

Roman ABC's

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English 6 HL

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Augurer ['ɔɡərə]

Definition: noun; (in ancient Rome) a religious official who observed natural signs, interpreting these as an indication of divine approval or disapproval of a proposed action.

Origin: Latin

Example: “What say the augurers?” [Caesar, 2.2.38]

Bestride [bɪ'straɪd]

Definition: verb; stand astride over; span or straddle.

Origin: Old English

Example: “Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world Like a Colossus, and we petty men walk under his huge legs and peep about to find ourselves dishonorable graves.” [Cassius, 1.2.135]

Coronet [kɒrə'net]

Definition: noun; a small or relatively simple crown, especially as worn by lesser royalty and peers or peeresses.

Origin: Old French.

Example: “I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown—yet ‘twas not a crown neither, ‘twas one of these coronets—and, as I told you, he put it by once; but for all that, to my thinking, he was very loath to lay his fingers off it.” [Casca, 1.2.234]

Drachma ['drakmə]

Definition: noun; the basic monetary unit of Greece (until the introduction of the euro), notionally equal to 100 lepta.

Origin: Via Latin from Greek.

Example: “By heaven, I had rather coin my heart And drop my blood for drachmas than to wring From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash By any indirection.” [Brutus, 4.3.72]

Emulation [ɛmjʊ'leɪʃ(ə)n]

Definition: noun; effort to match or surpass a person or achievement, typically by imitation.

Origin: Latin.

Example: “My heart laments that virtue cannot live out of the teeth of emulation.” [Artemidorus. 2.4.11]

Factionous ['fakʃəs]

Definition: adjective; relating or inclined to a state of faction.

Origin: French or Latin

Example: “Be factionous for redress of all these griefs, and I will set this foot of mine as far as who goes farthest.” [Casca, 1.3.117]

Ghastly ['gɑ:s(t)li]

Definition: adjective; causing great horror or fear; frightful or macabre.

Origin: Germanic origin.

Example: "Upon a heap a hundred ghastly women, transformèd with their fear, who swore they saw men all in fire walk up and down the streets." [Casca, 1.3.23]

Harlot ['harlɒt]

Definition: noun; a prostitute or promiscuous woman.

Origin: old French

Example: "If it be no more, Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife" [Portia, 2.1.286]

Ides [ahydz]

Definition: noun (used with a singular or plural verb); In the ancient Roman calendar the fifteenth day of March, May, July, or October, and the thirteenth day of the other months.

Origin: Old French.

Example: "Beware the ides of March." [Soothsayer, 1.2.18]

Jealous ['dʒɛləs]

Definition: adjective; feeling or showing envy of someone or their achievements and advantages.

Origin: Old French or Medieval Latin.

Example: "That you do love me, I am nothing jealous." [Brutus, 1.2.162]

Knave [nɛrv]

Definition: noun; a dishonest or unscrupulous man.

Origin: West Germanic origin.

Example: "What trade, thou knave?" [Flavius, 1.1.15]

Lethe ['lēTHē]

Definition: noun; a river in Hades whose water when drunk made the souls of the dead forget their life on earth.

Origin: Greek

Example: "Here wast thou bayed, brave hart, here didst thou fall, and here thy hunters stand, signed in thy spoil and crimsoned in my Lethe." [Antony, 3.1.204]

Marry ['mari]

Definition: exclamation; indeed; expressing surprise, indignation, or emphatic assertion.

Origin: Late Middle English.

Example: "Marry, before he fell down, when he perceived the common herd was glad he refused the crown, he plucked me ope his doublet and offered them his throat to cut." [Casca, 1.2.256]

Nimbleness ['nɪmb(ə)l]

Definition: noun; the ability of being quick and light in movement or action.

Origin: Germanic origin.

Example: "So shall he waste his means, weary his soldiers, doing himself offense, whilst we, lying still, are full of rest, defense, and nimbleness." [Cassius, 4.3.202]

Offal ['ɒf(ə)l]

Definition: noun; refuse or waste material.

Origin: Middle Dutch

Example: “What trash is Rome, What rubbish and what offal, when it serves For the base matter to illuminate So vile a thing as Caesar!” [Cassius, 1.3.109]

Plebeian [pli'bi:ən]

Definition: noun; (in ancient Rome) a commoner.

Origin: Latin

Example: The plebeians were celebrating Caesar's triumph over Pompey.

Quarter ['k(w)ɔ:tə]

Definition: verb; (*historical*) cut (the body of an executed person) into four parts.

Origin: Old French or Latin

Example: “Blood and destruction shall be so in use, And dreadful objects so familiar, That mothers shall but smile when they behold Their infants quartered with the hands of war.” [Antony, 3.1.265]

Rogue [rəʊg]

Definition: noun; a dishonest or unprincipled man but who is nonetheless likable or attractive.

Example: “And I had been a man of any occupation, if I would not have taken him at a word, I would I might go to hell among the rogues.” [Casca, 1.2.258]

Stale [steɪl]

Definition: verb; devalue.

Origin: Anglo-Norman French and Old French.

Example: “And be not jealous on me, gentle Brutus, were I a common laugh, or did use to stale with ordinary oaths my love to every new protester.” [Cassius, 1.2.71]

Tributary ['tribjə, təri]

Definition: noun; a person or state that pays tribute to another state or ruler.

Origin: Latin

Example: “What tributaries follow him to Rome to grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels?” [Murellus, 1.1.32]

Unbraced [ʌn'breɪsd]

Definition: adjective; with clothes undone.

Origin: Old French, Latin or Greek

Example: “And is it physical To walk unbracèd and suck up the humors Of the dank morning?” [Portia, 2.1.261]

Visage ['vɪzɪdʒ]

Definition: noun; a person's face, with reference to the form or proportions of the features.

Origin: Latin.

Example: “O, then by day where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough to mask thy monstrous visage?” [Brutus, 2.1.79]

Wench [wɛn(t)]

Definition: noun; a girl or young woman.

Origin: Old English

Example: “Three or four wenches where I stood cried, ‘Alas, good soul!’ and forgave him with all their hearts.” [Casca, 1.2.262]

Yoke [jəʊk]

Definition: noun; state of slavery

Origin: both Germanic and Latin

Example: “i have heard where many of the best respect in Rome, except immortal Caesar, speaking of Brutus and groaning underneath this age’s yoke, have wished that noble Brutus had his eyes.” [Cassius, 1.2. 58]

Zeus [zus]

Definition: noun; the supreme god, the son of Cronus (whom he dethroned) and Rhea, and brother and husband of Hera. Zeus was the protector and ruler of humankind, the dispenser of good and evil, and the god of atmospheric phenomena.

Origin: Greek

Example: Between heaven and earth he reigns who is the dispenser of life, and whom we call Zeus.