Latin 3a 2025 Word Study Compilation 2

As you read through each word study, evaluate each element on the following scale:

1=100% (truly excellent) I'm humbled and amazed

2=92% (pretty good—there was something great that got my attention)

3=84% (neither here nor there—got the job done but barely)

4= 76% (**not** a good job— there was something poorly done that got my attention in a big way)

5= (68%) evaluation element is extremely poor or missing entirely

Do NOT evaluate your own word study!
Skip the rating grid and leave the comment box completely blank for YOUR word study. Proceed with caution.

Evaluations must be completed no later than 7 pm ET on

December 2

Go here to submit your evaluations:
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DO NOT give overly inflated evaluations on this assignment or earn a blue comment. I, your trusty Latin teacher, will also be providing feedback as well. Feedback from all of us SHOULD **accurately** reflect the work and thought put into each study. Remember that the peer review process is not only an important one for helping your classmates and for your own learning but is also part of your grade.

These are the things you'll be ranking:

- **Provided good examples so that I better understand how the word is used**
- **Provided good, useful, and accurate translations and citations so that I can go and find it**
- **Defined the word clearly based on examples (adapted well to the data presented)**
- **Analysis of the word was helpful -- made good observations and drew relevant and appropriate conclusions**
- **Final overall impression of this word study – a "gut feeling" response to this work**

On the survey form there is a "**Free Response**" section for each essay. Provide a couple specific sentences of written feedback to help each writer improve his or her word study next time. Such comments should be primarily polite and useful critiques, not fluff like "this is really great." Since this is a professional endeavor, refrain from using emojis. Also, don't be a one-trick pony, only using one type of feedback (grammar, citations, etymology, etc.) for every study. Give each study the individual attention and feedback it deserves.

For the most part, you did well with the formatting. Please remember to be diligent about removing added spaces, using the correct font, and not adding in any extraneous fancy italicizing (outside of the Latin), underlining, or bold fonts. The point of uniformity is that I want peer reviews to be based solely on content and, believe it or not, sometimes snazzy things can sway them. This is why the rules are as such. Plus, we don't want the compilation to be thirty pages long. It is fine to add personal touches when creating a solo work, but for this project you are part of a larger whole. If there was something off with the formatting of your study when I received it, I have written you a reminder message at the top of your study so you can do better next time.

Word Study 1

Vanquishing Doubt about *Compesco*

Compesco is a verb that, like the common example *habeo*, can be translated into a large number of English words that approximate its meaning. Despite the number of English translations, which include *to check*, *quench*, *curb*, *confine*, or *block*, these translations revolve around the single idea of restraint, exerting power over something. However, the precise type of restraint being conveyed varies over time as the word develops.

One early example of *compesco* being used is in Plautus's play *Bacchides*. Plautus lived during the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE, and is the earliest user of *compesco* we will discuss in this study. In act 3 of his play, Plautus writes, *Cave malo et compesce in illum dicere iniuste*, Beware [of] evil and restrain [yourself] to speak unjustly against that one (Plautus, *Bacchides* 3.3.59). Here, *compesco* is a non-violent restraining of oneself, similar to the English word *moderation*. This is the gentlest and most original form of *compesco*, being limited to self-restraint.

In one of his odes, Horace, writing in the late 1st century BC, uses *compesco* in the sense of restricting or restraining another. He writes, *Plutona... qui ter amplum Geryonen Tityonque tristi conpescit unda*, Pluto, who thrice checked glorious Geryon and Tityos with a disagreeable wave (Horace, *Carmina* 2.14.7-9). In this case, Pluto, who is supreme over mythological figures Geryon and Tityos, checks, or overpowers, them. Pluto's role in this passage is already understood to be dominant and powerful. Whereas the similar verb *supero* means *to surmount* or *rise over*, implying a struggle and rising of the victor over the defeated, *compesco* is to entirely overpower or shut down another. *Supero* implies that great skill and effort were put into overcoming an adversary, but *compesco*, in this passage, means an adversary has no ability to defend against being vanquished by the powerful victor (that is, Pluto). Horace likely chose *compesco* over other words because Pluto, by the nature of his greatness, has checked, cut off, and overpowered his adversaries in an effortless, powerful manner. Note also that Horace spells the word with *con-* instead of the more common *com-*; however, the two spellings are variations of the same word.

Contemporary with Horace around the turn of the 1st century BCE/CE, Ovid uses *compesco* in a similar way in his *Metamorphoses*. He writes, *Intonat et dextra libratum fulmen ab aure / misit in aurigam pariterque animaque rotisque / expulit et saevis compescuit ignibus ignes*, He [Jupiter] thunders, and sent lightning hurled from his right ear upon the charioteer and likewise thrust away [his] life and wheels, and quenched fires with furious fires (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 2.311-313). This use of *compescuit* can be interpreted similarly to Horace's use in Ode 2.14 above, with the small fires being overcome by the great lightning of Jupiter. But the meaning in this passage can also be expanded slightly, as a quenching or extinguishing. That is, the first fire described in the passage is blown out, or extinguished, by Jupiter's great flame.

Later, in the late 4th century or early 5th century CE, a text attributed under the name Maurus Servius Honoratus, entitled *In Vergilii Aeneidem* Commentarii, uses *compesco* in a military context. It states, *Hic postea cum Hannibalis impetum ferre non posset, mora eum elusit—nam oportuna loca praeoccupans a vastatione Italiae compescuit*, This one, then, since he was not able to bear the attack of Hannibal, escaped him for a time—for he, anticipating, blocked favorable regions from the destruction of Italy (Servius, *In Aeneida* 6.845). This Late Latin use of the word has been further expanded from the earlier meanings, so that it refers to the forcible restraint, or blocking, of another. In this passage,

compesco clearly does not hold the same meaning as the Augustan period idea of being so powerful as to vanquish another effortlessly. In fact, the subject of *compescuit* here is fleeing for his life from the impending attack of Hannibal. However, it is worth noting that this Late Latin usage is similar to the early usage by Plautus above in that it conveys a form of restraint. It is unique in that it is a restraint of an adversary, not self-restraint.

Considering the etymology, c*ompesco* is derived from the Latin verb *parco*, meaning to avoid, abstain, or save up. *Parco*, in turn, has several possible etymologies. The first, and more common, is that *parco* is derived from a compounding of the Proto-Indo-European roots **h₂epó*, meaning *off*, and **h₂erk-*, meaning *to hold* or *guard*. Together, these roots mean, approximately, to *hold off* or *ward off*. Other linguists attribute it to the Greek *σπαρνός* (*sparnós*), meaning *rare* or *scarce*. In either case, these etymologies indicate that the original meaning of *compesco* carried a sense of *moderation* or *self-restraint*. As demonstrated by the passages above, that meaning grew over time within the Latin language to include a broader sense of restraining others, and the alternative meaning of *to vanquish*.

