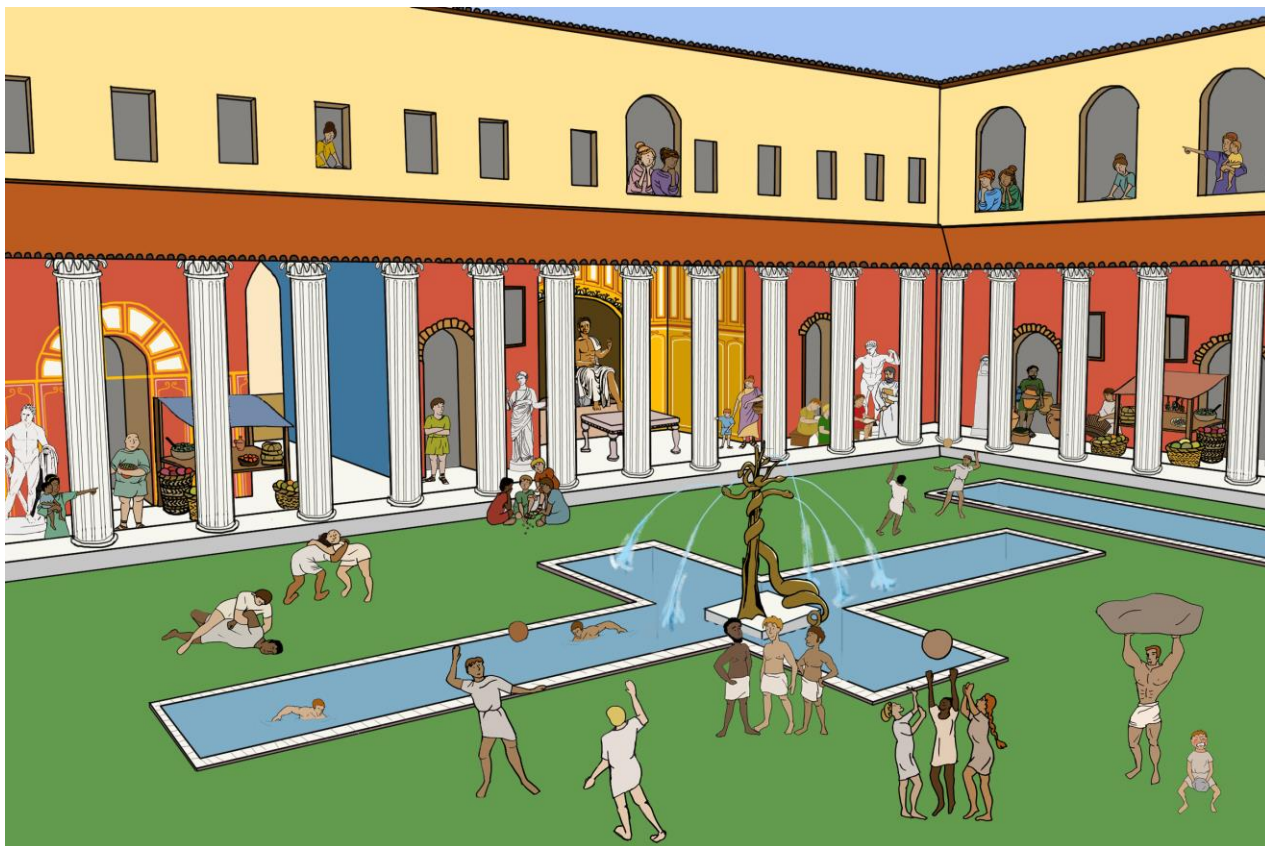


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Chapter 2 - Going to school

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Interactive image

The palaestra.

Archaeology

The palaestra and the activities which would have taken place there.

Mystery object: a stylus.

Stories

1. *Going to school*: Marcus and Silvia go to school and meet an unexpected character.
2. *The cat wanders*: Ulysses the cat wanders through the town, discovering characters in various places.
3. *Where is Silvia?* Silvia cannot be found - her mother Cara looks for her around the town.

Language development and sentence patterns

Main verb at the end of the sentence:

Silvia advenit.

Silvia arrives.

Marcus in via ambulat.

Marcus is walking in the street.

Sentences including a negative:

Silvia non est in palaestra.

Silvia isn't in the palaestra.

Vocabulary for learning

<i>advenit</i>	arrives
<i>ambulat</i>	walks
<i>dominus</i>	master
<i>feles</i>	cat
<i>magister</i>	teacher

<i>non</i>	not
<i>palaestra</i>	exercise ground
<i>sedet</i>	sits
<i>ubi</i>	where
<i>villa</i>	house

Civilisation

Roman education: who would have gone to school, what they would have learnt and the differences between ancient and modern education. The evidence for Roman schools.

Factfile

Marcus and Silvia, the children (including reasons for lack of evidence for children in the ancient world).

Mythology

The story of Odysseus' return home from Troy and its depiction in art. What makes a hero?

INTERACTIVE IMAGE - THE PALAESTRA

**Objectives**

The Interactive image is an opportunity for children to explore a location in depth, and find out about daily life through interpreting the drawn imagining of it. You may wish to come back to the Interactive image at the start of successive lessons on this topic.

