

Ad Usum Delphini: A New Book Series for High School Latin Students

This paper presents a new book series for high school Latin classes, called *Ad Usum Delphini*. The project is inspired by the time-honored Delphin Classics: a variety of annotated editions of Latin authors with commentary in Latin, first published in seventeenth-century France. By reviving that Latin-to-Latin commentary tradition, our series targets high school students preparing for the AP Latin exam through the Living Latin method.

Originally created “for the use of” Louis XIV’s heir, *Le Grand Dauphin*, the French *Ad Usum Delphini* editions included the main Latin text, a paraphrase in simpler Latin prose, and running notes in Latin on matters of syntax, vocabulary, history, culture, and mythology. The main pedagogical benefit of this approach, as we shall underscore in this paper, is that the reader is presented with primary and secondary material exclusively in the target language — i.e., Latin.

Our publication project takes the cue from the Delphin Classics to produce Latin-to-Latin commented editions of Vergil, Caesar, and other authors. Each book in our series places the main Latin text at the top (based on the text of standard critical editions, with minor modifications), the Latin paraphrase below it, and the Latin commentary at the bottom of the page.

For both paraphrase and commentary, we selected, compiled, and thoroughly reworked Latin-language material from numerous *Ad Usum Delphini* editions, adding our own Latin notes to it on occasion. Source editions are cited and referred to in each note. As this paper will demonstrate, the Latin paraphrases and annotations on each passage make the original text accessible to upper beginners and intermediate readers.

As we shall show in this presentation, the intended readers of our series are high school Latin students, and students preparing for the AP Latin exam in particular. The Latin-to-Latin

nature of the project makes it especially suitable for high school classes in which Living Latin or Active Latin pedagogy and the Comprehensible Input method are adopted.

For many years, the only resources available to students studying for the Latin AP exam have been modern anthologies with notes in English (such as Boyd 2012 and Mueller 2012) and standardized mock-test materials. Our project aims to enrich the field of AP Latin resources by providing useful commented editions to teachers and students interested in Living Latin.

As this paper will show, we have just completed our own new edition of Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*, with paraphrase and commentary in Latin, modeled after the French *Ad Usum Delphini* tradition. A similar edition of Vergil's *Aeneid*, focusing on the AP Latin excerpts with commentaries *tantum Latine*, will soon be published in our series. We then plan to expand the series so as to include such authors as Catullus, Horace, and Ovid.

This paper will introduce the audience to the books already available in our new *Ad Usum Delphini* series as well as to the forthcoming titles. We hope that the series will become widely used in high school Latin instruction across the United States.

Bibliography

Boyd, B.W. (ed.), 2012. *Vergil's Aeneid: Selected Readings from Books 1, 2, 4, and 6*.

Mundelein, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci.

Mueller, H.F. (ed.), 2012. *Caesar: Selections from his Commentarii De Bello Gallico*.

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