

A mosaic-style illustration of a bearded man, likely a Roman deity or historical figure, wearing a laurel wreath and holding a staff. The background is a textured, light-colored mosaic.

DE ROMANIS FAQS

GETTING STARTED WITH *DE ROMANIS*

We're thinking about introducing the course in September: what advice do you have for getting started?

de Romanis is very different from other courses because it's designed for a flexible approach. This means that you'll be able to choose which exercises to use to suit your classes and how to use them. There is lots of advice in the Teacher's Guide (available for free online) and it's worth reading this to understand how the course works and how to increase / decrease the difficulty level and what to prioritise / leave out. There is also advice on how get your classes really enthusiastic about the Classical world.

What does a typical *de Romanis* lesson look like?

Because the course is designed to be flexible, there is no such thing as a typical lesson in terms of approach. Different teachers will use the course in different ways. We hope, though, that this flexibility means that it'll be typical to be able to teach a lesson which suits the time you have available, the age and ability of your students, and to be able to discuss interesting things about the Romans all the way through.

What digital resources are available?

There are lots of resources on the companion website to support the course. These include vocab flashcards (via Quizlet links), electronic copies of the Latin stories and vocab lists, printable worksheets for all Additional Language exercises, comprehension questions, worksheets for the culture and content for each chapter, and vocab / grammar quizzes. The Teacher's Guide is also online and this gives lots of advice about how to use the course. Answers to all language exercises are in a password protected section along with end of chapter tests.

Is there a teacher guide to follow alongside the textbooks?

Yes: this includes an introduction to the course to explain how it is structured and how to use the materials to create different levels of difficulty. There are also detailed notes for each chapter. These give advice about how to introduce the culture and content material, how to explain the trickier bits of grammar, and what to prioritise if you are short of time.

What is it about the course that you think will capture the imagination of students?

Everything in the course is authentic and based on something original from the ancient world and this means that students know that they are learning something 'real' about the past. Each chapter has a different focus and this keeps students interested. The stories, illustrations, colour images and questions for discussion all pull students in and fire their imaginations. The Teacher's Guide has plenty of advice about how to capture students' interest.

How does the course connect with a) GCSE syllabus, b) Latin to GCSE and c) the Cambridge Language Course (CLC)?

de Romanis is designed to offer a smooth progression to GCSE and is centred around the GCSE syllabus. It covers all material from Latin to GCSE Book 1 and much of the start of Book 2. This means that students will find progression to GCSE very straightforward because they can either move easily into *Latin to GCSE* Book 2, or finish the GCSE syllabus via Essential GCSE Latin. The early books of the CLC are not particularly closely aligned to GCSE, and so the crossover in content between *de Romanis* and CLC Books 1-3 isn't as tight as the crossover with *Latin to GCSE* Book 1.

A mosaic depicting a Roman deity, likely Neptune or a similar god, with a beard and long hair, holding a trident. The background is a textured, golden-brown mosaic.

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Will this course help to recruit students to Latin GCSE as well as Classical Civilisation?

Yes, absolutely! Students will be well-prepared for all aspects of Latin GCSE, including topics for the Roman life paper. The comprehension questions for the Latin stories for *de Romanis* Book 2 build skills for literary analysis too, and the cultural content of the course is designed to give a good context for the literature papers.

What are the advantages of the ebooks rather than hard copy?

This is very much a matter of teacher preference, but the ebooks are easy to transport and mean that students can access the course content wherever they are.

How can we use *de Romanis* alongside other courses?

de Romanis is designed to be used alongside *Latin to GCSE* because it covers everything from *Latin to GCSE* Book 1 and much of the first two chapters in Book 2.

Can you offer ways on how best to excite pupils in their very first lesson

There is lots of advice about this in the Teacher's Guide, but we have found that students are immediately excited by the stories of the Olympian gods and love to share / develop what they already know. The opening image for Chapter 1 has been chosen for its high impact and to show how different the Classical gods were from, e.g. the Christian God: it's possible to have really interesting discussions in the first lesson about why the Romans worshipped gods who were not 'good' or kind, and to set exciting creative work about this to make sure the students are fully engaged.

TEACHING STRATEGIES IN *DE ROMANIS*

Can you explain the rationale for the Grammar Syllabus, in particular the decision to start with the perfect tense, and the decision to introduce the passive before the subjunctive?

The rationale for the Grammar Syllabus is explained in full in the Teacher's Guide, and it's worth reading this because the course is quite different from many others. The decision to start with the perfect tense was partly because it is the main narrative tense in Latin but also because it is the easiest for students to learn because the endings are the same for all verbs. This means that we can introduce the more complex tense endings (and the concept of conjugations) gradually.

How can you support the teaching of difficult narratives, such as Lucretia, and what made you choose some of the more shocking images?

The Teacher's Guide for each chapter discusses what students are likely to find difficult or challenging in the culture and context materials and how a teacher might best handle this material. Some of the material in the course is shocking to a modern audience, and we included this when it was integral to the Roman world. We wanted to tell the story of the Romans with as much authenticity as possible. We've found that the students respond really well to this because they know that the material hasn't been sanitised for a modern audience. The course, however, is designed to be flexible, and it's possible to leave out any of the Latin stories, or choose not to dwell on particular images, and so we hope that teachers will find they can move through the course in a way which suits their own contexts.



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There is a lot of English text to get through in the book. What strategies do you have for going through this with reluctant readers?

Because the course is designed to be flexible there are multiple ways to approach any bit of its content. The introduction to each chapter can be read in full, or broken down into sections, and there are supplementary resources (e.g. power points presentations / worksheets) to help scaffold this material. Some teachers might choose just to tell students about the content, or to handle it via focussing on the images rather than text.

