

Latin 100 Spring 2013

Expectations for Papers

Assignment: 3 pages on sight/vision and sound/hearing in the "matrōna Ephesia" as you have it in the *Cambridge Latin Course*. **Rough draft due May 29 (bring 2 copies); final draft due June 5.**

1) Thesis: Your paper should have one. That is, your paper should be directed towards proving a point. Your thesis need not be stated in bold form at the end of the first paragraph (it may even come at the end of a short paper), but you should be able to describe in casual conversation what your thesis is, in two sentences or less. A proper thesis will make every other aspect of your paper go more smoothly.

2) Content: Get down to brass tacks early: write a short, specific introduction, and do not waste time with empty filler. *Never* begin a paper with "Since the dawn of time, humankind has..." or any of its variants. Imagine a reader who is familiar with the work, but does not have it memorized, and cannot read your mind.

3) Structure: Your paper should have a shape. If carefully written, every sentence of every paragraph is designed to take your reader one step closer to believing your thesis. In order for this to be true, you must build your paper: introductory material, assumptions, and definitions should be stated early; evidence, important anecdotes, and analyses should follow; and conclusions (often with a view to the broader context) should round things off. This does *not mean* that you must follow 5-paragraph form, or that you must state your thesis at the beginning. You can lead me to your thesis via inductive reasoning, if that is your best method, but you still must lead me in a logical and convincing series of steps.

4) Tone and Style: Take a look at some secondary readings to get a feel for the "rhetoric of the discipline." Put some careful thought into it and you will have interesting things to say. You shouldn't feel the need to undermine your project and diminish the seriousness with which a reader takes your work by adopting too light a tone or too colloquial a style. On the other hand, while avoiding colloquialism, you don't want to use a prose style that is "higher" than you can manage in the hopes that it will somehow increase the seriousness with which your ideas are taken. Try for language that is a pellucid medium for your argument.

5) Citations: If you use someone else's words *or ideas* in writing your paper, you must cite them. Let me know what you have read in preparing a paper; use footnotes or endnotes as well as a bibliography at the end of the paper. You must also cite editions in the original languages, as well as any translations, that you have used. A first footnote should thank members of your editing group as well as anyone else who helped you to improve your final draft. Failure to properly cite sources, *even if unintentional*, constitutes plagiarism.

For formatting tips, see the Purdue Online Writing Lab, which has everything you'll probably need on MLA Style: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.

6) Grammar, Spelling, etc.: Proofread, proofread, proofread. Spellcheckers will not catch everything...in fact, they often introduce errors. I *strongly* recommend proofreading a "hard copy," and enlisting the aid of others (see #5 above) in this task as well. If your paper has more than a few errors of spelling or grammar, you can expect to be graded down or asked to rewrite.