
Hellênikê / ἑλληνική: an open-source introduction to ancient Greek

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1 Hellênikê / ἑλληνική: an open-source introduction to ancient Greek

Encounter a historical language and culture, and engage with how that language and culture continue to shape structures of power today.

This open-source textbook is one part of a project to develop a new two-semester introduction to ancient Greek at the College of the Holy Cross in 2022-2023. It is modeled on work by several members of our department over the past three years rethinking our introductory Latin courses. Like that project, our curriculum is based on these principles:

- the course emphasizes authentic examples of language, and is organized around a target text (in this textbook, Lysias, *Oration 1: On the Murder of Eratosthenes*). Instead of composing made-up Greek, we draw on the target text as much as possible.
- we follow modern principles of language pedagogy in presenting first those features of language (syntactic, morphological, lexical) that are frequent in Greek, are inherently complex, and are most different from English forms of expression and thought.
- we determine the sequence of content on the basis of computational analysis of the features needed to read authentic content.
- throughout the curriculum, we link the study of Greek to reflection on contemporary issues.

Like the Latin project before us, our work at Holy Cross is taking place through the college's Scholarship in Action program, and we gratefully acknowledge its support.

2 About this textbook

Download a PDF of this textbook.

2.1 Content

- targetted to a specific text or corpus
- covers only features of language found in the target texts

2.2 Organization

Organized in modules aimed at 2-3 weeks; modules 1-4 together should be roughly one semester of a two-semester, full-year course.

Each module comprises:

- introduction of grammatical topics
- minimally modified passages from the target corpus
- interactive practice
- ancient Greek in action: relating topics in this module to our lives today

2.3 Additional notes for teachers

2.3.1 Sequence of grammatical topics

Topics sequenced by:

- prominence in target corpus
- unfamiliarity to English speakers
- complexity of the topic
- priority to topics enabling students to explore continuous, contextualized reading, rather than isolated sentences

-> **teach to the synopsis, not the paradigm**

2.3.2 Vocabulary

First half of course: emphasis on a small core vocabulary (perhaps < 200 words). This vocabulary is defined by comparison with other Greek corpora, and finding shared items in the highest frequency lists of individual corpora (rather than the common practice of finding most frequent terms in a *composite* list: this effaces the differences in vocabulary from one corpus to another).

It includes:

- function words (prepositions, particles, conjunctions)
- the article and pronouns
- a small core of extremely common verbs, especially those which have a large number of compounds. In counting the frequency of a simplex verb like φέρω, we include occurrences of compounds such as ἐπιφέρω or ἐκφέρω.

It includes a relatively small number of nouns, and fewer adjectives: these parts of speech vary more from one corpus to another.

In the second half of the course, we focus on a second vocabulary tier: terms that are frequent in the target corpus and related or similar texts, but not necessarily in other Greek corpora. The goal is to have a large enough vocabulary to recognize 75-90% of the lexical items in the target text, excluding proper nouns and adjectives. For some target texts, a vocabulary of < 500 words may be adequate. This second vocabulary tier will include more verbs, a larger number of nouns, and some additional adjectives.

3 Preliminaries

3.1 The Greek alphabet

3.1.1 Background

Greeks began experimenting with alphabetic writing in the eighth century BCE when they became familiar with the alphabets used to write Semitic languages like Phoenician and Aramaic. Several adaptations of these Semitic models were used in different parts of the Greek world, with different numbers of letters, and different sounds for some of the letters in each alphabet. In 403 BCE, Athens officially adopted the form of the alphabet used in Ionia. Over the next century, this script soon became the standard form throughout the Greek world, and is the ancestor of what we think of as “the” Greek alphabet.

The alphabetic system defined sounds for each symbol. Another important feature was that it defined a sequence for the letters, just as we have maintained in our descendant of the Greek alphabet: it begins with “a”, and is followed by “b”, “c”, etc. You must learn the order of the letters in the Greek alphabet as well as their pronunciation so that you use a dictionary and other reference works that are organized alphabetically.

The classical Greeks always read aloud. You should do the same. As you learn the letters of the Greek alphabet, practice reading aloud until you are comfortable pronouncing Greek words you have not seen before.

3.1.2 The basic letters

letter	name	pronunciation guide	practice Greek word
A α	alpha	drama (long, short)	άνήρ (“man”)
B β	beta	book	βιβλίον (“book”)
Γ γ	gamma	good (“hard g”)	γυνή (“woman”)
Δ δ	delta	day	δῶρον (“gift”)

letter	name	pronunciation guide	practice Greek word
Ε ε	epsilon	bet	ἔργον (“work, deed”)
Ζ ζ	zeta	wisdom	ζῷον (“animal”)
Η η	eta	ate; wait	ἡμέρα (“day”)
Θ θ	theta	thick (or hothead)	θεός (“god”)
Ι ι	iota	hit (short); machine (long)	ἰχθύς (“fish”)
Κ κ	kappa	kind	καρπός (“fruit”)
Λ λ	lambda	language	λόγος (“word”)
Μ μ	mu	mother	μήτηρ (“mother”)
Ν ν	nu	night	νόμος (“law, custom”)
Ξ ξ	xi	hex (= ‘ks’)	ξένος (“guest, host, stranger”)
Ο ο	omicron	pot	ὄνομα (“name”)
Π π	pi	person	πατήρ (“father”)
Ρ ρ	rho	rose	ρήτωρ (“orator”)
Σ σ, ς	sigma	say	σῶμα (“body”)
Τ τ	tau	take	τέκνον (“child”)
Υ υ	upsilon	put (short); cute (long)	ὕπνος (“sleep”)
Φ φ	phi	photo (or hiphop)	φωνή (“voice”)
Χ χ	chi	chorus (or backhand)	χάρις (“grace, thanks, favor”)
Ψ ψ	psi	upset	ψυχή (“spirit, soul, life”)
Ω ω	omega	bone	ὥρα (“season, hour”)

3.1.3 Vowel length

Vowels could be long or short. As in a modern language like German, the long version of the vowel was held for a longer time than the short version. η and ω are always long; they correspond to the short vowels ε and ο respectively. Long and short versions of α, ι and υ were not distinguished in writing, but were pronounced differently.

3.1.4 Breathings

Another sound to add: words beginning with a vowel will have what is called a breathing mark written over that vowel. There are two kinds of breathing marks: smooth breathing looks like this ‘ and adds no sound to the vowel rough breathing looks like this ‘ and adds an ‘h’ sound to the vowel (words beginning with a rho also have a rough breathing, making it an ‘rh’ sound)

3.1.5 Diphthongs

Diphthongs are combinations of two vowels that result in one syllable. English has them, too. In Greek, diphthongs are combinations of iota or epsilon with other vowels.

diphthong	pronunciation guide	model Greek word
αι	aisle	αἰδώς (“sense of shame, respect”)
αυ	house, plow	αὔριον (“tomorrow”)
ει	weigh	εἰρήνη (“peace”)
ευ	ε + υ	εὖ (“well,” the adverb of “good”)
οι	coin	οἰκία (“house, home”)
ου	soup, boot	οὐρανός (“sky”)
υι	wit	υἱός (“son”)

Accents and breathing marks are written over the second vowel of a diphthong.

3.1.6 Iota subscript

When iota combines with long alpha, eta, or omega, one modern convention is to write it beneath the vowel as an “iota subscript,” which look like this: α̣, η̣, ω̣ Some guides suggest pronouncing such combinations as a diphthong; in practice, I will not. But in writing the iota subscript is absolutely essential and cannot be ignored. [[Neel and Mary differ on pronunciation]]

3.1.7 A few further details

A few details to note:

- “rough breathing” spells out when words spelled with an initial vowel start with an “h-” sound

- sigma changes form at the end of a word but is not pronounced differently
- “iota subscript” became an alternate way of spelling a final iota when the final iota began to be dropped in pronunciation. (You could think of it as similar to using an apostrophe when you write a contraction like “don’t” in English, but we’ll make a habit of pronouncing the iota subscript.)

Tips:

- read out loud (as the ancient Greeks did!)
- we can’t precisely recover ancient pronunciation, but try to distinguish sounds that are spelled differently (e.g., ο/ω ε/η), and include accent in your pronunciation. Hear the difference between ἀστραπηβόλος, “one who throws lightning” (an adjective describing Zeus) and ἀστραπήβολος “one struck by lightning”. It makes a difference! English similarly distinguishes otherwise identical words based on (stress) accent. How does the way you pronounce the following English word change their meaning? content, present, object, insult, permit

3.1.8 Pronunciation practice

Practice reading these words out loud:

- Ἑρατοσθένης (name of the murdered man in Lysias, *Oration 1*)
- Εὐφίλητος (name of the man accused of murder)
- Σώστρατος (name of a friend of Εὐφίλητος)
- Ἀθηναῖοι

3.1.9 Other resources

A youtube video showing you how to write ancient Greek.

3.2 Ancient Greek accents (τόνος)

Classical Greek was spoken with a pitch accent: that is, the pitch of your voice would rise or fall on different syllables. Later, this evolved into a stress accent: as in English or modern Greek, accented syllables came to be pronounced instead with extra stress. Ancient scholars worried about the “correct” pronunciation as pitch accent began to disappear, and devised a system of three accent marks to indicate the proper pitch for a syllable. Their word for these accents, τόνος, was also used to refer to systems of pitch in Greek music, and is the source of the English word “tone.”

The *acute* accent ´ indicated that your voice should rise on the accented syllable, and was called ὀξύτονον, the “sharp” or “high pitch”. The *grave* accent **** indicated that the voice should fall. It was called the βαρύτονον, the “heavy” or “low pitch”. The *circumflex* ~ signaled that your voice should rise and then fall on a single syllable. Its name was the περισπόμενος τόνος, a pitch that is bent or wrapped around as it travels up and then down.

Because English speakers are accustomed to stress accents, we will pronounce any accented syllable, regardless of type of accent, with a stress accent.

3.2.1 Pronunciation practice

Practice pronouncing the following words. As you’ll learn in Module 2, Greek nouns change their endings to indicate their function. Each pair of words shows two forms of the same noun: pronounce them so that you can hear clearly which syllable is stressed in each instance.

