

ETA SIGMA PHI
44th Annual Latin Prose Composition Contest (2010)

To be written as an examination, under supervision, within a maximum of three hours. The contestant is permitted to use an English-Latin lexicon (e.g., Cassell's) but no other helps. The only identification on the contest paper should be the contestant's pen name; please write on every other line of the paper provided.

The following selection comes from the seventh volume of the Harry Potter series, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. The first volumes of the series have already been translated in Greek and Latin, and this passage provides an opportunity for literal as well as free and creative expression in Latin.

Autumn seemed to arrive suddenly that year. The morning of the first of September was crisp and golden as an apple, and as the little family bobbed across the rumbling road towards the great, sooty station, the fumes of car exhausts and the breath of pedestrians sparkled like cobwebs in the cold air. Two large cages rattled on top of the laden trolleys the parents were pushing; the owls inside them hooted indignantly, and the red-headed girl trailed tearfully behind her brothers, clutching her father's arm.

'It won't be long, and you'll be going too,' Harry told her.

'Two years,' sniffed Lily. 'I want to go *now!*'

The commuters stared curiously at the owls as the family wove its way towards the barrier between platforms nine and ten. Albus's voice drifted back to Harry over the surrounding clamor; his sons had resumed the argument they had started in the car.

'I *won't!* I *won't!* be in Slytherin!'

'James, give it a rest!' said Ginny.

'I only said he *might* be,' said James, grinning at his younger brother. 'There's nothing wrong with that. He *might* be in Slyth—'

But James caught his mother's eye and fell silent. The five Potters approached the barrier. With a slightly cocky look over his shoulder at his younger brother, James took the trolley from his mother and broke into a run. A moment later, he had vanished...

Side by side, they pushed the second trolley forwards, gathering speed. As they reached the barrier, Albus winced, but no collision came. Instead, the family emerged on to platform nine and three-quarters, which was obscured by thick, white steam that was pouring from the scarlet Hogwarts Express.