

Echo and Narcissus (extracts from Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3.356-510)

Summary of the story

The nymph Echo catches sight of the beautiful youth Narcissus as he is hunting in the mountains and falls passionately in love with him. However, Echo has a handicap which makes it difficult for her to let him know how she feels: she can only repeat the words of others and cannot initiate her own speech. By chance Narcissus is separated from his companions, and, as he calls out to them, Echo uses the opportunity to repeat his words in such a way that she expresses her love for him. However, when she shows herself and tries to embrace him he rejects her. Echo wastes away with unrequited love until only her bones, turned into stone, and her voice remain. Meanwhile, Narcissus takes a break from hunting to quench his thirst in a stream. As he bends over to drink he sees his reflection in the water and falls in love with it, not realizing that it is just a reflection. Eventually he realizes his mistake, and wastes away with despair. Echo sees what is happening and joins in his final lament. Finally, Narcissus' body disappears and in its place appears a flower.

Text and adaptation

The story is presented as a combination of unadapted Latin and English translation. Apart from the omission of four lines of English translation from Section J (lines 465-8), the text is complete. The set text is prefaced by an introductory passage in italics which is a summary/translation of the lines immediately preceding the set text, 342-55. This version has been adapted slightly from the one in the *Cambridge Latin Anthology*. The most notable differences are (i) 5 extra lines of Latin in Section H; (ii) an additional passage of English translation = Section B; (iii) translation instead of summary in Sections F and G; (iv) a new version of the translated passages in Sections I-K, including some extra lines. Teachers who wish to use the *Anthology* may find the table below helpful.

Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> III	WJEC text	<i>Cambridge Latin Anthology</i>
356-361	Section A: Latin	Lines 1-6
362-369	Section B: English trans.	omitted
370-378	Section C: Latin	Lines 7-15
379-392	Section D: Latin	Lines 16-29
393-401	Section E: Latin	Lines 30-38
402-406	Section F: English trans.	summary
407-412	Section G: English trans.	summary
413-436	Section H: Latin	Lines 39-57 5 lines omitted (432-436)
437-453	Section I: English trans.	English
454-464,469-473	Section J: English trans.	English
474-485	Section K: English trans.	English
486-501	Section L: Latin	Lines 58-73
502-510	Section M: Latin	Lines 74-82

Ovid

Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BC – AD 17) was born in Sulmo, about ninety miles east of Rome, to a wealthy equestrian family. He was educated in Rome and lived there most of his life, until AD 8, when the Emperor Augustus exiled him to Tomis on the Black Sea (in modern Romania). The reasons for his banishment are not known exactly. He himself says that it was

because of **carmen et error** (a poem and a mistake). The poem was his *Ars Amatoria* (*The Art of Love*); the mistake may have been a scandal, possibly involving Augustus' family.

Ovid and metamorphosis

The story of Echo and Narcissus is told by Ovid in his poem the *Metamorphoses*, an immense collection of myths, legends and folk-tales which are linked by the theme of transformation. Many of the stories focus on the interaction between gods and men and on the theme of love; the humans often suffer but are changed into flowers, animals, birds and trees, even mountains, and are united with nature.

Background information on Echo and Narcissus

Narcissus was the son of the river-nymph Liriope and the river-god Cephisus. At the time of the story he is sixteen years old and, in Ovid's words, could be counted as at once boy and man (**poteratque puer iuvenisque vidēri**, line 352). Many young men and girls, including nymphs of the water and woods, fell in love with him, but his pride (**dūra superbia**, line 354) rebuffed them, so no one dared touch him. The prophet Tiresias had foretold that Narcissus would live to old age 'as long as he did not come to know himself'. This is the story of the fulfilment of that prophecy.

Echo was a mountain nymph who could only repeat the last words spoken by other people. This was a punishment she had received from the goddess Juno because she had helped Juno's husband, Jupiter, when he was chasing other nymphs. Echo would divert Juno with her endless chattering so that the nymphs could flee before she caught them with Jupiter.

Ovid was probably the first poet to combine the stories of Echo and Narcissus.

Further reading

Commentaries

A.A.R. Henderson, *Ovid, Metamorphoses III* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1979; repr. London: Bloomsbury, 2013)

Peter Jones, *Reading Ovid: Stories from the Metamorphōsēs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)

Translations

Arthur Golding, *Ovid's Metamorphoses* (1565, London: Penguin Classics, 2002)

Ted Hughes, *Twenty-four Passages from the "Metamorphoses"* (London: Faber & Faber, 1997)

A.D. Melville, *Ovid, Metamorphoses*, with an introduction by E.J. Kenney (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1986)

David Raeburn, *Ovid, Metamorphoses: a New Verse Translation*, with an introduction by Denis Feeney (London: Penguin Classics, 2004)

Reading and teaching

The story needs little introduction; the passage in italics at the start of the prescription is likely to be sufficient. One way into the story is to use an image as a stimulus. For example, teachers could show students Poussin's *Echo and Narcissus*, which is printed in the *Cambridge Latin Anthology*, page 33.

Initially, it is advisable to maintain a brisk pace and concentrate on establishing the narrative, postponing detailed exploration of the text until students have become more used to Ovid and his language.

Three key aims are:

- understanding what the Latin means
- translating the Latin into correct, natural English
- appreciating the poetry.

It is often useful to adopt the following tripartite approach before attempting a translation:

1. Read aloud - to emphasise phrasing and stress word groups.
2. Break up complex sentences into constituent parts for comprehension and translation.
3. Comprehension questions. Often it is best to pick out the salient points in a clause, sentence or short passage before proceeding to a word-for-word translation. Teachers can guide students towards understanding that translation is a two-stage process. First, translate the words literally. Then, produce a polished version in natural English, aiming for a style that is as close to the structure and vocabulary of the original Latin as possible while being expressed in correct and idiomatic English. Sometimes this may require a degree of paraphrase to avoid contorted 'translationese'. Although a sample translation is provided in the course resources, it is expected that each student should make his/her own individual translation after various options have been discussed and evaluated. Students will not be asked to translate in the examination; however, some questions will require detailed knowledge of the text with the ability to explain precisely what an individual word or phrase means and how it fits into the sentence. It is advisable, therefore, to test students regularly on the translation and how the words fit together, e.g. by asking them to pick out words or phrases.

The story of Echo and Narcissus is a tragic tale of unrequited love, yet in Ovid's version much of the enjoyment for the reader lies in the verbal playfulness and technical skill of the writing. This means that style and tone will be a major focus of exploration and discussion. Suggestions for helping students to explore this and other aspects of the text can be found in the *Notes* and in the *Questions* appended to each section and at the end. It is suggested that a full discussion of style and wordplay wait until the whole story is read. Students will probably enjoy collecting examples. A discussion of wordplay will lead into a discussion of tone. (See the *General Discussion* at the end of these notes.)

As a final consolidation, it is good practice for students or the teacher to read aloud a passage which has been translated and explored. Regular recaps (by students or teacher) of what has been happening are also helpful.

A smartboard is useful for marking up or highlighting parts of the text, e.g. split noun + adjective phrases, uses of the ablative.

About the teacher's notes

Within these Teacher's Notes, the prescribed text has been broken up into short sections. The notes on each section are usually followed by a *Discussion* and *Questions*. The notes concentrate on matters of language and content, but do include some comment on style and

literary effects. The *Discussion* and *Questions* focus mostly on literary appreciation and interpretation. Throughout the notes, some use is made of rhetorical and technical terms. As some of these may be unfamiliar to teachers new to teaching Latin literature, a definition is usually included on the first appearance of each term. It is important to remember that the ability to explain a stylistic effect clearly is much more important than labelling it with the appropriate technical term.

These notes are intended to be independent of the commentary provided for students. There is, therefore, a substantial overlap of material, some of it *verbatim*. The notes are designed to provide for the needs of a wide spectrum of teachers, from those with limited knowledge of Latin and who are perhaps entirely new to reading Latin literature, to teachers experienced in both language and literature. It is hoped that all will find something of use and interest. Teachers who feel they need more help with the language will find it useful to consult the student commentary as well as these notes.

Note that some of the information contained in these notes is for general interest and to satisfy the curiosity of students and teachers. The examination requires knowledge outside the text only when it is needed in order to understand the text.

The notes here are heavily indebted to the *Cambridge Latin Anthology* and the *Cambridge Latin Anthology Teacher's Handbook*.

Language and style

This may well be the first experience students have of reading Latin poetry. Generally the syntax is straightforward, but some of the features, particularly the flexibility of word order, will be unfamiliar. Split phrases, in which an adjective or participle is separated from the noun it qualifies and noun + adjective phrases are juxtaposed or intertwined with each other, will cause some difficulty. In dealing with these, the class will be helped by careful phrasing when the teacher reads the passage aloud, and by periodic reminders that each phrase or sentence must be read through to the end. Teachers may wish to put the focus of language work on word order in the first couple of lessons, in particular noun and adjective agreement. Later on, Section H lines 15-17 provides a good opportunity for examining the arrangement of nouns and adjectives/participles.

The range of uses of the ablative is a feature of Latin verse with which students need to become familiar; this familiarisation is inevitably fairly slow and gradual. It is better at this stage not to draw up lists of different ablative usages, which may dishearten students by opening up an apparently infinite field of possibilities. Instead, encourage them to use the context as a guide to the required meaning, and prompt them with comprehension questions. Discuss the variety of usage only when they have encountered many more examples. As a rule of thumb, students can be advised to start by translating the ablative as 'in', 'on', 'by', 'with', 'from' or 'at', then rephrase it in better English once they have grasped the idea being conveyed by the ablative.

Section H lines 13-14 could be used to revise the passive, as the wordplay depends on recognizing the distinction between the active and passive voice.

Metre: dactylic hexameter.

Notes on the text

Section A: Echo sees Narcissus (*Metamorphoses* 3.356-361)

While out hunting one day, Narcissus is spotted by Echo, a nymph whose speech is limited to repeating what someone else has said.