- Εὐφίλητος (name of the man accused of murder in Lysias 1)
- Εὐφιλήτου
- Ἀθηναῖοι (Athenians)
- Ἀθηναίους
- πολίτης (the word for citizen of a city-state, compare English “political”)
- πολιτῶν

3.2.2 Accented words

Every Greek sentence was a flow of higher and lower pitches, and every word had its own accent, except for a very small number of special cases. One group of small words that do not carry an accent or affect the accents of other words are called *proclitics*. These include some forms of the article (“the”), ὁ, ἡ, οἱ, αἱ, and a few prepositions like εἰς (“into”), ἐκ (“out of”), ἐν (“in”). There are also *enclitics*, short words that affect the accents of other words in a sentence but do not have their own accent. We’ll learn more about enclitics in Module 2.

3.2.3 General rules

Accents are always written over vowels. If a diphthong is accented, the accent is written over the second vowel of the diphthong (e.g., εὔ, or Ἀθηναῖοι).

Accents appear on only the last three syllables of a word. Rather than refer to “the second syllable from the end,” for example, it’s traditional to use these names for the last three syllables:

- the *ultima* is the last syllable
- the *penult* is the penultimate, or next to last, syllable
- the *antepenult* is the one before the penult, or third from last

Each accent can appear only in certain positions depending on the length of the vowels in the word. Remember that η, and ω are always long, ε, and ο always short. α, ι, and υ may represent either long ᾱ, ῑ, ῡ or short ᾶ, ῖ, ΰ. Diphthongs are long, except for final -αι, -οι in some forms.

1. The grave accent appears only on the ultima.
2. The circumflex appears only on the ultima and penult.
3. The acute accent appears on ultima, penult and antepenult.

Let's consider each individually.

3.2.4 The grave accent

A grave accent is really just a replacement for an acute accent. Within the context of a phrase or sentence, when a word with an acute accent on the ultima is followed directly by another accented word, its accent is changed from acute to grave. After a pause (indicated in our texts by a comma or period), the acute can remain unchanged.

Consider the word **αὐτήν** (the pronoun “her”, with acute accent on the ultima) in these two sentences from Lysias 1.

1. ἀπώλεσεν αὐτήν. (“He killed her.”)
2. ἐκέλευον αὐτήν ἀπιέναι. (“I ordered her to leave.”)

αὐτήν is the last word of the first sentence: we'll pause at the period, and the accent can remain unchanged. In sentence 2, however, αὐτήν is followed by the accented word ἀπιέναι (“leave”); we have to change its acute to grave, and have ἐκέλευον αὐτὴν ἀπιέναι for the whole sentence.

Notice that since the grave accent occurs only in the context of a sentence, when you examples of forms noun, adjective, or verb forms in this textbook, you will not see or use a grave accent!

3.2.5 The circumflex

The circumflex can only be used on long syllables (that is, over a long vowel or diphthong). It can only appear on the penult when the ultima is short.

Consider these examples from a pair of common Greek words. As we'll see in Module 2, nouns and pronouns use different endings to show their function (a little like adding “s” to a noun to make it

plural in English). Here are two forms of a noun meaning “divinity, god, goddess” (compare English words like “theology” and “theocracy”):

1. θεός
2. θεῶν

In both examples, the accent is on the ultima, but in the first example, the accent cannot be a circumflex, because the ultima is short. In the second form, the ultima is long and is accented with a circumflex.

The next pair of examples are a pronoun meaning “that person”.

1. ἐκεῖνος
2. ἐκεῖνη

Both forms are accented on the penult, and both forms have a long penult (the diphthong ει). In the first example, the ultima is short, so we can use a circumflex on the penult, but in the second example, the ultima is long, so a circumflex is not possible.

3.2.6 The acute accent

An acute accent can appear on any of the last three syllables. It only appears on the antepenult if the ultima is short. It can be used on the penult anytime the ultima is long, or when both the penult and ultima are short. These two patterns complement the use of the circumflex on the penult when the penult is long and the ultima short: taken together, these three patterns cover all instances of accent on the penult, as summarized here:

Accent to use	Syllable length	Example
<i>Acute</i>	× –	ἀνθρώπου
<i>Acute</i>	⏏ ⏏	φόνος
<i>Circumflex</i>	– ⏏	τοῦτο

3.2.7 Summary table

Accented syllable	Syllable length	Examples
<i>Acute on antepenult</i>	× × ⏏	ἄνθρωπος

Accented syllable	Syllable length	Examples
<i>Acute on penult</i>	× –	ἀνθρώπου
<i>Acute on penult</i>	⏏ ⏏	φόνος
<i>Circumflex on penult</i>	– ⏏	τοῦτο
<i>Acute on ultima</i>	×	αὐτή, αὐτός
<i>Circumflex on ultima</i>	–	αὐτοῦ

4 Module 1: the Greek verb

4.1 Overview of module 1

4.1.1 Language: overview

Module 1 introduces these features of Greek:

- verbal units expressing a subject and action
- how to recognize finite verb forms and identify them with person, number, tense, mood, voice
- principal parts of Greek verbs
- the aorist and imperfect indicative tenses

4.1.2 Ancient Greek in action: overview

Different languages imagine the world differently. To narrate past events, for example, English does not have a single verb tense that correspond to the ideas expressed by the Greek imperfect tense. Module 1 includes reflections of English speakers encountering a different imperfect tense in Spanish and Italian.

4.1.3 Reading: overview

In our reading in module 1, we meet Euphiletus, the speaker in Lysias, *Oration 1*. Euphiletus describes the early days of his marriage (to a wife who is never named).

4.2 The Greek verb (τὸ ῥῆμα)

We will see several kinds of *verbal unit* that Greek uses to express a subject and action. In this module, we begin our study of Greek with the most important one: *finite verbs*.

No Greek sentence is complete without an expressed or implied finite verb expressing the action of the sentence.

4.3 Verbal units

When people listen to their native language, we don't simply hear a stream of sound: we intuitively cluster meaningful units together. When we learn to read, we similarly learn how to recognize clusters of letters and words, to “chunk” the text into meaningful units.

As you learn how to read ancient Greek, we will emphasize this crucial skill. Rather than simply analyzing one word at a time reading left to right, you will learn how to see sentences and whole paragraphs as compositions of smaller pieces, each with a recognizable structure and meaning.

We will use the term *verbal unit* to refer to the most important underlying structure in Greek. A *verb* is a word that expresses an action or a state of being. (As Schoolhouse Rock put it decades ago, “Verb: that’s what happening.”) A verbal unit combines some form of a verb with a subject to express a complete idea.

Compared to English, Greek has an extremely rich system of verb forms that can form different kinds of verbal units. In module 3, for example, we will learn about how Greek can form verbal units quite differently from anything in English using participles.

The most important verbal unit in Greek, however, is the *finite verb*. Every sentence has at least one verbal unit expressed with a finite verb and a subject, even if these are only implied. In English, if someone asks you “Coffee or tea?” they are implying “Would you like coffee or tea?”, a sentence with a subject (“you”) and verb (“would like”).

The Greek grammatical term for a verb is ῥῆμα, a word that can mean “a statement”: even if you leave out every other word, the finite verb constitutes a complete statement.

4.3.1 Clauses and coordination

- A verbal unit containing a *finite* verb form is called a *clause*. A sentence consists of one or more clauses.
- Greek *coordinates* successive clauses with *conjunctions* or *particles*. Ancient Greek has an affinity for connecting clauses and sentences to show their relationship to one another. In many styles of English, starting every sentence by connecting it to the previous one could quickly seem excessive, but doing so is more the norm in many styles of Ancient Greek prose and even poetry.
- conjunctions: will look in unit 3 at *subordinating* conjunctions; for now, *coordinating* conjunctions. Join parallel clauses (that is, a verbal unit expressed by a finite verb).

ἔδοξέ μοι γῆμαι **καὶ** γυναῖκα ἡγαγόμεν ἐς τὴν οἰκίαν.

I decided to marry, and took a wife.

- particles. Rich, varied, characteristic of Greek. Many function like coordinating conjunctions to join parallel clauses, but are placed *after* the first word of the unit they introduce (while conjunctions are the first word of the clause).

ἐγὼ **μὲν** ἐγέλων

ἐκείνη **δὲ** ... προστίθησι τὴν θύραν

καὶ τὴν κλεῖν ἐφέλκεται

The first component is ἐγὼ ἐγέλων, “I started to laugh”. The second component starts ἐκείνη προστίθησι τὴν θύραν, “She locks the door” and is continued with τὴν κλεῖν ἐφέλκεται “She takes the key.” **μὲν** and **δὲ** balance what the speaker, Euphiletus, does, and what his (unnamed) wife does. **καὶ** always joins together things of the same type; here, it’s connecting the two things Euphiletus’ wife does (“She locks the door and takes the key”). You might express that in English with something like “I started to laugh, but she locks the door and takes the key.” The verb ἐγέλων is in a tense we’ll study in this unit called the imperfect tense. It indicates that an action is in some sense not complete, so one possibility is to take that as “I started to laugh.” The speaker uses the present tense for the wife’s actions, but as we might in English switch into the present tense in narrating past events, to emphasize a vivid moment: “I laughed, and BOOM! she locks the door!” One possibility for putting together **μὲν** and **δὲ** here could be, “I started to laugh, then she locks the door and takes the key”.

4.3.2 Vocabulary to memorize

These conjunctions *introduce* a clause:

- ἀλλά. Strong contrast with previous clause. (“but”)
- καί. Couples following clause with previous clauses. (“and”)

These particles are the *second* element of the new clause. One way to describe this placement in their clause is “postpositive” (meaning something like “placed after”)

- γάρ. This clause explains the previous clause.
- οὖν. This clause draws a conclusion from the previous clause.
- τε. Couples this clause with the previous clause (similar to καί).
- μὲν ... δέ The use of these particles together show a contrast of some sort along with a connection. A series of two or more clauses can be joined into a *list* using the particles μὲν...δέ...<δέ...>; δέ can be repeated to join as many clauses as you like into a single list.

