



## Student Activities

### Activity 1

Download and listen to the podcast of the 'In Our Time' discussion of Roman satire at: [BBC Radio 4 - In Our Time, Roman Satire](#)

While you listen, make notes on:

- a) Who were the key writers of satire in ancient Rome and when did they live?
- b) In what ways did Roman satire differ from modern forms of satire?
- c) In what ways did the change from a republic to imperial rule impact Roman satire?

### Activity 2

Satire 6 is an attack on women as potential wives and purports to divide women up into different groups, all of them unsuitable as marriage partners.

- a) Work through the poem making a list of all the different kinds of women described
- b) Discuss the ways in which the speaker exaggerates for satiric purposes

### Activity 3

The attack on women in Satire 6 is not the first case of misogyny in the ancient world. Check out some or all of the following texts and compare them with Juvenal's poem:

- a) The myth of Pandora in Hesiod's Theogony 507-616 ([Hesiod \(fl.750–650 BC\) - Theogony \(poetryintranslation.com\)](#))
- b) Semonides Fragment 7 which divides women into species of animal (vixen, bitch, cow etc) and accredits them with appropriate flaws (temper, stupidity, nosiness etc). Read it online at: [Women, by Semonides of Amorgos \(Poem 7\) – Diotíma \(diotima-doctafemina.org\)](#)



- c) Euripides *Hippolytus* 616-668, where the furious title characters vents his anger at women after he has been propositioned by the nurse on behalf of his own stepmother. Access it online at: [Euripides \(c.480–c.406 BC\) - Hippolytus: Translated by George Theodoridis \(poetryintranslation.com\)](https://www.poetryintranslation.com/Euripides/c.480-c.406-BC-Hippolytus-Translated-by-George-Theodoridis).
- d) In Athenian comedy women are often depicted as drunken, feckless and sex-mad: see for instance Aristophanes' plays *Lysistrata* (where the women of Athens struggle to abstain from sex in a bid to force their husbands to make peace in the war with Sparta) and *Women at the Thesmophoria* (where women plot against the playwright Euripides for his hostile depiction of their misbehaviour in his plays).
- e) Roman poets also could be harsh in their treatment of women: Horace's *Epodes* 8 and 12 are among the most obscene poems in antiquity and focus on the sexual shortcomings of named women. See [Horace \(65 BC–8 BC\) - The Epodes and Carmen Saeculare \(poetryintranslation.com\)](https://www.poetryintranslation.com/Horace/65-BC-8-BC-The-Epodes-and-Carmen-Saeculare). See also Catullus (41, 43) and Martial (e.g. 3.93).

#### Activity 4

Satire 14 is a long discursive poem with especial focus on avarice as a fault passed down from parents to children. Create a section-by-section summary of the poem which will help you to see the overall structure of the poem and also to remember the salient features as preparation for the essay question.

#### Activity 5

Satire 15 recounts the murderous warring between two Egyptian tribes. Make notes in detail on how the battle began and how it progressed. Can you find other accounts of ancient battles in epic poetry with which to compare it? Look for instance at the battle scenes in: Homer's *Iliad* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. To what extent is Juvenal trying to make his satire epic in form and content?

### Activity 6

Satire 3 was imitated by Dr Johnson in his poem *London* (accessible at: [Johnson, "London" \(1738 Edition\) \(jacklynch.net\)](#) or in print in *Johnson's Juvenal* by Niall Rudd (Bristol, 1988)). If you were to write a modern satire on a city making similar points to Juvenal, which city would you choose and how would you go about it?