News from Rome

In vīllā sedet vir Rōmānus, nōmine Gāius Cornēlius, quī est pater Mārcī et Cornēliae. Cornēlius est senātor Rōmānus. Sōlus sedet quod multās epistulās scrībere vult. Dum pater occupātus est, Mārcus et Sextus et Cornēlia in agrīs vīcīnīs errant. Ibi multōs servōs labōrantēs spectant.

Subitō nūntium cōnspiciunt quī ad eōs venit. Nūntius, ubi advenit, puerōs salūtat. 5

"Salvē!" respondet Mārcus. "Quem tū petis?"

Nūntius, "Gāium Cornēlium petō," inquit.

Mārcus, "Gāius Cornēlius est pater meus," inquit. "Est in vīllā." Nūntium in vīllam dūcit et patrem petit.

"Pater," inquit Mārcus, "nūntius in vīllā est." 10

Cornēlius statim venit et nūntium salūtat. Epistulam nūntius trādit. Cornēlius, ubi epistulam legit, "Ēheu!" inquit. "Prīnceps senātōrēs Rōmānōs ad urbem revocat. Eōs cōnsulere vult. Necesse est ad urbem redīre."

"Eugepae!" clāmat Sextus, quī Rōmam īre vult. Gemit Cornēlia quod Flāvia ad urbem venīre nōn potest. 15

3 **occupātus,** *busy*
4 labōrantēs, *working*
spectant, *(they) watch, look at*
5 **nūntius,** *messenger*
venit, *(he/she) comes*
salūtat, *(he/she) greets*
6 **Salvē!** *Greetings! Hello!*
7 **inquit,** *(he/she) says*
8 **meus,** *my*
9 **dūcit,** *(he/she) leads, takes*
11 **trādit,** *(he/she) hands over*
12 Ēheu! interj., *Alas! Oh no!*
prīnceps, *emperor*
ad urbem, *to the city*
revocat, *(he/she) recalls*
13 **cōnsulere,** *to consult*
redīre, *to return*
14 Eugepae! interj., *Hurray!*
īre, *to go*

Exercise 7a

Respondē Latīnē:

1. Cūr Cornēlius sōlus sedet?
2. Ubi Mārcus et Sextus et Cornēlia errant?
3. Quōs spectant in agrīs? **Quōs...?** *Whom...?* (plural)
4. Quis advenit?
5. Quem nūntius petit?
6. Cūr prīnceps senātōrēs Rōmānōs ad urbem revocat?
7. Quis clāmat "Eugepae!"? Cūr?
8. Cūr gemit Cornēlia?

FORMS

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Nouns and Adjectives: The Endings -ās, -ōs, and -ēs

Look at these three sentences:

Mult***ās*** epistul***ās*** scrībit.	*He writes many letters.*
Mult***ōs*** serv***ōs*** spectant.	*They watch many slaves.*
Senātōr***ēs*** Rōmān***ōs*** revocat.	*He recalls the Roman senators.*

The words **multās epistulās, multōs servōs,** and **senātōrēs Rōmānōs** introduce you to new endings. You already know that most singular Latin nouns and adjectives end in ***-m*** when they are used as direct objects (DO) (see page 20). Plural nouns and adjectives used as direct objects usually end in ***-s*** preceded by a long vowel, e.g., **mult*ās* epistul*ās*, mult*ōs* serv*ōs*,** and **senātōr*ēs* Rōmān*ōs*.**

EXERCISE 7b

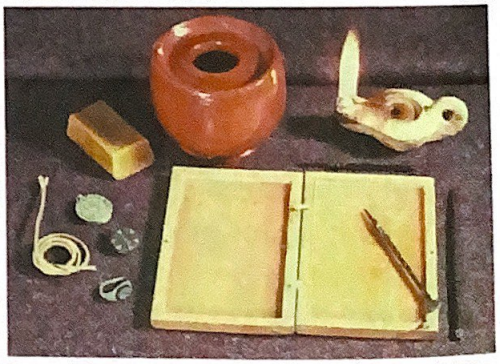
Read each sentence aloud. Then locate the direct object in each sentence and say whether it is singular or plural. Also locate any adjectives, identify the nouns that they modify, and give the gender of each of these nouns. Then translate:

1. Cornēlius multās epistulās scrībit.
2. Puerī magnam arborem in agrīs vident.
3. Nūntius quī ad puerōs venit magnōs clāmōrēs audit.
4. Magnās vōcēs audit.
5. Nūntius puerōs dēfessōs salūtat.
6. Prīnceps senātōrēs Rōmānōs ad urbem revocat.
7. Sextus ad magnam urbem īre vult.
8. Cornēlia ad urbem redīre nōn vult quod vīllam rūsticam et amīcam vīcīnam amat.

EXERCISE 7c

Using story 7 as a guide, give the Latin for:

1. Cornelius wants to write many letters.
2. Marcus and Sextus watch many slaves working in the fields.
3. The messenger greets the boys.
4. The messenger is looking for Gaius Cornelius.
5. The messenger hands over a letter.
6. It is necessary to return to the city immediately.
7. Sextus wishes to go to Rome, but Flavia cannot.



Roman writing artifacts

Nouns: Cases and Declensions

Nominative and Accusative Cases

The form of the Latin noun when used as the *subject* of a verb or as a *complement* with **est** or **sunt** is known as the *nominative case*.

The form of the Latin noun when used as the *direct object* of a verb is known as the *accusative case*.

For example:

Nominative	Accusative
Lup***us*** eum terret. *The wolf frightens him.*	Puellae lup***um*** vident. *The girls see the wolf.*
Lup***ī*** puerōs terrent. *The wolves frighten the boys.*	Servī lup***ōs*** repellunt. *The slaves drive off the wolves.*
Puell***a*** est laet***a***. *The girl is happy.*	Māter puell***am*** laet***am*** videt. *The mother sees the happy girl.*

Most nouns that you have met belong in the following groups or *declensions*:

Number Case	1st Declension	2nd Declension			3rd Declension	
Singular						
Nominative	puéll***a***	sérv***us***	púer	áger	páter	vōx
Accusative	puéll***am***	sérv***um***	púer***um***	ágr***um***	pátr***em***	vŏc***em***
Plural						
Nominative	puéll***ae***	sérv***ī***	púer***ī***	ágr***ī***	pátr***ēs***	vŏc***ēs***
Accusative	puéll***ās***	sérv***ōs***	púer***ōs***	ágr***ōs***	pátr***ēs***	vŏc***ēs***

Be sure to learn these forms thoroughly. Note how each word is accented.

NOTES

1. In the 2nd declension, most nouns end in ***-us*** in the nominative singular (e.g., **servus**), but there are a few like **puer, ager,** and **vir** that end in ***-r***. In both types, however, the accusative singular ends in ***-um*** and the accusative plural in ***-ōs***.
2. Although **arbor, pater,** and **māter** end in ***-r***, their other endings identify them as 3rd declension nouns.
3. In the 3rd declension, you will note that the nouns you have met end in different ways in the nominative singular (e.g., **arbor, prīnceps, urbs, pater, vōx**). Nevertheless, their accusative singulars all end in ***-em***, and both nominative and accusative plurals end in ***-ēs***.
4. Most 1st declension nouns are feminine; most 2nd declension nouns are masculine; some 3rd declension nouns are masculine, e.g., **pater**, and some are feminine, e.g., **vōx**.

EXERCISE 7d

In the sentences in Exercise 7b, locate all the nouns and identify their declension, gender, case, and number.

BUILDING THE MEANING

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Reading with Attention to Cases

When you are reading a Latin sentence, identifying the case of each noun *as you meet it* will help you decide what the function of the word will be in the sentence as a whole. As you meet each noun and decide its function, you will form expectations about what is likely to come later to complete the meaning of the sentence.