- Children become familiar with the variety of activities that took place in the *palaestra*, an unusual mix in modern terms.
- They become familiar with the following Latin terms and their meanings: *palaestra* (the palaestra: exercise ground and meeting-place), *natatio* (swimming pool), *sedet* (is sitting), *fons* (fountain), *statua* (statue), *ambulat* (is walking), *athleta* (athlete). Avoid confusion with the two labels that are verbs (*ambulat* and *sedet*) by eliciting the English with questions like 'What is this boy doing?'.

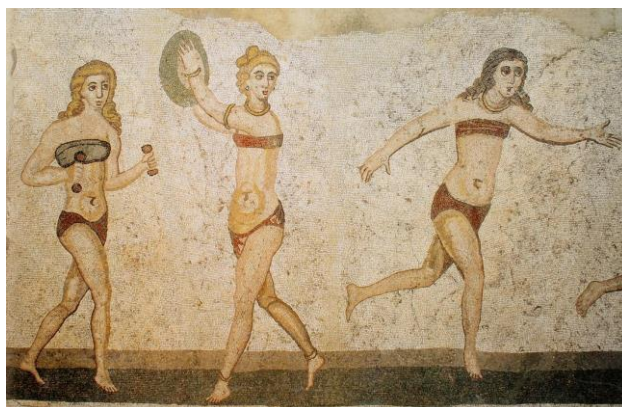
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Historical notes

The palaestra would have been a place to meet friends and relax as well as exercise and keep fit. It was a large space, approximately 105 x 70 metres, to accommodate the people in the town and it would have been an important social centre. The palaestra was a setting for people to spend leisure time but the importance of exercise and keeping fit in the Roman world is readily documented. In the central open area of the image the children can see various sports and exercises: wrestling, weight-lifting, ball-games, and swimming. The Romans would also have practised running and athletics in the palaestra.

The class may notice that almost all the people exercising are male. It is likely that the majority of people exercising in the palaestra would have been men but we do have some evidence of women exercising in Roman times, such as the mosaic from Villa Romana del Casale outside the town of Piazza Armerina in Central Sicily.

The fountain in the centre of the swimming pool (*natatio*) is an accurate reproduction of the bronze fountain found there. It depicts a five-headed serpent coiled around a tree stump, representing the Hydra which Hercules, the town's hero, defeated in one of his Twelve Labours. Fountains and water were a display of opulence and wealth since the water had to be brought in by aqueducts, a complicated and costly procedure.



Women exercising with weights wearing 'bikinis' from a mosaic from Villa Romana del Casale outside the town of Piazza Armerina in Central Sicily from the 4th Century AD.



Modern replica of the bronze fountain in the centre of the cruciform swimming pool in the palaestra

Under the portico which ran all around, different stalls selling snacks and refreshments can be seen. These might have included fruit, olives, wine, and sweet delicacies like honey cakes. In the back corner of the image children may spot a school scene with three boys sitting on stools facing a teacher (*magister*), a character they may be familiar with from Chapter 1. This may seem an unusual setting for a school and more detail is given in the **Archaeology** and **Civilisation** notes in this Chapter.

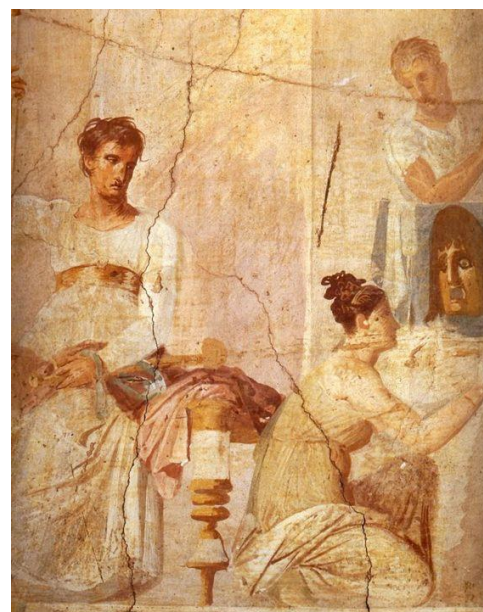
On the right side of the image (the north end of the palaestra) was a cryptoporticus, a vaulted corridor which probably housed more shops. Above this, the children can see women looking out of the windows onto the palaestra below. Scholars have noted that the palaestra at Herculaneum highlights the Roman interest in exercise as a spectacle and indicates that it was not only a training ground but also a setting for athletic competitions, on account of the excellent viewing platform from above the cryptoporticus.

The highly decorated hall in the centre of the west side of the portico is thought to be an area where athletes received medals.

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Children may notice how lavish it looks, and also the large statue. Although the setting looks very religious, the statue was of one of the Imperial family (although the line between the gods and the emperors was sometimes blurred, and dead emperors could be deified and worshipped as gods). The crowns, made of wreaths of olive branches, would have been placed on this table and here too sacrifices may have been offered, most likely lambs or kids. The Herculaneum games, and the feasts that followed them, were funded by a wealthy citizen. We know that the Proconsul Balbus, a relative of the wealthy Balbus in this course, was one of those who sponsored the Herculaneum games.

The palaestra in general would have been very richly decorated. Statues would have lined the walls along with frescoes, and modern scholars have compared the Roman palaestra to an art gallery. In Roman times this opulence was criticised; Seneca (Letters, 86, 4ff) writes that a bath is thought poor if the walls do not glisten with large round mosaics and if the following were lacking: Numidian marbles, a glass vault, Thasos marble silver taps, statues, and columns.



