TEACHER'S GUIDE

*The theatre at Palmyra (Syria), showing the circular* orchestra *(front), tiered seating, raised stage, and the* scaena *(the building on the stage).*

# Chapter 6 - At the theatre

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# CHAPTER OVERVIEW

## Interactive Image

The theatre (based on the theatre at Pompeii).

## Archaeology

The tunnels excavating the theatre at Herculaneum, and the theatre at Pompeii for comparison. Mystery object: papyrus scroll.

## Stories

1. *A new statue*: Balbus donates a statue to the theatre, but who does it depict?
2. *Dama gets a scare*: Dama goes for a walk at night, but gets a scare in the theatre.
3. *A play:* Balbus and Livia go to see a comedy, but Balbus struggles to find the best place to sit.

## Language development and sentence patterns

Sentences with nominates, accusatives, multiple adjectives and multiple verbs:

*Balbus, parvus, cum magno servo in theatro stat.*

The small Balbus stands in the theatre with a big slave.

*Dama statuam magnam et fortem et formosam inspicit, et Balbum inspicit.*

Dama looks at the big, strong, beautiful statue, and looks at Balbus.

## Vocabulary for learning

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *adest* | is there, is present | *spectat* | watches, is watching |
| *cum* | with | *statua* | statue |
| *fortis, fortem* | strong, brave | *theatrum* | theatre |
| *meus, mea* | my | *turba* | crowd |
| *ridet* | laughs, is laughing | *vir, virum* | man |

## Civilisation

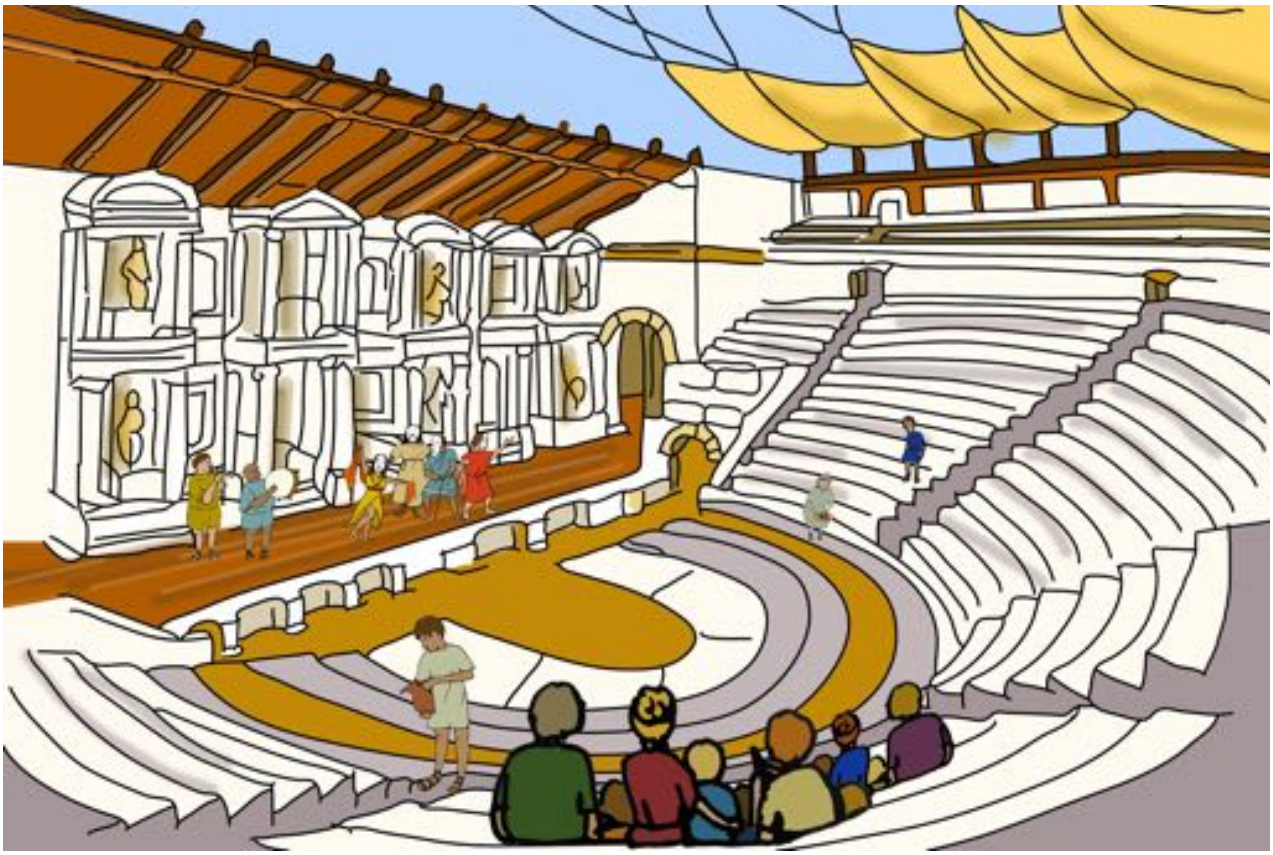
The theatre: layout and function of the building, types of plays, the role of actors, the experience of spectators.

## Fact file

Marcus Nonius Balbus, the great patron of Herculaneum. Looking at the historical record for the Balbus family, and what life would have been like for a man from an influential family.

## Mythology

The story of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, depictions in ancient art, and the tragic play written about this story.



# INTERACTIVE IMAGE - THE THEATRE

## Objectives

*The interactive image is an opportunity for pupils 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 should become familiar with layout of the theatre, and the name for the areas in it, as well as which kind of people you could encounter. Children become familiar with the following Latin terms and their meaning: **scaena** (stage), **actor** (actor), **theatrum** (theatre), **spectator** (spectator), **auditorium** (seating area), **statua** (statue), **turba** (crowd).

## Historical notes

The drawing is based on a photograph of the large theatre at Pompeii, which was slightly bigger than the theatre at Herculaneum but otherwise similar in its layout (as all Roman theatres are).

At the back of the raised stage area, on which actors would perform, was the stage building (the *scaena*), which was used to store props, function as a backdrop to the action, and was used as a means for actors to enter the stage. In the niches statues stood. The tunnels excavating the theatre of Herculaneum unearthed some stunning finds, which might have been held in these niches, including a statue of Marcus Nonius Balbus (an ancestor of the fictional Balbus of our stories). The great benefactors of the town could therefore put their generosity centre stage, literally, by donating gifts to the theatre, or by being honoured *by* citizens of the town by being given a statue or inscription there. As all people (citizens and slaves, men and women) were probably allowed to attend the theatre, and admission was free, the theatre was an excellent place to display one's wealth and influence.

