



TEACHING TIP

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The teacher may wish to assess the students' learning by asking for the definition and effect of the following figures of speech that were learned previously.

- chiasmus – lines 5–6*
- asyndeton – lines 9–12
- **sibilance – line 10**
- chiasmus – line 13*
- anaphora – lines 13–15



TEACHER BY THE WAY

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- The Lesbia poems in the polymetra appear to be arranged so as to reflect an on-again, off-again love affair. Despite Catullus's bitter dismissal of Lesbia in Poem 11 (which students may read in the series reader), Poem 51 indicates that he is still infatuated with her despite the fact he is at the same time aware that this infatuation is destructive.
- Poem 51 freely translates Sappho's frag. 31 (L–P), except for the final stanza, which is Catullus's own addition as a conclusion. A translation of Sappho's poem follows.

He seems to me to be equal to the gods, that man who sits opposite you and listens, nearby, to you speaking sweetly and laughing charmingly, a thing which in very truth makes the heart in my breast flutter, for whenever I look at you for a short while, yet no word comes, but my tongue is entirely silent (broken), and straightaway a subtle fire runs beneath my flesh, and with my eyes I see nothing, and my ears make a buzzing sound, and cold sweat pours over me, and trembling seizes all of me. And I am paler (greener) than grass, and I appear to be nearly dead. . . . But all must be endured, since

- In line 7, there is a tmesis, but students are not introduced to the figure of speech until p. 259. The teacher may choose to introduce this figure early or may refer students back to this example of tmesis after it is learned later.