Based on these passages, a more precise definition for *compesco* might be separated into the three main senses of the word across their respective time periods. For the original sense of the word, as used by Plautus above, an appropriate definition is *to check oneself* or *restrain oneself*, emphasizing the etymological idea of self-control. Similarly, for the meaning used in the Late Latin passage above, a more precise definition is *to restrain* or *ward off* another, or even to *shelter against* another, in line with the Proto-Indo-European meaning of *to hold off*. Finally, a definition for *compesco* as used by the Augustan period authors above is *to vanquish,* or occasionally *to extinguish*, which both provide more detail and clarity than simply *to quench*.

Overall, *compesco* is a unique word, particularly in the way it can be used to describe vanquishment. Depending on the context of its use, it could be an indicator of a large power imbalance between a victor and one defeated, highlighting the weakness of one in comparison with the other. It's also important to differentiate between the three separate senses of *compesco* when translating: to *restrain oneself*, to *restrain another*, and to *vanquish*. Like many other Latin words, from *habeo* to *animus* to *fero*, *compesco* is rich with meaning that is not immediately apparent, and it must always be carefully considered in context.

Word Study 2

A Mile in an Ancient Roman's *Solea*

Sole fish are very interesting creatures. They are brown and flat, as if a lost sandal had gone wild and grown eyes and frilly sides. Apparently, they are delicious when cooked. The most common of the sole fish species is the Dover sole, found in the Mediterranean, whose scientific name is *Solea solea*.

In English, the Latin word *solea* translates to sandal. Indeed, this is where the sole fish gets its English name from: the sole of a foot. Pliny the Elder wrote about the medical benefit of sole fish in his Natural History. *Lieni medetur solea piscis inpositus, item torpedo, item rhombus; vivus dein remittitur in mare.* An imposed sole fish is healing to the spleen, just like a torpedo fish, just like a flatfish; afterwards the living fish is thrown back into the sea. (Pliny the Elder, *Nat. Hist.* 32.102) In this passage, Pliny the Elder uses the word *solea* as part of the name of the sole fish. This was common in his time, just as it is common to use the word sole in the sole fish's name in current times.

However, the word *solea* was much more commonly used to refer to a sandal, instead of the fish named after a sandal. In a passage by Pliny the Younger, he talks about his uncle, Pliny the Elder, putting sandals on. *Usus ille sole, mox frigida, gustaverat iacens studebatque; poscit soleas....* That man, having enjoyed the sun, water soon cold, lying he had tasted and was studying; he requests his sandals.... (Pliny the Younger, *Letters*, 6.16) In this passage, Pliny the Elder takes his sandals off while eating and relaxing and puts them back on to venture out to investigate Vesuvius, which was erupting at that time. This was common in the Roman Empire: men would remove their sandals for relaxing meals and put them back on afterwards.

The word *solea* was used as part of an aphorism in a poem by Horace. *Chrysippus dicat: sapiens crepidas sibi numquam nec soleas fecit; sutor tamen est sapiens.* Chrysippus says: a wise man never made crepidae nor sandals for himself; nevertheless, a wise man is a shoemaker. (Horace, *Satires*, 1.3.128) In this aphorism, Horace is expressing the fact that while a smart person doesn't do everything, they must have knowledge, however basic, about a wide variety of topics. In his sentence, Horace specifies both *crepidas* and *soleas*. *Crepidae* were a type of footwear also used in ancient Greece and Rome which had elaborate straps, as compared to *solea*'s less elaborate, simpler straps (Sebesta*, The World of Roman Costume*). As seen in Horace's sentence, ancient Grecians and Romans considered *crepidas* to be a completely different type of shoe to *soleas*, while in the modern-day people often consider them to be different varieties of sandals. However, sometimes the two words were used as synonyms of one another in less formal settings.

Etymologically, the word *solea* derives from the Latin word *solum* which means base, foundation; sole of the foot (de Vaan, *Etymological Dictionary of Latin*). Descendants of the word *solea* continue in many living languages today. In Italian and Icelandic, the words suola and sóli both mean the sole of a shoe, respectively. The Albanian word shollë and the German word Sohle share the same meaning of the sole of a shoe or foot. In Finnish, the word solea is used to mean slender or tall, but it has no relation to the Latin word *solea*.

Overall, *solea* is a Latin word that describes a simple sandal which was taken off during meal and leisure times and was also adopted as the name of the sole fish, whose appearance is reminiscent of the sandal it is named after. It is distinctly different from *crepidae*, which were more elaborate, although the two were synonyms in less formal contexts. Its descendants continue to be used in modern languages like Italian and German in the present day.

Word Study 3

WS2 - On Leisure

Few words capture the Roman character as fully as *otium*, a word that shaped how Romans viewed rest, duty, and morality. *Otium* inspired politicians, authors, and philosophers with the idea of rest and leisure in a society relying on fulfilling civic duty. From the beginning of the Republic to the last emperor and integration of religion, the Romans considered how to rest without guilt. *Otium* was never a simple word meaning leisure, peace, or rest; it demonstrates the shifting values and ideals of Romans from duty to religious devotion and reflection.

Otium comes from the Proto-Indo-European noun *$h_2$ewt(i)-o-* meaning enjoying or resting. *H_2ewt(i)-o-* itself is theorized to derive from *$h_2$ew-* meaning to enjoy and *$h_2$wes* meaning live in or reside in. Perhaps the past "enjoying" meaning of *otium* influenced how rest can be morally good. Modern

English derivates of *otium*, although very uncommon, include otiose and otiosity, meaning laziness or uselessness. In direct contrast, *negotium*, from *nec-* and *otium*, literally translates to "not leisure", commonly meaning duty or work, and is the basis for our English word negotiate. Through the centuries, *otium* changed from a pause from *negotium* to intellectual vocation to holy leisure.

