

Classical Language Readers: Description

Hans Ørberg's famous *Lingua latina per se illustrata*¹² (henceforth, *LLPSI*), originally published in 1955, was revolutionary in its reliance on the target language alone in leading the reader towards language proficiency starting all the way from zero (or almost). The book comes in two volumes (of 35 and 21 chapters, respectively), each of which includes a continuous narrative centered around life in Ancient Rome. The narrative in volume 1 is authorial, whilst the one in volume 2 moves through adapted to largely original selections of Roman authors, such as Ovid, Vergil and Cicero. The texts are separated in chapters and accompanied with captioned illustrations as well as abundant marginal notes on different aspects of the language. Chapters also include grammatical notes and related exercises.

Fabulae Faciles (1903)³ is a Latin reader composed by Francis Ritchie long before comprehensible input was coined as a term. The reader includes 100 short Latin stories, ordered in ascending difficulty. The stories are based on literary works and historical events, related to Ancient Rome.

Likely inspired by *LLPSI*, *Athenaze*⁴⁵ is a two-volume introduction to the Ancient Greek language, composed by Maurice Balme and Gilbert Lawall in 2003. The first volume contains 16 chapters, which feature related texts of increasing difficulty describing 'the daily life of the ancient Greeks as it was

¹*Pars I: Familia Romana*, 2nd ed. (Focus Publishing Company, 2011). <https://hackettpublishing.com/lingua-latina-pars-i-familia-romana-full-color-edition>.

²*Pars II: Roma Aeterna*, 2nd ed. (Focus Publishing Company, 2017). <https://hackettpublishing.com/lingua-latina-pars-ii-roma-aeterna-second-edition-with-full-color-illustrations>.

³*Ritchie's Fabulae Faciles: A First Latin Reader*, ed. John Copeland Kirtland (Project Gutenberg, September 2005)

⁴*Athenaze: An Introduction to Ancient Greek. Book I*, 2nd ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003)

⁵*Book II*, 2nd ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003)

shaped and given meaning by historical developments, political events, and the life of the mind as revealed in mythology, religion, philosophy, literature, and art'. In contrast, the 14 texts that make up the second volume are typically unadapted works of classical Ancient Greek authors, such as Homer, Herodotus, and Thucydides. Apart from the main text, each chapter contains captioned illustrations, vocabulary lists, grammatical explanations and exercises. The book's second edition also features the sections 'Classical Greek', 'New Testament Greek' and 'Greek wisdom'. Unlike the case of *LLPSI*, the English language is present in the face translations of vocabulary items, cultural information and exercise instructions.

In many aspects, *Logos* by Santiago Carbonell Martínez (2023)⁶ is an even closer equivalent of *LLPSI* for the Ancient Greek language; in fact, its subtitle tellingly reads 'Logos. Lingua graeca per se illustrata'. Very similarly to *LLPSI*, *Logos* contains graded Greek texts in its 32 chapters, accompanied with captioned illustrations, marginal notes, grammatical explanations and exercises (all in Greek). Understandable by readers with no previous experience in the language, the beginning text is perceptively simpler to the one offered in *Athenaze*. The pronunciation is also simplified compared to the latter, such as by the absence of vowel length signs. Unlike both *LLPSI* and *Athenaze*, *Logos* features thematically organised discrete stories rather than an uninterrupted narrative line, although narrative elements do emerge at a given point.

Miles Van Pelt and Gary Pratico's *Graded Reader of Biblical Hebrew* (2006)⁷ (henceforth, *GRBH*) contains 30 Biblical Hebrew texts (202 Bible verses) in increasing levels of difficulty. The texts have been compiled to constitute a graded reader rather than adapted, and a variety of texts has been sought. Apart from the main texts, the book features footnotes with explanations of various textual aspects, verb lists, grammatical commentary and parsing exercises. Students are assumed to already have beginner knowledge of the Hebrew language, and they are aided to move onto the intermediate level. The authors have also composed additional learning materials in the language, including grammar-related resources and vocabulary flashcards.

Finally, *Biblical Hebrew Easy Stories*⁸ (henceforth, *BHES*) by Bethany

⁶*Logos. Hellenike glossa autoeikonographemēni* (Cultura Clásica, 2023).

⁷*Graded Reader of Biblical Hebrew: A Guide to Reading the Hebrew Bible* (Zondervan Academic, August 2006)

⁸(Aleph with Beth / Betheden Ministries, 2020–). <https://freehebrew.online/resources/>.

and Andrew Case is not a stand-alone resource but a part of a multi-faceted Biblical Hebrew course featured on the YouTube channel *Aleph with Beth* as well as on the related website, *Free Hebrew*. The associated course is based on comprehensible input and up to date contains over 200 video lessons. The easy stories that are to be used for the purpose of this project are transcribed unrelated stories that accompany the video course and, within its framework, gradually increase in difficulty. Most of the stories are based on the Hebrew Bible, while others are authorial. Currently, the resource features 52 stories.