## Points for discussion

- Do the actors look as the children had imaged? What's different about them? (You could point out their masks, and the musicians on stage).
- The building on the stage (the *scaena*), is a big difference to the layout of our theatres today. Can children guess what it could have been used for? (It was used as a backdrop (often decorated for the particular play), place for actors to enter the stage from, means of executing the *deus ex machina* (see the Civilisation section for further details), and for storage of props and costumes. Children might also spot the statues, which were donated by wealthy patrons of the town.)
- What are the consequences of the theatre not being a covered building? How exposed to the elements were actors and spectators? How comfortable do children reckon the theatre would be on hot/sunny/cold/rainy days?
- You may spot that the words for **actor** and **spectator** are identical in Latin and English, which might open up a little discussion about the fact that the English words come straight from the Latin. This is true of most of our words ending in *-tor* that are, loosely, words that refer to what people do: benefactor, curator, dictator, doctor, janitor, senator, tutor, victor being a few. Can the children think of some?

## Activities

- See the guide to using the Primary Latin Course for further activity ideas for the interactive image.
- Get the students to write a fictional account of a spectator attending a performance, or an actor performing in a play, with reference to the conditions in the theatre.
- List the differences between the layout of an ancient theatre, and what our modern theatres look like.
- In the playground, work out the size of the theatre (the diameter of the exterior of the circle of the theatre at Herculaneum was 34 meters, meaning that spectators might sit 17 meters away from the stage). Have some children stand "on stage", while others stand at the back of the theatre. Can the actors on stage make themselves heard to the spectators at the back? What about when the rest of the class chats amongst themselves? Why might it be that the theatre had tiered seating? (not just for line of sight; acoustics would improve too!).

# ARCHAEOLOGY

## Objectives

Pupils are introduced to the remains of the theatre of Herculaneum, and the large theatre at Pompeii. The archaeologists Peter and Lucia find a scorched manuscript scroll.

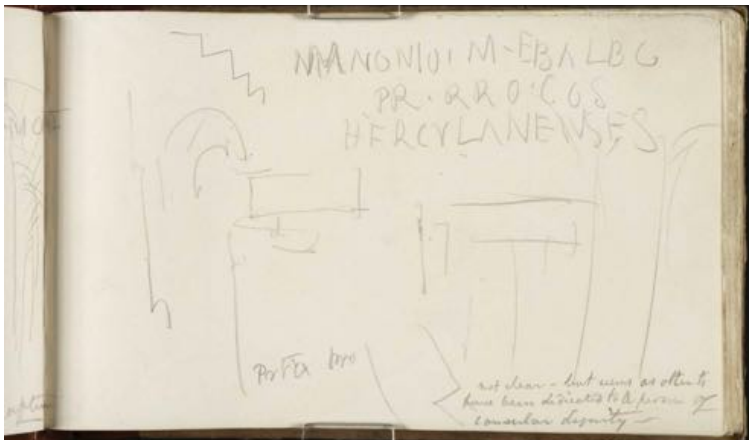
## Historical notes

*How to use these notes: Please use these notes to advance your own understanding of the theme if you wish - they are much more comprehensive than what you might want to share with your pupils, although they might not be! Hopefully they will help anticipate some of the questions your pupils might ask.*

### 4. The tunnel excavations of the 18th and 19th centuries

The only way to see the Herculaneum theatre today is to enter the complex of tunnels dug in the 18th century. The early archaeologists who excavated the area were not clear in preserving the find spots of the artefacts they dug up (which quickly made their way into the hands of private collectors through Europe), so we can only guess at the precise location of the statues which we *do* know came from the theatre. The theatre was one of the first areas of Herculaneum that was explored, and tunnels were dug excitedly and haphazardly, frescoes cut off the walls and artefacts removed without great care for their setting. The tunnels are now closed to the public, and are considered dangerous to enter. The eery experience of entering the tunnels in the 19th century by candlelight is described by Sarah Atkins (*Relics of Antiquity, exhibited in the Ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum,* 1825):

> *"… we descended by a spacious stone staircase of fifty steps, and were conveyed over the wall of a theatre, which presents one of the most perfect specimens of ancient architecture; but the darkness that reigns within it is too deep to be dispelled by the feeble glare of a few torches: its* cunei *[seats in the theatre] indeed receive a faint glimmering of daylight from the funnel over them; but the lava perpetually intervenes, and its magnificence can be discovered only by glimpses. Still it is a pleasure to descend into its dark and damp recesses, to trace its corridors, stage, orchestra and proscenium, and the seats of the consuls: far above the carriages of Portici are heard rolling over the spectator's head, with a sound which has been sometimes described as resembling that of thunder; but*



*Sketch by Turner (1851) of the inside the theatre, including a statue of M. Nonius Balbus and its inscription: M. NONIO. M.F. BALBO | PR.PRO.COS | HERCVLANENSES ('The men of Herculaneum, to Marcus Nonius Balbus, son of Marcus, praetor and proconsul').*

*this does not convey the idea, for it is a sound that cannot be expressed."*

Turner visited the tunnels in the theatre, and drew many sketches, such as the one above - though children might not find them very helpful in trying to imagine the space! The theatre is located directly under the busy town of Herculaneum, and therefore unlikely to be excavated fully now. Part of the reasoning is that the theatre is one of the less unique parts of the town; we have some excellently well-preserved theatres from other parts of the empire, and most theatres would have looked very similar to one another. To explore how the theatre can be seen in the tunnels now, visit the excellent tool here: http://donovanimages.co.nz/proxima-veritati/Herculaneum/Theatre/index.html.

**5. The theatre at Pompeii**

The theatre at Pompeii is used for all the reconstructed drawings in this chapter, rather than the theatre at Herculaneum. It is worth remembering that the theatre at Herculaneum would have been a bit smaller, but otherwise it would have looked very similar.

**6. Papyrus scrolls**

Students should hopefully be able to link the strange log they have seen with the rolled up scrolls in the basked in the drawn reconstruction, being unrolled by actors to read scripts. Scrolls were the common way of writing down texts and storing them in the ancient world; the Romans did also invent the "codex" (a book with pages bound to a spine), but this wasn't in common use until the 3rd century AD. Papyrus scrolls would be rolled tight to protect the paper, but cracking was common as the papyrus wasn't always very pliable, and the material was vulnerable to both excessive moisture and excessive dryness. The quality of papyrus varied considerably, depending on one's budget; Pliny the Elder speaks of six different types commonly for sale. Longer texts would need longer scrolls, which made them more fragile and expensive. The text on them would be copied out by hand by scribes, and was a laborious process. Owning a copy of a text meant paying for the production of the papyrus (in Egypt), the creation of a scroll of the required length, finding a copy of the text elsewhere, and having a scribe copy it out. By the 1st century AD, there were specialised book traders in the big cities where you could buy scrolls of popular texts. Good scribes were expensive - average scribes made mistakes, from spelling errors to missing out words or sentences (or "hypercorrecting" a previous scribe, thus writing a whole new text!).

