

LESSON 11

Passive Voice; Present System;
Ablative of Personal Agent



Roman mosaic showing the school of Plato in Athens—National Museum, Naples

IF YOU LIVED IN ANCIENT ROME . . .

YOUR EDUCATION

There were no free schools, but parents who could afford it paid for elementary education for both boys and girls. It began with reading, writing, and arithmetic. Roman history was taught through literature, and the study of Greek language and literature was also begun early. The children of the wealthy might be taught at home by tutors (often Greek slaves). Some of the great houses of Pompeii have schoolrooms where we can see scratched on the walls alphabets, both Latin and Greek, tags from Virgil, geometric figures, complaints about the difficulty of Cicero, and insults directed at the tutor.

There were also schools (*lūdi*), held by individual teachers in hired halls or in the open air. A child was accompanied to school by a personal slave, the *paedagōgus*, who would keep him from harm, carry his books and notebooks, and sometimes supervise his studies.

The pages (*pāginae*) of books (*librī*, *volūmina*) were glued side by side to form a long strip which was rolled from one roller to another as one passed from page to page. Notebooks (*tabellae*, *pugillārēs*) were small wooden frames filled with wax which could be written on by a *stilus*, a stick or metal rod pointed at one end and flattened at the other (for erasures).

For an equivalent to our high schools, upper-class boys aged twelve to fifteen were sent to schools run by Greek teachers to learn rhetoric. Girls of the same class might pursue the study of Greek and Latin literature with tutors at home.

There were no official educational requirements for the teacher, who was always male. He might be a slave or freedman of the proprietor of the school, or he might be in business for himself. The teachers were strict disciplinarians and practiced corporal punishment.

Upper-class boys destined for a political career continued their education longer than girls, and went to "college" by attaching themselves to some

(Continued)

A PHRASE TO USE

*Experientia docet.
Experience teaches.*

well-known orator to learn oratory and law. If they planned to become writers, they might also be sent to Athens or Rhodes to learn philosophy. Music and athletics, the core of Greek education, were considered unnecessary, even unsuitable, for good Romans. Upper-class boys, however, did learn horseback riding and sword-fighting.

(below left) Pompeian fresco showing Paquius Proculus and his wife with notebook, stilus, and book

(below right) A stylus and writing tablet

ANCIENT ROME LIVES ON . . .

Why does it take us longer to finish our formal education than it did the Romans?



FORMS

■ PASSIVE VOICE, PRESENT SYSTEM

In the present system (present, imperfect, and future) the passive voice is conjugated like the active voice, but with a different set of personal endings.

PERSONAL ENDINGS, PASSIVE

	SINGULAR	PLURAL
1ST PERSON	-or, -r	-mur
2D PERSON	-ris, (-re)	-mini
3D PERSON	-tur	-ntur

1. The ending -or is used in the passive where the ending -ō is used in the active. The ending -r is used in the passive where the ending -m is used in the active.
2. The 2d singular endings -ris and -re are used interchangeably; -ris is more common.

Vocō is conjugated as follows in the passive voice of the present system.



FROM THE PHILOSOPHER'S HANDBOOK . . .

Ā cane nōn magnō saepe tenētur aper.
A boar is often held by a not large dog.

—OVID

How can you use this saying as the basis for an argument against inferiority complexes?

PRESENT PASSIVE, FIRST CONJUGATION

vocor	<i>I am called</i>	vocāmur	<i>we are called</i>
	<i>I am being called</i>		<i>we are being called</i>
vocāris (-re)	<i>you are called</i>	vocāminī	<i>you are called</i>
	<i>you are being called</i>		<i>you are being called</i>
vocātur	<i>he, (she, it) is called</i>	vocāntur	<i>they are called</i>
	<i>he, (she, it) is being called</i>		<i>they are being called</i>

IMPERFECT PASSIVE, FIRST CONJUGATION

vocābar	<i>I was being called</i>	vocābāmur	<i>we were being called</i>
vocābāris (-re)	<i>you were being called</i>	vocābāminī	<i>you were being called</i>
vocābātur	<i>he, (she, it) was being called</i>	vocābantur	<i>they were being called</i>

FUTURE PASSIVE, FIRST CONJUGATION

vocābor	<i>I shall be called</i>	vocābimur	<i>we shall be called</i>
vocāberis (-re)	<i>you will be called</i>	vocābiminī	<i>you will be called</i>
vocābitur	<i>he, (she, it) will be called</i>	vocābuntur	<i>they will be called</i>

Notice that in the future passive the **-bi-** tense sign is changed to **-be-** before **-ris** and **-re**.