The Actor King, from the Palaestra in Herculaneum, now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Italy

- The *palaestra* is the palaestra or exercise ground. (It comes from the Greek παλαίειν (*palaiein*) - 'to wrestle'.)
- The *natatio* is the swimming pool (like 'natation' - *swimming* in French).
- *sedet* - is sitting (links to English sedate, sedative, sedentary)
- The *fons* is a fountain.
- The *statua*, very similar to English 'statue'.
- *ambulat* - 'is walking'. The English word 'perambulator' (pram) comes from this, a walker or stroller. Children are perhaps more likely to notice the similarity to the English word 'ambulance' which also derives from *ambulat*, stemming from a 'mobile or field hospital', literally a 'walking hospital', a slightly more roundabout derivation.

Points for discussion

- Can children work out all the different sports and games that are going on in the open area in the centre of the palaestra? Which of these do we still do today?
- What do they make of the variety of activities that is going on in the palaestra? Do they think it is a strange mix?
- Can they think of any modern-day equivalents to the Roman palaestra? (A leisure centre, big park, football stadium all have similarities.)

Activities

- See the *Guide to using The Primary Latin Course* for further activity ideas for the **Interactive image**.
- Download and print the worksheet **Spot the difference - the palaestra** or do it as a whole class activity, projecting the worksheet on the whiteboard.
- Ask the children to imagine they have gone back in time to the day of the Herculaneum games. They can write a fictional description of some of the events and what they see.

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ARCHAEOLOGY

Objectives

- Children are introduced to the palaestra and the wide range of activities which would have gone on there.
- It is also an opportunity for children to explore parts of the site which are only partially excavated.

Historical notes

How to use these notes: Please use these notes to advance your own understanding of the theme if you wish. They are likely to be much more comprehensive than what you might want to share with the children. Hopefully they will help anticipate some of the questions the children might ask.

1. The palaestra

The palaestra in Roman times was a large open space in the town where people would have met friends and exercised. Unusually, the large palaestra in Herculaneum is not attached to a bath complex (unlike the smaller palaestra you will see in Chapter 3). In this way it resembles more a Hellenistic palaestra, perhaps with influences from the Near East. The entrance to the palaestra, just next to Petulcius Felix' bakery, was through a monumental vestibule with a domed ceiling decorated like the night sky and painted with stars. Inside there were two pools: the long, rectangular northern pool is thought to have been a fish pond; the cross-shaped pool in the centre would have been used for swimming, a *natatio*. In the centre of this pool was a bronze fountain with a five-headed serpent coiled around a tree trunk. This represented the Hydra, one of the mythical beasts slaughtered by the town's hero Hercules in one of his Twelve Labours. A variety of exercises would have been practised in the palaestra such as running, weight-lifting, wrestling and various types of ball playing. The majority of those exercising in the palaestra were likely to be men but there are some sources which indicate women may also have practised some less strenuous sports and games. It is thought that unlike the Greeks, the Romans did not exercise naked and would have worn light tunics.

In the middle of the west portico, near the entrance, was an enormous hall with a marble floor and a marble table. Large statues of the Imperial family stood on the podium and it is thought that this is where athletes

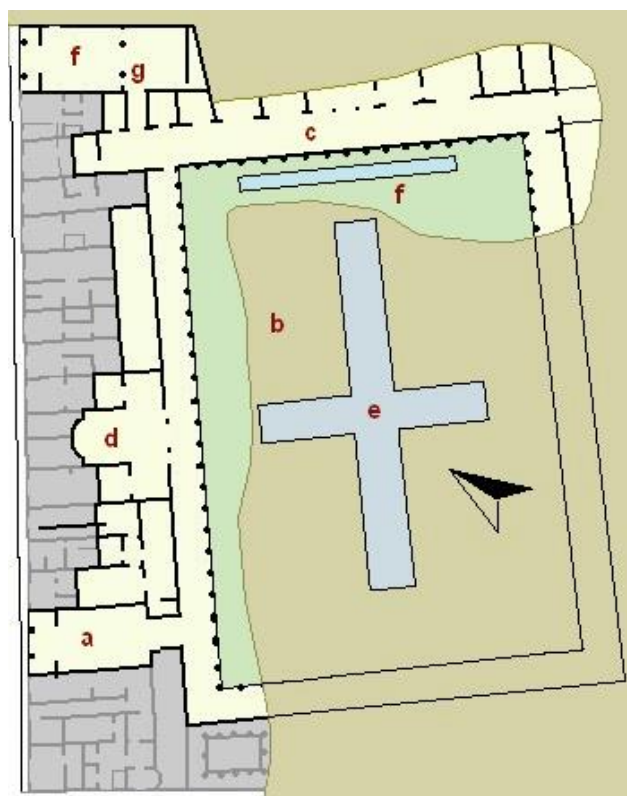


Diagram of the palaestra, showing which parts of the building are still buried. (a) Entrance, (b) exercise ground, (c) cryptoporticus, (d) prize hall, (e) swimming pool, (f) fish pond, (g) upper hall and access to Decumanus Maximus - Main street.

