

The World of the Hero: Virgil's *Aeneid*

Guide for A Level OCR Classical Civilisation

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Teacher's Introduction

The aim of this guide is to develop the knowledge and skills required to answer questions for OCR's Classical Civilisation A Level examination: H408/11 World of the Hero. This guide is for Virgil's *Aeneid*, study of which is compulsory.

The guide has three sections:

1. Section A: where any relevant historical and political context is introduced
2. Section B: where a commentary is provided for each of the prescribed literature, linked to relevant themes and topics, as set out in the specification. Activities based on the question styles in the exam will help students develop their critical and analytical skills.
3. Section C: where themes are drawn together

Learners are advised to use the guide as follows:

1. Read the historical context (Section A)
2. Read each prescribed book through first, using the reference section and summary to understand the more important people and places (Section B)
3. Study the notes, which are arranged around themes listed in the specification, as relevant to each individual book. This layout is designed specifically to reduce the tendency for candidates to give narrative or chronological responses. Discuss the characters and themes and complete the activities for each book (Section B).
4. After reading all the prescribed books, consider the work as a whole (Section C)

Books to be studied

- 1 Storm and Banquet
- 2 The Fall of Troy
- 4 Dido
- 6 The Underworld
- 7 War in Latin
- 8 Aeneas in Rome
- 9 Nisus and Euryalus
- 10 Pallas and Mezentius
- 11 Drances and Camilla
- 12 Truce and Duel

Text

This guide uses *The Aeneid* translated by D West (Penguin). There is also another version translated by A Kline available online at www.poetryintranslation.com Both versions will be printed on the examination paper. The line numbers given are approximations based on D West's translation, which has increments of 10 in the margins.

Quotations from *The Aeneid*

The learning of lists of quotations from the text is to be discouraged. The instruction 'detailed reference' does not require this and it is not expected by examiners.

November 2021



A web page containing all the links listed in this resource is conveniently provided on ZigZag Education's website at zzed.uk/11215

You may find this helpful for accessing the websites rather than typing in each URL.

Virgil's Life and Works

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Publius Virgilius Maro was born in 70 BC at Andes near Mantua in North Italy on a farm. Educated at Cremona and Mediolanum (Milan), he went to Rome to study rhetoric, as seen in the speeches in Books 4 and 8.

His first work, composed when he was a student, was a collection of short poems. Some time after his education, when he returned home to Andes but, a few years later, Julius Caesar's 8th Legion's farm was confiscated in order to provide land for the Roman army. Virgil appealed to Pollio, the governor of Cisalpine Gaul, who fortunately brought him to Octavian, who restored Virgil's farm to him. Virgil's gratitude to Pollio and Octavian inspired several of the 10 *Eclogues*, a book of pastoral poems, published in 37 BC.

His next work was the *Georgics*, a poem about farming in four books, written between 29 and 27 BC on the suggestion of Maecenas, one of Octavian's chief ministers, and dedicated to him when Maecenas became a great patron of the arts, supporting many young poets in Rome. Virgil had been introduced to Maecenas by Virgil. The *Georgics* have been greatly admired, and led to the *Aeneid*, possibly because the *Georgics* were a finished product compared to the *Aeneid*, which he ordered to be destroyed because he felt it was unfinished and needed for succeeding generations, the executors of his will ignored Virgil's instructions and published it.

The *Aeneid* is an epic poem (in both modern and literary senses) and is the Roman *Odyssey* combined. There are many parallels between the two works, e.g. Homeric *Odyssey* but this should not detract from his work, as Roman authors were expected to imitate Homer. Today, authors who imitate or copy other authors' works are accused of plagiarism, but Virgil produced a Roman epic on a par with Homer's epics immediately in the first line:

*I sing of arms and of the man, doomed to be an exile, who long
since left the shores of Troy and came to the shores of
Lavinium; and great-pounding he took by land and sea*

In other words, Virgil is going to write a Roman *Iliad* (arms and *Odyssey* (man)). He starts by putting the journey of Aeneas from Troy to Italy first, then the war between him and Turnus. An obvious parallel with Homer as the *Iliad* ends with the victory of the Greek Achilles over Hector, and the *Aeneid* ends with Aeneas killing Turnus, while the *Odyssey* tells of his journey home from Troy, and the *Aeneid* tells of Aeneas's long journey from Troy to establish a new home.

Another parallel with Homer is in the structure of the *Aeneid*, as both employ a circular structure. In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas lands in Carthage, and, in response to Queen Dido's request, tells her the story of Troy and his wanderings over the Mediterranean. These make up Books 2–3, then the story again from where he left it in Book 1. So, the chronological order of the *Aeneid* is: Troy, Book 3, the wanderings across the Mediterranean, Book 1, the storm which drives him to Africa, Book 4, the resumption of the story which Virgil had left in Book 1. The circular structure is a chronological order.

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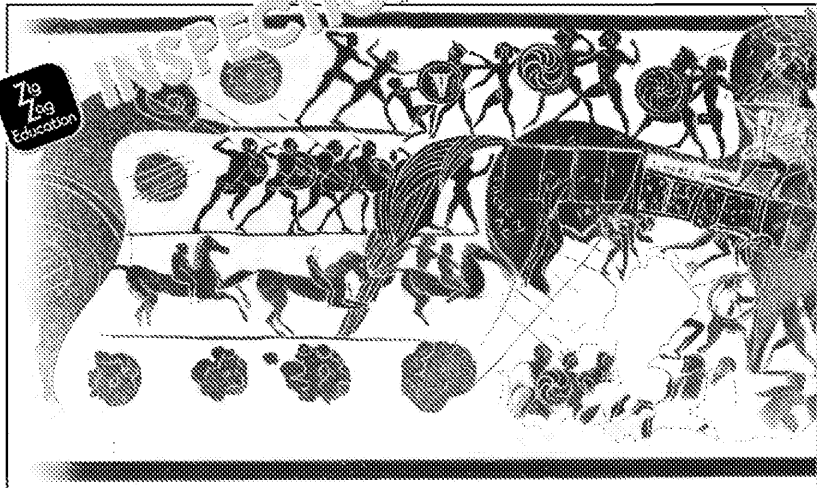
The Story of the Trojan War

Important to the study of both Homer and Virgil is knowledge of the Trojan War that of Peleus, a mortal, and Thetis, a (minor) sea goddess. This was an unusual divine met. It was decided not to invite the goddess Discord/Strife. However, she put an apple onto the wedding table. Attached to the apple was a label which read: 'For the goddesses immediately claimed the apple. In Homer they have Greek names: Hera, goddess of wisdom; and Aphrodite, goddess of love. In Virgil they have Roman (Latin) names: Minerva, goddess of wisdom; and Venus, goddess of love. They are, however, the

Zeus refused to choose. When the goddesses approached Paris, son of Priam of Troy, he persuaded him. Juno offered him power; Athene/Venus offered him wisdom; and Aphrodite offered him the most beautiful woman in the world. This was Helen, wife of Menelaus of Sparta. Paris chose Venus. Mortal time must have passed as Peleus and Thetis had a son, Achilles, son of his own.

During this time it was arranged that Paris should meet Helen, and they returned to Troy after assembling a huge gathering of Greek troops. With him were Agamemnon and Odysseus. The Greeks surrounded Troy in a siege lasting 10 years. Homer's *Iliad* describes

To break the deadlock the Greeks came up with the idea of a wooden horse. It was built with a hollow interior. The Greeks sailed away to a nearby island called Tenedos. After some days the horse inside the walls, relieved that the war was over. After celebrating and while the soldiers climbed down from the horse, opened doors and the Greeks burned the city. The Trojans were forced to flee and find another place to live under the leadership of Hector. Virgil's *Aeneid*.



In this image from a Greek vase, men can be seen coming from inside the horse.

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Section A: Historical Context

Historical and political background

After the Trojan War

After the fall of Troy, the stories continue of the return of the heroes. Homer has written about the return of *Agamemnon* in his poems. But what of the Trojans? The name that occurs in art and literature is *Aeneas*. Aeneas is the son of *Venus*. *Anchises* is a cousin of *Priam*, king of Troy. Aeneas leaves Troy with his father and home. He gathers with other refugees and begins his wanderings across the world. In detail of this, see Books 1, 2 and 4.

After many wanderings and adventures – including a storm off the coast of Carthage – they land on the west coast of Italy (Book 7) at the mouth of a river called *Tiber*. They live in *Latium* and their king is King *Latinus*. After bloody battles (Books 8, 9) with the chieftain *Turnus* (Book 12). He and his people can now settle at last and found a city. The Romans have arrived! But this is just one myth.

The second myth: The founding of Rome

The historian *Livy* relates the story which may be familiar to you: the founding of Rome. As a historian, *Livy* would have believed this to be factually correct. He was writing years after the supposed Trojan War.

The Vestal Rhea Silvia gave birth to twins. She named Mars as their father, but believed it, or because the fault might appear less heinous if a deity were the father, the gods nor men sheltered her or her babes from the king's cruelty; the priestesses the boys were ordered to be thrown into the river.

By a heaven-sent chance it happened that the Tiber was then overflowing and the standing water covered the only approach to the main channel. Those who were expected to drown at the flood-gate of the river were saved, so that the king's cruelty was carried out by the river.

The locality was then a wild solitude. The tradition goes on to say that after the boys had been exposed had been left by the retreating water on dry land surrounded by hills, attracted by the crying of the children, came to them, gave them milk, and was so gentle towards them that the king's flock-master found her licking the boys.

Livy Early History of Rome

The truer facts?

Rome is a settlement in a geographical basin. The rain runs off seven foothills of the Apennines and the water drains into the Tiber and flows out to sea at Ostia. The original people were Etruscans and there is evidence of Bronze Age settlements. Probably people met in the basin area to trade cattle. According to the tradition, Rome was founded in 753 BC. The first ruled by kings, such as *Romulus* and *Numa*. These probably were the original Etruscan kings. There were traditionally seven kings.

Expulsion of the kings

The last king of Rome was supposedly *Tarquinius Superbus*. He was expelled from Rome by a woman. In fact this probably marks the end of Etruscan rule over Rome. There were local inhabitants. *Livy's* version is much more violent but with a moral tone. *Tarquin* was expelled, according to tradition, in 509 BC.

Activity

Read *Livy Early History of Rome*. The story can be found at: [http://www.ancientrome.org/](#)

Romulus and *Remus* were the founders of Rome. They were building a city in the basin. The boys were exposed, but it all got out of hand.

Make a timeline of the terrible twist when *Romulus* took sole control of Rome.

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The Republic

The Romans decided that they would have kings no longer. Historically, this period was ruled by aristocrats. Power came into the hands of leading families often referred to as patricians. At first, power there were two joint leaders elected every year. These were called Consuls. A new class of men was created. These were not old families but new money called **equites**. The general population was referred to as **plebs**. This is not a derogatory term to describe the ordinary Roman. Rome started to have influence on her neighbours. A league of tribes formed called the Latin League. So Rome dominated the whole of Italy, and in time

Punic Wars (The wars with Carthage)

The other large nation in the 3rd century (300–200 BC) was the Carthaginian Empire, based in Tunisia). It was originally founded, according to legend, by a refugee from Tyre meeting her. (See *Aeneid* Books 1 and 4). Today the Carthaginians are almost forgotten, but that was in effect wiped out by the dominant Romans. The wars started over the supply. Their most famous war was the Second Punic War when the Carthaginian leader, *Hannibal*. He was finally defeated by the Roman commander *Scipio*.

Political and historical background to the civil war; civil unrest 100 BC

As a result of Rome's conquests there was a plentiful supply of slaves. The free born Romans were worried about how they would earn a living. Why pay when you can have a slave?

Two brothers, the *Gracchi*, came up with solutions to the people's problems. In 133 BC, Tiberius Gracchus was giving allotments to the poor. This was seen as a threat to wealthy landowners. He was killed in 133 BC. In 123 BC, Gaius Gracchus became another champion of the people. Yet he was roundly massacred on the Aventine Hill. But the brothers had started the idea of rights for the poor, and civil unrest.

In 108 BC *Marius* made the army a profession. Soldiers were paid and were not allowed to leave the army, veterans were given land in rural Italy. This caused resentment. The result was the Social Wars. In other words, the people of Italy fought each other. The army was in charge of the army. *Marius* was disappointed. Supporters of both factions fought. *Marius* died in 100 BC and *Sulla* in 78 BC. The republic was falling apart – even the most famous revolt was one led by *Spartacus*.

Civil War

Power passed to *Pompey* (106–48 BC). He was busy in the provinces of the growing empire. A mistake of not keeping an eye on matters back in Rome. A young man called *Gaius Caesar* came back in Rome. But he was not powerful yet. In 63 BC Pompey offered to give the soldiers land. This move was opposed by *Cicero*, a famous lawyer and senator. *Cicero* took sides. During Pompey's time in power, *Catiline* failed to get elected and *Cicero* took power, but his attempt was crushed by *Cicero*. Yet again, blood flowed in the streets. Full civil war broke out on 7th January 49 BC. *Caesar* won and was voted 'Dictator for life'. *Caesar* was not Emperor. In 44 BC on 15th March – the *Ides of March* – *Caesar* was assassinated.

Augustus's rise to power

After his death, *Caesar* passed power (as he wished this in his will) to his great nephew. *Octavian* continued his support for *Caesar*, providing with *Octavian* and gave *Caesar's* funeral. *Octavian* can be found in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

Brutus and *Cassius*, the ringleaders in *Caesar's* assassination, were pursued by *Antony* and *Octavian* at the Battle of Philippi, which is in Greece, in 42 BC. After the Battle of Philippi, the purposes of administration and *Octavian* stayed in Rome while *Antony* was in charge of Cleopatra, and there resulted a steamy love affair. *Antony* lost sight of his role.

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The relationship caused problems back in Rome. Antony had married, and was sister, and Octavian was furious. In addition, the people of Rome were wary of the ruled by a non-Roman queen. Matters came to a head at the Battle of Actium in 31 BC. Octavian of Rome and took on the title of *Augustus*, meaning 'lofty' or 'serene'. In 27 BC Augustus began his way of ruling with sole power but without the unpopular title of *rex*, king. Augustus ruled Rome and was, through his minister Maecenas, a patron to Virgil, Horace and Propertius.

I found Rome made of brick and left it made of marble

Augustus married his second wife Livia. He had no sons from his first wife, but his son Tiberius, Livia's son, his heir. Augustus died on 19th August AD 14.

Augustus: Consolidation of his rule and its promotion

Gaius Cilnius Maecenas

Maecenas (70–8 BC) was a political advisor to Augustus as well as an important patron of 'Augustan' poets. His grandfather, or possibly father, was a member of the equestrian order, the highest education of his time. His great wealth may have been in part hereditary, but his influence to his close connection with the Emperor Augustus. Maecenas is most famous for his patronage of poets. He supported Virgil, who wrote the *Georgics* in his honour.