**7. Deciphering papyrus scrolls**

To read more about the deciphering of the text on the scrolls using the latest modern techniques, have a look at the following:

- Excellent video showing how the scrolls are scanned and deciphered, must-watch to understand the process, and suitable for use in the classroom: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=885wc3sA7d0
- Easy reading introduction to the scrolls and their decipherment, including useful diagram of the scanning process: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-25106956

- Similar, slightly more technical article, including pictures of the decipherment of individual letters: http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/ancient-scrolls-blackened-vesuvius-are-readable-last-herculaneum-papyri-180953950/

**8. The Villa of the Papyri**

The charred scroll Peter holds is one of the scrolls found at the Villa of the Papyri, a short distance from the theatre. We think this was a private residence with a great library, or perhaps an association of scholars of some kind. The house is one of the largest and most opulent found anywhere, and the magnificent Getty Villa in California, which is based on it, gives some indication of its scale and impressive architecture (http://www.getty.edu/visit/villa/architecture.html). Its bronze and marble sculptures constitute the largest collection of ancient Roman sculpture ever found in one place. Yet the villa gets its name from the extraordinary number of carbonised papyrus scrolls - over 1800 have been found so far, and archaeologists argue we may only have a fraction of the total number that can be found, as most of the villa is still unexcavated. The greatest number of scrolls that have been deciphered are philosophical texts, mainly in the school of Epicureanism. Whether this meant the house is a specialist philosophical library, or whether the villa's main library with different types of texts is still to be found, is unclear. In either case, the vast majority of scrolls that we do have still remains unread!

*View of the Getty Villa (part of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles), based on the Villa of the Papyri.*

**Images**:

Page 1 - Bourbon tunnel showing the staircase in the theatre

Page 2, 3 & 4 - Pompeii large theatre

Page 5 (right) - detail from fresco from the praedia of Julia Felix in Pompeii

Page 5 (left) - detail from fresco from Pompeii, now at Museo Nazionale, Naples

Page 6 - carbonised scroll from Villa of the Papyri

Page 7 - view across town of Herculaneum, looking from the direction of the Palaestra towards the modern town, under which the theatre is situated.

## Points for discussion

- What do children think about whether to excavate the rest of the theatre? Would they feel differently if it was buried under their own house?
- The Bourbon tunnels allowed people to uncover some of the most beautiful sculptures, frescoes, etc. from Herculaneum, but they ended up in the hands of private collectors, weren't recorded carefully, were destroyed in the process of excavation, or lost altogether. Do children think we're doing a better job now? How can we make sure we're as careful as possible, and what is our responsibility to the next generation?
- The process of recording texts on papyrus made for lots of scope for errors (copying incorrectly, damage to the scroll from moisture, heat, drought, loss of scrolls in fires, limited copies due to the cost meaning fewer to survive). How do we store information nowadays that we want to keep safe? Can things still go wrong easily? Are books a good way of storing texts - or are they also endangered? (fires, floods, can destroy libraries). Are digital copies better? What dangers are they susceptible to?

## Activities

- "Chinese whispers": Think about the difficulties in copying good text onto a papyrus scroll. Start off with a short paragraph of text, in English or in Latin. Get one child to copy it onto a sheet of paper, and pass it to their neighbour, who copies it again. Have the text go round the classroom or round smaller groups, then compare the versions. Did sentences or words get missed out? Did spelling errors creep in? Were errors corrected by a subsequent scribe? Think about how much harder it is to do this for a piece of Latin text than for English text. This would have been true for Roman scribes as well, who might not have Latin as their first language, or be copying texts in Greek. An excellent scribe needed many skills!
- Create your own papyrus scrolls, using tips from this website (http://www.crayola.com/crafts/egyptian-papyrus-paper-craft/). A great way to get a sense for the difficulties of creating paper, the roughness and unevenness of the papyrus surface, and the difficulty of rolling it into scrolls. For an added challenge, write in fountain pen rather than biro. Let children write a favourite poem or song, or a bit of a Latin story onto the scrolls.

# STORY 1 (CORE STORY): A NEW STATUE

## Storyline

Balbus has a new statue placed in the theatre at Herculaneum. Dama joins an admiring crowd - but who is the dashing young man portrayed? Why it's Balbus himself…!

## Objectives

In this chapter longer sentences are used, with a greater variety of patterns. Sentences may include two main verbs, adjectives agreeing with both the subject and the object,

- *Dama statuam magnam et fortem et formosam inspicit, et Balbum inspicit.*
  Dama looks at the big, strong, beautiful statue, and looks at Balbus.
- *Balbus, parvus, cum magno servo in theatro stat.*
  The small Balbus stands in the theatre with a big slave.

The following vocabulary occurs in the core story, and should become familiar to pupils by the end of work on this chapter:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *adest* | is there, is present | *spectat* | watches, is watching |
| *cum* | with | *statua* | statue |
| *fortis, fortem* | strong, brave | *theatrum* | theatre |
| *meus, mea* | my | *turba* | crowd |

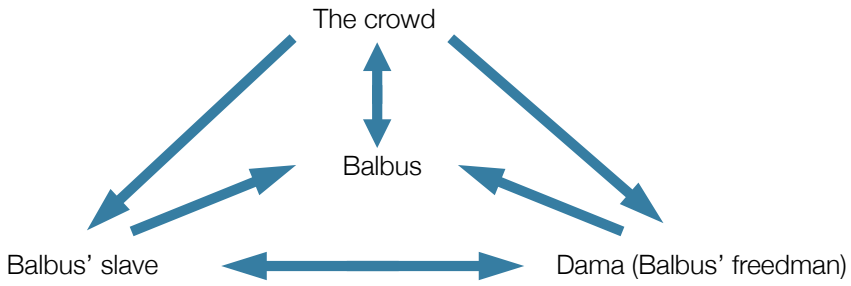
## Notes for treating this story

This story does not introduce any new forms, but the sentences become quite a lot longer and there is more scope for confusion about who the subject of a verb is, or what an adjective describes.

- Try not to get too technical in trying to figure out which noun is the subject of a verb, etc, and avoid dissecting the sentences. Instead, allow children a bit of time to work out the meaning of the sentence, reading it several times in Latin before asking for a translation. If incorrect translations are offered, ask whether they make sense; usually errors lead to sentences that don't convey the right meaning when considering the storyline and the pictures.
- In those sentences where the Latin word order is different from English, encourage pupils to actively try to make the English sound natural, starting from a word-by-word rendition, i.e.:
  *Balbus, parvus, in theatro stat* -> "Balbus, small, stands in the theatre"
  -> The small Balbus is standing in the theatre.
- A lot of adjectives are used in this chapter, quite a few of which are new. Rather than just clicking on them to find out their meaning, ask what kind of things they might convey, based on the story and pictures. For example, the way in which Dama describes the statue. Looking at the statue, what might Dama praise about it? (children might guess it's strong, beautiful, tall, muscular, bronzed…?) Then think about whether the Latin adjectives have any links to English words they know (*fortis* - fortitude, fortification), and finally click on the words to see how good their guesses were.