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would have received their prizes. The large palaestra at Herculaneum was surrounded by a portico which provided shade. Under the portico people would meet their friends and vendors would sell snacks and refreshments. Teachers also used this area for schooling. We know this from graffiti which has been found listing the children who had paid their school fees on one of the columns. Schooling and education is explored in more detail in the **Civilisation** section. The palaestra at Herculaneum was decorated very lavishly, maybe at the expense of a wealthy private citizen.

2. Stylus

For writing the Romans commonly used a *stylus* and a wax tablet. With the sharp end of the stylus they would scratch the letters into the wax and with the soft end they could smooth out the indentations so that the wax tablet could be used again. Romans also used pen and ink on parchment or papyrus (which grew around the Nile in Egypt, part of the Roman Empire). The tip of the pen would be made of reed or bronze and had a split nib. The ink was made of a mixture of carbon black, gum and water. In the context of the school setting a wax tablet and stylus would have been more common for children writing out exercises. Wax tablets could be bound together along the long edge by leather thongs or rings. Two tablets tied together was called a diptych and three formed a triptych.

3. Drawn reconstruction of school scene under the portico in the palaestra

This drawing reconstructs a possible scene under one of the porticoes in the large palaestra. The children sit on stools around the teacher and rest their tablets on their lap rather than a desk. In depth discussion of Roman schools is best postponed until the **Civilisation** section. Focus here on the ambient setting around the 'school'. It is strange for us to imagine men and women exercising and swimming in public alongside a school and we must imagine it was very noisy. This reconstruction invites children to think about the differences between their school setting and this imagined Roman one and all the distractions around it.

Images:

Screen 1 - north-west corner of the palaestra from the street

Screen 2 - plan of the palaestra and its structures

Screen 3 - the south-west corner of the large palaestra

Screen 4 - a Roman stylus probably made of either iron or bronze

Screen 5 - under the portico on the western edge of the large palaestra

Screen 6 - reconstructed wax tablet and stylus

Screen 7 - a Roman stylus probably made of either iron or bronze

Screen 8 - under the portico on the western edge of the large palaestra

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Points for discussion

A full discussion of Roman schooling and education is best postponed until the **Civilisation** section. In the **Interactive image** the children have seen the different activities which go on in the palaestra, so this is a good opportunity to talk about the setting of the school surrounded by all the noise and distractions. When thinking about the object, encourage the children to focus on the setting in which it was found (the palaestra). Which of the different activities that went on in the palaestra might have used this object?

- When revealing the drawn version of the scene in the palaestra, students may struggle to spot the stylus but remind them that it is only about 15 cm long.
- Once they have spotted it, allow them to try to work out how it is being used. It looks sharp so what are they scratching into and what marks are they making?

Activities

- Divide the children into groups and get them to act out different activities that might have been happening in the palaestra around the classroom (or outside), e.g. ball games, swimming, chatting, buying and selling food, at school etc. Let them rotate between the different activities. At the end ask how easy it would have been for a child to concentrate if that was their school environment? How distracting did they find the other groups in the class?
 - A great guide to making your own wax tablet: <http://timetravellerkids.co.uk/uncategorized/make-roman-wax-writing-tablet/>
-

TEACHER'S GUIDE

STORY 1 (CORE STORY): GOING TO SCHOOL

Storyline

Marcus and Silvia go to school and meet an unexpected character.

Objectives

- Children follow Marcus and Silvia as they go to school in the palaestra.
- Children read and hear Latin, becoming more familiar with the sounds of the language. They reinforce the sentence patterns from Chapter 1:

Marcus est in via. Marcus is in the street.

salve, magister! Hello, teacher!

feles est Ulysses! The cat is Ulysses!

And translate the new sentence patterns:

Marcus advenit. Marcus arrives.

Marcus in via ambulat. Marcus is walking in the street.

- Children should be familiar with the following vocabulary, which occurs in this story, by the end of this chapter:

advenit arrives

ambulat walks

feles cat

magister teacher

non not

sedet sits

Notes for teaching this story

The introduction of new verbs should pose relatively few problems and the children are likely to be able to work out what is happening with the help of the images.

- The sentences with the pattern *Marcus in via ambulat*, should be treated with care as they are the first example of the different order of words between Latin and English. You could approach them with a series of questions as follows, building on the knowledge gained from the previous sentence:

Q: "Who is in the picture?"

A: "Marcus."

Q: "Where is he?"

A: "In the street."

Q: "What is he doing?"

A: "Walking."

Then ask the students for a translation of the whole sentence. Allow them to translate it as 'Marcus in the street is walking', and if they do so ask them to phrase it in a way which seems more natural in English. This is an important point in the children's learning to read Latin: they should read Latin left to right (as English) and become used to information arriving in a different order. Discourage the students from 'jumping around' in the Latin, and let them know that in many languages, including Latin, the verb comes later in the sentence than it does in English.

