

It's Not the Size, It's the Frequency: The Value of Using a Core Vocabulary in Beginning and Intermediate Greek

Wilfred E. Major
Foreign Languages and Literatures Department
Louisiana State University

Teachers and students in the early stages of learning ancient Greek face a number of challenges: a different writing system, morphological changes with seemingly as many exceptions as rules, flexible and daunting syntax, complex and deep literature, a strikingly alien cultural context, and so on. Most often as teachers we simply have to argue or plead that these extra difficulties are worthwhile because the payoff of reading Greek is so great. Rarely, if ever, do we get to say that some aspect of Greek is actually *easier* than that of other languages. The core vocabulary of ancient Greek, however, is one such area.

This article presents various ways to make use of Greek's relatively small core vocabulary in beginning and intermediate classroom. The key points are:

1. Ancient Greek has a high-frequency core vocabulary scarcely half the size of many other languages.
2. Using "50%" and "80%" core vocabulary lists enhances student learning in the beginning and intermediate stages of learning Greek. Examples of such lists are included in this article.
3. Awareness of the relative frequency of certain morphological categories encourages students and teachers to focus on paradigms which are most common and therefore most rewarding when reading.
4. Grouping subsets of the core vocabulary in different ways (e.g., by logical groups or morphological type) improves acquisition of vocabulary by making relevant patterns clear and by reinforcing vocabulary in different contexts.

Greek's Smaller Core Vocabulary: The 50% and 80% Lists

The frequency and distribution of vocabulary can seem like an arcane topic, but especially for Greek, it is a helpful one for teachers and students in the early stages. Simply put, beginning students should learn vocabulary that they will encounter most often when they read. Reinforcing these high frequency items improves students' comfort level, since they master the elements which they encounter most often. Linguists have studied and quantified key levels in the core vocabulary of a number of languages. Computers have aided this research in recent years, although ideally the basic results match the intuition of native speakers. An adult speaker of English, for example, typically carries a vocabulary between 10,000 and 15,000 items. In a given conversation or even if writing an entire book (say over 100,000 words) an adult is unlikely to use anything close to their entire vocabulary. Nor do speakers or writers distribute their vocabulary usage at all evenly. A text of 100,000 words, for example, consisting of 5,000 different lexical items, does not include each word twenty times. On the contrary, a small

number of words are repeated very often and some more specialized vocabulary will be used only once or rarely.

Core vocabulary tends to cluster at two levels, 50% and 80%. The percentage refers to the proportion of a text made up by a certain amount of vocabulary. Half of most English texts, for example, consist of the same one hundred or so lemmas¹ repeated as the situation demands. Words like “the” “to” and “is,” for example, generate a fair amount of text by themselves. In these statistics, linguists count lemmas, so different forms of a word (“is” and “was”; “camel” and “camels”) count as a single lemma, not separate vocabulary items. Despite some irregular words (“go” and “went”) and vocabulary items of considerable flexibility (“do”), these are words absolutely fundamental to any communication and comprehension of English. The Perseus Project (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>) provides an invaluable database, and its vocabulary tool (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/vocab?lang=greek>) has allowed scholars to generate similar analyses for Greek. Whereas an English 50% list consists of more than a hundred lemmas, which is normal enough for languages, a comparable Greek list contains about 65 (the exact number can vary depending on whether some items are grouped together as a single lemma or separated as distinct lemmas). The list itself, with further discussion, follows later in this article, but the key points now are that Greek has a much smaller list at this level and that these are unquestionably vocabulary items a student of Greek will need to be comfortable with.

The next significant plateau arrives at 80%, that is, the number of lemmas which typically generate 80% of a text. In English such a list consists of 2,200-2,300 words, and a list between 2,000 and 3,000 lemmas is typical of many languages (Latin, for example, is comparable to English in this regard). The 80% list for ancient Greek consists of fewer than 1,100 lemmas, less than half of that typical for other languages. Here is an area, then, where we can actually streamline the presentation of Greek. While some areas of morphology, semantics and syntax can prove more difficult for students of Greek than in the study of other languages, core vocabulary represents a topic where students can rightly feel Greek will be easier than other languages and so in some way offset the additional struggles in other areas of grammar.

My version of this 80% list is appended to the end of this article and I will present a number of ways I believe that taking advantage of this list is helpful in the classroom, but some general observations now. There is no single, simple explanation as to why Greek has a smaller core vocabulary. Certainly part of the reason consists of the sampling of Greek we have. A limited number of ancient Greek texts on a relatively limited number of topics survive. For a resident of Classical Athens, there were probably a number of words for plants, foods, tools, and the like which would have been core items for them but which appear only rarely in Greek texts as we have them. For good or ill, anyone today who learns Greek is constrained by the survival of the texts that we have, so the frequency in these texts, simply as a pragmatic matter, should focus our priorities in beginning classes. Indeed, the texts we have can contain very narrow core vocabularies. For example, the corpus of Plato is one of the larger compared to that of other authors, but an 80% core vocabulary consists of fewer than 500 words. The relatively narrow topics and focus of Plato’s writings mean he has a much more repetitive vocabulary.

Finally, a few words about the remaining 20% of Greek vocabulary. As in most languages, this vocabulary is more diverse and technical, and the sheer number of lemmas increases significantly. Many adults carry 10,000 lemmas or more which they use for this 20%.

¹ For the purposes of this article, a lemma is defined as a single vocabulary item encompassing the multiple word forms of that item.

A discussion of ships, for example, would likely contain the technical vocabulary for parts of ships, lemmas which may appear rarely if at all in other contexts. Other types of vocabulary can also swell the numbers. A proper name that appears once, for example, can count as an additional lemma, even though it is not part of learning the language in particular.