## Activities

- This story can be used to do a bit of deeper probing into the relationships between different classes in Herculaneum. What do the people in this diagram think of each other?




- Why do children think Balbus has a big slave with him when going to the theatre? Is it to possibly protect him, should the crowd turn violent, or someone try to hold him up? Could it be to show off his wealth / intimidate people?
- Compare the statue and Balbus, taking a note of the Latin words to describe them both, as well as the images.
- Let children write an account of the story from the point of view of Balbus, Dama, the slave, or a member of the crowd, revealing their inner thoughts about the statue / the events of the story. Encourage children to be creative, but to think carefully about how the person they have chosen is described in the story (the *turba* is described as *laeta*, for instance, and rushes to the theatre, why?).
- Once you have read the story, you could download the "Write your own translation" worksheet, in which there is space for pupils to write down an English version of the story. They will also need access to the Latin, either through the online version, or by printing the line drawing version of the story to be shared by groups.

## Transcript and translation

Dama in via ambulat et magnam turbam videt. magna turba ad theatrum contendit. Dama ad theatrum contendit cum turba. nunc theatrum intrat et Balbum videt. Balbus, parvus, cum servo magno in theatro stat. Balbus statuam debit. turba laeta statuam spectat et laudat. Balbus Damam videt et salutat. "salve, Dama!". "salve, domine!". Balbus statuam indicat. "ecce, Dama, mea statua nova!". Dama statuam spectat et laudat. "quam magnus est! quam formosus est! quam fortis est!". Balbus gaudet et quoque statuam novam laudat. "sed quis est? est heros? est deus?". "ego!". Dama statuam magnam et fortem et formosam inspicit, et Balbum inspicit. Dama parvum Balbum spectat et rubescet. servus Damam rubrum spectat et risum celat.

Dama is walking in the street, and sees a big crowd. The crowd is rushing to the theatre. Dama rushes to the theatre with the crowd. Now he enters the theatre, and sees Balbus. The small Balbus stands in the theatre with a large slave. Balbus has donated a statue. The happy crowd watches the statue and praises it. Balbus sees Dama and greets him. "Hello, Dama!". "Hello, master!". Balbus points to his statue. "Look, Dama, my new statue!". Dama watches the statue and praises it. "How great it is! How beautiful! How strong!". Balbus rejoices and also praises the new statue. "But who is it? Is it a hero? Is it a god?". "It's me!". Dama looks at the big, strong, beautiful statue, and looks at Balbus. Dama watches the small Balbus and blushes. The slave watches the blushing Dama, and hides a laugh.

# STORY 2 (CONSOLIDATION): DAMA GETS A SCARE

## Storyline

Dama goes for a walk to the theatre in the night, but gets scared when he hears a man professing the most terrible things!

## Objectives

This story revises the sentence patterns and some of the vocabulary from the Chapter 4 core story, but includes quite a bit of new vocabulary. The following new vocabulary to be learnt is met: *vir, virum* (man), *ridet* (laughs, is laughing).

## Notes for treating this story

This is a very dramatic story, that builds up some tension - when reading it with the class try to bring out the suspense and the creepiness of the situation, and understand why Dama is so scared, and keep up the pace to keep children engaged.

- This story introduces some new vocabulary, but to keep the pace of the narrative up, it is advised to not spend too much time guessing at words.
- If children don't yet quite understand the twist at page 8, wait until page 9 where Dama laughs and says he's an actor, then go back to page 8 and ask the children how Dama knew.

## Activities

- This story lends itself well to being acted out, in groups of 3 or 4. Have one Dama, one actor, and one or two narrators (there are enough lines to share). Give the children time to use the Latin to work out precisely where everyone should be, how scared Dama should look in response to the different lines of the actor, and when he realises the man is an actor. Encourage the child playing the actor to do a very dramatic reading! Listen to the Latin audio to help with pronunciation.
- If you wanted to create an extension activity, let children work on the story themselves in pairs and answer the comprehension questions in the "Dama gets a scare - Comprehension" worksheet.
- Once you have read the story, you could download the "Write your own translation" worksheet, in which there is space for pupils to write down an English version of the story. They will also need access to the Latin, either through the online version, or by printing the line drawing version of the story to be shared by groups.

## Transcript and translation

nox est, et via est obscura. nemo est in via. pistor non adest. carnifex  non est in taberna. Balbus in villa dormit. Dama non dormit, sed in theatro obscuro ambulat et stellas spectat. "ecce!".
Dama solus in theatro sedet et lunam pulchram videt. sed quid est? Dama vocem audit, et timidus est. est fur? est malefactor? Dama post magnam statuam se celat. vir theatrum intrat et exclamat. "mater mea est horrenda, nefaria, perhorrida!". Dama, post statuam, timidus est, sed non exclamat. "mater mea patrem meum necavit!". Dama virum horribilem timet, sed post statuam manet. "non! pater matrem necavit! eheu! hic versus est difficilis!". nunc vir horribilis ridet, et Dama quoque ridet. non est fur, non est malefactor - est actor!

It's night, and the road is dark. No one is in the street. The baker is not there. The butcher is not in the taberna. Balbus sleeps in his house. Dama is not asleep, but is walking in the dark theatre and watching the stars. "Look!". Dama sits in the theatre alone, and watches the beautiful moon. But what's that? Dama hears a voice, and is afraid. Is it a thief? Is it a criminal? Dama hides himself behind a big statue. A man comes into the theatre and shouts out. "My mother is horrible, criminal, very evil!". Dama, behind the statue, is afraid, but does not cry out. "My mother has killed my father!". Dama fears the horrible man, but remains behind the statue. "No! My father has killed my mother! Oh no, this line is difficult!". Now the horrible man laughs, and Dama also laughs. It's not a thief, it's not a criminal - it's an actor!

# STORY 3 (CONSOLIDATION): A PLAY

## Storyline

Livia and Balbus attend a comedy play, but Balbus struggles to be content and wants to find the best seat in the house.

## Objectives

This story offers a good way into discussing what it was like to see plays, and what was different about being an audience member in the theatre of Herculaneum to theatres today.

## Notes for treating this story

This story has a simple plot line and is not too long, so can be read relatively easily. There is some new vocabulary but this should be easily accessible through the context, and the language is very repetitive.

- You may want to give a bit of background about the word 'comoedia' - this refers to the fact that the play is a comedy (see the Civilisation section for more details about play types). What kind of play do the children expect it to be, given that it's a comedy?
- Children may stumble on the content of the second page (a scene from the comedy). The two stock characters on stage here are the "miles gloriosus" (the amazing soldier) and the "adulator" (the sycophant/flatterer) - have a look at Page 3 of the Civilisation section for more stock characters. How do the children think the play will be made funny by the interaction between these two? As this page does not interact with the rest of the story, feel free to gloss over it.
- Do the children empathise with Livia? Or with Balbus? Or with both?

