

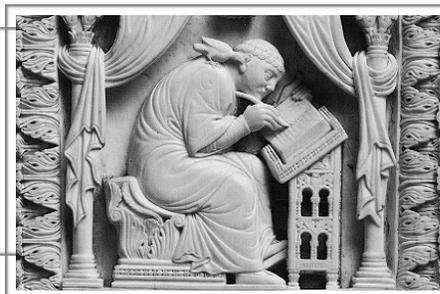
# HOW “STUDENT MULLIGAN” PREPARES FOR CLASS

Since this is a full-credit course at Haverford, I expect to devote **at least three hours of preparation for each hour of class** (i.e., 9+ hours in an average week). With that in mind, here are the five steps I follow to prepare for class to mix **extensive** and **intensive reading** to prepare for class and progressively improve my fluency with Latin.

## A Note on Extensive vs. Intensive Reading

*Extensive reading* is rapid reading for the general sense of a passage (i.e., “getting the gist”)

*Intensive reading* is slow, careful reading in which all aspects of a text’s language are identified and considered.



## 1. **Extensive Review or “Post-paration”** [~ 10% of prep time]

1) **After class, later in the day, I quickly read through the previous assignment**, using an unmarked text.

If possible, I read the passage out-loud (even if only sotto voce), trying to mark in my mind the Word-Groups, related words, pauses, etc. that contribute to the Message.

If there are any words that I have any trouble recognizing, I check them in my word-list and mark them in some way (a star, a dot). If there are passages that I think might give me trouble, I note them as well, to be reviewed later in the week.

2) **Then I re-read the passage straight through again.** Since I have recently read it in class, and through once again to myself, it flows by. I can appreciate the style and think about the content and context. I rejoice in the wondrous knowledge that I can read Latin.

## 2. **Extensive Pre-Reading** [~ 15 % of prep time]

**When I begin a new passage, I read it out-loud, straight through** from the book, or in a “by-phrase” or prose paraphrase (if one is provided). If the passage is very long, I may sub-divide into a few sections.

Note, at this point, I am not translating. I am reading, seeing if I can identify the gist of what is happening: “Who is doing what to whom?” “What are the major themes?” “Can I recognize any key words?” “What significant syntactical or stylistic features can I identify in the passage?”

**Variation: If the professor (or text) includes focus vocabulary, I cultivate these key words; striving to recognize them as I pre-read.**

Variation: As I re-read, I use pre-reading marks to identify Word-Groups and structure.

In *How People Learn*, John Bransford, Ann Brown, and Rodney Cocking report three key findings about the science of learning: “To develop competence in an area of inquiry, students must: (a) have a deep foundation of **factual knowledge**, (b) understand facts and ideas in the context of a **conceptual framework**, and (c) **organize knowledge** in ways that facilitate retrieval and application” (p. 16).

Variation: as I read through extensively a second time, I *highlight* words that I do not know, this creates a visual guide for sentences where I might be able to make an educated guess about new words as opposed to sentences that contain a great deal of new information.

Variation: I listen to the audio or podcast (if available) and follow along in the text when (re-)reading.

### 3. **Intensive Reading and/or Translating** [~50% of prep time, perhaps at 2 sittings]

Now, I begin reading the passage through **intensively**, with dictionary, commentary, and grammar at hand (and whatever other resources you may use).

1) I **read a full sentence through** and then read and analyze each coherent unit (Word-Group, line, or half-line).

If I need to look up a word, I do so in materials provided or my dictionary or *Logeion*, **adding it to my vocabulary list**, as well as making notes of grammatical constructions I may have forgotten or need to review. **Any time I look up a word, I note it with a mark in the dictionary or by adding it to a list.** To look up a word without additional actions all but guarantees that you will look that word up again. Make looking up a word the meaningful first step to learning it, not merely a transitory data dump so as to forge ahead with a particular sentence.

