

GCSE Latin for Beginners

Lesson 3 Pre-Class Tasks

1. Five Important Words.

Here are two important conjunctions (joining words):

et *and*

sed *but*

Here are three important adverbs (words that describe or modify the verb):

non *not* (goes in front of the word which is being negated)

nunc *now*

semper *always*

nunc and *semper* often reinforce present tense verbs. When they are used it can be more natural to translate a present tense as (e.g.) *she is carrying* rather than *she carries*:

e.g. servus nunc laborat.

The slave is now *working*.

or The slave now *works*.

ancillae semper pugnant.

The slave-girls are always *fighting*.

or The slave-girls always *fight*.

Exercise 1. Translate into English:

1. villam et hortos amo.
2. ancilla nunc laborat.
3. cibum semper paramus.
4. nuntius ancillam amat sed ancilla nuntium non amat.
5. servus et ancilla semper laborant.*

* A combination of two or more singular subjects needs a plural verb.

Exercise 2. Translate into Latin:

1. The woman calls her* slaves and slave-girls.
2. You (s.) always prepare the food.
3. The master is now working.
4. We do not like the block of flats.
5. I love the girl but the girl loves the messenger.

* Remember that no word for *her* is required here.

2. Next week we will learn about “prepositions” in Latin. Can you guess what the prepositions below mean? Match them up!

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. ad | a. against |
| 2. circum | b. to, towards |
| 3. contra | c. around |
| 4. a/ab | d. through |
| 5. per | e. from, away from |

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3. The Verb 'To Be': sum.

In Latin, like in almost all modern European languages (including English), the verb 'to be' is irregular. This is not surprising: the more often a word is used, the more likely it is that its form will be altered or corrupted when spoken or written. Though irregular, this verb is so common that it will quickly become familiar.¹

The present tense is:

<i>sg 1</i>	sum	I am
2	es	you (s.) are
3	est	he/she/it is
<i>pl 1</i>	sumus	we are
2	estis	you (pl.) are
3	sunt	they are

The verb to be is most commonly used to tell you **what something is** or **what something is like** (using an adjective, watch this space!).

When we are told what something is, the new noun goes into the **nominative** case and is called the complement. The nominative is used rather than the accusative because the verb to be is telling us more about the same person rather than describing something done to someone else.

- e.g. nuntius sum. I am a messenger.
 servi amici sunt. The slaves are friends.

If *est* or *sunt* appear at the start of a sentence, it is often best to translate them not as *he/she/it is* or *they are* but *there is* or *there are*.

- e.g. sunt dei. There are gods (or the gods exist).

Exercise 3. Translate into English:

1. dominus sum; servi estis.
2. nuntius et servus amici sunt.
3. sunt dei, et dei Romam amant.
4. ancillae sumus; dominum non amamus.
5. puella ancilla est.

Exercise 4. Translate into Latin:

1. You (s.) are not a god.
2. The messenger is a slave.
3. The masters are friends.
4. There is a god.
5. The slave and the messenger are friends.

¹ Chapter 1, John Taylor's *Latin to GCSE Book 1*.