Notes

1-3 **aspicit ... Ēchō**: the delayed subject (**vōcālis nymphē**) is a potential difficulty for students. Ease them into the text by providing guidance to help them correctly identify subject and object. Use careful reading aloud, emphasising the phrasing, followed by comprehension questions, such as:

- **aspicit**: what does this tell us about what was happening? (someone saw someone/thing)
- **hunc**: what does the word mean? (this); Does it tell us who did the seeing or who/what was seen? How do you know? (the latter; it's accusative/it means 'him'); Does it mean 'him' or 'her'?
- **trepidōs ... cervōs**: what was the person referred to as **hunc** doing? What was he hunting? How are the deer described?
- **vōcālis nymphē**: ah! Now we find out who the person seeing is?

hunc: Ovid often uses forms of **hic** and **ille** to refer to Narcissus and Echo.

trepidōs ... cervōs: the first example of a split adjective + noun phrase, a common feature of poetry. Teachers may want to draw students' attention to this.

1 **aspicit**: historic present tense. Roman writers often use the present tense for events which occur in the past. The effect is to make those events more exciting and vivid. Teachers may wish to discuss with students the relative merits of a present tense or past tense English translation. Ovid uses the historic present tense frequently and it will not be commented on again in the notes on this text.

2-3 **quae nec reticēre loquentī ... didicit**: 'who has not learnt to keep quiet when someone is talking'. **loquentī** is the dative singular of the present participle, literally 'for [someone] talking'. **discō** here means 'learn how to' and is used with the infinitives **reticēre** and **loquī**.

quae nec reticēre loquentī nec prius ipsa loquī didicit resonābilis Ēchō: like a natural echo, the nymph Echo cannot start a conversation herself, and she cannot stop herself repeating what someone else says.

3 the adjective **resonābilis** explains and translates the name Echo itself.

4-6 **corpus adhūc Ēchō, nōn vōx, erat; et tamen ūsum garrula nōn alium, quam nunc habet, ōris habēbat, reddere dē multīs ut verba novissima posset**: Ovid is reminding readers that at this point in the story Echo is a living girl who has limited power of speech; she can only repeat other people's last words. Check that students have grasped this, as they may assume from the name that Echo is no more than a disembodied voice. This is the only place where Echo's name is not at the end of the line, a position which emphasises her echoing quality.

4-5 **et tamen ūsum garrula nōn alium, quam nunc habet, ōris habēbat**: 'and, although a chatterbox, she enjoyed no more power of speech than she now does'. Literally, 'and yet the chatterbox had no other use of her mouth than she now has'.

Comprehension questions will help students. For example:

- Which word describes Echo? (**garrula**)

- What did Echo not have? (Hint: ignore the subordinate clause, **quam nunc habet**) (use of her voice)
- **aliud** describes **ūsum**: what does it add? (other use)
- **quam nunc habet**: choose the meaning of **quam** which would make more sense here: which; than; how! (Alternatively, use the interactive explorer to show the meaning ‘than’.)

6 **reddere dē multīs ut verba novissima posset**: there are several potential difficulties here. Three common words have unfamiliar translations: **reddere** = ‘reply’; **ut** = ‘namely that’, explaining **ūsum** (with the subjunctive verb **posset**); **novissima** = ‘last’ or ‘most recent’. **ut** is postponed; its usual position is first word in the clause. **multīs** = **multīs verbīs** (omission of a word: ellipsis). The simplest way to make all this accessible to students is probably to rearrange the word order and supply the missing word: **ut dē multīs [verbīs] verba novissima reddere posset**. Teachers could make the point that word order in Latin poetry is more flexible than in prose, and it is quite common for a conjunction to be postponed from its usual position as first word in the clause.

Discussion

The first word, **aspicit**, immediately grabs the reader’s attention and creates suspense by the delay in revealing, first of all, the subject, and then, at the very end of the sentence, the name of the nymph who sees Narcissus. It would be useful to spend some time studying the word order of lines 1-3. This could be done after reading the first sentence (lines 1-3) or left until the whole passage has been understood. Spending some time studying word order here will have two benefits: (i) it will improve students’ reading skills by helping them become accustomed to poetic word order; and (ii) it will encourage students to think about the effects that can be achieved by word arrangement. Teachers could ask: What is unusual about the order of words? What do you think is the effect of putting the verb first and delaying the subject? One approach is to compare Ovid’s sentence with a version in a more regular order: **vocalis nympha, quae nec reticere loquenti nec prius ipsa loqui didicit, resonabilis Echo hunc cervos trepidos in retia agitantem aspicit**. There is also an opportunity here to point out the separation of adjective and noun in **trepidos ... cervos**. Since this is such a common characteristic of Ovid’s poetry, students need to become familiar with it early on in their reading.

The theme of (lack of) communication is central to the story. Students may notice the irony inherent in Echo’s character and situation: she is a chatterbox but her speech is restricted and she cannot say what she wants.

Questions

1. Who is Echo and what do we learn about her in these lines?
2. Look at lines 2-6. Pick out all the words relating to speech. What do you think is the effect of this concentration on the idea of speech?

Section B: Echo’s punishment (*Metamorphoses* 3.362-369)

Ovid interrupts the story to explain how Echo’s condition had come about. It was a punishment from Juno, when she learnt that Echo was distracting her by chattering so that she did not notice Jupiter’s adultery.

Notes

- 1 **Juno:** wife of Jupiter and daughter of the god Saturn
- 2 **nymphs:** minor goddesses, imagined in the form of beautiful young women. They were associated with a particular location, such as mountains, rivers or woods. The Romans regarded their gods as having human form and behaviour (anthropomorphism).
- Jupiter:** the king of the gods. He had numerous sexual liaisons with goddesses, nymphs and humans, and Juno was jealous of his adultery.

Questions

Note: perhaps tell students that these questions do not have an expected correct answer.

- Why do you think Echo helped the nymphs escape by distracting Juno?
 - She wanted to protect Jupiter from Juno's anger.
 - She wanted to protect the nymphs from Juno's anger.
- Do you think Echo deserved to be punished?

Section C: Echo falls in love with Narcissus (*Metamorphoses* 3.370-378)

As soon as she sees Narcissus, Echo falls in love. She wants to speak to him, but she can't. All she can do is wait for him to speak so she can repeat his words.

Notes

- 1-2 **Narcissum ... vīdit et incaluit:** use comprehension questions to guide students to a correct identification of the subject:
- Whom did Echo see?
 - What was Narcissus doing when Echo saw him?
 - How did the sight of Narcissus make Echo feel?
- 1 **rūra:** plural for singular, as often in poetry (poetic plural). Translate as singular.
- 2-3 **incaluit ... calēscit:** literally (**in**)**calēscō** means 'grow warm'. Here it is used in a metaphorical sense to mean 'grow excited with desire', 'fall in love'.
- 2 **vīdit... incaluit, sequitur:** notice the three verbs together at the beginning of the line (a prominent position). The effect is to draw attention to the speed at which Echo fell in love - she saw Narcissus, fell in love at once, and immediately began to follow him.
- 3 **quōque magis:** literally 'and by which more', i.e. 'and by how much more'. Translate as 'and the more'. **quō** is in the ablative case, expressing measure of difference. Ensure students do not confuse **quōque** with the more familiar **quoque** ('also').
- quōque magis sequitur, flammā propiōre calēscit:** 'and the more she follows, she grows hot with a closer flame'. There are two ways of interpreting this:
- (i) 'and the more she follows, she burns as she comes closer to her love'. Here **flamma** is taken to mean the object of her love, i.e. Narcissus. (Compare the English expression 'old flame'.) On this interpretation, Echo is getting closer to Narcissus, probably because she is moving faster than him, rather than because he is slowing down or stopping. This is the translation given in the *CSCP Resources*.

(ii) ‘and the more she follows, the more the flame of passion burns within her’. Here **flamma** is taken to mean the emotion of love which Echo feels. This is the translation given in the *Cambridge Latin Anthology*.

The simile which follows might help decide between the two interpretations. It is up to individual teachers whether to steer students towards just one interpretation or whether to discuss the merits of each alternative. The decision will depend on the ability and interest of the class.

4 **nōn aliter quam cum**: ‘not otherwise than when’, i.e. ‘just as when’; the phrase introduces a simile.

summīs ... taedīs: dative, dependent on **circumlita**. Compound verbs often take a noun in the dative case.

4-5 **summīs circumlita taedīs admōtās rapiunt vīvācia sulphura flammās**: the intricate word order, combined with an image that is not easy to grasp, will need careful handling. Perhaps start by asking students what they know about sulphur. Then:

- Which adjective describes sulphur? Why is sulphur described as ‘quick to ignite’? Do you know of any common object where sulphur is used today (the head of matches)?
- The words **summīs circumlita taedīs** tell us where the sulphur is in the simile? Why would sulphur be smeared on the tips of torches?
- What happens when the sulphur is smeared on the tips of the torches? (It snatches the flames, i.e. it ignites.) **admōtās** describes the flames. What does this add to the image? (The flames have been brought near to the sulphur-tipped torches.)

Echo is compared to sulphur smeared on a torch. The simile is discussed in more detail below.

5 **sulphura**: poetic plural; translate as singular.

6 **ō quotiēns**: the exclamation **ō** is usually found in prayers on serious matters. It is sometimes difficult to judge Ovid's tone. How serious is he? Is there an element of playfulness? This is something to bear in mind as you read the rest of the story with the class. Here the prayer style is grand for the situation and could possibly be seen as mock-solemn, introducing a gentle humour which points out how exaggerated Echo's feelings are.

blandīs ... dictīs: a split noun + adjective phrase. There is another example in the next line, **mollēs ... precēs**. Students have already met several of these split noun + adjective (or participle) phrases and should be getting used to them. Both phrases are good examples of how meaning is enhanced by word order: the adjectives are stressed by being placed first in the phrase, separated from the noun they qualify.

