

What do Creek students want you to know about Latin? (the extended version)

The quotes below come from current Creek Latin students and alumni (and one parent). Some have been edited slightly for clarity. Happy reading!

Latin was a big part of my high school experience and has stayed with me for a long time. There are so many things I can say about Latin at Creek, but the biggest thing is the classroom community. A lot of people say this, but **the Latin community is really a big family**. At Creek, I met many good friends and became close with several classmates through Latin. It's a language that grows on you, so much so that I ended up taking Latin in my second year of college after a year of missing it! Latin has helped me in so many ways--from my English classes to my pre-med science classes. **This class was an experience that I am always grateful for and would recommend to everyone.**

-Gloria J., class of 2018

When I was in the Latin program at Creek, the classes were inter-disciplinary affairs. I was learning history, culture, literature, mythology, and language all in one. I can't say if this is the norm for the living languages, but Latin especially assisted all of my studies in high school. Latin cognates helped me study Chemistry; Latin grammar improved my composition (learning about the subjunctive really changed me); Roman history revealed the underpinnings of AP World History, AP Euro, and AP Government; Roman culture, history, and literature all made me a master allusion-finder in English classes.

The Latin curriculum at Creek also set me up for success in college. I was far ahead of my first-year peers who had completed AP Latin and equivalents, even though I had only completed Latin III/IV Honors. With that kind of head start, I decided to be a Latin Major. And even in my senior year of college, I was singing the songs, using the tricks, and remembering all I had learned in Latin 1.

Today, I don't study ancient texts for a living--in fact, I work with some of the most contemporary texts possible: marketing copy. However, there's not a week that goes by without someone in my office thanking their "Local Latin Major" for solving a vocabulary dispute. **Latin has been at the core of my well-rounded humanities education, without which, I wouldn't have been able to see all that was connected around me.**

And perhaps more importantly than the sheer usefulness of my Latin classes at Creek, my time in that sunny classroom at the top of the IC tunnel was fun! **Classes were engaging because I was using my whole brain.** Students and teacher alike could nerd out! **The freedom to do serious work in a silly manner was really special in a high school environment; and I believe that it taught me a lot about how to feel comfortable in my skin and to own the geeky, exuberant parts of myself.**

-Kellyn H., class of 2012

I loved Latin. I was certainly never the best student at it either. But I loved the history and the classic works that we got to dive into and Ms. Rosevear's enthusiasm made it fun. I was an Italian minor in college and the classes were an absolute breeze with my Latin background. I'm currently a medical student, and there are tons of ridiculous names that actually make sense to me because the physicians of the past were very descriptive with their Latin. Levator labii superioris alaeque nasi muscle? Yeah, that exists. **But if you don't see medicine or other romantic languages in your future, do Latin because the people and community are great (even beyond Creek!).** When I find a fellow Latin nerd out in the wild there's an instant connection.

-Mason S., class of 2013

Taking Latin at Cherry Creek was one of the best decisions I made in my high school career. Educationally, while learning Latin is often considered not to be the most practical language to learn, **I have noticed that the abilities my classmates and I acquired in writing, problem-solving, and teamwork are rarely reproduced to the same extent as non-classics students.** That doesn't even mention the world of literature and history made accessible by a foundation in Latin. I am currently a sophomore at Colorado College, and my base of knowledge from Latin at Cherry Creek played a key role in my selection into a summer class spending a month touring Greece studying Homer's Odyssey in my freshman year, a class typically reserved for older students. Even though I am majoring in computer science, Latin at Creek is making it possible for me to finish the coursework for a minor in Classics by the end of my second year.

Beyond the educational benefits, Cherry Creek's Latin program provided a home for me in the school's massive student body. Even though I was not a part of Latin Club, my Latin classes, especially as an upperclassman, were easily the most socially cohesive classes I was in throughout my entire time at Creek. For someone who struggled to find a solid group of friends in school, getting to go to Latin every day helped me make some of my closest friends throughout high school. Ms. Rosevear, who was my teacher for 3 years, would regularly go out of her way to ensure our mental health and well-being outside of the content in the class. **While every teacher at Cherry Creek is fantastic, Ms. Rosevear has an unparalleled ability to create a highly productive classroom environment while emphasizing an incredibly caring and positive atmosphere.**

From a variety of different perspectives, I cannot recommend Latin at Cherry Creek enough. In my second year out of high school, I can confidently say that Latin was one of the biggest contributors to my development as a student, friend, leader, and person.

