

If you thought that the main reasons for teaching at the pre-collegiate level were "June, July, and August," then you may have some surprises.

The following quotations are a sampling of responses that members of the Latinteach discussion group gave when asked what their top reasons were for teaching Latin at the pre-collegiate level.

Some Top
Reasons
to
Teach Latin
at the
Pre-
Collegiate
Level

National Latin Teacher
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www.promotelatin.org/nltrw.htm

from Karen Zeller

- ❖ The opportunity to watch measurable, incremental growth, and to have a hand in it. It's something like gardening, but the subjects are much more entertaining than a radish.
- ❖ The opportunity to indulge my passions, which for me happen to include Latin poetry and educational theory.
- ❖ The opportunity to *perform* for an appreciative (though sometimes captive) audience.
- ❖ Every week I get to engage in conversations about big issues, things that really matter, things like how to live or love or die, truth and deception, beauty and depravity. And Cicero is sitting at the table along with Kate, Michael, Victoria and Brandon.

from Daniel Robie

- ❖ The opportunity to build meaningful, life-shaping relationships with students over a span of years.
- ❖ Intellectual stimulation. Although there are many fields where continued study will reveal novelty, I am thrilled by the fact that I will *never* know as much as I might want to about history, myth, even grammar and literature!

from Sharon Stokes

- ❖ I get to speak a secret language with my students. We can pass code words to each other in the hall, the cafeteria, even at the mall on occasion.

from DD Farms

- ❖ Teaching is like trodding the boards in a live play, or preaching live. If you do it well, your heart beats fast as you come on the stage. You do your act. If you do it well, you know you have had an impact on the audience. They gasp, applaud, say amen, make cheerio mouths, laugh at the right point, and don't throw rotten tomatoes. They learned something. You exit {Pursued by bear?} and then hits the incredible. *RUSH.*
- ❖ Teaching, if you are moderately successful, is an ego trip beyond belief.

from John Higgins

- ❖ These people (i.e., my school system) are paying me money to (1) learn as much as I can about Latin, Greek, and the cultures, ancient medieval and modern, that use those languages, so that I can (2) talk about this stuff for several hours each day. I get to be in daily contact with what I love and have the privilege of passing it on to others. Where else can I do this sort of thing every day? What could be better?
- ❖ In the past two years, I have taught elementary Greek, a small amount of Sappho, Catullus, Horace (the AP course), Cicero, Plautus, Caesar, some medieval Latin, all in the language; also, Homer, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Plato, Livy, Cicero and the Roman comedians, in translation. For people like us (if I may generalize), this is precisely what we want to do. That's it for me—the ability to be in touch with what I am passionate about.
- ❖ The summer vacations are also nice, but not for the reasons that those outside the

profession think (also, too many of our colleagues, but that's another rant). Not to laze the summer away but to refresh ourselves academically and increase our knowledge of what we teach.

- ❖ I get to meet a lot of nice people who happen to be a lot younger than me, who still have a lot of the freshness that gets beaten out of them later. I get to see them grow, sometimes considerably, and get a warm feeling when they show that they have deeply learned what I gave them.

from Sarah Bjorkman

- ❖ I'm thrilled that I have a job where I laugh every day.

from Mary Lou Carroll

- ❖ One of the big satisfactions is to help younger people prepare themselves for their futures.
- ❖ Latin is a good subject for bolstering the student who needs to improve reading and grammar, to challenging the gifted learners.

from Carol Pobst

- ❖ It uses everything, every skill I have ever learned—emotional, intellectual, physical, spiritual
- ❖ Never a dull moment.
- ❖ It is a small universe—the room you teach in—but it is all yours.