

By ANNE DONNELL

Please explain the difference between the abbreviations i.e. and e.g. I confuse the two and feel uncomfortable using them or even reading them! Thank you. I appreciate that you want to help.

-Guy Scratching My Head Over This

I'll skip the dandruff-related remarks, and thank our QP of T (Question Person of Today). His question is about id est and exempli gratia. Huh?

The expressions are in Latin, the language erupting from that great city empire Rome, the language spread around Europe and Asia and Africa, the language forced into the throats of all sorts of nations and tribes, communicants of churches, and high school students, pimples and all. It's a language with a past, like a few hundred years B.C. kind of past, but it's not a dead language. It's still quite the thing in scientific circles, though somewhat less in religious ones [Meeting from 1962-1965, Vatican II, the 21st Ecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church, chose to permit liturgy in the vernacular, diminishing the use of Latin. Vernacular is the language or dialect spoken by ordinary people in a particular country or region. Dictionary.com]

We all know there's one thing always true about language – it cannot stop changing; robbing, plundering from all it encounters, adding the new, adjusting or expelling the old, a constant whirlwind of upheaval in book or tongue. Latin has had a remarkable history and some remarkable devotion through the years, and so has ancient Greek with its advantage of a close relationship to ancient Biblical text.

Liz Gephardt in a short exposition (that's a comprehensive description and explanation of an idea or theory, Dictionary.com) titled "Classics in American Schools" notes, "Although the exact number of students currently enrolled in Latin in the United States is unknown, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' most recent survey estimates national Latin enrollment at 205,158, comprising 2.3% of all students enrolled in Foreign Languages. The number of students taking the National Latin Exam is somewhat smaller than ACTFL's estimate, since not all schools offer the exam. In 2010 138,000 students signed up to take the National

Latin Exam, and the number of students actually taking the exam each year has ranged between 130,000 and 138,000 since 2004." The National Latin Exam awards prizes and scholarships. The study of Latin has not been abandoned.

So how about i.e.? It means "that is" and is used to clarify a statement just made.

E.g. means "for instance" or "for example" and is used to introduce an example.

Some good advice in Eugene Ehrlich's book *Amo, Amas, and More: How to Use Latin to Your Own Advantage and to the Astonishment of Others* [I'm a sucker for long titles] suggests one avoid the worrisome duo of abbreviations when a lack of confidence interferes. Simply say or write, "that is" or "for example."

A few reruns in today's ONLINE, but a lot of social time is spent by polite people listening with pleasant smiles on their faces to jokes that have been around the block. And, after the punch line, which in some cases everyone in the vicinity of the joke teller could murmur while asleep, these polite people laugh convincingly. Out of respect. Oh, don't we need respect in this slick, unfair, caustic world!

ONLINE DEPARTMENT "Festival of Blonde Jokes" Perhaps not the best avenue to respect? (Thanks, J. W.) □ *A friend told the blonde: "Christmas is on a Friday this year." The blonde then said, "Let's hope it's not the 13th."* □ *Two blondes find three grenades, and they decide to take them to a police station. One asked: "What if one explodes on us before we get there?" The other says: "We'll lie and say we only found two."* □ *A woman phoned her blonde neighbor and said: "Close your curtains the next time you & your husband are getting romantic." The whole street was watching and laughing at you yesterday." To which the blonde replied: "Well the joke's on all of you because I wasn't even at home yesterday."* □ *A blonde is in the bathroom and her husband shouts: "Did you find the shampoo?" She answers, "Yes, but I'm not sure what to do... it's for dry hair, and I've just wet mine."* □ *A blonde goes to the vet with her goldfish. "I think it's got epilepsy," she tells the vet. The vet takes a look and says, "It seems calm enough to me". The blonde says, "Wait, I haven't taken it out of the bowl to pet it yet."* □ *A blonde spies a letter lying on her doormat. It says on the envelope "DO NOT BEND." She spends the next 2 hours trying to figure out how to pick it up.* □ *A blonde was driving home, drunk as a skunk. Suddenly she has to swerve to avoid a tree, then another, then another. A cop car pulls her over, so she tells the cop about all the trees in the road. The cop says, "That's your air freshener swinging about!"* □ *A police officer stops a blonde for speeding and*

asks her very nicely if he could see her license. She replies in a huff, "I wish you guys would get your act together. Just yesterday you take away my license and then today you expect me to show it to you!" □

A blonde's dog goes missing and she is frantic. Her husband says "Why don't you put an ad in the paper?" She does, but two weeks later the dog is still missing. "What did you put in the paper?" her husband asks. "Here, Fido!" she replies □ *An Italian tourist asks a blonde: "Why do Scuba divers always fall backwards off their boats?" To which the blonde replies: "If they fell forward, they'd hit their face on the floor of the boat."* □ *Two blondes were going to Disneyland. They were driving on the Interstate when they saw the sign that said Disneyland LEFT. They started crying and turned around and went home.* □ □

A blonde was playing Trivial Pursuit one night... It was her turn. She rolled the dice and she landed on Science & Nature. Her question was, 'If you are in a vacuum and someone calls your name, can you hear it?' She thought for a time and then asked, 'Is it on or off?'