The 50% list follows immediately on the next page. An 80% list is appended to the end of this article. The 50% list below contains the 65 different words which make up 50% of the Greek database of 4.1+ million words in the Perseus Project, compiled March 31, 2006 and subsequently revised. It updates a similar list compiled by Prof. Helma Dik of the University of Chicago. The 80% was similarly compiled and revised in stages from 2004 to 2006.

GREEK VOCABULARY 50% LIST**VERBS**

γίγνομαι become, happen
 εἰμί be
 εἶπον say
 ἔχω have
 λαμβάνω take
 λέγω say
 ποιέω make
 φημί say

NOUNS

ἄνθρω, ἄνδρός, ὁ man
 βασιλεύς -εως, ὁ king
 λόγος -ου, ὁ word
 πόλις -εως, ἡ city

ADJECTIVES

ἄλλος -η -ον another
 ἐκεῖνος -η -ο that
 μέγας, μεγάλη, μέγα big, great ,
 ὁ, ἡ, τό the
 οὗτος, αὕτη, τοῦτο this
 πᾶς πᾶσα πᾶν all, every, whole
 πολὺς πολλή πολὺ many
 πρότερος -α -ον prior
 τοιοῦτος -η -ον such as this

PRONOUNS

αὐτός -ή -όν (s)he, it
 ἐγώ, μου I
 ὅς, ἧ, ὅ who, which
 ὅστις, ὅτι anyone who, anything which
 οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one
 σύ, σου you
 τις, τι someone, something
 τίς, τί who? which?

ADVERBS

ἄν
 γε especially
 δή now
 ἔτι still
 μή not
 νῦν now
 οὐ not
 οὔτε and not
 οὕτως this way
 ὡς as

PREPOSITIONS

ἀνά up
 ἀπό from
 διά through
 εἰς into
 ἐκ out of
 ἐν in
 ἐπί on
 κατά down
 μετά with, after
 παρά from beside
 περί around
 πρὸς to
 ὑπό from under, by

CONJUNCTIONS

ἀλλά but
 γάρ for, because
 δέ and, but
 ἐάν, εἰ if
 ἢ or
 καί and
 μὲν on the one hand
 ὅτι that, because
 οὖν therefore
 τε, and
 ὡς so that

The Greek 50% List

This list contains no surprises for experienced readers of Greek. All the items here are very common and fundamental for reading nearly any extended passage of ancient Greek. Nonetheless, depending on textbooks or other pedagogical materials, students at the beginning level and even sometimes the intermediate level might find this list surprising. In many popular beginning Greek textbooks, some of these lemmas appear rather late, occasionally even not at all. The particular items within each part of speech deserve some comment.

The list contains no more than eight *verbs*, but even these might startle students only part way through a beginning textbook. In terms of raw frequency, γίγνομαι is perhaps the second most common verb in Greek, after εἰμί. This is not surprising, given that γίγνομαι often serves as little more than a substitute for εἰμί, but since it is deponent, students might encounter it late and receive little reinforcement. When students encounter it so frequently in an unadapted reading, then, they can still be unsure about it (and especially its principal parts) and thus feel unnecessarily unprepared and insecure about their reading skills in general.

The listing of λέγω, εἶπον and φημί points up another issue. While the vocabulary items on this list certainly generate half of the words in the Perseus database, how to group them into lemmas is not always a straightforward matter. Related is another issue, especially when trying to introduce high frequency items at an early stage: which forms are truly high frequency? Some Greek verbs can appear in literally hundreds of forms, but many of them are low frequency. This is yet another possible partial explanation for the smaller core vocabulary in ancient Greek. Native speakers may have needed to maintain multiple forms of some lemmas more than speakers of other languages, and this combination may have effectively brought their core to a level parallel with speakers of other languages. In any case, we have a tendency to teach a large vocabulary and a great many more forms than most speakers use routinely, so a more realistic level of material for beginning students is needed.

In this particular case, I would suggest that we can profitably view this grouping of three semantically overlapping verbs as a single lemma with the meaning “say”: λέγω provides the present tense, φημί the imperfect and εἶπον the aorist. While these three verbs do exist in other tenses, the forms are not nearly as common. Moreover, the present, imperfect and aorist tenses make up 90% of the verb forms in Greek texts in general, and so serve as proper tenses to emphasize early on.²

Frequency of tenses leads to another strength of even this small list. These verbs include good examples of many standard and high frequency forms. Consider: εἶπον and λαμβάνω have a second aorist; ποιέω represents the most common type of contract verb and has a regular first aorist. γίγνομαι is regular, just deponent, in these three tenses, so it is a good model for middle endings. Thus this small group of the most common verbs in Greek also provides good paradigms for the most common indicative forms of verbs.

The *nouns*, *pronouns*, and *adjectives* are more complex but, because of their frequency, deserve attention. Some follow a common paradigm (λόγος, ἄλλος, ἐκεῖνος, πρότερος, τοιοῦτος), but others have irregularities of some sort. In most textbooks, the unusual paradigms of these words are not given particular emphasis as very common words, and indeed not distinguished from paradigms which are equally irregular but far less common. A beginning

² Anne Mahoney. 2004. “The Forms You Really Need to Know.” *CO* 81: 101-105.

Greek textbook might well include μέλας, μέλαινα, μέλαν “black,” for example, but not point out that only two adjectives in all of Greek share this paradigm (τάλας, τάλαινα, τάλαν is the other), and neither are nearly as high frequency as the items on this list. The frequency of the lemmas on the 50% list, however, means they deserve to be introduced early and reinforced often. They should not, of course, all be introduced at once, but a teacher should be aware that some of the difficult paradigms here (especially μέγας, οὔτος, πᾶς, πολύς, ἐγώ, οὐδείς, σύ, and τις) are simply crucial to developing a comfort level with Greek. Two of the nouns (ἀνήρ, βασιλεύς) are quite irregular but worth extra attention because of their frequency. All words on this list should be introduced as early as can be done comfortably and reinforced as often as possible.