If I have a grammar question, I take a look in the commentary and/or grammar. If I cannot answer the question myself, I make a note to revisit the question in class.

Variation: *Only at this point, might I check a translation, and only if there were a passage that still seemed completely perplexing. A translation can be used like a commentary but is not a substitute for reading.*

2) Having worked through the sentence intensively, I **read it through entirely at least once, or better yet twice**—once to translate, once to read it (mentally noting structure and style).

### 4. **Intensive Review** [~ 15% of prep time]

After I have finished the passage, I **read it through it again**, noting any moments that give me pause.

Those caused by a lapse of memory, I revisit.

Those that are caused by confusion about the grammar/Message/etc. I note so that I can ask questions about them in class.

### 5. **Extensive Review** [~10% of prep time]

After the *Intensive Review* and before class, I read the passage through again, quickly.

Those sentences that are by now easily understood I read extensively, less clear sentences are perhaps (re-)read *intensively*, or at least marked so that I know to volunteer to try them or ask questions about them in class. [~10% of prep time]

**At no point have I written down a translation of the entire passage—although if there are particular phrases that prove particularly challenging I may try my hand at translating those as a check on comprehension.**

**Total preparation time:** could be between around 7-to-8 hours for the week, leaving a 1–2 hours per week for systematic review, secondary reading, written work, personal reading, out-of-class discussion, and general musing about the glories of Latin. Of course, this timeframe is general, since individuals will work more or less rapidly.

Finally, I draw your attention to these time-tested **Principles for Success.**

Learning a language demands your willingness to work carefully and diligently. There are many steps on the path towards mastering this wonderful, powerful language. To start you on your way, I give you the following adages:

- I. **Viā voce:** engage as many senses as possible: **always read out loud.** After all, we are reading works that were made to be heard. Few poets have wielded a language with as much force as Vergil; Cicero is one of history's greatest orators. Reciting will give you a better sense of the Latin, will help you remember vocabulary (and the poem), and will facilitate "chunking"—the recognition of natural patterns of discrete and meaningful phrases. Don't fret about the precise pronunciation, and don't mumble: just roar it out and take pleasure in the sound of the language.
- II. **Bis repetita placent** or **Repetitiō est mater studiōrum:** to prepare for class you should use the process that works best for you, but before you come to class, you must have re-read the passage or poem several times, noting phrases that require immediate attention, as well as have formulated interpretative questions and observations. Be prepared to summarize, to translate, and to explain how meaning is generated by the phrase or passage or poem.
- III. **In memoriam:** after class, re-read or "post-para" what we discussed in class; doing so will take little time and it is the best way to reinforce the lessons from the day and reveal those words and concepts that are still causing you difficulties. You should seek assistance on these difficulties from peers or from me during drop-in hours.
- IV. **Socii sunt optimi:** I strongly encourage you to collaborate with other students on readings and any activities. Unless I explicitly say otherwise, assume that you can and should work with your *socii*.
- V. **Compos mentis esto:** When in class, be engaged and active in your learning. Make effective use of the class environment to ask questions of your friends and me, and seek help where you need it and give help to others. **When in class, be fully in class: do not use electronic devices unless their use is part of our joint activities.**
- VI. **Non scholae sed vitae:** Practice self-regulated learning. Pay attention not only to what you are learning but how you are learning it. Instructors can help you learn but learning can only be done by you. When you work, work purposefully on activities that help move you towards the learning objectives for the course and your personal goals. Some of these activities are ones that you take on yourself.
- VII. **Ad astra per aspera:** taking a shortcut when preparing or using translations and on-line parsing tools may save a few minutes in the short term but will only result in hours of compensatory drudgery going forward. The more Latin you have mastered, the faster and more enjoyable reading Latin will become. And is that not why you are taking this class?

**MEMENTO: translations are (limited and idiosyncratic) commentaries,  
not introductions to nor substitutes for reading the original.**