**GCSE Latin Syntax notes**

1. **Time expressions:**
2. Time how long = **accusative**

**duas horas** in urbe manebamus = *we stayed in the city for two hours*

1. Time at which = **ablative**

Time within which = **ablative**

milites **prima luce** profecti sunt = *the soldiers set off at dawn*

amicus meus **tribus diebus** adveniet = *my friend will arrive within/in three days*

1. **Comparison:**

For comparative phrases (e.g. John is taller than James), Latin uses either:

1. Quam

puellae celeriores sunt **quam** pueri = *the girls are faster than the boys*

With quam, the two nouns being compared are in the same case.

1. the ablative case **without** quam:

**pueris** celeriores sunt puellae = *the girls are faster than the boys*

1. **Verbs and adjectives that take the dative:**
2. **Verbs:**

The majority of Latin verbs use the accusative for their direct object. However, some are followed by just a dative:

appropinquo: approach

credo: believe

faveo: favour

impero: order (+ ut/ne + subjunctive)

persuadeo: persuade (+ ut/ne + subjunctive)

resisto: resist

1. **Adjectives:**

Some adjectives can be followed by the dative, e.g. similis ‘similar’

1. **Prepositions:**

Latin prepositions are followed either by the accusative or the ablative:

+ accusative + ablative

ad = to, towards, at a/ab = from, away from, by

ante = before cum = with

circum = around de = about, from

contra = against e/ex = out of, from

inter = among, between pro = in front of

per = through sine = without

post = after, behind

prope = near

propter = on account of, because of

trans = across

* NB A few can take **either** the accusative **or** the ablative**:**

in + acc. = into sub + acc. = under (motion)

in + abl. = in/on (location) sub + abl. = under (location)

**5) Direct statements**

Direct statements are simple statements of fact (e.g. Jack is going to the shops, Jim saw the dog). They use the **indicative**, e.g.

puer librum **incendit** = the boy burnt the book

1. **Direct questions**

Direct questions are simple questions that end in a question mark in English (e.g. Where are you going? Are you happy?). There are different ways of expressing these in Latin:

1. Use of a question word at the beginning (as in English):

ubi es? = *where are you?*

quando Romam vidisti? = *when did you see Rome?*

The most common question words are:

cur: why?

qualis, -e: what sort of?

quam (with adj. or adv.): how?

quando: when? (NB only for questions; ‘when’ in statements is ubi or cum)

quantus, -a, -um: how great? how much?

quis: who?; quid: what?

quomodo: how?

quot: how many?

ubi: where?

1. *Yes/no* questions. For questions that can be answered by *yes* or *no*, add –ne to the first word of the question. The most important word comes first (usually the verb):

vidisti**ne** regem? = *did you see the king?*

1. Questions that expect the answer ‘yes’ begin with nonne (this means ‘surely’ or ‘you did do this, didn’t you?):

nonne regem vidisti? = *surely you saw the king?* or *you saw the king, didn’t you?*

1. Questions that expect the answer ‘no’ begin with num (= ‘surely not’ or ‘you didn’t do this, did you?):

num regem vidisti? = *surely you didn’t see the king?* or *you didn’t see the king, did you?*

1. **Direct commands:**

Commands (e.g. get out! Help me!) = **imperative**

audi magistrum = *listen to the teacher*! abi = *go away*!

* Negative commands (or **prohibitions**) (e.g. don’t walk on the grass)

= noli (sg.)/ nolite (pl.) + **infinitive**

noli timere = don’t be afraid! (singular)

nolite currere = don’t run! (plural)

1. **Participles:**

Participles are **adjectives** formed from **verbs**. They can go (agree) with any noun in a sentence. There are different types:

Present active participle: amans, amantis (like ingens) = *loving*

Perfect passive participle: amatus, -a, um (like bonus) = *having been loved*

Future active participle: amaturus, -a, -um (like bonus) = *about to love*

For deponents only, there is no perfect passive participle and instead:

Perfect active participle: secutus, -a, -um (like bonus) = *having followed*

Examples in practice:

Present participle = action happening at **same time as** main verb

per viam **ambulantes**, clamorem audivimus = *while walking along the road, we heard a shout*

Perfect passive participle = action that happened **before** the main verb

hostes **victi** lente discesserunt = *the defeated enemy slowly departed* (lit. the having been defeated enemy slowly departed)

Perfect active participle (deponents only) = action that happened **before** the main verb

hostes regressi castra intraverunt = *the enemy, after returning, entered their camp*

Future active participle = action **going to happen** in the future

senex pecuniam celaturus erat = *the old man was going to hide the money*

* **The ablative absolute**

This is a special use of the participle. It gives **background** for the rest of the sentence and contains a noun and participle, both in the ablative:

+ present participle = while something was happening….