Finally, note that nearly half of the list consists of adverbs, prepositions and conjunctions, which do not inflect, but I would recommend teaching alternate forms (e.g. ἀπό, ἀπ', ἀφ') of these items as early as possible. While these words are often given in the vocabularies, their importance as high frequency items rarely receives attention. Students are going to encounter these lemmas constantly and a little time spent practicing these words pays off richly. With conjunctions and some prepositions in particular, however, be aware that some textbooks inexplicably make little or delayed use of these very common words. Thus students at the intermediate stage can become very frustrated when a word like οὖν appears constantly, if they were exposed to it only briefly toward the end of their beginning sequence, when they were already overwhelmed by other material.

The Greek 80% List

A version of this list I have used in recent years in my classes is appended to the end of this article. Some analysis follows below, but first a few words about the creation of this list. It began with the raw list of lemmas generated by the Perseus vocabulary tool. The raw list consists of 1,193 lemmas, but I have modified it in three basic ways. First, the raw list included a considerable number of proper nouns and related words. I deleted words for Athens, Athenian, Odysseus and so on. Second, a certain number of anomalies appear in the list because of the way Perseus' vocabulary tool works. When the tool meets a form which could be generated by more than one lemma, it has no means to distinguish the source, so it distributes all instances equally among the potential sources. In reality, of course, this can distort the true frequency. For example, listed 559th in frequency was the word ἔχις, a type of viper. Certainly Greek texts do not use this extremely rare word often enough that intermediate students should be learning it. As it happens, however, the dative singular of this word is ἔχει. In practice ἔχει is almost always the 3rd person singular present indicative active of ἔχω, but the tool automatically credits ἔχις with half of the occurrences. Note that this means half of the instances of ἔχει are sufficient to put it in the 80% list. This does not undermine the credibility of the list as a whole; it just can distort the relative frequency of the lemmas on the list. The verb ἔχω should in fact appear a little higher in terms of frequency, but it should still appear. A little common sense is needed, however, to remove statistical dust like ἔχις. Deletions of this type and of proper names removed 168 lemmas from the raw list.

I added 79 lemmas into this newly reduced list. The reasons varied. In some cases, I added a verb like ἀγγέλλω, which appeared on the list only in compound forms, as I felt it was pedagogically worthwhile to be able to learn the root verb along with the compounds. In some

cases I added words important culturally or valuable for their English derivatives and equivalents (e.g., δαίμων). The resulting list is approximately 1,100 words (allowing for some variation depending on how one counts the lemmas).

Generally I would recommend that this sort of list form the core vocabulary for beginning and intermediate students. Whatever the textbook, hold students accountable for vocabulary that also appears in the core vocabulary. This provides a rationale for prioritizing the vocabulary in a textbook and some security for the students that the vocabulary they learn will be that which they need as they continue to read Greek. After the beginning sequence (usually the first year in college or the second year in high school), when students have as their primary focus the navigation of readings, students can continue reviewing and working on the rest of the vocabulary list. And whatever readings they go on to, from Homeric to Biblical, they should have a valuable foundation on which to build.

Subsets of the Greek 80% List

The complete 80% list can serve as, among other things, a goal of vocabulary acquisition for students in beginning and intermediate classes. Subsets of this vocabulary can prove at least as useful. On the one hand, subsets can form useful groups of vocabulary for students to study (simply proceeding through the whole list alphabetically is perhaps the least efficient method of learning it, although it can be a worthwhile review) but subsets can further serve to establish priorities for other material in the early stages of learning Greek. Most of the subsets discussed in what follows can be downloaded from <http://www.dramata.com> (the lists are in pdf format, and users may need to be sure they have a sufficiently recent version of the free Adobe Acrobat reader so the Greek appears properly).

Verbs:

The 80% list of 1,100 lemmas includes 404 verbs. Verbs make up only a small part of the 50% list but more than a third of this list. Thus verbs will make up a substantial part of students' growth from one list to the other. At least in part, students will also be learning an increasing number of verb forms even as they are learning the verb vocabulary on this list. As students learn some of the eccentricities of Greek verbs, subsets of the core vocabulary can provide for students a context for the features they are learning and for teachers a means to prioritize vocabulary and grammatical features.

Characteristics of the Core Verbs: Sixty of the verbs generate 157 compound forms on the list. Effectively, then, there are 247 basic verbs plus compound forms. Among the ways to group vocabulary profitably is to gather together all the compound forms of a verb and to group verbs together by prefix (compound forms are indented in the main list). Some smaller subsets have grammatical features students are likely to be learning in beginning courses: there are 28 deponent verbs, 33 verbs with deponent futures, and 36 with a 2nd (aka "strong") aorist.

The vocabulary meaning is only part of the challenge of mastering verbs. Learning principal parts is often one of the most daunting areas of beginning Greek. Having a controlled core vocabulary makes it possible to present, study and test principal parts in ways that highlight the patterns of principal parts. Rather than it seeming like there are no regular verbs in Greek, verbs can fall into recognizable patterns and categories. I find five groupings particularly helpful for highlighting the main patterns of principal parts.

1. *Vowel stems*: The most stable subset of Greek verbs contains those whose stems end in -ύω (which is why λύω makes such a good paradigm). Explaining the rule for each part and an example of the pattern of each subset makes Greek verbs seem predictable and straightforward to recognize. For example:

Present	Future	Aorist augment	Perfect Active reduplication	Perfect Middle reduplication	Aorist Passive augment	Meaning
stem + ω	stem + σω	+ stem + σα	+ stem + κα	+ stem + μαι	+ stem + θην	
λύω	λύσω	ἔλυσα	λέλυκα	λέλυμαι	ἐλύθην	loosen

There are twenty such verbs in the core vocabulary, plus six which have some irregularity in one or more of their principal parts.

