

Chapter 13: Disaster

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Here is an exercise I developed for Chapter 13 of *ECCE ROMANI*. This dialogue-writing exercise can be done individually or with the whole class participating. I have even done it while teaching via distance learning. Individuals may write their own dialogue and be graded on a teacher's rubric/standard for original Latin writing/grammar. Whole group participation usually produces instant corrections because someone always "knows" how to say/spell what is needed. Both ways are fun. The exercise illustrates that Latin can indeed be used for communication.

Culture includes family relationships in ancient Rome and why what we say today would not be appropriate to the Cornelii. I use this exercise to review weather words, vocabulary, verbs, personal endings, and status in society. It is a surprise to students that Syrus is not treated better in subsequent chapters after he saves the family *magna arte*.

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Add dialogue to the family trip by following the inserted directions.

Intereā Cornēlii per Viam Appiam iter faciēbant. Cornēlius, quod ad urbem tribus diēbus advenīre volēbat, Syrum identidem iubēbat equōs incitāre. Syrus igitur equōs virgā verberābat. Dum per viam ībant, Aurēlia et Cornēlia spectābant rūsticōs quī in agrīs labōrābant.

*Write a dialogue between Aurelia and Cornelia.
(Have them comment on the peasants working.)*

Marcus et Sextus spectābant omnēs raedās quae per Viam Appiam ībant.

*Write a dialogue between Marcus and Sextus.
(Have them tell what vehicle they like and why.)*

Septima hōra erat. Diēs erat calidus. In agrīs rūsticī nōn iam labōrābant, sed sub arboribus quiēscēbant.

*Write a dialogue between any family members about the weather.
(Have them tell what kind of weather they like and what they do.)*

In raedā Cornēlius et Aurēlia iam dormiēbant. Marcus pede vexābat Cornēliam quae dormīre volēbat. Sextus cum raedāriō Syrō sedēbat; viam et vehicula spectābat.

*Write a dialogue between Sextus and Syrus.
(Have Sextus comment on why he likes Syrus better than Davus.
Have Syrus tell how he feels working for Cornelius.
Does he like being a coachman? Why or why not?)*

Subitō, "Ecce, Marce!" exclāmat Sextus. "Est aurīga!"

Marcus magnō rīsū respondet, "Nōn est aurīga, fatue! Est tabellārius quī epistulās cīvium praeclārōrum ab urbe fert. Tabellārii semper celeriter iter faciunt quod epistulās ab urbe ad omnēs partēs Italiae ferunt."

"Quam celeriter iter facit!" clāmat Sextus. "Equōs ferōciter virgā incitat. Cavē tabellārium, Syre! Tenē equōs! Cavē fossam! Cavē fossam!"

Syrus equōs tenet et tabellārium vītat, sed raeda in fossam magnō fragōre dēscendit.

*Finish the story with a dialogue in which family members ask each other how they are.
(Have someone compliment Syrus for a job well done.)*