

# ITAL 204

## Intermediate Italian

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### General Description

#### Introduction

Italian 204 is the last in the series of four Italian courses offered through the Friday Center's Self-paced Courses program. In this fourth semester of Italian, you will review some of the grammatical structures you learned in your second and third semester Italian courses as well as learn a few new ones. You will read a lot in this course. The readings will include essays from your textbook, *Ponti*, on aspects of Italian culture such as fashion, film, games, lifestyles, and immigration. You will also read stories by two famous Italian authors, Carlo Collodi and Italo Calvino. In addition to helping you learn more about Italian literature, history, and contemporary culture, these readings provide a context for much of the grammar. They will also help you expand your vocabulary and increase your fluency. Like previous courses, Italian 204 develops your skills in the four areas of grammar, reading, writing, and pronunciation. In addition to completing grammar exercises and reading comprehension assignments, you will record passages on tape for pronunciation practice and will write short essays on topics relating to the themes of the chapters.

#### Required Materials

- Tognozzi, Elissa and Giuseppe Cavatorta. *Ponti*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.\*

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\* This textbook is also used for ITAL 203.

## General Description

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- Collodi, Carlo. *Le avventure di Pinocchio*. Ed. Solveig Odland and Pina Zaccarin. Denmark: Aschehoug, 1972.
- Calvino, Italo. *Marcovaldo*. Ed. Zita Vaccaro. Denmark: Aschehoug, 1987.
- Set of blank audiocassette tapes and access to a cassette recorder.

You may purchase the books from the Higher Grounds bookstore at the Friday Center by using the book order form in this manual or by ordering them online at <https://s4.its.unc.edu/HigherGrounds/>.

### Recommended Materials

A good Italian/English dictionary is indispensable to this course. Although you will find vocabulary help in your textbook and in this course manual for many of the assigned readings, there will always be additional words that you have never seen or whose meanings you have forgotten. When you write essays in Italian, you will undoubtedly want to express an idea for which you are missing a key word. If you plan to purchase a dictionary, look for *Harper Collins*, *Cassell's*, or *Webster's New World*. You can find these at Borders, Barnes and Noble, or UNC-Chapel Hill's Bullshead. If you prefer an online dictionary, try *Garzanti linguistica* at [www.garzantilinguistica.it](http://www.garzantilinguistica.it).

### Organization of Lessons

The lessons in your course manual include work from two sources: your main textbook, *Ponti*, and your short-story readers, *Le avventure di Pinocchio* and *Marcovaldo*. **Those assignments that you must turn in for grading are designated by an arrow (►) in front of them.**

The *Ponti* course work may include the following:

**Pre-lettura:** Before beginning one of *Ponti's* cultural readings, you will have a warm-up activity, in which you are asked to make some notes to yourself in Italian in response to a particular set of questions or a particular theme. These notes **should not be submitted for grading**; however, you should

still complete this activity as a way to start thinking in Italian and to prepare for the cultural topic.

**Lettura:** The reading selections are those found at the beginning and end of the chapters of *Ponti*. The readings all deal with some aspect of Italian culture (fashion, film, comic books, lifestyle, health, and immigration), and alternate between a reporting style common to textbooks and a literary style (an excerpt from a book or an essay written by a famous writer). In your textbook you will find some words of these readings glossed with the English definitions; in the course manual, the *Supplemental word bank* section offers additional help with vocabulary.

**Attività:** The activity section always includes one or two post-reading assignments that demand close engagement with the content of the reading: its *literal* meaning, its vocabulary, and the broader questions it raises. Examples of post-reading assignments include:

- a. comprehension questions
- b. one-line paraphrased summaries of each paragraph
- c. a list of questions provoked by the reading
- d. selection and definition of key words or idioms found in the reading
- e. reflections on broader issues raised by the reading.

**Grammatica:** This section begins with an introduction to the grammatical point under review. It is meant as a supplement to the grammar explanations offered in *Ponti*, much like the explanations you might get from your instructor in a regular classroom. Ideally, this introduction will make those in *Ponti* more digestible. You are advised to read both.