Verbs with other vowels ending their stems also tend to be stable, except that these vowels contract with the endings in the present and imperfect tenses. The largest group by far consists of verbs in -έω. Recall also that ποιέω is on the 50% list:

There are 50 regular verbs in this group plus 20 others with some irregularity in their parts.

ε lengthens to η in the future, aorist and perfect stems:

pattern: stem + -έω, -ήσω, -ησα, -ηκα, -ημαι, -ήθην

example: ποιέω, ποιήσω, ἐποίησα, πεποίηκα, πεποίημαι, ἐποιήθην make, do

The next largest group are -άω verbs, with 17 regular examples and 9 with irregularities.:

α lengthens to η in the future, aorist and perfect stems:

pattern: stem + -άω, -ήσω, -ησα, -ηκα, -ημαι, -ήθην

example: νικάω, νικήσω, ἐνίκησα, νενίκηκα, νενίκημαι, ἐνικήθην conquer

Finally, there are -όω verbs, with ten regular specimens and five with irregularities:

ο lengthens to ω in the future, aorist and perfect stems:

pattern: stem + -όω, -ώσω, -ωσα, -ωκα, -ωμαι, -ώθην

example: δηλόω, δηλώσω, ἐδήλωσα, δεδήλωκα, δεδήλωμαι, ἐδηλώθην show

In addition there are 35 verbs with contract futures (mainly with liquid stems; see category #5 below).

2. *Labial stems*: Verbs with consonant stem endings are also easier to learn when grouped into subsets of the core vocabulary, even when several individual verbs have irregularities. These irregularities tend to be minor and to occur only in one or two parts. There are 18 verbs with labial stems, of which five are entirely regular.

Verbs whose stems end in labials have present stems which end in β, π, πτ, or φ:

+ σ → ψ, therefore -ψ- in future and aorist

+ κ → φ, therefore -φ- in perfect active

+ μ → μμ, therefore -μμ- in perfect middle

+ θ → φθ, therefore -φθ- in aorist passive

Example: τρίβω, τρίψω, ἔτριψα, τέτριφα, τέτριμμαι, ἐτρίφθην rub

3. *Dental stems*: 25 regular verbs plus 17 with some irregularity.

Verbs whose stems end in dentals have present stems which end in δ, ζ, θ, or σ:

+ σ → σ, therefore -σ- in future and aorist

+ κ → κ, therefore -κ- in perfect active

+ μ → σμ, therefore -σμ- in perfect middle

+ θ → σθ, therefore -σθ- in aorist passive

Example: δικάζω, δικάσω, ἐδίκασα, δεδίκασα, δεδίκασμαι, ἐδικάσθην judge

4. *Palatal stems*: 18 regular verbs plus 19 with some irregularity.

Verbs whose stems end in palatals have present stems which end in γ, κ, χ, or σσ (= ττ in Attic).

+ σ → ξ, therefore -ξ- in future and aorist

+ κ → χ, therefore -χ- in perfect active

+ μ → γμ, therefore -γμ- in perfect middle

+ θ → χθ, therefore -χθ- in aorist passive

Example: ἄρχω, ἄρξω, ἤρξα, ἤρχα, ἤρχμαι, ἤρχθην rule

5. *Liquid stems*: Because this stem ending is unstable, only two of the 42 verbs in this class are entirely regular in their principal parts, but mostly the irregularities are minor differences in the less commonly used stems, so the pattern still helps a great deal. Contract and deponent futures crop up most often in this group, so this is a good opportunity to review these features.

Verbs whose stems end in liquids have present stems which end in λ, μ, ν or ρ.

+ σ → loss of σ, therefore -εω- in future and no σ in aorist

+ κ → γκ, but more often just -κ- in perfect active

+ μ → μ, therefore -μ- in perfect middle

+ θ → θ, therefore -θ- in aorist passive

Example: κρίνω, κρίνω, ἔκρινα, κέκρικα, κέκριμαι, ἐκρίθην decide

Irregular stems: Among the most feared and challenging verbs in Greek are athematic verbs, also known as -μι verbs. These are high frequency verbs, however, especially counting all their compound forms, and are thus core verbs. The 80% list includes four athematic verbs which use the -μι conjugation in the present, imperfect and aorist tenses, 13 which have -μι forms only in the present and imperfect, plus six which have -μι forms in the aorist only.

For all of Greek verbs' reputation for irregularity, there are only ten verbs on the core list with truly mixed principal parts or with irregularities in their parts which make them difficult for even passive recognition (αἰρέω, ἀποθνήσκω, ἔρχομαι, ἐσθίω, ἔχω, λέγω, ὀράω, πάσχω, τρέχω, φέρω).

Nouns:

Greek nouns do not generate the sheer number of forms that verbs can, but beginning Greek textbooks routinely present a great many different noun paradigms without indicating the relevant frequency and importance of the variations. Again a core vocabulary can provide a means to prioritize. The 80% list includes 325 nouns, nearly equally distributed between the

three declensions: 114 1st declension, 103 2nd declension, and 108 3rd declension. Each declension, of course, allows for some variation and knowing the relative importance of these variations is helpful.

1st Declension: Nouns of the first declension vary in their paradigms almost always only in the vowel used in the endings of the singular. Of the 114 first declension nouns, 46 are of the canonical form with η (like τιμή), 38 have a long α (like οικήα), four have a short α while retaining η in the genitive and dative singular (like γλωσσα); ten alternate a long α with a short one (like μοῖα). Twelve nouns are masculine (like πολίτης). Four nouns have some individual variation (γῆ, κόρη, μνᾶ, νεανίας).

