

Honors Latin 5: Summer Reading

Required Text #1:

Everitt, Anthony. *Augustus: The Life of Rome's First Emperor*. Random House: 2006.

Everitt's story of the man who would become Rome's first true Emperor and, in the process, totally transform the world as the Romans and their subjects knew it, tells us everything we need to know about this remarkable man and the stunningly complex events that transpired during his lifetime.

We're reading this book because this is a course on Augustan literature (i.e., literature written during the reign of Augustus), and it's essential that we know all we can about the man who ruled Rome while Vergil, Horace, and Ovid - giants of classical literature, against whose work all later poetry is measured - lived and wrote. One of our big questions throughout the year will be: could these poets have flourished under a different regime with a different leader, or was Augustus himself an essential part of what may very well be the greatest-ever convergence of literary minds?

Required Text #2

Highet, Gilbert, and Michael C.J. Putnam. *Poets in a Landscape*. New York Review Books Classics: March 16, 2010.

Gilbert Highet was a legendary professor at Columbia, and *Poets in a Landscape* is his inquiry into Latin poetry, among other things. Highet writes about Catullus, Vergil, Propertius, Horace, Tibullus, Ovid, and Juvenal, devoting a chapter to each, and attempting to place each artist within his own literary, historical, cultural, and physical context. Highet also includes a number of his own elegant translations of these poets' works. Michael C.J. Putnam, MacMillan professor emeritus of Classics and Comparative Literature at Brown, who has written widely on Catullus and Horace, wrote the lovely preface to this new edition.

We are reading this book because it brings these poets to life. Your assignment is to read the chapters on Catullus, Vergil, Horace, and Ovid. If you get sucked in by Highet (as many do) and would like to read the others, please do. We will refer back to this work as a reference throughout the year, so please keep it within arms' length. And, most of all, enjoy it: it's magical.