7 **nātūra**: here = ‘condition’. Because of Juno's revenge Echo is not allowed to initiate any speech of her own. Ironically, her real nature would have been to talk nonstop!

8 **nec sinit incipiat**: add **eam** and **ut**; **nec [eam] sinit [ut] incipiat**. **sinō ut** + subjunctive verb = ‘allow to’.

sed, quod sinit, illa parāta est: one way of dealing with this compressed sentence is to expand it: **sed [id] quod [nātūra] sinit, illa parāta est [facere]**, ‘but she is ready to do what her condition does allow’. Literally, ‘but, what it allows, she is ready’.

illa: ‘she’, i.e. Echo.

- 9 **ad quōs sua verba remittat:** ‘so that she may send back her own words in reply to them’. Literally, ‘in reply to which [sounds] she may send back her own words’. The subjunctive verb expresses Echo’s purpose.

sua verba: ironic, because although Echo is speaking, she is merely repeating the words of someone else. Check that students remember that Echo can only repeat the last words that someone else has said, so she cannot spontaneously tell Narcissus that she loves him. All she can do is repeat what Narcissus says. In the lines which follow Ovid cleverly gives Narcissus words which can, when repeated, convey Echo’s meaning: students can be told to look out for this.

Discussion

Initially it is advisable, on the whole, to maintain a brisk pace and concentrate on establishing the narrative, postponing detailed exploration of the text until students have become more used to Ovid and his language. However, even on a first reading, it will be necessary to spend some time on analysing the simile. Some teachers may prefer to postpone a fuller investigation until after the whole text has been read. Elaborate similes, often extended over several lines, are a feature of epic poetry; sometimes they are known as epic similes. This particular simile is comparatively short and unelaborated, but deserves to be explored in detail as an example of the way Ovid uses similes in his narrative. Discuss the simile itself (**summīs ... flammīs**, lines 4-5) in the context of the lines which precede. One way to approach a simile is, first of all, to establish the main point of comparison, then continue the exploration by looking for other similarities and differences in the details. Here Echo is being compared to sulphur smeared on a torch. The adjective **vīvācia** (‘lively’, here ‘quick to ignite’) gives a clue to the point of the simile. Sulphur ignites quickly even when exposed to a gentle flame, suggesting that Echo is susceptible to falling in love. The simile also conveys the idea of physical attraction; Echo falls in love at first sight just as the sulphur snatches the flame when it is brought close. Fire imagery is common to the simile and the surrounding narrative (**incaluit ... flammā ... calēscit**). Fire suggests the intensity of passion, but also has ominous connotations of danger and destructiveness. A Roman reader may have been reminded of the torches which were used at Roman weddings, an ironic association in the circumstances.

Further discussion could focus on the presentation of Echo, the author’s attitude to her and the tone of the passage. Echo’s combination of hesitation and determination could make the reader pity her and her situation. Some readers may admire her courage. On the other hand, the prayer style (**ō**, line 6) is high-flown for the situation and could therefore be seen as mock-solemn, providing a gentle humour which shows how exaggerated her feelings are. The contrast with the direct and simple statement of truth in **nātūra repugnat** (line 7) may also undercut the seriousness. The ironic use of **nātūra** (here referring to her present condition, but also a reminder of her true nature) could be regarded as adding to the pity we feel for Echo; on the other hand, Ovid’s wit may lead readers to distance themselves from sympathising with Echo as they may feel that he is not taking the character seriously.

This might be a good time to pull together some examples of split noun + adjective (or participle) phrases: **Narcissum ... vagantem, summīs ... taedīs, admōtās ... flammās, blandīs ... dictīs, mollēs ... precēs**. Cf. **trepidōs ... cervos** in Section A, line 1. Examples can be picked out and highlighted on the board for the class to study, read aloud or retranslate. Ask students to identify the case and sometimes note the effect achieved by the phrase, e.g. highlighting the adjectives **blandīs** and **mollēs**.

Questions

1. Lines 4-5 contain a simile? What exactly is being compared with what?
2. In lines 1-5 how does Ovid impress on the reader the intensity of Echo's feelings? You could consider the choice of detail, the language and the simile. Do you think that it is passion or love that she feels?
3. Study lines 6-10. Do you think there are any hints of pathos here or is Echo's situation slightly comic?

Section D: Echo reveals her feelings but is rejected by Narcissus (*Metamorphoses* 3.379-392)

Narcissus becomes separated from his companions and calls out, giving Echo the opportunity to speak. By repeating his last words, she manages to make her feelings known, but when she reveals herself and tries to embrace him Narcissus rejects her and flees.

1-2 forte ... equis adest?: comprehension questions could be used for an initial exploration. For example:

- **equis adest?** Who says this?
- (if the answer is **puer**) Who is the **puer**?
- Why did Narcissus call out?

2 dixerat 'equis adest?' et 'adest!' responderat Ēchō: Echo does all she is capable of - she repeats Narcissus' last word. But it isn't just an echo, it is also a meaningful reply to Narcissus' question. Narcissus has lost his companions and cries out 'Is anyone here?' to which Echo replies 'Is here'. Echo's reply could be translated as 'Here!' to reproduce the echoing effect. It is important to check that students understand what is going on here and can therefore appreciate Ovid's ingenuity. Teachers may need to remind students that Echo can only repeat the last words she has heard and, therefore, Ovid has to give Narcissus words which can, when repeated, convey Echo's meaning. The same technique is used again in lines 8-9 and 13-14. Notice the arrangement of words:

pluperfect verb of speaking, **dixerat** (A); **adest** (B); **adest** (B); pluperfect verb of speaking, **responderat** (A)

This kind of word arrangement (ABBA) is called chiasmus. The chiasmus here produces an echoing effect by placing Narcissus' **adest** next to the **adest** of Echo's reply.

3 hic: 'he' = Narcissus. In this story forms of **hic** and **ille** are often used to refer to Narcissus and Echo. Cf. Section 1 line 1 above (**hunc**) and, in this Section, **illa** (line 4), **ille** (line 12), **illa** (line 14). Teachers might want to revise some forms of these

pronouns before reading this Section, and remind students that they can be used to mean ‘he’ and ‘she’.

- 2-3** **dixerat ... responderat ... stupet**: the change of tense from pluperfect to present has the effect of making Narcissus’ reaction more dramatic and vivid.
- 3** **utque ... dimittit: ut** here = ‘while’, ‘as’. The verb is indicative.
aciem ... dimittit: ‘sends out his gaze’. Ask students to think of a more natural English phrase, e.g. ‘directs his gaze’, ‘gazes around’.
partēs dimittit in omnēs: the preposition and verb are sandwiched between noun and adjective.
- 4** **vōce ‘venī!’ magnā clāmat**: the single quoted word inserted between noun and adjective may be difficult for students. Use comprehension questions, such as:
- What does Narcissus do?
 - What does he say?
 - What kind of voice does he use?
- vocat illa vocantem**: add **eum**; **vocat illa [eum] vocantem**, ‘she calls him calling’, i.e. ‘she calls him when he calls [to his companions]’.
- vōce ‘venī!’ magnā clāmat; vocat illa vocantem**: after translating, read the line aloud so students can appreciate the sound pattern. Then, ask: Which sounds are repeated? What is the effect of the repetition? Make clear to students that the ability to explain the sound effects and how they work is more important than using technical vocabulary. Ovid uses three words with the same stem: **vōx** (noun), **vocat** (verb) and **vocantem** (participle). This clever play on words imitates the echo. The assonance is extended by the *v* of **venī**. The repetition of the sounds *v* and *vo* is effective here because they reproduce the natural sound of an echo; this is an example of onomatopoeia, the sound of the words imitating the sound they are describing.
- 5** **respicit**: there is nothing in the Latin to indicate that Narcissus is now the subject, but students should be able to work it out from the context.
rūrsus nūllō veniente ... inquit: there are three ways of interpreting **rūrsus**:
- (i) Take with **nūllō veniente** and translate as ‘again’.
 - (ii) Take with **inquit** and translate as ‘again’.
 - (iii) Take with **inquit** and translate as ‘in response’.
- (i) is simplest, and is the translation adopted in the *CSCP Resources*. It will probably not be necessary to consider the other options unless students ask.
nūllō veniente: careful phrasing when reading aloud will help students identify the ablative absolute. If students do not grasp the sense immediately, encourage them to identify the case as ablative, then start with a literal translation such as ‘with no one coming’. Next, ask for suggestions for a more natural translation, such as ‘as no one was coming’.
- 6** **totidem quot**: ‘as many [words] as’
- 7** **alternae ... vōcis**: split adjective + noun phrase. **alternae** could be translated here as ‘answering’.
alternae dēceptus imāgine vōcis: it is important to ensure students understand what is happening here. Narcissus thinks that he is hearing one of his companions

answering him, but in fact what he hears is Echo repeating his words. You could translate **imāgine** here as ‘illusion’. (Another possible translation, adopted by Henderson ad loc., is ‘echo’.) Comprehension questions could be used as a starting point, for example:

- Which word describes Narcissus?
- Which other word suggests he doesn’t understand what is going on?
- What is Narcissus being deceived by?

8 coeāmus: ‘let us get together’. Jussive subjunctive. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar* 12.3, page 48.

8-9 nūllīque libentius umquam respōnsūra sonō ... Ēchō: ‘and Echo, who would never make a more willing reply to any sound’. Literally, ‘and Echo, to no sound ever about to reply more gladly’. Teachers may need to offer students considerable help here as there are several possibly unfamiliar forms and potential difficulties: the postponed subject (**Ēchō**); recognition of **nūllī** as the dative singular of **nūllus**; the split adjective + noun phrase **nūllīque ... sonō**; the comparative adverb **libentius**. A possible approach is a combination of questions, explanation and translation. For example:

- **nūllī** is the dative case of **nūllus**. How would you translate it?
- **nūllī** is an adjective. What noun does it describe? (Hint: the dative case.)
- **libenter** means ‘gladly’. **libentius** is the comparative form. So what does it mean?
- **respōnsūra**: translate the ending **-ūra** as ‘about to’ or ‘going to’. Now, what does **respōnsūra** mean? Who does it refer to? What would be a good translation here? (Hint: you could use a clause beginning ‘who’.)

coeāmus... coeāmus: most students will quickly see the double meaning. Narcissus is suggesting merely that he and his hunting companion should meet. When Echo repeats the word, she is using it with a sexual connotation.