2nd Declension: Nouns of the second declension differ only in gender and the attendant restrictions on neuter nouns. Of the 103 second declension nouns, 74 are masculine, four are feminine and 25 neuter. Three nouns have some rarer variation (νοῦς, λεώς, νεώς).

3rd Declension: Nouns of the third declension display greater variation than those in the first two declensions, but these variations involve primarily the nominative singular and dative plural. The sigmas in each ending (the nominative singular -ς and the dative plural -σι) cause these variations. Like verb stems, third declension nouns benefit from being classified by stem ending:

Palatal stems

like κῆρυξ: 5

Dental stems

Masculine and feminine like ἐλπίς: 9

Neuters like σῶμα: 20

There are only two nouns on the list like ἄρχων, but these are valuable for also being the paradigm for active participles.

Liquid stems

like δαίμων: 7

Sigma stems

like κλέος: 21

Vowel stems

like πόλις: 14

Recall that πόλις was also on the 50% list.

The remaining 31 nouns have individual minor irregularities or belong to a category with three or fewer nouns. The number of variations even within this small sample suggests that teaching the more stable parts of third declension paradigms is prudent, but it is advisable for teachers to notice when textbooks give full declensions of nouns which are paradigms for no other common nouns. It is not unusual for declensions of fundamentally irregular nouns to appear side by side with paradigms for more common types. Distinguishing and prioritizing among third declension nouns is too often left up to the unsuspecting reader.

Adjectives:

The adjectives on the 80% list do not vary nearly as much as third declension nouns. The list includes 188 adjectives. The largest subgroup consists of 1st/2nd declension adjectives like

ἀγαθός or the mechanical variant (like μικρός) sporting an α in the feminine forms, with 52 and 67 entries respectively, for a total of 119. There are seven two-termination adjectives, using only second declension endings (like ἄδικος) and two contract adjectives (χρυσοῦς and διπλοῦς), plus one of the so-called “Attic” declension (πλέως). The third declension adjectives fall into three types: like εὐδαίμων (7), like ἀληθής (9) and like ταχύς (7). The three types of irregular adjectives (μέγας, πᾶς and πολύς) already appear on the 50% list.

There are still other ways to group and present the vocabulary on the core list. Logical semantic groups are especially valuable (parts of the body, words for time, animals, English derivatives, and so on). I have also found that maintaining a stricter control over vocabulary makes it easier to bring in exterior readings. If I use a reading unconnected with the textbook, I gloss the vocabulary not on the core list (or whatever part of the core list we have covered). Doing so makes the process of glossing vocabulary straightforward for me and reinforces the core vocabulary for students. Furthermore, I have generally found that the core list does indeed generally cover the highly repetitive vocabulary of readings across time and genre.

Conclusion

There remains much to discuss, refine and improve in these vocabulary lists, and I sincerely hope lively debate will ensue. More important than any specifics, however, I believe that we as teachers of Greek need to rethink vocabulary. The vocabulary selection in textbooks varies wildly in terms of quantity and quality. Vocabulary lists tend to be dominated by the needs of a narrative, reading passage, or grammatical construction. This haphazard approach not only hinders students in their acquisition of the language but in their appreciation of what this vocabulary has bequeathed to modern languages (Latin too often takes credit for bringing Greek vocabulary to English). We also too readily chalk up difficulties in textbooks to something inherent in the complexity of Greek. Greek does pose multiple challenges and rewards, but speakers of the language in antiquity for the most part were no more intellectual giants than students of the language are today. If we are to provide the access to the ancient Greek world and to the most influential writings in Greek, we owe it to our students and other devotees to ease their journey wherever we legitimately can. A high frequency core vocabulary is one such entry point where we can and should hold the gate open wider.

Wilfred E. Major
Classics
Louisiana State University

CORE GREEK VOCABULARY
for the
FIRST TWO YEARS of GREEK

This list contains approximately 1,100 words, based on the 1193 different words which make up 80% of the Greek database of 3.8+ million words in the Perseus Project. Compiled September 2, 2004 and subsequently revised.

ἀγαθός -ή -όν good	αἰτιάομαι accuse, blame
ἄγαλμα -ατος, τό glory, statue	αἷτιος -α -ον responsible, guilty
ἄγαν too much	αἰχμάλωτος -ου, ὁ prisoner of war
ἀγανακτέω be annoyed with	ἀκολουθέω follow
ἀγάπη -ης, ἡ love, charity	ἀκούω hear
ἀγγέλλω announce	ἀκριβής -ές exact
ἄγγελος -ου, ὁ messenger, angel	ἄκρος -α -ον top
ἀγνοέω not know	ἄλγος -ους, τό pain
ἀγορά, -ᾶς, ἡ market place	ἀλήθεια -ας, ἡ truth
ἀγορεύω say, proclaim	ἀληθής -ές true
ἄγω lead, bring	ἀλίσκομαι be taken
ἀγών, -ῶνος, ὁ contest	ἀλλά but
ἀγωνίζομαι contend for a prize	ἀλλήλων (oblique cases only) one another
ἀδελφή -ῆς, ἡ sister	ἄλλος -η -ον other
ἀδελφός -οῦ, ὁ brother	ἄλλοτριος -α -ον someone else's
ἀδικέω do wrong	ἄλλως otherwise
ἀδίκημα, -ατος, τό a wrong, an injustice	ἅμα at the same time
ἄδικος -ον unjust	ἀμαρτάνω make a mistake, miss the target
ἀδύνατος -ον impossible	ἀμείβω change
ἀεί always	ἀμείνων -ον better
ἀείδω (Attic ἄδω) sing	ἀμελέω not worry
ἄεκων -ουσα -ον (Attic ἄκων) unwilling	ἀμύνω ward off
ἀθάνατος -ον immortal	ἀμφί + gen, dat, acc about, around
ἄθλιος -α -ον wretched	ἀμφισβητέω argue
ἄθλον -ου, τό prize	ἀμφότερος -α -ον both
ἀθροίζω muster	ἄμφω, ἀμφοῖν both
ἀθρόος -α -ον crowded	ἄν generalizes dependent clauses with the subjunctive; makes independent clauses less real (contrary to fact)
αἰδώς, αἰδοῦς, ἡ shame	
αἷμα -ατος, τό blood	ἀνά + gen, dat, acc up, on
αἰνέω praise	ἀνάγω lead up
αἰρέω take (mid: choose)	ἀναιρέω raise
αἶρω raise	ἀναλαμβάνω pick up
αἰσθάνομαι perceive	ἀναβαίνω board, cross
αἰσχρός -ή -όν disgraceful	ἀναγιγνώσκω recognize
αἰσχύνω dishonor	ἀνέχω hold up
αἰτέω ask	ἀνίστημι stand up
αἰτία -ας, ἡ cause	

