Quintilian: *Institutio Oratoria* 3.2-13

Quintilian (35-95 CE) wrote the *Institutio Oratoria* (“The Orator’s Education”) in first-century Rome, the height of the Pax Romana. His views have influenced educational practice ever since, especially in the Renaissance, laying the groundwork for rhetorical instruction until the emphasis in the field shifted from oral to written composition in the nineteenth century.

Rhetoric, or the theory of effective communication, was for Quintilian merely the tool of the broadly educated citizen who was capable of analysis, reflection, and then powerful action in public affairs. Oratorical excellence resulted from native skill as a speaker along with extensive background reading in philosophy and the liberal arts and intensive writing practice, with the goal of producing “a good man skilled at speaking.”

The cradle was not too early to begin this education, according to Quintilian. Supposedly cutting-edge early education approaches today, such as Baby Einstein and LeapFrog, only echo many of the principles this ancient teacher advocated. As the pupil progresses, each step is carefully laid out in his twelve-book instruction manual on how to grow a lawyer.

In the following excerpt, the author outlines the specific qualities a good boy (*probus*) must exhibit in order to become an ideal student. For instance, he must be able to be nurtured and shaped by the superior guidance and talents of a master-teacher, one like Quintilian himself.

In children, the principal sign of talent is memory. (Its) quality is two-fold, to understand (things) easily and to retain (them) accurately. Next (is) the ability to imitate: for that is also a part of a teachable character; for a good boy also will be the one in his earliest years (who seems) truly gifted.

And I would consider (it) less of a problem for (any) other boy to be slow-witted than ill-behaved: however, the good boy

[Continued on the next page]
illo segni et iacente plurimum aberit. Hic meus quae tradentur non difficulter will be very different from one (who is) slow and lethargic. This (student) of mine will absorb without difficulty what will be taught (to him)

accipiet, quaedam etiam interrogabit; sequetur tamen magis quam praecurrent. and certain things he will even ask about: nevertheless, he will follow (the teacher) rather than get ahead (of the class).

Mihi ille detur puer quem laus excitet, quem gloria iuvet, qui victus fleat. Let that boy be given to me whom praise motivates, whom recognition encourages, who (when) bested, cries.

Hic erit alendus ambitu, hunc mordebit obiurgatio, hunc honor excitabit, in This boy will have to be nourished through his desire for achievement, criticism will sting him, admiration will spur him on,

hoc desidiam numquam verebor. Danda est tamen omnibus aliqua remissio, in this boy I will never worry about laziness. There must be given to everyone, nevertheless, some leniency,

non solum quia nulla res est quae perferre possit continuum laborem, sed not only because there is no matter which is able to withstand unremitting effort, but also

quod studium discendi voluntate, quae cogi non potest, constat. Modus because the love of learning rests upon a willingness (to learn) which is not able to be compelled.

tamen sit remissionibus, ne aut odium studiorum faciant negatae aut otii Nevertheless, there should be a limit to indulgences, so that either (when they are) denied, they create a dislike of studies or

consuetudinem nimiae. Sunt etiam nonnulli acuendis puerorum ingeniis non (when they are) too frequent, (they create) the expectation of leisure. There are even some games (which are) not useless in sharpening boys’ minds.

inutiles lusūs, cum positis invicem cuiusque generis quaestiunculis (especially) when they compete (against one another) with debate questions of every sort posed back and forth.

aemulantur. Mores quoque se inter ludendum simplicius detegunt. Character also reveals itself quite naturally in the course of (their) playing.
Institutio Oratoria: Worksheet

a. The questions below pertain to the forms underlined in the passage (pp. 1-2).

b. When you’re asked to change a word from one form to another, change only that form of the word. For instance, if you’re asked to change habet to the passive voice, make habet passive (i.e. habetur) but leave it in the 3rd sing. present indicative.

1. Make signum plural. ______________________________________________________

2. Change est to a future infinitive (neut.). _______________________________________

3. Make eius nominative. ______________________________________________________

4. Make continere passive. _____________________________________________________

5. Make primis comparative. ____________________________________________________

6. Make ingeniouis superlative. _________________________________________________

7. Make peius positive. _________________________________________________________

8. Change iacent to future passive. ______________________________________________

9. Make hic accusative. _________________________________________________________

10. Change accipiet to imperfect second person plural. _____________________________

11. Make quaedam singular. ____________________________________________________

12. Change interrogabit to pluperfect passive (masc.). ______________________________

13. Make ille dative. ___________________________________________________________

14. What case is quem and why? ________________________________________________

15. Make alendus active. ________________________________________________________

[Continued on the next page]
16. What grammatical construction does Danda est represent? __________________________