9 rettulit: here = ‘answered’

10 verbīs favet ipsa suīs: ‘she is as good as her word’. Literally, ‘she herself backs up her own words’, i.e. she starts moving towards Narcissus.

10-11 ēgressaque ... collō: perhaps use comprehension questions here:

- Echo now acts on her words. What did she do?
- What was her intention?

silvā = ē silvā. The ablative is used without a preposition to mean ‘out of’. Teachers could draw students’ attention to this use of the ablative.

11 spērātō ... collō: ‘the neck she longed for’. Literally, ‘the hoped-for neck’. Dative, dependent on **iniceret**. Cf. the note on Section C line 4.

12 ille fugit: check that students remember that Narcissus has rejected all of his suitors. Ovid has explained this in an earlier part of the story, translated in the introduction: ‘... many young men and many girls desired him, but he was so proud that he allowed no young men and no girls near him’.

complexibus: ‘from my embrace’. Poetic plural. **auferō** (‘take away from’) takes a dative case. With some verbs the dative case expresses the idea of ‘from’, as well as the more usual ‘to’ or ‘for’.

13 ante ... quam: = [ēmoriar] **antequam**

ante ... ēmoriar quam sit tibi cōpia nostrī: **ēmoriar** could be either present subjunctive or future indicative. The present subjunctive is used to express a wish. Literally, the sentence means: ‘May I die (*or* I shall die) before there should be to you enjoyment of me’.

tibi: the dative case (with a part of **esse**) expresses possession.

cōpia: used here in a sexual sense, ‘the opportunity to have sexual intercourse (with someone)’. This is difficult to translate into English. An alternative to ‘enjoyment’ is ‘possession’, giving the translation ‘before you possess me’.

sit: clauses beginning with **antequam** sometimes have a subjunctive verb; here the subjunctive gives a sense of result.

nostrī = meī, ‘of me’. **nostrī** is the genitive of the pronoun **nōs**. Literally, ‘of us’.

Latin poets often use the plural instead of the singular. This sentence presents a good opportunity to discuss with students the merits of different interpretations. Teachers could ask:

Which of these translations do you prefer? Give your reasons.

(i) May I die before you possess me.

(ii) I shall die before you possess me.

The translation in the *CSCP Resources* is (i).

Notice the irony. Narcissus will indeed die before he has sex with Echo.

14 **rettulit:** here = ‘answered’

rettulit illa: the inversion of subject and verb may be difficult for students. Perhaps ask:

- Who answered? Which word shows this?
- How have forms of **hic** and **illa** been used often in this story? (Hint: look back at lines 4 (**illa**) and 12 (**ille**).)

sit tibi cōpia nostrī: by repeating just the last words spoken by Narcissus, Echo changes their meaning. She misses out **antequam** so that her words mean ‘May you enjoy me’. Without **antequam** the subjunctive verb **sit** expresses a wish.

Discussion

Teachers will decide whether to examine the wordplay in detail or limit discussion here and leave a full analysis until after the whole text has been read. Much will depend on how students respond after they have read and understood the text; they may be amused and want to pause to explore Ovid’s technique.

Ovid ingeniously devises utterances for Narcissus so that Echo can repeat the last word to convey the meaning she wants. This begins in line 2 when Narcissus says **ecquis adest?** and Echo repeats just the last word, **adest**. The effect is highlighted by the word order (see the note on line 2). The same technique is used in lines 8-9 and 12-13. The double entendres (**coeāmus**, **cōpia**) add to the fun. A different technique is seen in line 4. Here there is no direct speech; instead the sound of the words produces an echoing effect (see the note on line 4).

Discussion of tone is crucial, but is perhaps best left until after the whole text has been read. Some students may feel that Ovid’s wit detracts from the seriousness as he seems more

concerned to display his own ingenuity than to explore the feelings of his characters, and correspondingly the reader's focus of attention is directed more to the language games than the characters.

Questions

1. In this passage Echo repeats Narcissus' last words. What does Narcissus say and what does Echo say in return? Write down the Latin words and translate them.
2. What does Narcissus think is happening? What is really happening?
3. Find examples of how Ovid plays with language.
4. Which of these statements would you agree with more?
 - (a) The way Ovid describes Echo's situation makes me feel sorry for her.
 - (b) Ovid seems more interested in displaying his own wit and ingenuity than in exploring the feelings of his characters.
 Give reasons for your opinions, using examples from the text.

Section E: Echo's transformation (*Metamorphoses* 3.393-401)

Rejected by Narcissus, Echo goes into hiding. Gradually she wastes away until all that is left is her voice.

- 1 **sprēta**: context should make it evident that this refers to Echo, even if students do not register the feminine gender.
silvīs: the ablative without a preposition expresses the idea of 'in' a place.
puḍibundaque: the adjective could describe **Ēchō** (feminine nominative singular) or **ōra** (neuter accusative plural) or both. A Roman reader would not have to choose. It is possible to achieve the double effect in English: 'in shame she covers her embarrassed face'. The translation in the *CSCP Resources* takes **puḍibunda** with **ōra**. Students should choose which translation they prefer.
ōra: poetic plural. Translate as 'face' or preserve the plural form with 'features'.
- 2 **sōlis ex illō vivit in antrīs**: the preposition **in** is sandwiched between adjective and noun (**sōlis** ... **antrīs**); this is common in Latin. Here the adjective and noun are separated by three more words as well as a preposition; the word order is poetic. **sōlis** here means 'lonely' or 'isolated'. It is likely that some students will ignore the case of **sōlis** and assume it means 'lonely', referring to Echo. You can avoid this by using comprehension questions instead of asking for a translation: Where did Echo live? Which word describes the caves? What does **sōlis** mean here?
ex illō : add **tempōre**, 'from that time on', 'ever after'.
- 1-2 Comprehension questions could be used before attempting a translation. For example:
 - Echo was rejected by Narcissus (**sprēta**). Pick out the word in line 1 that describes how she felt.
 - What three things did she do in reaction to the rejection (lines 1-3)?
- 3 **sed tamen**: the two words reinforce each other, to create a strong contrast at the opening of the line and let the reader know that Echo's story is not yet over. Students may offer the literal translation 'but however'. Encourage them to look for a more natural English version, such as '(but) nonetheless/nevertheless' or 'but all the same'.
haeret amor: inversion of noun and verb. This emphasises **haeret**.

dolōre: help students with the ablative by asking: What caused her love to grow? You could remind them that a rule of thumb for translating the ablative case is ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘by’, ‘with’, ‘from’ or ‘at’.

4 **vigilēs ... cūrae:** split adjective + noun phrase. You could translate **vigilēs** with a relative clause, ‘the troubles which keep her awake’. **cūra** is often used for the torment of love.

5 **āera:** accusative singular of the Greek noun **āēr**.

6 **omnis:** the adjective could qualify either **sūcus** (masculine nominative singular) or **corporis** (neuter genitive singular); the former is probably better.

vōx tantum atque ossa supersunt: read these words aloud so students can appreciate the rhythm. The elided endings of **tantum** and **atque** make the words difficult to read. Combined with the heavy syllables, this produces the rough sound of a gasp or sob, full of broken emotion. The double elision may also imitate a fading away, reinforcing how little of Echo remains.

7 **ferunt:** ‘people say’. Literally, ‘they say’. This is a way of introducing a piece of information or a story without attributing it to any individual. The verb **ferō**, which usually means ‘carry’ is also used with the meaning ‘say’ or ‘tell’.

ossa ferunt lapidis figuram trāxisse: ‘people say her bones have assumed the shape of a stone’. The postponement of **ferunt** is difficult. Help students by showing them how this sentence links to the previous two statements about Echo’s voice and bones. For example:

- Ovid has explained what has happened to Echo’s voice. Now he is going to explain what happened to her bones. **ferunt** here means ‘they say’. What did people say happened to Echo’s bones?

nūllōque in monte: the preposition is sandwiched between adjective and noun. Students should be becoming familiar with this word order.

9 **omnibus audītur:** there are two ways of interpreting **omnibus**:

(i) ‘she is heard by everyone’

(ii) = **omnibus [montibus]**, ‘in all [the mountains]’

In (i) **omnibus** is dative case, expressing the agent.

In (ii) **omnibus** is ablative denoting place.

The ambiguity cannot be reproduced in English, so any translation will have to opt for one interpretation. The translation in the *CSCP Resources* is (i). However, (ii) might be more attractive from a grammatical point of view, as students will have become familiar with the use of the ablative without a preposition to denote ‘in’ a place, whereas the dative of agent with a passive verb will probably be unfamiliar. For this reason, some teachers may decide to go with (ii) if this is the translation students come up with, without mentioning (i). (However, they should bear in mind that students may come across (i) when using the *WJEC Resources*.) Some students might enjoy considering the pros and cons of each translation. For example, an argument for the translation ‘in all the mountains’ could go as follows: notice the contrast between **omnibus audītur** and **nūllōque in monte vidētur**. The contrast in meaning is brought out by the way the contrasting words are balanced, adjective with adjective (**nūllō** and **omnibus**) and passive verb with passive verb (**vidētur** and **audītur**). If

omnibus is taken as ablative and describes the mountains, then the balance is exact. On the other hand, a case can also be made for the other translation, ‘by everyone’. Ask students: Which do you think makes more sense? Echo is heard in all the mountains or she is heard by everyone (who happens to be there)? It could be argued that the former is highly exaggerated and it makes more sense to say that Echo is heard by everyone.

vīvit: although Echo’s body has been turned into a rock, so she is no longer alive, she lives on as a rock. Paradoxical expression is a feature of Ovid’s style.