ἀνατίθημι put up, set on	ἀποστέλλω send away
ἀναχωρέω go back	ἀποστερέω deprive
ἀναγκάζω force, compel	ἀποφαίνω display
ἀναγκαῖος -α -ον necessary	ἀπορία -ας, ἡ helplessness
ἀνάγκη -ης, ἡ necessity	ἄπτω join (mid: touch)
ἀνάθημα -ατος, τό a curse	ἄρα so then
ἄναξ, -ακτος, ὁ ruler, lord	ἀργύριον -ου, τό silver, a silver coin
ἀνδρείος -α -ον manly, brave	ἀρέσκω please
ἄνεμος -ου, ὁ wind	ἀρετή -ῆς, ἡ excellence
ἄνευ + <i>gen</i> without	ἀριθμός -οῦ, ὁ number
ἄνήρ, ἀνδρός, ὁ man	ἄριστος -ῆ -ον best
ἄνθος -ους, τό flower	ἀρκέω ward off
ἄνθρωπος -ου, ὁ/ἡ human being	ἄρμα -ατος, τό chariot
ἀνοίγνυμι open up	ἀρμόζω (Attic ἀρμόττω) join
ἀντί + <i>gen</i> opposite	ἀρόω plow
ἄνω up	ἀρπάζω snatch
ἄξιος -α -ον worthy	ἄρτι just now
ἀξιόω consider worthy	ἀρχαῖος -α -ον ancient
ἀπαλλάσσω release, escape	ἀρχή -ῆς, ἡ beginning, rule
ἀπαντάω + <i>dat</i> meet	ἄρχω rule
ἄπαξ once	ἄρχων -οντος, ὁ ruler, archon
ἄπας -ασα -αν all together	ἀσπίς, -ίδος, ἡ a round shield
ἄπειρος -α -ον inexperienced, ignorant	ἄστυ, ἄστεως, τό town
ἀπό + <i>gen</i> from	ἀσφάλεια -ας, ἡ security
ἀπαγγέλλω announce	ἀσφαλής -ές safe
ἀπάγω carry off	ἀτάρ but
ἀφαιρέω take from	ἄτε just as, because
ἀποβαίνω step from	ἄτη -ῆς, ἡ blindness, destruction
ἀποδείκνυμι point away	αὖ, αὖθις again
ἀποδίδωμι give back	αὐξάνω increase
ἄπειμι be away	αὖτε again
ἀπέρχομαι go away	αὐτίκα immediately
ἀπέχω keep away	αὐτόθι on the spot
ἀποθνήσκω die	αὐτός -ῆ --ό self, same, s/he/it
ἀφήμι let go	ἄφνω suddenly
ἀφικνέομαι come to	βαίνω walk
ἀφίστημι remove, revolt	βάλλω throw
ἀποκρίνω separate (mid: answer)	βάρβαρος -α -ον foreign, barbarous
ἀποκτείνω kill	βαρῦς -εῖα -ύ heavy
ἀπολαμβάνω take from	βασιλεία -ας ἡ kingdom
ἀπολείπω leave behind	βασίλειος -α -ον kingly, royal
ἀπόλλυμι kill (mid: die)	τὰ βασιλεία palace
ἀπολογέομαι defend oneself	βασιλεύς, βασιλεως, ὁ king
ἀπολύω set free from	βασιλεύω be king, rule, reign
ἀποπέμπω send away	βασιλικός -ῆ --όν royal, kingly
ἀποπλέω sail away	βέβαιος -α -ον firm
	βέλος -ους, τό missile, weapon

