

A Guide to Using Henle Latin for Parents and Students at PEP¹

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Introduction

Some introduction and explanation is often needed at the beginning of using Henle Latin. While it is the best curriculum that I have found for a two day per week model of education, there are some things that take some getting used to. This is because Henle Latin is an older, reprinted text with an unusual format. Most modern elementary language books have neatly divided lessons with a similar format for each lesson. Henle does not. Henle's lesson lengths vary considerably and the vocabulary lists may occur anywhere within the lesson. Also, Henle has a "grammar book," which is a reference book that is a list of forms that the students must learn, and a "textbook," which contains vocabulary, explanations, and assignments.

Furthermore, the numbers on the assignment sheet for the Henle textbook (purple book) are page numbers, while the numbers for the grammar book (blue book) are section numbers. For example, if the assignment is to memorize the declension of *terra*, Grammar No. 31, you will find this on page 5, section number 31 rather than page 31. It's easy to get used to once you are aware of this.

The Importance of Review

A large percentage of Latin I is drill, memorization, and review. The objective of these activities is for the vocabulary and grammar forms to become part of the student's long-term memory. It is only through repetition, both oral and written, that this takes place. The goal is for the student to have immediate recall of the material that he has memorized. This is what I call the "3 AM test." For example, I will sometimes ask students, "if your parents were to wake you up at 3 AM and ask you the declension of *terra*, would you be able to do it?" The student should be able to recite vocabulary and grammar forms without thinking.

Why is this important, especially when in the early stages of Latin, students can often study right before class and pass the quiz? Or later, they can look up the words or the forms as they translate? Mastery is important because translation work is difficult enough without having to stop and look up every word. If the student has to spend the majority of time looking up words and grammar, Latin becomes both odious and time consuming. The reason students either do not succeed at Latin or detest Latin is not because of the difficulty of the concepts. It is because they do not take the time to master the grammar forms and vocabulary, which requires review, review, review. During my years of teaching Latin, I have found that the students who succeed and who enjoy the class are the ones who review. The students who don't succeed and don't enjoy the class are the ones who don't review. It's really that simple.

¹ Adapted from Cheryl Lowe, *First Year Henle Latin: Guide For Units I-II*. (Memoria Press: Louisville, KY, 2000), p. 5-10.

Elements of the review process

The weekly lesson plans are organized into daily assignments. Sometimes, we will get ahead and end up completing some of the home assignments in class. But here are the elements of the review process:

1. The written exercises that are in the weekly lesson plan
2. Review of vocabulary cards
3. Review of grammar cards
4. Daily “fun drill”

1. **Written Exercises:** These are listed as “exercises” in the weekly lesson plan. The instructions are generally provided there. They are to be checked with the answer key (white book). The exercises are to be done as follows:

The student’s first attempt is to be done in pencil.

Mistakes are to be noted in red pen.

Corrections are to be made in blue or black ink.

Word order may vary from the answer key, since Latin does not depend on word order for correct syntax. Also, words may have more than one meaning in the vocabulary list. However, tense, voice, mood, person, number, case, and gender should be the same as in the answer key. For more information, there is a short introduction in the answer key.

Also, the answer key does not always have the answers for initial exercises that ask for form identification. Those forms may be found in the Grammar (blue) book.

2. **Vocabulary cards:** Vocabulary cards are to be made by the student each time new vocabulary is assigned. This should be noted on the lesson plan and on the parental sign-off sheet. This is for the purpose of being able to review vocabulary quickly and often.
3. **Grammar cards:** A grammar card is to be made for each grammatical form that is introduced. This should be noted on the lesson plan and on the parental sign-off sheet. This is for the purpose of being able to review grammar forms quickly and often.
4. **Daily “fun drill”:** A quick, daily, oral review of all grammar cards and vocabulary cards to date.

How to make and use vocabulary cards

You may use either the Vis-Ed blank vocabulary cards or 3 x 5 cards. I do not recommend getting the pre-printed Vis-Ed cards. Making the cards has the benefit of connecting the kinetic process of writing with the mental process of review. This is yet another way to reinforce learning.

Do the following:

1. Write the Latin word on the front. If it is a noun, make sure you include the genitive singular.
2. Write the English translation on the back.

Terra, ae

Earth, land

How to use vocabulary cards

1. With the Latin side of the cards face-up, translate from Latin to English
2. When you translate correctly from Latin to English, turn the card over with the English side up on the bottom of the deck.
3. When you do not translate the card correctly, place the card at the bottom of the deck without turning it over so that the Latin remains face-up.
4. When you encounter a card with the English side up, translate from English to Latin. If you translate correctly, place the card aside. If you translate incorrectly, place the card at the bottom with the English side up.
5. Continue this process until all the cards are gone.
6. Once you can translate correctly from Latin to English and English to Latin without thinking, please them into a separate deck to be reviewed weekly or monthly. This will keep you from needlessly reviewing words you already know and will keep the review task manageable.

How to make grammar cards

Again, you may use either the Vis-Ed cards or 3x5 cards. There are cards for grammar rules and grammar forms. They are to be reviewed in the same manner as the vocabulary cards. Below, you will find an example of each:

Grammar rules:

Genitive singular of 2nd declension nouns

Us = masculine
Um = neuter

Grammar forms:

First declension feminine endings

Singular

a
ae
ae
am
ā

Plural

ae
arum
is
as
is