

# Keys to Language and Cultural Awareness

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## **LATIN DEVELOPS A PERSON'S ENGLISH**

One's reading, writing and speaking of his own language is improved. His vocabulary is enriched, his grammar is sharpened, and a sense of organization is instilled in him. Both at home and abroad, American business needs workers and administrators who can use the English language well. Competence in our tongue pertains to the greatest job market for Americans. A mastery of English gives a person an edge over others with the same job skills and expertise in almost any line of work. A foreign branch communicates with its head office and many firms in written and spoken English. If its personnel have facility in their own tongue, as well as in the language of the country, business will be conducted at a greater profit.

## **GREEK AND LATIN PROVIDE A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR THE ACQUISITION OF OTHER LANGUAGES**

They equip a person with the strongest single foundation for mastering Romance languages, modern inflected ones such as Russian and German, and even non-related tongues like Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese. Working with Latin and Greek broadens a person's notion of structures possible in languages other than his own. In addition, Latin gives one a grip on about 80% of the vocabulary of the Romance languages - French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish. About 723 million people in 57 countries speak these tongues, Spanish being the official language of 20 nations, French of 27, and Italian, Romanian and Portuguese of 10 other nations.

## **THE CIVILIZATIONS OF GREECE AND ROME LINK US WITH CULTURES OF 57 NATIONS ON FOUR CONTINENTS**

A background in the classical civilizations makes Americans aware of customs, values and ideas that we have in common with Eastern and Western Europeans and with North and South Americans. We share many concepts in government, religion, art, literature, and economics. This cultural kinship of nations underlies such modern alliances as NATO, the British Commonwealth, and the Common Market.

## **THE GRAECO-ROMAN TRADITION PROVIDES CULTURAL ROOTS AND A SENSE OF IDENTITY**

An American better understands his place in history and modern political developments if he has relived the many-sided chapters of Athens and Rome. One who studies his 3000 year old tradition can trace its values, politics, architecture and engineering, trade and farming, myths and psychology back to their origins in the ancient world. In an urban age of dispersed families, a person may well feel less alienated if he can link his world to that of Homer, Socrates, Vergil and Pliny. A sense of belonging and participation in a larger culture makes him better adjusted and more disposed to dedicate himself to serious, productive work.

## **ACQUAINTANCE WITH ANCIENT CULTURES PROMOTES TOLERANCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF OTHER NATIONS AND WAYS OF LIFE**

Aware of the rich and varied culture of the Greeks and Romans, one is more likely to accept the differing customs and values of other peoples today. For in the study of ancient civilizations, one encounters exotic and extreme customs which were not static, but evolved over the centuries. Familiar with diversity, change, and longevity in his own culture, a person is more inclined to respect the views, ideologies, religions, and economic systems of foreign peoples and to appreciate their rich, age-old traditions.

## **TEST SCORES IN URBAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS HAVE DEMONSTRATED THE VALUE OF EARLY LANGUAGE TRAINING**

Thousands of students in big city schools benefit from courses in Latin roots of English words. These courses also teach them Roman culture and Greek myths. Successful programs flourish in such cities as Philadelphia, New York City, and Los Angeles, where Latin provides a key to improving English vocabulary skills and reading scores. Through songs, word games and lively oral participation, students come to know the building blocks of words and the families to which words belong.

In Los Angeles, Hispanic students have an edge in learning English, since 60% of English words (90% of words over two syllables) and 80% of Spanish words come from Latin. Learning Latin translates into a larger vocabulary, higher reading scores, better pronunciation, and increased self-esteem. An ethnically neutral language and culture provides a bridge to improving English for all students. In addition, these youngsters enrich their background and outlook on life by studying the magnificent and many-sided world of Rome.