Discussion

Remind students that metamorphosis is the theme which links the stories in Ovid's poem. Echo’s transformation is appropriate because it is in rocky places that echoes are most often heard. The description of Echo’s transformation into a rock is handled with sensitivity and restraint. A detailed description would risk being comic or grotesque. There is some focus on the physical details and the gradual process of transformation, but not in a graphic way: Echo becomes emaciated and shrivelled, until finally she is reduced to only a voice, expressed emphatically and briefly in just two words at the beginning of the line (**vōx manet**); the language has shrunk to reflect Echo’s fading away. The language emphasises Echo’s shame, isolation, suffering and vulnerability. There are plenty of words and phrases that could be cited: **sprēta** (highlighted by its position), **latet**, **puḍibunda**, **ōra prōtegit**, **sōlis**, **dolōre repulsae**, **miserābile**, **cūrae**. The passive **audītur** reflects her passivity: she is heard by others and is unable to be active herself, yet paradoxically **vīvit** – she achieves a kind of immortality by living on as a voice.

Questions

1. Lines 1-7 describe the transformation of Echo. What happens to her body? What remains of her at the end?
2. The words **latet silvīs** occur in line 1 and are repeated in line 8, in the same position in the line. Do you think that the repetition has any special effect? If so, what is the effect?
3. Do you think Ovid presents Echo sympathetically? Pick out some specific words and phrases to support your opinion.
4. Do you think it is a blessing or a curse to avoid death in the way Echo does?

Section F: Narcissus is cursed (*Metamorphoses* 3.402-406)

One of Narcissus’ rejected admirers prays that Narcissus himself should suffer the rejection he inflicts on others. The goddess Nemesis answers his prayer.

- 1-3 **as he had ... male admirers too**: check that students remember what was said about Narcissus in the introductory section: ‘he was so proud that he allowed no young men and no girls near him’.
- 2 **nymphs sprung from the waters or the mountains**: nymphs were often the daughters of river-gods or mountain-gods.
- 4 **raising his hand to the sky**: a gesture of prayer.

5-6 The goddess Nemesis granted these well-deserved prayers: Nemesis was the goddess of vengeance.

Discussion

Students will probably enjoy discussing the question below about the phrase ‘well-deserved prayers’. They will be able to suggest several answers: Nemesis, Narcissus' rejected suitors, Ovid, the reader. Encourage students to discuss the pros and cons of each, stressing that there is no single correct answer; they may think one, some or all are correct. Nemesis surely thought the prayer deserved to be answered, but other answers may be correct too.

Question

In whose judgement are the prayers well-deserved? (You may be able to think of more than one answer to this question.)

Section G: A clear pool (*Metamorphoses* 3.407-412)

In the wood there was a clear, shady pool, surrounded by grass.

Discussion

This interlude in the narrative breaks the tension and sets the scene for the next stage of the story. As befits a hot Mediterranean climate, the typical lovely place of Latin literature includes clear water and shade.

Question

This is a description of a typical beautiful place. What features of the place make it attractive? Which features, in particular, does Ovid emphasise?

Section H: Narcissus falls in love (*Metamorphoses* 3.413-436)

Narcissus looks into the pool and falls in love with the image he sees there, not realising that it is his own reflection.

Notes

- 1 hīc:** the metre shows that *i* is a long vowel. Carefully pronouncing the *i* as a long vowel will help students hear the difference between **hīc** (‘here’, ‘in this place’) and **hic** (‘this’).
studiō vēnandī: ‘by (as a result of) his enthusiasm for hunting’. **vēnandī** is the genitive singular of the gerund.
- 1-2 et ... et ... faciemque ... fontemque:** the double **et** and the double **-que** = ‘both ... and ... both ... and’. This is likely to present a problem for students. Help them by starting with comprehension questions:
- In line 1, which word shows how Narcissus felt?
 - What two things caused him to be tired?
 - Look at line 2: because he was tired, what did he do?

- **secūtus** usually means ‘having followed’. Here it has the special meaning of ‘attracted by’ or ‘drawn to’. What two things was Narcissus attracted by?
- Now point out the double **et** and double **–que**. Students will probably be able to see for themselves how these words function.

3 **sitim ... sitis altera**: after translating, ask students what they think **sitis altera** means. Perhaps follow by asking if they think thirst is an appropriate metaphor for love or physical desire.

4 **vīsaē correptus imāgine fōrmae**: ‘captivated by the beautiful image he saw’. Literally, ‘captivated by the image of beauty seen’. Students may express surprise that Narcissus has reached the age of sixteen without ever having seen his own reflection. **vīsaē ... fōrmae**: split participle + noun phrase. Ask students: ‘What was Narcissus captivated by?’ (If they reply ‘the sight’, point out that ‘by’ requires the ablative case. **vīsaē** is not in the ablative case. Which noun is in the ablative case?)

5 **corpus putat esse, quod umbra est**: add **id**; = **putat [id] quod umbra est corpus esse**. **umbra** here = ‘reflection’. Use comprehension questions to elicit the meaning.

6 **vultūque ... eōdem**: ‘with unchanging expression’. Literally, ‘with the same expression’.

7 **ē Pariō fōrmātum marmore signum**: the meaning should be clear despite the interlaced arrangement of words. The simile can be approached in the way suggested in the *Discussion* following Section C above.

1. What is the main point of comparison?

2. Are there any other similarities and differences in the details?

The main point of comparison between Narcissus and a statue is stillness. Narcissus is **immōtus** and **haeret**. A statue also suggests beauty, as statues were often representations of the ideal beauty of gods, heroes and athletes. Whiteness or paleness is not one of the similarities; ancient statues were painted in bright colours. The image of the statue could also be tied in with the theme of appearance and reality that is so strong in this story: both Narcissus and Echo fall in love with an appearance. It would be good to show students an example of an ancient statue such as the Apollo Belvedere.

Pariō ... marmore: Parian marble, from the Greek island of Paros, was famous.

8-12 **spectat ... ipse**: a long sentence. One approach is to read the whole sentence aloud first. Follow this up by reading sections, with comprehension questions, concentrating on the bare bones of the sentence. For example:

- **spectat**: what is Narcissus doing?
- **humī positus**: where precisely is he?
- **geminum ... sīdus**: what is the first thing he looks at?
- What does he look at next? Pick out the word which shows this?
- **et dignōs ... crīnēs**: then what did he look at? Pick out the word which shows this.

Continue in this way with the rest of the sentence, before going back to fill in the details.

8 **positus**: ‘lying’. Sometimes it is better to translate the Latin perfect participle by an English present participle.

geminum, sua lūmina, sīdus: lūmen ('light') and **sīdus** ('star') are used metaphorically in poetry for 'eye'.

geminum ... sīdus: poetic singular for plural. Translate as plural.

- 9 **Bacchō ... Apolline**: ablative because **dignus** ('worthy of') goes with a noun in the ablative case. Bacchus was the god of wine (Greek: Dionysos). Apollo was the god of prophecy, music and archery. Both gods were usually depicted as handsome young men with long, flowing hair. Roman temples and public spaces were adorned with statues of gods.

dignōs et Apolline: **et** here means '[Apollo] too'. Ask students:

- What else does Narcissus look at besides his eyes?
- How is the hair described? Pick out the phrase.
- The hair is also **dignōs ... Apolline**. What does this mean?
- What does **et** mean here?

- 10 **colla**: poetic plural. Translate as singular.

- 11 **in niveō mixtum candōre rubōrem**: 'the blush mixed with snow-white radiance'. **in ... mixtum** = 'mixed with'.

- 12 **quibus est mīrābilis ipse**: 'for which he himself is admired'. **quibus** is causal ablative, explaining why Narcissus is to be admired; literally 'because of which'. **mīrātur... mīrābilis**: this pair of words with the same stem highlights the paradox that Narcissus is both the admirer and the object of admiration.

- 13-14 **probat ... probātur ... petit ... petitur**: active and passive forms of the same verb exploit the paradox of Narcissus' situation: he is both the lover (active) and the beloved (passive). Alliteration of *p* stresses the key words.

- 14 **accendit ... ardet**: another pair of words highlighting the reciprocal nature of Narcissus' love.

- 15 **irrita fallācī quotiēns dedit ōscula fontī**: students will need some help with word order here. By now they should be familiar with the separation of nouns from adjectives; the postponement of the conjunction **quotiēns** is more difficult. Start with questions:

- What did Narcissus do?
- Which word describes the kisses? And what does it mean?
- Which word describes the spring? And what does it mean?
- How does **quotiēns** fit in?

This is a good example of how word order enhances meaning. The line begins with a pair of adjectives and ends with a pair of nouns. Thus the emphasis is on the adjectives, and the sense of failure they express, as they are in a prominent position at the beginning of the sentence and the beginning of the line. The alliteration of *f* in **fallācī ... fontī** has the effect of binding the two words together by sound and thus aiding comprehension.

- 16-17 **in mediīs ... aquīs**: the adjective is separated from its noun.

in mediīs quotiēns vīsum captantia collum bracchia mersit aquīs: guide students through the interlaced word order. For example:

- What does **in mediīs** mean? ‘in the middle [of something]’. Postpone completing this until later in the sentence.
- Begin the translation with **quotiēns** as in the previous line.
- **vīsum captantia collum bracchia**: translate these words, but leave putting them together until later.
- **mersit**: What did Narcissus do?
- When he plunged his arms into the water, what was he trying to do?
- **vīsum ... collum**: ‘the having been seen neck’. Rephrase in natural English (‘the neck which he had seen’).

