

Latin Teaching Resources for Students with ADHD

General Teaching principles:

- Think of students with ADHD as if they are driving a car...
 - Add enough **acceleration** (interest and intensity), often enough, to keep the student travelling at good speed through your lesson and the whole course.¹
 - Avoid **pulling up the handbrake**, i.e. overwhelming working memory or boredom. Managing working memory helps neurotypical students also.
- **Every student will experience ADHD slightly differently**, which means you can experiment with different techniques to see what works for each class. One possible reason for this variation is that 40-60% of students with ADHD have comorbidities such as anxiety, depression, OCD, ODD, autism, or sensory processing disorder. And so, what may be perfect for one class may not work for another.

Strategies for undergraduate Latin:

- Adding interest and intensity (“acceleration”):
 - Ask students to create a class narrative to dramatize memorization work. Maybe they are helping Percy Jackson get out of trouble. The goal is to displace any shame-based narratives they may have, which can hold them back from getting started.
 - www.hexameter.co for learning to scan dactylic hexameter.
 - Create AI-generated images from their vocabulary for the week, for them to describe in spoken Latin.
 - Vocabulary game. Write Latin words on the board and split class into two teams. Call out an English word. The first person to swipe off the correct Latin word from the board wins a point for their team. (Not as good for anxious students.)
 - Patchwork assessment allows students to choose based on their interests.
 - ‘Reacting to the past’ exercise. Students are assigned roles to reenact a moment from the text at the end of the course. Works best with historiography and texts with a good story. The roles can include people who were not given a voice in the Latin.
- Helping with working memory (don’t “pull up the handbrake”):
 - [Alpheios](https://alpheios.com/) Chrome extension with [Perseus Scaife Viewer](https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph). Students can make an account to record which words they clicked on in a vocabulary list.
 - [NoDictionaries.com](https://noldictionaries.com/) can create an interlinear vocabulary aid for any Latin text, with slider scale for level of detail. Export results in a spreadsheet to create a frequency-ranked vocabulary list.
 - [The Bridge](https://thebridgeapp.org/) can create a vocabulary list in the order the words appear for some canonized texts.

¹ Rosqvist et al. (2023)

- When assigning a translation, consider choosing one written in modern or casual English, in a format compatible with text-to-speech AI, e.g. [Speechify](#).
- Format tests with word counts, time remaining, extra spacing for notes, empty declension table for memory dumping. Avoid having a page turn between the question and where they write their answer.
- Adjustments to grammar-translation method:
 - Mark out rest points in the text at every semi-colon, full stop, etc.
 - Work from most to least subordinated. (This avoids the interruption of a new clause which could clear working memory at the wrong time.)
- Essays and long translations can be very taxing on executive functioning. Consider whether the same skills can be assessed with a combination of shorter assignments, such as writing commentaries.
- When a textbook builds on a previous concept or paradigm without reprinting it, consider providing the old and new information side-by-side.

Other strategies:

- Visual design of presentations:
 - If you teach with a slide deck, consider making text grey if it isn't currently the focal point. This directs the students' gaze to the correct place on the slide and reduces the effort needed to parse the information. It may help them concentrate for longer.
- Time management
 - Having a visual timer can help students manage their time better in class activities and tests than with a watch or clock. ([Example](#))
 - Students may need help with planning their time over the whole course. Regular reminders of the course organization can help a lot.

Further Reading & Watching:

Topic	Resource
<i>Universal Design</i>	CAST. 'About Universal Design for Learning.' DO-IT. 'Universal Design Overview'
<i>Teaching & Learning with ADHD</i>	Hamilton LG, Petty S. 'Compassionate pedagogy for neurodiversity in higher education: A conceptual analysis.' Front Psychol. 2023 Feb 16;14:1093290. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1093290. Erratum in: Front Psychol. 2024 Feb 20;14:1345256. Levy, J. 'Learning Languages with ADHD.' Asterion. 24 Jan 2022.
<i>ADHD General</i>	Barkley, Russell A., Murphy, Kevin R., Fischer, Mariellen (2008). ADHD in Adults: What the Science Says (pp 171–175). New York, Guilford Press. Brown, Thomas E. (2005). Attention Deficit Disorder: The Unfocused Mind in Children and Adults (pp 20–58). New Haven, CT, Yale University Press Health and Wellness. Dwyer P. 'The Neurodiversity Approach(es): What Are They and What Do They Mean for Researchers?' (May 2022). <i>Human Development</i> , 66(2):73-92. Epub 2022 Feb 22.
<i>Hyperfocus</i>	Ashinoff BK & Abu-Akel A. (2019). Hyperfocus: 'The Forgotten Frontier of Attention.' Psychological Research 85(1), 1–19.
<i>Executive Functioning</i>	Barkley, Russell. 'How Executive Functioning Relates to ADHD and Other Disorders' , Youtube presentation, 2023. (Note: Russell Barkley is one of the foremost ADHD clinical researchers; his Youtube videos are part of his outreach work.)
<i>Time Blindness</i>	Ptacek R, Weissenberger S, Braaten E, Klicperova-Baker M, Goetz M, Raboch J, Vnukova M, & Stefano GB. (2019, May 26). 'Clinical implications of the perception of time in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): A Review.' <i>Medical Science Monitor: International Medical Journal of Experimental and Clinical Research</i> .
<i>Using intensity and interest to generate focus</i>	Hanna Bertilsdotter Rosqvist, Lill Hultman, Sofia Österborg Wiklund, Anna Nygren, Palle Storm, Greta Sandberg, 'Intensity and Variable Attention: Counter Narrating ADHD, from ADHD Deficits to ADHD Difference' , <i>The British Journal of Social Work</i> , Volume 53, Issue 8, December 2023, Pages 3647–3664, https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcad138 .
<i>Changing ADHD presentation with age</i>	FARAONE, S.V., BIEDERMAN, J. and MICK, E. (2006) 'The age-dependent decline of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: a meta-analysis of follow-up studies' , <i>Psychological Medicine</i> , 36(2), pp. 159–165. doi:10.1017/S003329170500471X.