Cicero, writing during the fall of the Roman Republic, wrote *De Oratore* about what is required to be an accomplished speaker. In the introduction, Cicero writes *illi videri solent, qui in optima re publica, cum et honoribus et rerum gestarum gloria florerent, eum vitae cursum tenere potuerunt, ut vel in negotio sine periculo vel in otio cum dignitate esse possent*, those men were very fortunate who, in the optimum type of republic, when they flourished both in honor and in the glory of their achievements, were able to have such a course of life that they could be either engaged in public business without danger or at leisure with dignity. (Cicero, *De Oratore* 1.1) Here, *otium* means an excusable pause from duty, not idleness or laziness but closer to leisure or a reprieve. The Republican instability made complete withdrawal from society impossible, but a reprieve was still necessary for moral balance. *Otium* became politically essential and ethical, rather than personal laziness.

One generation later during the turmoil of the new Empire, the poet Horace wrote his *Odes*, a series of lyrical poems. In one of his poems, he uses *otium* several times: *Otium divos rogat in patenti / prensus Aegaeo*, [...] *otium bello furiosa Thrace / otium Medi pharetra decori / Grosphe, non gemmis neque purpura / venale nec auro*. (Horace, *Odes* 2.16) Amidst the turmoil and chaos of the new Empire after Julius Caesar's murder, Augustus championed order and peace. For Horace, *otium* becomes inner calm instead of inactivity; he shows this by setting his characters in storms and war and portraying them as needing peace. In less than a century, *otium* has become more introspective and profound.

Pliny the Younger, writing his *Epistulae*, a collection of letters, about eighty years after Horace, defends his choice to live in a quiet place in the Roman countryside rather than the city and explains that *otium* is not laziness but deep, philosophical thought. *O rectam sinceramque vitam! O dulce otium honestumque ac paene omni negotio pulchrius! O mare, o litus, verum secretumque μουσεῖον, quam multa invenitis, quam multa dictatis! Proinde tu quoque strepitum istum inanemque discursum et multum ineptos labores, ut primum fuerit occasio, relinque teque studiis vel otio trade. Satius est enim, ut Atilius noster eruditissime simul et facetissime dixit, otiosum esse quam nihil agere.* Oh right and sincere life! O sweet and honest repose, almost more beautiful than business! O sea, o shore, true and sincere home of the Muses, which many things you find, what many things you say! Therefore, you too should leave this empty noise, useless talk, and useless work, on the first occasion, and give back yourself to studies and peace. For it is better, that our Atilius said most learned and funnily, to be at peace than to do nothing. (Pliny, *Epistulae* 1.9) Here, Pliny redefines *otium* as a time uncluttered by trivial things for moral productivity and intellectual vocation. Unlike Cicero or Horace, Pliny equates *otium* more closely with a professional discipline and philosophy. By grouping *studium* and *otium*, he emphasizes that point. The meaning of *otium* now includes active thinking and mental labor.

Nearly two centuries later, St. Augustine, a philosopher in Late Antiquity, wrote *De Civitate Dei*, a work of Christian philosophy. He argued that *otium* is divine rest, or holy leisure as the ideal: *Quamobrem otium sanctum quaerit caritas veritatis; negotium iustum suscipit necessitas caritatis*, Therefore, the love of truth seeks holy leisure, while the necessity of love undertakes fair business. (St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 19.19). Here, *otium* is not quite the opposite of *negotium*; it is more of a factor. To achieve *otium sanctum*, business and work are required. *Otium* has completed its transformation, from a break from work to divine peace.

Across these four authors, *otium* retains its Proto-Indo-European definition of rest, and each generation redefines its purpose and philosophy, becoming increasingly internal, moral, and sacred. Cicero rested for the Republic, Horace rested for moral balance, Pliny for intellectual thought, and St. Augustine for holy devotion and to attain the final resting state of the soul. Mirroring the transformation of Rome from political to religious, *otium* changed from meaning leisure with dignity to holy rest.

Word Study 4

Breaking down Dissolvo

The Latin verb *dissolvo, dissolvere,* means to dissolve, separate, end, and many other things. *Dissolvo* is the root of the English word dissolve. The aim of this word study is to dig deeper into the origins and meanings of *dissolvo.* This is done through primarily Golden Age authors, in addition to Terence, who is earlier, writing about 160 BCE, and Seneca, who wrote about 31-65 BCE, in the Silver Age.

The word *dissolvo* appears in Horace's *Odes* when he speaks about enjoying even a harsh winter. Though this is not the poem in which he says *carpe diem,* the same sort of idea is presented here, and Horace tells readers to enjoy what they have as well as they can, for example in a cold winter. *Dissolve frigus ligna super foco / large reponens atque benignius / deprome quadrimum Sabina, / o Thaliarche, merum diota,* Dissolve the chill, replacing firewood upon the hearth / and rather kindly bring / a two handled Sabine jug of four years, / Oh Thaliarchus, of unmixed wine (Horace, *Odes* 1.9.5-8). In this text, *dissolvo* means literally to dissolve the chill, or perhaps even more colloquially, melt the frost. Here the fire is going to dissolve the frost and bring back warmth.

In one of Cicero's first major cases, he defends Sextus Roscius, who was charged with patricide. He goes into an aside in which he says that friendships are formed for mutual good. For this reason, he explains, it makes no sense not to be a good friend. *Perditissimi est igitur hominis simul et amicitiam dissolvere et fallere eum qui laesus non esset, nisi credidisset,* It is therefore most wasteful of man at the same time both to end friendship and to cheat him who would not be injured, unless he had trusted [him] (Cicero, *Pro Sexto Roscio Amerino* 112). In this context, *dissolvo* could not possibly mean to melt a friendship. But a little more figuratively, *dissolvo* might mean to end something. After all, in the previous example, dissolving the frost would be the same as getting rid of or ending it. This fits well with the rest of the passage to describe ending a friendship and betraying the former friend.

Seneca uses *dissolvo* in his work *Quaestiones Naturales,* a work of natural philosophy, which describes various natural phenomena. In the book on waters, he describes the deluge, a great flood which will destroy the world. While contemplating this, he talks about how things are created slowly but destroyed very quickly. *Urbes constituit aetas, hora dissoluit; momento fit cinis, diu silua,* An age builds cities, an hour destroys them; ashes are made in a moment, forests are made for a long time (Seneca, *Quaestiones Naturales* 3.27.2). In this work, he makes a clear contrast between *aetas* and *hora* and between *momento* and *diu.* The words *cinis* and *silua* especially highlight the difference between creation of a forest and its destruction. Seneca used *dissolvo* as an antonym to *constituit*, which in this context means to build. *Dissolvo* does mean here to dissolve a city, since here he does not refer to disintegration, but rather dissolving buildings or a group of people. In this sentence, *dissolvo* might be better translated as to destroy.