Promotion of the Roman Empire

Maecenas's was not just a simple patron. His patronage was done for clear matters of state. Poets such as Horace and Virgil could promote Augustus's policies and bring the emperor's way of thinking. This was the 'new order'. Maecenas was the ultimate patron.

Virgil soon became part of the literary group of Maecenas. As a 'study poet', he wrote the *Aeneid* in 10 years, converted his narrative to a few lines of poetry. He spent the last 10 years of his life writing the *Aeneid* by Augustus to accompany the emperor's journey to the east. Virgil caught a fever and died. The text of the *Aeneid* was unfinished, but he asked for it to be burned, but Augustus ordered that the text of the *Aeneid* be published. It may contain 'faults' or 'inconsistencies' which Virgil would have corrected before publication.

The poet Horace gives us an idea of the circle of Maecenas:

Now, because, Maecenas, I am a constant guest of yours; but formerly, before, I was under my command, as being a military tribune. This latter case is different from the former, though any person perhaps might justly envy me that post of honour, yet I do not regard to your being my friend! especially as you are cautious to admit such persons far from having any sinister ambitious views. I cannot reckon myself a lucky man if it were by accident that I got you for my friend; for no kind of accident the best of men, Virgil, long ago, and after him, Varius, told you what I was. When in your presence, I spoke a few words in a broken manner (for childish bashfulness was speaking more); I did not tell you that I was the child of an illustrious father, who rode about the country on a [...] horse, but plainly what I really was; you answered in a few words: I depart: and you re-invite me after a short month, and command me to bring a number of your friends. I esteem it a great thing, that I pleased you, who did not do so by baseness, not by the illustrious name of my father, but by the purity of heart and the simplicity of my life.

Horace Satires 1.6 50–60

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Section B: Prescribed Literature

Books to be studied from Virgil's *Aeneid*:

- 1 Storm and Banquet
- 2 The Fall of Troy
- 4 Dido
- 6 The Underworld
- 7 War in Latin
- 8 Aeneas in Rome
- 9 Nisus and Euryalus
- 10 Pallas and the Ghost of Hector
- 11 Drances and Amilla
- 12 Truce and Duel

Each book in Section B is broken down into relevant subsections that will help students understand the context and required content outlined in the specification:

- A summary of the lines
- References to key figures and places
- The heroic and Roman world: characterisation and themes
- Literary techniques and composition
- The social, cultural and religious context

Section B is set out to enable learners to gain the skills set out in the OCR specification:

- Understand the storyline
- Understand the social, historical, and cultural references of the heroic and Roman world
- Understand the attitudes and values of the heroic Roman world as seen on stage
- Virgil's literary skills and the effect on the ancient and modern audience

Text:

This guide uses the *Aeneid* translated by D West (Penguin). There is also another version available online at www.poetryintranslation.com. Both versions will be printed on the page. Line numbers given are approximations based on D West's translation, which has 12 books.

Learners may, however, use any translation of the text of the *Aeneid* in their studies.

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Aeneid I: Storm and Bang

Lines 1–756

Summary: Through the plotting of Juno, still angry with the Trojans, Aeneas encounters storms at Carthage. Venus complains about Aeneas's treatment by Juno. Jupiter reassures her about the future for the Romans. She then disguises herself as a Syracusan girl and gives Aeneas a sign that he is safe. He meets queen Dido and is reunited with his crew.

For a YouTube introduction and diary see: [zzed.uk/11215-book1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzed.uk/11215-book1)

Reference

The gods

Muse: One of a group of goddesses of inspiration and the arts. It was usual for a poet to invoke the Muse. **Juno:** Queen of the Gods and wife of Jupiter. She is opposed to Aeneas. **Daughter of Juno** (formula phrase) for Juno. Juno is daughter of Saturn and both sister and wife of Jupiter.

Fates: Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos. **Pallas Athene:** Because Ajax had 'violated' Cassandra, she sent a storm to the Greek fleet with a thunderbolt and sunk it just as it was nearing the Greek coast. **Zeus:** His island was sometimes associated with Sicily. He also appears in the *Odyssey*. **Aeneas:** The messenger of the gods. **Son of Maia** is his epithet. Maia was a nymph.

Troy

Judgement of Paris: Paris, prince of Troy, was asked to choose the most beautiful goddess between Juno, Athena and Aphrodite. He chose Aphrodite, not Juno, causing Juno's anger. **Troy** is also called *Ilium*, the homeland of the Trojans. The city was destroyed by the Greeks and some survivors. **Argos:** An area in southern Greece where Mycenae and Sparta lie. The Greeks sailed for Troy. **Dardanus:** A son of Jupiter and founder of the Trojans. One version says he was succeeded by Dardanus, the founder of Troy. **Ganymede** was a beautiful Trojan boy who was taken up to the gods and became his 'cup-bearer'. **Achilles:** The wrath of this hero was a major theme. **Diomedes** was a Greek who almost killed Aeneas. He will appear again in Book II. **Paris** was the leader of the Trojans who was killed by Achilles.

Carthage

Tyre: A town situated in the eastern Mediterranean; was the town from where Dido came. **Carthage:** Today, is modern Tunis in Tunisia. **Libya** is a country in North Africa. **Sychaeus** was Dido's husband, now dead. **Pygmalion** was Dido's brother. **Byrsa:** The name of the hill on which Carthage was built. The idea is that it was cut into a continuous long strip and used like string to build the city.

Aeneas's crew

Achates is regarded as Aeneas's second in command. **Orontes:** The captain of one of the ships. **Caicus** are other companions.

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The heroic world: characterisation and themes

The gods

Juno: In lines 1–34, notice how the continuing opposition of Juno is emphasised. Several reasons:

Carthage would never be 'top nation'; people would overthrow this...	The Romans would defeat the Trojans
Judgement of Paris	Her slight to her beauty
Honours done to Ganymede	Her husband had carried him off

Virgil sums this up with *...this fuelling her anger*. Juno's mission throughout as much as *...the gods can delay the fates but never avoid or change them* storm.

Aeolus has a very minor role in the *Aeneid*. He is very much subservient to Juno as *to decide your wishes; my duty is to carry out your orders*.

Neptune is angry at the *cunning of his sister Juno*. Gods do not normally interfere with mortals. Neptune at once takes back command: *before he had finished speaking he*

Venus: Throughout the *Aeneid*, Venus is Aeneas's protector. She is aware of the *found* (NB not find) Rome, which is why she is frustrated by Juno's delaying tactics. She ensures fate takes its course, is heartfelt.

Activity

Study Venus's speech, lines 230–255. How does Virgil convey the emotion of Venus?

In your answer you might like to consider: the emotion of Venus; the choice of words; highlight what is said.

However, Venus can also appear to be a schemer and a romantic! Some feel Venus's love for Aeneas, lines 658–89, is very weak. Dido is already showing hospitality. Love will delay Aeneas even longer. Remember, she has already complained to Juno. She nearly abandons his mission altogether.

The mortals

Aeneas has much in common with Odysseus initially. But he must leave behind the Greek, civilised world. Aeneas performs heroic tasks such as hunting, lines 180–199, lines 305–15, for his men. In Book 1 we see glimpses of Odysseus, but we also see that Odysseus is a brilliant **individual** but Aeneas is to be a **brilliant leader**. Aeneas is supported by his men, lines 511–60. *Dutiful Aeneas* is Aeneas's personal epithet. It stresses his sense of anxieties and human failings, which he only just conquers. He reacts with human frailty. He is not super strong, nor does he have superhuman resolve. He desponds but he does not give up. True heroism is not the grand but the uncertain. It is a paradox that Aeneas must undergo efforts to achieve a mission the fates have decreed that he will complete.

Dido: Like Aeneas, she had to leave her native land and found a new city. She was in even worse luck, facing danger and assuming responsibility. Her ability to inspire admiration in the Trojans. She is queenly, kind to her people, and generous to her guests. She is a woman of great strength. *Through my own suffering I am learning to help those who suffer*, lines 445–450. She resists and she does have the opportunity to make a choice. She is not just a puppet. She has her responsibility, but her response to them is. She will have choices to make at the end. *Unfortunate Dido* is her epithet.

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Themes

The old Homeric/heroic code versus the new

Look at the opening words: *I sing of arms and of the man*: these two themes characterise arms as in the *Iliad* and man as in the *Odyssey*. Virgil sets his poem with a strong world of Homer. Aeneas must leave one world and enter another.

Imperial destiny: Jupiter's speech lines 255–97

Jupiter states two elements to Aeneas's mission:

- to conquer
- to civilise

Above all, this is Virgil's opportunity to celebrate Rome's success under the reign

Lavinium was to be Aeneas's first settlement in Italy. *Latium* is the area of Italy with Lazio). *Alban*: After Aeneas died, his son Ascanius moved the settlement from Lavinium to Alba Longa. *Tiber*: the river running through Rome. *Tyrrhenian Sea*: The sea nearest to Aeneas; he is also called *Iulus*. *Ilia*: An alternative name for Rhea Silvia, mother of Aeneas; here is connected with Ilium, the alternative name for Troy. *Trojan Caesar*... *Julius*: Important to Rome's early time. An early king, Numa, established the first Roman laws. Another name for Romulus.

Gates of War: The doors on the temple of Janus were closed by Augustus, indicating peace for the first time since 235 BC.

Jupiter's speech is very important for several reasons:

1. Divine episodes are expected for epic. Jupiter's speech sets the poem above the mortal world.
2. Prophecies can refer to 'future' events for Aeneas, but are familiar to Virgil's audience.
3. Part of the non-*Iliad* element of the poem. The mission is special to Aeneas and Rome.
4. Mission and suffering. The suffering which is to come is made worthwhile as the empire cannot come about without sacrifice and suffering.
5. Fate – the destiny of Rome.
6. If we think of Aeneas as a second Homeric-style hero, this speech shows us a different picture of the Roman character.
7. Written at a time of optimism and Romans felt a glorious new chapter was beginning.

Activity

What effect do you think this speech had on the audience when it was read out? How does a positive image of Rome emerge; Virgil's choice of words; literary devices to highlight the mission.

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Social, cultural and religious context

A very Roman work

The *Aeneid* is not a copy of Homer. It is very much a Roman work. A major feature is the emphasis on the worship of the Trojans to his new land. The *penates* were very familiar to the Romans, as they were these at the household shrine every day. Virgil is trying to attribute their introduction to Aeneas. The etymological explanation of *Iulus* from *Ilum* or Troy would have been very flattering for Augustus. He belonged to the Julio-Claudian family and claimed descent from Ascanius and Troy. Even the clothes of Aeneas are a Roman (citizen): *the race that wears the toga*, line 10. Aeneas does not wear a toga.

Activity

Look at the lines of the *Aeneid* and suggest how the poet may represent the Roman way of life.

Fate and destiny

Fate is a word which recurs many times in the *Aeneid*. Odysseus used his resourcefulness to escape his fate. Aeneas has his life laid out by fate to establish a new (Roman) way of life planned by the gods.

Literary techniques and composition

Homer asks the Muse to give him a story. Virgil does not ask for a story like Homer. He asks the Muse to explain the reasons behind Aeneas's suffering. The story then does not start at the beginning of the Trojan War where Aeneas has left Troy well behind. We pick up the story in the middle. This is *medias res*.

Activity

Book 1 is characterised by particularly graphic passages of description. Study the passages and decide why they are effective:

- lines 50–75
- lines 82–120: do you agree with R D Williams's comment on the lines: 'verbal gymnastics'?
- lines 160–179

Divine intervention

Divine intervention is an essential part of epic composition. Venus often intervenes on behalf of her son. These interventions are beneficial and this is so for Aeneas:

- Venus pleads for her son to Jupiter
- She, disguised as a Spartan girl, gives him vital information about where he has come ashore
- She substitutes Cupid for Ascanius in order to protect her grandson and his fate

Activity

You may find it interesting to see how Venus is portrayed in the *Aeneid*.

Ecphrasis

See lines 450–493. An ecphrasis is a long, descriptive passage, almost a digression, which is a work of art. Here it is a work of art in a temple depicting the Trojan War. Actually, the temple was not known in the heroic age and so this is also an example of an *anachronism*.

The ancient writer Pausanias saw and described a mural, now lost, by the famous painter Polygnotos which depicted the Trojan War. It was originally at the Shrine of Apollo at Delphi. Virgil has this in mind.

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Aeneid 2: The Fall of Troy

Lines: 1–804

Summary: The Trojans debate what to do about the wooden horse. Laocoön appeals to the Trojans bring a deserter, Sinon, before them. The Trojans are taken in by Sinon horribly and the Trojans take in the horse. The Greeks return by night and the gates open. Aeneas climbs onto his roof and witnesses the destruction of Troy. The Greek Pyrrhus slaughters the royal family, including Priam. Aeneas spots Helen and intends to kill her but is stopped by his father. Aeneas takes his father, son and wife, and runs back to Italy. The ghost of his wife tells Aeneas to go on.

For a YouTube introductory summary see: [zzed.uk/11215-book2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzed.uk/11215-book2)

References

The gods

Pallas Athene: She helped Epos build the horse. *Gorgon:* Athena's shield has the head of a Gorgon.

Tritonian Pallas: Athene is called this from Lake Tritonis in Africa, where some say she was born. *Palladium:* The safety of Troy depended on a statue of Pallas Athene, called the Palladium. The Greeks, although one version says that the Greeks stole a false image and then returned to Rome. *Minerva:* The horse was supposed to be a gift to Minerva. *Neptune:* was not involved in the original Troy.

Lucifer is not a reference to the devil. It was the bright morning star and is actually believed that Venus guided her son by her star.

Troy

Priam was King of Troy (also known as *Ilion* and *Pergamum*) in Asia. *Hecuba* was his wife and 50 daughters. His son *Paris* was the leader of the Trojan forces. His wife was *Hebe*. Their son was *Ascanius*, but readers would have known that *Astyanax* was the son. *Paris* chose *Venus* as the most beautiful goddess. *Laocoön* was also a son of Priam, possibly second in authority to *Cassandra*, a daughter. She prophesied disaster but was killed by a serpent. *Aeneas* was also one of Priam's sons. Aeneas was a cousin to Priam's children. His own father was *Creusa*. They had a son, *Ascanius* (Iulus). Anchises knows he is *hated by the gods*. Anchises was Venus's lover, he threw a thunderbolt. Venus deflected it but Anchises was killed. *Deiphobus*, a Trojan, marries Helen after Paris is killed.

Greeks (also known as Achaeans and Argives)

Peleus: was father of Achilles and the grandfather of Neoptolemus, also known as *Priam*. Achilles' special soldiers and *Dolopians* soldiers of Achilles' son. *The two sons of Agamemnon* from Mycenae. Pelops was one of Agamemnon's ancestors. *Helen:* was a Greek and wife of Menelaus. She had a son Nicostratus and a daughter Helen. *Odysseus*, king of *Ithaca*. *Sinon* is the so-called 'deserter'. The *Aeneid* is the first point of view. *Calchas:* Chief prophet of the Greeks.

