

POSTSECONDARY LEVEL

LESSON PLANS TO ACCOMPANY

“The Second Death of Latin”

by Nicholas Ostler



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1. What does the author mean by a “colonizing language”?

2. What was the “epoch-making development” that brought about the second death of Latin? What does Nicholas Ostler say the connection is between this event and Latin’s demise?



3. What do you imagine was Latin's first death? Is it related to the events portrayed in the movie *Gladiator*?

4. Is Latin really dead?

5. Nicholas Ostler is worried about the future of one of today's dominant languages, English. Please read his article on Forbes.com on the future of English



Forbes.com

Language

English's Bleak Future

Nicholas Ostler 02.21.08, 6:00 PM

http://www.forbes.com/2008/02/21/future-english-chinese-tech-cx_no_language_sp08_0221lingua.html

a) Why is the author worried? What forces may bring about the “death” of English?

b) What did Pliny the Elder say about the mere act of speaking Latin?

c) What was one of the “unintended consequences” of World War II on language?



6. Here is an article in *Wired* magazine about the changes taking place in the English language.

How English Is Evolving Into a Language We May Not Even Understand

http://www.wired.com/culture/culturereviews/magazine/16-07/st_essay

a) What is “Chinglish”? What is “Singlish”? If history is any indication, what will happen to these strains of English in the coming decades?

b) Why are these new types of English being formed? Has such a thing happened before?

7. Over the course of its long life, the Latin language developed into several different strains or types – classical and vulgar Latin, Church or Ecclesiastical Latin, Renaissance Latin, as well as regional dialects.

Are there different types of English spoken in America today? What are they? How do they differ from one another?



8. Will the English language change in America? What technological forces are working on English language today?

9. Latin mottos. Please find a translation of the Latin phrase and then give your own interpretation of what the saying means. Which is your favorite?

a) *Bis vivit qui bene vivit ...* He lives twice who lives well.

b) *Caveat emptor ...* _____

c) *Sine labore nihil ...* _____

d) *Cogita ante salis ...* _____



e) *Vir sapit qui pauca loquitur ...*_____

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