4.4 Finite Verb Forms

Finite verb forms have five properties: **person**, **number**, **tense**, **voice**, and **mood**. To properly identify a finite verb form, you must identify all five properties. Ancient Greek finite verb forms contain all of this information in the verb form itself. In English, we often need other words to convey some of this information, such as subject pronouns to convey the person and number, and auxiliary (or “helping”) verbs to express tense, mood, and voice.

4.4.1 Person

A verb’s person expresses the subject of the verb in relation to the “speaker” of the sentence.

1. The first person (I or we in English) subject includes the speaker.
2. The second person (you in English) subject is the addressee(s) of the speaker.
3. The third person (he, she, it, they in English) subject is a person or thing separate from the speaker and addressee.

4.4.2 Number

Number combines with person in describing the subject of verb. It indicates when the subject is singular or plural. In English, for example, 1st person singular is “I” while 1st person plural is “we.”

Ancient Greek also has an additional, less common “number” known as the dual, when the subject is two persons, animals, body parts (e.g., eyes, hands), or things acting together.

4.4.3 Tense

The tense of a finite verb describes the time of the action and/or its aspect. “Aspect” refers to the type of the action as simple/single, ongoing/repeated, or completed.

Ancient Greek has seven tenses, which are divided into “primary” and “secondary” tenses. The “secondary” tenses are all past tenses, while the “primary” tenses represent actions in the present or future.

- Primary tenses: Present, Future, Perfect, Future Perfect
- Secondary tenses: Imperfect, Aorist, Pluperfect

Multiple tenses for action in a particular “time” (such as the past) differ in terms of *aspect*. Aspect emphasizes the type of action being represented, or how the action is being depicted. Aspects include

simple, ongoing or continuous and **completed**. Tense can indicate both time and aspect, or, in some verb forms, aspect alone.

4.4.4 Voice

Voice expresses the relationship between the action of the verb and the subject. English has two voices: active, in which the subject is performing the action of the verb (“I love”), and passive, in which the subject is receiving the action of the verb (“I am loved”).

Ancient Greek has active and passive voices that operate the same way. It also has a third voice, the middle. In the middle voice, the subject performs the action of the verb with a particular interest or reference between the subject and the action of the verb, such as reflexive (“I love myself”), reciprocal (“we love each other”), initiating the action to be performed by another (“I got my hair cut”) or with a particular self-interest (“I love for my own reasons, in my own interests”).

In some uses (and for some verbs in all uses), the middle forms will have a meaning that is best represented by an active verb form in English. But paying attention to the ideas that the middle form represents is important for understanding ancient Greek modes of expression.

For some verb tenses, the middle and the passive share the same form. If you are identifying the form alone, you should identify it as “middle/passive.” In a sentence, however, you will consider other syntactic structures within the clause or sentence to determine whether that particular use is middle or is passive, in order to understand the clause or sentence correctly.

4.4.5 Mood

The mood of a verb indicates the function of the expression and the nature of the action in the speaker’s conception. “Mood” and “mode” come from the same root in English: the “mood” of a verb is the “mode” in which the verb is operating.

Ancient Greek has four moods: (1) the indicative, used to express statement or question of a factual nature (in the eyes of the speaker) in the past, present, or future; (2) the imperative, used to give a command; (3) the subjunctive and (4) the optative, which have many uses in subordinate clauses and are also used to express potential or possible action or action that could have happened but did not.

4.4.6 Negation with finite verb forms

There are two basic words in ancient Greek used to negate a finite verb form: οὐ and μή. (“not”) οὐ: Indicative verbs in most clauses are negated with οὐ. Note that οὐ has a smooth breathing and no accent. If the word that follows οὐ in a sentence begins with a vowel also with a smooth breathing, οὐ

becomes οὐκ. If the word following begins with a rough breathing, οὐ becomes οὐχ. μή: Some verbs in other moods or certain types of clauses use μή instead. We will meet μή again in Module 4.

4.5 Principal parts of verbs

All verb forms in these many combinations of person, number, tense, mood and voice, as well as infinitives and participles, are formed using the verb's principal parts.

English verbs have principal parts, too, although native speakers may not learn them as such. In English, the principal parts can include the present, past, and past participle: for example, play, played, played; swim, swam, swum; go, went, gone; do, did, done.

The standard number of principal parts for Ancient Greek verbs is six, although for some verbs fewer principal parts, even only one or two, may exist; and for others, alternatives may exist and increase the total number.

Learning the principal parts of verbs is important so that you will be able to create correct verb forms and so that you will be able to recognize verb forms in a text, both for what person, number, tense, voice, and mood they are and also what verb they come from. In a glossary or a lexicon Greek verbs are listed according to the first principal part, and so if you are looking a verb up you will need to be able to move from a verb form made from any principal part to its first principal part in order to find it in the lexicon.

4.5.1 Forms of Principal Parts

All principal parts of an Ancient Greek verb are 1st person singular forms.

Principal part	Form
1st	1st person singular present active indicative OR 1st person singular present middle indicative if active forms do not exist
2nd	1st person singular future active indicative OR 1st person singular future middle indicative if active forms do not exist
3rd	1st person singular aorist active indicative OR 1st person singular aorist middle indicative if active forms do not exist

Principal part	Form
4th	1st person singular perfect active indicative
5th	1st person singular perfect middle/passive indicative
6th	1st person singular aorist passive indicative

4.5.2 Verb conjugations

Verbs are organized into “conjugations,” a grouping where they share common endings. Ancient Greek has two conjugations: thematic and athematic. The names reflect the presence or the absence of a “thematic vowel” as part of the personal verb endings: thematic verbs use the thematic vowel, while athematic verbs do not. In this module, we will begin practicing forms of both conjugations, and note these differences and the ways they affect the forms. Conjugations are also sometimes named after the common ending of the first principal part, so thematic verbs may be referred to as -ω verbs and athematic verbs may be called -μι verbs.

4.5.3 Examples of principal parts

Principal parts are listed in order, 1–6. If a verb does not have a particular principal part, that absence is marked by —. Note that more than one form may exist for a principal part: those are indicated with “or”.

βαίνω, βήσομαι, ἔβην, βέβηκα, βέβημαι, ἐβάθην go, walk, step

βάλλω, βαλέω, ἔβαλον, βέβληκα, βέβλημαι, ἐβλήθην throw, hit (by throwing), strike (by throwing), pelt

γίγνομαι, γενήσομαι, ἐγενόμην, γέγονα, γεγέννημαι, — become, come to be, be born, be

δείκνυμι, δείξω, ἔδειξα δέδειχα, δέδειγμαι, ἐδείχθην show, demonstrate

δύναμαι, δυνήσομαι, —, —, δεδύναμαι, ἐδυνήθην be able, can, be capable, have the power

εἰμί, ἔσομαι, —, —, —, — be, exist

ἔρχομαι, ἐλεύσομαι, ἦλθον, ἐλήλυθα, —, — go, come

ἔχω, ἔξω or σχήσω, ἔσχον, ἔσχηκα, -έσχημαι, ἐσχέθην have, hold, possess; be able; be (in a particular state)

ἡγέομαι, ἡγήσομαι, ἡγησάμην, —, ἡγηναι, ἡγήθην lead; think, consider, believe

κελεύω, κελεύσω, ἐκέλευσα, κεκέλευκα, κεκέλευσμαι, ἐκελεύσθην bid, order, command, exhort

λαμβάνω, λήψομαι, ἔλαβον, εἴληφα, εἴλημμαι, ἐλήφθην take, receive, catch, grasp

λέγω, λέξω, ἔλεξα or εἶπον, εἴρηκα, εἴρηκα, λέλεγμαι, ἐλέχθην say, speak, tell

ὁράω, ὄψομαι, εἶδον, ἑώρακα or ἐόρακα, ἑώραμαι or ὤμμαι, ὤφθην see, look, understand

ποιέω, ποιήσω, ἐποίησα, πεποίηκα, πεποίημαι, ἐποιήθην do, make, create, compose

πράττω, πράξω, ἔπραξα, πέπραχα or πέπραγα, πέπραγμαι, ἐπράχθην do, accomplish, make, act

τυγχάνω, τεύξομαι, ἔτυχον, τετύχηκα, —, — happen (happen to be, happen upon), obtain, get

4.5.4 Looking for patterns

As you learn principal parts, you should practice noticing patterns and then using those patterns to help you recognize, retrieve, use, and even take an educated guess at, a principal part. Here are some general patterns to start noticing, but you should work at discovering others that help you memorize, recall, and work with principal parts.

4.5.4.1 Endings

Since all the forms are first-person singular, the ending reflects that person-number. The ending will indicate which conjugation the verb belongs to. In the first principal part, the endings -ω and -ομαι indicate the thematic conjugation, while the endings -μι and -μαι (with some letter other than omicron before it) indicate the athematic conjugation.

For those principal parts that could be either active or middle, the ending will also indicate the voice: -ω or -μι (1st and 2nd principal parts), and -ον or -α (3rd) are active, while -μαι (1st and 2nd) and -μην (3rd) are middle.

For the 4th principal part, which is always active, you can expect the ending -α. For the 5th, which is always middle/passive, the endings is -μαι. And the 6th principal part, which is always passive, will end in -ην.

4.5.4.2 Prefixes

For the 3rd and 6th principal parts, which are aorist (a secondary tense) you will see an *augment* prefixed to the verbal stem. The augment is an indication of a secondary tense in the indicative mood (all principal parts are in the indicative mood). The augment may appear as the addition of an ἐ- before a

stem that begins with a consonant, or it may appear as the lengthening of the initial vowel if the stem begins with a vowel.

For the 4th and 5th principal parts, which are in the perfect tense, the stem will show reduplication as a sign of the perfect tense. The reduplication may appear as a repetition of the initial consonant of the verb stem. If the initial consonant is aspirated (θ, φ, χ), the reduplication is the corresponding non-aspirated consonant (τ, π, κ, respectively). If the stem starts with multiple consonants, the reduplication will be simply ἐ-. If the stem starts with a vowel, the reduplication will appear as a lengthened vowel.

4.5.4.3 Stem changes

As in English, very common verbs show greater changes to the verb stem in different principal parts. Compare ἔρχομαι (present) and ἦλθον (aorist) with “go” (present) and “went” (past) in English.