Palamedes: Odysseus was angry that he had to avoid fighting in the war had been killed. He forged a letter saying that the Trojans wanted to betray the Greeks and Odysseus was angry. Palamedes was killed.

The heroic world: characterisation and themes

The mortals

Aeneas, in Book 2, is depicted as a brave, impetuous warrior of the heroic age. His personal satisfaction, even in killing oneself, must come second to responsibilities.

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Aeneas turns from public concern to concern for his family. Aeneas realises with a sense of disaster but a personal loss. In his account of the fall of Troy, he reveals his emotions. How can he show such great despair? How could Aeneas think of killing a woman? Aeneas will leave his family, e.g. in Book 4. Aeneas must learn that there is a better way than violence. Aeneas learns to control himself to some extent, but is he successful when dealing with others? The answer is no.

Again, he despairs when he cannot persuade his father to leave. Again he wants to die but is obliged to survive.

The emotions of Aeneas

Aeneas is eager to rush to Italy (lines 538–355). Reference is made to his reaction to the fall of Troy (lines 590–634). At this point for Aeneas the old Homeric values are important.

Activity
What emotions does Aeneas feel?

Sinon is the master of deception and is very convincing. In his speech he uses a range of rhetorical devices.

Activity

Find examples from lines 79–144 of the following:

- despair
- humility
- anger
- appeal for pity

Hector appears in a dream, lines 268–297.

Anchises: Book 2 marks the first appearance of Aeneas's father. He appears as a helpless old man way past his prime. At this stage he knows nothing of his son's destiny. When he does find out he becomes a companion and advisor to Aeneas.

Activity
Make a list of the emotions used to describe Anchises.

Portrayal of War

Virgil builds up a horrific picture of war. The reader is reminded that in war there is no honour. The description of the breaking door is very graphic. The murder of Priam is not unique. Older Greek vases do show Priam being killed.

The final battle scene is chiasmic:

- Greeks break through the gates
- Others climb the walls
- Trojans defend the walls
- Trojans defend the gates

Activity
How is the battle scene emphasised?

Many of Virgil's battle scenes are carefully arranged. Virgil never served in the Roman army, so he does not understand battle tactics. He goes for arrangement and individuals rather than a general view.

Imperial destiny and Rome

Gradually Aeneas's destiny is revealed to him throughout the *Aeneid*. We begin with the prophecy of the Sibyl. Hector informs him he is to be an instrument of history. Some ancients believed that the flight was cowardly. Hector explains that the flight is useful, necessary, correct and honest. *great city to establish for them after long wanderings across the sea.* (lines 295–300). In lines 770–789, Creusa says:

1. *Before you lies a long exile*
2. *A vast expanse of sea to plough*
3. *Before you come to the land of the Trojans*, meaning 'Western Land', a term used by the Romans to refer to the West.
4. *Where the Lydian river flows*. This is the Tiber. Thought to be Lydian, whose name was given to the river. The Romans believed that the Etruscans came from Lydia.
5. *A rich land with many brave warriors*
6. *There is prosperity waiting for you*
7. *And a royal bride*. Creusa is not destined to come as Aeneas must take a new wife.

In response to this, Aeneas yields to his destiny.

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Portrayal of Trojans

Virgil understandably always sees events from the point of view of the Trojans. The Trojans are portrayed as kind people. They are also gullible, or maybe optimistic, wanting it to be true.

Portrayal of the Greeks

The Greeks are not portrayed in a good light. They are harsh and brutish and certainly not what the modern Roman general should aspire to be.

Social, cultural and religious context

For the Greeks the sack of Troy was a great triumph with disasters to follow. For Virgil, Book 2 prelude to the whole of Book 2 is tragic and dark. It represents the night of the Roman Empire. Again, do not forget that this is a very Roman work. We have looked at a form familiar to a Roman. It is a typical Roman-style speech as witnessed in the last speech for pity, called the *miseratio*. The scholar Austin said: 'Cicero would have enjoyed the orator and politician Cicero. Sinon, a Greek, is made by Virgil to address the crowd.'

Relationships

Activity

Here are some relationships to consider. How are the following portrayed?

- Priam and Hecuba
- Hector and Aeneas
- Aeneas and Anchises
- Aeneas and Creusa

Activity

Notice the **contrast** between Aeneas's and Creusa's emotions. Find these words in the text.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Aeneas – grief and hurt</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I was paralysed 2. Hair stood on end 3. Voice 4. Wild | <p>Creusa – peace and acceptance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. O husband that I love 2. Wipe away the tears |
|--|---|

Literary techniques and composition

Book 2 takes the form of a **flashback**. This and Book 3 form Aeneas's tale, and we are his companions sitting at dinner in Carthage, with Dido held spellbound by his account.

Activity

Book 2 is characterised by the high number of similes. Remember, a simile is a comparison between an individual, thing or event to something else of greater familiarity (to an ancient audience).

- often long; referred to as 'extended similes'
- with detailed description or 'ornamental'
- drawn from: nature, politics, literature, mythology, life in general

Here is a list of similes from Book 2. To what do they correspond in each case?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>p. 36 death of Laocoon</p> <p>p. 39 Aeneas's view from the city</p> <p>p. 40 Aeneas speaks to friends</p> <p>p. 41 Androgeos's mistake</p> <p>p. 42 Ajax Menelaus Agamemnon</p> <p>p. 44 Pyrrhus</p> <p>p. 49 Sack of Troy</p> | <p>bull's bellow, fire, field of grain, oxen, trees, sheep, wolves, foraging young man, snake, blood, winds, whirlwind, snake, poisonous ash tree, double</p> |
|---|---|

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Summary of *Aeneid* 3: Aeneas's journey linking

This is not a prescribed book, but credit will be given for relevant references

Place	Encounter	
Troy	Troy is burned and Aeneas, with his wife and son, is forced to leave	Draco
Antandros	Aeneas builds a fleet	
Aeneas – The Tiber	Aeneas gives a grim and horrifying account of when Aeneas discovers Polydorus	First and The four begins
Delos	Aeneas receives a prophecy, but Anchises misinterprets what Apollo says	
Pergameia – Crete	Aeneas builds a city but is harassed by plagues. The gods tell him not to stay.	Aeneas still
Strophades	Celaeno and Harpies	Faint Celaeno Aeneas suffer
Actium – Leucate	Aeneas stops for games	Flash ins vict
Buthrotum	Aeneas meets Andromache and her new husband, Helenus	Slow sign
Coast of Cyclopes	Aeneas meets one of Odysseus's crew members	Aeneas Helenus
Drepanum	Anchises dies	For has nov
Carthage Book 4	Aeneas and Dido	Aeneas

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Aeneid 4: Dido and Aeneas

Lines: 1–705

Summary: The story picks up from the end of Book 1. Dido confesses her love to Aeneas and the advantages in marrying Aeneas. The building of her city is neglected. Juno opposes Aeneas and Dido should *form an alliance*. A hunt takes place and Juno sends a storm to hide in a cave. Rumour of their 'alliance' spreads and local king Iarbas complains to Aeneas. Aeneas prepares to leave without telling Dido. Dido confronts Aeneas to no avail. Dido is determined to die.

Watch the introduction: [zzed.uk/11215-book4](https://www.zzed.uk/11215-book4)



Go to [zzed.uk](https://www.zzed.uk)

References

The gods

Phoebus is Apollo, God of the Sun, and *Aurora* goddess of the Dawn. *Ocean*: It was the Ocean, where she had been for the night beneath the waves. *Erebus* is another name for the Underworld. *Stygian Jupiter*. Pluto was the 'Jupiter of the Underworld', i.e. King of the Underworld.

Tyrians/Carthaginians

Sychaeus: Dido's husband; her brother Pygmalion killed Sychaeus. His murder is the reason for Dido's exile. *Sidonian*: Dido is from Sidon and is wearing clothes which she brought from there. We are told that Dido's nurse is already dead as *black ash* has her. It is also fitting that she should be helped by the ashes of her husband, whom she is going to make her peace with. *Punic* is another name for the Carthaginians. The story of Hannibal and the *Punic Wars* are well known. Carthaginians (see section A on the Historical Background).

Local Africans

When Dido landed at Carthage she was offered safety by Iarbas, a local tribesman. *Ammon*. Jupiter is also known as Jupiter, Roman chief god of Africa. His mother was a local goddess. Romanisation: When taking a country as a province, was to encourage acceptance. *Massylians* were an African people living West of Carthage. *Mauri* were people west and south, and the *Barcae* lived around Carthage. *Barca* was the name of the city.

Trojans

Phrygians: A term referring to the Trojans.

Iulus is another name for Ascanius. It is by using this form of his name that Julius Caesar descended from Aeneas. His nephew Augustus became emperor, and Virgil would have possibly to flatter him.

The heroic world: characterisation and themes

The gods

Juno knows that she cannot change fate but that she is permitted to delay it, and her aim is clear: to prevent the Trojans from reaching Italy. She uses sarcasm and deception.

1. You, covering yourself with glory...
2. That boy of yours and his noble... divine specimen he is

Venus: It is strange that Venus would agree to an alliance of Aeneas with Dido. Some have suggested that this is because she is the goddess of love or that she is scared of Juno. However, Venus is cleverer than some give her credit for. She has a plan if Jupiter is willing, and she knows that he is not. Scholars still argue, though, about what subject her son (and Dido) to what happens.

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The mortals

Dido: The best-known part of *Aeneid* is the story of Aeneas's relationship with Dido. Dido is mentioned by writers Chaucer and Marlowe as well as the musicians Purcell and Berlioz. Dido as a character in Virgil and is the only character to pass into literature who is purely a Roman invention. Dido is sympathetically portrayed. This would make a good conclusion to an essay on Dido.

So where did Virgil get his inspiration? She does appear as a historical figure. A Greek story tells of her escape to Libya. A Roman historian (Naevius) tells of her in his history of the Punic Wars. The Historians living at the same time that Virgil wrote (contemporaries), such as the Greek geographer Strabo, mention her, and it seems that Virgil's long version of the story is very largely original. In ancient Greek literature, in Homer, Dido's treatment is original, since Dido is strong. Dido is closer to Circe than to Helen. Helen are supernatural and death is a pity.

Dido is the central character in Book 4 and, like a character in Greek tragedy (e.g. Medea), she is a character. The confident character of Book 1 contrasts sharply with what she becomes in Book 4. Considering the question 'Is this as she appears elsewhere in the *Aeneid*?' The only other place where Dido appears is in Book 1 and Book 6. Dido gradually falls apart. Her character disintegrates. The end is totally destructive.

Dido is hopelessly in love and can think of nothing else:

1. She leads him on a tour
2. She talks to him but breaks off in mid-sentence
3. She lies where he has lain when he has gone
4. She hears him and sees him in her mind when he is away
5. She holds Ascanius as he reminds her of Aeneas

Activity

Find the love is

Dido had been an admirable queen, but since Aeneas's arrival she has abandoned

1. No towers went up
2. The Carthaginian youth did not do any military exercises
3. City gates and harbours were not made safe
4. All building work was suspended and men in the city stood idle

Aeneas: A good summary of his character is in the simile where he is compared to a lion. Consider:

1. the effect of his appearance on those around him
2. his attractive appearance

The comparison is in his composure, his majesty of movement, and his beauty.

However, Iarbas is not so impressed as he calls him a *second Paris* and accuses him of being effeminate, *dripping in perfume*. The first time the focus shifts to Aeneas is when Mercury appears to him. In many respects, he is a lonely figure among the Trojans, rejoicing at moving on. For further discussion of his character, see the section on relationships below.

Activity

Study the **effect** that Mercury has on Aeneas (lines 279–296).

Mercury goes personally to Aeneas's conscience. Aeneas must

Iarbas:

Activity

Study the speech by Iarbas (207–219).

Do you agree with Austin, who says that Iarbas is a picture of primitive mentality in this speech?

Ascanius: Aeneas's son. Sometimes he is depicted as being quite a young boy and as he is able to sit on Dido's lap. Elsewhere he seems a more mature figure, such as when he is out riding with the hunt.

Activity

Does Anna's love for Ascanius do more harm than good? How might it be used to Aeneas's advantage?

Anna: Many blame Anna for persuading Dido into a relationship with Aeneas.

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Social, cultural and religious context

The Roman setting is again reflected in this book. Dido repeats to her sister that *univira*. In Augustan Rome, the goddess Chastity, *Pudicitia*, was worshipped especially by women who had been married once, even if widowed. At a time of many divorces, to be married once was encouraged, by the Emperor Augustus.

The description of sacrifices is given in detail; Augustus was promoting a new interpretation of the *Aeneid*. Those performed in Book 1 would be familiar to any Roman gods, *penates*. They were worshipped even in a private *lararium* in the reception room. The idea, but is it really likely that Dido, a Carthaginian, would know of a Roman practice? It is not clear that the idea of the *penates* was even in existence at the time of the Trojan War, and the fact that Virgil's readers about 1,200 years later would have known of it is an example of *anachronism*. Also, Romans reclined to eat and this would be unfamiliar to the readers – but would Dido do the same in Carthage? Is this an anachronism too?

Relationships

Dido and Aeneas

The relationship between Aeneas and Dido has sparked much debate. One question is whether Dido is a mad woman. The answer may be discussed in these lines:

221	The lovers who had lost all recollection of their good name
332	He struggled to fight down the anguish in his heart
395	With a great shaken by his great love

Activity
Compare
work

Much is made of the destructive power of love in their relationship. The imagery of Dido gives up everything for her personal love, something Aeneas does not. When she has not told her, she is like a mad woman. Lines 391–400 compare her with a Bacchant, followers of Bacchus, god of wine. The extent of Dido's madness is emphasised in the following lines:

1. stirred
2. roused to frenzy

Aeneas, on the other hand, tries to justify himself, but his speech is not a formal legal one in a Roman law court.

Activity

The scholar Page said 'the figure of Aeneas is despicable'. Read the text and say whether you agree.

In line 615, Dido begins her curses on Aeneas. They all come true.

1. Harassed in war – by the local Italians
2. He is separated from his son when he goes to get help in the war
3. He loses many men
4. He only lived for three years after the battle to found Rome

Pietas

Aeneas's duty is tested in Book 4. The discussion of the meaning of *pietas* is in an extension course, linked below. It includes extension activities.

zzed.uk/11215-pietas

to zzed.uk/11215

Literary techniques and comparison

Some scholars see Aeneas's story as more like a Greek tragedy. The story is compared to the Greek stage, 584–629. Many of Virgil's audience would have been familiar with Greek tragedies. In tragedy a character is often on the stage for all of the play and Dido holds centre stage. The words *But the Queen* start line 1, placing emphasis on Dido. She is very strong when crossed. As she loses control, she reminds us of Euripides, *Bacchae*, the central part of a Greek tragedy has a reasoned argument between the two characters, the *agon*. Each character makes points to form their argument.

Activity
How
described
198?