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- For Latin present tense verbs like *ambulat*, both 'is walking' and 'walks' are good translations. One will usually sound more natural than the other in the context. Discuss this with children explicitly: which sounds better to them for this sentence?
- The story can be split into three parts:
 - 1. Marcus and Silvia go to school and greet the teacher (screens 1 - 6)
 - 2. Marcus recites the story of Ulysses, and Silvia is distracted by spotting a cat (screens 7 - 10)
 - 3. The children make their way home to their waiting mother, accompanied by the cat (11 - 13)
- This story is quite long, so maintain pace as you go through, keeping the children involved in the progression of the story (where do you think Marcus and Silvia might be going? Why do they call the cat Ulysses? Who do you think the mother is waiting for? Why does the mother look so surprised at the end? Did you expect the cat to come home with Marcus and Silvia?) to make sure they understand what is happening.
- The story Marcus recites about Ulysses contains some more complex sentence patterns, and vocabulary that will not be re-encountered. Don't spend too much time on this part of the story; the main thing is that the children understand the storyline, there's no need to discuss the language in detail. There may be children who know the story of Odysseus in the class and could it explain to others, and some may be confused about his different name here: Ulysses is the Latin name, Odysseus the Greek (see the **Mythology** section of this guide for further information about the hero).
- There are some harder to pronounce words in this text: ask the children to repeat words like *Ulysses*, *quoque*, *exspectat*. Who can roll their 'r's in the most Roman way for *errat*?

Activities

- In groups of four the children act out the story: narrator, Marcus, Silvia, teacher (the slave and Ulysses probably don't need full characters).
 - This is the first time that the children have encountered a slave directly. Take this opportunity to discuss briefly with the class the idea that many Romans did have slaves. The slave in the story is a *paedagogus* who looked after the children and accompanied them to school, carrying their equipment.
 - This story introduces some new commands: *sedete* (plural, 'sit down!'), and *ecce!* ('look!'). Introduce the children to some simple classroom commands, which you can put up on a poster or on the board. Decide on gestures for each, and play '*Caesar dicit*' ('Simon says') with the class, using:

<i>salvete</i> hello!	<i>valete</i> goodbye!	<i>ecce</i> look!
<i>sedete</i> sit down	<i>surgite</i> stand up	<i>tacete</i> be quiet
 - Let the children discuss, in pairs or as a class, how their school day looks different from Marcus and Silvia's. They may want to think about: how they get to school, their classroom vs. the palaestra (e.g. lack of tables, heat of the outdoors, writing on tablets with stylus, and stray animals wandering in), what kind of things they learn in school vs. Marcus' recital, the envisaged number of children in the class in the palaestra vs. their own.
-

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Transcript and translation

Marcus est in via. Marcus in via ambulat. Silvia est in via. Silvia in via ambulat. servus est in via. servus in via ambulat. Marcus advenit.

"salve, magister!"

"salve, puer!"

Silvia advenit.

"salve, Silvia!"

"salve, magister!"

"sedete!"

Silvia sedet. Marcus sedet. Marcus recitat. magister audit. Silvia audit. Marcus recitat:

"Ulysses est heros. Ulysses multos annos navigat. Ulysses non advenit. Ulysses errat."

feles intrat.

"ecce, feles!"

"feles errat! Ulysses quoque errat"

"feles est Ulysses!!"

mater exspectat. Marcus advenit. Silvia advenit. Ulysses quoque advenit.

"salve, Ulysses!"

Marcus is in the street. Marcus is walking in the street. Silvia is in the street. Silvia is walking in the street. The slave is in the street. The slave is walking in the street. Marcus arrives.

"Hello, teacher!"

"Hello, boy!"

Silvia arrives.

"Hello Silvia!"

"Hello, teacher!"

"Sit down!"

Silvia sits down. Marcus sits down. Marcus recites. The teacher listens. Silvia listens. Marcus recites:

"Ulysses is a hero. Ulysses sails for many years. Ulysses does not arrive. Ulysses wanders."

A cat enters.

"Look, a cat!"

"The cat wanders! Ulysses also wanders."

"The cat is Ulysses!!"

Mother is waiting. Marcus arrives. Silvia arrives. Ulysses also arrives.

"Hello Ulysses!"

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STORY 2 (CONSOLIDATION): THE CAT WANDERS

Storyline

Ulysses the cat wanders through the town, and comes upon inhabitants in different locations.

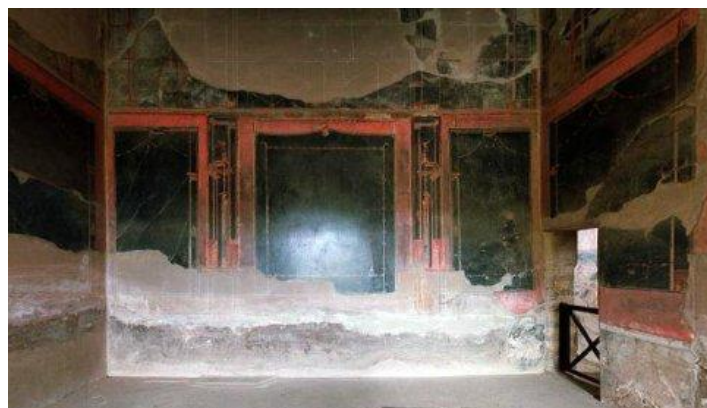
Objectives

- Children are exposed to the sentence pattern new to this chapter of the type 'someone in a place is doing something' (e.g. *pistor in via ambulat*).
- The story revises what different people might do, and reintroduces characters from Chapter 1 who had not featured in the **Core story**.
- New vocabulary: *villa* (house/villa/mansion), *dormit* (sleeps, is sleeping), *nunc* (now).

