

ANSWERS TO COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. The poet feels envy. In fact, the girl displays too much affection for the sparrow.
2. The grumpy old men.
3. Life is short.

**TEACHING TIP**

Ask the students to determine which nouns in the Reading Vocabulary do not follow the format of the first and second declension nouns that they have already learned.

**TEACHER BY THE WAY**

In addition to the sparrow, doves and pigeons appear in statues as children's pets. Romans loved their gardens so the realistic depiction of various bird species in their frescoes is not surprising. Birds also figured prominently in Roman religion and myth. Augurs observed the flights of birds to determine whether a proposed action was auspicious or not. Romulus and Remus based their respective claims to kingship on the number of birds each one saw. Remus, stationed on the Aventine Hill, saw the first sign, a flight of six vultures (*vulturēs*). Romulus, on the Palatine Hill, saw twelve vultures. A fight ensued in which Remus was killed and Romulus became the eponymous (name-giving) founder of Rome. The vulture and woodpecker (*pīcus*) were sacred to Mars, the twins' father.

The eagle (*aquila*) was a prominent symbol on the Roman legionary standard. To lose it to the enemy was disgraceful and sometimes resulted in the disbandment of the legion. Varus in 9 CE lost three legions to the Germans, which prompted him to commit suicide.

**TEACHING TIP**

Remind students that the aviary is the location for the birds (*avēs*) at the zoo.

Birds may have been a delightful and decorative element in everyday life, but beekeeping was big business. Civil laws even made provisions for this occupation. Bees in hives were a beekeeper's property and to steal them was theft and punishable. Pliny the Elder and Columella, a Spaniard interested in reviving Roman agriculture, discuss in depth how to build and maintain hives, how to harvest honeycomb, and how to alleviate a bee's stress. Romans were obviously very involved in the care of their bees. Vergil glorifies this interest in the *Georgics* (Book 4) in his story of Aristaeus, whose bees were destroyed. It was considered a sign of good hospitality to offer guests fresh honey. Soldiers carried honey in their packs to treat burns and wounds. Physicians recommended honey for those having problems sleeping. It was used to make *mulsum* (honey wine), for food preparation, and for wax. Romans learned many tricks of the trade from Greece, Spain, and Carthage.

**TEACHING TIP**

The term "apiary," a place where bees are kept for their honey, derives from the Latin word for bee, *apis*.

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