

LATIN JOKES II

Repetition and fun (a lowered affective filter, as Second Language Researchers call it) are two of the best ways to acquire a language. Reading, rehearsing and telling jokes will do that.

*Here are a few jokes to practice beginning Latin. They use the kind of words that really come in handy: short, common words and phrases that are used all the time in class: **nōn intellegō** (I don't understand), **iam** (now), **nōlō** (I don't want to), **fortasse** (maybe or perhaps), **nescio** (I don't know), **vōlō** (I want to), **nēmo** (nobody), **quid** (what), **cur** (why), **possum** (I can), and **scio** (I know).*

→ *This may be the funniest: These are phrases that a lucky game show contestant who is a bit hard of hearing happens to get right. These use the phrases **nescio** (I don't know), **quid** (what), **non possum** (I can't), **Ignōscē mihi, nōn audīvī** ("I'm sorry, I didn't hear that."), and "**Iterā, quaeso**" (Repeat, please).*

All of these are ideal for beginning Latin students. My students have created skits with some of these and have figured out ways to involve their parents, classmates, friends and siblings in the jokes.

*Students may also be able to think of their own jokes with the Latin words **minime** (no), **ita** (yes), and others. Let your imaginations run wild and then share what you come up with!*

Thanks to my students for many of these ideas, particularly Nora, Kristoffer, Soren, James, Peter, Silas and Martha... and for practicing these with their parents!

*I keep hearing the phrase **nōn intellegō**. What does that mean?*

I don't understand.

*I said, "What does **nōn intellegō** mean?"*

I don't understand.

*What do you mean by "I don't understand"? I know you understand what I'm saying!
Just tell me what **nōn intellegō** means!*

I don't understand.

Aaauugggh! I don't understand!

Yes! You've got it!

*I've asked you about the word **iam** before. When will you tell me what it means?*

Now.

Yes, now.

Now.

Yes! Now! Tell me right now.

Now.

*You keep saying you're going to tell me what **iam** is, but you don't!*

*"Will you tell me what **nōlō** means?"*

"I don't want to."

*"Why not? Just tell me what **nōlō** could mean!"*

"I don't want to! I refuse!"

*"Are you going to tell me what **fortasse** means?"*

"Maybe..."

*"Huh? Are you going to tell me what **fortasse** means or not?!"*

"Maybe..."

*Will you tell me what the word **volō** means in English?*

"I want to."

*Ok, good. So tell me what **volō** means.*

"I want to."

*"I know you want to. So just go ahead and tell me what **volō** is in English!"*

"I want to."

*"I understand that you want to! Tell me what **volō** means!"*

Substitute teacher who doesn't know any Latin:

Teacher: "Ok, class, who will tell me what the word **nemo** means?"

Students: "**Nobody!**"

Teacher: "What a rude bunch of kids!"

Substitute teacher who doesn't know any Latin:

Teacher: "OK, class, please tell me the meaning of the word **quid**."

Students: "**What**"

Teacher: "I said, 'Tell me the meaning of the word **quid**.' "

Students: "**What**"

Teacher: "**What is quid?**"

Students: "**Yes!**"

Teacher: "Ok, so that's how it's going to be, huh? Silly answers? Pretending you can't hear? Fine, but I've got my eyes on you rascals!"

"What does the Latin word **cur** mean in English?"

"**Why**"

"Because I asked you, that's why! Please tell me what **cur** means!"

"**Why**"

"How rude! So you're not going to tell me what **cur** means?"

"**Why**"

"Who cares why? I want to know! You don't have to know why! Just tell me what **cur** means!"

"**Why**"

Can you tell me what **possum** means ?

"**I can!**"

OK, then , go ahead and tell me...

*"I don't know what the word **scio** means. Do you?"*

"I know."

*"Yes, I thought you might, but I don't know what it means. What does **scio** mean?"*

"I know."

*"I realize that you know! I'm the one that doesn't know what **scio** means."*

"I know."

"I know you know that I don't know!"

*A lucky game show contestant that
doesn't know any Latin and can't hear well:*

Host: "The category is Latin Phrases..."

*"What does the Latin word **nescio** mean?"*

"I don't know!"

That's right!

*Give the meaning of the Latin word **quid**.*

"What?"

Correct!

*Can you tell us what **non possum** means?*

“I can’t!”

Exactly!

*What does the Latin phrase **“Ignōscē mihi, nōn audīvī”** mean?*

“I’m sorry, I didn’t hear that.”

Right again!

*What is the Latin saying **“Iterā, quaeso”** in English?*

“Um, repeat, please.”

Yes! Magnificent! You are really good at this!

What else could we add to this skit?