ENCLITICS: *-ne, -que, -ve*

### VERBS:

deponents and semi-deponents  
irregular, e.g., *fio, malo, volo, nolo*  
impersonal, e.g., *oportet, decet*  
indirect statement with present and past tense main verbs  
infinitives  
perfect active and passive, future active  
subjunctive mood  
hortatory, jussive  
indirect command, purpose clause, result clause, indirect question  
cum clauses  
gerunds and gerundives, including expressions of purpose (*ad, causa, gratia*)  
active and passive periphrastic

IDIOMS: e.g., *vita excedere, in matrimonium ducere, consilium capere*

## IV. CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION (in addition to items on previous levels)

GEOGRAPHY: notable cities, regions, mountains, rivers, and bodies of water of Italy and the ancient world, e.g., Naples, Alexandria, Gaul, Pyrenees, Mt. Etna, Nile, Aegean Sea, Black Sea

HISTORY: prominent persons and events from the Roman Republic and early Empire (through the Julio-Claudian emperors), e.g., Pyrrhus, Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Livia, Augustus, Tiberius, Nero, Battle of Cannae, Battle of Actium

MYTHOLOGY: typical Roman and Italian deities, e.g., Janus, Vesta; origins and transformations, e.g., Daphne, Pygmalion, Baucis and Philemon, Niobe

ROMAN LIFE: calendar terms, Kalends, Nones, Ides, *pr. (pridie), a.d. (ante diem)*; religion, e.g., *pontifex maximus, augures*; ceremonies, e.g., weddings, funerals, triumph

## V. LATIN IN USE (in addition to items on previous levels)

ORAL LATIN: e.g., *plaudite omnes; me paenitet; ut bene scis; ignosce mihi*

DERIVATIVES: English words based on Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes, e.g., agenda, conspicuous, moratorium, salient

### EXPRESSIONS, MOTTOES, ABBREVIATIONS:

e.g., Pyrrhic victory, crossing the Rubicon, *non sequitur, ad hominem, Q.E.D*

# LATIN III-IV PROSE EXAM

## I. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LATIN III-IV PROSE EXAM?

Students who are enrolled in a Latin III or Latin IV class in which the subject matter is predominantly or entirely the literature from Latin prose authors should take the Latin III-IV Prose Exam.

## II. READING LEVEL

Students read and understand Latin sentences and an adapted Latin passage from Classical or later Latin author with appropriate glosses provided. They recognize some figures of speech and features of style found in the passage on the exam.

## III. LANGUAGE (in addition to items on previous levels)

### NOUNS:

Genitive:	with <i>causa</i> or <i>gratia</i> description objective partitive
Dative:	possession purpose and reference (double dative) agent with special adjectives, e.g., <i>amicus, carus, similis</i>
Accusative:	place to which (without prepositions) subject of indirect statement object of prepositions, e.g., <i>apud, praeter, super</i>
Ablative:	ablative absolute comparison degree of difference cause description separation place from which (without preposition) with special adjectives, e.g., <i>dignus</i> with special verbs, e.g., <i>utor, fruor, fungor, potior, vescor</i>
Locative:	place where with the names of cities, towns, small islands, <i>domus, rus, humus</i>

### PRONOUNS:

*ipse, idem, iste*  
indefinite pronouns, e.g., *aliquis* (*quis* after *si, nisi, num, ne*), *quidam, quisque*

### ADJECTIVES and ADVERBS:

regular and irregular forms from I/II declension  
adjectives: positive, comparative, and superlative degrees

### CONJUNCTIONS:

e.g., *si, nisi, antequam, nam, vero*  
correlatives, e.g., *sive...sive, vel...vel, non modo...sed etiam, tam...quam, utrum...an*

### VERBS:

deponents and semi-deponents  
irregular verbs *fiō, malo, volo, nolo*  
impersonal verbs, e.g., *oportet, decet*

### VERBS (continued):

impersonal passives, e.g., *pugnatum est, mihi creditum est*  
indirect statements  
subjunctive mood  
hortatory, jussive, optative, deliberative  
indirect command, purpose clause, result clause, fearing clause  
indirect question, cum clause, conditions  
relative clauses of characteristic and purpose  
gerunds and gerundives, including expressions of purpose (*ad, causa, gratia*)  
active and passive periphrastic  
alternate forms, e.g., *futurum esse = fore*

IDIOMS: e.g., *navem solvere, castra ponere, certiores facere, orationem habere*

RHETORICAL FIGURES: those common in prose, e.g., anaphora, tricolon, hyperbole, alliteration, litotes

## IV. CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION (in addition to items on previous levels)

AUTHORS: general information on the life and works of Caesar, Cicero; Golden Age prose authors, e.g., Livy; Silver Age prose authors, e.g., Pliny the Younger, Tacitus

GEOGRAPHY: notable cities, regions, mountains, rivers, and bodies of water of the ancient world, e.g., Alexandria, Alps, Libya, Pyrenees, Delphi; regions of Italy, e.g., *Etruria, Latium, Campania*