17. Change nulla res to accusative plural. ________________________________

18. Change quae to dative plural. ________________________________

19. What mood is cogi and why? ________________________________

20. Make faciant perfect. ________________________________

21. Make lusūs genitive. ________________________________

22. Make generis plural. ________________________________

23. What case is quaestiunculis and why? ________________________________

24. Make se dative. ________________________________

25. Make detegunt future first person. ________________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Note/ Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.   | *ingenii*: *ingenium, -ii, n.*: natural mental power, mind; here, talent  
*praecipuum*: *praecipuus, -a, -um*: special; here, principal  
*duplex*: *duplex, duplicis*: two-fold  
*facile*: (adverb) easily |
| 2.   | *percipere*: *percipio, percipere, -cepi, -ceptum*: comprehend  
*fideliter*: adverb of *fidelis, -e*: faithfully; here, accurately  
*proximum*: *proximus, -a, -um*: next  
*imitatio*: *imitatio, -onis, f.*: imitation; here, the abstract quality of imitating  
*quoque*: (adverb/conjunction) also; placed after the word it emphasizes |
| 3.   | *docilis*: *docilis, -e*: teachable  
*probus*: *probus, -a, -um*: good  
*primis*: *primus, -a, -um*: first; here with *in*, in the earliest years (of a student’s education)  
*ver_-*: (adverb) truly  
*ingeniosus*: *ingeniosus, -a, -um*: gifted |
| 4.   | *peius*: comparative adverb; here with *non*, less of a problem  
*duxerim*: I would consider; perfect active subjunctive 1st sing. of *duco*  
*tardi ... ingenii*: gen. of characteristic, literally “of slow intelligence”; here, slow-witted  
*mali (ingenii)*: here, ill-behaved |
| 5.   | *segni*: *segnis,-e*: slow  
*iacente*: *iaceo, -re, iacui*: be idle; here, (being) lethargic  
*plurimum*: (superlative adverb) very  
*aberit*: *absum, abesse, afui*: be far removed, be different  
*tradentur*: *trado, -ere, -didi, -ditum*: teach  
*difficulter*: (adverb) with difficulty |
*sequeatur*: *sequor, sequi, secutus sum* (deponent verb): he will follow  
*magis*: (adverb) rather  
*praecurrat*: *praecurrro, -currere, -cucurri, -cursum*: go on ahead |
| 7.   | *detur*: let him be given; present passive subjunctive 3rd sing. of *do, dare, dedi, datum*  
*excitetur*: (it) motivates; present active subjunctive 3rd sing. of *excito* (1)  
*iuvet*: (it) encourages; present active subjunctive 3rd sing. of *iuvo*  
*fleat*: (he) cries; present active subjunctive 3rd sing. of *fleo, -ere, flevi, fletum*  

[Continued on the next page]
8. **alendus**: alo, -ere, alui, altum: nourish  
**ambitu**: ambitus, -s, m.: desire for popularity; here, desire for achievement  
**mordebit**: mordeo, -re, momordi, morsum: bite; here, sting  
**obiurgatio**: obiurgatio, -onis, f.: reproach; here, criticism  
**honor**: honor, -oris, m.: a mark of respect; here, recognition

9. **desidiam**: desidia, -ae, f.: idleness  
**verebor**: vereor, -eri, veritus sum (deponent verb); I will worry  
**remissio**: remissio, -onis, f.: leniency, indulgence

10. **quia**: (conjunction) because  
**perferre**: perfero, perferre, pertuli, perlatum: stand  
**continuum**: continuus, -a, -um: unremitting

11. **discendi**: disco, -ere, didici: learn; genitive gerund (verbal noun); here, of learning  
**voluntate**: voluntas, -tatis, f.: willingness  
**cogi**: cogo, -ere, coegi, coactum: compel  
**constat**: consto, -are, -stiti, -statum: rest on  
**modus**: modus, -i, m.: limit

12. **sit**: there should be; present subjunctive 3rd sing. of sum  
**ne**: (conjunction) lest, not  
**odium**: odium, -ii, n.: dislike  
**faciant**: with ne, so that they do not create; present active subjunctive 3rd pl. of facio

13. **consuetudinem**: consuetudo, -tudinis, f.: habit; here, expectation  
**nimiae**: nimius, -a, -um: too frequent  
**nonnulli**: nonnullus, -a, -um: several  
**acuendis**: acuo, acuere, acui, acutum: sharpen to a point; here with ingenii, in sharpening the minds

14. **inutiles**: inutilis, -e: useless  
**lusus**: lusus, -s, m.: game  
**cum**: (conjunction) when  
**positis**: pono, -ere, posui, positum: put, pose  
**invicem**: (adverb) back and forth  
**quaestiunculis**: quaestiuncula, -ae, f.: a little question (diminutive of quaestio, “question”)

15. **aemulantur**: aemulor, -ari (deponent verb): they compete  
**inter ludendum**: ludo, -ere, lusi, lusum: play; neuter accusative gerund (verbal noun); here, in the course of (their) playing  
**simplicius**: quite naturally; comparative adverb of simplex, simplicis (“simple”)  
**detegunt**: detego, -ere, -texti, -textum: reveal