βέλτιστος -η -ον best	δεινός -ή --όν awesome
βελτίων -ον better	δείπνον -ου, τό feast
βία -ας, ή force	δέκα, ten
βιάζω, βιάω force, compel	δένδρον -ου, τό tree
βίβλος -ου, ό book	δεξιός -ά -όν right
βίος -ου, ό life	δέος -ους, τό fear
βιώω live	δεσπότης -ου, ό master
βλάπτω hurt	δεῦρο (to) here
βλέπω see	δεύτερος -α -ον second
βοήθεια -ας, ή help	δέχομαι welcome
βοηθέω help	δέω (1) bind
βουλεύω deliberate	δέω (2) need
βουλή -ης, ή plan, council	δή now
βούλομαι want, wish	δηλος -η -ον clear
βοῦς, βοός, ό/ή ox	δηλώω show
βραχύς -εῖα -ύ short	δήμος -ου, ό people
βροτός -οῦ, ό mortal	δήπου perhaps, maybe
βωμός -οῦ, ό altar	διά + <i>gen, acc</i> through
γαῖα -ας, ή earth	διαίρῶ divide, cut apart
γαμέω marry	διαβαίνω step across
γάμος -ου, ό wedding, marriage	διαβάλλω throw across
γάρ for, because	διέρχομαι go through
γε for sure	διάκειμαι be arranged (pass. of διατίθημι)
γελάω laugh	διαλέγω discuss
γεννάω beget	διαλύω dissolve
γένος -ους, τό race, family	διάνοια -ας, ή thought, intention
γέρας -ως, τό prize	διοικέω manage a house
γέρων -οντος, ό old man	διαπράσσω pass over, accomplish
γῆ, γῆς, ή earth	διατελέω finish
γῆρας -ως, τό old age	διατίθημι arrange
γίγνομαι become, be	διατρίβω consume, spend time
γινώσκω come to know, learn	διαφέρω carry on, make a difference
γλυκύς -εῖα -ύν sweet	διαφεύγω escape
γλῶσσα -ης, ή tongue, language	διαφθείρω destroy
γνώμη -ης, ή thought, intelligence, opinion	διαθήκη -ης, ή arrangement, last will and testament
γοῦν so then, for sure	δίαιτα -ης, ή lifestyle
γράμμα -ατος, τό letter	διακόσιοι -αι -α two hundred
γράφω write	διδάσκω teach
γύμνος -η -ον naked	δίδωμι give
γυνή, γυναικός, ή woman	δικάζω judge
δαίμων -ονος, ό spirit, god, demon	δίκαιος -α -ον just
δακρύω cry	δικαιοσύνη -ης, ή justice
δέ and, but	δικαστήριον -ου, τό court
δεῖ it is necessary	δικαστής -οῦ, ό judge, juror
δεῖδω fear	δίκη -ης, ή justice, lawsuit
δείκνυμι show	
δειλός -ή -όν cowardly	

διό, διόπερ because of this	εισάγω lead
δῖος -α -ον divine	εἰσέρχομαι go into, enter
διότι since	εἰσφέρω carry into, pay taxes
διπλοῦς -ῆ -οῦν double	εἷς, μία, ἓν one
δισχίλιοι -αι -α two thousand	εἶτα then, next
δίχα apart	εἴτε either...or
διώκω pursue	ἐκ, ἐξ + <i>gen</i> from, out of
δόγμα -ατος, τό opinion, dogma	ἐξάγω lead out
δοκεῖ it seems	ἐξαίρειω take out
δοκέω think	ἐξαπατάω deceive
δόλος -ου, ὁ trick	ἐκβάλλω throw out
δόξα -ης, ἡ glory, opinion	ἐκδίδωμι surrender
δόρυ, δόρατος, τό spear	ἐξελέγχω refute
δούλος -ου, ὁ slave	ἐξέρχομαι go or come out
δράω do	ἔξεστι it is allowed, it is possible
δύναμαι be able, can	ἐκλείπω leave out
δύναμις -εως, ἡ power	ἐκπέμπω send out
δυνατός -ῆ -όν able	ἐκπίπτω fall out
δύο, two	ἐκτείνω stretch out
δώδεκα twelve	ἐκφέρω carry out
δῶμα -ατος, τό house	ἕκαστος -ῆ -ον each
δῶρον -ου, τό gift	ἐκάτερος -α -ον each of two
ἔάν = εἰ + ἄν	ἑκατόν hundred
ἔαρ, ἔαρος, τό spring	ἐκεῖ there
ἑαυτοῦ -ῆς -οῦ him/her/itself	ἐκεῖθεν from there
ἔαω allow	ἐκεῖνος -ῆ -ον that
ἐγγύς near	ἐκκλησία -ας, ἡ assembly
ἐγείρω wake up	ἐκτός outside
ἐγώ, ἐμοῦ I	ἐκόν -οῦσα -όν, willing
ἐθέλω wish	ἐλάσσων -ον smaller, less
ἔθνος -ους, τό nation	ἐλαύνω drive
ἔθος, -ους, τό custom, character	ἔλεγος -ου, ὁ a lament
ἔθω be accustomed	ἐλέγχω refute
εἰ, εἴπερ if	ἐλευθερία -ας, ἡ freedom
εἶδομαι, εἶδον see (cf. ὁράω)	ἐλεύθερος -α -ον free
εἶδος -ους, τό form	ἐλευθερώω set free
εἰκός, εἰκότος, τό proper, probable	ἐλπίζω hope for
εἴκοσι twenty	ἐλπῖς -ίδος, ἡ hope
εἰκόν -όνος, ἡ image	ἑμαντοῦ my own
εἰμί be	ἑμός -ῆ -όν my, mine
εἶμι go (cf. ἔρχομαι)	ἐν + <i>dat</i> in
εἶπον say (cf. λέγω, φημί)	ἐμβάλλω throw in
εἴργω confine	ἐνδίδωμι give in
εἰρήνη -ης, ἡ peace	ἐνθυμέομαι ponder
εἰς + <i>acc</i> into	ἐγκαλέω accuse
	ἐμπίπτω fall on
	ἔμπροσθεν in front