-Stephen S., class of 2018

Latin has played a significant role in my career in foreign policy. After taking 4 years of Latin at Creek, **I studied Arabic in college and quickly found significant similarities between Latin and Arabic that gave me an advantage in learning the language.** Moreover, anyone who aspires to learn a foreign language funded by the government has to take the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB), which assesses the ability to learn languages by testing the applicant on a fictitious language. When I took the test, I found that the DLAB's invented language was predominantly built on Latin, which allowed me to easily pass the test and qualify for government funding to study any language of my choice worldwide. Finally, when I deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Inherent Resolve to defeat ISIS, my study of the Classics gave me unique insight into the politics and history of Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, and Egypt, all of which were at one point Roman territories. If the legends of Virgil's Aeneid are believed, Roman civilization began with a fall of one empire in Turkey and the eventual rise of another in

Italy. The challenges facing the West and the Middle East today can invariably trace their origins to Classical civilization, and **the study of Latin is critical to understanding the full picture.**

-Jack M., class of 2012

Latin has helped me in life far beyond high school. I think the biggest impact it has made on my adult life is in my vocabulary and understanding of language. **If you know the roots of words it's easy to parse out words you've never seen before and understand languages you've never learned.** Being an avid reader, it is a huge plus. **Don't let anyone tell you Latin is a dead language. It is, in fact, all around you.**

-Mackenzie P., class of 2010

I would honestly recommend both the community and the opportunities that come with taking Latin. There's a lot of great people in the program, and as one of the smallest world languages you usually know your class and the people in it pretty well by the end of the year. The Latin Club is also a great community. **Being in Latin has also given me the opportunity to participate in things like the Colorado Junior Classical League's annual convention, and even go to Rome last year- something that I never thought I'd get to do.** As for academic benefits, I now actually understand grammar thanks to Latin- in order to literally translate, you need to know how English grammar works, and Latin basically ensured I passed my 9th and 10th grade grammar tests.

-Courtney V., AP Latin student (class of 2020)

As a student involved in a wide variety of activities at Creek, Latin is certainly one of my favorites. Not only is it incredibly useful academically, but the environment that Latin offers in the often monolith of Creek is inexpressibly beneficial. I constantly find myself recognizing Latin in my everyday life and use it to help me study in other classes: whether it be English, Chemistry, Biology, World History, Government, or Choir, **Latin is applicable in essentially any subject and makes learning content that is often difficult for others significantly easier.** However, what stands out most about Latin to me is the fact that **Latin, both as a class and as a club, is a safe space for everyone who is involved.** Ms. Rosevear, our teacher for all levels, fosters an incredibly supportive community - we often talk about Trusted Adults as a part of our mental health at Creek, and I can say with certainty that Ms. Rosevear is a trusted adult for the majority of her students. Many groups will refer to themselves as a family at Creek, but Latin is one of the few places where I have genuinely found this to be true. No matter how much I struggle with my mental health, I know I have a teacher, kind peers, and the space I need to support me, which is an invaluable privilege. **Latin is not only a fascinating subject that allows us to understand a great deal about language and history; it is a community that never fails to have fun.**

-Sanya B., Latin III/IV Honors (class of 2021)

I really like taking Latin. It's helped hugely in other classes. English as a language is so much easier with Latin knowledge. Also, Ms. Rosevear is a really fun teacher and even if you feel bad that day Latin

class will perk you up. Even if you can't attend Latin Club or any trips, **the class itself is a great place to feel welcome and have a community that accepts you no matter who you are.** Latin is a great way of bringing people together.

-Jason F., Latin I (class of 2023)

Latin makes grammar make so, so, so much more sense. **Applying concepts from Latin that you learn really thoroughly, English grammar is a breeze.**

-Anonymous Latin II student

Latin is a wonderful class to take for students of all ages. People say it's a dead language, but I think even languages deserve to be revived. Latin vocabulary and roots are beneficial in LA (English) as they offer insight into a possible definition for words you may not know. The class also paves the way to learning a number of Romance languages. **The classroom itself is one of the most fun classrooms I've ever had the pleasure of learning in. The class forms inside jokes, plays games, and I can't think of a single day we have gone without laughing.** I highly recommend Latin to incoming students, because you never know how much fun it could be. *Valē* (goodbye)!