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Summary of *Aeneid* 5: Funeral Games – linkin

This is not a prescribed book, but credit will be given for relevant reference

Summary: The Trojans leave Carthage and land in Sicily. At the end of Book 3, Anchises (Western Sicily), and, as for all great heroes, they now hold funeral games. Aeneas visits Anchises' tomb when a snake slides out, tastes the offerings, and goes back into the underworld. On the next day, the funeral games take place. The Trojans and Sicilians compete in a boat race, a chariot race, and in an archery contest. Aeneas gives the prizes. Two men are spotlighted: Nisus and Euryalus. They appear again in Book 9. Anchises and his friends give a demonstration of horsemanship.

While the men are distracted by the games, Juno sends Iris to the Trojan women. Iris tells them to set fire to the ships. When he notices this, Aeneas prays to Jupiter, who sends rain from Sicily, but leaves some Trojans who want to stay and goes on with his companions. He instructs Aeneas to visit him in the Underworld. Upset by Juno's 'divine intervention', Aeneas prays to Neptune. He says all the Trojans will reach Italy safely except for the helmsman Palinurus.

Why have games in *Aeneid* Book 5? It may seem to us that holding games after the war is insensitive. Aeneas says in lines 59–60, *Come then, let us all celebrate these rites*. The games have a purpose on several levels.

1. Anchises, a man of the heroic age, would have expected funeral games to be held. Detailed funeral rites for Anchises would have been familiar to Virgil's contemporary audience. A useful example of the *pietas* of Aeneas as he organises the games. Here is an example of showing the Trojans with Roman virtues.
2. The games bring about social integration where men of all social standing are involved.
3. The book provides an interlude between one emotionally-filled book and another.
4. The 'war games' provide a military exercise for the real war in Latium.

There is also a nod to the Augustan regime. Augustus devised the Actian Games in 28 BC to celebrate the emperor's victory over Antony and Cleopatra in 31 BC. The games were called 'Troiae', or 'of Troy', the display of horsemanship with which Virgil concludes the poem is an example of an **aetiology** when a practice familiar in Virgil's time is given a Trojan origin.

We are introduced to two important characters: Nisus and Euryalus. They take part in the chariot race, where Nisus, who falls and loses his own chance of winning, unscrupulously trips another competitor. Euryalus, a beloved friend, will win; but why the focus on them?

1. They will feature in Book 9.
2. They remind the audience that the wars and struggles involve individuals.
3. Love and comradeship are important to humans.

Activity (optional)
Read Book 5

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Aeneid 6: The Underworld

Lines 1–902

Summary: Aeneas lands in Italy. He makes his way to the Sibyl at Cumae. After giving Aeneas is reminded to make the proper sacrifices. The Sibyl gives her prophecy and encourages Aeneas to carry on. Aeneas asks to be allowed to meet his father in the body of Misenus and organises proper funeral rites. Aeneas is guided by two doves to the Sibyl. Aeneas and the Sibyl enter the Underworld. Aeneas meets Palinurus properly. Charon the ferryman challenges Aeneas, but the Sibyl shows the golden bough. They come to the Fields of Elysium, where the Sibyl drugs Aeneas. The Sibyl and Aeneas meet Dido in the groves of the blessed in Elysium, where Aeneas meets Anchises.

An introductory summary can be viewed here: [zzed.uk/11215-book6](https://www.zzed.uk/11215-book6)



References

Cumae is situated 10 miles west of Naples. It was a successful place as early as 10th century BC colony with settlers from Chalcis in Euboea, a Greek island, hence *Chalcidian Cumae*. The temples and reintroduced the worship of the Sibyl. It looks as if Aeneas has finally promised Western Land (line 5). *Apollo* was the god of prophecy, and the temple ruins are still visible. The *Sibyl* was the priestess of Apollo and remained unmarried. She was called *Delian* because Delos, a Greek island, was one of the places of worship of Apollo. *Diana Trivia*, Diana of the Crossroads, was always close to her brother Apollo but was also associated with the Underworld.



The Minotaur – by George Frederic Watts

Daedalus and the story of the Labyrinth. **ecphrasis:** The term is used in the description either of natural scenery or of art. It is relevant as both Daedalus and Aeneas have landed in Italy.

The story of the Minotaur is sad rather than heroic. Ariadne of Crete, was away fighting with Athens with one of the bulls in the fields of Crete. She made to attract the bull and as a result a half human, half bull – was born. Pasiphaë, Ariadne and Phaedra (who would go on to become the attitudes of the ancient world, were shameful and was hidden in the basement. Certainly the palace discovered on Crete had a complicated design, almost labyrinthine, with the element of truth lying beneath all the

Misenus: The purpose of this story (lines 212–237) is to act as an indication of the nature of mortality. Aeneas will have special permission to descend to the Underworld but Misenus will have no return. The scholar Williams said: 'He represents a sacrifice for the success of the mission.'

Reference: The Underworld: Fantasy and Supernatural

Aeneas was not the first person to visit the Underworld. Odysseus does in *Odyssey* and Orpheus. However, Aeneas's journey is very Roman. The region around Cumae Lake Averno in Italy is a volcanic lake which in Virgil is referred to as *Avernus*, and sulphuric fumes which come from the rocks in this volcanic area. *No bird could* were thought to keep away the birds. The name in ancient times was associated

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'no-bird'. The Underworld was ruled by Pluto (also referred to in the poem as *Erebus, Dis*) and his wife *Proserpina* (Persephone). As queen, she was often called *Juno of the Underworld* and Pluto the *Stygian King* after the river Styx. The geography of the Underworld is part of the fantasy but there were supposedly several rivers: the *Acheron, Styx, Phlegethon* and *Cocytus*.

Activity

Lines 264–295 form a very mo... and conditions associated with...

zzed.uk/11215-Heaney Simon A Heaney's translation. Which wor...

At the entrance also lived a... such as *Centaurs, Hydra, Chimaera, Gorgons*, and *Geryon*.

Cerberus gets his name very early on in Greek literature, but not in Homer. He is popular because of the descriptive opportunities.

Activity

The mo... familiar... more d... could b...

Activity

What impression is given of Cerberus in lines 417–427?



Everyone went to the Underworld and was... *Mourning Plains* was where those went who were not expected. There are three classes: infants, suicides, which includes Dido. This area also includes those who fell in the Trojan War. Aeneas meets...

Activity

Find out why some of these women were in the Mourning Plains: *Procris, Phaedra, Laodamia*. This activity could be shared if in a group.

Tartarus was where those went for punishment on the order of judges, one being Minos. The description of the sinners is not 'standard' in the poem, discussed below in more unusual ones. *Tartarus* was surrounded by the *Phlegethon*, a burning river. The walls were made of *adamant*. This was the hardest substance known to man. *Tisiphone*, one of the Furies...

The hero and characterisation and themes

The gods

Charon: was the ferryman of the Underworld. There is an almost humorous way he is described, almost mock heroic. Yet, at the same time, vivid.

Activity

How is... down v...

The mortals

Examples appear of Aeneas's past life that he must revisit and with which he must be behind for ever:

1. Misenus
2. Palinurus
3. Dido
4. Deiphobus, whose fate represents the fate of all the comrades who did not survive; he feels guilt for not having buried the body properly

When the Sibyl leads Aeneas away he finally realises that the past is dead.

Old Homeric heroic code

It is time to leave the Homeric world behind as Aeneas's journey ends. He has a mission, with which his father will instil.

Imperial destiny / fate pageant of heroes: lines 752–892

The most sustained of all the patriotic passages in *Aeneid*; the effect on Aeneas is to give him encouragement and offer inspiration. The effect on Virgil's audience is to instil pride in Rome. There is no such pageant in the Homer as Odysseus is returning to the past. Aeneas has no past as it was destroyed, and he must look to the future.

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Alban kings	A 'crowd scene' of minor dignitaries
Romulus	A focus on a key individual founder of Rome
Augustus	The chronological order breaks off to focus on the restorer of the new golden age
Roman kings	A 'crowd scene' of Roman kings
Brutus	A focus on Brutus, who helped found the republic (aware that his descendant was a key assassin)
Famous republicans	A 'crowd scene'
Caesar Pompey	The tragedy of the individual is stressed and not the politics
Contributors to the world of Rome civilisation	... <i>... Roman, and do not forget it... to govern</i>
Marcellus	A final focus; he died in 23 BC

Social, cultural and religious

Roman world

Augustus revived the consultation of the Sibyl. Augustus built a marble temple to which he transferred Sibylline books. This is 'promised' in lines 72–73 *for you our kingdom: as we have seen in previous books, there are many aetiological references. Virgil (rather flatteringly) gives an explanation of the origins of practices common to the Romans. These are often attributed to Aeneas, and the practices are usually 'renewed' by Augustus. (reference: Punta di Miseno, from Misenus line 235.)*

The significance of the punishments of those in Tartarus also has special relevance. They are all related to Roman values. The effect on the audience is to stress that Augustus is restoring the values of the past.

1. Family ties
2. Legal obligation of the patronus
3. Unselfish use of riches
4. Adultery – Augustus's moral policy, culminating in the *Leges Iuliae*, 18 BC
5. Arming of runaway slaves by Sextus Pompey
6. General Roman crimes

As shown in the *Georgics* of Misenus, Virgil is fond of describing funeral rites in great detail. This is a tradition. There are many Roman references:

1. averted faces
2. sacrificial food
3. sprinkling with water
4. last words of farewell

Relationships

Aeneas and Dido: Aeneas has to meet Dido and justify his actions. He was unaware that she was dead until this point, though he had heard a rumour. This time *he* is pleading and *she* is not listening. He is tormented by his past with guilt and remorse. In Book 6 he learns to turn away from the past and look to the future. Dido rejects him and is hostile towards him for ever – Aeneas must live with this.

Aeneas and Anchises: The Father–son bond is strong. Until his death, Aeneas needed Anchises's advice. Now Anchises gives him the courage and inspiration to continue with his destiny.

Activity

Look at lines 455–475. How does Dido change?

Activity

Read lines 112–125. How does Aeneas change? What do you think Aeneas is thinking?

Literary techniques and composition

Activity

How do lines 180–212 contribute to the fantasy and supernatural themes of Book 6? You might like to consider:

1. the description of the wood
2. the divine intervention of Venus
3. the birds
4. the golden bough

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Aeneid 7: The War in Latium

Lines: 1–817

Summary: Aeneas sails up the Tiber. Latinus welcomes the Trojans. Latinus tells foreigners he was told by an oracle to seek, and offers his daughter's hand to Aeneas. Juno as the Fury Allecto causes trouble. Allecto then goes to the sleeping Turnus. He appears as herself. Turnus is filled with war. He decides to drive the Trojans out of Italy. Allecto finds Ascanius, who is out. Ascanius shoots the parricide, Prius, who, with the farmers, sets off to punish Aeneas and the Trojans for the war.

An introductory summary can be viewed here: [zzed.uk/11215-book7](https://www.zzed.uk/11215-book7)



References

Gods

Erato: was one of the Muses. Virgil calls upon her in an invocation (line 40) to get inspiration for the second half of his book. **Allecto** is one of the furies and described as *bringer of grief* (line 325), which, given the events of the next books, is an understatement. Allecto 'infects' Amata, Turnus and Ascanius's dogs.

Activity

Collect and discuss the associations of the gods.

The Trojans

Caieta: All aristocratic families had nurses (more like nannies) for their children. They were held in great affection. Aeneas's nurse, who has travelled with his family, gives her name to Caieta, a coastal town in central Italy. **Ilioneus** is a Trojan delegate, a statesman and a gifted speaker.

Activity

Read lines 204–210 and show how Ilioneus is a statesman.

The Latins

Unsurprisingly, the land destined to be Aeneas's new home is already occupied. **Latium.** He is descended from **Saturn**. His father is **Faunus**, at whose grove Latinus lives. **Amata** and his only child (his son died), a daughter, is **Lavinia**. Lavinia is old enough to be married, but this could be as young as 12, though most would have been in their later teens. She is very much a Roman female figure. Her character is not developed and she is portrayed as an object over which men are arguing. She has little say in her future. **Tyrrhus:** Latinus's shepherd is at the flashpoint of the war. **Almo**, his eldest son, is shot. He represents those who die in war who are innocent.

Rutulians

Turnus: King of the Rutulians, Lavinia's suitor; in fact she has been promised as his wife. Joining him is **Mezentius**, an Etruscan tyrant.

Activity

Discuss how much the above image of Turnus is how you imagined he would look. You could find more images and discuss their merits.

The hero's characterisation and themes

This is a great work I now set in motion (line 46). Book 7 is a turning point in the second half of Virgil's epic. This importance is emphasised by Virgil's return to **Erato**, and *I shall tell of the kings of ancient Latium* (line 40). This half of the book the action takes place in one location, Latium. Furthermore, Virgil offers exhaustive detail on the warriors, lavishing attention on their ancestry and past feats of heroism. He also offers (and it is tiresome?) detail. We might expect a close similarity with Homer, but things

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The gods

Juno: her anger continues as she spots Aeneas: *She stopped in mid-flight, pierced*
The speech which follows is negative (lines 295–297):

1. *Could they not have died...*
2. *why could they not accept?*
3. *Could they not have burned...*

She is scheming still: *I shall be able to delay it all and bring it out* (line 315). The mortals create the tragedy which unfolds. She enlists Allecto to aid her, and the ensuing motion again.

The mortals

Turnus. Turnus is not the great 'baddy' he is often described as. He is not convincing (disguise) wants: *You are wrong... Do not invent these fears for me...* (line 438). Much of his behaviour is as a result of Allecto's intervention. He is described as being driven to the brink of sanity. Turnus's militant fury in the second half of the *Aeneid* takes up the anger of Dido's love-struck fury from the first half. Both get in the way of Aeneas's mission.

Activity

- Look at lines 438–440.
1. What is Turnus's attitude towards Aeneas?
 2. How does Allecto influence him?

Aeneas. On the first day after his arrival, Aeneas sends ambassadors bearing gifts to the Trojans to be allowed to peacefully found a settlement. Being a good leader, Aeneas asks for: *a little piece of land... for the air and sea which are common to all*. Continually, Virgil emphasises the peaceful nature of Aeneas who, as Latinus is wary of him, no matter what the obstacles.

Latinus: In many respects, Latinus and his family represent what Aeneas wants. He abdicates his position and as a king he is revealed as weak, Latin society becomes vulnerable. There is a message here that Aeneas is not like Latinus.

Amata:

Activity

Look at lines 342–359. How effective is Allecto's possession of Amata?

Old Homeric heroic code

Turnus and Dido to some extent are part of the old code. **Individuals**, who follow the code to excess, the Rutulian warrior and the Carthaginian queen, represent ways of feeling in the old epics. The *Aeneid*, however, although it takes much from Homer, is a celebration of the future domination Dido and Turnus must be sacrificed. Aeneas and the Trojans are really Romans in disguise. In Book 7, Aeneas literally leaves Homer behind as they sail past Circe's island (lines 5–24).

Fate

Fate has dictated that Aeneas will marry Lavinia and the Trojans will settle in Italy. When people or gods try to meddle in destiny, they suffer the negative consequences. Aeneas delays fate but cannot, and she comes to her end with this in Book 12.