Dissolvo is also employed in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, a poem which similarly describes natural phenomena, but is more philosophical. Near the end, he uses *dissolvo* when describing the Plague of Athens. ... *singultusque frequens noctem per saepe diemque / corripere adsidue nervos et membra coactans / dissoluebat eos, defessos ante, fatigans,* And often frequent croaking through the night and day / continually seizing their energy and forcing their limbs / was weakening them, exhausted before, fatiguing them (Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 6.1160-2). *Dissolvo* takes *eos,* them, as direct object here, with *singultus,* croaking, as subject. The croaking is said to seize their energy, *corripere*, suggesting that *dissolvo* means to dissolve their energy, or weaken them, since *eos* is the direct object. This is different from the previous uses in that before, *dissolvo* was used to mean completely ending or destroying something, but here it only means to weaken the people, as suggested by *defessus*.

As a final example, in Terence's *Phormio,* a comic play about two cousins and their lovers, a character uses *dissolvo* when he speaks about his money problems. He says that that he would like to marry a different woman than the one to whom he is betrothed, but he needs a wife who will pay his debts. *Sed mihi opus erat, ut aperte tibi nunc fabuler, / Aliquantulum quae afferret qui dissolverem/ Quae debeo,* But it was my duty, that now I would speak to you openly, / [I need] one who would provide a little which would pay/ what I owe (Terence, *Phormio* 654-6). In this sentence, he says literally that he needs the money to dissolve what he owes, which would mean to pay. This is shown by *debeo*, which indicates his debt.

Dissolvo comes from the prefix *dis*-, meaning apart and *solvo*, which is very similar, meaning to untie, dissolve, free, weaken, pay, or open. *Solvo* is the root of many English words including soluble and solve, which can be viewed as untying, or dissolving a problem. Another descendant of *solvo* is absolve, which is to dissolve guilt. *Solvo* itself comes from the prefix *se*-, meaning away, and *luo,* to untie, let go, pay, atone, satisfy. *Se*- is actually cognate with Latin se and English self, since being away from other people or things is being by oneself. *Luo* initially meant free, coming from Proto-Indo-European **lewh₁-,* to separate or free.

In conclusion, *dissolvo* on the surface just means dissolve, but it can also mean end, destroy, or weaken, and was even used to mean pay. These meanings are all expressions of destroying something or negating it. This can be seen further in the etymology of *dissolvo*, where we see ultimately it comes from Proto-Indo-European **lewh₁-,* free, and as it evolved, this root came to mean untie or disunite, which is can also be viewed as dissolving or destroying. The idea of destroying or nullifying was then extended to money, with *dissolvo* coming to mean pay.

Word Study 5

Word Study 2 - Considering *Sidus*

Sidus, -eris is a neuter Latin noun with two primary meanings, star, and constellation. Similar to many other Latin words however, it can also be used in a variety of different contexts, some relating to its two base meanings, others not quite so much. Strangely, *sidus* is also the base for several words with seemingly unrelated meanings in modern English. Stars and constellations held much significance to ancient romans for two main reasons, and this word study will explore both the importance and contextual usage of this word by different medieval authors as well as its context and connection to its English derivatives.

Otium divos rogat in patenti prensus Aegaeo simul atra nubes condidit lunam neque certa fulgent sidera nautis, Caught on the open Aegean, he begs the gods for leisure once a black cloud has hidden the moon, and no certain stars shine for the sailors (Horace *Carmina* 2.16.1-4). Throughout much of the medieval world, the moon and stars were extremely important to sailors as they were the only readily available method of navigation before the advent of compasses. A few stars and constellations in particular were most commonly used for navigation. For instance, the North Star, otherwise known as Polaris. The lower it sunk in the sky, the further south the ship was sailing, and if it disappeared entirely beneath the horizon, the ship had crossed or almost crossed the equator. Similarly, the higher Polaris was in the sky, the further north the ship was sailing. Some other constellations that served as important indicators included Crux, the Southern Cross, and Ursa Major.

Atque hac mundi divinitate perspecta tribuenda est sideribus eadem divinitas; quae ex mobilissima purissimaque aetheris parte gignuntur neque ulla praeterea sunt admixta natura totaque sunt calida atque perlucida ut ea quoque rectissime et animantia esse et sentire atque intellegere dicantur,

And when the divinity of this world has been seen, the same divinity must be assigned to the stars; for they are born from the part of the aether that is most changing and purest, and are mixed into no other substance. They are by nature entirely warm and shining, so that they may also most correctly be said to be both living things and to feel and to understand (Cicero *De Natura Deorum* 2.38). This short passage gives readers a glimpse into another reason why the stars were so important to the ancient romans. The romans strongly believed in the concept of everything being having being created and overseen by higher powers, gods and goddesses. This belief extended even to the universe itself. The ancient romans believed that the aether, best described as a divine spirit of sorts, was what held the universe and everything within it together. In a more literal sense, the aether could be considered almost like the breath of the gods, a divine force that enforced order. The importance that they gave to the stars, was in many cases heavily based on the role that they believed the aether played in holding the universe together. The stars, being entirely pure and made from no other material and having no other nature, were considered to be nothing but a rendition of this aether. Therefore, just like the aether, these stars must also have some divine spirit within them, leading Cicero and many other ancient romans to believe that stars were not just objects, but were in fact living and sentient beings. This belief established an important position for the stars in the minds and hearts of most ancient romans.

Latin word *sidus*, with meanings star and constellation, originated from a Proto-Indo-European word meaning shine or gleam. This connects exactly to its latin meaning as stars do indeed both shine and gleam. However, *sidus* has a handful of derivatives, some of which have made their way into modern English, that don't seem so intuitively correct. The most well-known example of this is the word desire. Originating from the French word *desirer*, which in turn originated from the latin verb *desidero*, it literally means down star, which makes no sense logically. Analyzing the meaning of it as a cognate of its Proto-Indo-European predecessor, however, its meaning, to shine down, starts to take shape somewhat. Merely analyzing a word's meanings however, especially in ancient and sometimes slightly poetic languages such as latin, is never sufficient. The ancient romans considered stars to be divine, sentient, yet on a level that no ordinary human could hope to reach. Taking this into account, the originis of desire begin to make more sense. Perhaps it is not directly related to stars, but to certain qualities of stars, or rather, certain qualities the ancient romans believed that stars possessed. Just as the stars were and mostly

still are far away and out of people's reach, when a person desires something, they often want something that is out of their reach, something they cannot have.