**Pratica:** This section includes from one to three exercises in which you may practice the use of the grammatical point you have just reviewed. Some of these exercises come from *Ponti* itself, in which case you will see a page-number designation; otherwise they are original exercises in the course manual.

**Scrittura:** This is a short essay on a topic related to the cultural themes of the chapter.

## General Description

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The course work from your short-story readers includes the following:

**Reading:** In almost every lesson, you will read one to two chapters of Collodi's *Pinocchio* or one short story in Calvino's collection, *Marcovaldo*. Each reading offers a small word bank for difficult vocabulary, but this time the definitions glossed are found in footnotes *in Italian* as well as in illustrations. In the course manual, a *Supplemental word bank* offers additional help with vocabulary.

**Attività:** These post-reading activities encourage close engagement with the text. Examples of activities include:

- comprehension questions
- recording of a passage from the story
- diagrams of action in the story
- definitions in Italian of key words in the story
- description of key characters
- invention of dialogues between two characters
- essay questions.

**Assignment Summary:** At the end of each lesson, under the heading *Summary of Assignments to Submit*, you will find a synopsis of the assignments to be submitted for grading. Usually, it is still advisable to read the original descriptions of the assignments in the course manual; these descriptions contain more detailed information about each assignment and provide examples. Use the assignment summary as a checklist!

**Review Lessons:** After every four lessons, you will have one review lesson. These lessons contain exercises designed for you to test your cumulative knowledge gained in the course. They serve as mock quizzes, but are graded with the same criteria and weight as your other lessons. For example, Lessons 1–4 present new material, while Lesson 5 is a review of the material in Lessons 1–4. Lesson 11, midway through the course, is a mock midterm—a midterm weighted the same as other Lesson assignments.

**Study Tips**

***Don't rush it!*** Take your time with all of the sections: grammar, readings, and writing. Rushing through assignments can lead to careless mistakes and sometimes to misunderstanding instructions, which can lead to getting a whole exercise wrong.

***Make it complete!*** Make sure that you submit all of the exercises with an ► beside them, designating them as assignments to be graded. Even one missed exercise can cost you a whole letter grade on your lesson. (You must submit all exercises on the Review lessons, which are not marked with an arrow.)

***Don't be intimidated!*** You will undoubtedly encounter many words in your readings that you have never seen or that you have forgotten since you first started taking Italian. Even with the help you receive from your text and your course manual, you will probably still find words (or whole sentences) that you do not understand. Do not get overwhelmed by trying to understand every single word, because this may not be essential to understanding the important points of the selection or to answering the questions that follow it. You may find it helpful to look over your post-reading activities before starting the selection, to get some idea of what to look for while reading.

***Use note cards!*** As you proceed through your course manual and through your textbook, use note cards for information that you need to memorize: verb conjugations, chapter vocabulary, cultural facts, and so on. If you take a little bit of time at each sitting to prepare this “study kit,” you will have less work to do when the final approaches. It is a good idea to study these cards periodically, because they will also make each subsequent lesson easier, as you master more and more of the language through such focused memorization.

***Have fun!*** Many of these activities are meant to encourage creative thought in addition to mechanical practice, so treat this as an opportunity to make cross-cultural comparisons and to reflect on issues that may interest you in your own society as well.

***Stay in touch!*** Please feel free to e-mail your instructor

## General Description

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whenever you have problems with material in the course. It is better to get in touch right away rather than stall your progress or wait until you forget the context of the question itself.

### **Grading of Lessons and Final Exam**

You will receive a grade for each lesson (A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, and so on) that is derived from your performance on all the assignments that make up that lesson (grammar, comprehension questions, pronunciation, writing, and so on).

Your final exam will consist of three sections:

1. a grammar section
2. a set of terms to identify from your cultural readings
3. an essay on your short story readings.

The very last lesson of the course (Lesson 22) serves as a review for the final and will give you a great idea of what to expect. There should be no surprises!

Your final grade is derived from two components:

1. the average of the grades on your twenty-two lessons (worth 60 percent)
2. the grade on your final exam (worth 40 percent)

Remember, in order to pass the course you must pass the final exam. This is consistent with the policy for all courses offered through Self-paced Courses.