



The Heights School

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To the American Philological Association and the Trustees of the Coffin Fellowship:

Because of the generosity of the David D. and Rosemary H. Coffin Fellowship for Travel in Classical Lands, I attended three weeks of intensive classes at the Pontifical University of Santa Croce in spoken Latin and Greek. During one of the weeks, I attended afternoon classes about language pedagogy, specifically tailored to and taught by Latin and Greek teachers. Twice a week in the afternoons, all of the Greek or Latin classes would foray into the city to a specific museum or famous ruin to build our vocabulary and discuss its importance, in Greek or Latin.

I tested into the highest levels of Latin and Greek, and from the first day, we had non-stop interaction in those languages. Often, conversations begun in class would carry over into lunch afterwards in the school cafeteria, never breaking out of Latin or Greek! Our professors, Christophe Rico and Eduardo Engelsing, not only shared their fluency, but their excitement and depth in these languages. More than half of the students in my Greek class had Master's degrees or Ph.Ds., but there was still so much we could learn from a great speaker like Rico. At the highest levels, we read through letters and excerpts from the great works and discussed diction, style, and grammar in the target language. This exercise gave me the confidence to use Greek and Latin in the classroom to talk about everything, not just sticking to the words on the page. We used Latin and Greek communicatively, many of us forming friendships in these languages when Latin was the only *lingua franca*.

The Pedagogy Workshop in the afternoons of the second week taxed our stamina, but rewarded us with a plethora of insights and teaching techniques. Many of the classes were taught in a workshop and participatory style, which allowed us to use the techniques for ourselves as students. The other lectures in this program included where to find and how to use living language resources for Latin and Greek, as well as sketches of the scientific research on language acquisition and why what is true for learning Spanish, Arabic, and Chinese must also be true for Latin and Greek. I also gained confidence practicing Total Physical Response and Total Proficiency through Reading and Story-Telling. I returned to find many pages of notes to collate, organize, and digest.

This year, I want to bring these languages alive for my students and encourage them to communicate everything in the classroom. In both my Latin I and Greek II class, we will be speaking in the language from the first day, a priceless gift for which I can thank the Coffin Fellowship.

Gratefully,

Thomas Cox
Latin, Greek, and English Teacher