

**ALPHA: A GREEK
PRIMER, INTRODUCTORY
TO XENOPHON**

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Alpha: A Greek Primer, Introductory to Xenophon by William G. Frost

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WILLIAM G. FROST

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ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ Ο ΜΕΤΑΣ

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ALPHA
A GREEK PRIMER

INTRODUCTORY TO XENOPHON

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Small Lecture
on
A. C. White

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PREFACE.

THIS little book must speak for itself. No one is more conscious of its shortcomings than the author, or more impatient of the incomplete statements, and the detached and diluted Greek sentences, so useful in a handbook for beginners. The book has been prepared, however, in the belief that a worthy contribution to classical studies, and to the cause of learning in general, is possible; that the facts of the language may be grouped in a more effective manner than formerly; and that greater practical results, though it may be at the sacrifice of some traditional formulas, are attainable.

In our day every educated person desires to know something of Greek, and it is essential that the work of the first term should be something more than a preparation for that which is to follow. The student must be enabled to see the connections between Greek and English, and made to feel, even in the first lessons, that he is approaching the literature of a great age and people.

The revolt against the idea that Greek is a "dead" language has scarcely reached, as yet, the elementary text-books, and preparatory teachers have few helps in training their students in "reading at sight," or in other exercises, which involve the use of the language in a *real* way. While nothing revolutionary is proposed, it is hoped that this primer will be adapted to the wants of teachers who seek progress in this direction.

To have any sense of literary values, one must acquire an almost vernacular command of a good vocabulary. To en-

courage the beginner in this difficult task, we have been at some pains to select for this manual the six hundred and sixty-five most important words,¹ and to make provision for oral exercises, as a necessary supplement to black-board work. It is certainly time that the deaf and dumb method of language teaching were superseded.

Another legacy from a more formal age is the plan of teaching elementary grammar by minute references. How many hours have been wasted in the turning of leaves! The inexperienced student needs the facts and principles of the lesson as a connected whole on the page before him. Before leaving the Primer he is taught to use the grammar, and to use it in a rational way.

The inductive method is employed largely throughout the book, but is not allowed to dominate in the order of development.

¹ The Vocabulary is made up as follows:—

Words which occur four times or more in Anabasis I-III, and which are also among the five hundred most common words in the De Corona, Oedipus Rex, Phaedo, Memorabilia, and Thucydides I	423
All other words occurring seven times or more in Anab. I-III,	92
Common words (though less common than the above) which are related to words already on the list; that <i>εἰς</i> for example may stand beside <i>εἰς</i> , and <i>ἀρχαῖος</i> beside <i>ἀρχή</i>	68
Words which are in regular use in English, as <i>τέρας</i> and <i>δημοκρατία</i>	30
Words like <i>ἄετος</i> which are necessary as paradigms	18
Words necessary for conversation, as <i>ταῦ</i> and <i>σήμερον</i>	10
Words involved in literary extracts, as <i>φειδομαι</i>	24
Total	665

Words like *ἀπέω* are entered more than once in the vocabulary.

This enumeration does not include proper names, nor the list of grammatical terms and phrases for class-room conversation, on page 215.

The fundamental elements of syntax are taught most easily in connection with the forms, and false ideas are thus excluded. The aim has been to make the regular forms so prominent that the student will be startled into attention when he encounters the exceptions. It is unnecessary to refer more in detail to the faithful rendering of tenses, the idiomatic use of participles, the introduction of connected discourse and dialog, and other matters in which care has been taken to remove or smooth away the old stumbling-blocks.

It is believed that much is gained by grouping, in each lesson, facts which are more easily learned together than separately. The more difficult lessons must be reviewed the more frequently. It is designed that each paragraph of Greek sentences should be made the basis of conversational exercises like those of Lesson VIII.

The author's sincere thanks are due to the able scholars who have preceded him in similar attempts, and to a number of his associates and pupils. It must suffice to mention here the Greek Club of Oberlin, whose companionship has been most stimulating; Mr. F. H. Howard, of the Syracuse High School, who has kindly reviewed nearly the entire book; and Prof. M. L. D'Ooge, upon whose mature scholarship it has been a pleasure to lean. He was particularly fortunate in enlisting Mr. Francis K. Ball, of Cambridge, Mass., in the revision of the proof-sheets. The Primer has been much improved by that gentleman's scholarship, judgment, and taste.

It is to be expected that some errors will appear in a first edition, and the kindness of those who point them out to the author will be appreciated.

OBERLIN COLLEGE,
Sept. 5, 1889.



Greek vase. An athlete's prize.