Word Study 6

Gelo Stands Immovable: A Latin Word Study

The Latin verb *gelo, gelare, gelavi, gelatum* meant to cause to freeze, be frozen, or be chilled. While this word can be used in a literal sense to describe something cold or frozen, it is often used in a metaphorical sense to talk about something which is lifeless or statuesque. This definition is further expanded to include things that stand, unchanging, in the face of hardships or outside forces. This study will examine the word's use as a literal description of the cold, all the way to its poetic usage as a word to describe something without feeling, inhuman, or unchanging.

It is not hard to find *gelo*'s use as a literal description of the cold. In *Horace, Odes 1.9.1–8,* he writes: *Vides ut alta stet niue candidum / Soracte nec iam sustineant onus / siluae laborantes geluque / flumina constiterint acuto?* Which translates to "Do you see how Mount Soracte, white with deep snow, / now can no longer support the burden, / the woods laboring under frost, / and how the streams have frozen with sharp ice?" In this example, *gelo* is used literally to describe the ice frozen over the top of a stream in the winter. This literal nature and weather-focused use is the basis for *gelo*'s further metaphorical meanings.

The next example is found in *Cancianini, Gian Domenico Spilimbergo, Odes 24*, here it is written *t. Quis a tali / Illuvie est tutus, maculis, atroque veneno? / Quis non gelat metu?* "Who is safe / from such foul corruption, such stains, such blackened poison? / Who does not freeze in fear?" This example utilizes *gelo*'s association with the cold and unmoving ice to describe freezing in fear. The subject is not literally being frozen over by ice, as in the example from Horace's *Odes*, but is holding the traits of ice and being frozen as they freeze out of fear. The use of *gero* begins to shift away from literal ice and cold, to a more metaphorical version of the word where one is able to attain the characteristics of freezing.

Another example is an extreme metaphorical example of gero, used in a passage of Renaissance Latin poetry *Augurelli, Giovanni Aurelio Rimini Chrysopoeia ad Leonem X pontificem maximum, 115-119*. The poem is a meditation on the relationship between human skill and natural law. In other words, it contemplates how much effect humans really can have on the earth and natural processes. A passage from this piece reads: *Invalido aufugiens argentum sistere succo? / Idque gelat duratque simul, sed figere nulla / Arte potest, ictu quo molli ducere possit.* To fix the silver of a plant that has grown long? / And it both freezes and hardens at once, but no art / can fix it in place, so that a soft strike might move it. In this case, the subject "anything" is not *literally* freezing or hardening, as that does not fit the context of the poem, but instead is resisting human change. The subject naturally, and temporarily, stiffens or freezes, but not in a way that human skill can stabilize permanently or "fix it in place." The subject's "silver" or very *essence* relies on this immovability. In this example, *gero* is used symbolically not to describe a subject frozen by cold, but one completely resistant to outside forces who wish it to change.

In conclusion, *Gero*, while literally translated as "to freeze" or "be frozen," is used in a variety of ways. It can be used literally to describe actual ice and cold, as in Horace's text. This use sets up the metaphorical uses in Latin. *Gero* can also be used to describe a subject who has the characteristics of ice, being frozen, or the cold. Lastly, *gero* is able to take advantage of this more metaphorical use to go even further, describing a subject that is not "freezing" in a traditional sense, but standing still in the face of

outside forces and change. *Gero* is a word that, besides being able to describe natural weather phenomena, had the core meaning of immovability, whether that be to nature, and resistance, as to human will.

Word Study 7

A Swift Definition of *Ocior*

The word *Ocior* as a comparative adjective meaning swifter of quicker (D. P. Simpson, Cassell's Latin Dictionary, 1977, *Ocior*."). Not only can it mean swifter or quicker, but it can also mean sooner or earlier, however this is a less literal meaning. It comes from the root "ac" which means sharp, meaning that it is a form of literary "cousin" to *acer* (Charlton T. Lewis, Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary, Ocior*). It is an interesting word because it has no positive form, however it has a superlative form as *ocissimus*. In addition, it has an adverbial form, which is the exact same as it's comparative nominative neuter form, both being *ocius*. The cognate of *ocior* in Ancient Greek is *okus* (also related to "ac"), which may be where the word originated. *Ocius* is shown in Horace's poetry, where he says "*…ocior cervis et agente nimbos ocior Euro.* (Horace *Odes* 2.16.21-4)" Which means "swifter than a stag and swifter than making a cloud for the east wind." Here *ocior* is used in one of the most common uses of ocior, which is the use of the ablative of comparison. In the text, Horace is saying that something is swifter than wind. Talking about wind seems to be another recurring characteristic with the word *ocior*.

For example, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, he says "*fugit ocior aura illa levi neque ad haec revocantis verba resistit:*" which means "It flees swifter than that light breeze and it does not stand to these words of recalling:" (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.501-2). Here Ovid is talking about how something is fleeing from somewhere quicker than something else. This is another example where it is used as an ablative of comparison. It makes sense that it would be used often as an ablative of comparison, because in more poetic English, people commonly use swifter or quicker in similes. It seems like *ocior Euro* is a sort of idiom used to show how fast something is.

As seen in Horace's passage, Ocior is often used to refer to wind. In *Thebais*, by Statius, he says "*Dat vires refovetque deus; volat ocior euro*" which means "God gives and refreshes men; he flies swifter than the east wind. (Statius, *Thebais* 6.521)" Here he says that God moves faster than the east wind. From this and the other examples, we can see that *ocior* is used to refer to the swift wind and things swifter than the wind. This is one of many installments in which the Roman are talking about something being faster than the east wind. If someone were trying to say that something was fast, they would compare it to something everyone knows is very fast. Using this logic, we can infer that maybe the east wind was very strong in Italy.

Ocior is not just used to compare things to the east wind though. In *Satyricon*, Petronius says "*Ocior ipse hos inter motus populus…* (Petronius, *Satyricon*, 1.123.39-41)" This means "The rather quick people are moved between us…" Here Petronius is talking about people having the quality of being quick. This goes to show that *ocior* can in fact be used in a way that is not just related to wind. In *Naturalis Historia* by Pliny the Elder, he says "*etiamnum spiritum ociorem fulmine* (Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*, 2.59.3" which means "even now the swifter spirit than lighting." This is one section in a very long series of commas, so it doesn't have context, however we can still tell that *ocior* or in this case *ociorem* is again part of an ablative of comparison. This has been a very recurring theme in the uses of *ocior*, where it has been used as an almost-idiom as an ablative of comparison. It has also been used as

a normal comparative and superlative. It has stayed relatively the same over time but it has not survived into any other languages.