Notes for teaching this story

This story is very repetitive, so should not present any problems for reading, and a brisk pace is advised.

- Remind the children who the characters are, and what kind of things they might do in their daily lives (why is Dama in the taberna? what does the *dominus* do in his villa, and what does that tell us about his status?).
- This story introduces us to the home of the *dominus* (Balbus), and it's worth discussing with the children what this house looks like (how can they tell it's a rich home? what do they think of the decoration?).



Triclinium (dining room) of the House of the Stags, Herculaneum.

Activities

- These sentence patterns lend themselves well to doing a quick-fire game of asking Latin comprehension questions. For the sentence *pistor in via ambulat* you can ask:
 - quis est in via?* (who is in the street? answer: *pistor*)
 - ubi est pistor?* (where is the baker? answer: *in via*)
 - quid pistor facit?* (what is the baker doing? answer: *ambulat*)
 - Ask the children to act out the different verbs as you say them, choosing from:
 - ambulat, recitat, audit, sedet, dormit*
-

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Transcript and translation

feles errat. feles est in via. pistor est in via. pistor in via ambulat.

feles errat. feles est in palaestra. magister est in palaestra. puer recitat. magister audit.

feles errat. feles est in taberna. Dama est in taberna. Dama in taberna sedet.

feles errat. feles est in villa. dominus est in villa. dominus in villa dormit.

feles errat. feles est in via. piscatrix est in via.

“salve, feles!”

nunc feles non errat.

The cat wanders. The cat is in the street. The baker is in the street. The baker is walking in the street.

The cat wanders. The cat is in the palaestra. The teacher is in the palaestra. A boy is reciting. The teacher listens.

The cat wanders. The cat is in the taberna. Dama is in the taberna. Dama is sitting in the taberna.

The cat wanders. The cat is in the house. The master is in the house. The master is sleeping in the house.

The cat wanders. The cat is in the street. The fishmonger is in the street.

“Hello, cat!”

Now the cat doesn't wander.

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STORY 3 (CONSOLIDATION): WHERE IS SILVIA?

Storyline

Silvia cannot be found - her mother Cara looks for her around the town.

Objectives

- The children repeat language patterns and vocabulary already encountered in the first two stories, and re-encounter a set of characters going about their daily lives.
- A new sentence pattern is introduced:
Silvia non est in palaestra. Silvia is not in the palaestra.
- New vocabulary: *laborat* (works, is working).

Notes for teaching this story

This is a short story, and uses exactly the same sentence patterns as **The cat wanders**.

The children may be able to translate this story independently if they are comfortable with the chapter's vocabulary and sentence patterns, or it can function to consolidate the patterns.

- Help students with the word order of *Silvia non est in palaestra*, starting out by saying that it means 'Silvia not is in the palaestra', and getting students to put it into more natural English, for which they'll change the word order.
- What is Dama doing in his taberna? *laborat* means 'works, is working' - what kind of work does Dama perform in his taberna?
- Discuss the layout and decoration of the *dominus'* house - do the children think it's stylishly decorated?
- Revise the difference between *salve* and *salvete* using the final page in the story.

Activities

- See **The cat wanders** for Latin comprehension questions.

Transcript and translation

mater exspectat.

"ubi est Silvia?"

ubi est Silvia? Silvia non est in palaestra. Marcus in palaestra recitat.

ubi est Silvia? Silvia non est in taberna. Dama in taberna laborat.

ubi est Silvia? Silvia non est in villa. dominus in villa sedet.

ubi est Silvia? ecce! feles est in via. Silvia quoque est in via!

"salve Silvia!" "et Ulysses!" "salvete, Silvia et Ulysses!"

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Mother is waiting.

"Where is Silvia?"

"Where is Silvia?" Silvia is not in the palaestra. Marcus is reciting in the palaestra.

"Where is Silvia?" Silvia is not in the taberna. Dama is working in the taberna.

"Where is Silvia?" Silvia is not in the house. The master is sitting in the house.

"Where is Silvia?" Look! The cat is in the street. Silvia is also in the street!

"Hello, Silvia." "And Ulysses!" "Hello, Silvia and Ulysses."

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LANGUAGE PATTERNS

Sentence patterns

By the end of the Chapter, children should be familiar with the following new sentence patterns:

<i>Marcus in via ambulat.</i>	Marcus is walking in the street.
<i>Silvia advenit.</i>	Silvia arrives.
<i>Silvia non est in palaestra.</i>	Silvia is not in the palaestra.

This chapter therefore introduces a new flow of information:

<i>Marcus in via ambulat.</i>	subject > location > action
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This does not match English word order. The children should be encouraged to read Latin in the order it appears (i.e. from left to right) and get used to the information coming in that order. If they wish to write a translation, they should re-order the words in English to come to a natural sentence, moving from 'Marcus in the street is walking.' to 'Marcus is walking in the street.'

Vocabulary

The following vocabulary should be familiar to the children by the end this chapter. All the vocabulary occurs in one of the stories and is repeated in the **Interactive image** and/or **Activities**:

<i>advenit</i>	arrives	<i>non</i>	not
<i>ambulat</i>	walks	<i>*palaestra</i>	exercise ground
<i>*dominus</i>	master	<i>sedet</i>	sits
<i>feles</i>	cat	<i>*ubi</i>	where
<i>magister</i>	teacher	<i>*villa</i>	house

* Words marked with an asterisk do not appear in the **Core story**.

