

9. Lāocoōnta serpentēs medium corporis amplectentēs immēnsibus orbibus **ligant**.

active voice

The snakes, embracing the middle of his body, bind Laocoon with their huge coils.

10. Anguēs parva nātōrum corpora **plexī** miserōs artūs dēpāscuntur.

passive in form, active in meaning

The snakes having embraced the small bodies of the sons feed upon their miserable/pitiable limbs.

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The description of the snakes and their actions (lines 201–222) is extraordinarily vivid. How does Vergil achieve this effect? What senses does his description include? Present your response in a well-organized essay.

Support your assertions with references drawn from throughout the passage. All Latin words must be copied or their line numbers provided, AND they must be translated or paraphrased closely enough so that it is clear you understand the Latin. Direct your answer to the question; do not merely summarize the passage. Please write your essay on a separate piece of paper.



TEACHER BY THE WAY

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Students may approach this essay in a variety of ways. The most obvious ways are either to organize their essay by commenting largely line-by-line on visual and auditory descriptions that contribute to the vividness of the passage, or to structure their essays in two parts focusing on the visual in one section and the auditory in the other. Students should note one or two literary devices that contribute to making this passage so vivid, such as sibilance, alliteration, hyperbaton, and the like.

The narration of the death of Laocoon and his sons is dramatic and intense. By introducing the passage with the word *ecce* (line 203), addressed to the reader, Vergil makes the description to follow more immediate. Aeneas says that he shudders just recalling the event, *horrēscō referēs* (line 204), and he keeps the reader in suspense about the horrible episode through his use of hyperbaton (*gemīnī . . . anguēs* lines 203–204). He underlines the blood-thirsty nature of the serpents by the use of words like *sanguineae* (line 207)