Social culture and religion

A very Roman

When the Romans went to war they would symbolically 'Open the Gates of War' at the Forum and the doors to the temple were closed in times of peace (Augustus did this). The gates were open in times of war. By opening these gates, they believed they were releasing the spirit of Mars. This tradition already existed in the time of Aeneas, but this is unlikely – another tradition. Latinus will not open them so, dramatically, Juno opens the gates herself.

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Virgil portrays Latinus's household as organised. It is surprisingly Roman and, as Williams says: 'it is almost wholly anachronistic'.

1. *This temple was their senate-house* (176).
2. *Statues of their ancestors* (178). Roman had images of their ancestors in their reception halls.
3. *Beaks broken off the prows of ships* (187). These could be seen on the Roman Forum in Virgil's time. They were taken from captured enemy ships.
4. *With his short toga* (188).

Omens, oracles and prophecy

Activity

What do the following signs and prophecy tell of the future?

Sign/prophecy		meanings
Sign	Swarm of bees	
Sign	Lavinia's hair was on fire	
Prophecy	'Look we are eating our tables'	Celaeno in Book 3 line 2 When the Trojans did this arrived, <i>This is our own land</i>

Literary techniques and composition

Book 7 is divided into three sections:

Arrival and welcome of the Trojans	Light and bright
Divine intervention of Juno and Allecto	Dark
Catalogue of Italians	Suspense about what will happen

Portrayal of different nations

An important aspect of Book 7 is the emphasis that Virgil places on the Trojans' blame for the 'invaders', placing the blame on the Trojans for invading Latium, that does not belong to them, and disturbing the peace of the Italian people. Illioneus asks the Trojans to leave, showing that Aeneas and his men are more than conquerors. In this manner, Virgil reconciles the 'merging' of the Latin people with Aeneas's essential Roman identity.

Catalogue of Latins

In lines 648–815 (the end), Virgil lists the Italian forces which gather to fight off Aeneas. Why spend time on Aeneas's enemy? Because Virgil, like all of his audience, had their roots in Italian stock, and they get a sympathetic treatment. Later in Book 12, Juno will get her peace on terms which are favourable to the Italians, many of whom are listed here.

Activity

Look for the following names and suggest why they are important:

- Mezentius
- Caeculus
- Ufens

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Activity

Unlike the professional army of Virgil's day, many of those in the catalogue have grabbed what they can to defend their land. There is an archaic, almost prehistoric, quality to the catalogue, as, during the civil wars, men's families fought each other as well as their own, trying to do what they could. Make a list of the weapons and implements used as weapons.

Activity

How does Virgil describe the Italians? What might he like to consider?

1. Characters: brave, loyal, etc.
2. Descriptive phrases
3. References to their land
4. Details of individual weapons



Aeneid 8: Aeneas in Rome

Lines: 1–731

Summary: Aeneas needs allies, so sails up the Tiber to his distant relative Evander's hospitality. He explains that the ceremony they are holding is to honour Hercules' bulls. Aeneas is given a tour of Evander's town, which will later become the city of Rome. Evander orders armour for her son. Evander explains that he is hemmed in by the river and the army of Turnus. He thinks that Tarchon will help. Evander offers to send his young son, Ascanius, to Aeneas. Aeneas is ready.

An introductory summary can be viewed here: [zzed.uk/11215-book8](https://www.zzed.uk/11215-book8)



References

Gods

Tiber: the river is personified *old Tiber himself* (line 32). Here is another place where Aeneas's destiny is revealed a little more.

Activity

Look at lines 33–51.

1. What sign does Aeneas see?
2. What does the future hold?

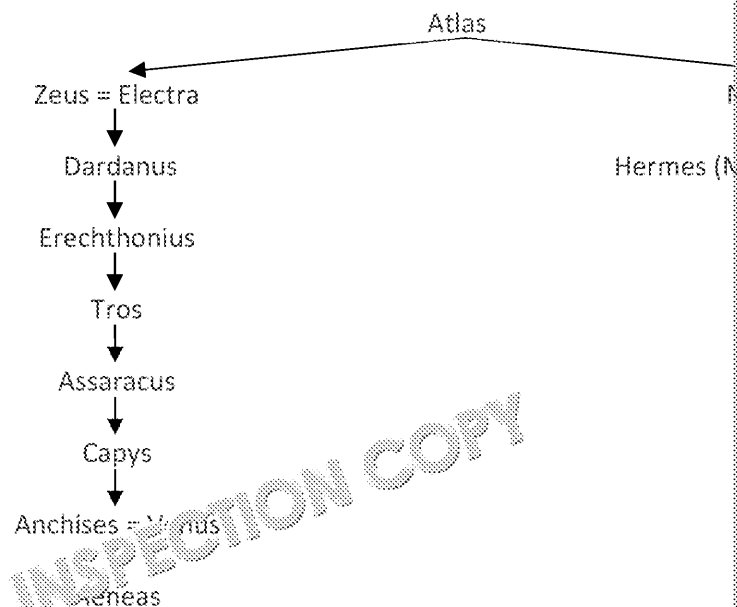
Hercules and Cacus

Cacus lived in a cave in Italy on the future site of Rome. In an act horrific to Roman standards, he would nail the heads of victims to the doors of his cave. One day, Hercules stole the cattle of Geryon, which was near Cacus's cave. As Hercules slept, Cacus took the cattle by dragging them by their tails, thus leaving a trail of hoof prints going in the wrong direction. The rest of the herd made lowing sounds and the cows in the cave mooed back. Angered by the noise, Hercules entered the cave. Cacus barricaded himself in, forcing Hercules to climb to the top of the mountain and strangled him, ridding the people of future Rome of the monster.

Mortals



Genealogical table showing the link between Aeneas and Evander



Tarchon is an ally of Evander and Aeneas.

Rutulians

Turnus is the head of the forces and *Messapus*, *Ufens* and *Mezentius* are leaders in the fields to fight, just as Romans were summoned before the formation of the army.

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The heroic world: characterisation and themes

The gods

Venus: displays her maternal side in her efforts to protect her son and orders arm

She lives up to her reputation as goddess of love by using her charms to persuade him. Line 370:

But his mother Venus was terrified, and with good reason by the threats of the Laurentines and the savagery of the first in his line spoke to her husband Vulcan. Coming to him in his bedchamber and breathing divine love into her voice.

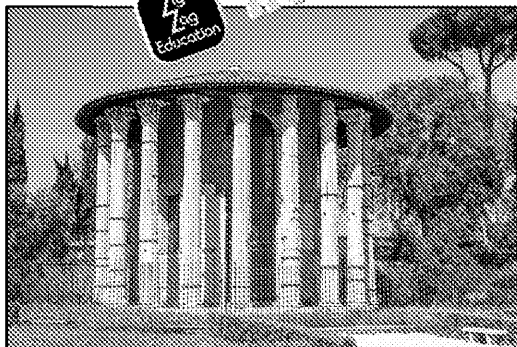
The mortals

Aeneas is less of the Homeric hero behind. Aeneas needs allies and Aeneas's best model for Roman leaders (and a hint or 'warning' to Augustus, some scholars say) greatly with Turnus *raised the flag of war* (line 1), and Aeneas reacts with great

Pallas is religious as he forbids the Trojans to interrupt the sacrifice, as they would (line 110). However, he is affable and welcoming, when he knows who the Trojan Aeneas's right hand in welcome (line 124). He is both bold and brave when the need and is ready to go with Aeneas to face possible death.

Evander is likewise welcoming (line 155), and offers to help (line 171). He invites Aeneas to his home (line 173). He takes pride in his city and shows Aeneas around the future site of Rome (line 273). He celebrates the annual sacrifice (line 273). He prays to gods for the safe return of his son (line 127). He is also careful as he eyes Aeneas up and down with many respects, Pallas and Evander are very similar.

Mezentius: Is Mezentius a thing of the past? Mezentius is a reminder of how far Roman attitudes have moved on. Some say he represents the old pre-Roman occupants of the area.



Temple of Hercules in the Forum Boarium

tour of Evander's town, which will later become the city of Rome. This gives Virgil and the building works of Augustus who himself said: 'I found Rome made of brick

Imperial destiny / fate

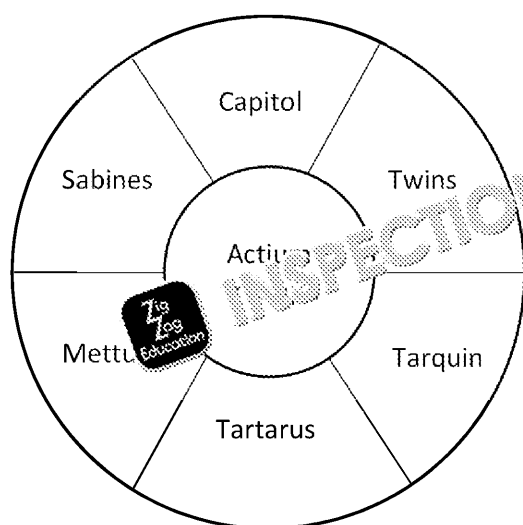
The Hercules and Cacus story (see also the later *Forum Boarium*). There is a contrast between the grandeur of Rome and Evander's simple city in the past. Hercules was still celebrated in Augustus's time. The *senate* would remind a Roman of the past. There are many other references to the past, e.g. Aventine hill (231), the *Ara Maxima* (231), the famous victory over the Persians (133). The explanation for the cult of Hercules in Rome is the revival of old religious traditions of Augustus's revival of old religious traditions.

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The shield of Aeneas: lines 615–731

Meanwhile, the armour of Aeneas is ready; the most marvellous part is the shield of the book.



David West's imagined layout for the shield of Aeneas. Illustration from David A West 'Cernere erat: The shield of Aeneas', in *Oxford Readings in Virgil's Aeneid* (ed. Stephen J Harrison; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 28

Activity

Find out about the different sections of the shield. This task could be shown as a class activity.

Section of Shield	Roman History
Twins	Romulus and Remus
Sabines	Religion and the founding of Rome
Tarquin and Porsenna	Fighting the Etruscans
Mettus	Punishment of the king of the Etruscans
Actium	Triumph over Augustus and Cleopatra
Capitol	The temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill
Tartarus	Punishment of the dead

Activity

'In the *Aeneid*, past, present and future combine to form a compelling story.' How true is this of Book 8?

Activity

Find examples from the descriptions of the shield of Aeneas.

- evidence of the new order
- patriotism
- how traitors are dealt with
- the glorification of Rome

Portrayal of war

After the Second World War, Virgil was regarded very much as a war poet and was seen as a man who could not be far from the truth. Virgil was never very keen on war; in fact, his descriptions of war were so idealized that he had very little experience of actual military service or of the realities of war. Maecenas's group may have seen service in the civil war, and Virgil could have done. But in the non-battle descriptions, such as aetiological digressions and ecphrasis, the avoidance of warfare in Book 8 makes this a peaceful interlude.

Social, cultural and religious

Relationships

Evander and Pallas

In answering questions on father-and-son relationships it is important not to put too much focus on Aeneas and Anchises. In Book 8, we see the relationship between Evander and Pallas. Pallas is evidently a nice person as he is so beloved by his father (line 104), and this may suggest a close bond; Evander dotes on Pallas, his only son, whose later death into Evander's life is stressed at line 581 *only pleasure* because his wife was dead (though we are not told this until Book 11, lines 158–159, where Evander shows her death because she had not been able to see the death of her son). Evander grieves his son, line 559, and Pallas dies while still speaking, line 584.

Literary techniques and composition

Book 8 falls into two interwoven sections: the visit to Evander and Venus's (by divine intervention) order of armour for her son. There is an opportunity for Virgil to show his descriptive skills in the portrayal of the Cyclops' forge.

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Aeneid 9: Nisus and Euryalus

Lines: 1–818

Summary: Turnus and the Rutulians make a surprise attack on the Trojans' camp in camp. The Rutulians also attack the Trojan ships, which are turned into sea nymphs. Trojans, Nisus and Euryalus, who are killed while trying to get a message to Aeneas, battles, with Turnus the particular focus.

An introduction can be found here: [zzed.uk/11215-book9](https://www.zzed.uk/11215-book9)

Go to [zzed.uk](https://www.zzed.uk)

Reference

The gods

Iris: is Juno's special messenger. She has already appeared in Book 4, where she visits Turnus to prompt an attack on the Trojans: *Make a surprise attack* (line 15).

Berecyntian Cybele: Cybele was regarded as the mother of the gods. She saved Jupiter's father Saturn. In a shift to the immortal world, Cybele turns to Jupiter to protect his prayer (84). This is told in Ovid's *Fasti* Book 4 from line 199. This translation is later.

Saturn was given this oracle: 'You best of kings, you shall be ousted of your sceptre, the god devoured his offspring as fast as they were born, and he kept them secret until Jove was born. The testimony of antiquity passes for good; pray do not shake the sceptre concealed in a garment went down the heavenly throne, as fate decreed to be deceived. Now rang steep Ida loud and long with the vigorous music, that the infant mouth. Some beat their shields, others their empty helmets with staccato task of the Curetes and the Corybantes.'

Apollo: makes his appearance here. He appears to Ascanius and reveals more to him to keep him from the fighting until he is older.

Trojans and Rutulians

Catalogue of Trojans and Rutulians: the tight list of victims from line 570 onward in hand combat. Notice how well balanced Virgil has this fight.

Victim	
Lucetius	Rutulian
Emathion	Trojan
Corynaeus	Trojan
Ortygius	Rutulian
Caeneus	Trojan
Itys, Clonius, Dioxippus, Promolus, Sagaris Idas	Trojan victims of Turnus
Privernus	Rutulian

Messapus: is Turnus's second in command. **Volcens** is also under the command of Turnus. He is killed by Nisus and Euryalus in line 300 and is responsible for hunting down Nisus and Euryalus.

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The heroic world: characterisation and themes

The mortals

Turnus is frustrated in lines 59–68, and the simile compares Turnus to a hungry wolf. The wolf in the simile is unsuccessful, and this comparison does not bode well for Turnus.

Turnus attacks the Trojan camp in an effort to halt the newcomers. It is possible to feel some sympathy for Turnus. His role in the epic is to represent the traditional traits and old order which have to be defeated by Aeneas. He is portrayed, and indeed portrayed, in a way that does not show him in a good light compared with Aeneas.

Our sympathy wanes for Turnus, though, as, although he is not personally responsible for Nisus's and Euryalus's deaths, showing off their heads goes completely against our sense of dignity, to which the dead have a right. The great injustice of Turnus's performance is reinforced by Euryalus's mother's heartfelt wailing over the loss of her son.

Aeneas: Book 9 is the only book in the *Aeneid* in which Aeneas does not feature. Yet even so his presence is still felt. His leadership is so strong that even when he is not there the Trojans obey his commands. When Turnus's army attacks the Trojan camp, the Trojans retreat inside the walls, because Aeneas instructed them to do. Despite being desperate to fight back, they respect him.