CIVILISATION - ROMAN EDUCATION

Objectives

- Children should gain an understanding of Roman education and have a sense of who would have gone to school and what might they have learnt.
- Children should understand the key differences between Roman schools and modern schools.
- Children should be aware of what evidence we have for Roman schools.

Historical notes

1. Who received an education

Unlike today, there was no free education and parents were not obliged by law to send their children to school. Parents had to pay to send their children to a private tutor. This immediately meant that the poorest children in society would not go to school. However, literacy was fairly high in the Roman Empire, so it is possible these children would be taught the basics at home from parents, neighbours or more fortunate older siblings. Many girls would also not be sent to school and would stay at home, helping around the house and learning skills such as weaving. In the upper classes, education was valued highly and many girls would also be taught to a good level, although most likely by a private tutor within the house. Of those who did go to school, they would start at around age seven. Many would have finished their schooling by age eleven and would go to learn a trade or help in the family business. Those whose parents could afford for them to stay moved to a more advanced school. The charges for sending a child to school were not high and the advantages of a basic education and literacy were widely appreciated. As a result, many of those who could afford it would send their children (or some of them) to school for a few years at least.

2. The 'school'

There was no formal school building. Lessons would be taught either in the teacher's own house, a rented room or, most likely, in a public area like the palaestra. Here they were exposed to the weather but more noticeably the distractions of those around. In a crowded area like the palaestra it would have been hard to concentrate with the noise. The children would sit either on the floor or on stools and would rest their tablets on their laps. There was no blackboard at the front and students would be set exercises to do and bring them to the teacher once they were done. The school day was much longer than that which children are used to now, and schools were open seven days a week - there were no weekends! But children were let off on religious festivals and market days, of which there were quite a few. The school would also be closed for some time in the summer.

3. The lessons

Roman children would first learn the alphabet and the basics of reading and writing. They would also learn some mathematics using an abacus. Most teaching at first would be done by listening to the teacher and repeating. Once children had mastered the basics they would often go on to learn famous Roman works by heart. It would be normal for them to learn the laws of the twelve tablets (the first written laws of Rome collated by the Decemviri). In his book *de Legibus*, Cicero tells us that when he was a boy he had to learn the famous

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Laws of the Twelve Tablets by heart, in the same manner as he had learnt poetry. They would also learn Ancient Greek. Wax tablets have been found on which a teacher has written out a line of Greek and a student has copied it below (just like our worksheet 'It's all Greek to me!'). Roman schooling was all about practice. Students would write out very repetitive exercises on wax tablets and only when their writing was good enough would they be allowed to progress on to ink and parchment. Even in the first century AD the Greek author Homer was still a core part of the curriculum (although the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were probably written in 800 BC). Class sizes would vary but could be up to thirty pupils. Within this class there would be a wide range of abilities and ages so usually children were set tasks by the teacher for their ability to get on with by themselves. Only the students who progressed onto the next teacher, the *grammaticus*, would learn any science or more advanced mathematics. Education past the age of eleven was mainly focussed on oratory and debate which the Romans considered key skills for public life. Here they would study famous speeches, such as those by Cicero and take part in debates. Some students would continue in education after the age of sixteen and study under a *rhetor* where they would study and discuss philosophy and advance their skills at public speaking.

4. Discipline

Discipline in Roman schools was very strict. If children misbehaved or were late to class they could be beaten with rods. Martial, a satirical poet, begs a vociferous teacher to keep his voice down (Epigrams IX.LXVIII): *What right have you got to disturb me, dreadful teacher, hated alike by boys and girls? Before the crested cocks have broken silence, you begin to roar out your savage scoldings and blows. Metal struck on the anvil doesn't resound with a louder noise, when the workman is putting a lawyer on his horse; nor is it as noisy in the large amphitheatre, when fans applaud the winning gladiator. We, your neighbours, aren't asking you to let us sleep the whole night - it is not a big deal to be awakened occasionally; but to be kept awake all night is too much. Send your students away, brawler, and we'll give you as much for keeping quiet as you receive for making a noise.*

Images:

Screen 1 - entrance to the palaestra from the street, bakery of Petulcius Felix is situated just to the left

Screen 2 - outside of Dama's taberna from the street

Screen 3 - the south-west corner of the large palaestra

Screen 4 - famous wall painting from Pompeii that shows a lady holding a stylus to her lips, with a writing tablet in her left hand. The lady in the fresco is widely known as 'Sappho' (the Greek poetess).

Screen 5 - reconstructed wax tablet and stylus

Screen 5 - part of a wall painting from Pompeii showing a set of wax tablets, a scroll and an inkwell and pen

Screen 6 - portico on the west side of the palaestra

Screen 7 - entrance to the palaestra from the street, bakery of Petulcius Felix is situated just to the left

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Points for discussion

- How does a Roman school compare to a modern one? Talk about the setting of the school (no building and public) as well as what students studied.
- Do we think it is fair that some children didn't get any education (particularly girls)? Does your class think it is right that it is now a legal obligation for parents to send their children to school?
- What do the children think about the subjects the Romans studied? How useful is Ancient Greek and public speaking compared to some subjects we study today (Science, Geography, History)? Can they think of any reasons why the subjects which are thought to be useful have changed?