Word Study 8

Viridis: A Garden of Latin

The Latin language is a garden of richness and roots. It is ever green and healthy, remaining prominent in scholarly circles even after three thousand years of use. It is fitting, therefore, that only a Latin word can describe the eternal youth of the language: *viridis*. Dynamic as a budding seed, even the beginning of the word has shifted over the eras, transforming from a *u* to a *v*. Beyond the simple translation as "green" and the variation of the color, *viridis* refers to plant life, growth, and even human health.

In its most concrete sense, *viridis* refers to the color green. In *De Divinatione* (*On Fortune Telling*), for instance, Cicero (106 B.C.-43 B.C.) describes *Iam vero semper viridis semperque gravata lentiscus*: Now, truly, the green mastic, always weighted with a burden… (Cicero, *De Divinatione*, 1.15). Here, *viridis* is used to signify the color green. Horace (65 B.C.-8 B.C.), too, uses *viridis* to describe the green lizards of the forest: *seu virides rubum dimovere lacertae*, the green lizards move the thistle (Horace, *Odes*, 1.23). *Viridis* is the natural tint of animal and plant life, a healthy green tint.

Viridis refers to variations of the color as well. According to the 1968 *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, it could also describe blue-green waters. In a few instances, the turquoise shade *viridis* associates the word with the river gods, as the works of Aulius Furius Antius (c. 100 B.C.) demonstrate. Aulus Furius Antius' poems are preserved in the *Noctes Atticae* (*Greek Nights*) of Aulus Gellius, who cites: *spiritus Eurorum uiridis cum purpurat undas*: the spirits of the water-gods of the blue-deep turns the waves purple (Aulius Furius Antius, *Noctes Atticae*, 18.11). Aulius Furius Antius associates the blue-green color of the waves with water spirits, who stir up the lakes and mix the streams with silt. The concrete translation of *viridis* as green further extends to cousins of the color, particularly the turquoise of the sea.

The correlation between *viridis* and nature remains prominent throughout Latin literature. Golden Age Latin associates *viridis* with plant life in particular, which blossoms with green leaves each spring. Catullus, for instance, uses *verdissimo* (the adjectival form of *viridis*) to describe a flower fresh as a young maiden: *cui cum sit viridissimo nupta flore puella,* the man is married to the girl, in the freshest flower [of youth] (Catullus, 17.14). Catullus uses *viridis* to refer to the ripeness of flowering plant life, which he compares to a bride. The word measures how full of life, full of greenness, the plant is, blossoming in its prime. *Viridis* is used to describe the greenness of flourishing plants, particularly those which are fruitful.

Viridis further illustrates plants that have not yet reached their full potential. In particular, it can refer to plants still unripe, preparing to bear fruit in the summer. Virgil refers to this quality of *viridis* when he describes spring in his *Georgics*: *cum frumenta in uiridi stipula lactentia turgent?*: the [sheep] give their pails of milk as the plants are still unripe? (Vergil, *Georgics*, 1.311-315). Virgil presents the classic springtime scene: livestock giving rich milk as they raise their young, the maturing grain still growing. The fruits are still preparing for the richness of the summer harvest. *Viridis* refers to the preparation of becoming fruitful just as much as it labels the ripeness itself.

Be it fruitful or beginning to bloom, *viridis* is often used, therefore, to refer to the freshness of a material. Roman writers extend the freshness in a green plant to other materials as well, such as Livy,

who states that *ex uiridi materia raptim factae erant*: that objects had quickly been made from fresh material (Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, 29.1.14). Here, "freshness" refers to the newness of a certain object, regardless of the material itself, which Livy does not specify. The *Oxford Latin Dictionary* states that this usage is particularly employed to describe wood which retains water in its bark. Beyond sheer ripeness, *viridis* can also be used to refer to the freshness of a certain object, particularly wood.

Viridis, however, can also refer to a person who is young and tender. A person who enjoys *viridis* is in the prime of his youth, blooming like a flowering green plant. Seneca the Younger states in his *Controversiae*: *Audivi autem illum et viridem et postea iam senem*: I heard about him, however, and his youth, and afterward his old age (Seneca, *Controversiae*, 4.3). A young person is full of promise and energy, just like a tree blossoming with flowers; the same word describes a thriving plant and youth. *Viridis* describes the energy of human life just as it refers to springtime blossoms on bushes and trees. *Viridis* is not limited to a number of years, however. *Viridis* can also describe a person who retains his youth in old age. Pliny writes that the old man Ummidia Quadratilla is *paulo minus octogensimo aetatis anno decessit usque ad novissimam valetudinem viridis*: he is only a little under eighty years old, but he is still at the great health of youth (Pliny, *Epistulae*, 7.24.1). Though Ummidia Quadratilla is eighty years old, he is still healthy and energetic; he still retains the *viridis* of youth. Anyone who lives in health and energy has the *viridis* of adolescence, regardless of numerical age.

Be he young or old, therefore, a person with *viridis* is always physically robust, flowing with energy like a thriving green plant. Quintilian writes, *sed viridis et sane pulcher habitu nescio ubi totam reliquerat mortem*: but I do not know where complete death had lain when I lived, handsome in health and soundness of body (Quintilian, *Declematio Maior*, 10.5). Those who enjoy *viridis* are so healthy that the strength of their physical stature often obscures the prospect of death. *Viridis* is always associated with resilience in plants and in humans.

At its basic level, *viridis* refers to green or the color's cousins, particularly turquoise. *Viridis* also describes the richness and vitality of plant life. In Golden Age Latin, *viridis* is especially correlated with a young and healthy person. The shoots of *viridis* continue to extend to countless parts of the garden of Romance languages. Though the branches have shifted to *verte* (French) or the versatile *verde* (Spanish, Italian, and Romanian), its core meaning remains the same. Indeed, the roots of *viridis* have even intertwined with those of English, appearing as "verdant" or "viridescent," both describing the rich greenness of vegetation. May all who enter the verdant garden of the Latin language cultivate the energy of *viridis*.

