

## Encomium and Vituperation

*enkomium*: *en* = 'within' + *komos* = 'revel'; a eulogy; a speech written to praise or give honor someone or something highly

### encomium

### *enkomion*

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Encomium is "a composition expository of attendant excellencies." Subjects include persons, things (such as abstract ideas), times (as the seasons), places, animals, and growing things, either general or specific.

#### Directions for Composition

Praise a person or thing for being virtuous. After composing an exordium (introduction), follow these steps:

1. Describe the stock a person comes from:
  - o what people
  - o what country
  - o what ancestors
  - o what parents
2. Describe the person's upbringing
  - o education
  - o instruction in art
  - o training in laws
3. Describe the person's deeds, which should be described as the results of
  - o his/her excellencies of mind (such as fortitude or prudence)
  - o his/her excellencies of body (such as beauty, speed, or vigor)
  - o his/her excellencies of fortune (as high position, power, wealth, friends)
4. Make a favorable comparison to someone else to escalate your praise
5. Conclude with an epilogue including either an exhortation to your hearers to emulate this person, or a prayer.

#### Related Figures

- [encomium](#)

#### See Also

- [epideictic](#)
- Progymnasmata: [vituperation](#)

**Sources:** Quintilian 2.4.20

See also Biography

*vituperere*: L. *vitium* = 'fault' + *parare* = 'prepare'; bitter and abusive language, a censure (n.); to censure, to disparage (v.)

## vituperation

*psogos*

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Vituperation or invective is "a composition expository of attendant evils" and is a companion to the previous exercise, [encomium](#). It also compares to the [Commonplace](#) exercise, but differs in speaking against not general vices or types of persons, but a specific individual. As the encomium, the vituperation includes as subjects chiefly persons, but also can take up things (such as abstract ideas), times (as the seasons), places, or animals.

### Directions for Composition

Attack a person or thing for being vicious. After composing an exordium (introduction), follow these steps:

1. Describe the stock a person comes from:
  - o what people
  - o what country
  - o what ancestors
  - o what parents
2. Describe the person's upbringing
  - o education
  - o instruction in art
  - o training in laws
3. Describe the person's deeds, which should be described as the results of
  - o his/her evils of mind (such as weakness or indiscretion)
  - o his/her evils of body (such as plainness, lethargy, or lack of vigor)
  - o his/her evils of fortune (as lack of or corruption of high position, power, wealth, friends)
4. Make a disfavorable comparison to someone else to escalate your vituperation
5. Conclude with an epilogue including either an exhortation to your hearers not to emulate this person, or a prayer.

### Example

Cicero's invectives against Antony, like those of Demosthenes against Philip of Macedon, are good examples of vituperation.