## Activities

- This story lends itself to being acted out with a bigger group, or perhaps the whole class - you'd need at least 10 children per group (one or more narrators, a soldier, flatterer, Livia, Balbus, merchant, Aper and Caper (silent parts but with plenty of comedy potential), and some vociferous crowd members).
- Start a discussion about what luxuries the theatre could afford to a man like Balbus: he has his own slave to fan him, another to carry a tray of food, he could buy refreshments from the merchants in the theatre, and being an influential man he gets to sit right at the front. But he's still dissatisfied - can children empathise with his annoyance?
- Use the "Write your own translation" worksheet either once you have treated the story or, for more able pupils, as a first reading. On the worksheet there is space for pupils to write down an English version of the story. They will also need access to the Latin, either through the online version, or by printing the line drawing version of the story to be shared by groups.

## Transcript and translation

comoedia est in theatro, et magna turba adest. "hic est miles gloriosus, fortissimus, pulcherrimus et optimus!". "hic est adulator." turba ridet et cum magna voce exclamat. Livia est in theatro. Livia actores spectat, et ridet. Balbus quoque est in theatro, sed non laetus est. Balbus actores non audit, sed turbam. turba Balbum vexat, et nunc Balbus Liviam vexat. "ubi est sedes optima?". "eheu!". mercator cum magna voce exclamat. "ficos! ficos deliciosos!". mercator Balbum vexat, et nunc Balbus Liviam vexat. "eheu!!". "nunc est silens! haec est sedes optima! mercator non adest! turba non adest!" "… et comoedia non adest. eheu!".

There is a comedy in the theatre, and a great crowd is present. "This man is a famous soldier, the strongest, the most beautiful, the very best!". "This man is a flatterer.". The crowd laughs and cries out in a big voice. Livia is in the theatre. Livia is watching the actors, and laughing. Balbus is also in the theatre, but is not happy. Balbus does not hear the actors, but the crowd. The crowd bothers Balbus, and now he bothers Livia. "Where is the best seat?". "Oh no!". A merchant cries out in a big voice. "Figs! Delicious figs!". The merchant bothers Balbus, and now Balbus bothers Livia. "Oh no!!". "Now it's quiet! This is the best seat! The merchant isn't here, the crowd isn't here!". "And the comedy isn't here… Rubbish!".

# LANGUAGE PATTERNS

## Sentence patterns

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

- *Balbus, parvus, cum magno servo in theatro stat.*

  The small Balbus stands in the theatre with a big slave.

- *Dama statuam magnam et fortem et formosam inspicit, et Balbum inspicit.*

  Dama looks at the big, strong, beautiful statue, and looks at Balbus.

## Vocabulary

The following vocabulary should be familiar to pupils by the end of work on this chapter; they all occur in the core story except for *ridet* and *vir*, and are repeated in additional stories, interactive image and games:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *adest* | is there, is present | *spectat* | watches, is watching |
| *cum* | with | *statua* | statue |
| *fortis, fortem* | strong, brave | *theatrum* | theatre |
| *meus, mea* | my | *turba* | crowd |
| *ridet* | laughs, is laughing | *vir, virum* | man |

A note on *cum*:

The word *cum*, meaning 'with', usually does not present any translation problems. See below for two different uses in Chapter 6:

- *Dama ad theatrum contendit cum turba.* - Dama rushes to the theatre with the crowd.
- *turba cum magna voce exclamat.* - The crowd cries out with a big voice ***or*** in a big voice.

## Complex sentences

There are no new language forms in this chapter, but children are now getting comfortable reading sentences that include a range of more complex features, with more than one occurring in one sentence:

- sentences with two verbs
- more than one adjective describing one noun
- sentences with adjectives modifying both the subject and the object
- sentences with '*cum*' phrases

# CIVILISATION - ROMAN THEATRE

## Objectives

Children should understand the layout of Roman theatres, the two types of plays put on there, the experiences for actors and audience members, and the differences between modern and ancient theatre.

*Theatre scene: two women making a call on a witch (all three wearing masks). Mosaic from the Villa del Cicerone in Pompeii.*

## Historical notes

For more information, see also the Archaeology section of this guide and the notes on the Interactive Image.

### 1. Theatre attendance

We believe all people could attend the theatre, from wealthy magistrates to slaves, women and children. Plays were not staged regularly, but were special occasions, for which a public holiday was announced, all business ceased and no a whole town would rush to the theatre, to watch an acting troupe that had come especially for the day. The size of a theatre's seating area is therefore not a bad indication of a town's population, working on the assumption that a good percentage of the people of the town would need to fit into the space. The richest citizens had special seats reserved for them at the front of the auditorium, which they would enter via a separate entrance.

### Benefactors

The cost of the entertainment was borne by wealthy individuals in the town, usually men who were looking to be elected, and so wanted to broadcast their generosity to the citizens. This meant that the theatre was free to attend. The quality of the day's entertainment would depend on the size of the purse of the benefactor; the most famous actors and productions with the most spectacular costumes, backdrops and tricks, would be reserved for the wealthiest of patrons.