SYNTAX
VOICES

In Latin, as in English, verbs have two voices, the active voice and the passive voice. The active voice shows that the subject of the verb performs the action of the verb. The passive voice shows that the subject receives the

action. In other words the direct object of an active verb becomes the subject when the verb is passive:

Fābulam narrat.

He is telling a story.

Fābula narrātur.

A story is being told.

Intransitive verbs, and the verb *sum*, which do not take direct objects, are not normally used in the passive.

■ ABLATIVE OF PERSONAL AGENT

With an active verb the person by whom the action is performed is the subject, and is expressed by the nominative. With a passive verb the person by whom the action is performed is expressed by the ablative with the preposition *ā* or *ab*, since the Romans thought of the action as coming *from* the agent.

Poēta fābulam narrat.

The poet is telling a story.

Fābula ā poētā narrātur.

A story is being told by the poet.

You can remember that the Ablative of Personal Agent needs three p's: a passive, a person, and a preposition. This will keep you from confusing the ablative of personal agent with the ablative of means.

Ā deīs servābitur. *She will be saved by the gods.*

Deōrum auxiliō servābitur.

She will be saved by the help of the gods.

■ PREDICATE NOMINATIVE WITH PASSIVE VERBS

A verb of *making*, *naming*, or *choosing* (which may take a predicate accusative when it is active) may take a predicate nominative when it is passive.

ACTIVE: Filiam vocābat Helenam.

He used to call his daughter Helen.

PASSIVE: Filia vocābātur Helena.

The daughter used to be called Helen.

VOCABULARY

BASIC WORDS

cōpia, -ae, f. *supply; plenty; opportunity*fāma, -ae, f. *rumor, report; reputation*īra, -ae, f. *anger, rage*tēlum, -ī, n. *weapon, spear*laetus, -a, -um *joyful, glad*novus, -a, -um *new*parātus, -a, -um *ready, prepared*clāmō, -āre, -āvī, -ātum *shout*

dēmōnstrō, -āre, -āvī, -ātum

*point out, show*labōrō, -āre, -āvī, -ātum *toil,**suffer, be in difficulties*liberō, -āre, -āvī, -ātum *free, set**free*servō, -āre, -āvī, -ātum *save;**keep, guard*rūrsus (adv.) *back; again*semper (adv.) *always; continually; still*

LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH LATIN

copious

plentiful, abundant

demonstrable

capable of being shown or proved

elaborate (verb)

to develop in great detail

exclamation

an abrupt, forceful utterance; an outcry

irate

angry

liberate

to set free, release

novice

a person new to a particular activity

reservation

something set aside and kept until called for; a limiting condition—"I have reservations about this procedure."

PRACTICE

A. Write an original sentence that uses two or more words from the above list of English derivatives.

B. Find these English derivatives:

1. Check your dictionary and find more derivatives which come from dēmōnstrō. Show how they are related in meaning to dēmōnstrō. 2. What

other derivatives can you find that come from *clāmō*? The English forms of the stems will be *-claim* and *clama-*. (You will find the list of prefixes in the Appendix helpful.) 3. What is the relation of the English word *reservation* to the Latin *servō*? What other derivatives can you find from this word? Remember to look for forms in *-serve*, *-serva-*, and *-servat-*, and to check your list with a dictionary to be sure that your words are in fact derived from *servō*.