**custodibus dormientibus**, captivi effugerunt = while the guards were sleeping, the prisoners fled.

+ perfect participle = after/when something had happened…

**templo aedificato**, cives domum rediierunt = when the temple had been built, the citizens returned home

**9) Gerundive:**

The gerundive is an adjective formed from a verb, and means ‘must be done’, e.g. amandus ‘having to be loved’. It can be used to express the idea of ‘in order to’ after the preposition ad:

Quintus ad Salvium laudandum surrexit =

Literally: Quintus stood up for the purpose of Salvius being praised

Better translation: Quintus stood up to praise Salvius.

**10) Conditional sentences:**

Conditional sentences are ‘if…then’ sentences (e.g. ‘if it rains tomorrow, then I’ll take an umbrella’). They normally take the same tense in Latin as in English.

si tu laetus es, ego quoque gaudeo = *if you are happy, I rejoice as well*

However, special care is needed when they refer to the future (e.g. ‘if you do this, you’ll be punished’), as Latin normally uses the **future perfect** for the ‘if’ clause, the **future** for the ‘then’ clause:

si hoc **feceris**, poenas **dabis** = *if you do this, you’ll be punished*

**11) Relative clauses:**

Relative clauses are sentences with ‘who’, ‘whom’ or ‘that’ (e.g. That is the man **whom** I saw yesterday). The word for ‘who’ or ‘whom’ = *qui quae quod* (the **relative pronoun**). It goes into the same gender and number as the noun it’s describing, but takes **whatever case it needs in its own clause**:

* puer, **cui** librum dedi, laetissimus est = the boy **to whom** I gave the book is very happy

(cui describes puer, but is dative because it’s the indirect object of dedi in its own clause)

* puella, **cuius** canem interfeci, lacrimat = the girl **whose** dog I have killed is crying

(cuius describes puella, but is genitive because the relative clause says that the dog belongs to her)

**12) Indirect statement:**

Indirect statements are sentences like ‘he says that the slave is brave’, ‘we believed that they had gone’, with a verb of saying or perceiving that something is/was/will happen(ing).

In Latin, these take the **accusative and infinitive** construction. The infinitive goes into the same tense as the original direct statement:

**Original present = present infinitive:**

ancilla lacrimat = *the slave-girl is crying*

dico ancillam lacrimare = *I say that the slave-girl is crying*

dixi ancillam lacrimare = *I said that the slave-girl was crying*

**Original past = perfect infinitive**

servus fugit = *the slave has fled*

scio servum fugisse = *I know that the slave has fled*

scivi servum fugisse = *I knew that the slave had fled*

**Original future = future infinitive**

tu servos necabis = *you are going to kill the slaves*

audimus te servos necaturum esse = *we hear that you will kill the slaves*

audivimus te servos necaturum esse = *we heard that you were going to kill the slaves*

NB In English, the translation of the second half changes if the speaking verb is in past time. The key point is to think

about what tense the original direct statement was in (present, past or future).

* **CONSTRUCTIONS USING THE SUBJUNCTIVE:**

**13) cum + subjunctive = ‘when, since’:**

+ pluperfect subjunctive = when/since it **had** happened…

**cum** haec verba **dixisset**, exiit = ***when he******had said*** *these words, he left.*

+ imperfect subjunctive = when/since it **was** happening…

**cum** custodes **dormirent**, me non viderunt = ***since*** *the guards* ***were sleeping****, they did not see me.*

**14) Indirect questions:**

Indirect questions are questions that are part of a larger sentence, where the question is introduced by

a verb of asking or finding out. The verb in the second (question) part is in the subjunctive. The subjunctive

used is the same as the corresponding English tense:

rogavit **quis** puerum **interfecisset** = *He asked* ***who had killed*** *the boy.*

scire volebam **quid faceres** = *I wanted to know* ***what you were doing****.*

**15) Purpose clauses:**

Purpose clauses = sentences like *I went to London to see the queen*.

