

ECCE ROMANI I : A Latin Reading Program: Fourth Edition, by Gilbert Lawall et al. published by Pearson Prentice Hall in 2009

When it comes to communication there are four main sets of activities throughout the book. First there are translation activities, then grammar activities, then towards the back half of the book are activities all in Latin titled "Responde Latine" and finally a section of questions after stories probing for either cultural understanding. For critiquing purposes I will use "Responde Latine" on pg 212, Exercise 24d pg 219(translation), Exercise Va pg 223 (grammar), and pg 153 (culture)

The Responde Latine sections featured sparsely throughout the back half of the book offer students the ability to produce a personalized response. Although it is in answer to a question that has a correct answer, so I don't know if I would call it personalized. The students are given the ability to produce their own meaning. There are several sections that pop up that allow students to create an artifact in Latin, the cultural example that I picked gives students example of Latin graffiti then asks them to create their own graffiti. This is the closest thing in the book to allowing students to provide an almost entirely personalized response and meaning. The other two kinds of activities "grammar" and "translation" leave very little room for personalization, sometimes there can be multiple ways to correctly answer a question, but I do not feel that that really mounts up to personalization.

The Responde Latine and some of the cultural sections allow students to provide their own form and structure, there is little to no guidance in these portions of the textbook, therefore students are really free to do whatever they please in these sections. The grammar and translation sections either give students a blank where they can fill in a noun with the correct ending or give students a sentence in English or Latin to translate. This leaves them some room to provide their own form and structure, but not in super meaningful ways. The book does not really ask for the students to communicate in meaningful ways in Latin beyond the aforementioned activities, for example there is no conversation happening. There is not a heavy reliance on group work or class wide activities, so there are not many opportunities to showcase their knowledge and skill in that setting. The grammar and translation activities do not leave much room for personalization, generally they are either right or wrong and this leaves them an opportunity to demonstrate that they can correctly answer. Whether or not that amounts to demonstrating knowledge is unclear to me. The activities almost all use a form of constructed Latin, authentic texts are almost all introduced having already been translated into English. The constructed Latin used for most activities is generally typical of Latin of the late republican. The vocabulary is presented in cultural contexts and clusters. The activities generally do not exist in a real-world context, most take place in an obscure part of history. The activities generally provide guidance or hints for facilitating comprehension. The activities generally allow for student variation in applying different strategies for comprehension, but a marked number ask students to find the verb before translating. The activities generally revolve around stories that are fun and interesting, or around roman history and culture, which I would assume would be interesting to a student of Latin. The activities are generally age appropriate, some involve discussing murder and crime, but I think that is pretty hard to get around in a culture that was so utterly obsessed with war and violence.

There are lots of visual images through the textbook. The first one I will mention is a painting on pg 85. It is a painting depicting Romulus and Remus, it is probably about as current and authentic as you

can get when dealing with the culture of the people who spoke Latin. The painting depicts people who use Latin for Communication, and the activities surrounding the painting fill in a lot of detail around what is happening and leads students to discuss cultural practices. The second one is a floor mosaic on pg 92 The floor mosaic depicts a dog and several geometric patterns surrounding the dog. This depiction is authentic and comes to us from 300AD. The mosaic depicts how animals were cared for in ancient times. The image is featured a couple of pages away from a story about dogs, but otherwise seems out of place, the footnote describes the image and what it depicts in roman culture but does not generally invite student discussion or analysis.

There are lots of cultural activities that hit on each of the check boxes asked here. I will first evaluate "Roman Life IX" on page 155. The activities depict travel across the whole Italian peninsula and the different regions involved. The students get to read stories from the letters of Seneca, and of Horace. The students are asked to discuss the authors perspectives on the lessons. This lesson asks students to discuss literature of foreign culture. Next Roman Life VI on pg 75. This activity discusses the treatment of slaves within the Roman culture. The reading depicts treatment of slaves at different times. Students are not asked to participate in anything similar to the topic of the text. The students are asked to discuss the perspectives of the people involved in those systems at that time. The students are also asked to analyze literature produced on slavery at the time.

Students get the opportunity to discover the literature, art, and history of the Romans. There are a lot of myths throughout the book, and students get to build on existing background knowledge they may have. Students are not often asked to participate in projects where they seek out information from the wider world. The book does not provide sources written for native speakers, although it does provide some examples of Latin made for native Latin speakers. The book does give additional reading for the students to pursue, but almost never in authentic Latin.

There are several times in the book where students are presented with activities based around cognates. The book gives students a Latin word and a cognate that goes with it. The students are then asked to match the Latin word with its English meaning. This occurs several times throughout the book. There are also activities that give students a sentence with a cognate italicized, the book asks students to supply a correct Latin cognate for the word. The textbook has a few opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding of similarities and differences between English and Latin. For example, on pg125 there is a lesson on Roman numerals, and students are asked to find examples of Roman numerals in their own environment.

The textbook does not really ask students to communicate with speakers of the foreign language outside of their own classroom, however it does try to get students excited about reading authentic Latin in the future. The text does not consistently identify many everyday situations which require enhanced proficiency in the foreign language. The book does however lead students to believe that an understanding of Latin will generally enrich their lives. The text does not present foreign language or culture projects involving interacting with the local community. The book does mention that there are opportunities to see the language in everyday life, it makes a connection between the super bowl and Roman numerals. At the end of culture activities and interspersed throughout the book are

suggested readings on Roman culture, while some may not view it as leisure, I and possibly a few students would very much enjoy the time spent reading on Roman culture.

I think that overall, the textbook is alright. The textbook is not magnificently in line with the 5c's, but out of the textbooks I have read this one comes the closest to being in line with ACTFL's standards. The book could be immediately improved by asking students to communicate in Latin from the beginning. If I were to use it, I would make sure to supplement with a lot of my own spoken Latin activities. I would also incorporate more authentic Latin in classroom activities. This book would not be my first selection if I was given a choice, but the textbook offers a solid foundation. I think I would be able to build activities in the classroom to make up for the shortcomings of the book.