LITERARY TERMS

alliteration: repetition of a consonant at the beginning of words close to each other or closely connected. The effect is to create a sound pattern, which may link words together or stress them. See p. 31.

anaphora: repetition of a word or phrase at the start of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences. The effect may be to emphasize a word or phrase or connect it to a previous one.

antithesis: a contrast of ideas is highlighted by a balanced arrangement of words. For example, **ubi sōlitūdinem faciunt, pācem appellant**.

ascending tricolon: a tricolon whose three elements are of increasing length or intensity, rising to a climax. Also known as a **tricolon crescens** or **tricolon crescendo**. See p. 128.

assonance: repetition of a vowel, or similar-sounding vowels, in words close to each other. See p. 31.

asyndeton: words, phrases, or clauses are placed next to each other with no connecting word such as **sed** or **et**. The effect may be to make a strong contrast.

chiasmus: arrangement of words in the pattern ABBA; the second phrase reverses the order of the first. For example: **ululātūs fēminārum, īnfantum quirītātūs**. See p.61.

compound adjective: adjectives composed of two words e.g. **frondifer**, *bearing leaves*.

consonance: repetition of a consonant, or similar-sounding consonants, in words close to each other. See p. 31.

dicolon (**word pair**): a pair of words, usually joined by **et** or -**que**, is used to reinforce a point or image; often the words have similar meanings. For example, **cadūca et incerta** (*fleeting and uncertain*).

diminutive: the diminutive form of a noun or adjective expresses smallness, affection, or ridicule.

direct address (**apostrophe**): the speaker or writer directly addresses the audience or reader.

end-stopped line: a line of poetry is end-stopped when the end of a phrase, clause, or sentence coincides with the end of the line. See p. 97.

enjambment: in poetry, enjambment occurs when a phrase, clause, or sentence runs into the following line. See p. 97.

epithet: a descriptive word or phrase that refers to a characteristic quality of a person or thing. An epithet can modify a name (e.g. **pius Aenēās**) or be used in place of a name e.g. (**Berecyntius hērōs** for Midas).

exemplum: an example introduced in a literary work to make a point; often a figure from the past cited as a representative of good or bad behaviour.

frequentative: the frequentative form of a verb indicates that an action occurs repeatedly, e.g. **cursitat**.

hendiadys: a compound idea is expressed as if it were two separate ideas. Often two nouns or verbs joined by **et** or -**que** are used instead of a noun or verb with another word dependent on it. For example, **necāvit et submersit** (*killed and drowned*), rather than **submergendō necāvit** (*killed by drowning*).

historical infinitive: the present infinitive is used instead of a past tense verb. The effect is to quicken the pace of the narrative or make it more exciting.

historical present: a present tense is used to refer to actions that happened in the past; it is often best translated as a past tense in English. The effect is to make events more vivid or immediate.

hyperbaton: words that usually go together are separated.

hyperbole: exaggeration.

juxtaposition: two words are placed next to each other to achieve a striking effect, often emphasis or contrast.

litotes: something positive is emphasized by denying its opposite. For example, **sine lābe toga** (*a toga without stain*) for **toga pūra** (*a clean toga*).

metaphor: a person, thing, or action is referred to by a word that normally refers to another person, thing, or action. This implies a comparison, without using a word such as **velut** or **quālis** (*like* or *as*).

metonymy: a quality of an object, or something associated with it, is used to refer to that object. For example, **altum** (*deep*) for *sea*.

multi-correspondence simile: a simile that is developed at length and has more than one correspondence with the narrative. A feature of epic poetry; also called an epic simile. See p. 28.

paradox: a statement that seems contradictory but may reveal a truth.

periphrasis: using more words than are needed to express an idea. For example, **pater gregis** (*father of the herd*) for *goat*.

personification: attributing human qualities to something that is non-human.

polyptoton: repetition of a noun, pronoun, adjective, or verb in a form that has different endings; usually used for emphasis.

polysyndeton: repetition of a conjunction, especially **et**; the effect can be to emphasize the number of items in a list or sequence, to make a list or sequence seem impressive, or to give a sense of busyness and rapidity.

praeteritio (**omission**): the writer or speaker claims that they are not going to mention some person or thing. The effect is to draw attention to that person or thing. See p. 169.

rhetorical question: a question that does not expect a reply or whose answer is self-evident or assumed. The question is asked for rhetorical effect, implying that the answer is obvious.

sibilance: repeated **s** sounds in words close to each other. This can imitate sounds such as hissing, spitting, or buzzing. See p. 31.

simile: a comparison of one person, thing, event, or scene to another; usually introduced by **velut**, **quālis**, **ut**, or **similis** (*like* or *as*).

synchesis (also **synchysis**): intertwined arrangement of words, usually two noun-adjective phrases; the words that go together grammatically are separated. For example:

   aeternum hoc sānctae foedus amicitiae.

synecdoche: part of an object is used to refer to the whole object, e.g. **carīna** (*keel*) for *ship*.

tautology: saying the same thing twice in different words, e.g. **fōrmat et fabricat** (*shapes and fashions*).

tmesis: a compound word is split into two parts, e.g. **inter ... currere** for **intercurrere**.

tricolon: a series of three words, phrases, or clauses of parallel structure, e.g. **pius**, **fortis**, **fidēlis**. See p. 128.

transferred epithet: an adjective is attached grammatically to one noun but belongs in sense to another.

word pair: see **dicolon**.