Latin uses ut + imperfect subjunctive, **not** an infinitive like English:

domum redii ut canem viderem = *I returned home (in order) to see my dog.*

For negatives (in order not to), use ne:

domum redii ne canem visitarem = *I returned home in order not to see my dog (*or *so as not to see my dog)*

**16) Indirect commands:**

Indirect commands follow verbs of asking, begging, persuading, encouraging someone to do something.

They take exactly the same construction as purpose clauses (i.e. ut/ne + imperfect subjunctive):

captivus custodem oravit **ut** aquam sibi **daret** = *the prisoner begged the guard* ***to give him*** *some water.*

**17) Result clauses**

A result clause shows the result of an action or a state of affairs (e.g. there were **so many** guards **that**

**we could not escape**). You can recognise one because of:

1. a signpost word

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signpost words for result clauses | |
| **tam** + adjective or adverb | *So* |
| **tantus, –a, –um** | *so large/great* |
| **tot** | *so many* |
| **totiens** | *so often* |
| **talis, –e** | *of such a kind* |
| **adeo + verb** | *to such a degree/extent* |
| **ita** | *in such a way* |

1. ut (or ut…non for negatives)
2. subjunctive (same tense as the English verb)

**tam** iratus erat imperator **ut** milites **timerent** = *the general was so angry that the soldiers were scared*

**tot** erant milites **ut** hostes **non oppugnarent** = *there were so many soldiers that the enemy did not attack*

1. **Temporal clauses**

Temporal clauses are clauses such as ‘when’, ‘while’ or ‘after’. These normally take an indicative verb

(except with cum (cf. Section 13)). There are a few extra details:

1. In sentences where ubi (when), postquam (after) or simulac (as soon as) refer to the past, **English** tends

to use the **pluperfect**. **Latin** uses the **perfect** here:

simulac Romam adveni, tabernam intravi = *as soon as I had arrived at Rome, I went into an inn*

ii) dum ‘while’.

In sentences with *dum* ‘while’, if the **dum clause** takes place **for longer** than the **main clause**, it always has a

verb in the **present indicative**, even when referring to the past. This can also be described as a **‘dum interrupted’**

clause:

dum per silvam **ambulo**, pecuniam inveni = *while I was walking through the wood, I found some money*

1. In time clauses referring to the future, English uses a present where Latin uses a future or

future perfect:

ubi Romam **advenero**, apud te manebo = *when I arrive at Rome, I shall stay with you*

1. Time clauses with dum ‘until’, where it means ‘until’, or priusquam ‘before’, where it means

‘before something *could* happen’, take the imperfect subjunctive:

cives in foro manebant dum senator **adveniret** = *the citizens waited in the forum until the senator arrived*

*or* *the citizens waited in the forum for the senator to arrive*

servus fugit priusquam dominus **regrederetur** = the slave ran away before his master returned

(or could return)

These take the subjunctive because they are basically purpose clauses (cf. Section 15)

1. **Causal clauses**

Causal clauses are clauses with ‘because’ or ‘since’. They can be expressed by:

1. quod = ‘because’ + indicative

**quod** severus est, dominus a servis timetur = *because he is strict, the master is feared by his slaves*

1. cum = ‘since’ + subjunctive (see section 13))
2. **Concessive clauses**

Concessive clauses are clauses with ‘although’ (quamquam). They take the indicative:

**quamquam** severus est, dominus a servis amatur = *although he is strict, the master is loved by his slaves*

1. **Fearing clauses**

Fearing clauses are clauses introduced by a verb of fearing (e.g. timeo). To express the idea of fearing that

something will happen, Latin uses ne and the imperfect subjunctive. NB ne here means ‘in case that’ or ‘lest’

and does **NOT** have its normal negative meaning.

servus timebat **ne** dominus canem **necaret** = ‘the slave was afraid that his master would kill the dog’

To say ‘afraid that something *won’t* happen’, Latin uses *ne non* + subjunctive:

puellae timebant ne pueros non viderent = ‘the girls were afraid that they wouldn’t see the boys’