-Tatum K., Latin I (class of 2024)

My son, James, is in his third year of Latin and really loves it! He has found a great group of friends through Latin Club. He has also attended the CoJCL Convention in Estes Park where they compete in Latin trivia, Olympic style pool games, skits, catapult launches and more! He had an incredible opportunity to travel to Rome last spring break. My daughter, Becca, is an 8th grader at Campus Middle School and is taking Latin I this year. She is also loving it! **I have enjoyed "Latin moments" when my daughter shares something she has come across in her day related to Latin. I think she is surprised how often that occurs.** This winter break the choir at Christmas Eve service sang in Latin and she was correcting the translation in the bulletin!! Of course, they are both big fans of Ms. Rosevear. She clearly makes learning Latin fun!

-Penny D., CCHS parent

Latin was one of the classes I looked forward to the most in high school. Our AP class was so close and tight-knit that every hour was enjoyable. Ms. Rosevear (woah that's so strange to type... you'll always be Ms. Sommer to us!!) is an amazing teacher. Now that I'm teaching students myself, **I have come to truly appreciate her teaching style and never-ending patience. Her classes had a good balance of hard work and fun laughs.** Attending the Latin Convention was an experience to remember as well. After graduating high school, I saw Latin in everything. I noticed that I could infer meanings of words much quicker than my fellow classmates by deciphering the Latin roots; this was especially helpful in learning human anatomy in graduate school. If an intrinsic back muscle ended in "capitis," I knew this back muscle attached to the skull because "capitis" is Latin for "head." **My Latin skills, albeit a bit rusty, saved my grade several times over. If I had to retake high school, I would definitely sign up for Latin again and again.**

-Anonymous Latin alumnus, class of 2012

I originally took Latin because I thought I would go on to be a doctor. But life changes and those four years of Latin have still paid dividends into my life. I am grateful for the Latin classes I took in relation to helping me adopt Italian. After my first year of college, I went to live in Italy for two years doing service. I can only credit the extreme quickness with which I picked up Italian to the years of Latin that I took. **ALL THE VERBS ARE THE SAME.** Additionally, all the Roman history, geography, and culture lessons helped me connect with the Italians on a deeper level. This helped me forge friendships and have an impact that I otherwise would not have. Returning to school I chose to major in Italian. **Now as a consultant, I consistently get selected to work cases in Italy because of my familiarity with Italian.** I credit much of the excitement of my life to the road that A-Som's [aka Ms. Rosevear's] classes put me on nearly 10 years ago.

-Ben J., class of 2011

What initially appealed to me about taking Latin was that I heard it would help on standardized tests. This turned out to be very true! It was helpful on the PSAT and SAT, and later on the GMAT (for anyone considering grad school down the line, this may someday be relevant to you.)

The experience of the class itself was invaluable. Whereas with a typical language class, the content might focus exclusively on the language itself, learning Latin incorporates elements of Roman history, which offers an added level of knowledge. I also found the community of students taking Latin to be very close. **We were basically guaranteed to have a class with the same group of friends every year we took Latin, and as a result several of my Latin classmates have remained lifelong friends** (I'm actually the godfather of the son of one of my fellow Latin students.)

In my work today as a business strategist in healthcare, my Latin knowledge allows me to easily communicate with medical staff about diagnoses and other medical details, and has absolutely helped advance my career. Outside of work, Latin has given me a framework to easily acquire other languages: I've recently traveled to Spain, France, Italy, Switzerland, and Mexico, and in each country I found I was able to quickly adapt to the language because many of the root words and conjugations are very similar.

-Michael S., class of 2009

I went on to study Ancient Greek in college. Both Latin and Greek taught me more about the English language than I ever learned in other classes, which has been very interesting and eye-opening. But more importantly, in the course of learning Latin and Greek, I learned so much about Greco-Roman history and the similarities and differences in those cultures from our American culture and the broader, modern global culture. **Our country has such deep roots into Roman and Greek society that I think now more than ever it's important and necessary to learn where our political, economical, and moral systems largely stem from.** Plus Latin is the shared language of a large part of the Western Enlightenment and Renaissance; much of our seminal scientific writings are in Latin. Just because a language is no longer spoken, does not make learning it worthless. (And the vocab on the SAT is much easier with a background in Latin and Greek). And last, but certainly not least, **Ancient language teachers have been some of the most positive and impactful relationships with authority I've ever had. I would do it all again.**

-Kate, class of 2013

I was interested in taking Latin because I wanted to know the answers to questions like these:

- What's the meaning of the US motto, *e pluribus unum* (which is written on all American money?)
- In the Harry Potter books, what do spells like "Accio" actually mean?
- Why does the chemical symbol for the element lead consist of the letters Pb, instead of something logical like Ld or Le?
- Why on earth do we call a political campaign for a governorship a "gubernatorial" race?
- What's the significance of the Latin names of animals, like *Homo sapiens*?
- What was Julius Caesar famous for?
- What does the word "pejorative" mean?

