Latin was the global language of the West for centuries. In studying this language of ancient Rome, students engage with a vibrant and stimulating intellectual community that stretches more than 2,000 years into the past yet still seems startlingly modern. In so doing, students broaden their sense of the scope of history, their understanding of human nature, and their perspective on their own lives. Students become familiar with ideas and literature of exceptional influence in the intellectual and cultural history of the West and come to a deeper understanding of their own cultural heritage, whatever it may be. As they advance in the Latin curriculum, students increasingly concentrate on close textual analysis, grappling with the nuance and power of words and with the very nature of language itself.

These results are achieved incrementally, beginning with focused study of Latin grammar and syntax. Students are challenged to grasp a linguistic structure significantly different from English, yet full of words that seem familiar. Classes are lively, with the goal of capturing the students’ imagination and inspiring a love for this subject. Because Latin is an economical and inflected language, in translating students learn how to read and write carefully and how to be precise in their use of English. By studying Latin roots, they also increase their vocabulary and create a foundation for future language learning. At the upper levels, classes foster the development of thoughtful literary judgment, including a tolerance for ambiguity, as students are introduced to current scholarly issues in this field. All students take the National Latin Exam in March.

All of the Latin courses offered at St. George’s are yearlong courses. Completion of Latin through the 300-level satisfies the graduation requirement for languages.

Latin I: Latin 100

Open to all forms

Students in Latin 1 acquire a basic understanding of the structure of this ancient language and develop a working Latin vocabulary. Because Latin is an inflected language, students must wrestle with a radically different linguistic structure. They learn how to be intellectually flexible and verbally precise as they carefully reason their way through a Latin sentence. Readings in Jenney’s *First Year Latin* are supplemented by engaging mythological and cultural readings, and a specific goal is for students to enhance their English vocabulary by learning Latin roots and English derivations.

Latin II: Latin 200

Open to all forms: Prerequisite Latin 100

The opening weeks of this course are dedicated to a fast-paced review of the first-year material in the context of reading continuous Latin narratives on Rome’s legendary history. The remainder of first semester focuses on a mastery of advanced topics of grammar, including participles, gerunds, conditions, and the subjunctive mood. In the second semester, students translate Caesar’s famous *Commentarii De Bello Gallico* and in so doing, they grapple with the power and nuance of words in both languages.

Latin Honors II: Latin 220/H

Open by invitation to all forms: Prerequisite Latin 100

Latin 220/H is designed for motivated students who have a genuine interest in Latin, a strong record of achievement in the discipline, and a willingness to devote the additional time and effort required of this course. Students in this class tackle the same foundational material as in Latin 200 but at an accelerated pace and with more challenging Latin readings, in-class work, and assessments. They also read more selections from *Commentarii De Bello Gallico* and begin to build their skills of close textual analysis.
Latin III: Latin 300

Open to fourth-, fifth- and sixth-formers: Prerequisite Latin 200 or 220

Beginning with an intensive grammar review, the third-year course focuses reading extended passages of unedited Latin from a variety of authors. Students learn how to explicate Latin poetry and prose and to write essays analyzing a Latin text. By reading excerpts from authors such as Virgil, Cicero, Catullus, and Ovid, students read Latin in different genres and interpret famous primary sources that illuminate the unchanging nature of the human condition.

Latin Honors III: Latin 320/H

Open by invitation to fourth-, fifth- and sixth-formers: Prerequisite Latin 200 or 220

As an Honors course, Latin 320/H is an appropriate choice for those students who have a strong record of achievement in Latin, well-developed study skills, and a sincere interest in the subject. The grammar review at the beginning of this course is brief so that students can jump into “real” Latin as soon as possible. A specific curricular goal is to prepare students for further study and particularly for success in the AP Latin course. Among the authors studied, Vergil and Caesar therefore receive particular attention. Throughout the course, students are stretched to improve their fluency and deepen their comprehension of a Latin text. They also relate the material to its various contexts and focus on crafting well-argued and appropriately substantiated interpretive essays.

Advanced Placement Latin: Vergil and Caesar: Latin 400/A

Open by invitation to fifth- and sixth-formers; Prerequisite Latin 320

What causes wars? How does a leader inspire? Is vengeance ever just? These and other seminal questions form the core of this fast-paced, challenging course. Students begin their study with Vergil’s Aeneid, an epic poem of refugees and survivor guilt, deception and the madness of love, capricious if not malevolent gods, and even a journey to Hell. The course then shifts Caesar’s Commentarii De Bello Gallico to focus on historical prose and issues of war and peace, the cost of empire, and the demands of leadership. Throughout this advanced course, students enhance their fluency in Latin, their sight reading skills, and their ability to analyze a Latin text in class and on assessments. They also become acquainted with the mythological, legendary, and historical figures of Rome’s history and discuss the troubling yet timeless questions raised by Rome’s rise to power. Students who take this course will take the national AP Latin exam in May.