18 **quid videat nescit**: the subordinate clause (**quid videat**, an indirect question) precedes the main verb (**nescit**).

quid videat ... quod videt: **quid videat** and **quod videt** both become in English ‘what he sees’. **quid videat** is an indirect question, so the verb is subjunctive. **quod videt** is a relative clause so the verb is indicative and **quod** is a relative pronoun. There is a contrast between the indefinite subjunctive verb **videat** and the definite indicative verb **videt**.

quod videt ūritur illō: again, the subordinate (relative) clause (**quod videt**) precedes the main clause (**ūritur illō**). The antecedent of **quod** is **illō**; the ablative expresses cause or result. The metaphor of fire to describe desire is continued from line 14, **accendit et ardet**. Compare the description of Echo falling in love with Narcissus, Section C, lines 3-5.

19 **oculōs īdem quī dēcipit incitat error**: **oculōs** needs to be understood as the object of **incitat**. The reversal of the usual order of subject and object may also present a difficulty. Perhaps break the sentence into short parts for translation and questions:

- **oculōs**: what does it mean? What case is it? So, it isn’t the subject.
- **īdem quī dēcipit**: Translate. ‘The same’ what? Wait to find out. But now you can fit in **oculōs**.
- **incitat error**: now you have the word that goes with **īdem**, ‘the same error’.
- So far then, ‘the same error which deceives the eyes, encourages’. What do you need to add to complete the sentence: ‘the same error which deceives his eyes, encourages them’.

20 **crēdūle**: the poet interrupts his story to speak directly to Narcissus; an example of apostrophe. The effect of the apostrophe is to create intimacy and emotional involvement. As a way of stimulating a discussion of the tone of these lines, perhaps ask students which of these statements they agree with more:

- The direct address has the effect of making me feel pity for Narcissus.
- The direct address sounds contemptuous, as if the poet is criticising Narcissus for his naivety.

21 **quod ... quod**: add **id** as the antecedent of **quod**, [**id**] **quod** ... [**id**] **quod**. Translate **id quod** (literally ‘that which’) as ‘what’.

āvertere: the imperative could be interpreted as:

- advice (‘Turn away!’);
- an appeal (‘Please turn away!’);

(iii) as a substitute for a conditional clause ('should you turn away').

(iii) seems to make most sense. It is the interpretation agreed by the translation in the *CSCP Resources* ('turn away and you will lose it'), Jones and Henderson.

22 ista: add **umbra**.

23 nīl habet ista suī: the subject is **ista**, referring to **umbra**.

nīl ... suī: 'nothing of itself', i.e. no substance.

-que ... -que: 'both ... and'.

Discussion

The lengthy description of Narcissus falling in love with his own reflection in the water gives Ovid enormous scope for verbal play, paradox and irony. Analysis of style and its effects will form a large part of the exploration of this passage; some examples have been discussed in the notes. The language emphasises the illusory nature of Narcissus' love: **spem sine corpore**, **umbra**, the adjectives **irrita** and **fallācī** (stressed by being placed next to each other in a prominent position). Line 19 highlights the paradox that the illusion which deceives his sight also excites him. Yet, alongside the linguistic glitter on the surface, there is also pathos. And there is irony in the situation: Narcissus himself is the victim of the same rejection he has inflicted on others.

Questions

1. **dumque ... est** (lines 2-4). In your own words explain what happens to Narcissus here and what mistakes he makes.
2. Look carefully at the simile in line 7. Which two things are being compared and in what ways are they similar? How effective do you think the simile is?
3. Look at lines 8-11. What things does Narcissus look at? How does this resemble a lover's description of the beloved? Pick out some specific words and phrases as examples. How does Narcissus respond to what he sees (line 12)?
4. The reflection of himself is, of course, an illusion. What elements does Ovid pick out in this passage to emphasise the illusory nature of that love which must be doomed to failure?
5. Does Ovid's style of writing make you feel any sympathy for Narcissus? Give examples from the text to support your opinion.

Section I: Narcissus wastes away and complains about his situation (*Metamorphoses* 3.437-53)

Narcissus continues to stare at his own image in the water, refusing to eat or drink. He appeals to the surrounding woods, complaining about the uniqueness and impossibility of his situation.

Narcissus' death, and his responsibility for it, is clearly signalled here: 'it was by his own eyes that he perished'. The wasting away from lack of food and drink will remind the reader of Echo's fate. However, unlike her, Narcissus has brought this on himself; his previous behaviour has led to his punishment by Nemesis, and, moreover, it is his own image that will kill him. There is no one to confide in or to sympathise with him, so he appeals to nature to express his love, his confusion, and his belief in the uniqueness of his situation. Students may

find Narcissus' address to the trees strange, but it is a convention of Latin poetry for lovers to pour out their feelings to inanimate nature. By the end of this section it emerges that he genuinely believes that the image in the water is a real, separate person.

Questions

1. Look at lines 1-4. In what ways is Narcissus' situation similar to Echo's? In what ways is his situation different from Echo's? (Hint: look back at Section E lines 1-6.)
2. Look at lines 5-16. Narcissus speaks to the woods. What effect do you think this has?
 - (a) It stresses his isolation, because he has no one else he can appeal to.
 - (b) It stresses the uniqueness of his love - the woods are centuries old and the frequent meeting place of lovers, yet they have never witnessed such a love.
 - (c) It is very artificial and makes it difficult for me to sympathise with Narcissus.

Section J: Narcissus realises he is looking at his own reflection (*Metamorphoses* 3.454-64, 469-473)

Narcissus begins to address the image in the water, but there is no response. Eventually he realises that the image is his own reflection. With this comes the realisation that he will die soon.

Discussion

Narcissus now speaks to the reflection in the water. Students' reaction to this may be that it is hard to accept that Narcissus still believes that there really is someone in the water mimicking his gestures. However, Peter Jones, in his commentary, provides an explanation. He points out, firstly, that Narcissus' world is full of water-nymphs and mountain-nymphs and other spirits, and some of them have already tried to seduce him. Narcissus would not therefore be surprised to see a spirit-like form in the water. Secondly, it is important to bear in mind that the goddess Nemesis is punishing Narcissus by making him fall in love with himself; what is happening is therefore out of his control.

Abruptly, with the words 'I am that boy' (line 9), Narcissus realises that he is looking at himself. He now knows too that he is going to die from the sorrow of unrequited love. The words 'no long life lies ahead for me' (line 12) are a reminder of Tiresias' prediction. When his mother asked the prophet Tiresias whether her son would live to a ripe old age, Tiresias replied 'If he never knows himself'. (See the introduction to the text.)

Question

How has Tiresias' prediction about Narcissus come true? (Look back at the introduction to the text for a reminder of Tiresias' prophecy.)

Section K: Narcissus is maddened by grief (*Metamorphoses* 3.474-485)

Narcissus' tears disturb the water and the reflection begins to disappear. He calls out to the image, begging it to remain. Grief-stricken, he tears his clothes and beats his chest.

- 1 maddened by grief:** the reader has been told at the very start of the story that Narcissus will be driven mad before he dies. Tiresias' prophecy that Narcissus will die young is followed by the words 'the strange madness which led to his death proved the truth of the prophecy'. These words are not part of the prescribed text, but are in the Introduction, which contains a summary of the beginning of the story.
- 6-7 While he was grieving he tore away the top of his tunic and beat his naked breast:** tearing one's clothes and beating one's breast were gestures of grief.
- 7-11 hands ... colours:** the description of Narcissus' grief concludes with three similes. First there is the simple comparison of his hands to marble. Then, there is a double simile, comparing his bruised chest to apples or grapes.

Discussion

The main focus of discussion will be the similes. Analysis of the similes can follow the method suggested in the *Discussion* on **Section C** above; first establish the main point(s) of comparison, then continue the exploration by looking for other similarities and differences in the details. The questions below can be used to help students.

Questions

1. Narcissus' hands are compared to marble. In what way(s) do they resemble marble? In what way(s) are they different?
2. What two things is Narcissus' beaten chest compared to?
3. Do you think the similes are effective? In answering this, it might help to consider whether you agree with any of the following statements:
 - (a) The similes help create a picture of the scene so the reader can visualise it.
 - (b) The similes add to the emotional involvement with Narcissus' situation by showing the physical effects of his grief.
 - (c) The similes create a pretty picture which makes the reader forget about Narcissus' situation.
 - (d) The similes create a pretty picture which isn't appropriate in the context of grief and suffering.

Section L: Narcissus wastes away (*Metamorphoses* 3.486-501)

Narcissus gradually fades away from unrequited love. Echo sees him and pities him, and repeats his final words.

- 1 quae:** = **et haec**, referring back to the reflection of himself, bare-chested, which appears in the now clear (**liquefactā**) water. The relative pronoun at the beginning of a sentence (connecting relative) makes a connection to the previous sentence. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar* 5.7, page 21.
- simul:** = **simulac**, 'as soon as'
- liquefactā ... undā:** split adjective + noun phrase. Scansion shows that **liquefactā** is feminine ablative singular and must therefore go with **undā**.
- aspexit liquefactā rursus in undā:** there are two ways of interpreting **rursus**:
- (i) take **rursus** with **aspexit**;

- (ii) take **liquefactā rursus** together, describing **undā**. When the water had been disturbed by Narcissus' tears, the reflection had begun to disappear (Section K), but now, as the water clears again, the reflection has returned.

The translation in the *CSCP Resources* opts for (i). Henderson and the *Cambridge Latin Anthology (Teacher's Handbook)* opt for (ii). Accept either translation. If students come up with (i) some teachers might decide to go no further, judging that their students prefer the security of a single interpretation. However, if students suggest (ii) it will be necessary to offer (i) as well, as students may be puzzled if they come upon it in the *CSCP Resources* translation. Some students might enjoy discussing the pros and cons of each translation.

2-4 **ut ... sic**: 'just as ... so'. **ut** introduces a simile.

2-4 **intābēscere ... solent**: students will probably need help with the word order and compressed expression here. The main verb (**solent**) has to be understood in the first clause and the infinitive (**intābēscere**) in the second clause.