Ascanius is a leader in the making. He knows that a good leader encourages his troops, takes responsibility and promises gifts to Nisus and Euryalus. Ascanius also reflects his father, as he holds back from boasting, because a great warrior (point to Augustus?) does not need to.

Ascanius's speech in lines 250–252 shows that he has matured from the child who was once a playmate and is thought of as a man beyond his years.

1. Your mother will be my mother...
2. I have promised you rewards...
3. These promises I will hold good for your mother and your kin.

Nisus and Euryalus: are very much a team. They worked together in Book 5 (not

As soon as they sight the goal, away goes Nisus first, and far in front of all dark winds or than winged thunderbolt. Next to him, but next by a long distance, for space left between them, Euryalus third . . . and, after Euryalus, Helymus; then flies, now grazing foot with foot and pressing close at his shoulder. And had not he would have shot past him to the fore or left the issue in doubt. And now, with panting they neared the very goal, when Nisus, luckless one, falls in some slippery chance where steers were slain, had soaked the ground and greensward. Here the youth could not hold his stumbling steps on the arched ground; he trod, but fell prostrate and blood of sacrifice. Yet not of Euryalus, not of Helymus was he forgetful; for on the ground he threw himself in the way of the dark wind, rolling over, fell prostrate and darts by and, winning by grace of the god, takes first place, and flies on amid cheers. Behind come Helymus and Diores, now third prize.

Nisus and Euryalus could have just gone through with the messages, but with their bravery and desire for glory, they decide to take advantage of the Rutulians, who are drunk and sleeping it off. Euryalus takes trophies of enemy armour. Euryalus's lack of war experience shows through. Nisus and Euryalus and puts himself in danger to go back for his friend.

Activity

Complete the comparison in the table below.

Simile
Wolf
Pen full of sheep
He storms and raves, but cannot reach the goal
Ravens and hounds

Aeneas
Turnus
Ascanius

Activity

They now team up again to plan which he puts forward.

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Themes

Fate

The rather strange episode (Williams: 'incongruous'), lines 77–106, about the burning attempt at burning the boats. In Book 5, Jupiter saved four ships by sending rain. Now into nymphs. This confirms that Aeneas has finished with wandering and has reached home. The ships were fated to turn into nymphs once they had completed their task. Key points:

1. *I gladly gave to the Trojans warrior when he neared the fleet* (89)
2. *What is this you are calling on the Fates to do?* (95) (Meaning the fates cannot be changed)
3. *Is Aeneas... to never know uncertainty?* (97)
4. *When... they reach the shore of their voyaging* (98)

As the god  Jupiter takes its course, Jupiter knows the boats have finished their journey to the great Ocean. (He has found another way to get around what the goddesses had decreed.)

Portrayal of war and portrayal of different nations

Virgil focuses in Book 9 on the violence and inhumanity of war. This is so different from what was accepted as heroic. The fairly standard metaphor of a wolf is used, but instead of the lamb (the Trojans), Virgil draws our attention to the mother sheep.

He is one of the few poets to remind his audience that war is not just the death of soldiers but the families left behind. Virgil places huge importance on the mother of Euryalus.

However, Virgil is also fair in his portrayal of both nations. The deaths of soldiers on both sides of the conflict are outlined sympathetically. Both sides are treated equally. Nisus and Euryalus are just two of a number of young (Pallas, Lausus, (Book 11), Camilla) who die and whose families are left at home. Such was the case for many during the Punic wars.

Numanus's speech (lines 590–671) highlights the difference between nations. He emphasises how different they are and all the hardships they can endure. The Romans, being effeminate, cannot.

Act 1
Recall how the mother of Euryalus is portrayed.

Act 2
Look at the way Virgil uses the 'in the end' to show the superiority of the Romans.

Social, cultural and religious

Relationships

From all sides flock Trojans and Sicilians among them, Nisus and Euryalus foremost and flower of youth, Nisus for tender love for the boy (Book 5.290). This phrase highlights about the relationship between the two men. Whether their love is friendly or romantic. Evidence may be found in the text and could form some debate among learners.

In modern society, the relationship of Nisus and Euryalus reflects the common Greek practice of a relationship in which an adult man was romantically involved with a teenage boy. Euryalus is definitely a youth with only the first down of manhood, cheeks unshaved, line 181.

Ascanius and Aeneas

This book may also be used for the father-son relationship between Aeneas and Ascanius. As discussed above, Ascanius respects his father's wishes. He stays at the camp and is aware of his responsibilities for them. Notice how far he has moved in Book 2.

Act 3
What is the relationship between the two men?

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Literary techniques and composition

Book 9 is the most graphically violent book in the *Aeneid*, and at its centre is the Nisus and Euryalus.

Activity

Do we admire Nisus and Euryalus?



Activity

Study lines 320–367 and complete the table.

Account of Nisus and Euryalus as they slaughter the Rutulians: composition

Short sentences
Personal details of individuals
Pathos
Negative images/adjectives
Gruesome images / graphic detail
Simile
Animalism
Onomatopoeia

Activity

'They got what they deserved.' How far do you agree with this assessment of the account of Nisus and Euryalus?



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Aeneid 10: Pallas and Mezentius

Lines: 1–908

Summary: On Mount Olympus, Jupiter complains about the war, which is against each other of giving unfair help. The Rutulians continue their attack on the Trojans from Tarchon and Pallas. Aeneas raises his shield and rallies his troops. Turnus, Tarchon is shipwrecked and the Arcadians, led by Evander, lose heart. Pallas tries to meet Pallas and Pallas is killed. Turnus takes Pallas's sword belt. Juno makes a 'copy' away. The real Aeneas looks for Turnus. While Turnus is absent, Mezentius has to kill his son as a copy of Pallas. As the book closes, Aeneas has gained the upper hand.



An overview can be seen here: zzed.uk/11215-book10



Go to zzed.uk/

References

The mortals

Catalogue of Trojans, lines 118–145

Book 10, after the interlude on Mount Olympus, picks up again from Book 9: *The Rutulians meanwhile were fighting hard round each of the gates*, line 18. We are met with the now familiar Homeric-type catalogue of fighters. In fact, their names are taken from Homer.

The list is carefully constructed to surround Ascanius, line 131. Our focus is on him and the simile emphasises this. There are two comparisons (lines 133–138):

- *He is like a gem sparkling in its no'd sea*
- *Like glowing ivory inlaid in boxwood or Orician terebinth.* Boxwood is a very dark wood, and Oricia refers to a town in Greece. All the materials in the simile are Ascanius.

Activity

Copy and add the names of the Trojans 118–145

Asius
Clarus as
Acmon
Mnesther
Capys

Activity

There are 30 ships in all (line 213). To achieve variety, different details are given about the following.

- Massicus
- Asilas
- Astyr, Cunareus, Cupavo
- Ocnus, Aulesters

Notice how Virgil adds a reference to *Mantua* (lines 198–205). He emphasises it by repeating the word three times. He is linking it to *Manto* and his son *Monas*. This aetiology is close to Virgil as he came from Mantua!

Activity

Lines 380–398, Pallas's death

Using the tables show the table of victims and the



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The heroic world: characterisation and themes

The gods

Jupiter: Jupiter is often criticised for not taking a more active role in *Aeneid*. However, as possible. He must see that fate takes its course. He does agree that Venus and in the end Jupiter states: *Trojan and Rutulian I shall treat alike* (line 109). Jupiter and Venus and Juno continue their argument in lines 16–95.

The mortals

Aeneas and Turnus both display leadership qualities. They inspire their troops, but in different ways.

Turnus is ruthless. Turnus seeks combat with Pallas: *Pallas is mine and mine alone* (line 444). Turnus tells his men to withdraw, so that he can fight Pallas in single combat. In lines 474–489 Turnus kills Pallas. In lines 490–509 Turnus tells the Arcadians to take home the body of Pallas.

Pallas is a key character to get Virgil's attention in Book 10 along with the reactive events around him and his death. He tries to learn from Aeneas and sticks by him in line 161. He tries to be a leader in lines 362–379: Pallas attempts to rally the retrained levels Pallas represents:

- casualties of war
- anti-war sentiments
- effects of death on families
- civil wars of Virgil's own times

Activity

Study lines

1. How does Turnus inspire his troops?
2. How does Aeneas inspire his troops?
3. Who is the more effective leader?

Activity

Discuss Virgil's portrayal of Pallas and Book 10. How does Virgil detect and use the themes of the poem?

Aeneas does not come off well in Book 10. The diplomatic ways vanish when he is stung by guilt over Pallas's death. He goes on to slaughter. He gives in to *furor*.

Lausus, a young man on Turnus's side, also, perishes himself in battle.

Themes

Homeric combat

In his single combat, Turnus kills Pallas. The impression sometimes given is that Turnus fighting Pallas is unfair. However, Turnus is still a young man and, although certainly he is not a man years older. Is Turnus committing a crime by taking Pallas's belt?

- No – taking a belt from a body would have been normal practice under the Homeric code. Pallas he is also perfectly entitled to take Pallas's sword belt (baldric).
- Yes – he could take the belt but he could not exult over it. He should also have his protecting god, but he chose to wear the belt. Euryalus also pays for taking Hector wears the armour taken from Patroclus.

Portrayal of war

Much of Book 10 is a collection of battle scenes, some explained in gory detail. As Rutulian *Halaesus* are described. Here, Halaesus cuts off the right hand of Strymon with a stone, *dispersing the bones mixed up with the blood of Lausus*. The father of Lausus when the Trojan War started, but, on his father's death, the fates took a hand and the weapons of Evander. Pallas prays to his father to direct his weapon and kills Halaesus.

Virgil's attitude to war is reflected in Book 10 by the death of Lausus. In the civil war, we see what vivid memory of Virgil and his audience, families would have met against one another and fathers and sons would have died. This is exemplified in the pity Aeneas feels for Lausus and his father. War brings casualties, and the pathos in the description of Pallas's combat brings home to the reader that the young die as well as the experienced. In the case of Pallas and Lausus (and Euryalus in Book 9), Virgil emphasises the death of two young men whose qualities might have been of benefit to mankind.

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Social, cultural and religious

Furor

When Aeneas learns of the death of Lausus, he responds with violence in lines 510–523. The horror of Aeneas's revenge is shown in Virgil's choice of language:

- *Cutting a broad swathe*
- *Burning with rage*
- *He captured alive... to sacrifice them*

In lines 524–542, Aeneas rejects Mnestheus's appeal despite Magus *closer* *to his knees* in supplication, where supplication might have been *pleading* for mercy.

Activity

In addition, this *furor* is mirrored by a spree in lines 689–783. What impression is any different from Aeneas? Is there

Supernatural: immortal and mortal blend

In line with the composition of epic, Book 10 has a seamless blend of immortal and mortal. It opens with the council on Mount Olympus and later Hercules and Jupiter appear fated to die. In lines 457–473 Pallas prays to Hercules to assist him. At this suspense away from the mortals to the immortals. Hercules' reaction increases the pathos *streamed from his eyes*, line 467. Why is Jupiter's speech important?

1. Creates suspense at the critical point of the duel.
2. Emphasises Jupiter's role in ensuring fate takes its course (he reminds us that for Turnus).
3. Reminds the audience that length of time on earth is not the most important: *but the task of a brave man is to enlarge his fame by his actions*.

In lines 606–88, Juno intervenes against Aeneas's permission to save Turnus, but this can only be temporary. She makes a phantom of Aeneas, which Turnus then kills.

Activity
From the text
1.
2.

Literary techniques and composition

The focus on the sword belt (baldric) of Pallas gives Virgil another descriptive opportunity in line 494: *Seizing the huge weight of the belt and the crime engraved upon it. On one of the band of young men were foully slain and the bridal chambers stained with blood. Eurytus had engraved with much gold.*

We know nothing of Clonus.

The story of Danaus

Danaus, fearing that his brother Aegyptus was going to kill him, fled from Egypt to Egyptus with his 50 sons followed him and arranged a marriage between his sons to cement an alliance between them. However, Danaus gave each of his daughters a dagger, instructing them to kill their husbands on their wedding night. All obeyed except Hypermnestra. As a result, the daughters (Danaids) were punished in the Underworld by having to draw water in jugs with a hole at the bottom.

Activity
How does the text

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Aeneid 11: Drances and Ca

Lines: 1–915

Summary: Aeneas celebrates his victory over Mezentius, but changes to the obs and preparations for taking the body back to his father. E. sides bury their dea council to discuss the worsening situation. Venulus reports that Diomedes has restating that the Greeks have suffered en. Latinus advises the council to make Drances proposes that Turnus should take up his claim to Lavinia. While they are that Aeneas is advancing on Troy. Turnus leaves the council and organises the including the tribulation of Camilla, who slays many Trojans before being killed



For an overview see: zzed.uk/11215-book11



Go to zzed.uk/11215

References

Gods

Diana: Goddess of hunting and sister to Apollo. Their mother was *Latona* and the despite Diana's divine intervention Camilla is not fated to survive: *she has put on nothing*, line 535. **Opis** is Diana's attendant. She avenges Camilla's death by slaying *Arruns*. Her task set by Diana is laid out in lines 592–597. **Apollo:** grants Arruns' prayer to kill Camilla.

Jupiter in line 757 sees Camilla in battle. He needs fate to take its course.

Mortals

Greeks

Diomedes was the commander of Greek forces and one of the most respected leaders managed to wound Aphrodite and seize the sacred image of the goddess Pallas. A council called by King Latinus. The Latins learn that Diomedes, who now reigns over rejected the offer for peace.

Latins and Rutulians

Drances, a Latin, praises Aeneas's war skills and declares that he (and King Latinus) ally than Turnus's. They agree on 12 days of truce. **Venulus:** was an ambassador who request assistance in a war against Aeneas. See Book 8, line 9.

Camilla's story takes the form of an *epyllion*, a short mythological aside, and is the daughter of the deposed king of the Volsci, allies of Turnus. The king was chased from Volsci, his infant daughter in his hands. He came to a river which he could not cross. He prayed to Diana to save her. He promised Diana that Camilla would be her servant. She safely threw her to the other side and swam across himself. The baby Camilla was *as she had taken her first steps on her infant feet, he put a keen edged javelin in her hand*. She was raised in her childhood to be a huntress with her father and the shepherds in the

Trojans

Arruns, a Trojan ally, stalked Camilla in the field, and, when she is distracted by seeing his opportunity, prays to Apollo in lines 784–795 and Apollo *granted his prayer*.

The hero and his world: characterisation and themes

The mortals

Turnus: The council begins to turn against Turnus, who, back from chasing after the anger. He challenges the courage and manhood of Drances and Latinus, first insulting them by begging Latinus to continue fighting. Still, Turnus says, if the council wishes him to go so without fear.

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Aeneas is portrayed, in Diomedes' eyes, as equal with Hector: *Both were outstar*. *Aeneas was foremost in pietas* (lines 291–292). Earlier, in lines 285–287, Diomedes says that if not for two others like Aeneas, the Greeks would have been defeated. Virgil has probably exaggerated the reputation of Aeneas, who played only a minor part in Homer's *Iliad*, so that he is the founder of the Roman race.

