**Composing using Comparatives and Superlatives in Latin**

Follow these steps to help you write a sentence using a **comparative or superlative adjective** in Latin:

1. Write the sentence in English, using simple grammar.

2. Compose these sentences in the same way you would compose a regular Latin sentence (see the bottom of this document). The only difference is you will insert the comparative and superlative forms where they best fit into the sentence.

3. Remember to watch for the Ablative of Comparison or Quam + Comparative adjective

Here are a few simple reminders:

1. The comparative and superlative adjective will agree with the noun it modifies in case, number, and gender.

2. The comparative and superlative adverb will be written right before the verb in the sentence.

**Composing a Latin sentence with a comparative or superlative adjective**

1. Find the subject of the sentence:

a. Can be noun/pronoun controlling the action in the sentence. Example: The man is loved by the woman, who is taller than her children. “The man” is the subject of the sentence. Write this identified subject in the Nominative case. Check your noun declining charts for the correct noun form.

i. Write the Nominative subject as the first word in your composed sentence.

ii. “Taller than” is the comparative in the sentence.

b. Or, can be the verb in the sentence. Example: We will love the woman, who is the tallest of her three children. “We will love” is the verb and controls the action of the sentence so it is the subject of the sentence. Check your verb conjugating charts for correct verb form.

i. Write the verb as the last word in your independent clause.

ii. “Tallest” is the superlative in the sentence.

2. Write this main verb in Latin. If you haven’t done so already, write the verb to have the correct tense, Passive Voice, person, and number. Check your verb conjugating charts for correct verb form.

i. Write the verb as the last word in your independent clause.

3. Compose any remaining words: Identify the function of remaining words (direct object, possessor, indirect object, prepositional phrase, adverb) and write those words in their correct cases.

4. Comparative, Superlative forms: Fit these into the sentence where they fit. As adjectives, they modify their nouns in case, number, and gender. As adverbs, place them closest to the verbs. Follow the instructions for Quam + Comparative or Ablative of Degree of Comparison.

**Nota Bene:** Sentence structure in Latin is flexible, but you can follow a general layout: Subject, indirect object (if there is one), direct object, prepositional phrase(s), infinitive (if there is one), main verb. Adjectives after their nouns except if it’s a noun of size or quantity; genitives follow the noun they possess/describe.

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| **Example Sentences** | **Latin** |
| The man taller than the woman is loved by the children. | Vir **altior** femina a liberis amatur. |
| The most graceful teacher taught Latin. | Magistra gracillima Latinam docuit. |
| We will seize rather quickly the enemy, who is at our gates. | Hostes, qui ad portas nostras sunt, celerius capiemus. |

There are three degrees of comparison: positive, comparative, superlative.

* The positive is the simple form of the adjective.
* The comparative is between two people or objects.
* The superlative is with three or more.

Examples:

* Positive: Tom is tall.
* Comparative: Susie is tall*er*.
* Superlative: Anthony is the tall*est* of them all.

Mark is handsome.  Bruce is *more* handsome than Mark; but John is the *most* handsome of the three brothers.

In Latin, the comparative is formed by adding *-ior* (m. and f.), *-ius* (n.) to the stem/base of the positive (feminine nominative singular minus the ending). The superlative is formed by adding *-issimus, a, um* to the base of the positive.

Hints for translating:

The comparative may often be translated *...-er, more ..., too ...*The superlative may be translated *...-est, most ... , very...*

**Quam + Comparatives:**

When translating a comparison in Latin,

* quam=than
* The two objects or people being compared are in the same case.

Example: I have not seen a prettier girl than she. = Puellam pulchriorem quam eam non vidi.   
  
Eam is accusative because puellam is accusative. Those are the two people being compared.

**Ablative of Comparison:** when comparing two objects. The second object being compared is placed in the Ablative case.

* Example: I have not seen a prettier girl than she. = Puellam pulchriorem ea non vidi.
* Ea is ablative because it is the second object in the comparison. Those are the two people being compared.