- What does **intābēscere** mean? (melt) What form is it? (infinitive) A word later in the sentence will explain why it is infinitive – leave that for now.
- What is described as 'yellow'? (Some students may say 'fire', but teachers can point out that the words **flāvae** and **igne** do not agree.)
- What happens to the wax?
- What makes the wax melt?
- Does **levī** describe the wax or the flame? Which do you think is a more appropriate translation of **levī** here, 'light' or 'gentle'?
- What else melts?
- What causes the frost to melt?
- Now can you see how **solent** fits in? (Hint: take it with the infinitive **intābēscere**.)

2-5 **ut ... ignī**: a double simile. Apply the approach to analysing similes demonstrated in the notes on Section C lines 4-5 and Section H line 7. Ask students:

- What is the main point of comparison?
- Are there any other similarities and differences in the details?

The simile is explored in the *Discussion* which follows the notes on this section.

3 **cērae**: possibly a poetic plural. Otherwise, as Henderson suggests, it may refer to objects made of wax, such as funeral portrait masks, dolls or displays of fruit and flowers.

4 **sōle tepente solent**: repeat these words after the first reading aloud to help students appreciate the sound and rhythm of the first part of this line. The two dactyls at the start, the assonance (repetition of the vowels *o* and *e*), and the internal rhyme *tepente solent* give the line a gentle sound.

6 **neque iam color est mixtō candōre rubōrī**: 'his rosy-white complexion now has no colour'. Literally, 'there is no longer colour to his redness mixed with whiteness'. Narcissus' complexion (or perhaps, as Henderson argues, his body, which has been bruised by his pounding - looking back to the similes of the apples and grapes) has

lost its colour. **mixtō** is ambiguous. It can be interpreted (as here and in the *CSCP Resources*) as dative agreeing with **rubōrī**. Alternatively (as in Jones) it could be ablative agreeing with **candōre**.

rubōrī: the dative case with a form of **esse** expresses possession.

7 **quae**: add **ea**; [**ea**] **quae**, ‘the things which’.

quae modo vīsa placēbant: ‘the things which he had recently seen and liked’.

Literally, ‘the things which recently seen were pleasing’.

vigor ... vīres ... vīsa: alliteration of *v* and assonance of *i* stress the most important words in the line.

8 **corpus**: this may refer to his physique, the kind of body which made him attractive, i.e. his body is still there but its appearance has changed.

quondam quod amāverat Ēchō: Ovid brings Echo back into the story. Reading aloud with careful phrasing will help students see the clause boundaries; the punctuation is also helpful. **quod** is postponed to the second word in the relative clause; the antecedent is **corpus**. The reversal of verb and subject may cause a problem, but is easily solved by sense. Ask: ‘Had Echo loved the body or had the body loved Echo?’

9 **quae ... ut vīdit**: **ut** + indicative verb = ‘when’. **quae** is a connecting relative. There are two ways of interpreting it:

(i) neuter accusative plural, referring to the things Echo has seen: ‘when she saw this’;

(ii) feminine nominative singular, referring to Echo: ‘when she saw [him]’ (**quae ... ut [eum] vīdit**).

The translation in the *CSCP Resources* opts for (i). Jones opts for (ii). Accept either translation.

10-12 **quotiēns ... dīxerat ... cumque ... percusserat**: the pluperfect tense is used for repeated actions. Use a simple past tense in English: ‘whenever he said ...’.

11-13 **haec... ille ... haec**: **haec** = ‘she’, referring to Echo; **ille** = ‘he’, referring to Narcissus.

resonīs ... vōcibus: split adjective + noun phrase

12 **suōs ... lacertōs**: split adjective + noun phrase

14 **vōx**: = ‘words’, ‘cry’

haec: refers to **vōx**

solitam ... in undam: adjective and noun are separated by the preposition they depend on. The word order foregrounds **solitam** and emphasises its pathos.

spectantis: add **Narcissī**; ‘of Narcissus looking’.

15 **dīlēcte**: vocative case, agreeing with **puer**

15-16 **totidem remisit verba locus, dictōque ‘valē’, ‘vale’ inquit et Ēchō**: there are two echoes here - from nature (**locus**) and from the nymph Echo, who has turned into a rock. Originally **Ēchō** would have been written here without the capital letter, giving Ovid the chance to attach two meanings to one word; Roman readers would not have had to distinguish between the nymph and the natural phenomenon.

16 **dictōque ‘valē’**: ‘and when he had said farewell’. Literally, ‘farewell having been said’. Ablative absolute.

valē, ‘vale’ inquit: there are some subtle metrical effects in the second half of this line:

vālē, 'vālē' īnquīt

The second syllable of the second **vale** would normally be heavy, but here it is scanned as light. Also, the final vowel of **vale** is not elided before **īnquīt**. The effect is that the second, echoing, **vale** sounds as if it is fading away.

et: here = 'also'

Discussion

Narcissus' dissolution is described first of all in two similes. He fades away like wax being melted by a flame or frost melting in the sun. The slowness and gentleness of these processes is emphasised. For Narcissus it is a gradual process, but not, however, particularly gentle. Another difference is that the images portray natural processes, whereas Narcissus' dissolution is unnatural. The flame image is common both to Narcissus' situation and the wax simile; however, in Narcissus' case the consuming flame is metaphorical, the flame of unfulfilled desire hidden within himself. The two similes help the reader to imagine the fading away of Narcissus by using analogies from the physical world - things the reader would be familiar with to help picture something unknown. Both similes contain decorative adjectives (**flāvae**, **mātūtīnae**) which make the picture of melting wax or frost more precise but do not contribute to explaining what is happening to Narcissus.

After the similes there is a brief description (lines 6-8): Narcissus loses his colour, his strength, all his beauty, and finally his whole body disappears. The repeated negatives in these lines express regret for Narcissus' lost beauty; he no longer possesses the attributes which made Echo fall in love with him and, like Echo, he loses his physical form. Then in mid-line and mid-sentence, Ovid weaves Echo back into the story and she is there to share his final moments. The pivot for this transition is the reference to her love for Narcissus and the thematic allusion to the fate they share - dissolution. As they read the rest of this section, encourage students to think about how Echo is presented, bearing in mind that she has changed into a rock, with the power to repeat sounds. (See the note on lines 15-16.) She has a voice, perception and feelings, but presumably no body. Is she a natural phenomenon or a rock, or both? Earlier, Echo had contrived to repeat Narcissus' words so that they formed a conversation and declaration of love. Now, however, all she can do is repeat the sounds he makes; the lack of communication underlines the futility of her love.

Narcissus' body disappears (**nec corpus remanet**, line 8), yet in the lines that follow (and in Section M, lines 1-2) it appears that he is still alive, beating his upper arms and speaking. Students may be puzzled by the apparent contradiction. The simplest explanation is that **corpus** refers to Narcissus' physique; Narcissus is still alive, but his body is no longer of the kind which made Echo fall in love with him. An alternative solution is that lines 9-16 (and Section M, lines 1-2) are a flashback.

Questions

1. Examine the two images in lines 2-4. Which do you think portrays dissolution more effectively? You could consider the contribution of sound and rhythm to the effect in line 4. In what way are these gentle images different from the wasting away of Narcissus?
2. Narcissus' dissolution is described briefly in lines 6-8. What are the four stages of Narcissus' dissolution?
3. Study lines 10-16. What sounds does Echo make?

4. Do you feel pity for (a) Narcissus and/or (b) Echo? Give reasons to explain your view, picking out and translating some words and phrases from the text to support it.

Section M: Narcissus becomes a flower (*Metamorphoses* 3.502-510)

Narcissus dies and is mourned by the nymphs and Echo, but when they come to bury him a flower has appeared in the place of his body.

Notes

1 **ille**: Narcissus

caput viridī fessum ... in herbā: interwoven poetic word order. The pair of nouns frames the pair of adjectives in the order: noun A adjective B adjective A noun B. Additionally, the preposition is enclosed between adjective B and noun B. The meaning, however, should be easily discerned if comprehension questions are used. For example:

- What did Narcissus do?
- Which word describes the grass?
- Which word describes his head?

2 **viridī**: the colour green is associated with life and health, whereas Narcissus is weak and dying. The adjective also creates a picture in which the green grass contrasts with Narcissus' paleness (unstated here, but implicit in the image of Narcissus created in Section L, line 6). Strong colour contrasts have played a large part in Ovid's picture-making in this story. Compare Section L, line 6 and the similes in Section K, lines 7-11).

lūmina: **lūmen** ('light') is often used in poetry to mean 'eye'.

lūmina mors clausit: the inversion of subject and object should not present any difficulty.

dominī: here = 'owner'. Latin love poets often use the language of slavery to describe the relationship between lover and beloved. **dominī** depends on **fōrmam** (not on **lūmina**). Guide students by reading aloud with a pause after **clausit**, followed by questions, e.g.:

- What were the eyes doing when death closed them? (admiring)
- What were they admiring? (the beauty)
- Whose beauty? (Narcissus')
- Which word shows this? (**dominī**)

3 **īfernā sēde**: 'in the region below', i.e. the Underworld, where the spirits of the dead were believed to go after death. The ablative without a proposition means 'in'.

4 **in Stygiā ... aquā**: **Stygiā** is an adjective, 'of the Styx'. In Greek mythology the Styx was one of the five rivers of the Underworld.

3-4 **tum quoque ... sē spectābat**: the force of the imperfect tense can be conveyed by translations such as 'He went on looking at himself' or 'He continued looking at himself'. Even after death Narcissus continued to gaze on his own image. Some readers might feel that the wit undercuts the pathos at this point.

4-7 **plānxēre ... parābant**: establish a basic understanding before embarking on a translation of these lines. Ask students to pick out the elements of a traditional Roman funeral.