However, Aeneas is no superhero. Like any other mortal, he feels sorrow and guilt for the death of Pallas. Book 8, line 514, Evander placed his hope in Aeneas: *Let him be hardened to the rigour of war under your leadership*. In Book 10, Aeneas says: *this is not what I need for my son, line 47*. He tries to make up for this with a very elaborate funeral described in great detail.

Activity

Self-blame is very important in the story. What happens at the end of the story?

Study lines 43–59: in what ways does self-blame come across? How does it affect the story?

Camilla: is another woman, like Dido, who reminds the audience of Greek tragedy. She is reminded of *Hippolytus*, a play by Euripides. Camilla is insistent on not marrying, but she can be compared with Hippolytus, whose insistence on chastity spelled his death at the hands of Aphrodite/Venus. He would not give her the worship she felt she deserved. But Hippolytus went so far as to be hostile towards Aphrodite/Venus. Camilla lacks the anger and hostility of Hippolytus. The story of Hippolytus and Phaedra is given a mention in Book 7, lines 765–766. Camilla's chosen chastity, and its comparison with both Hippolytus and the virgin Penthesilea, foreshadows her death. Penthesilea's death at the hands of Achilles, who falls in love with her at the moment of her dying, was a popular and common story, and the story was well known. Unlike her counterpart, however, Camilla's death will display no elegance, only tragic pathos.

Activity

In many ways, Camilla can be compared with Hippolytus. How far do you agree? You may find lines 502–507; 648–660; 709–714 helpful.

Evander: The frailty of Evander is brought out in Book 11: *Rumour is a great wing*. He is overwhelmed by the news (line 140). His speech in lines 151–182 is full of pathos.

Activity

Copy and complete the table by finding examples of the following literary devices in the text. Which speech is so effective?

Exclamation	
Rhetorical questions	
Addressing others though they are not there	
Bitterness	
Desire for revenge	

Themes

Old Homeric heroic code

In Book 11, the old and new ways clash. Like the warriors of Homer, displays on the battlefield. These displays are called *aristeia* and are found frequently in Homer. Aeneas is covered in lines 648–721. He is, too, when urged to make peace with the Trojans. 'Impetuous' is a quality of the Homeric heroes are willing to rush into battle. In addition, in single combat, lines 440–447. Yet Diomedes is the one who wants a diplomatic approach. A great warrior at Troy, a Greek and opponent of the Trojans, says in line 292: *Let peace while the chance is offered, but take care not to let your weapons clash on*

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Portrayal of war

Virgil's audience was only too aware that one of the consequences of war was funerals are held and a truce agreed. When approached, Aeneas gives his (and po lines 108–121, of which two sections are:

What cruel fortune this is, men of Latium, that has embroiled you in war and who are your friends... I myself would have been willing to grant them peace

Aeneas has mixed emotions over the deaths. For the Trojans: *These are the spoils* (line 17), and for Pallas: *This is not what I expected Evander for his son* (47). Virgil of the civil war in the first century BC: *...how we return from war? Are these* (lines 54–55)

Virgil had experienced at first hand the effects of Roman civil war (133–31 BC) and *pax Romana*. Virgil never forgot that his father was among those whose land was fought for Augustus at the Battle of Philippi (42 BC). Augustus did restore the farm probably scarred from the experience.

Pallas's funeral is full of pathos (note especially the moving simile at line 68). Virgil deliberately puts a great deal of detail into the preparations.

Activity
Make notes on the ceremonial Virgil Pallas

Social, cultural and religious

A very Roman work

As we have seen in Book 6, most of the Romans believed that the spirits of the dead went to the Styx, to the Underworld. There, the spirit was said to be judged to decide whether (Elysium) or hell (Tartarus). Funerals were held to prepare the spirit for this journey. In the Styx, a coin was placed underneath the tongue. In the elaborate funerals, there was a ceremonial fire. Food and clothes were thrown into the flames by the relatives in the afterlife. When the fire died, the urn was poured over it.

Then, the ash was poured into a jar called an urn.

Relationships

When considering questions on relationships, most would think of Dido and Aeneas. Book 11 highlights the relationship between Evander and his son Pallas, discussion of essays on relationships.

Role of women

Camilla arrives with other female Volscians. She intends to remain chaste and to loyalty, Diana sends Opis to protect her. Camilla does not fit the picture of typical compared with Dido. Some scholars say that she takes the narrative 'into the realm of the fantastic' which might not suit a modern audience and this might raise some discussion.

Literary techniques and composition

Speeches form a large part of Book 11, from line 125 to nearly 200 lines. These are persuasive oratory for the most part, but what is said needs to be studied carefully.

Activity

Make notes on the following speeches:

- 225–296 Diomedes' reply
- 296–335 Latinus
- 336–375 Drances' rhetoric against Turnus
- 376–444 Turnus's rebuttal

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Aeneid 12: Truce and Du

Lines: 1–952

Summary: Latinus tries to persuade Turnus to abandon his claim and seek peace but Turnus rides out. Juno allows Juturna to intervene. Jupiter intervenes in disguise and intensifies. Aeneas is wounded. Iapyx tries to treat Aeneas. Venus intervenes by returning to battle. Juturna, now disguised as Camers, drives Turnus around the forest. Turnus deal out death to all around him. Aeneas rallies his troops.

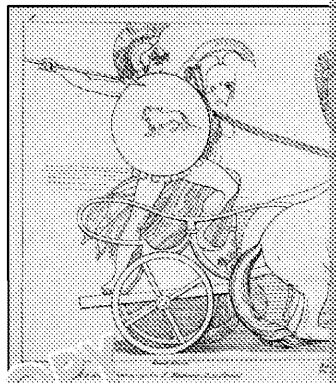
Amata comes to Latinus. Turnus insists that he must face Aeneas. Aeneas and Turnus switches to single combat. Juno finally gives in, but with a few demands. Jupiter agrees,

A final overview can be seen here: [zzed.uk/11215-book12](https://www.zzed.uk/11215-book12)  Go to [zzed.uk/11215-book12](https://www.zzed.uk/11215-book12)

References

Latins

Lavinia, daughter of Latinus, has little influence and yet again is discussed as Book 12 opens: *for me it would have been wrong to unite my daughter with any of those who came to ask for her in the past* (line 28). There does seem to be love for Lavinia on Turnus's part, which is not clearly as strong in Aeneas: *Turnus was distraught with love*, line 70. **Faunus**: An old Latin god of the countryside and Latinus's father.



Turnus and the Rutulians

Daunus: Turnus's father. He lives in Ardea, which is the home town of Turnus. He is a god who became a mortal, god of agriculture. **Metiscus**: is Turnus's charioteer. It was his 'driver' for his chariot. This allowed him to fight more easily, e.g. he was able to fight

Juturna: is a nymph and servant of Juno; she is also the sister of Turnus. She appears to the army in disguise as Camers (see also Book 10.562).

Activity

How does she encourage her speech, lines 200–210?

Etruscans

Activity

Many of those mentioned in Book 12 are victims of war. Each of these is an individual with personal detail about each by mentioning where they come from, who their father is, and how they fight. Make a list of at least five from Book 12 and give some detail about each in essays.

For example:

Aulestes: a king wearing the insignia of a king, line 200.

Trojans

There are several names that appear in Book 12 that have not been mentioned before the creation of the Trojan War, e.g. **Eumedes**. Others, more senior generals, have been mentioned before: **Phryxus** and **Phrygians**, **Neptune**, and **Achates**: Aeneas's second in command.

Iapyx: is a Trojan doctor. He is depicted in a fresco in Pompeii treating Aeneas's wound. The Roman army had skilled doctors who performed complicated surgery on injured soldiers. They were trained not to hear the screams of their patients.

Activity

How does Iapyx intervene?

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The heroic world: characterisation and themes

The gods

Juno: Juno can no longer help Turnus as he is confronting a destiny to which he is not equal (line 149). But Juno speaks to the nymph and sister of Turnus, and Juturna is still free to help: *You dare. I sanction.* (line 160). Juno's anger at the Trojans is still there but she can do no more to intervene. It is not yet reconciled and has been a major theme throughout *Aeneid* from its opening (see Book 1.8) and also, Jupiter prophesied that it would end it in Book 1, 279–282. Her anger has been a destructive force along the way, but in the end she has achieved an outcome that is beneficial to Roman history. Juno is a very strong woman and agrees to peace, but on her terms.



Fresco

Activity

Read lines 819–829. Write out Juno's conditions.

Having achieved her conditions, it is amazing how briefly her change of attitude forced her mind to change, leaving the cloud behind her and withdrawing from the scene.

The mortals

Latinus: does not come across well in Book 12. He does not have the qualities of

1. is fearful (21)
2. dithers (37–39)
3. worries about his reputation (40–41)
4. is not very tactful (line 24), but could also be regarded as plain-speaking
5. is superstitious (41)

Turnus: 100 out of 952 lines are taken up with speeches by Turnus. He is portrayed as a diplomat. Many similes applied to Turnus, as we have seen before, are animal based: lion (lines 4–8) and an angry bull (lines 103–106). Latinus talks of his fiery angry and calm with adjectives associated with fire (4, 71 and 101); *sparks* and *piercing eyes* and *kindled fire* (lines 101–102). There is the suggestion of violence and Turnus is stubborn and proud as he refuses to give up Lavinia. He is sarcastic about the Homeric hero, who usually respects his enemy – and calls Aeneas *that effeminate*. The book opens with the war turned against Turnus. Latinus makes a speech trying to persuade but these words had no effect on Turnus. Latinus's wife, Amata, tries to check him but he *not persist in meeting the Trojans in battle* (63). Turnus is not persuaded. He rides out to battle. Aeneas gets ready to meet him in battle.

The full disintegration of his character is seen like a Greek tragedy. He becomes honest with himself and acquires a heroic stature as a result.

Aeneas: Throughout the epic, Aeneas has developed from a man of doubts to a diplomat in the image of Augustus. But it is Aeneas (and, therefore, Augustus) who is the marked contrast is in Aeneas the peace-maker (i.e. Augustus), lines 107–12: although the description of Turnus's preparations is long and detailed, the description of Aeneas's preparations is short. He is much calmer. Aeneas (lines 311, 313) has been observing the conventions of battle, but now he attacks indiscriminately. Lines 498–499 show him throwing off all restraint. *Furo*. However, people in the Middle Ages felt that Aeneas did not receive the rewards he deserved. Maphaeus Vegius wrote a Book 13, in which Aeneas was received as a god in heaven. Aeneas had failed to show restraint and clemency at the end when it was intended.

Activity

How far do you agree with what is said of Turnus?

Activity

Read Turnus's final speech. Do you feel sympathy for him? What is the last line of the speech? It is not about Rome.

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Juturna: It looks as if the treaty will hold, but Juturna intervenes in the guise of *Camers* (224); she inflames the minds of the warriors (239) and shows them the sign of an eagle. Juturna pretends to be Turnus's charioteer, Metiscus, and drives him away from the intensity of battle. Turnus soon realises this, and when reproached by *Saces* (650) he finally meets Aeneas in one-to-one combat. Their meeting comes to a crisis, at which point the battle is 'frozen' as the gods debate what to do.

Activity

Here are some questions to consider:

1. How does a man of war feel?
2. Is there any justice in war?
3. What type of hero was a new hero?

Themes

Fate

Jupiter ensures that fate takes its course. He sends Juturna away not Juno. Fate matters the day. Gods withdraw when their protégé is about to die. Therefore, Turnus is in a picture is portrayed of Turnus. Normally arrogant and impetuous with plenty of self

Portrayal of war

As in all the later books of Virgil's *Aeneid*, the names of the victims, each with a picture, reader that war affects individuals. He switches constantly from Aeneas to Turnus to realise that, although restrained so far, Aeneas is just as capable a warrior as Turnus.

Social, cultural and religious

A question for debate here is: Retribution: Is it wrong? Does Virgil make us feel that it is wrong? Why? Think back to the times when Virgil was writing. Julius Caesar killed one million Gauls in France as they resisted the Roman advance. After he was assassinated in 44BC, Octavian/Augustus had all his assassins killed. Is retribution being criticised here?

Literary techniques and composition

Divine intervention and disguise

These make important elements of this final book. Suspense builds up until the end and Turnus. The intervention from Juno delays the final meeting and Juturna is a divine intervention from Venus gets Aeneas back into battle so fighting can continue. The immortals freeze-frames the final duel as they come to an amicable agreement. The 'button' achieves suspense.

Similes

Activity

There are many similes to study regarding their correspondences and effectiveness. Here are some for consideration: 103, 365, 451, 473, 521 (has a double simile men), 587, 715, 749 855, 908.

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Activity

This link to the Open University discusses the character of Turnus and includes an activity: <https://www.open.ac.uk/11215-OU-Turnus>

Section C: Themes

The aim of this section is to draw together the themes listed in the specification. We have already introduced some of these themes, but now we study Virgil's *Aeneid*.

Composition of the *Aeneid*

Having read and studied all the prescribed books, readers should be familiar with historical and cultural background. Virgil's *Aeneid* is an epic poem. Epic poems have other features essential to their composition.

Homeric

Both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are written in the style of oral poetry. We do not know if they were composed deliberately in this style or whether they are actually a collection of poems passed down by mouth by bards. Most people believe that they were originally oral. Oral poetry and its rhythm and meter were helped by this. To help him further, the bard used various devices such as formulae / packaged / prepared in advance to aid memory. The poems seem to indicate that they were told to nobles. Some scholars believe Homer may have been a bard and could have told the poems in 30 hours). Virgil's *Aeneid* is written in the **epic style** but is not the same as Homer's. Virgil was an oral poet; he did not recite by heart passages over several nights to large gatherings. He wrote a poem (some scholars call him a *study poet*) and then revised and carefully constructed it, redrafting many times. He did read some sections to Augustus as we are told that Augustus wept at the heroes section from Book 6 and that Augustus wept at the description of Marcellus. We can identify features of composition which make this an epic poem.

Similarities with Homer	
Subject matter: Trojan War stories. However, the poet could also introduce other themes and characters.	When people leave a formula: X arrives, seen, meet/greet
Epithets: Frequent use of the same epithets attached to the same people and for the same speaking and answering. This is seen in Virgil.	Repetition of scenes
Flashback: Homer and Virgil use flashback often over several books. See <i>Aeneid</i> Books 2 and 3, in which Aeneas tells Dido of the fall of Troy and his wanderings.	Homer has simple and complex in its origin
Digression into fantasy and supernatural: Digressions or sub-stories can be linked back to the main story. Often these stories had a moral message for the listening audience.	Homer has straightforward characters of the
Speeches are found in both Homer and Virgil.	In addition, in Virgil there is a political message
The use of similes .	

So does this mean that there is little original material, or is Virgil's *Aeneid* more so?

