

Greek Grammar Primer

Yearlong, September 2021-May 2022

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:

Grades 4-5 *Students should be reading English chapter books fluently, beginning a study of English grammar, and be able to follow instructions well.*

Class Dates: Beginning Tuesday, September 7, 2021; running through Tuesday, May 24, 2021. (ORIENTATION: Tuesday, August 31)

Class Times: Tuesday, 2:30 pm (EST,) running 45 minutes

Instructor: Mallory Stripling

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SCHEDULE FOR GREEK GRAMMAR PRIMER

Orientation: Tuesday, August 31

First Day of Class: Tuesday, September 7

Thanksgiving Break: No class on Tuesday, November 23

Resume: Tuesday, December 7

Christmas Break: No classes on December 21, 28, January 4

Resume: Tuesday, January 11

SRS Winter Break: No class on Tuesday, February 15

Resume: Tuesday, February 22

Holy Week Break: No class on Tuesday, April 19 (Holy Tuesday)

Resume: Tuesday, April 26 (Bright Tuesday)

Last Class: Tuesday, May 24

GREEK GRAMMAR PRIMER COURSE MAP:

QUARTER 1

Greek alphabet
Grammarland
Hymns from the Liturgy

QUARTER 2

Greek reading practice
Grammarland
Hymns from the Liturgy

QUARTER 3

Begin Memoria Press Text
-ω verbs and εἰμι
2nd declension nouns
Aesop's *Fables* in Greek
Hymns from the Liturgy

QUARTER 4

Simple Greek sentences
Aesop's *Fables* in Greek
Hymns from the Liturgy

OFFICE HOURS: Contact Mrs. Stripling to determine the best time to meet via Zoom or talk on the phone to ask questions or discuss concerns. MWF afternoons are usually the best time.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS:

The course text is [Elementary Greek: Year One](#) by Christine Gatchell, published by Memoria Press. Please buy the *Student Text*, the *Student Workbook*, the *Test Book*, and the *Teacher Key*. Do not buy the audio CD (the pronunciation is different.) Do not buy the pre-made flashcards, but do buy blank flashcards so that students can make their own.

Mrs. Stripling will upload all other course materials to Schoology.

GREEK GRAMMAR PRIMER COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is intended to be a introduction to Biblical Greek for late elementary students who will benefit from a very thorough treatment of the basic elements of the Greek language, with strong emphases on decoding and pronouncing words correctly, understanding grammar concepts, memorizing vocabulary and paradigms, and working with the structure of the sentence in both English and Greek. Over the course of one school year, children will study most of the material covered in the first semester of the St. Raphael Greek 1 course.

In the first quarter, the students will learn the Greek alphabet, and spend the second quarter practicing reading (simply decoding) Greek texts, with the goal of fluent decoding before Christmas. In the first semester, we will read Edith Nesbitt's Grammarland, a delightful way to create a shared foundation in English grammar before we tackle Greek grammar. In the second semester, we will begin the Memoria Press textbook, as well as working with Aesop's Fables in Greek. Throughout the year, we will be learning to sing hymns from the Liturgy, often pertinent to the liturgical season.

The following is a description of how classes will *generally* be conducted.

Each class meeting will begin with prayer in Greek, usually the Lord's Prayer. Mrs. Stripling will lead the students in reviewing the past week's work. Students will translate sentences, recite or sing paradigms, and be quizzed on vocabulary words. Mrs. Stripling will then teach new material or lead students in practicing skills.

During each class, students will practice singing the hymn currently in focus, receiving (encouraging) critiques of their Greek pronunciation. Recordings of native Greek-speakers singing hymns will often give color to the lessons, as well as icons with Greek inscriptions.

The fact that our class only meets once a week defines the scope of our work together. The purpose of our class meeting is to offer live instruction from a skilled teacher, who can explain the content of the course in a responsive way, giving students closer guidance than they would receive from a textbook alone, in a difficult subject many parents do not feel equipped to teach. The class meeting is also a time to coach students in their practice of skills they will need as they study Greek on the other four days of the week. Finally, Mrs. Stripling intends the course to be a community of learners, who gain strength and inspiration from each other, integrating their Orthodox faith and their study of Greek.

