

Martial, Part I: Epigrams

Marcus Valerius Martialis (ca. 45-104 CE) was the poor man's poet. He held no official post and was often in need of a daily hand-out (*sportula*) from his patrons. But because of his skill as an epigrammist (a writer of short witty poems), Martial traveled in the circle of other famous authors of the Roman Silver Age (1st and 2nd centuries CE). Among his friends were Juvenal, Pliny, and Quintilian, and he eventually obtained favor from the emperor Domitian as his reputation increased. His life at Rome was the usual social round, often described in his poems. His verses are vigorous, polished, and of great variety as the following selections will show.

Text and Translation

1.47

Nuper erat medicus, nunc est vispillo, Diaulus:
Not long ago Diaulus was a doctor, now he is an undertaker.

Quod vispillo facit, fecerat et medicus.
What the undertaker (now) does, the doctor also had done.

7.3

Cur non mitto meos tibi, Pontiliane, libellos?
Why do I not send my little books to you, Pontilianus?

Ne mihi tu mittas, Pontiliane, tuos.
In order that you, Pontilianus, not send yours to me.

5.81

Semper pauper eris, si pauper es, Aemiliane:
You will always be poor, if you are poor, Aemilianus:

dantur opes nulli nunc nisi divitibus.
Wealth is given nowadays to none unless to the rich.

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5.43

Thais habet nigros, niveos Laecania dentes.

Thais has black, Laecania, snow-white teeth.

Quae ratio est? emptos haec habet, illa suos.

What is the reason? The latter has purchased (teeth), the former, her own.

1.19

Si memini, fuerant tibi quattuor, Aelia, dentes:

If I remember, you had four teeth, Aelia:

expulit una duos tussis et una duos.

One cough expelled two and one (cough) another two.

Iam secura potes totis tussire diebus:

Now safely you are able to cough all day long:

nil istic quod agat tertia tussis habet.

A third cough has nothing which it can do there.

4.41

Quid recitaturus circumdas vellera collo?

Why, (when you are) about to recite, do you put a woolen muffler around your neck?

Conveniunt nostris auribus ista magis.

Woolen mufflers are more fitting for our ears!

Worksheet - Martial, Part I: Epigrams

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.

1.47

1. What case is **vispillo** and why? _____

7.3

2. Change **meos...libellos** to dative singular. _____

3. Make **tibi** plural. _____

4. What case is **mihi** and why? _____

5. What mood is **mittas** and why? _____

5.81

6. What case is **Aemiliane** and why? _____

7. Change **dantur** to subjunctive active. _____

5.43

8. Change **habet** to a passive infinitive. _____

9. What case is **niveos** and why? _____

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10. Make **Quae** modify *dentes* in the line above. _____
11. Make **haec** accusative. _____
12. Make **illa** genitive. _____
13. Make **suos** modify *ratio*. _____

1.19

14. Make **fueraut** imperfect first person plural. _____
15. Change **tussis** to genitive plural. _____
16. Make **potes** perfect. _____
17. What case is **diebus** and why? _____
18. Change **agat** to future passive indicative second person plural. _____
19. Change **habet** to imperfect passive plural. _____

4.41

20. Make **recitaturus** passive accusative plural. _____
21. Make **vellera** singular. _____
22. Change **collo** to nominative plural. _____
23. Make **convenient** perfect passive singular (neut.). _____
24. Make **nostris** modify the subject in the previous line. _____
25. Make **ista** genitive. _____

Notes and Vocabulary - Martial, Part I: Epigrams

<u>Line</u>	<u>Note/ Vocabulary</u>
1.47	nuper: (adverb) not long ago medicus: <i>medicus, -i, m.:</i> doctor vispillo: <i>vispellio/vispillo, -onis, m.:</i> undertaker
7.3	Pontiliane: <i>Pontilianus, -i, m.:</i> a man's name libellos: <i>libellus, -i, m.:</i> little book (diminutive of <i>liber</i>)
5.81	pauper: <i>pauper, pauperis:</i> poor Aemiliane: <i>Aemilianus, -i, m.:</i> a man's name opes: <i>opes, opum, f.pl.:</i> wealth nisi: unless divitibus: <i>dives, divitis:</i> rich
5.43	Thais: <i>Thais, -is, f.:</i> a woman's name nigros: <i>niger, nigra, nigrum:</i> black niveos: <i>niveus, -a, -um:</i> snow-white Laecania: <i>Laecania, -ae, f.:</i> a woman's name dentes: <i>dens, dentis, m.:</i> tooth emptos: <i>emo, -ere, _mi, emptum:</i> purchase
1.19	memini: <i>memini, meminisse:</i> remember; translate perfect as present quattuor: (indeclinable) four duos: acc. pl. masc. of <i>duo, duae, duo:</i> two tussis: <i>tussis, -is, f.:</i> cough secura: <i>securus, -a, -um:</i> safe; here, used as an adverb totis diebus: all day long; literally, "in whole days" istic: (adverb) there tertia: <i>tertius, -a, -um:</i> third
4.41	quid: why recitaturus: <i>recito (1):</i> recite circumdās: = <i>circum</i> ("around") + <i>do (1):</i> put (accusative noun) around (dative noun) vellera: <i>vellus, -eris, n.:</i> fleece; literally, "pieces of wool"; here, wool muffler collo: <i>collum, -i, n.:</i> neck auribus: <i>auris, -is, f.:</i> ear conveniunt: <i>convenio, -ire, -veni, -ventum:</i> be fitting (+ dative) magis: (comparative adverb of <i>magnopere</i>) greatly; here, more