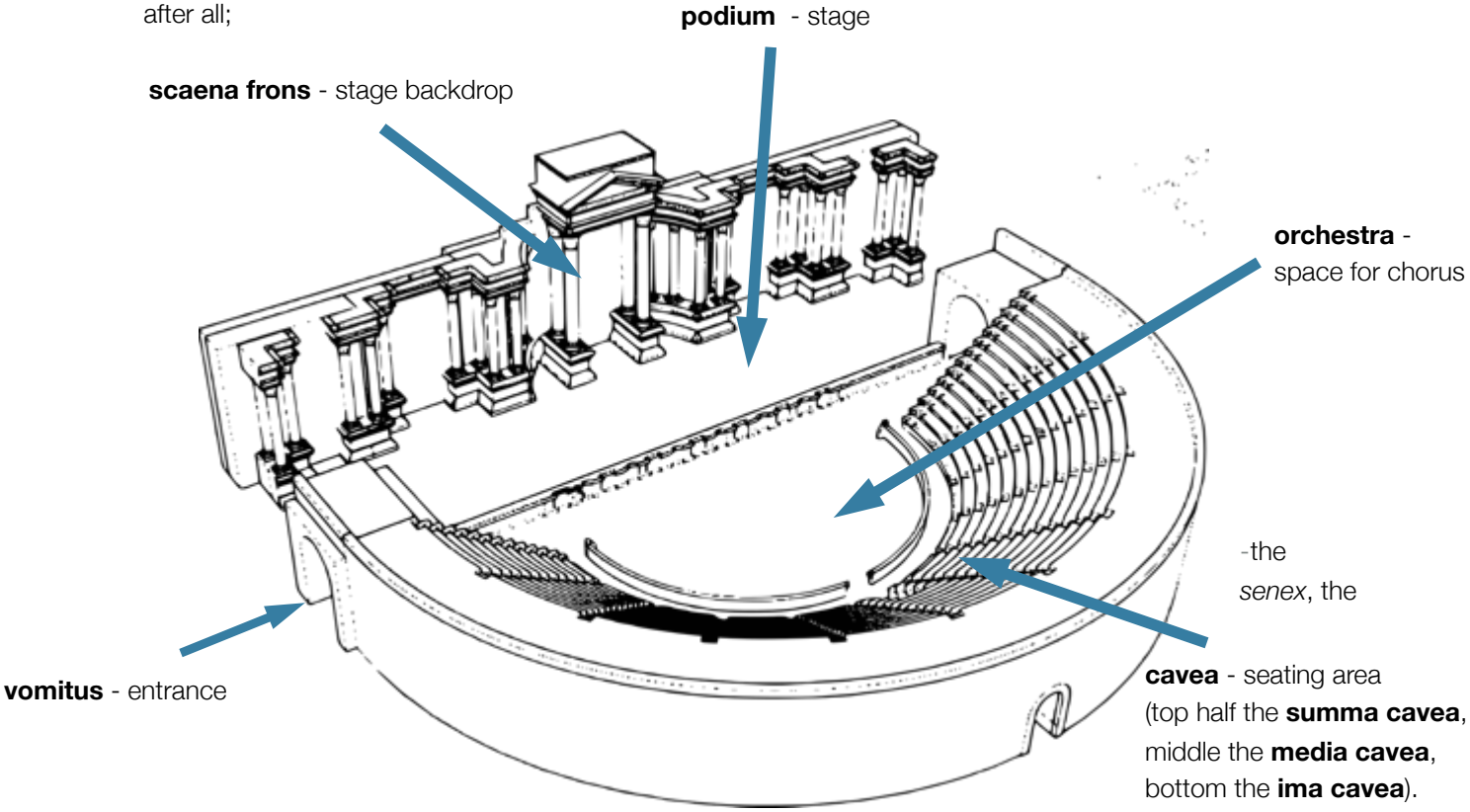
### Facilities

The theatre had few amenities, but it did include a system of ropes and sails to shield the audience from the worst of sun and rain (as long as it wasn't also windy, in which case they could not go up). Vendors would have made their way through the crowd selling food, drink, fans, cushions, parasols, to keep people comfortable and make a good profit. People would get in and out through *vomitoria,* great corridors that ran up to the sides and back of the theatre, and bigger theatres had tunnels that ran under the seating area as well.

## 2. Comedy plays

Comedies came in different forms, from the lewd satyr plays, to the popular pantomime, and at the more sophisticated end of the scale more clever plays written by Terence, or Plautus (usually based unashamedly on Greek plays). The latter two types of plays featured the same set of stock characters, convoluted plots with unlikely happy endings, and rude jokes. Stock characters include:

- the *adolescens*, the teenager who falls in love with a slave girl or prostitute, who at the end of the play transpires miraculously to have been the long lost daughter of a wealthy man after all;




- the *senex*, the old man, father of the *adolescens* - usually has a nagging wife at home, and gets the wool pulled over his eyes by his son;
- the *miles gloriosus,* an arrogant soldier, boastful, but usually actually cowardly
- the *parasitus* or *adulator;* friend of the *miles gloriosus*, who follows him around and hangs on his every word, selfish, and gluttonous.

The majority of our extant comedy texts come from Terence and Plautus.

## 3. Tragedies

Tragedies were usually translations or interpretations of the famous Greek tragedies by Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles, but also included some new Roman writing (very little of which sadly survives to us today). Tragedy plays intended to transform the mindset of the audience, to make them think, experience violent emotions, grapple with philosophical and ethical questions, and be shocked at the human potential for evil,

and the power of the gods. Common motifs were suicide, deceit and betrayal, murder, revenge, *hubris* (a disregard for the power of the gods), and the breakdown of familial relationships. Seneca's play *Phaedra* for instance (a rendition of the Greek tragedy by Euripides), tells the story of a woman who falls in love with her own son-in-law, Hippolytus. When he refuses Phaedra, she schemes to have him accused of incest, upon which her husband flies into a range and asks the god Neptune to kill Hippolytus. Upon the death of Hippolytus, Phaedra repents, confesses, and commits suicide. All tragedies were written in poetic metre. Our extant tragic texts predominantly come from Seneca, although fragments and references to earlier tragic writers do survive.

*Ivory statuette of Roman tragedy actor. 1st century, provenance unknown (Rome?).*

**4. Production details**

Roman theatre productions included some features that were unusual compared to our experience today, including:

- use of masks for all characters (thus never showing the actor's face while on stage)
- the presence of a *chorus*, a group of actors who chanted in the *orchestra* space in front of the stage. Choral odes often commented on the action of the play, written in a poetic metre that sounded religious, and could be obscure in their meaning. Sometimes though, choruses made up, say, a group of citizens of the country where the play was set, whom characters on stage could address, and who answered back.
- the *scaena*, the building behind the stage, held props and costumes, and was probably used for rehearsals.
- the *scaena* could also be used to create a *deus ex machina*, the illusion of a god flying over the stage, and an *ekkyklema*, an opening of the central doors to reveal a platform that could be wheeled out, on which often the bodies of dead tragedy characters were shown.
- Music often accompanied plays of all types, as well as dancing from the chorus, and acrobatics; theatre was not "just" acting, but a range of performances for each production.

For an overview of the physical space of the theatre, see the diagram below.

**5. Actors**

Acting was considered a prestigious job for those who did it well (with actors acquiring fame across the empire), but was also a demanding profession. Many actors were always on the road to perform in different towns, and the rehearsals and performances were tough; actors were on stage most of the day during a performance day, whatever the weather, and the small cast of plays would mean they had a great number of lines in each production. Physically, the job was demanding too; a lot of comedies and satyr plays particularly got their laughs from slapstick and acrobatics; the masks and costumes were heavy and hot; and the large theatres filled with noisy crowds were demanding on an actor's voice.

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

Images:
Page 1 - Roman theatre at Bosra.
Page 2 - Mosaic of tragic and comic masks, from Rome (2nd Century), now in Capitoline Museums.
Page 3 - Left: Greek theatre mask, Hellenistic (at National Archaeological Museum, Athens).
Page 3 - Right: fragment of mosaic depicting a comic actor playing a slave, 1st century AD.
Page 4 - Scene from a tragedy from a burial chamber in Rome, 1st century AD, of polychrome terracotta.
Page 5 - Left & middle bottom: details from a mosaic showing musicians, Villa of Cicero, Pompeii.
Page 5 - Middle top: mosaic showing choregos and actors from the House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii.
Page 6 - Bottom: Relief of seated poet (Menander?) with masks of New Comedy. Roman.
Page 6 - Right: Terracotta theatre mask from Herculaneum.
Page 7 - fresco showing actor with mask, from House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii.
Page 8 & 9 - Roman theatre at Palmyra (Syria).

