

### Latina III – Plutarch’s *Life of Marius* and *Life of Sulla*

Answer **two questions of your choice AND question 6** as thoroughly as you can. A good answer is *at least* a page long and provides multiple *specific examples* from the text (possibly, but not necessarily, including quotes).

\* Remember that these questions address not one biography, but two, which you will be asked to compare and contrast – in each account there is no single section where each question is answered, so take notes as you go along!

1. Compare the character/personality of Marius and Sulla as presented by Plutarch. What are their positive and negative qualities? Give examples!
2. Discuss the politics of Marius and Sulla. How do they obtain office? How do they keep office? Do they abide by the established law, or bend the law to their own will? Is one a better statesman than the other? Why or why not?
3. What do you think of Marius and Sulla as generals? Is one a better general than the other? Why or why not? Think about how they control and treat their soldiers, how they prepare for and fight battles, and their behavior outside of the battlefield.
4. What roles does violence play in the power plays of Marius and Sulla? Is it ever justified? Does one use/abuse it more than the other? What lesson, if any, is Plutarch trying to communicate about obtaining and maintaining power?
5. Think about when and how Plutarch emphasizes superstition. How does Plutarch react to or account for omens and the like? How do Marius and Sulla react to them or make use of them? What is Plutarch’s motivation to include so much superstition in his accounts? Think back to your thoughts on superstition in Livy. Is it being used the same way here, or differently?
6. Marius or Sulla: forced to choose (which you are), which would you support? You, like many of the Romans of the time, must pick one over the other, even if you have doubts about your choice. Why would you support one over the other? Be sure to back up your choice with as much support as you can from Plutarch’s accounts; there is no one ‘right’ choice, but you need to make your choice convincing!