- 4-5 plānxēre ... posuēre: = plānxērunt, posuērunt.** The ending **-ēre** for the 3rd person plural of the perfect tense is common in poetry. Take care that students do not confuse it with the infinitive.
- 5 Nāides:** Naiads were water-nymphs.
sectōs ... capillōs: literally ‘the having been cut off hair’. When translating into English, it is best to rephrase the perfect participle as a main verb: ‘they cut off their hair and ...’. It was a custom at funerals to cut off a lock of hair and place it on the grave as an offering to the dead. The Naiads cut off their hair, then put it down, presumably on the river bank where Narcissus had died, as there was no grave and no body.
frātrī: the dative = ‘in honour of’. Narcissus’ mother, Liriope, was a water-nymph and his father was the river-god Cephisus, so these would be his sisters.
- 6 Dryades:** Dryads were wood-nymphs. These would be some of the nymphs who had fallen in love with Narcissus and been rejected by him (Section F, lines 1-2).
plangentibus: add **eīs**. The dative case depends on **assonat**, ‘sounds along with’. A possible translation is ‘returns their cries’; literally, ‘sounds along with them wailing’.
- 4-6 plānxēre ... plānxērunt ... plangentibus:** the repetition of the verb **plangere** in different forms echoes the sound of wailing and gives the impression that the cries of grief are repeated. Each time the verb is emphasised by its position as first word in the clause. Encourage students to read the whole sentence aloud (**plānxēre ... Ēchō**) to help them appreciate how the sound emphasises the idea of mourning.
- 7 quassāsque facēs:** ‘and the torches which would be shaken’. Literally, ‘the shaken torches’. Mourners would shake torches as part of the funeral rites.
rogum ... pheretrumque: the Roman custom was to cremate the bodies of the dead on a funeral pyre. The corpse was laid on a bier (funeral couch) and carried in procession to the pyre, then the bier was placed on the pyre.
- 8 nusquam corpus erat:** without a body there could be no funeral. The absence of a connective, such as **sed**, to connect this bald statement to the previous sentence conveys the surprise felt by the nymphs. (Omission of a connective is known as asyndeton.) Some students may feel that the idea that the nymphs have only just noticed that Narcissus’ body has disappeared is a rather comic touch which undercuts the serious tone of this section.
croceum ... flōrem: split adjective + noun phrase. This flower is the narcissus, a daffodil with white petals surrounding a yellow centre.
- 8-9 croceum ... albis:** before attempting a word-for-word translation ask students to describe what appeared where Narcissus’ body had been.
- 9 foliīs ... albīs:** split adjective + noun phrase
medium: add **flōrem**, ‘the middle of the flower’. Translate, ‘its centre’.

Discussion

The story of Echo and Narcissus ends with the metamorphosis of Narcissus into the flower which bears his name. Ovid describes only the result of his transformation, not the process – the flower has appeared suddenly in the place where his body has been. At the end, Narcissus is mourned by those he has rejected, including Echo. The focus on the grief of the bereaved

and the actions and sounds of mourning creates an elegiac mood. However, some students may feel that there are some jarring notes. The detail that, even in the Underworld, Narcissus continues to gaze at his own image in the River Styx could be seen as witty rather than poignant. Later, the nymphs' apparent failure to notice that Narcissus' body has disappeared could be regarded as a comic touch which undercuts the serious tone.

Questions

1. Look back to the simile in Section C lines 4-5. When Echo first fell in love with Narcissus she was compared to a torch being lit. Do you think that the repeated use of torch (and fire) imagery has any significance? Remember that torches were used at both weddings and funerals.
2. What is your final impression of Narcissus and of the way Ovid presents him?

General discussion

The theme of metamorphosis

Both Echo and Narcissus experience transformation: Echo the nymph into echo, the natural phenomenon; Narcissus the youth into a flower. Both characters bear the name of the natural feature into which they are transformed (although, in the case of Narcissus, the flower is not named). The process of metamorphosis is more clearly described in Echo's change of body into nothing but auditory reflection and stone (Section E, lines 4-7). In contrast, Narcissus' fate is less clearly defined because it comes in two stages: there is the wasting away of his body (Section L, lines 2-8) followed later by the simple result (but not the process) of his metamorphosis into a flower (Section M, lines 8-9). The process is described only by means of the two similes. There are, however, some similarities. Both Echo and Narcissus waste away from unrequited love for the same person. Both too are transformed into something that reflects a quality that defined them when they were alive: Echo's chattiness and Narcissus' beauty. For both, metamorphosis allows death to be side-stepped: their existence continues in a different form, as part of the natural world.

The theme of love

Students will have no trouble in identifying familiar elements of the traditional love story: love at first sight, infatuation, unrequited love, doomed young lovers, girl chasing boy (the opposite of the usual in Ovid where god chases nymph), the beauty of the beloved, wasting away from unrequited love. Teachers could develop the discussion by directing students to look at the language and imagery. Fire imagery is pervasive: **incaluit** (Section C, line 2); **flammā ... calēscit** (Section C, line 3); the torch simile (Section C, lines 4-5) and the wax simile (Section L, lines 2-4); **accendit, ardet** (Section H, line 14); **ūritur** (Section H, line 18); **tēctō ... carpitur ignī** (Section L, line 5). Inability to sleep because of the torments of love (**vigilēs ... cūrae**, Section E, line 4) is a common motif in Latin love poetry. Another way to extend the discussion is to ask students to think about how Ovid manipulates the traditional motifs. In Latin love poetry lovers often say that they are wasting away and dying of love; here they actually do.

The characters: Echo

Echo's character is only sketchily drawn. She is young and vulnerable, and students may feel that she has been harshly treated by Juno. Despite her disability she acts with courage and determination in her pursuit of Narcissus. Students will probably find it easy to identify with her, although some may respond less sympathetically to her relentless pursuit of Narcissus. Narcissus treats her cruelly, yet she plays no part in his destruction; it is not her but another of his rejected suitors who curses Narcissus (Section F). On the contrary, although she has

not forgotten her rejection by Narcissus and still feels angry, she seems to show compassion: **quamvīs irāta memorque indoluit** (Section L, lines 9-10); **plangentibus assonat Ēchō** (Section M, line 6).

The characters: Narcissus

The character of Narcissus is given more prominence. His infatuation with his own reflection is described at length (some readers might think at excessive length) and the reader is invited to share his thought processes and his feelings. Students may think that Narcissus is cruel in his treatment of Echo and deserves to be punished; immediately before this excerpt begins (see the introductory section in italics) Ovid has mentioned Narcissus' arrogance, and in Section F his harsh behaviour to his suitors is punished by the goddess Nemesis. Does this suggest that Ovid is presenting the story as one of just punishment? On the other hand, some pathos may be detected (e.g. in Section H **imprūdēns**, line 13; **quid videat nescit**, line 18; **crēdule**, line 20).

Style

Many examples of Ovid's wit, humour and ingenuity will have been noted already on the first reading, but it will be necessary to gather them together. Here are just a few: the idea that after death Narcissus continued to gaze at his reflection in the Styx (Section M, lines 3-4); the play on the two ideas of echoes, the natural one and the nymph (Section L, lines 15-16); the sexual innuendoes and other word play (see for example Section D); the exploitation of paradox (Section E, line 9; Section H, lines 12-14, 19); the mock-solemnity of the prayer form (Section C, lines 6-7).

Tone

This follows naturally from the discussion of style. Although the story has elements of a passionate tragedy, this is undercut by the wordplay and wit. Teachers can help students develop their ideas about this key issue by asking further questions:

- Ovid is attempting a delicate balancing act between humour and seriousness. Does he succeed? Or, does he take the word-play and humour too far?
- Does Ovid's presentation of the story appeal to both intellect and emotions or is your enjoyment in reading the poem purely intellectual?

Narrative unity

Ovid was probably the first to combine two separate stories about Echo and Narcissus in a single story. Students could be asked to consider whether he has done this successfully. Some readers may think that Echo's reappearance is awkward. If she is just an echo how has she seen what has happened to Narcissus? Echo may stand for all the suitors Narcissus has rejected and this may affect the way the reader judges Narcissus, especially as Echo is presented as a forgiving figure. There are thematic links: both stories turn on the idea of reflection, one a kind of auditory reflection the other visual (Henderson, note on line 78); Narcissus' fate is similar to that of Echo in that both waste away from unrequited love for the same person; in both stories there is a failure of communication between lover and beloved; in both stories Narcissus is the victim of an illusion (Section D, line 7: **alternae dēceptus imāgine vōcis**; cf. Section H, line 4: **vīsae correptus imāgine fōrmae**). The technique gives shape to the joining of the separate stories.

General questions

1. The adjective 'narcissistic' is sometimes used in English to describe people. What do you think it means?
2. Compare the metamorphoses of Echo and Narcissus. Do you think them appropriate for each character? How do both Echo and Narcissus manage to cheat death?
3. What elements are there of a traditional love story?

4. Do you feel sympathy for either Echo or Narcissus or both?
5. Are there any places where you think Ovid is not being entirely serious? If so, support your ideas with specific examples from the text.
6. Consider the following statement: The enjoyment this story offers comes more from the play with words than from a deeply emotional involvement in the 'tragedy'. To what extent do you agree? (Completely, not at all, partly.) Find examples from the text to support your opinion.
7. Compare the similes in Section C lines 3-5 and Section L lines 2-5.
8. Ovid was probably the first to combine two separate stories about Echo and Narcissus in a single story. Do you think he has done this successfully? Can you see any advantages in combining the stories?

Activities

Read aloud: make a recording or have a reading competition. Each student chooses a short passage.

Stylistic analysis of a short passage: Provide students with enlarged copies of the passage pasted on to a large piece of (A3) paper. There should be wide margins all around the text. In pairs, students mark up and annotate the text, using coloured pens and highlighters. (Alternatively make a Powerpoint.)

Translation: choose a short passage (about 10 lines) and make a polished translation.

Compare translations: choose a short passage and compare a translation or a selection of translations. It would be good to include the translation by Arthur Golding in a selection. The poet Ted Hughes made a free translation of some of the myths from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; a few lines from his version of the Echo and Narcissus story could be compared with the original.

Images: the story of Echo and Narcissus is a popular subject for artists. The *Cambridge Latin Anthology* contains several examples: a Roman wall painting and paintings by Poussin and Waterhouse. Choose an image or images and ask students to compare them with the text.