Some changes to verb stems appear with many more regular verbs: A sigma may be added to the present stem for the future and/or aorist active stem (2nd and 3rd principal parts, e.g., κελεύω, κελεύσω, ἐκέλευσα), A kappa may be part of the stem in the perfect active (4th principal part, e.g., κεκέλευκα). The 6th principal part may have a theta at the end of its stem, e.g. ἐδυνήθην.

4.6 Formation of finite verbs: recessive accent

The accent on finite verb forms in ancient Greek is described as *recessive*, meaning that the accent recedes as far back from the end of the word as the possible, in accordance with the set of rules governing accentuation.

Review the general principles of accent in the preliminaries section. Can you see how they imply the following rules of thumb for placing accent on a recessive verb form?

1. The accent cannot recede further back than the antepenult. Therefore, the accent will reside on one of the last three syllables of a finite verb form, even if it has more than three syllables.
2. If the ultima is long, the accent can only recede to the penult and is an acute accent on the penult.
3. If the ultima is short:[reminder that final -αι and -οι are usually short]
 - a. if there are three or more syllables in the form, the accent will recede to the antepenult and be an acute accent on that syllable.
 - b. if there are two syllables, the accent will be on the penult. Since the ultima is short, when the penult is accented its form will depend on the quantity of the penult syllable: if it is short, the accent will be acute. If it is long, the accent will be a circumflex.

In addition, if a finite verb form is only one syllable and it is long, it will carry a circumflex accent.

****Tip*:** other situations with circumflex accents on finite verb forms

We will see that when vowels contract and two vowels combine to one sound, circumflex accents mark those contractions when possible under the rules for circumflex accents. [do we explain compound verb forms yet? a couple of examples already in Lysias 1.6]

4.6.1 Practice for recessive accents

On the following finite verb forms, determine the correct placement and type of accent in accordance with the rules of recessive accents, and then put it there. [Verb forms from Lysias 1.6–11]

1. ἔδοξε
2. ἡγαγομην
3. διεκειμην
4. ἔθελη
5. ἐφυλλατον
6. γιγνεται
7. ἐπιστευον
8. ἐτελευτησε
9. γεγενηται
10. διαφθιρεται
11. ἐγενετο
12. ἐθηλαζεν
13. δεοι
14. κινδυνευη
15. διητωμην
16. ἀπηει
17. ἐγίγνετο
18. ὑπωπτευσα
19. διεκειμην

20. ἦκον
21. ἔβοα
22. ἐδυσκολαινεν

4.7 The aorist indicative

4.7.1 Verbs

- we'll always begin to understand our reading by looking for *verbal units* that express an action
- the form of a verb in ancient Greek expresses the *subject* as well as the *verb*. Example: the form ἐκέλευσε means “he or she ordered”; the form ἐκέλευσαν means “they ordered.” These are complete sentences that do not need a separate word for “he”, “she” or “they.”

4.7.2 The indicative mood and narrating events in the past

As described above, finite verbs have five properties: person, number, tense, mood, and voice.

“Indicative” is a mood, one of the four that ancient Greek has. It is the mode of verb used for narrating factual events. As such, it is a frequently seen mood in most texts.

Ancient Greek has more than one tense for narrating events in the past. The distinction between those past tenses, then, is one of *aspect*—that is, how to think of or picture the action the verb is representing.

- the *aorist* tense expresses an action as single and simple, without indication of its completion or continuation
- the *imperfect* tense expresses an action as continuous, started, ongoing, habitual or in any way incomplete

The choice of tense, then, involves not only an indication that the events happened in the past, but other information about the event. Do you want to emphasize it as a single incident? Choose the aorist indicative if so. Or do you want to indicate that it happened over a length of time, was repeated or habitual, perhaps was started but not completed? The imperfect indicative will give you the means to add those shades of meaning.

4.7.3 Meaning of aorist indicative

The aorist indicative represents the action in a way that can be (and has been) described as “single,” “simple,” “distinct,” the equivalent to a snapshot of the action. The tense that is the closest to this

idea in English is the “simple past,” the past tense formed in the active voice by adding -ed to the verb stem, or made by changes to the stem, with no other “helping” verbs. Examples of the “simple past” in the active voice: He walked, she ran, they watched. She taught, they learned.

To understand a verb form, you must take into account all five properties: person, number, tense, mood and voice. In the active voice, the subject performs the action. In the passive voice, the subject receives the action. The middle voice is, as the name indicates, in between active and passive, where the subject performs the action in some way for themselves.

To use as examples the verbs of “show” and “command” (compare the sample Greek verbs below), the 3rd person plural aorist indicative in each voice could be translated into English as follows:

- Active: “they showed,” “they commanded”
- Middle: “they showed (for their own benefit),” “they commanded themselves”
- Passive: “they were shown,” “they were commanded”

? Example with ἀρχω ? Active voice “to be first, rule” ; passive “to be ruled”; middle “to make oneself first {over something in the genitive case}, to begin”

4.7.4 Forming the aorist indicative

To learn this tense + mood, you will need to learn the person and number in all three voices: active, middle, and passive.

As you learn it for any particular verb, you will notice that not all verbs appear in all three voices. For example, the verb γίγνομαι “to become” always and only uses the middle voice.

The aorist tense forms the active and middle voices from the *third* principal part; it forms the passive voice from the *sixth* principal part. So you will need to pay attention to the principal parts for any particular verb to see what forms are possible. For example, if the third principal part appears in the middle, then no active forms are used. If a verb does not have a sixth principal part, then no passive forms are used.

As you look at the third principal part, there are two different patterns of endings. These are referred to as “first” and “second” aorists. The different endings do not have different meanings except in rare cases when both exist for the same verb. That is, both first and second aorists, both sets of endings, represent the single action in the past, and you will accordingly translate each with the English simple past. Compare the two systems of past-tense formation in English: adding “-ed” to the verb stem (which are called “regular” or “weak” verbs) or a change in the verb stem (“irregular” or “strong” verbs): I walked (weak) vs. I went (strong). I consumed (weak) vs. I ate (strong).

You can recognize a verb that has a first aorist by a third principal ending in -α or -άμην. Verbs that have a second aorist have a third principal part that ends in -ον or -όμην. We will return to the second aorist forms later in this module.

4.7.4.1 Aorist active and middle indicative of first aorist verbs

Once you have identified a verb as a first aorist verb, you form other persons and numbers by the following process:

- (1) the third principal part is in the first singular indicative: start by dropping the first singular ending and the accent from the third principal part:

ἔδειξα -> ἐδειξ-

ἐκέλευσα -> ἐκελευσ-

- (2) Add appropriate ending. For today, memorize *third person* endings for singular and plural.

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle ending
3rd singular	-ε	-ατο
3rd plural	-ον	-αντο

- (3) Apply recessive accent.

4.7.4.2 Aorist Passive Indicative

You may see somewhere the reference to “first” and “second” aorists in the aorist passive, but for most purposes, that is a complication we need not be concerned with. All sixth principal parts can be used the same way to form aorist passive forms.

- (1) Drop the first singular ending -ην and the accent from the sixth principal part

ἐδείχθην -> ἐδειχθ-

ἐκελεύθην -> ἐκελευθ-

- (2) Add appropriate ending

Person and Number	Ending
3rd singular	-η
3rd plural	-ησαν

- (3) Apply recessive accent.

4.7.4.3 Examples

	Active	Middle	Passive
3rd singular	ἔδειξε	ἐδείξατο	ἐδείχθη
3rd plural	ἔδειξαν	ἐδείξαντο	ἐδείχθησαν

	Active	Middle	Passive
3rd singular	ἐκέλευσε	ἐκελεύσατο	ἐκελεύθη
3rd plural	ἐκέλευσαν	ἐκελεύσαντο	ἐκελεύθησαν

4.7.5 Vocabulary to memorize

Learn these paradigm verbs: be able to produce the first, third and sixth principal parts (**emphasized like this** in the list) from memory.

- **δείκνυμι**, δείξω, **ἔδειξα**, δέδειχα, δέδειγμα, **ἐδείχθην**, “to show”
 - compound **ἐπιδείκνυμι**, ἐπιδείξω, **ἐπέδειξα**, ἐπιδέδειχα, ἐπιδέδειγμα, **ἐπεδείχθην**, “to demonstrate, prove”
- **κελεύω**, κελεύσω, **ἐκέλευσα**, κεκέλευκα, κεκέλευμαι, **ἐκελεύσθην**, “to order”

4.7.6 Vocabulary to practice with (no need to memorize)

- ἀπόλλυμι
- δυσκολαίνω
- καθεύδω

- θηλάζω
- ὀργίζω. “to anger”. Use the middle voice to express “grew angry”.
- ὑποπτεύω

4.8 The imperfect indicative

The imperfect indicative is another way of narrating factual events in the past. As we have seen, the aorist views an action as a single action completed in the past. The imperfect, by contrast, expresses an action that is incomplete, repeated, continuous or ongoing, habitual, or in some other way *not* viewed as single and complete. To express similar ideas, English uses additional “helping” verbs: “she was going,” “he started to go,” “they used to go.”

4.8.1 Forming the imperfect indicative of -ω or thematic verbs

- all three voices use the *first* principal part, with the addition of an **augment**
- middle and passive voices have identical forms in this tense

Augment: Past tenses in the indicative mood are indicated by two features: their set of personal endings, and an *augment* at the front of the verb stem. Compare first and third parts of verbs you already know. The aorist indicative (third principal part) is characterized by adding an epsilon to the first principal part’s stem. If the stem begins with a consonant, you will see the epsilon in front of it. If the stem begins with a vowel, you will see that vowel lengthened. Either of these is called an *augment*. The imperfect tense shows the same pattern, but uses the first principal part. So when you need to add an augment, look to the third principal part to see what it should be.

- (1) start by removing the first person singular ending (-ω or -ομαι) and accent from the first principal part, and add the augment

γίγνομαι -> ἐγίγν- (Remember that for a verb whose first principal part has a middle ending, you will use only middle endings in the imperfect.)