C. Change from passive to active, keeping the same tense, person, and number, translating both the passive and the active form:

1. *expectāberis* 2. *spector* 3. *laudābāminī* 4. *servābātur*
5. *liberābimur*

D. Choose the correct translation(s) for these verb forms:

1. *occupābat* she was seized, she was seizing, she seized
2. *amāberis* you will be loved, you were loving, you were being loved
3. *portātis* you are carried, you are carrying, you carry
4. *dēmōnstrābor* I was pointing out, I shall be pointed out, I was being pointed out
5. *parāris* he is being prepared, you were prepared, you are being prepared
6. *laudābimur* we shall be praised, we shall praise, we used to be praised
7. *liberāminī* you were freed, you are freed, you are freeing
8. *expectābantur* they were awaiting, they were awaited, they were being awaited
9. *servābāmur* it was saved, we were being saved, we were saving
10. *spectābāris* you are being looked at, you were being looked at, you were looking at

E. Change from active to passive, keeping the same tense, person, and number, and translating both the active and the passive:

1. *portābimus* 2. *parant* 3. *occupās* 4. *demonstrābātis* 5. *amābit*

F. Conjugate the following verbs in the present system, active and passive, with meanings:

1. *servō* 2. *dō* 3. *liberō*

G. Translate:

1. With savage tongue the Greek is shouting evil words about the reputation of our good queen.
2. Good slave, won't the wild horses in your master's meadows be looked at by many people?
3. Meanwhile news about the farmers' flight from the fields was being long awaited.

Relief showing a school for secretaries and notaries—
National Museum, Ostia.
Education, even of the wealthy, had vocational goals.



READING

Developing Reading Skills

You know the verb *volō* and the prepositions *dē*, *ā*, and *ad*. Therefore, you know the meanings of *dēvolō*, *āvolō*, and *advolō*. The meaning of *domina* also is easy to determine from a Latin word which you have learned.

English derivatives will help you to guess at the meanings of *mōnstrum*, *pestilentia*, *rapidē*, and *dēvorō*.

Are you familiar with the English words *frustrate* and *dire*? If so, you can guess at the meanings of *frūstrā* and *dīrus*.

The Harpies

Fugam Trōiānōrum Aenēās semper narrābat: "In Crētā laetī oppidum aedificāvimus, sed frustrā. Caelī ira in populum Trōiānum ā deīs semper dēmōnstrābātur, nam frūmentī inopiā pestilentiāque labōrābāmus. Tum in meīs somnīs deī Trōiae dē caelō volāvērunt atque auxilium dedērunt, viam
 5 enim ad Ītaliā dēmōnstrāvērunt: 'Ītalia vocātur Hesperia; in Ītaliā Trōia nova ā Trōiānīs aedificābitur.'

"Ut super altum ergō nāvigābāmus, magnā procellā ad ĩnsulam portābāmur ubi Harpŷiae, mōnstra dīra et fera, habitābant. Feminae foedae erant, at magnīs ālis volābant. Atque ut cēnam parābāmus dē caelō dēvolāvērunt et
 10 cibum rapidē occupāvērunt et tum altē āvolāvērunt. Rŷsus cibum parāvimus rŷsusque advolāvērunt Harpŷiae, paratī autem erāmus, nam tēla occupāverāmus. Diū cum Harpŷiīs pugnābāmus at dēnique mōnstra in fugam nostrīs tēlīs dabantur. At ĩram ut āvolābant dēmōnstrāvērunt, et mala verba fātidica ā Harpŷiārum dominā clāmābantur: 'In Ītaliā nāvigābitis, sed magnā
 15 inopiā ante labōrābitis itaque et mēnsās vestrās dēvorābitis.' "

An archaic Greek depiction of the legend of Phineus. The head and winged figure on the right are two harpies, Ocypele and Aello—590 B.C., Delphi



READING COMPREHENSION

1. Why was the Trojans' joy on Crete short-lived? 2. What did the gods of Troy reveal to Aeneas in a dream? 3. Who were the Harpies? 4. How did they harass the Trojans? 5. What prophetic words did the Harpies hurl at the Trojans?

7. *insulam*: This was one of the Strophades, the islands to which the Argonauts had chased the Harpies from the palace of King Phineus. 12. *in fugam . . . dabantur*: In fugam dō is an idiom meaning *I put to flight*. 13. *fātidica*: As supernatural creatures, the Harpies could foresee the future.