Parents with no background in Greek can find this subject daunting. Although it isn't required that you give your child homework help, I do encourage you to at least try to learn the alphabet with us during our first month of study. Then you will at least be able to decipher the material and quiz students on their flashcards. You will probably find that if you do learn the alphabet, the rest of the content of this course will be no more difficult to grasp than an early-grades Latin course, since the grammatical principles being discussed are universal to all languages. Please contact me with any questions that come up at home!

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: CLASS BEHAVIOR

- Students are expected to be able to sit quietly and listen respectfully for the duration of the class (45 minutes.) Students will frequently be called upon to participate actively, and should remain sitting at the computer, listening and ready to contribute when asked.

- Students should be able to operate the Zoom program without frequent parental intervention.
- Students should come to class with a notebook and something to write with.
- Students should take care of all their physical needs before class begins (having used the bathroom, having water available to drink, having already eaten.)
- Students should strive to answer questions correctly and clearly during class times and respond willingly to guidance from Mrs. Stripling. For example, students should give their best try at pronouncing Greek words, and then listen carefully to the teacher's correction, and try again, until they pronounce the words correctly.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: WORKING AT HOME

At home, parents will determine how the material is incorporated into the child's education (examples would be choosing on what days to do which activities or deciding whether a child needs to repeat an activity until mastered.) It is understood that every homeschooling family is different, and that life frequently disrupts the best-laid plans, but an ideal week would include engaging in each of the following activities. Throughout all these activities, the student should be constantly *saying* and *writing* Greek words.

- **Daily:** Reading the assigned material, divided into short daily lessons. Mrs. Stripling will have taught from these lessons during the class, so children will not be encountering anything new on their own. The written lessons will be a reminder of what was learned in class.
- **Daily:** Working through exercises, including translation, diagramming, and classifying. Consider doing some exercises each on erasable surfaces so that the focus is on the process and not always the finished page.
- **Daily:** Making and quizzing oneself with flashcards to improve vocabulary (use a variety of approaches- English to Greek, Greek to English, writing from an oral cue, etc.)
- **2-3 times a week:** Practicing the assigned Greek hymn by reading it aloud, writing sections of it as copy work, and of course, singing it! Incorporating the hymn into family prayers or morning time is a fun way to learn it together.

STUDENT EVALUATION: GRADING

Students will be assessed on their oral participation in class, as well as assignments submitted on Schoology. Tests will be given bi-weekly and other work may be assigned for submission on "off" weeks. Mrs. Stripling will provide student assessment in the form of comments at least once a semester, as well as providing a record of test scores, often commenting directly on the work submitted. See "Mastery Portrait" below for assessment criteria concerning skills and content specific to Greek. Students will also be expected and encouraged to exhibit development of good scholarly habits such as preparedness, engagement, and self-assessment/correction.

STUDENT EVALUATION: MASTERY PORTRAIT

Since our class will include students of varying ages, and levels of preparedness, I do not expect every student to *fully* master the following content and skills by the end of the year. Instead I intend this portrait to be an **image** that they seek to embody over the course of our school year together. The list proceeds in ascending order, from the most basic skills to the most complete mastery.

- Fluently decode and pronounce any Greek text (whether the meaning is understood or not), including inscriptions on icons
- Sing assigned Byzantine hymns in Greek, eventually from memory, and know generally what the hymn is about, picking out a few important words
- Accurately define Greek vocabulary words given in their lexical form (as seen on the flashcards) and in many cases relate to an English derivative
- Recite the endings of all assigned paradigms
- Classify, diagram, and translate the simple Greek sentences assigned as exercises
- Find the stem of any given vocabulary word and accurately decline or conjugate it according to assigned paradigms
- Understand why Greek nouns have different endings for different cases, numbers, and genders
- Understand why Greek verbs have different endings for different persons and numbers
- Understand the concept of grammatical “agreement” between words

THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM:

We will be using the free online “virtual classroom” software provided by Zoom. The virtual classroom will provide students with video, audio and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video and other media can be displayed and analyzed. We will provide students with a link (via email) that will enable students to join the virtual classroom.

Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting the [Technology in the Classroom](#) section of the Student Parent Handbook.

We will also be using an online Learning Management System called Schoology to communicate about assignments. In a traditional classroom, the teacher would be handing out materials to the students physically. Consider Schoology our medium for sharing instructional materials. This is where Mrs. Stripling will be sharing necessary resources such as sheet music for hymns, as well as anything she finds interesting and pertinent to our studies together. **Note:** I do not expect students in this age range to be able to use Schoology responsibly, and in fact I strongly recommend that parents are responsible for or at least aware of all of their children’s online communications.

New tools for learning are always being developed. Throughout the school year I may be experimenting with new programs to find the best ways to help students engage actively

with the material and the group. If anything is required for you to download or sign up for, I will communicate this clearly via Schoology assignments or messages.

ONE LAST THING: WHAT KIND OF GREEK IS THIS ANYWAY?

When your child tells someone that she is studying Greek, the next part of the conversation may be confusing if you are not clear on what kind of Greek she is learning. We are learning *Biblical Greek*, using *Modern pronunciation*.

Biblical Greek is essentially the same language as “Classical” or Attic Greek, in which Plato, Aristotle, and Thucydides wrote in the century before Christ’s birth. The Septuagint was translated into, and the New Testament was mostly written in a variant of Greek called “Koine,” meaning “common.” This is a simpler form of Greek than Attic Greek. Koine Greek basically persisted into the Byzantine era, so that our Orthodox hymns, liturgy, and much of our theology were written in this language.

Today, the Greek language is very different from the language of the Bible. The influence of Turkish and other languages has infused new vocabulary, and the grammatical structure has become even simpler. To give you a *rough* idea of the different eras, I like to compare Homeric Greek to Old English (*Beowulf*, basically incomprehensible to modern English-speakers without intense study,) Attic Greek to Middle English (Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, readable to us with some knowledge of French and extensive footnotes) and Koine Greek to Elizabethan English (Shakespeare, understandable to us with a bit of effort if we have grown up hearing the King James Bible.) Modern Greek speakers understand Koine Greek pretty well if they have grown up in the Orthodox Church, BUT, learning Koine Greek will not teach you how to ask a modern Greek person where you can buy a fish sandwich.

The other important thing to clarify is that we are using the Modern pronunciation. Scholars differ on how Greek sounded during classical and Biblical times. In the middle ages, a German monk named Erasmus came up with a system of Greek pronunciation that is still used in academic circles today (including non-Orthodox scholars of the Bible.) This system sounds different from the way that Greeks speak today (mainly in vowel sounds, but also in a few of the consonants.) In Greek Orthodox churches and any Orthodox seminary that teaches Biblical Greek, the Modern Greek pronunciation is used for the liturgy, chanting hymns, and reading the Bible. *At St. Raphael School, we have chosen to use the Modern pronunciation, because our study of Greek, besides being an essential part of a classical education, is also an element of our catechism in the Orthodox faith.*

So, when a Greek parishioner tries to make conversation with your student in Greek, or when a friend with a classical education quotes the Bible or Homer in a strange-sounding accent, you will be able to help your student explain that she is studying *Biblical Greek* (the language of the Orthodox liturgy) and using the *Modern pronunciation*.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:

Mallory Stripling begins her seventh year of teaching Greek with St. Raphael School in September of 2021. She embarked on her teaching career as a founding faculty member at Hagia Sophia Classical Academy in Indianapolis, Indiana, where she taught Latin, art, language arts, and science. Mallory is a homeschool alumna and a 2010 graduate of St.

John's College in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where she studied philosophy, history, literature, French, Greek, mathematics, science and music. In Santa Fe, she also met and fell in love with the Orthodox Church (into which she was baptized in 2008) and her husband, Matthew (whom she married in 2011.) Matthew and Mallory live in Annapolis, Maryland with a second grader, a kindergartener, and a toddler.