κελεύω -> ἐκελευ-

ἔρχομαι -> ἤρχ-

ἄγω -> ἤγ-

- (2) Add appropriate ending. For today, memorize *third person* endings for singular and plural.

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle and Passive ending
3rd singular	-ε	-ετο
3rd plural	-ον	-οντο

- (3) Apply recessive accent.

Example of κελεύω “command”

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle and Passive ending
3rd singular	ἐκέλευε	ἐκελεύετο
3rd plural	ἐκέλευον	ἐκελεύοντο

The imperfect indicative active could be translated into English as “she/he/it was commanding” or “he/she/it used to command” (3rd singular) or “they were commanding” (3rd plural).

The imperfect indicative middle would add to the active sense that the subject was giving these commands for their own benefit or interests.

The imperfect indicative passive means that the subject is now the one receiving the orders: “he/she it was being commanded” or “they were being commanded.”

4.8.2 Forming the imperfect indicative of -μι or athematic verbs like δείκνυμι

When we practiced aorist forms, the third principal part of the verb δείκνυμι (“to show, demonstrate”), ἔδειξα, indicated that its forms were like that of any first aorist. Since the imperfect is formed from the first principal part, we will notice that δείκνυμι belongs to a different conjugation than our -ω or thematic verbs for forms made from this principal part. The meaning and usage of the imperfect indicative, in all three voices, remains the same, it is simply formed slightly differently.

As with -ω/thematic verbs, for the imperfect indicative of -μι/athematic verbs:

- all three voices use the *first* principal part, with the addition of an **augment**
- middle and passive voices have identical forms in this tense
- (1) start by removing the first person singular ending (-μι or -μαι) and accent from the first principal part, and add the augment

δείκνυμι -> ἐδείκνυ-

- (2) Add appropriate ending. For today, memorize *third person* endings for singular and plural. The key difference in the endings is that they do not include the *thematic* vowel (hence the name of the conjugation “athematic”).

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle and Passive ending
3rd singular	—	-το
3rd plural	-ν	-ντο

- (3) Apply recessive accent.

Example of δείκνυμι “show, demonstrate” (note that the upsilon is a long upsilon)

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle and Passive ending
3rd singular	ἐδείκνυ	ἐδείκνυτο
3rd plural	ἐδείκνυν	ἐδείκνυντο

To repeat, the meaning and usage of these forms is the same. Thus the imperfect indicative active could be translated into English as “she/he/it was showing” or “he/she/it used to show” (3rd singular) or “they were showing” (3rd plural).

The imperfect indicative middle would add to the active sense that the subject was showing for their own benefit or interests.

The imperfect indicative passive means that the subject is now the one receiving the orders: “he/she it was being shown” or “they were being shown.”

4.9 Contract verbs

The different verbs you have already learned all have stems of the first principal part ending in a *consonant*. When the first principal part ends in a *vowel*, you use the same endings you have already learned, but they contract with the vowel of the stem. Some verbs that do not have verb stems ending in a vowel in the first principal part do have a vowel at the end of their stem in the *second* principal part, which is used for the future active and middle. We will review these contractions for those forms when we learn the future tense forms.

4.9.1 Stems ending in -ε-

Vocabulary to memorize:

- ἀδικέω
- δοκέω
- ποιέω

The first principal part will be listed in a lexicon or glossary with the first principal part ending in ε before the first person ending of -ω. Recall that our imperfect active and middle/passive indicative personal endings start with vowels, either an ε or an ο:

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle and Passive ending
3rd singular	-ε	-ετο
3rd plural	-ον	-οντο

The rules of contraction that you will need to learn for these endings (as we learn more endings, we will add others) are as follows:

- ε + ε = ει
- ε + ο = ου

The rule of accentuation that you will need for contractions is that if one of the vowels within the sequence would have been accented before the contraction, the contracted syllable, a diphthong, will be accented, and will be accented with a circumflex, if possible under the rules of accentuation for circumflex accents (that it is a long syllable (which the diphthong is), the syllable is the penult or ultima, and if the penult that the ultima is short.

With that additional information, the process of forming the imperfect indicative follows the process already outlined:

- (1) start by removing the first person singular ending (-ω or -ομαι) and accent from the first principal part, and add the augment

ἀδικέω -> ἠδικε-

δοκέω -> ἔδοκε-

ποιέω -> ἔποιε-

- (2) Add appropriate ending and contract the vowel at the end of the stem with the vowel at the beginning of the personal ending.

- (3) Apply recessive accent, keeping in mind the contraction.

Example: Imperfect indicative of ἀδικέω

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle and Passive ending
3rd singular	ἡδίκηι	ἡδικεῖτο
3rd plural	ἡδίκουν	ἡδικοῦντο

To practice, complete the following:

Imperfect indicative of δοκέω:

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle and Passive ending
3rd singular		
3rd plural		

Imperfect indicative of ποιέω:

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle and Passive ending
3rd singular		
3rd plural		

4.9.2 Stems ending in -α-

Vocabulary to memorize:

- ὁράω

Verbs whose present stem from the first principal part ends in α operate the same way, but the contractions resulting from the combination of α with the endings are different. The contractions you will need to know for these verbs in the forms we have learned so far are:

- α + ε = α (long alpha)
- α + ο = ω

Example: Imperfect indicative of ὁράω (augmented stem: ὠρα-)

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle and Passive ending
3rd singular	ῶρα	ῶρᾱται
3rd plural	ῶρων	ῶρῶντο

The good news is that you know these already (follows the imperfect). Use βάλλω

4.10 The second aorist

A small group of verbs use a different set of endings to form the active and middle voices of the aorist indicative. We recognize a verb has a “second aorist” set of endings for the aorist active and middle when the third principal part ends in -ον or -όμην. Examples: ἦλθον (from ἔρχομαι), εἶπον (from λέγω), ἐγενόμην (from γίγνομαι).

4.10.0.1 Active and middle of second aorist -ω verbs

Formation follows the same process as first aorist active and middle forms.

- (1) principal parts give an example form in the first singular indicative active of a representative tense: start by dropping the first singular ending -ον or -όμην and the accent from the third principal part:

ἦλθον -> ἦλθ-

εἶπον -> εἶπ-

ἐγενόμην -> ἐγεν-

- (2) Add appropriate ending. For today, memorize *third person* endings for singular and plural.

Person and Number	Active ending	Middle ending
3rd singular	-ε	-ετο
3rd plural	-ον	-οντο

Notice that these endings are identical to the endings of the imperfect indicative. You will distinguish the imperfect from the aorist for these verbs by noticing which verb stem (which principal part) the

ending is applied to. In the imperfect the ending is applied to the first principal part stem, and in the aorist the ending is applied to the third stem. Examples: ἦρχετο “She was going” vs. ἦλθε “She went”; ἔλεγε “She was saying” - εἶπε “She said.”

Note that the 1st person singular active ending in the second aorist -ov is the same as that of the 3rd personal plural active.

- (3) Apply recessive accent.

4.10.0.2 Examples

	Active	Middle	Passive
3rd singular	ἦλθε	ἦλθετο	no 6th principal part
3rd plural	ἦλθον	ἦλθοντο	no 6th principal part

Note that the first principal part ἔρχομαι shows us that there is no active voice for the forms made from that principal part (“present system”), while ἦλθον shows us that the aorist indicative appears in the active voice using second aorist endings.

	Active	Middle	Passive
3rd singular	εἶπε	εἶπετο	ἐλέχθη
3rd plural	εἶπον	εἶποντο	ἐλέχθησαν

4.10.0.3 Active and middle of aorist indicative - mi verbs?

Learn on:

- βάλλω
- γίγνομαι
- ἔρχομαι
- ἔχω
- λέγω
- need a -mi verb?

4.11 Ancient Greek in action: the imperfect tense

As you've seen in this module, while the Greek imperfect and aorist tenses can both refer to events in the past, they express different ideas about how an event takes place in time. (This is sometimes called *grammatical aspect*).

4.11.1 A. Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor, “Widowed NYC Teacher Studies Spanish in Mexico”

Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor, poem from *Imperfect Tense*, “Widowed NYC Teacher Studies Spanish in Mexico”

4.11.2 B. Jhumpa Lahiri, *In Other Words*

Jhumpa Lahiri, excerpt from *In Other Words*, “The Imperfect” (pp. 103-114)

4.12 Reading

Practice, reading and composition based on Lysias 1, sections 6-10: the early days of Euphiletos' marriage.

5 Module 2: nouns and adjectives

5.1 Overview of module 2

5.1.1 Language: overview

Module 2 introduces these features of Greek:

- TBA

5.1.2 Ancient Greek in action: overview

TBA

5.1.3 Practice, Reading, and Composition

TBA

5.2 Nouns (τὸ ὄνομα) and adjectives (τὸ ἐπίθετον)

In this module, we'll learn about two further parts of speech: nouns (ancient Greek ὀνόματα, the *names* for people and things), and adjectives, words that describe nouns (Greek ἐπίθετα, literally “add ons”).

Unlike English, where word order determines the role of a noun, Greek shows the function of nouns and adjective through changes in their form.

5.3 Greek nouns

“Noun” is a part of speech. The ancient Greek word for noun is ὄνομα, which means “name.” Nouns name a person, animal, place, or thing (whether that “thing” is concrete or abstract). In a clause or

sentence, nouns can fulfill various functions. A noun might be the subject of the verb, the person, place, or thing doing the action the verb represents. A noun might be the object of the the verb, the recipient of the verb's action, or the indirect (or secondary) object of that action. A noun might further describe another noun, or be paired with a preposition to act adjectivally or adverbially. It may describe the means by which the action of the verb happens. Or it might name the addressee of the sentence. In ancient Greek, the function of the noun is represented by its case, and the case is indicated by the ending attached to the noun's stem. We have already seen that endings provide a great deal of information in a verb form, and the same is true in nouns. Identifying the case of a noun is key to understanding how it is functioning in that particular sentence.

5.3.1 Overview of nouns

All ancient Greek nouns have gender, case, and number.

- There are three grammatical **genders**: masculine, feminine, and neuter.
- **Case** indicates the function of a noun in a sentence. Cases are expressed and identified by endings. There are five cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative.
- Ancient Greek has three **numbers**: singular, plural, and dual. Dual is used for two nouns considered a pair; we will not see the dual in our readings this year.