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Word Study 9

Going for Golden

In Book VII of Ovid’s Metamorphoses, we are introduced to the mythological story of the Golden fleece. A ram with a golden fleece was ordered to save the children of King Athamas and the goddess Nephele, Phrixus and Helle, when their evil stepmother wished to sacrifice them. Unfortunately, Helle was lost in the travel, but Phrixus arrived at Colchis unharmed and sacrificed the ram to Zeus. He gave the fleece of the ram, dubbed the Golden Fleece, to King Aeetes. Jason, the son of Aeson, was sent by his uncle King Pelias to retrieve the Golden Fleece. Upon arrival in Colchis, King Aeetes set out hazardous tasks for Jason, who completed them with the help of King Aetees’s daughter Medea.

dumque adeut regime Phrixeaque vellera poscunt and while they approached the king and demanded the fleece of Phrixus (Ovid, Metamorphoses, 7.7). This line represents the moment when Jason demanded the fleece of Phrixus from King Aetees. It is possible to translate *Phrixeaque vellera* as golden fleece as the fleece of Phrixus is the golden fleece.

The word golden is associated with *auream* and its cognates. While it is a simple word, *auream* branches into two meanings: one is quite literal, gold; and the other is a symbolic meaning as gold is referred to as the highest, the best, or the most peaceful. *aureus* is closely related to the noun *aurum* meaning gold. The Proto-Indo-European root of aurum is $h_2$ews meaning to dawn, become light, or shine. This Proto-Indo-European root connects a cognate *aurum* to *aurora*, the Latin word for dawn and the Roman goddess of the dawn.

Privigilem superest herbis sopire draconem ....et uncis dentibus horrdenus custos erat arbors aureae the dragon, remains asleep among the herbs, and with its hooked teeth, was the guardian of the golden tree (Ovid, Metamorphoses, 7.149-151). Also from the Metamorphoses (8 AD), this section hones in on the dragon guarding the golden fleece. The dragon guarding the golden fleece was the Colchian Dragon, which was made to sleep by Medea. The part “of the golden tree” does not suggest that the tree was golden, but rather the object, the fleece or perhaps apples on the tree, were golden. This highlights the literal significance of the word *aureae*. It points out that the object is golden.

Horace uses a cognate of *auream, auro,* in his poem *otium bello furiosa Thrace, otium Medi pharetra decori, Grosphe, non gemmis neque purpura, venale neque auro* rest in war furious Thracian, rest the Parthians adorned with the quiver, Grosphus, not for jewels neither purple for sale nor gold

(Horace, Odes, 2.16.5-8). In his Odes (20-10 B.C.), Horace remarks on the philosophy that humble living provides greater significance than having excess materials. This relates to Horatian philosophy, which are teachings that emphasize living in the moment (*Carpe Diem*) and a rejection of wealth for an appreciation of the simple fulfillments of life. The word *auro*, a cognate of *aureum* exhibits this wealth. Having gold is seen as a material, so it is better to reject it for otherworldly pleasures. This example shows the literal meaning of gold.

While the literal idea has substance, the metaphorical part of *aureum* is just as interesting. The philosophy around *auream* is that it is prosperous and peaceful. It refers to the Golden Age of Roman Literature during Emperor Augustus (63 B.C. – 14 A.D.) when peace and prosperity cultivated many influential works of authors like Ovid, Virgil, and Horace. These were authors that were proponents of this concept.

Auream quisquis mediocritatem diligit, tutus caret obsoleti sordibus tecti, caret invidenda sobrius aula whoever loves golden mediocrity, safely lacks having been obsolete having been covered in dirt, sober lacks a hall to be envied (Horace Odes 2.10.5-8). This is another one of Horace's Odes, which points out *auream* in the term *auream mediocritatem*, which translates as golden mediocrity. This encourages people to avoid harsh extremes and to live in the middle. This middle has virtue in itself. This is not a literal view of what mediocrity is, but it points towards mediocrity as golden, fulfilling in prosperity.

It is common for these authors to use *aureum* in conjunction with a noun mentioning age or time to exhibit the connection to the Golden Age more clearly. Common ones include *aurea aetas* and *aurea saecula*, both of which we will see used in examples. Ovid makes mention of this Golden Age in his Metamorphoses *Aurea prima asta est aeta,… sine lege fidem rectumque colebat* the first golden age stood, … without law worshipped faith and right (Ovid, Metamorphoses, 1.89). Ovid's Metamorphoses focuses on the transformation of the world, quite literally a metamorphosis. This line in particular focus on the golden age where people focus on their own faith and right without being bounded to a law that requires them to do so. They are acting in their free will. A curious point is noting the connection between *aurea* and *aetas*. *aetas* translates to age, so it is in connection with *aurea* to a golden age.

It is also possible to use *aurea* with *saecula* as shown in this passage from Suetonius (121 A.D.): *aurea mutasti saturni saecula, Caesar: incolumni nam te ferrea semper erunt* you have changed the golden ages of Saturn, Caesar: for you the columns will always be iron (Seutonius, Tiberius III, 59.8). Suetonius was a roman historian, and his work Tiberius is a biography of Emperor Tiberius. Throughout the work, Suetonius hones in on the public hate that Tiberius received. Suetonius points out that Caesar, which refers to Tiberius, changed the golden age to an age of iron. The word *saturni* offers another relationship to the Golden Age. *saturni* refers to Saturn, a god of wealth and time. Symbolically, Saturn is associated to the Golden Age. So, it is fitting for Suetonius to call on the golden ages of Saturn.

Virgil, another author in the Golden Age of Literature, references Saturn: *iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna; … desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo* already the Virgin returns, the kingdom of Saturn returns; … the golden nation will cease and rise through the whole world (Virgil, Eclogues, 4.6-9). The Eclogues (29 B.C. – 19 B.C.) are a collection of poems that describe the nature of life in ancient Rome at the time. In this specific section, Virgil discusses the return of the Golden Age, and the start of a better age for Rome. He uses "kingdom of Saturn" to refer to the Golden Age, but then he uses "golden nation" not as Golden Age, but a new golden people to rise through the world. The

meaning of golden here mimics that of a Golden Age, but is specifically targeted at *gens,* which translates to nation.

Another fascinating fact about golden is Marcus Aurelius's name. His surname Aurelius is a Latin name stemming from *aureus,* which means golden. Consequently, Marcus Aurelius was "the golden one." On the subject of *aureus,* these were the primary gold coins of Ancient Rome used from 200 B.C. to 400 A.D. In modern times, *auream* is connected to the chemical symbol of gold, which is Au. This comes directly from the first two letters of *auream.* There are other common words that stem from *auream* that have some relation to it. Examples include auriferous, which means containing gold; aureate, which means of a golden color; aureole, which means a circle of light, and much more.

Overall, *aureum* and its cognates form an alluring history of gold that has both literal and figurative meaning. It holds a link between the Golden Age and Saturn that explains a metaphysical philosophy of peace. There are mentions of the word beyond the Golden Age, but it is much fewer than when Horace, Ovid, and Virgil used it, so it is outside the scope of this paper to provide a full transformation of the word over time.

