# Reflection letter

## Instructions

Reflecting on your readings of Martial and Pliny, write a letter to one of the writers. In your letter, share with them your personal reactions to at least 2 of their works, making detailed reference to each work. Ask any questions you have of them, and share one way in which you feel they have enriched your study of Latin.

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## For the teacher

Remove this section before sharing this resource with students.

### Sample response

*Claudia Martialī salūtem dat*,

Or as we would write in English, Hi Martial! I can’t believe I’m at the end of 3 years of Latin study. While it took a long time for me to gain the confidence to read real Latin, I feel so privileged to have read your poems, and gotten a glimpse into the ancient world from an actual Roman.

One of my favourites of your poems was 7.3, though you would know it better as the epigram you wrote to Pontilianus. Was he really that bad a poet that you didn’t want to exchange pamphlets of poems with him? Although you only had 2 lines of the epigram to work with, it was so clever the way you set up the poem with your question ‘Why don’t I send you my pamphlets?’ That made your statement ‘so you don’t send me yours’ so much more effective, especially when you ended it with ‘*tuos’*, which was particularly cutting. I wish I could be so witty!

Poem 5.34 which you wrote to the slave-girl Erotion was so touching. The fact that she was 6 days short of her sixth birthday was so sad, and she must have been such a delight in your household. Do you think you were able to fully capture how her death affected you? I feel like by the end of the poem I got a sense what she was like: a sweet, lisping young girl who ran about the house and brought joy to everyone around her. I hope you were able to reunite with her in the underworld, together with your parents and everyone else you cared for.

Thank you for making the final term of my Latin studies so interesting. I found your poems witty, thought-provoking, clever and moving. I didn’t know what to expect when I first started learning Latin, but looking back now, I realise how much I’ve gained, and am grateful that I’ve been able to read the real words of someone who lived such a long time ago from me, yet who thought and felt the same way about so many things- from sneering annoyance to profound grief. I hope I’ll have a chance to read many more of your poems in the future!

*Vale!*

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