5.3.1.1 Dictionary entry of nouns

The dictionary entry of a noun efficiently encodes all the information you need to know in order to produce all of its cases and numbers. The first word tells you its nominative singular form, the second word is its genitive singular form, and the third word, in the form of the definite article, tells you its gender(s).

5.3.1.2 Declension

Nouns are organized into “declensions,” a category of nouns that share the same set of endings. In Greek, there are three declensions of nouns. In this module, we will learn forms of two cases of all three declensions.

5.3.1.3 Accents on nouns

You have learned the rules for accents on verbs, which are *recessive* accents. The same general rules for accents apply to nouns (and adjectives), but nouns carry what we call a *persistent* accent, which

means that you must learn where the accent resides as you learn the word. Then, you apply the rules of accentuation as you decline the noun into its full range of cases. There are a number of patterns of persistent accents to practice and learn, which all follow the general rules for accents as you learned in Module 1. In the “language reference” section in this module, you will find demonstrations of these patterns as well as opportunities for practicing them.

5.3.2 Learning cases: the nominative and genitive cases

The **nominative case** is a naming case; its most frequent function is to indicate the subject of a sentence.

The **genitive case** is used to relate one noun to another/make one noun depend on another. We often translate nouns in the genitive case with the English preposition “of.” We will learn more about the functions of the genitive case later in this module.

5.3.3 Forms of the nominative and genitive cases

5.3.3.1 First declension

Note on the persistent accent: the first declension has one important exception to the expected position of the accent, in the genitive plural. The genitive plural ending of the first declension is always accented with a circumflex. There is a reason for this apparent exception, which has to do with the linguistic development of these forms over time.

Notice below that all the plural endings in this declension are the same, even with the variations in the singular.

For feminine first-declension nouns that end in -ῆ

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ῆ	-αι
Genitive	-ῆς	-ῶν

For feminine first-declension nouns that end in -ᾱ

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ᾱ	-αι
Genitive	-ᾱς	-ῶν

For feminine first-declension nouns that end in -ᾱ

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ᾱ	-αι
Genitive	-ης	-ῶν

For masculine first-declension nouns that end in -ης / -ᾱς

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ης / -ᾱς	-αι
Genitive	-ου	-ῶν

5.3.3.2 Second declension

For masculine or feminine second-declension nouns that end in -ος

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ος	-οι
Genitive	-ου	-ων

For neuter second-declension nouns that end in -ον

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ον	-ᾶ
Genitive	-ου	-ων

5.3.3.3 Third declension

The third declension also contains nouns of all three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. The third declension is sometimes called the “consonant declension” because most nouns in this declension have stems ending in a consonant. Because of linguistic

For masculine or feminine third-declension nouns:

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ς or no ending	-ες
Genitive	-ος	-ων

Note that the genitive singular ending in this declension, -ος, is the same as the masculine or feminine ending of the nominative singular form in the second declension. That shows us that knowing what declension a noun belongs to, as well as what gender it is, is crucial for knowing what form the ending is indicating. Compare also the neuter nominative plural ending in both the second and third declensions, -ᾶ, and one of the feminine nominative singular forms in the first declension, also -ᾶ.

For neuter third-declension nouns:

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-	-ᾶ
Genitive	-ος	-ων

5.4 The article and the genitive case of nouns

The article is used so frequently in ancient Greek that it must and will become familiar, with its uses and nuances grasped with practice. Pronouns are also frequently used, and come in different types and uses that we will start, but not cover exhaustively, in this section.

5.4.1 The article

English has a definite article, “the” and an indefinite article, “a” or “an.” Ancient Greek has only one article, and its uses are both straightforward and subtle.

5.4.1.1 Forms of the article

The article modifying a noun agrees with it in gender, case, and number. There is a full paradigm of forms with all three genders in all cases and numbers, and it is important to learn to recognize these forms easily. Pay careful attention to and memorize the spelling, including accents and breathing marks, on these forms. There is no vocative form of the article.

Case	Singular			Plural		
	Masc	Fem	Neut	Masc	Fem	Neut
Nominative	ὁ	ἡ	τό	οἱ	αἱ	τά
Genitive	τοῦ	τῆς	τοῦ	τῶν	τῶν	τῶν
Dative	τῷ	τῇ	τῷ	τοῖς	ταῖς	τοῖς
Accusative	τόν	τήν	τό	τούς	τάς	τά

Note that the alpha in the neuter nominative and accusative plural form, *τά*, is a short alpha, while the alpha in the feminine accusative plural form, *τάς*, is a long alpha.

5.4.1.2 Some uses of the article

- Like the English definite article, the ancient Greek article may modify its noun by making it definite or particle: *ἡ οἰκία* “the house”
- If indicated by the context, the article can convey a possessive adjective: *ὁ ἀνὴρ ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας ἦλθεν*, “The man went out of **his** house”
- Differently from English, however, the article may be used to denote a general class, *οἱ ἄνθρωποι* “people” or “humans”
- Also differently from English, the article with a proper name, exs. *ὁ Ἐρατοσθένης* “Eratosthenes”; *αἱ Ἀθῆναι* “Athens” or with abstract nouns, ex. *ἡ δημοκρατία* “democracy”
- The article has “noun-making” powers: the article can be used with another part of speech, such as infinitives, participles, adjectives, and even particles, to create nouns or “substantives.” We will see in more detail later in this module how it is used this way with adjectives.

5.4.2 The genitive case

As noted briefly above, the genitive case shows a connection between that noun and another noun. We can start with some broad categories of connection that are represented by the genitive. Notice that different uses may result in using similar words in English translation, such as “of”: that coincidence provides ease of translation, but we should nevertheless pay attention to what the relationship is. Translation of the genitive is also not *restricted* to using “of” and considering how English expresses that same relationship between nouns is a good habit to get into as you practice translating.

5.4.2.1 Some general uses of the genitive

- *Possessive genitive*: the genitive case represents the possessor of the other noun. As such, it can be translated into English with the preposition “of” or with the possessive marker “’s”. Example: ἡ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς οἰκία “the house of the man” or “the man’s house.” Possessive genitives are usually placed in attributive position.
- *Partitive genitive* or *Genitive of the whole*: the genitive expresses a group or a “whole” and the noun it is modifying is part of or one among that group. Example: ἡ βελτίστη γυνὴ πασῶν “the best wife of all.” The partitive genitive is generally in the predicate position.
- *Subjective genitive* or *objective genitive*: when a noun is related to a verb, the genitive can express either the subject or the object of that verbal idea. Understanding the difference between them, even if the same phrasing is used to express each, allows for greater clarity. For example, in the English phrase “the fear of the Athenians,” are the Athenians the ones fearing (subjective genitive) or the ones being feared by someone else (objective genitive)? You would have to tell from context, and you can see that it does make a difference in meaning.
 - Subjective genitives, when the genitive is the “doer” of the implied action of the other noun, is usually in attributive position. Example: ἡ τοῦ παιδίου βοά “the cry of the baby” or “the baby’s cry”
 - Objective genitives, when the genitive represents the object of the implied action, is usually in the predicate position. Example: πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἡ αἰτία “the cause of all my problems”

Other uses of the genitive we will meet later in this module, when the genitive is used with prepositions:

- *Motion away or separation*
- *Agent*

More uses will be introduced and discussed in future modules.

5.5 Direct and indirect objects

Two functions that nouns can have in a clause is to act as the direct object of the verb, or as the indirect object of the verb. In order for a verb to take an object, it must be what we call a *transitive* verb, a verb that expresses an action that acts upon a recipient. The recipient of the action is called the *direct object*. Some verbs may express actions that also involve a secondary recipient: that is the *indirect object*.

In ancient Greek, the **accusative** case is the most common way of expressing a *direct object*. The **dative** case is the most common way of expressing the *indirect object*.

5.5.1 Direct Object: function of the accusative case

5.5.2 Indirect Object: function of the dative case

5.6 Types of clauses

Recall that every instance of a finite verb identifies a clause. When we have chunked together the words in a clause, the case of nouns will tell us how they function in the clause (subject, direct or indirect object). Looking at the verb of a clause together with the main nouns (if any), we can think about clauses in one of three categories: *transitive*, *intransitive* or *linking*

5.6.1 Transitive clauses

- transitive. Can have a direct object in active or middle voice; can have a passive form. In passive, agent can be expressed with ὑπό + genitive.

ἡ ἐμὴ γυνὴ ὑπὸ τούτου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὤφθη (ὀφθεῖσα in text)

(== ὁ ἄνθρωπος τὴν ἐμὴν γυναῖκα εἶδε.)

5.6.2 Intransitive clauses

- intransitive. Does not take a direct object.

ἦκον ἀπροσδοκῆτως ἐξ ἀγροῦ

(perhaps examples with γίγνομαι)

5.6.3 Linking clauses

- linking. Joins together a nominative subject and a nominative predicate with a verb referring to a state (εἰμί). Note that in the third person, εἰμί can be omitted.

οἰκονόμος δεινὴ καὶ φειδωλὸς ἀγαθὴ {ἦν}

5.7 Examples of coordinating clauses

Find subject (explicit or implicit) and verb of each clause. Categorize each as transitive, intransitive or linking.

ἦγον **μὲν** ἀπροσδοκήτως ἐξ ἀγροῦ,

μετὰ **δὲ** τὸ δεῖπνον τὸ παιδίον ἐβόα

καὶ ἐδυσκόλαιεν ...

ὁ **γὰρ** ἄνθρωπος ἔνδον ἦν:

5.8 Pronouns

Pronouns are a part of speech, words that are used in place of and in reference to a noun. There are several types of pronouns in ancient Greek, as there are in English: personal, relative, demonstrative, interrogative, indefinite, reflexive, reciprocal, intensive, and more. We know and use all of these types of pronouns without perhaps knowing their classification. In this section, we will learn the ancient Greek personal pronouns, the relative pronoun, and demonstrative pronouns.

