

## Why Latin? Why now?

I feel that studying a second language, especially Latin, has been and continues to be very helpful to me in several ways. Many of the best words in English are derived from Latin words. Also, Latin is the mother language of Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese, and Romanian. The derivative aspect of Latin has helped me to expand my vocabulary in my primary language and in other Romantic languages.

In addition to the component of grasping our language better in terms of vocabulary, Latin has helped me to understand English grammar better. Grammar is a vital part of learning a second language. A Latin-English dictionary (or Google Translate) can help a student with translating words. A dictionary cannot help a student translate a sentence. Students often learn the grammar of a second language in terms of their primary language; therefore, students need to have a high level of competency in their own grammatical system first.

Latin, like other world languages, is most enjoyed when students get to translate and recite material that was originally composed in that language. One thing that makes Latin special from other languages is that the people who originally spoke and wrote in Latin are major contributors to Western thought and tradition. I have translated parts of works by Virgil, Cicero, Catullus, Ovid, Horace, and Julius Caesar.

Many parents are interested in their children being able to gain entrance to the college or university that is the best fit for him or her. Standardized test scores often are higher for students who have studied Greek and Latin roots, which gives the student more options in their college choice. This is just one way that Latin and its derivatives can advance a student's education. I discuss derivatives in all of my classes (and at my own dinner table). This is just natural as we study vocabulary.

Additionally to do well in this course, the students must be consistent and diligent. The middle years (7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>) is a great time in a child's life to begin Latin because it will be a strong foundation for other learning in the years to follow.

As a little background on me, I have studied multiple years of Latin with great teachers in high school and college. While in my junior year of college, I was inducted into Eta Sigma Phi, the Classical Studies academic fraternity. I was also chosen to carry the Latin flag at Gettysburg College's 1999 Commencement. I started teaching in 2001, and I have taught Latin for all but five of those years.

Magister Kreider

## 7 Reasons We Are Learning Latin

1. **English Vocabulary** – Learning Latin improves your vocabulary and helps you understand the English language. Did you know that **approximately 60% of all English words derive from Latin, and that 90% of English words with more than 2 syllables have a Latin root!** Just a few weeks ago, I had a conversation that referenced octuplets. Bradley, my 8-year-old, said “Wow! That’s a lot of babies Mom.” I asked him, “Do you know how many babies that is?” And he responded, “Yeah, 8.” I said, “How do you know that?” And he casually stated, “You know *octo* in Latin is 8, Mom.” Sweet, at just 8 years old, learning Latin is already helping my child with his English vocabulary!
2. **Foreign Languages** – Having a grasp of Latin aids in learning other languages. After learning Latin, learning any other language will be easier, but especially the romance languages. Spanish, French, Italian, Portugese, and Romanian are all romance languages, and these languages derive more than 80% of words from Latin and their grammatical structure is similar to that of Latin.
3. **English Grammar** – Many argue learning Latin grammar, which is organized better than English grammar, gives a student a superior understanding of the English language, even more than studying the English language does.
4. **Increase Standardized Test Scores** – A student’s verbal, analytic, and problem solving scores all increase after studying Latin. A [profile of SAT scores](#) was completed recently which shows Latin students as compared to those learning French, Spanish, German, and Hebrew. The Latin students surpassed the test scores of every other group. This study showed that this trend did not just happen in one year. In all seven years of the study, they observed Latin students outperformed others students.
5. **Key to the Past** – Students have access to ancient scholars when they become proficient in Latin. You are able to examine many classical pieces of influential literature in their original language.
6. **Foundation of Sciences, Logic, Theology, and Law** – Latin provides many root words for the modern sciences, and is the language of law, politics, logic, and theology. While it is true that a large number of scientific terms come from Greek as well, all legal terms come from Latin. The study of logic also comes to us from Latin translations of Aristotle’s work from the Middle Ages. And in the West, theology was filtered through the Latin language, providing Christians with a rich and malleable language to discuss divine concepts.
7. **Intellectual Discipline** – Latin is systematic and precise. Learning Lating demands intellectual discipline. The influential author and academic Dorothy Sayers pronounced,