Can this resource be used to teach KS2 pupils

Yes, and part of the trials involved students of this age. Teachers keen to use it with younger students, however, might need to scaffold certain tasks and there is advice in the Teacher's Guide (both the introduction to the course and the material for each chapter) about how to do this.

How long would you expect to spend in each chapter

This depends on the age of students and available teaching time, and it's possible to move through pretty quickly if teachers are short on time. There's no particular need to dash through though, and - if time allows - students often enjoy doing the extension / discussion / creative tasks available for a chapter. Any student who has reached the end of Chapter 9 by the end of Y9 will be well set for progression to GCSE and we have found that we have plenty of time to complete the GCSE syllabus even if *de Romanis* lasts into the Spring Term of Y10.

Any ideas for creative activities?

Lots and lots! There's a section on this for each chapter in the Teacher's Guide.

How do you envisage teachers making the most of the Additional Language sections at the end of each chapter? And can you suggest time-efficient ways to use the Sources?

The structure of the course is explained in the Teacher's Guide 'Introduction to the Course' material. This details how the difficulty of the Additional Language material varies according to section, and how this material can also be used as vocab consolidation or stretch and challenge material. The sources can be used as suits time / interests. We have found them really good as introductory material for a chapter, and often do the questions orally in class. They can provide good material for cover lessons too, or for extended written tasks. It's always worth being selective and a teacher might choose to read a source in class but set just a couple of the questions for students to answer independently.

Why did you opt to introduce the passive before participles and subjunctives?

Present participles are introduced before the passive because they are much easier to translate than the passive and we wanted students to have plenty of time to grow comfortable with the concept of a participle before meeting the much harder perfect passive participle. We introduce the passive in Chapters 9-12 because it is worth doing the passive really gradually. Students often find it very difficult because they often don't really understand the passive in English; the aim was to allow them the chance to get really confident with it before moving on to deponent verbs (if they choose to continue with Latin to GCSE). The subjunctive isn't included in this course; this is because it can be taught fairly quickly for GCSE at the end of a GCSE course and therefore didn't need a slow and steady run-in in the way that the passive and participles do. We give lots of advice in the Teacher's Guide about how best to explain the harder bits of grammar.



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What made you choose those pieces of artwork for each chapter?

We wanted a range of material so that each chapter contained images which were visually striking and which helped to tell the stories. The digital images are there to give a direct link to pieces of evidence from the Roman world and the hand-drawn illustrations help to convey the emotions and atmosphere of the stories in an imaginative way. Students tend to enjoy being able to jump straight into something via an image and they like the fact that the Roman world was very different from our own.

Could you go into more detail about how you include declensions and tenses? Is it done through the texts or separately?

All grammar material is woven into a syllabus designed to achieve a smooth progression through material and to facilitate the Latin stories. We wanted to make sure that as far as possible the Latin text was constructed only from things which the students already knew. This meant that we needed the flexibility of vocab from across the conjugations and declensions. To achieve this without bombarding students with too many endings at once we start with the perfect tense (where the endings are the same for all verbs regardless of conjugation) and we teach the case endings by case across the three major declensions. This brings with it the benefit of establishing recognisable patterns across the case endings (e.g. *-am*, *-um*, *-em* for the accusative sg endings). The grammar syllabus is explained in full in the Teacher's Guide introduction to the course. In each chapter, new grammar content is explained in the Core Language section and teachers can choose whether to practise it using the Latin sentences, stories or the Additional Language materials.

PROGRESSION AND LEVELS IN *DE ROMANIS*

What year group would you suggest we start using the first book with?

We trialled the course with students from KS2 as well as KS3 and we are confident that it can be used to suit students of any age from Y5 upwards. Teachers might need to scaffold (or build in extra extension material) depending on the age of their students, and there is advice in the Teacher's Guide about how to do this easily using the course's wide range of material.

What further resources would you suggest to bridge the gap between the end of Book 2 and GCSE Language requirements?

Teachers can finish the GCSE syllabus by using the last few chapters of *Latin to GCSE Book 2* (much of Chapters 7 and 8 of this course is covered with *de Romanis*) or by using *Essential GCSE Latin*. We've found that it works well to teach the remaining content fairly quickly using *Essential GCSE Latin*, and then move onto GCSE past papers for consolidation and practice, scaffolding the translation work to begin with.

Does it include all GCSE vocab?

de Romanis contains 360 words; just over 100 words are left for students who continue to the OCR GCSE, and fewer than this for students who take the WJEC specification.

Do you assume a certain level of English grammatical knowledge?

Our aim was that *de Romanis* would be a course which would develop English literacy. This means that all grammatical concepts are explained with English examples first. Lots of attention is given to areas which are not easy within English (e.g. parts of speech).

A mosaic depicting a bearded man with a halo, likely a saint or deity, holding a fish. The background is a textured, light-colored mosaic.

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How has first teaching with *de Romanis* gone?

Our experience has been that students have responded really well. They have been much more engaged by the content, class discussions have been much more interesting, and we've had a really good take-up for GCSE from across the year group (including those who do not find languages easy). We've also found that the progression to A Level has been much smoother because students have a better general knowledge of the Classical world and are much more secure in their understanding of key grammatical concepts.

Could this course be used by a non-specialist? / For speakers of non-European languages, how to effectively take up Latin?

This course can be used by a non-specialist because students will never meet anything in the Latin which has not been previously explained (or which isn't glossed separately). Answers for all language exercises are available in a password protected section of the companion website and there is a guide to pronunciation in the Teacher's Guide. Audio recordings are available for some of the Latin stories online, and this will help non-specialists feel confident in their pronunciation.

For more information on *de Romanis* visit: [bloomsbury.com/deromanis](https://www.bloomsbury.com/deromanis)

Additional teacher resources can be found on the companion website:
<https://www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/de-romanis/home>