## Sound & Sense

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*What choices does a translator make about what to include and what to omit in translation?*
*What matters most in translating a poem – conveying the sound or the sense of the original?*
*Can the effect of Latin poetry be accurately reproduced in English?*

*These questions are intended to stimulate your thinking in advance of the process of writing your essay – they should provide the matrix, the framework within which you can begin to construct your analysis of the Latin text.*

Text

Martial, Epigram 1.46.

Preparation

Read through the Latin passage carefully and sketch out a translation. Figure out the scansion of the verses, using the system of notation given. Pay attention to sounds in the Latin text, and note the effect of meter as the poem is read. Look for patterns – repetitions and contrasts, etc. – in the deployment of words. Think about what the poem communicates and how you will share this with your reader in your English translation.

Write

Write out the Latin poem, leaving a blank line above each verse. On the blank line, write in the scansion of each verse, using the system of notation given. Under the Latin text, write out your translation of the poem. Finally, write a brief reflection on the choices you have made in trying to communicate both the musical quality and the sense of the original poem.

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## Martial *Epigrammata* 1.46

*nūper erat medicus, nunc est vespillo Diaulus.*
*quod vespillo facit, fēcerat et medicus.*

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Notes

**nūper** (*adv.*): "recently"
**nunc** (*adv.*): "now"
**medicus, -ī**, m.: "doctor"
**vespillo, -ōnis**, m.: "undertaker, mortician"

**quod** = **id quod**, *i.e.* "that which; what"
**fēcerat** *is a pluperfect*: "had done"
**et** *here* = **etiam**, *i.e.* "also"

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Meter: *elegaic couplet*

– ◡ ◡ | – ◡ ◡ | – ◡ ◡ | – ◡ ◡ | – ◡ ◡ | – –

– ◡ ◡ | – ◡ ◡ | – – | ◡ ◡ – | ◡ ◡ –

*Note that the notation* – ◡ ◡ *may be expressed by either two longs or one long and two shorts.*