5.9 Noun-adjective agreement

In ancient Greek, an adjective modifying a noun must agree with, or match, that noun in gender, case, and number. Adjectives from any of the three declensions can modify nouns from any of the three declensions. That is, the adjective need not “match” the noun in declension and its particular case endings, although sometimes by coincidence, the endings will look the same, especially if the adjective and noun come from the same declension.

Examples of noun-adjective agreement from Lysias I.6-10

τὸν ἄλλον χρόνον masculine accusative singular

τῷ πρώτῳ χρόνῳ masculine dative singular

πολὺν χρόνον masculine accusative singular

οἰκειότητα μεγίστην feminine accusative singular

οἰκονόμος δεινή feminine nominative singular

ἡ ἐμὴ γυνή feminine nominative singular (but note that γυνή is a 3rd declension noun, and the genitive case would be τῆς ἐμῆς γυναικός)

γυναῖκα σωφρονεστάτην feminine accusative singular

πάντων τῶν κακῶν neuter genitive plural

οἰκίδιον διπλοῦν neuter nominative singular

Because of the lack in English of gender and case with nouns and lack of even number with adjectives, English does not have explicit rules about noun-adjective agreement (as it does for subject-verb agreement, for example). The adjective does not change between one green shoe and two green shoes, an old woman or a group of old men.

But note that English has interesting “ingrained” rules about the order of adjectives when there is more than one. Most native speakers of English know these rules as just what “sounds right” or “sounds wrong,” “Old green shoes” obeys these rules while “green old shoes” does not. <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20160908-the-language-rules-we-know-but-dont-know-we-know>

English language learners are sometimes asked to learn these rules explicitly. That is a good reminder of the way in which language rules are defined for non-native-speakers (as we all are for ancient Greek) in a way that complicates the sense of a language meant to communicate.

5.9.1 Adjective placement: attributive and predicate positions

Adjectives can describe a noun, and thus in ancient Greek must agree with that noun in gender, case, and number, from different syntactical positions in a sentence.

One of those positions is called the **attributive** position, when the adjective qualifies the noun within a noun phrase. The other is called the **predicate** position, when the adjective is part of the predicate of the clause or sentence. Compare these examples in English:

The tall woman went to the market. The adjective “tall” is in the attributive position.

The woman is tall. The adjective “tall” is in the predicate position, syntactically connected to the verb of the sentence.

In both sentences, the adjective “tall” describes the woman, and so in ancient Greek would be the same gender, case, and number as the noun “woman”: since “woman” is the subject of each sentence, the adjective will be feminine, nominative, singular, as the noun is.

Attributive position in ancient Greek follows the article that modifies the noun. The article can be repeated to create this position: ἡ μεγάλη γυνή ‘the tall woman’ ἡ γυνή ἡ μεγάλη ‘the tall woman’

Note that the article may be absent, and if so, the word order of adjective and noun is less restricted, such as οἰκονόμος δεινὴ above.

Predicate position is a placement outside of the article + noun phrase.

ἡ μεγάλη γυνή εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν ἦλθον. OR ἡ γυνή ἡ μεγάλη εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν ἦλθον. *The tall woman went to the market.* (attributive position)

ἡ γυνή μεγάλη ἐστίν. *The woman is tall.* (predicate position)

5.9.2 Adjectives used as nouns, substantive adjectives

Adjectives, and indeed any kind of modifier, can be used with the definite article to function as nouns. A term for this use is “substantive adjectives.” English does this, too. In a sentence such as “Only the good die young,” we understand “the good” to refer to “good persons,” a group that is abstract in nature. In the sentence “That’s all for the good,” we understand “the good” to refer to an abstract quality.

Ancient Greek tends to use substantive adjectives much more often than English does, though, and takes advantage of the gender and number of adjectives to express a wider variety of the understood noun. Because ancient Greek has that flexibility, to understand and translate it properly, you must supply a noun that reflects that gender and number:

ὁ ἀγαθός, masculine singular, “the good man”; οἱ ἀγαθοί masculine plural “good men,” “the good men” or “the good” (ancient Greek defaults to the masculine when describing a group of persons of mixed gender, whether possible or actual)

ἡ ἀγαθή feminine singular, “the good woman”; αἱ ἀγαθαί feminine plural “the good women,” “good women”

τὸ ἀγαθόν neuter singular, “the good thing” or “the good” as a abstract quality; τὰ ἀγαθὰ “good things,” “the good things,” “goods” or “the good”. Neuter plural substantives are especially flexible in meaning and thus can be used in a variety of contexts.

THIS SECTION SHOULD ACCOMPANY or FOLLOW THE SECTION ON PERSISTENT ACCENT

5.10 Enclitics

5.11 Prepositions

A *preposition* is a part of speech, like noun or verb or adjective, in both English and ancient Greek. Its ancient Greek name is πρόθεσις. It is used to create a relationship between a noun and another word. A preposition and a noun create a *prepositional phrase*. That prepositional phrase may act adjectivally to modify a noun or adverbially to modify a predicate. Compare the uses of the prepositional phrase “on the beach” in these two English sentences:

The women on the beach were playing. (describes which women, adjectival)

The women were playing on the beach. (describes where they were playing, adverbial)

The nouns in a prepositional phrase in ancient Greek will be one of the oblique cases: genitive, dative, and accusative. We have already learned that noun cases in Greek have particular functions. These functions broadly determine which of the cases will be the object of a particular preposition. For example, the genitive conveys motion away from, the dative is used for a stationary position, and the accusative for motion toward or into. That relationship of case and function is apparent also with some prepositions that take more than one case of noun: which case is used shades the meaning of the preposition, sometimes subtly, sometimes substantially.

Therefore, it is important as you learn prepositions as vocabulary that you also learn which case(s) of noun each takes as its object, and how the case of the object affects the meaning of the preposition. Preposition usage in English is highly idiomatic, and so the practice of translation requires, as always, a good understanding of what the Greek is expressing and how English expresses that same idea, rather than a single equivalence of word to word.

5.11.0.1 Frequently used prepositions that take only one case

Preposition	case of noun object	English near-equivalents
ἀπό	+ genitive	away from, from
εἰς	+ accusative	into, to, toward, in regard to
ἐκ, ἐξ	+ genitive	out of, from
ἐν	+ dative	in, on, among, within
σύν	+ dative	with

5.11.0.2 Frequently used prepositions that take more than one case

Preposition	case of noun object	English near-equivalents
ἐπί	+ genitive	near, at, upon
ἐπί	+ dative	at, on, upon, in addition to
ἐπί	+ accusative	to, onto, up to, toward; against
κατά	+ genitive	down from, against
κατά	+ accusative	down to, down along, in accordance with
μετά	+ genitive	among, with
μετά	+ accusative	after
παρά	+ genitive	from the side of
παρά	+ dative	at the side of, next to, beside
παρά	+ accusative	to the side of, beside, beyond, contrary to
περί	+ genitive	around, about
περί	+ dative	around, about
περί	+ accusative	around, concerning
πρός	+ genitive	from
πρός	+ dative	near, beside; in addition to
πρός	+ accusative	to, toward, against; regarding
ὑπό	+ genitive	from under; by {personal agent, see below}
ὑπό	+ dative	under (stationary), at the hands of
ὑπό	+ accusative	under (motion toward)

5.11.1 Compound Verbs

The adverbial properties of prepositions can also be seen in so-called compound verbs, in which a preposition is a prefix on a verb and shades its meaning according. For example, ἔρχομαι ‘to go’ → εἰσέρχομαι ‘to go into, enter’

5.11.2 Agent: a use of the preposition ὑπό + genitive

We have seen that the subject of a passive verb is the recipient of the action expressed by that verb: for example, “you are caught.” To express who is the agent of the action of the passive verb, English uses the preposition “by”: “you are caught by her husband.” Ancient Greek expresses the personal agent of a passive verb with the preposition ὑπό plus a noun in the genitive. You can remember the three “P’s” of personal agent: passive verb, preposition, and person in the genitive.

5.12 Ancient Greek in action: gender identity and language

- Gender and gender diversity: draw on sources in Tom Hendrickson, “Gender Diversity in Greek and Latin”

5.13 Reading

Practice, reading and composition based on Lysias 1, 11-14: curious events in the household of Euphiletos.

6 Module 3: participles

Practice, reading and composition based on Lysias 1, sections 16-19: an elderly woman reveals to Euphiletos that his wife is having an affair with Eratosthenes.

6.1 Overview of module 3

6.1.1 Language

Main areas of focus are:

- participles: a verbal unit
- attributive, circumstantial, supplementary participles
- absolute construction

6.1.2 Making Connections

Reading the Second Amendment

6.1.3 Practice, Reading, and Composition

- πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἀποθανοῦσα αἰτία μοι γεγένηται
- ἢ ἐμὴ γυνὴ ὑπὸ τούτου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὀφθεῖσα, χρόνῳ διαφθείρεται
- οἰκίδιον ἔστι μοι διπλοῦν, ἴσα ἔχον τὰ ἄνω τοῖς κάτω
- ... ἵνα δὲ μὴ κινδυνεύῃ κατὰ τῆς κλίμακος καταβαίνουσα
- προϊόντος τοῦ χρόνου...
- ἵνα παύσῃται κλᾶον
- ὥς ἀσμένῃ με ἑορακυῖα ἦκοντα διὰ χρόνου.
- πρότερον δὲ μεθύων εἴλκες αὐτήν
- καγὼ τούτων οὐδὲν ἐνθυμούμενος οὐδ' ὑπονοῶν ἐκάθευδον ἄσμενος
- χρόνου μεταξὺ διαγενομένου καὶ ἐμοῦ πολὺ ἀπολελειμμένον τῶν ἐμαυτοῦ κακῶν, προσέρχεταιί μοι τις πρεσβυτίας...

6.2 Participles (ἡ μετοχή)

TBA: the next verbal unit

6.3 Participles: introduction

Participles are a kind of adjective created from a verb. They share qualities of both verbs and adjectives (and in fact, the ancient Greek grammatical term for “participle,” μετοχή, literally means “a sharing”). Like any other adjective, participles have gender, case and number, and agree with the noun they describe in all those properties. But like other verb forms, participles have tense and voice, and function alongside finite verbs as a second kind of verbal unit.

