

## LATIN ROCKS!

Introduction: In this lesson, students will learn Latin words for colors, and they will paint Latin-themed rocks which they can later hide in their community.

Background: At first glance, it seems like a simple topic, but there is much to discuss when it comes to colors in Ancient Greece and Rome! For this lesson, we have chosen eleven Latin color words, the same words used in our "[Leap into Latin](#)" publication. These are only a handful of the various words the Romans had for colors. A long, colored list of names the Romans gave to many hues can be found here: <http://www.harbornet.com/folks/theedrich/Colores/Colores.htm>. Some students might ask why the Romans had so many different color words. Remind them that we, too, have many terms for different shades, and point out a sixty-four-color crayon box as an example.

For the class interested in exploring big questions about color, these resources are fascinating:

1. This two-minute video discusses the non-existence of the word "blue" in all of Homer. How does not having a word for a color affect our ability to see it?

<http://www.businessinsider.com/color-blue-couldnt-see-until-modern-times-2016-3>

2. This "Brains On" podcast for kids explores the question, "Do we all see the same colors?" <http://www.brainson.org/do-we-all-see-the-same-colors/>

Objectives: Students will be able to identify the following colors using their Latin names.

*albus, -a, -um* - white  
*āter, ātra, ātrum* - black  
*caeruleus, -a, -um* - blue  
*cānus, -a, -um* - gray  
*flāvus, -a, -um* - yellow  
*fulvus, -a, -um* - brown  
*lūteus, -a, -um* - orange  
*prasinus, -a, -um* - green  
*purpureus, -a, -um* - purple  
*rosāceus, -a, -um* - pink  
*ruber, rubra, rubrum* - red

Materials:

- color term cards, 1 set per student (attached – choose from small cards or large cards)
- Slideshow: Learning Colors in Latin with Painted Rocks: <http://bit.ly/2txpOT8>
- 2 flyswatters
- copies of the Latin Rocks Planning Page (attached)
- smooth rocks (Large bags of rocks are often sold at home improvement stores.)
- acrylic paints and paintbrushes, or oil-based paint pens
- paint sealer

Special Concerns: Some classes may already be familiar with the Latin words for the colors and may view the slideshow activity as practice or a review. Classes with no prior experience with this topic can take their time with the slideshow, which could be used to introduce a few colors at a time over a couple



of days. Also, teachers who prefer to use different Latin words for any of the colors can change the color name slides in the slideshow.

Procedure:

1. Share with students the background information provided above.
2. Give each student a set of color term cards, and inform the class that you will introduce one color at a time, using photos of painted rocks. Explore the colors while presenting the slideshow. For each picture, ask students to hold up the correct color term(s) for the colors they see.
3. The photos near the end of the slideshow are of rocks painted with many colors. Use these slides to practice the Latin words for colors by playing the Flyswatter Game:
  - Divide the class into two teams.
  - Two students, each holding a flyswatter, represent the teams and stand at the screen displaying an photo with many colors.
  - The teacher calls a Latin color word, and both students try to be the first to correctly slap that color on the screen with a flyswatter. The student who is correct earns a point for his or her team.
  - The team with the highest number of points at the end wins the game.
4. Next, students will paint rocks of their own with a recognizable Classical theme or with Latin writing. They should use the planning page to plan the rock. Depending on the time available, students could do this planning page for homework, and the painting could take place the next day.
5. Encourage students to say only the Latin names for the colors during the activity, no English. Here are some sentences to put on the board:
  - *Ubi est rubrum pigmentum?* (Where is the red paint?)
  - *Dā mihi rubrum pigmentum, sī placet.* (Please give me the red paint.)
6. Have students write on the back of their rocks a certain hashtag or the name of a Facebook group. Many communities currently have Facebook groups dedicated to painting and finding rocks. It is common to post to these groups when hiding or finding rocks. You may also wish to have students include the school name and “Latin.” This is a wonderful publicity opportunity for Latin programs since the groups often contain thousands of people!
7. Seal the rocks with a spray sealant so that the artwork will be protected against the outside elements.
8. Hide the rocks in the community for others to find. Parks are popular hiding places, but rocks are also sometimes hidden outside of businesses.



## Color Term Cards

Use the small cards on this page or the large cards on the pages that follow.

**āter**

**albus**

**caeruleus**

**cānus**

**flāvus**

**fulvus**

**lūteus**

**prasinus**

**purpureus**

**rosāceus**

**ruber**

**āter**

**albus**

**caeruleus**

**cānus**

**flāvus**

**fulvus**

**lūteus**

**prasinus**

**purpureus**

**rosāceus**

**ruber**

# Latin Rocks!

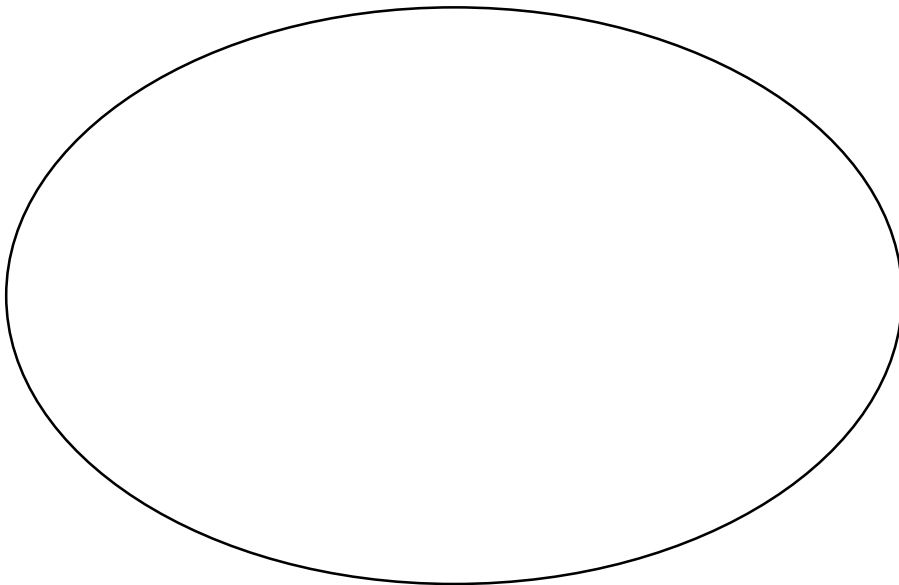
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## Planning Page

You will use this page to form your plan for painting a classically-themed rock. Your rock should have an identifiable classical theme or have Latin writing on it. You could use a favorite Latin quote, or you could depict a favorite person or story from history or mythology. Is there a way that your rock could illustrate something about Latin which you would like to share with your community?

<p>I. What will you paint? List some ideas based on a classical topic, person, or story.</p>	<p>II. Will your rock have Latin writing on it? If so, write it here. Shorter is better since space is limited.</p>
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III. In the oval below, practice drawing your design. Plan the colors you will use, and label them by drawing lines to from your design to the Latin colors listed on the right.



albus, a, um  
āter, ātra, ātrum  
caeruleus, a, um  
cānus, a, um  
flāvus, a, um  
fulvus, a, um  
lūteus, a, um  
prasinus, a, um  
purpureus, a, um  
rosāceus, a, um  
ruber, rubra, rubrum

IV. Where in your community will you hide your rock?

