

Introduction to writing in Greek

Adapted from JACT's *Reading Greek: Grammar and Exercises* (2nd ed.) Cambridge, 2007, p. 365-366.

In the ENGLISH INTO GREEK exercises you will practice translating English sentences into Greek. To get you started on this, bear in mind the following tips:

- Do not rush into translating – look carefully at the **WHOLE** sentence in English.
- First translate the 'guide'-sentence in Greek which precedes the one you have to translate from English into Greek. (Alternatively, look at the Greek to English practice and review sentences in the primer you are using for your class.) This has the same general shape as the sentence you will be writing. Use it to guide the shape of your sentence.
- Remember that Greek will often use just one word where English will use several, e.g. 'you are going' is translated by one word, βαίνεις.
- Think about the English sentence in terms of **SUBJECT, VERB, and OBJECT**.
- Remember, when turning the English **SUBJECT** and **OBJECT** into Greek, that it is vital to get the endings right in Greek – simply putting the Greek in the same order as the English will not get the meaning across. **SUBJECTS** will go into the **NOMINATIVE** case, **OBJECTS** into the **ACCUSATIVE**.
- You will have to check carefully on the **NUMBER** of the subject (singular or plural), and make sure the verb corresponds to it (but remember that neuter plural subjects take singular verbs).
- Check also the number and gender (masculine, feminine, or neuter) of nouns and make certain that any definite article or adjective going with a noun agrees with it in **CASE, NUMBER, and GENDER**.

So, work through these points for the following sentence:

'Guide'-sentence: οἱ ἄνθρωποι ὁρῶσι τὸν Ἡγέστρατον.

Translate: 'The men see [the] Hegestratos.'

Your sentence for translation into Greek: 'The friends pursue the man.'

What is the **SUBJECT**? (it is 'the friends')

What is Greek for 'friend'? (it is φίλος)

What gender is φίλος? (masculine)

So what form of 'the' will you need? (some form of ὁ)

What **CASE** does this need to be in your sentence?

How many friends? (More than one – you need the plural)

So how do you translate 'the friends' here?

What is the **VERB**? (it is 'pursue')

What is the Greek for 'I pursue'? (it is διώκω)

What form do you need? (it is the third person plural)

So what is 'pursue' here?

Does this **VERB** have an **OBJECT** (remember, not all verbs have objects)?

What is the **OBJECT**? (it is 'the man')

What is Greek for 'the man'?

Make sure that 'the' agrees with 'man'.

What **CASE** does this need to be in your sentence?

How many men?

So what is 'the man' here?

Putting it all together – look at the guide-sentence to structure your sentence.

The sentence should be:

οἱ φίλοι διώκουσι τὸν ἄνθρωπον.