



TEACHING TIP

Besides the references to the “ship of state” metaphor in ancient authors (see p. 385), the metaphor appears in English literature too. Ask the students if they have read Walt Whitman’s poem “O Captain, My Captain” or Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s “The Ship of State” in which he wrote “Sail on, o Ship of State/Sail on, o Union strong and great.” If not, ask one or more students to find these poems and bring a copy to class where the metaphor can be compared and contrasted with the one Nepos used in this reading.

In addition, call the students’ attention to the word *gubernātor* in line 12. While the Latin word means “pilot,” its English derivative “gubernatorial” refers to a governor of a state. Discuss how this too refers to the “ship of state” metaphor.

Finally, ask the students to explain how Nepos’s comparison of Atticus to a ship’s captain works. Students should cite the points of comparison in Latin with line references and then give them in English.

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ANSWERS TO THE COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Ita, fortūna facile/facillimē mūtārī poterat. Varietās fortūnae erat magna.
2. Hominēs, quī erant in summō fastigiō, facile in perīculum dēscendere poterant.
3. Antōnius Rōmam redīvit et erat in fastigiō.
4. Antōnīi inimīcī sunt prōscriptī.
5. Atticus prōscriptiōnem timēbat et propter timōrem dē forō dēcessit.
6. Antōnius rogāvit ubinam esset Atticus et eī epistolam scrīpsit.
7. Antōnius Atticum dēclārāvit sē eum dē numerō prōscriptōrum exēmisse.
8. Antōnius rogāvit ut Atticus ad sē venīret.
9. Ut bonus gubernātor nāvem ex procellā et marī scopulosō servat, ita Atticus ex procellis cīvilibus vītā suā servāvit.



TEACHER BY THE WAY

Greek and Roman Shipbuilding

The “ship of state” metaphor resonated with the ancient Greeks and Romans because of the importance of ships in their world. Sea travel was integral to both cultures’ military and economic stability. Moreover, the same shipbuilding tradition is visible in both cultures’ vessels. However, a closer look reveals that each civilization adapted this method of shipbuilding to fit their needs.

The biggest similarity between Greek and Roman ships is how they were constructed. Both civilizations built the hulls of their ships first and then skeletons into them, the reverse of modern building methods. This similarity in the method of construction was matched by a similarity in design, particularly for military ships.

The Roman navy was primarily equipped with quadriremes, quinqueremes, and triremes. All three were part of the earlier Greek navies; the trireme was the primary warship during the Persian War (for both armies), and the Hellenistic Greeks had developed the other two. The Romans did not make major changes to the ship design. All of the ships had two or three