

5. nefarium factū
wrong to do, supine of respect
6. fortunātī moenibus surgentibus
fortunate in (respect to) the walls rising, noun in an ablative of respect
7. instant ductum mūrōs
they press on to extend the wall, supine of purpose
8. sanctum dictū
a holy thing to say, supine of respect

ESSAY P. 252

What emotions does Aeneas reveal in this passage, and what literary features does Vergil use to draw our attention to these emotions in the text?



TEACHER BY THE WAY

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Students should observe that Aeneas reveals several complementary emotions in this passage, wonder, envy, and possibly self-pity, and that these emotions do not detract from his character as a hero.

The repetition of *mīratur* at the start of the passage at the beginning of lines 421 and 422 makes clear that the emotion Aeneas feels initially is one of “wonder.” Aeneas marvels at the construction of the city, the gates, the noise, and the paved streets. The idea of wonder or amazement appears to shift to envy through the detailed description of the high level of activity in Carthage that has taken place or is in progress. Aeneas witnesses the Tyrians hard at work erecting citadels, extending city walls, marking lots for homes, creating laws, choosing magistrates, establishing a revered senate, excavating harbors, and constructing a theater (lines 421–429). The simile of the bees (lines 430–436) serves to heighten the remarkable scene Aeneas witnesses by drawing attention to the fact that the Tyrians are working as a community. In essence, Aeneas observes the Tyrians doing what he himself longs to do—to found a city. It is not surprising, therefore, that his envy expresses itself clearly in the apostrophe, “*Ō fortunātī, quōrum moenia iam surgunt*” at line 437. Envy can be a positive emotion. It can be argued that Aeneas’s envy arises from the sense of duty that consumes him, and that it does not stem from a jealous comparison of this new city to his own present homeless circumstances.