HISTORY: prominent persons and events from the late Roman Republic and early Empire, e.g., Caesar, Cicero, Brutus, Clodius, Octavian (Augustus), Battle of Pharsalus, Battle of Philippi, Pompey, Crassus, Catiline, Vesuvius, the Five Good Emperors, the Flavian emperors

MYTHOLOGY: mythological groups and figures, e.g., centaurs, Fates, Furies, Muses, nymphs, satyrs

ROMAN LIFE: calendar terms, e.g., Kalends, Nones, Ides, *pridie, a.d. (ante diem)*; government, magistrates, and social classes, e.g., *consul, dictator, praetor, tribunus, fasces, equites*; religion, e.g., *pontifex maximus, augures*; military terms, e.g., *legio, castra, legatus, impedimenta*; ceremonies, e.g., weddings, funerals

## V. LATIN IN USE (in addition to items on previous levels)

ORAL LATIN: e.g., *plaudite omnes, me paenitet, eamus*

DERIVATIVES: English words based on Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes, e.g., subsequent, loquacious, deciduous, contingent

EXPRESSIONS, MOTTOES, ABBREVIATIONS: e.g., *de facto; suum cuique; habeas corpus; q.v.; morituri te salutamus; O tempora! O mores!*

# LATIN III-IV POETRY EXAM

## I. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LATIN III-IV POETRY EXAM?

Students who are enrolled in a Latin III or Latin IV class in which the subject matter is predominantly or entirely the literature from Latin poets should take the Latin III-IV Poetry Exam.

## II. READING LEVEL

Students read and understand sentences featuring complex syntactical elements and passages of Latin poetry from the Classical and later Latin poets with appropriate assistance provided by glosses. They recognize some figures of speech and are able to scan poetry and identify its metrical features.

## III. LANGUAGE (in addition to items on previous levels)

### NOUNS:

diminutives  
Greek accusatives, e.g., *Aenean*  
supines

### CONJUNCTIONS:

e.g., *velut, quasi, ceu*

### VERBS:

poetic forms, e.g., *conticuēre = conticuerunt*,  
*futurum esse = fore*  
syncopated forms, e.g., *vocasset = vocavisset*  
defective, e.g., *memini, odi, coepi*

### IDIOMS:

e.g., *poenas dare, vela dare, opus est, cordi est*

### METRICS AND POETIC DEVICES:

poetic devices, e.g., onomatopoeia, metaphor,  
simile, chiasmus, synchysis  
scansion and terms associated with dactylic  
hexameter and elegiac couplet, e.g., dactyl,  
elision, spondee

## IV. CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION (in addition to items on previous levels)

**AUTHORS:** comedy, e.g., Plautus, Terence; epic, e.g., Vergil; lyric, e.g., Catullus, Horace, Ovid; satire, e.g., Horace, Juvenal, Martial; Greek poets influencing Roman poets, e.g., Homer, Sappho

**GEOGRAPHY:** poetic references, e.g., Phoenicia, Cyprus, Ithaca, Bithynia, Mycenae, Atlas Mts., Mt. Parnassus

**HISTORY:** prominent figures and events of the Augustan Age and Empire, e.g., Augustus, Maecenas, Vergil, Horace, Nero, Hadrian, Constantine

**MYTHOLOGY:** figures and events associated with the Trojan War; tales of lovers and transformations, e.g., Orpheus and Eurydice, Cupid and Psyche, Pyramus and Thisbe, Baucis and Philemon

**ROMAN LIFE:** values and perspectives, e.g., *pietas, gravitas*; philosophies, e.g., Epicureanism, Stoicism; role of prophets and prophecy, e.g., Delphic Oracle, Cumaean Sibyl

## V. LATIN IN USE (in addition to items on previous levels)

**ORAL LATIN:** e.g., *mirabile dictu, salvus sis, gaudeamus*

**DERIVATIVES:** English words based on Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes, e.g., ineluctable, cincture, ferrous, progeny, refulgent

### EXPRESSIONS, MOTTOES, ABBREVIATIONS:

those in common use, consisting of words and constructions appropriate for the level, e.g., *cogito ergo sum, res ipsa loquitur, in medias res, dux femina facti*

# LATIN V-VI EXAM

## WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LATIN V-VI EXAM?

Students who are enrolled in a Latin V class or higher should take the Latin V-VI Exam.

The Latin V-VI Exam consists of a selection of passages of Latin prose and poetry with multiple-choice questions on grammar and comprehension, literary devices, meter, historical background, and classical literature in general. Students read passages of authentic prose and poetry with appropriate assistance. Based on their knowledge of the Latin language and of the ancient world, they are asked to interpret the meaning of the passages and relate the content to the historic and social context of the time. They must recognize and understand features of style and meter in the passages on the exam. Derivatives are based on the vocabulary in the passages. Scansion questions pertain to dactylic hexameter and elegiac couplet. Selections are drawn from authors of diverse literary periods and genres, e.g., Cicero, Livy, Horace, Ovid, Pliny, and Latin writers from later periods. General questions pertaining to the Greek models for Latin literature, such as Homer, Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles, may also be included.

## **CONTACT THE NLE**

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