

Aeneid Book III

Virgil's Art 2

Lines 229-244



First use your flash cards, or those on Quizlet: <https://quizlet.com/gb/617807965/aeneid-cambridge-international-igcse-2023-25-flash-cards/> to make sure you can translate these lines. Go over the notes for these lines in Year 2 Term 2 Weeks 2 and 3 Day 2. You might like to note that the three lines I have marked below all have the maximum number of spondees.

Exam style question

rursum in secessu longo sub rupe cavata
 [arboribus clausam circum atque horrentibus umbris] 230
 instruimus mensas arisque reponimus ignem;
 rursum ex diverso caeli caecisque latebris
 turba sonans praedam pedibus circumvolat uncis,
 polluit ore dapes. sociis tunc arma capessant
 edico, et dira bellum cum gente gerendum. 235
 haud secus ac iussi faciunt tectosque per herbam
 disponunt ensis et scuta latentia condunt.
 ergo ubi delapsae sonitum per curva dedere
 litora, dat signum specula Misenus ab alta
 aere cavo. invadunt socii et nova proelia temptant, 240
 obscenas pelagi ferro foedare volucris.
 sed neque vim plumis ullam nec vulnera tergo
 accipiunt, celerique fuga sub sidera lapsae
 semesam praedam et vestigia foeda relinquunt.

- (a) Translate lines 242–244 (*sed neque... sub sidera lapsae*). [5]
- (b) Who is Misenus and what is his rôle in these lines? [2]
- (c) *nova proelia* (line 240): what does Virgil mean by these words and why does he use them? [2]
- (d) *obscenas pelagi... volucris*. (line 241). Who are these creatures and why does Virgil describe them in this way? [4]
- (e) Write out and scan line 233 (*turba... uncis*) marking the long and short syllables and divisions between the feet. Comment on the rhythm of this line. [3]
- (f) Comment on Virgil's use of language in lines 243-244. [2]

Specimen answers on the next page.

(a) Translate lines 242–244 (*sed neque... sub sidera lapsae*). [5]

Check this with your flash cards.

(b) Who is Misenus and what is his rôle in these lines? [2]

Misenus was brother-in-arms to Hector in the Trojan War. Later he became Aeneas's trumpeter.

[1] In these lines his rôle is to give the signal with his trumpet for the attack on the Harpies. [1]

(c) *nova proelia* (line 240): what does Virgil mean by these words and why does he use them? [2]

Virgil here means a new kind of battle. [1] He uses them because up to this point his Trojans warriors have fought only with human enemies. Now they have to fight the monstrous Harpies. [1]

(d) *obsceñas pelagi... volucris*. (line 241). Who are these creatures and why does Virgil describe them in this way?

These creatures are the Harpies. [1] Virgil describes them as *obsceñas* “loathsome” because they had clawed hands, and a foul overflow from their stomachs. [1] He calls them *pelagi* “of the sea” because they were said to descend for the god Oceanus [1] and he calls them *volucris* because they fly and have wings like a kind of bird. [1]

(e) Write out and scan line 233 (*turba... uncis*) marking the long and short syllables and divisions between the feet. Comment on the rhythm of this line. [3]

No elisions. Mark last two feet.

turba sonans praedam pedibus cir | cūmvōlāt | ūncis,

Vowels followed by double consonants or x are long.

turba sonāns praedām pedibus cīr | cūmvōlāt | ūncis,

Diphthongs are long:

turba sonāns prāedām pedibus cīr | cūmvōlāt | ūncis,

Count remaining syllables: 10 so 2 dactyls and 2 spondees.

turba sonāns praedām pedibus cīr | cūmvōlāt | ūncis,

Fourth foot must be a spondee.

turba sonāns praedām pedi | būs cīr | cūmvōlāt | ūncis,

Only one spondee remains. If *praedam* was a spondee then *pedi* be a spondee giving two spondees.

Therefore the third foot is a dactyl.

turba sonāns prāe | dām pēdī | būs cīr | cūmvōlāt | ūncis,

Second foot is therefore a spondee.

turba so | nāns prāe | dām pēdī | būs cīr | cūmvōlāt | ūncis,

This leaves three syllables so the first foot must be a dactyl.

tūrbā sō | nāns prāe | dām pēdī | būs cīr | cūmvōlāt | ūncis,

Comment: this line consists of alternating dactyls and spondees which pictures the Harpies hovering with their taloned feet over the prey.

(f) Comment on Virgil's use of language in lines 243-244. [2]

There is a zeugma in these lines [1]. The verb *relinquunt* applies to the half-eaten food *and* the filthy residue. But it has a (slightly) different meaning in each case. The food is left in the sense of “abandoned” – it was there already but the Harpies have left it. The residue is left in the sense of “put there” – it was not there already – the Harpies have deposited it there. [1]