Word Study 10

Rainbows, Arcs, and Bows, Oh My

Derived from the Proto-Italic *arkuos,* meaning a bow, and the Proto-Indo-European *herkos*, meaning a bow and arrow, the word *arcus* in Latin means a rainbow, arc, or bow. *Arcus* retained the same three meanings throughout ancient Latin, regardless of the year of the work in which the word appeared.

The first recorded use of the *arcus* in ancient Latin is in one of Plautus' plays, *Curculio,* which was written around 204 to 184 B.C.*,* where the Roman playwright states: *Noli, taceo. écce autem bibit árcus, pluet credo hércle hodie.* I'll hold my tongue. But look, the rainbow is drinking, by Hercules, I do believe that it will rain today (Plautus, *Curculio,* 1.2.34). *Arcus,* in Plautus' passage, means rainbow, and he uses figurative imagery to describe the rainbow "drinking" or drawing in rain in a way that appears as if the rainbow is drinking.

Nearly a couple of hundred years later, Virgil wrote the *Aeneid* (around 29 to 19 B.C.), and he uses the word *arcus,* also as a rainbow. *Dixerat haec, adytis cum lubricus anguis ab imis/septem ingens gyros, septena volumina traxit/amplexus placide tumulum lapsusque per aras,/caeruleae cui terga notae maculosus et auro/squamam incendebat fulgor, ceu nubibus arcus/mille iacit varios adverso sole colores.* He had just finished speaking, when a shining snake unwound all seven of its coils from the base of the shrine, in seven large folds, placidly surrounding the mound, and sliding through the sanctuaries, its back dotted with blue-green marks and its scales burning with a golden brilliance, in the same way a rainbow casts a thousand various colors in clouds opposite the sun (Virgil, *The Aeneid,* 5.84-9). In the passage, Virgil uses *arcus* at the heart of a simile and compares the shiny and multi-colored scales of a snake to the many shimmering colors of a rainbow.

Nearly a century after Virgil's *Aeneid* was written, Pliny the Elder wrote one of the largest works to survive from the Roman Empire. In his *Naturalis Historia (*written between 77 and 79 AD), he also uses the Latin word *arcus* to mean a rainbow. *Arcus vocamus extra miraculum frequentes et extra ostentum. Nam ne pluvios quidem aut serenos dies cum fide portendunt.* We call rainbows a rare occurrence and beyond a display, for they do not even faithfully predict rainy or clear days (Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia,* 2.64.1-2). In this excerpt, Pliny attempts to explain the formation of rainbows

and describes them as a beautiful phenomenon, and implies that rainbows ought to be appreciated for their beauty and not to "faithfully" predict events in the future.

The second common use of the word *arcus* in ancient Latin was any type of arc. The word can and was used in sentences to show the general shape of an arc, not just a literal arc or arch. However, in Vitruvius Pollio's *De Architectura* (*architectura,* finds its root in the Latin word, *arcus),* written between 30 and 15 BC, *arcus* appears multiple times in his work and means just that, an arc. *Regulae ferreae aut arcus fiant, eaeque uncinis ferreis ad contignationem suspendantur quam creberrimis; eaeque regulae sive arcus ita disponantur.* Let the iron straight edges or arcs be made, and let the floor be equally suspended by the thick iron hooks; and thus let either the straight edges or the arcs be placed here (Vitruvius Pollio, *De Architectura* 5.10.4-6). In the passage, Vitruvius Pollio describes a specific architectural design and utilizes the literal use of the word *arcus* as an iron arc.

Years after *De Architectura* was written, Livy wrote *The History of Rome* (written between 27 and 9 BC), using the word *arcus,* also*. Frusinone arcus solem tenui linea amplexus est, circulum deinde ipsum maior solis orbis extrinsecus inclusit; Arpini terra campestri agro in ingentem sinum consedit.* At Frusinone, an arc surrounded the sun with a slender circumference, and then the outer ring itself included a greater circle of the sun; the land of Arpinum in a level field sat in a vast curve (Livy, *The History of Rome,* 30.2.12). In this excerpt, Livy does not describe a literal iron or stone arc, but simply a sun ray with the shape of an arc, surrounding the sun. Another way to translate *arcus* in Livy's passage is as a halo; this word would serve the same purpose, and the meaning would remain the same because it suggests something with a curved shape.

The final definition of the word *arcus,* seen in ancient Latin, is a bow, as in the weapon. *Arcus* appears in Horace's *Odes* (written between 23 and 13 BC), meaning the weapon. *Non, si male nunc, et olim sic erit: quondam cithara tacentem suscitat Musam neque semper arcum tendit Apollo.* If it is bad now, and was before then, it will not always be so: Apollo stirs with his lyre, the silent muse, and nor does he always extend his bow (Horace, *Odes,* 2.10.17-20). Horace's passage refers specifically to the bow of the god, Apollo, describing the way that bad times will pass and that Apollo will bring peace and reassurance in a time of struggle.

Additionally, *arcus* appears with the same meaning in the *Vulgate* (written in the 4th century AD). *Tetendit arcum suum et posuit me quasi signum ad sagittam.* He aimed his own bow and set me as a mark for his arrow (Lamentations 3:12). *Arcus,* in this passage of the *Vulgate,* is used to compare the judgment of God to that of a bow, shooting its arrow at a designated target.

The definition of *arcus* in Latin is either a rainbow, arc, or bow; it pertains to something that is curved. The word appears in all types of ancient Latin, and the definition varies based on author and context, but the meaning did not change from one to another over the years; there remained three meanings of the word throughout ancient Latin. For instance, Plautus' *Curculio* was written nearly a century before Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia,* but *arcus* meant a rainbow in both of them. Additionally, Horace's *Odes* were written a significant time before the *Vulgate,* but the meaning of *arcus* remains the same: a bow. However, shifting from Latin to English, the definition did change. Over the years, the definition of *arcus* received a medical connotation. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, *arcus* means "a feature in the body that is curved in shape" (CITE). Thus, while the definition, in English, does not refer specifically to a rainbow, bow, or a literal arc, it still pertains to something that is curved in shape, just as a rainbow, bow, or arc. Other cognates of the Latin word include the Italian *arco,* meaning

bow, and the French *arc,* meaning bow or arc. Despite the varied specific meanings of languages, every cognate derived from the Latin word *arcus* has the curved shape in common.

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Word Study 11

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