

Student 6: High Not Achieved

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1 Pliny was a countryman and an author. He was quite well off and tells of his simple and peaceful life in the country. Being a man of high political status who frequently had duties to carry out in the city he himself was able to get a clear picture of the differences between town and country living. He had no interest in social events like the circus games or the chariot races. "The circus games were on the sort of show in which I am not the slightest bit interested." In his own mind he was better than the town folk. In his country home he could be at peace in silence and among his writing tablets. "Omne hoc tempus inter pugillares ac libellos iucundissima quiete transmisi".

4 The poet Juvenal shared Pliny's opinion about the city. He described the life there in detail. He told of houses being unstable and the residents living in fear of their collapse as well as fires which were also a common cause of the destruction of property.

5 Horace wrote the well-known tale of the Town and Country Mouse. The country mouse is content with his simple life. The town mouse is living a life of luxury and comes across as a bit pretentious. The downside to the town mouse's life is that while it is something that the country mouse admires at first it is also dangerous. When their lives are threatened by vicious dogs in the luxurious town house the country mouse says "I have no need of this life. Farewell." Tum rusticus 'haud mihi vita est opus hac..' ait 'et valeas.'