I answered all these questions - and many more - by learning Latin! I loved the camaraderie of my Latin classes at Creek, and I enjoyed learning about the culture, society, and history of the Romans, in addition to learning their language. I gained so much valuable vocabulary (and rocked the SAT vocab questions), learned to critically analyze language, and picked up some fun sayings here and there.

I especially enjoyed attending the Colorado state Latin convention every year, where I got to meet and interact with other students from across the state, test my Latin knowledge, and compete in fun events. I loved these experiences so much that I served as Treasurer of the Colorado Junior Classical League my senior year at Creek.

I enjoyed my Creek Latin classes so much that I kept taking Latin in college, and loved it so much that I then wanted to learn Ancient Greek, then Egyptian hieroglyphs, and before I knew it, I was double-majoring in Classical Studies (the study of ancient Mediterranean civilizations and languages), in addition to my planned biology major! And, since leaving college, **I still continue to encounter Latin in my life as a scientist, since many scientific instruments, procedures, and organisms are named from Latin roots, and the critical thinking and problem solving skills I developed through learning Latin are essential to my work in biological research.**

-Lauren H., class of 2015

Latin has been a relatively constant part of my life since graduating from high school. Thanks to my years of studying Latin and AP Latin specifically, I was able to complete a Minor in Classics at the University of Colorado with relative ease. The material covered in class at Creek, both linguistic and cultural, was an incredibly useful tool for my undergraduate studies. Furthermore, the study of Latin at Creek is still paying dividends for me in my current work as a law student. **Many excellent lawyers and judges struggle with the prevalence of Latin terms used in law, but the knowledge I gained through studying Latin at Creek provides familiarity with the terms that so many find daunting.** Latin has provided me with tools that I use regularly, and I thoroughly recommend taking this course.

-Josh R., class of 2011

Latin at Creek was one of the most valuable experiences of my life due to:

- Understanding the etymology of Romance language words, fanning the flame of curiosity for the meaning of things and understanding their roots in history. (We cannot appreciate what we do now we unless we understand those who came before us.)

- Respect and appreciation for another culture very different from our own both in location and time/history. **We cannot judge a culture through the lens of our current world-view; we must understand and see the world through the eyes of that unique culture.**
- The tight-knit and knowledge-hungry Latin community, specifically at Creek and throughout Colorado, created an environment of competitive learning. This air of competition is contagious and can spread to other educational topics. **Latin students learn with a curious and thoughtful hunger as opposed to learning for utility without interest or understanding.**
- The educational difficulty of Latin and unwavering high expectations made me a stronger professional who treats every hard problem as a challenge to learn, grow, and understand. This has directly contributed to my overall professional success, agnostic of any specific requirements to execute my job.

-Josh K., class of 2011

Latin was very beneficial to me, even after leaving Creek. Just based on the amount of vocabulary and word roots learned in the classroom, it seems like it would be much easier to learn a language with Latin roots (like Spanish or Italian). Having this foundation also helps define unknown words (or at least infer a close definition) without needing a dictionary. Furthermore, the history aspect is very helpful. **It was interesting to examine the successes and downfalls of the Roman Empire while thinking about the contemporary socio-political context these lessons can teach. I didn't know it at the time, but signing up for Latin actually threw me into an environment built for much more than just the study of a "dead language."**

-David M., class of 2013

TAKE LATIN AT CREEK

- 4 levels (CP Latin I, CP Latin II, Latin III/IV Honors, AP Latin)
- Start CP Latin I in any grade.
- All students are welcome. All students belong.
- Latin Club and Colorado Junior Classical League events are optional and available to all.
- We took our first student trip to Rome in 2019 and hope to take another one in the next couple of years.
- For more information, contact Amy Rosevear at (720) 554-2490 or arosevear@cherrycreekschools.org