Both Homer and Virgil use the same genre – epic. Epic has certain conventions, so there will appear to be similarities.

- Subject matter is similar – life after the Trojan War
- Typically Homeric phrases – especially simile and epithets
- Similarity in structure
- There is a moral message

Virgil, however, takes this a step further. He takes a simple idea and expands it.

- Odysseus is trying to escape his *past* but for Aeneas it is the future.
- Aeneas is a more believable character.
- The redefinition of the term 'hero'.
- Places associated with Augustus.

Virgil also has a wealth of literature and history to draw on as he was writing something new. For example, his experience of the civil war sees him offering a personal response. It is likely that Virgil would have recalled Homer, but Virgil has created a very Roman work relevant to his time.

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Gods and divine beings

Activity

One of the essential features of epic is that divine beings (gods, demi-gods and) in the storyline. Consider what the following divine beings do in *Aeneid*.

Major god	Storyline (with some hints)	Less divine being
Jupiter	Book 1; Book 4; Book 10; Book 12	Allecto
Juno	Book 1; Book 4; Book 7; Book 12	Juturna
Venus	Book 1; Book 2; Book 5; Book 6; Book 12	Opis
Mercury	Book 2	Iris



Activity

'The gods of the *Aeneid* deserve no respect.' Discuss.



Activity

The gods often display human characteristics. Look back over Section B and select the following gods/goddesses to complete the table.

Major god	Human characteristic
Jupiter	
Juno	
Venus	

Similes

A simile is a poetic comparison of an individual, thing or event to something else of greater familiarity to the audience of the time. Virgil's similes are:

- often long; these are referred to as *extended similes*
- ornamental – detailed description
- drawn from nature, politics, literature, mythology, life in general

Activity

From Section B, select three similes from the *Aeneid* and explain their effect.

Speeches

Speeches in epic are important because they:

- state the speaker's intention or opinion
- give an insight into a character
- give warning or advice
- heighten emotion at critical times
- can be used to give background information
- can be used to give information about the future

Activity

From Section B, select three speeches from the *Aeneid* and explain their effect.

Activity

The following are some of the key speeches in *Aeneid*. Consider why each is important.

Character	Book	Content
Jupiter	1	Future
Creusa	2	Future
Dido and Aeneas	4	Opinion, intention
Mercury	4	Warning
Juno	6	Information, future
Juno	7	Character, intention
Evander	8	Explanation
Nisus	9	Intention
Turnus	10	Character
Evander	11	Emotion
Diomedes	11	Advice
Turnus (his final speech)	12	Character



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Narrative and descriptive techniques

There will be questions which requires learners to appreciate *the way in which* a questions may use the word 'How...'. The original Latin used the same literary device translation to reinforce what Virgil was trying to say. Questions may require learners which could cover the following:

1. idyllic
2. violent
3. emotions, e.g. anger, fear, pathos, admiration
4. vivid, persuasive

Some examples have been noted in Section B.

General guidance for essay questions is to first read the passage! NEVER summarise

Highlight words appropriate to the specified theme and note any literary devices. Give a few examples from the beginning – and keep references from the passage to one line. Start to begin with general comments and then turn to details OR the other way around. This should be positive.

In examinations, candidates frequently give a list of technical terms (anaphora, etc.) without an example or explanation. Phrases which say, for example, 'there is a lot of alliteration in this passage', comments which say, for example, 'the repetition of the s sounds resembles a snake', will earn much more credit. Below is an introductory checklist to apply to passages.

Literary device	
Choice of words for the theme	Creates picture
Appeal to the senses: sight, sound	Creates vivid image
Direct speech	Dramatic/pace
Many verbs	Move the story on
Adjectives	Slow story but used to
Repetitions	Draw attention to a character
Similes and metaphors	Focus on the point Virgil is making
Use of negative adjectives	Gloomy atmosphere of
Use of imperatives, exclamations or questions (including rhetorical questions)	Adds to drama

Remember to quote an example and say what is being emphasised.

Reference to alliteration should not be overused. Below is a guide as to how some consonants are used.

q, t, s	Bitterness, anger
s	Horror, sleep
p	Indignation
m	Mourning

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The story of Rome

How does the *Aeneid* move on from Homeric epic? One way is in the concept of Roman hero.

The Homeric hero, such as Achilles or Odysseus	The Roman hero
Homer's heroes were usually aristocrats and were reared to be warriors.	Aeneas is from a humble background and has hardly any heroic features.
The hero values strength, skill, courage, determination, glory and honour.	Aeneas does value these things but not as much as the Homeric hero.
The hero is always faced with death, so he tries to focus on the aspects he could control, such as the quality of his life and the manner of his death.	Aeneas thinks of his duty and of those beyond himself.
How the hero is remembered and honoured after his death is determined by how well he faces death, how heroic his adversaries are, and how well he fights.	Aeneas has a duty to his people and his country.
What others think of the hero is quite important. The greatest insult to a hero is for others not to give the hero the honour due him.	Aeneas is a diplomat and a statesman.
Everlasting fame is the ultimate honour.	Aeneas's mission is to found a new city.

Role of Aeneas in Rome's imperial destiny

'The founding of Rome involved great cost, but there can be no suggestion that it was a failure', says the scholar Harrison. Aeneas himself cuts a tragic figure in the way he has to sacrifice to follow the destiny fate has laid out for him. He is unaware of his fate in the way it is revealed to him.

Activity

What is he told in the following?

Book	How destiny is revealed
Book 1	Jupiter's prophecy
Book 2	Hector's warning; Creusa's speech
Book 3 (not prescribed but credit will be given for knowledge)	Helenus's prophecy; Celaeno's speech
Book 4	Jupiter's warning
Book 6	The pageant of heroes
Book 7	The scrolls of fate
Book 8	The shield of Aeneas; Evander's tour of the city
Book 12	Juno's compromise

Activity

Go back through Section B. What Roman customs, common in Virgil's time, are depicted as beginning with Aeneas?



Activity

How far do you think the *Aeneid* is in a real sense a tribute to his country?

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Portrayal of war

We have seen throughout section B that Virgil does not glorify war. The balance of imperial success and the cost to individuals is shown below by R D Williams.

It is this mixing of two contrasting aspects of human experience which seem the main reasons for the greatness of the Aeneid. In Virgil's epic let us consider the public world and the private world. The public's view of the Aeneid empire as civilisation for the barbarians is the basic foundation of the poem, the reason for the proper stuff of epic, and this is what Virgil set out to portray in the excitement and fervour of the Augustan age. But every reader of the Aeneid knows that the sorrow, suffering and sadness is very much to the forefront of Virgil's thought. It has been said (especially by the Victorians) that this is Virgil's greatest quality: the expression of the imperial theme. This isn't true, but it makes the point that the Aeneid is a simplified panegyric of Rome and Augustus, but a sensitive exploration in the narrative of the implications of right through might and of the suffering.

From reading Section A, it can be seen nevertheless that from the time of Aeneas to Virgil's own time the classical world was one of violence. The civil wars were within living memory, with families fighting each other. Violence is reflected in the *Aeneid*.

To balance this portrayal of war Virgil never forgets that each man (and woman) who dies on the battlefield is an individual. They have fathers, such as Evander, father of Pallas, and mothers such as Euryalus's. They have home towns, which are described in idyllic terms.

Activity

Find examples of violence in books you have read.

- Violent
- Violent
- Violent
 - Nisus
 - Turnus
 - Aeneas

Different nations

We actually know Augustus's attitude to different nations as he tells us in an account of his principate:

I often thought of war, civil and foreign, on the earth and sea, in the whole wide world. I spare the citizens who sought pardon. As for foreign nations, those who I forgive, I preferred to preserve than to destroy. About five hundred thousand were sworn to me. I led something more than three hundred thousand of them into battle and I returned them to their cities, after their military service had been earned. I gave them farms or gave them money for their military service. I captured six hundred smaller than triremes.

The way the nations are portrayed in Virgil's *Aeneid* reflects the Romans' relation to them.

1. Trojans

The Trojans seem to be depicted as 'Romans in waiting'. From Book 1, from their diplomatic skills to address Dido to their fighting 'Roman' formation in Latin, they are forerunners of what the Romans of Virgil's time would do. Aeneas is the embodiment of the dutiful servant of fate and of *paterfamilias*, he is an exemplary leader of his people and son.

2. Greeks

The attitude towards the Greeks shifts as the books progress. In Book 2, the Trojans hear Aeneas's account of the death of Priam shows. He wants to kill them and Helenus, in Book 3 by Helenus and sees how Andromache is (apparently) happy. Then, the Greek enemy of Aeneas, advises Latinus to make peace, going so far as to praise Aeneas as Achilles (Book 11). Greece was already part of the Roman Empire as Virgil's language, art and literature.

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3. Carthaginians

Carthage was originally a trading post of the Phoenicians. Virgil picks up on the story of a Queen Dido. The Phoenicians created trading posts as far as Britain, and set up a great empire in Spain, and by the third century BC Rome and Carthage were at war. At this time Carthage was not a democracy. It was an oligarchy, ruled by the elite. Rome had long ago (502 BC) ceased to have kings and was a republic with elected leaders for the benefit of the poor. The Romans were very different people. In Book 4, the Carthaginian Hannibal, who poses one of the greatest threats to Aeneas's destiny, just as the Carthaginian leadership of Hannibal.

4. Latins and Italians

Rome, with the Latin League, warred with the Latin League (made up of other Latin cities) in 493 BC, and agreed on an alliance. In time, Rome dominated all Latium. The Roman republic defeated various mountain tribes that pressed in on Latium. To control the north and central Italy, the Romans perfected two methods: first, they planted Roman colonies on lands that they confiscated; second, they awarded complete Roman citizenship only to some cities and tribes – as a reward for speedy Romanisation and faithfulness to Rome. This is reflected in Aeneas's discussions with Latinus from Book 7. In *Aeneid*, though, Turnus is Aeneas's great adversary; the scholar Cannington said: 'The victory over Turnus represents Rome's victory over her enemies.'

Activity

Find words from the text which have different meanings to those discussed in the text.

Moral values

As seen above, Aeneas, the Trojan, is the embodiment of Roman virtues: he demonstrates appropriate *pietas* – devotion to his family, country and mission. Loyalty and honour are virtues which drive almost everything Aeneas does. He was courageous, honourable, just, and a good leader of his comrades, but he was often called 'pious Aeneas' because of his most exemplified virtue: piety, or loyalty to the gods.

Activity

Write out the virtues which drive almost everything Aeneas does. Discuss in the class.

In *Aeneid*, *furor* is when emotions or other violent outbursts are unchecked and allowed to take over. So, when Aeneas goes on a killing spree after the death of Pallas his behaviour is associated with *furor*.

Activity

For a discussion of the role of *furor* in the *Aeneid* see the free course at [zzed.uk/11215](http://www.zzed.uk/11215)

Augustus insisted he was merciful and advocated sparing the defeated, so why did Aeneas kill Turnus at the end of Book 12?

Activity

For a discussion of the role of *furor* in the *Aeneid* see the free course at [zzed.uk/11215](http://www.zzed.uk/11215)

Fate

In the *Aeneid*, fate (or destiny) is an all-powerful force – what fate decrees will happen, must happen. It is Aeneas's fate to found a city in Italy, and he must do so, but he does have the free will to resist fate and they can delay fate, but ultimately such resistance is futile. [zzed.uk/11215-charts](http://www.zzed.uk/11215-charts) has an interesting analysis of fate. The theme of fate often appears in the 12 books. It tells us that the theme of fate appears in about half of Books 1, 7, 10 and 11. It is more dominant in Books 4 and 6, and surprisingly, it appears very little in Book 2.

Activity

Study the chart on the right and discuss how far you are sure of vengeance appearing in the text, and the reasons, which can be given for this.

Major characters who delay fate are:

1. Juno
2. Dido
3. Turnus

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The role of Jupiter should not be underestimated. Jupiter ensures that fate takes but in the end *he* sends Juturna away, not Juno, in Book 12, and Turnus must face

For Aeneas, his destiny is gradually revealed to him. It begins at Troy, when Hector to leave and then Creusa says he must go without her. As the Trojans begin their revealed. On Delos: *O iron sons of Dardanus, the land that gave you birth, of your again... seek out your ancient mother.* The messages are of cryptic, e.g. Celaeno not end until they *eat their own tables*. Helenus the priest says he will found a city *suckling thirty piglets*. The Sybil, too, gives messages which require interpretation. Aeneas makes mistakes in interpreting the revelations and also receives help. Characters who help include:

1. Creusa
2. Jupiter via Mercury
3. Anchises

Activity

Think of the times that Aeneas is given a revelation.
What would have happened if he had not received the revelation?
Which revelation is the most detailed?
Do you think Aeneas was the right man to be the discussion point for a group.

Relationships

Relationships	Examples
Father–Son	Anchises and Aeneas Aeneas and Ascanius/Iulus Evander and Pallas Mezentius and Lausus
Man and Woman	Aeneas and Dido Aeneas and Creusa Latinus and Amata Latinus and Lavinia
God and Goddess	Jupiter and Juno Jupiter and Venus Jupiter and Mercury
Mortal and Immortal	Aeneas and Venus Hercules and Pallas

Points to consider could be:

1. Level of detail
2. Development of the relationship which could be positive or negative
3. Does the relationship change how and why?

Role of women

Questions requiring responses about **women** refer to **mortals**. Discussion of **divine** characters may refer to goddesses in responses.

The name *paterfamilias* was given to the male head of a Roman *familia*, which is translated as 'household' as it included family and slaves. Among the rights of the paterfamilias was the right of choosing husbands and arranging marriage for his daughters. In many respects, Latinus is already acting like a Roman *paterfamilias*. Lavinia also follows the pattern of Roman women in Virgil's time. She accepts her father's choice – rather than her own mind. Definitely a suitable bride for Aeneas, unlike the Carthaginian Dido, who does not even know what a Roman matron should be.

Activity

What do the women in the storyline do?
Creusa
Anna
Amata
Lavinia

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Activity

Which women have the following effects on events in the *Aeneid*? This activity may have more than one woman for each event.

- Must die for the good of the mission
- Gives assistance to the Trojans
- Behaves unlike the expectations of Roman women
- Is a poor role model for women
- Poses a threat to the mission
- Opposes the Trojans
- Reveals Rome's future
- Is a good role model


Modern views and personal responses

Further learning:

A 40-minute discussion from BBC *In Our Time*: three modern Classical scholars – and Philip Hardie – discuss Virgil's *Aeneid*: [zzed.uk/11215-in-our-time](https://www.bbc.com/programmes/11215-in-our-time)



A learner's personal response is always given credit when based on textual, contextual or historical evidence. An introduction to an extended response could begin with a learner's definition of a hero as a personal response. For example, the definition of a hero could come from a discussion of how Aeneas compares to heroes from modern culture.

 Learners should be encouraged to give a personal definition of the hero, which could include:	
Epic	Homeric influence
Destiny	Moral values
Pietas	Furor
Fate	Relationship with Augustus

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