Consider the following sentences:

1. **Servus currit.**
   The first word we meet is **servus**. We know that it is the subject of the verb because we recognize that it is in the nominative case. The verb (**currit**) then tells us what the slave is "doing."
2. **Servus Dāvum cōnspicit.**
   We go from **servus** (nominative = subject) to **Dāvum** and recognize that **Dāvum** is the direct object of the verb because we recognize it as accusative case. **Dāvum** also tells us that the verb in this sentence is transitive, because **Dāvum** is a direct object and direct objects appear only with transitive verbs. The verb tells us what the slave is "doing" to Davus.
3. **Dāvum puerī vexant.**
   The first word we meet is **Dāvum**. We recognize it as accusative case. The next word is **puerī**. We recognize that it is nominative, and therefore it is *the boys* who are doing something to Davus. The verb **vexant** tells us what they are doing.
4. **Rāmum arripit.**
   We recognize **Rāmum** as accusative case, and we know immediately that someone is doing something to a branch. Since there is no noun in the nominative case, the *ending* of the verb indicates the subject (*he/she*) and the *meaning* of the verb completes the sense.

EXERCISE 7e

Read each sentence aloud. Identify subjects and direct objects, as in the examples above. Then translate:

1. Lupus puellās terret.
2. Puellae silvam amant.
3. Dāvum et servōs puerī vexāre nōn timent.
4. Puerōs et puellās lupī semper terrent.
5. Servī lupōs ex agrīs repellunt.

Mercury, the Roman god of messengers. The wings on the head and feet and the caduceus, or herald's wand, identify this figure as Mercury.
Detail of the ceiling of Palazzo Clerici, Milan, Italy

Nominative or Accusative Plural? How Do You Decide?

In 3rd declension nouns, the ending of both the nominative and accusative plural is *-ēs*. When you meet a noun with this ending, you cannot tell from the word itself whether it will be a subject or a direct object. To do so in the sentences below, you must first identify the case of the other noun in each sentence. Note the kind of logic modeled below these sentences:

1. Puerī clāmōrēs audiunt.
2. Puerōs clāmōrēs terrent.
3. Prīnceps senātōrēs excipit.
4. Prīncipem senātōrēs excipiunt.
5. Clāmōrēs mātrēs audiunt.
6. Magnōs clāmōrēs patrēs audiunt.
7. Magnī clāmōrēs patrēs terrent.

In sentence 1, since **puerī** is in the nominative case and is therefore the subject of the verb, **clāmōrēs** must be in the accusative case and is therefore the direct object.

In sentence 2, since **puerōs** is accusative, **clāmōrēs** must be nominative.

In sentence 3, since **prīnceps** is nominative, we assume that **senātōrēs** will be accusative. This is confirmed by the singular transitive verb **excipit**.

In sentence 4, since **prīncipem** is accusative, we assume that **senātōrēs** will be nominative. This is confirmed by the fact that the verb **excipiunt** is plural.

In sentence 5, where both nouns end in *-ēs* and the verb is plural, it is the sense that indicates that **clāmōrēs** is accusative and **mātrēs** nominative.

In sentences 6 and 7 the endings on the adjectives tell that **clāmōrēs** is accusative in 6 and nominative in 7.

EXERCISE 7f

Read each sentence aloud. Identify subjects and direct objects, as in the preceding examples. Then translate:

1. Servus senātōrēs videt.
2. Arborēs puerī saepe ascendunt.
3. Clāmōrēs puellās terrent.
4. Patrēs magnōs fragōrēs audiunt.
5. Patrem vōcēs vexant.
6. Vōcēs in hortō audit.
7. Patrēs in viā cōnspiciunt.
8. Patrēs puerōs in viā cōnspiciunt.
9. Patrēs sollicitī clāmōrēs audiunt.
10. Magnās vōcēs patrēs audiunt.

Peristyle of the luxurious *vīlla urbāna* owned by Poppaea Sabina, wife of the emperor Nero, at Oplontis, between Pompeii and Herculaneum
Torre Annunziata, Italy, first century A.D.

ADDITIONAL READING:
The Romans Speak for Themselves: Book I: "Roman Roots in the Country," pages 10–17.