*Roman theatre at Palmyra, Syria.*

### Points for discussion

- Do you think theatre going was more exciting for the people of Herculaneum than it is for us today?
- How comfortable was it for a spectator to attend the theatre in Herculaneum?
- Would you have liked being an actor in ancient Rome?
- Would you have enjoyed seeing a comedy? Would you have enjoyed seeing a tragedy?
- Do you think going to the theatre should be free nowadays? Why do you think it used to be free? Do you approve?

### Activities

- Use the "Triarama" worksheet to fold a small model of the theatre, and stick the people in the right place in the theatre based on the Latin sentences.
- Make theatre masks out of paper, card, papier-mâché, or clay (see: https://www.wikihow.com/Make-Greek-Theatre-Masks).

- Let the class reenact a Roman play; devise one based on the comedy scene in the third story ("A Play"), or a tragedy based on the Iphigenia myth (see **Mythology** section).
- See the **Interactive Image** and **Archaeology** sections for further activities related to the theatre.

## Further reading

- Video: reconstruction of the Herculaneum theatre[1].
- Weblink: General information on the theatre and theatre going, suitable for primary level readers.[2]
- Weblink: On stock characters in Roman comedy.[3]
- Weblink: Introduction to Roman theatre and its origins.[4]
- Weblink: Catalogue of Roman theatres from across the empire, with excellent photographs. [5]
- Weblink: Guide to the Large Theatre in Pompeii (not to be confused with the smaller theatre, the Odeion).[6]
- Weblink: Computer model of Large Theatre Pompeii.[7]
- Weblink: On Turner's visit to the theatre through the Bourbon tunnels.[8]
- Weblink: About the Bourbon excavations.[9]
- Weblink: The theatre at Herculaneum photographs.[10]
- Weblink: Guide to the Herculaneum theatre.[11]

[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mRdUdgJg8Y

[2] http://rome.mrdonn.org/theatre.html

[3] http://www.artandpopularculture.com/Ancient_Roman_comedy

[4] http://www.didaskalia.net/studyarea/romanstagecraft.html

[5] https://www.whitman.edu/theatre/theatretour/home.htm

[6] https://sites.google.com/site/ad79eruption/pompeii/public-buildings/large-theatre

[7] https://www.flickr.com/photos/16472880@N06/8005275344/in/photostream/lightbox/

[8] http://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/jmw-turner/joseph-mallord-william-turner-inside-the-theatre-herculaneum-with-the-pedestal-of-appius-r1138367

[9] https://sites.google.com/site/ad79eruption/herculaneum-1/villa-of-the-papyri/bourbon-excavation

[10] http://donovanimages.co.nz/proxima-veritati/Herculaneum/Theatre/index.html

[11] https://sites.google.com/site/ad79eruption/herculaneum-1/theatre

# FACT FILE - BALBUS

## Objectives

Children get an insight into the historical evidence behind Marcus Nonius Balbus, the great patron of Herculaneum, and discover how a benefactor like Balbus would commemorate his role though donations and buildings.

## Historical notes

When reading the fact file with the children, remember that the Balbus in the fact file is imagined to be the ancestor of our Balbus (the real Balbus lived quite a bit earlier, with his political career coinciding with the rise to power of Octavian/Augustus).

Cassius Dio's account has Balbus mentioned only in passing, but because of the Herculaneum connection we now know a bit more about this otherwise unremarkable figure in the story of Octavian's rise to power. In 32 BC, Octavian, Marc Antony and Lepidus had formed a triumvirate that was now under strain; both Octavian and Antony were accusing the other of being the obstacle to achieving peace and all going back to how things were. One of the consuls was now proposing measures against Octavian, but they were vetoed by one of the tribunes of the peoples - a Marcus Nonius Balbus. With the ensuing war between Octavian and Antony won by Octavian, the new young emperor would have been grateful for Balbus' good deed, and it may be that this is why Balbus was granted a province not much later. Provinces were considered lucrative treats, and the worst of the provincial governors exploited the locals shamelessly to line their own pockets. Whether or not Balbus was one of these is not know, but we do know that not long after Balbus's praetorship a range of measures were passed to curtail the powers of provincial governors and limit exploitation, suggesting that Balbus' province tenure was well-timed to have been profitable. The wealth of the man who returned to Herculaneum to give the town a makeover suggested that in whatever way, Balbus had done well for himself financially.

Other than buildings, another way to measure the reaches of Balbus' influence in the town is to consider the number of names that survive in inscriptions, wax tablets and catalogues of men with names that suggest they're freedmen or relations of freedmen of the Marcus Nonius Balbus family. As Dama is called "Marcus Nonius Dama", so any ex-slave of Balbus would continue to bear his name (as would their children). It's no coincidence either that Dama's son has been imagined as being called "Marcus", suggesting Dama naming his son in honour of his former master. From all the sources in Herculaneum we have over 50 surviving Marcus Noniuses, the single most attested name in the town.

## Points for discussion

- Why do you think Balbus gave so much money to build buildings and statues in Herculaneum? Did he do it for the good of the town, or to demonstrate his own wealth and power?
- Do people still get remembered for public gifts they make? Do the children know of any buildings named after people who gave the money for them for instance? Do they think this is a good thing?

- Why do you think the people of Herculaneum in the inscription left after his death, decided to honour Balbus to such an extent? What does this show you about the relationship between Balbus and the people of the town?
- What do you think of the way Balbus made his money?

# MYTHOLOGY - IPHIGENIA

## Objectives

Children learn the story of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the basis of a famous tragic play, are introduced to some depictions of the myth in ancient art, and grapple with the questions raised by the story.

## Notes

The full audio file will take slightly over 5 minutes to listen to. This version of the story is based largely on the Euripides play, but with some changes (a few plot lines have been left out to speed along the narrative, and Euripides does not include the replacement of Iphigenia with the deer, although other tellings of the myth do include this, and other tragedies do refer to it too).

