

## Steps for Reading Roman Epic

### I. Pre-reading Activities:

- A. Before starting each assignment, recall the status of the story:
  - 1. Summarize to yourself the plot so far.
  - 2. Recall in some detail what was going on at the end of the last reading.
  - 3. Look at the notes and summaries in the text book to put the passage in perspective.
- B. Decide which characters and events you expect to see in the next lines:
  - 1. Recall their character and personality, their situation and their agenda.
  - 2. Consider what each of these characters knows or thinks they know.
  - 3. Predict what is likely to happen next.

(Now you are ready to start reading.)

### II. Reading Activities:

(Basically, you read the passage over and over several times, out loud, in the Latin word order, until you understand its meaning.)

- A. Read the whole passage aloud.
  - 1. Do not stop to check on grammar or vocabulary.
  - 2. Repeat at least once more.
  - 3. Think about what you got out of the reading:
    - a. What is the basic structure of the passage?
    - b. What happens? (in general terms)
    - c. What is the gist of its meaning?
- B. Read it again, breaking it up into smaller, comprehensible chunks.
  - 1. Try to follow the form and function of each word as it enters each clause.
  - 2. Try to listen to the development of the meaning.
  - 3. If you don't know a word, think before you dive into the dictionary.
    - a. Notice its part of speech.
    - b. Check its form and how it fits into the clause.
    - c. Try to figure out the lexical meaning from the context.  
(What general class of meaning is demanded by the context – e.g.: is it a color? an emotional outburst? etc.)
    - d. Consider under what dictionary form this word must be found.
  - 4. Only then should you look in the dictionary:
    - a. Make sure this word will yield the form in your passage.
    - b. Read the whole article in the dictionary.
    - c. Look out for any special notes on its usage.
    - d. Read all the meanings.
    - e. Choose the one that best fits your passage in form and meaning.
  - 5. Reread the chunks until you understand each one.

C. Reread the passage as a whole to understand it as a whole.

### III. Post-reading Activities:

- A. Review and summarize the passage:
  - 1. What happens?
  - 2. What is said?
  - 3. How did the passage fit in with your predictions?
  - 4. Were there any surprises?
  - 5. What other reactions did you have?