

Teaching Grammar through 'Games'

1. Moving pictures

Students write up sentences in groups (e.g. 'Caecilius in atrio sedet'), each taking one element ('Caecilius', 'in atrio', 'sedet'). They can draw a picture to indicate their part of the sentence. On the reverse of the sheets on which they have written their part of the sentence, they should write a translation (e.g. 'is sitting'). They stand up and arrange themselves so their Latin sentence is in order. Then they flip over the sheets to the translations, and rearrange themselves so the English sentence is in order.

2. Arrows

For when the nominative and accusative are introduced. The same, but with arrows – pointing to the right for nominatives, to the left for accusatives.

3. Case studies

This could be done by the teacher or by a student or students on the board. In one drawing, Caecilius (or whoever) throws a rock into the air, with an arrow pointing up. It is entitled CAECILIUS. This illustrates the nominative. Put writing at the bottom (e.g. 'Caecilius is doing something. He throws the rock. He is the **subject** of the sentence.'). Then show the rock landing on Caecilius' head, knocking him out and causing him to leak red whiteboard marker pen or smartboard pen, with an arrow pointing downwards at Caecilius. It is entitled CAECILIUM ('Caecilius is **on the receiving end of the action**. The rock hits **him**. He is **doing nothing**. He is the **object** of the sentence.')

4. Girl (or boy), interrupted

Just to clarify English grammar. One student has to start a phrase 'I was' and end it with 'when'; a second student has to complete.

5. Perfect mnemonics

The characteristic consonants that end the perfect stem (v, u, s, x) are tricky to remember. Challenge your students to come up with a memorable mnemonic.

6. Present and correct

As above, but with present tense person endings. Students have to come up with sentences starting with a personal pronoun and highlighting the ending for that person in Latin (e.g. 'I go through the snow with Flo'; 'They live with their aunt in a tent in Kent'). *-mus* is particularly challenging! Put up the best mnemonics on the board.

7. Mr and Mrs North

This comes out of a competition run by, I think, the *Times*, which asked readers to dramatise a book that, to all appearances, was impossible to dramatise. One reader chose Kennedy's *Shorter Latin Primer*. It went something like:

Mr Hillard and Mrs North are in a passionate embrace.

MR HILLARD: amo.

MRS NORTH: amas?

Enter Mr North.

MR NORTH: amat!

MR HILLARD and MRS NORTH: amamus!