*Fresco showing the sacrifice of Iphigenia (centre), while the seer Calchas (right) watches on and Agamemnon (left) covers his head to shield his eyes. In the sky above, Artemis and the deer that will replace Iphigenia can be seen. From the House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii.*

## Points for discussion

- Do you think this story is a good basis for a tragedy? Have a look back at the Civilisation section, and see which of the requirements of a tragedy it meets. Which bits of the play could you show easily on stage? Which might you need to leave out of a stage production?
- Who is responsible for the death of the girl (even if she does not die technically): Artemis, for demanding a sacrifice? Calchas, for telling the prophecy to Agamemnon? Agamemnon, for ordering her death? Clytaemnestra, for not preventing it? Iphigenia for asking for death herself? Menelaus for wanting to go to Troy in the first place? Paris for abducting Helen, or Helen for running away with him…?
- Do you think what Iphigenia did was courageous? Would you make the same choice?
- Iphigenia wants to be known to be as brave as a man. In war in the ancient world, only men fought. Do we still have differences in how we think of bravery for men and for women today?
- This is the second time the mythology section features the goddess Artemis demanding the death of a mortal. Compare the Iphigenia story with the Actaeon myth. How fair is Artemis in both of these myths? What can these stories tell us about the nature of the gods and their relationship with humans?

## Activities

- Set up a court room in class, putting Agamemnon on trial for the murder of his daughter. Let some children draft up the defense, and some the prosecution - either can call witnesses whom they'd need to act out (such as Iphigenia, Clytaemnestra, Calchas, … see Points for discussion above for ideas).

Images

Page 1 & Page 2 (Left) - Fresco from the House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii (also above).
Page 2 (Right) - Fresco of Iphigenia in Tauris, from the House of Lucius Caecilius Iucundus, Pompeii.

Transcript

When Helen left for Troy with Paris, Menelaus was in a rage. His wife, his beautiful wife - the most beautiful woman who had ever lived, taken from him, by a Trojan prince! Did he abduct her? Or .. did she choose to go? That thought made a new wave of rage come over King Menelaus. He cried out in his fury: “Agamemnon! Brother!”

Agamemnon was King of Argos, and he commanded the greatest forces of the Greek mainland. They would sail to Troy, they would wage war on the city, they would kill Paris and all the Trojans, and bring Helen back. Agamemnon and Menelaus rallied all the Greek warlords; great Achilles, giant Ajax, the cunning Odysseus. They all came, over land and over sea, and met at Aulis. There they gathered, their ships filled with war-hungry men, and waited. Waited for the wind to be right, to carry them across the sea, to take them to Troy and to war.

But the wind did not come. Barely a breeze stirred in Aulis. The days were hot, the sea was flat. The men grew restless. How long must they wait? And after many long days of waiting, they started to talk… Were the gods against them? Why were they not given their favourable wind?

Agamemnon heard their talks, and consulted his seer, Calchas, asking him what they needed to do, to make the gods bring them the wind they needed. Calchas took the omens, and the news was bad. It was Agamemnon himself, who had displeased the gods! He had brought on the anger of Artemis, by killing one of her deer in her sacred wood. Agamemnon groaned at his foolishness. What should they do then, to appease the goddess Artemis?

What Calchas said next, made his blood run cold. A sacrifice needed to be made. But not just of an animal, to make up for the loss of Artemis’s deer… No, the goddess demanded he ceremoniously killed - his own daughter, Iphigenia.

Agamemnon was furious, but his anger didn’t help. The huge army was bristling to sail to Troy, and Agamemnon was the only one who could make their wind come back. With heavy heart he wrote to his wife Clytaemnestra, telling her to bring the girl to Aulis. He didn’t dare tell her why…

Clytaemnestra and her daughter arrived, and were brought to the altar where the ceremony would take place. Clytaemnestra saw the axe, saw her husband refusing to catch her eye, saw her daughter being seized, and knew just what was going on. She screamed and tried to throw herself between her daughter and executioner.

She was dragged away, and Agamemnon explained himself - it wasn’t his choice, he said, it was the gods who demanded it… but Agamemnon too was beginning to doubt he could do it. Clytaemnestra wailed, Agamemnon faltered… and then a voice cut through the commotion at the altar, and Iphigenia herself spoke out. “Let me die”, she said “if it’s the gods’ will. So you may sail to Troy. And I’ll die an honourable death: as honourable as any man who dies on the battlefield. Let people remember me as brave Iphigenia, let me be the saviour of the Greece, and may everyone know what the Greeks are made of!”

Agamemnon, tears in his eyes, consented, and despite the wails of his wife, lifted high his ceremonial axe, lifted it for the gods to see, and then brought it down with one swift blow. On looking down, however, his daughter’s body did not lay at his feet. Instead, a deer, the sacred animal of Artemis, lay there at the altar. What Agamemnon would never know was that his daughter was had been spirited away by the goddess Artemis, taken to her temple to serve as a priestess, there protected by the virgin goddess herself. All Agamemnon knew was that a breeze stirred in the trees, and then a gust of wind whipped at his hair. The goddess was appeased.

# OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

*Note: The 'Guide to using the Primary Latin Course' has more detailed notes on how to use these resources.*

### Naval race - civilisation (online game)

This game focuses on the Roman theatre.

### Naval race - language (online game)

This game tests the vocabulary 'to learn' from this chapter as well as the sentence patterns.

### Pairs (online game)

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

### Categories (online game)

Sort the words into people you'd encounter in the *cavea* or on the *scaena* of the theatre.

### Write your translation (printable worksheets)

Printable line drawing versions of all of the stories for this chapter, in which enough space is left for pupils to write in their own English translation. The Latin is not given on the worksheet - this can be supplied by giving pupils access to the online text, or by printing the line drawing version of the story (downloadable from the lander page of each story).

### Language links (printable worksheet)

This worksheet looks at some rather more advanced vocabulary for this chapter, and may best be attempted only with higher year groups and more able pupils (words like virile and constellation are encountered). You may wish to give pupils access to a dictionary, and this can be a good way for more able pupils to expand their vocabulary.

### Practice sentences (printable worksheet)

This worksheet provides a few more sentences in the same pattern practising longer sentences with more than one verb and more than one object and adjectives. This worked through as a class from the board, to revise how to translate longer sentences.

### What's happening? (printable worksheet)

This worksheet lets children create Latin sentences themselves, then translating them, allowing for some creative solutions. This worksheet creates more complex sentences, with more than one verb and more than one adjective, so children will be challenged to keep their sentences making sense.

### Dama gets a scare - Comprehension (printable worksheet)

A version of the second story of the chapter, “Dama gets a scare” with comprehension questions interspersed with the Latin story. This could be an assessment tool, used with more able pupils, or worked through together after reading the story for the first time.

### Triarama (printable worksheet)

This worksheet lets children fold and glue a little model of the Herculaneum theatre. They then read some Latin sentences and cut out and glue in the people in the sentences into the right part of the theatre.

### Write a letter about your day at the theatre (printable worksheet)

This worksheet lets children write a letter to an imaginary friend about their day at the theatre in Herculaneum, on a papyrus background. Children my enjoy creating Latin versions of their own and friends’ names for this. Girl’s names usually end in -a, and boy’s names in -us. Or let children invent their own *tria nomina,* or choose a name from this catalogue: https://www.behindthename.com/names/usage/ancient-roman.