Activities

- Play the **Categories School** game and note the differences between Roman and modern schools.
 - Try a Roman-style lesson using the worksheets '**Learn it by heart**' and '**It's all Greek to me!**'. Remind children of the strict discipline in Roman schools too!
 - Write a diary of a child in Herculaneum walking to the palaestra and having a day in a Roman school. What might you see when you walk to school and in the palaestra during your lessons?
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FACT FILE - MARCUS AND SILVIA

Objectives

- Students gain an insight into the life of children in the town and explore why there is such scarce evidence for children in the ancient world.

Historical notes

Very little is known about the lives of children in Herculaneum and in the ancient world in general. They are largely missing from works of literature, law records, and official documents. Their presence is most noted on their tombstones. Infant mortality was very high in ancient Rome and fewer than half of children reached their tenth birthday. Any material evidence we do have, other than tombs, is very difficult to interpret and votive offerings can often be mistaken as dolls, imposing our own



Tomb of a young boy decorated with scenes of him growing up. Now in the Baths of Diocletian, Rome.

modern views of objects onto the archaeological finds.

One object which does relate directly to children is the *bullā*. This is a round amulet made of gold or other shiny metal which parents would give their children. It was worn in the hope that it would shepherd children through the dangers of childhood into adulthood. It also simultaneously proclaimed their status as freeborn citizen children.

Marcus and Silvia are the children of freedmen. According to Roman law the children of freedmen were full citizens, as would be their descendants. Romans valued education and the advantages of a basic education and literacy were widely appreciated, so it was not unusual for the children of freedmen to be sent to school. They have also chosen to send Silvia to school, but she will probably not stay for as long as her brother.

Marcus is on the point of becoming an adult, a transition which is marked by donning the special '*toga virilis*'. He will also take off his *bullā* and dedicate it to the household gods (*Lares*). He would still remain under his father's power though. In Roman times *patria*

potestas (the power of the father) normally ceased only with the death of the father. Until then legally he had control over his children and any acquisitions of the children became the property of the father in the eyes of the law.



Roman bulla made of gold with a Gorgon head in relief.

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Silvia would probably only stay at school a year or so longer and then return to help at home and at her father's taberna. The end of childhood for a girl was her marriage which would be between the ages of around thirteen and eighteen.

Points for discussion

- How was the life of a child in Herculaneum different to the life of a child now?
 - Do you think that thirteen is too young for a girl to marry, and sixteen too young for a boy to become an adult?
 - We have very little evidence for children in the ancient world. Would modern day children leave more evidence for archaeologists in the future (plastic toys, special smaller chairs and tables, computer games)?
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MYTHOLOGY - ODYSSEY

Objectives

- Children learn about Odysseus, the protagonist of one of Homer's epic poems, the *Odyssey*.
- They listen to the story of his return home from Troy.
- They see how Odysseus has been depicted differently in art.

Notes

The audio file on the Classic Tales website is split into 12 sections. Each episode has Teaching resources, which give more information and notes about the story and ideas for the classroom.

Points for discussion

- Discuss what makes a hero a hero? Comparing Odysseus and Hercules think about what a hero has to be like or has to do to become a hero. What criteria does a hero need to meet?
- The *Odyssey* was written almost a thousand years before Marcus and Silvia studied it at school. Can your students think of any stories that we tell today which have been passed down for so long? (Fairy tales, parables from the Bible etc.) What stories do they think children will still be reading and learning about in a thousand years?

Images:

Screen 2 - fresco from Pompeii showing Odysseus with the sirens (British Museum).

Screen 3 - head of Odysseus (blinding the Cyclops) from Sperlonga group (see:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sperlonga_sculptures).

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OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Note: The Guide to using The Primary Latin Course has more detailed notes on how to use the online games and worksheets in the classroom.

Naval race (online game)

This naval race focuses on content from the **Archaeology** and **Civilisation** sections on education in the ancient world.

Pairs (online game)

Match up vocabulary items from the 'to learn' vocabulary for this Chapter, matching English to Latin words.

Categories (online game)

Children categorise school subjects by whether they were learnt at school today, or at schools in ancient Herculaneum.

Write your translation (printable worksheets)

Printable line drawing versions of all the stories for this chapter, in which enough space is left for the children to write in their own English translation. The Latin is not given on the worksheet - this can be supplied by giving children access to the online text, or by printing the line drawing version of the story. You may wish to wait to give these activities to the children until you have read the story in class, though a motivated class may be able to translate the Latin for the **consolidation story 'Where is Silvia?'** themselves.

It's all Greek to me! (printable worksheet)

This worksheet exposes children to some Ancient Greek and lets them have a go at an exercise much like one Marcus or Silvia might have done at school. If the children are keen, they could try to learn the first five letters of the Greek alphabet.

Learn it by heart! (printable worksheet)

This worksheet gives the children a chance to learn in a 'Roman way'. Memorisation was very important in Roman schooling and is a difficult skill to master. The three texts are of varying lengths and difficulties. You may wish to create a similar resource from texts you are reading in class

Spot the difference - the palaestra (printable worksheet)

This worksheet encourages the children to look closely at two scenes from the palaestra and pick out the differences, some of which are modern objects in the ancient setting. This worksheet could also be projected onto the whiteboard and done as a class activity.