6.3.1 English participles

English has a very limited set of participles. We can add *ing* to a verb stem to create a participle in a present tense and active voice. In a phrase like the cliché “babbling brook”, “brook” is a noun described by the adjective “babbling”. “Babbling” is a participle in the active voice: we’re saying that “the brook babbles.” It’s also in the present tense: the brook is babbling as we speak.

We can also add *ed* to a verb stem to create a participle in a past tense and passive voice. The phrase “dreaded news” describes the noun “news” with an adjective made from the verb “to dread”. The voice is passive: the news is not the active subject dreading something, but the passive subject, the thing that is dreaded. The tense is past: the news was already dreaded before we speak.

6.3.2 Participles in Greek

Like finite verbs, participles are a verbal unit. That is, they express a verbal idea with a subject. Finite verbs

You’ve seen that the subject of finite verb may be implied by the person and number of the verb form (“he” or “she”, for example, could be the subject of a third singular form), and that expressed subjects of finite verbs are in the nominative case.

The subject of a participle is a noun or pronoun

Participles: a verbal unit

Participles: an adjective

προσέρχεται μοί τις πρεσβύτες ἄνθρωπος, ὑπὸ γυναικὸς ὑποπεμφθεῖσα ἣν ἐκεῖνος ἐμοίχευεν, ὡς ἐγὼ ὕστερον ἤκουον

ὁ γὰρ ἀνὴρ ὁ ὑβρίζων εἰς σὲ καὶ τὴν σὴν γυναῖκα ἐχθρὸς ὢν ἡμῖν τυγχάνει.
τὴν θεράπειναν τὴν εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν βαδίζουσιν

6.4 Present-tense participles

- Formation
- meaning

examples:

πρότερον δὲ μεθύων εἴλκεσ ἀυτὴν

κἀγὼ τούτων οὐδὲν ἐνθυμούμενος οὐδ' ὑπονοῶν ἐκάθευδον ἄσμενος

6.5 Aorist participles

- Formation
- meaning

6.6 Ancient Greek in action: reading the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed

6.7 Module 3: reading

6.7.1 Chunking more complex sentences

- this display indents by level of subordination:

πάντων τῶν κακῶν

ἀποθανοῦσα

αἰτία μοι **γεγένηται**

- start by reading down the left-most (principal) elements:

πάντων τῶν κακῶν ... αἰτία μοι **γεγένηται**

Then proceed in one level, and work on each subordinate construction.

When you're done, reread it like a printed text:

πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἀποθανοῦσα αἰτία μοι γεγένηται

Another example...

ἢ ἐμὴ γυνή

ὑπὸ τούτου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου **ὀφθεῖσα**,

χρόνῳ **διαφθείρεται**

7 Module 4: subordination

7.1 Overview of module 4

7.1.1 Language

Main areas of focus are:

- first subordinate clause (introducing subordinating conjunctions, use of μή)
- sequence of tenses
- morphology of subjunctive and optative moods, all three voices, 3S and Pl (aorist, imperfect tenses)

7.1.2 Making Connections

- Phuc Tran on the power of a non-indicative mood

7.1.3 Practice, Reading, and Composition

- Continuing with Lysias 1, sections 20-22(?)
- Can express purpose in two different ways

7.2 Subordination, the subjunctive (ἡ ὑποτακτικὴ ἔγκλις) and optative (ἡ εὐκτικὴ ἔγκλις) moods

In this module, we will introduce the first of several types of subordinate clauses you will learn in Greek: the purpose clause.

You will see that the purpose clause (a subordinate clause, introduced by a subordinating conjunction with a verb in the subjunctive or optative) is an alternative method of expressing the idea of purpose through a future tense participle. Options!

This subordinate clause features finite verbs of the subjunctive or optative mood.

7.3 The Subjunctive and Optative Moods: Overview

You were introduced to the indicative mood in Module 1. In this module, you will learn how to form verbs in the subjunctive and optative moods. Verbs in these moods appear frequently in subordinate clauses (such as the purpose clause, in this module) and in certain independent clauses (which you will learn about next semester).

Learning to form subjunctive and optative verbs will open up whole worlds of expression — possibilities, conditions, wishes, mental content of all sorts.

7.3.1 Important things to know:

- The way we translate subjunctives and optatives is entirely dependent on their context. You must always first identify the type of “verbal chunk” they belong to. The “tense” of a verb in these moods represents the *aspect* of the action, not the *time*. Thus a present subjunctive or optative expresses ongoing or continuous action, and an aorist subjunctive or optative expresses a single action.
- Forming these verbs requires only adding a new set of endings onto the same principal part stems that you have already learned.

7.3.2 Forming the present subjunctive and optative

Present subjunctive

To the stem from the first principal part, add the following endings:

Number	Active	Middle/Passive
3rd singular	-ῃ	-ῃται
3rd plural	-ωσι(ν)	-ωνται

Present optative

Number	Active	Middle/Passive
3rd singular	-οι	-οιτο
3rd plural	-οιεν	-οιντο

7.3.3 Forming the aorist subjunctive and optative

As you would expect, for the active and middle, add endings to the stem from the third principal part. For the passive, add endings to the stem from the sixth principal part. Subjunctive and optative forms never carry an augment, however, so you must remove the augment from the stem.

Examples:

Aorist subjunctive

	Active	Middle	Passive
3rd singular	-ῃ	-ῃται	-ῃ
3rd plural	-ωσι(ν)	-ωνται	-ῶσι(ν)

1st Aorist optative

	Active	Middle	Passive
3rd singular	-αι or -ειε(ν)	-αιτο	-εῖη
3rd plural	-αιεν or -ειαν	-αιντο	-εῖσαν or -εῖεν

2nd Aorist optative

	Active	Middle	Passive
3rd singular	-οι	-οιτο	-εῖη
3rd plural	-οιεν	-οιντο	-εῖσαν or -εῖεν

7.4 Purpose clauses

A purpose clause is a subordinate clause. “Clause” means it has its own subject and verb, while “subordinate” means that it is dependent on the main clause of the sentence and does not stand alone. As the name indicates, purpose clauses explain the reason(s) behind the main action: why, or for what purpose, the action of the main clause was done. The verb of a purpose clause is never in the indicative mood.

Identify the purpose expressed in these English sentences: He told them everything so that they would understand. So that she wouldn't have to climb stairs, she slept on the first floor. The students practiced their Greek forms daily to learn them better. We live in order to love.

The structure of a purpose clause in ancient Greek has the following features

- it is introduced by a specific subordinating conjunctions, ἵνα, ὥς, or ὅπως
- if the verb in the purpose clause is negated, it is negated by μή
- the verb within the purpose clause will be in the subjunctive or the optative mood, according to the **sequence of moods**.

7.5 Sequence of Moods: Overview

The term “Sequence of Moods” describes the relationship between the tense/mood of a sentence's main verb and the mood of the verb in a subordinate clause.

The sequence is called either “Primary” or “Secondary.” Primary tenses of verbs are those that express action in the present or future, while secondary tenses are those that express action in the past. The subjunctive mood is associated with the primary tenses. The optative mood is associated with the secondary tenses.

Sequence	Tense of the main verb	Mood of the verb in subordinate clause
Primary	Present, Future, or Perfect	Subjunctive
Secondary	Imperfect, Aorist, or Pluperfect	Optative

7.6 Ancient Greek in action: “the dark side of the subjunctive”

- Watch Phuc Tran's TED Talk, “The Dark Side of the Subjunctive.”

Our discussion of Tran's talk will examine the power of verbal moods (other than the indicative), and how they expand the universe of ideas we can describe.

8 Practice

Studying a language requires practice.

8.1 Verbs: practice

- drills identifying verb forms?
- drills on principal parts?
- drills on singular<->plural?
- drills on imperfect<->aorist?
- drills changing voice?

8.2 Module 1: assignments

8.3 Nouns and adjectives: practice

TBA

8.4 Module 2: assignments

8.5 Participles: practice

8.6 Module 3: assignments

8.7 Subordination: practice

- drills on identifying verb forms of subjunctives/optatives
- drills on creating verb forms of subjunctives/optatives

- drills on translating purposes clauses
- drills on composing purpose clauses, running through various parts of sequence of tenses

8.8 Module 4: assignments

9 Reference and review

- review material by module
- reference material for entire textbook (paradigms, synopses)

9.1 Module 1: reference and review

9.1.1 Module 1: vocabulary

9.1.1.1 Conjunctions and connecting particles

- ἀλλά
- γάρ
- καί
- μέν...δέ...δέ
- οὐν
- τε

9.1.1.2 Verbs

- ἀδικέω
- γίγνομαι
- δείκνυμι
- δοκέω
- ἔρχομαι
- ἔχω
- κελεύω
- λέγω
- ποιέω

Other:

- ἔστι(ν)

9.1.2 Module 1: summary of forms and grammar

To form the **imperfect indicative** in all three voices:

- use the *first principal part*
- find the stem by dropping **ω** or **νυμι**

To form the **aorist indicative** in **active or middle** forms

- use the *third principal part*
- find the stem by dropping **α** from “first” aorists, or **ον** from “second” aorists

To form the **aorist indicative** in **passive** forms

- use the *sixth principal part*
- find the stem by dropping **ην**

9.1.2.1 Paradigms

The aorist indicative in the third person. (Forms highlighted like this are not required to be memorized in module 1.)

The aorist indicative of δείκνυμι

person/number	Active	Middle	Passive
<i>Singular</i>			
1st singular	ἔδειξα	ἔδειξάμην	ἐδείχθη
2d singular	ἔδειξες	ἔδειξω	ἐδείχθης
3rd singular	ἔδειξε	ἔδειξατο	ἐδείχθη
<i>Plural</i>			
1st plural	ἐδείξαμεν	ἐδειξάμεθα	ἐδείχθη
2d plural	ἐδείξατε	ἐδείξασθε	ἐδείχθησαν
3rd plural	ἔδειξαν	ἔδειξαντο	ἐδείχθησαν

9.2 Module 2: reference and review

9.2.1 Summary of forms and grammar

9.2.2 Vocabulary

9.3 Module 3: reference and review

9.4 Module 4: reference and review

10 Postscript

- many questions