έντυγχάνω meet with	έπομαι follow
έναντίος –α –ον opposite	έπος –ους, τό word
ένεκα because of	έργάζομαι work
ένθα there	έργον –ου, τό work
ένθάδε from there	έρημος –η –ον deserted
ένιαυτός –ού, ό year	έρις, –ιδος, ή strife
ένιοι –αι –α some	έρομαι ask
ένίοτε sometimes	έρχομαι come, go
ένταῦθα here, there	έρω will say
έντεῦθεν from here, from there	έρως –ωτος, ό love
έντός inside	έρωτάω ask
έξ six	έσθής –ήτος, ή clothing
έξετάζω examine	έσθίω eat
έξαίφνης suddenly	έσπέρα –ας, ή evening
έξήκοντα sixty	έσχατος –η –ον last
έξουσία –ας, ή authority	έταῖρος –ου, ό companion
έξω outside	έτερος –α –ον other
έοικα be like	έτης –ου, ό kin, cousin
έπει after, since, when	έτι still
έπείγω press hard (mid: hurry)	έτοιμος or έτοιμος –η –ον ready
έπειδάν whenever	έτος –ους, τό year
έπειτα then, next	εὖ well
έπί + gen at; + dat on; + acc on to, against	ευδαίμων –ον happy, lucky, blessed
έπαγγέλλω announce	ευθύς –εἶα –ύ straight
έπάγω bring on	εὐνοια –ας, ή good-will
έπαινέω praise	εύρισκω find
έπανέρχομαι go back, return	εύρως –εἶα –ύ broad
έπιβάλλω throw on	εύχομαι pray
έπιβουλεύω plan against	έχθρός –ά –όν hated
έπιγίγνομαι be born after, come after	έχω have, hold
έπιδείκνυμι exhibit	έως until
έπέρχομαι come to	ζάω live
έπέχω hold on to	Ζεύς, Διός, ό Zeus
έπιθυμέω desire	ζητέω seek
έφίστημι set upon	ή or, than
έπιμέλεια –ας, ή care, attention	ή [strengthening particle]
έπιμελέομαι take care of	or [introduces lively questions]
έπιτίθημι put on	or = "s/he said" from ήμί
έπιτρέπω entrust	or = 1 st sg impf indic act of ειμί
έπιφανής –ές evident	ή [3d sg pres subj act of ειμί]
έπιφέρω put upon	ή [feminine article nom sg]
έπιχειρέω attempt	ή [relative pronoun, fem nom sg, "who, which"]
έπίσταμαι know	ή [relative pronoun, fem dat sg]
έπιστήμη –ης, ή knowledge	or ["where"]
έπιστολή –ής, ή message, letter	ήγεμών, –όνος, ό leader
έπιτήδειος –α –ον convenient	ήγέομαι lead, consider
	ήδη already

ἡδομαι rejoice	ἵημι throw
ἡδονή -ῆς, ἡ pleasure	ἰκανός -ή -όν sufficient
ἡδύς -εῖα, -ύ sweet	ἰκνέομαι come
ἥκιστος -η -ον least	ἴνα there, so that
ἦκω have come, be present	ἵππεύς -έως, ὁ horseman
ἡλικία -ας, ἡ time of life, age	ἵππος -ου, ὁ horse
ἥλιος -ου, ὁ sun	ἴσος -η -ον equal
ἦμαι sit	ἴστημι stand
ἡμέρα -ας, ἡ day	ἱστορία -ας, ἡ inquiry
ἡμέτερος -α -ον our	ἰσχυρός -ά -όν strong
ἡμί say	ἰσχύς, ἰσχύος, ἡ strength
ἡμισυς -εἰα -υ half	καθά just as
ἡπειρος -ου, ἡ the land	καθαρός -ά -όν pure
ἥρως, ἥρωος, ὁ hero	καθό in so far as
ἡσυχία -ας, ἡ quiet	καί and
ἡσάομαι be inferior, be defeated	καίπερ although
ἥσων -ον less, weaker	καιρός -οῦ, ὁ the right time
θάλασσα -ης, ἡ the sea	καίτοι and indeed, and yet
θάνατος -ου, ὁ death	κακός -ή -όν bad
θάπτω bury	καλέω call
θαρσέω be bold, courageous	κάλλος -ους, τό beauty
θαυμάζω be in awe	καλός -ή -όν beautiful
θαυμαστός -ή -όν awesome	κάμνω work
θεά -ᾶς, ἡ goddess	κάν = καί + ἐν
θεάομαι watch	κάν = καί + εἰ + ἄν
θεῖος -α -ον divine	καρδία -ας, ἡ heart
θεός -οῦ, ὁ god	καρπός -οῦ, ὁ fruit
θεραπεύω serve	κατά + <i>gen.</i> or <i>acc.</i> down
θέρμος -ου, ὁ heat	καταβαίνω step down
θέω run	καταγιγνώσκω have prejudice, charge
θεωρέω look at	κατάγω lead down
θνήσκω die	κάθημαι sit
θρόνος -ου, ὁ seat	καθίστημι set down
θυγάτηρ, θυγατρός, ἡ daughter	καταλαμβάνω take hold of
θυμός -οῦ, ὁ soul, spirit	καταλείπω leave behind
θύρα -ας, ἡ door	καταλύω put down
θυσία -ας, ἡ sacrifice	καταπλήσσω strike down
θύω sacrifice	κατασκευάζω equip
θώραξ -ακος, ὁ breastplate	καταστρέφω subdue
ἰατρός -οῦ, ὁ doctor	καταφεύγω flee for refuge
ἴδιος -α -ον one's own	καταφρονέω despise (+ <i>gen.</i>)
ιδιώτης -ου, ὁ a private person, an individual	κατέχω restrain
ἰδοῦ look!	κατηγορέω accuse
ἰδρύω make sit down, seat	κατοικέω dwell, settle
ἱερεύς -έως, ὁ priest	κεῖμαι lie down
ἱερόν -οῦ, τό temple	κελεύω order
ἱερός -ᾶ -ον holy	κενός -ή -όν empty

κέρας -ατος, τό horn	λόγος -ου, ό word
κεφαλή -ῆς, ή head	λοιπός -ή -όν remaining
κῆρυξ -υκος, ό messenger	λόφος -ου, ό crest (esp. of a helmet), mane,
κινδυνεύω risk	ridge
κίνδυνος -ου, ό danger	λυπέω hurt
κινέω move	λύω loosen, destroy
κλέος -ους, τό glory	μακρός -ά -όν long
κλέπτω steal	μάλα very, very much
κλίνω bend	μάλιστα very, very much
κοινός -ή -όν common	μᾶλλον more, rather
κολάζω punish	μανθάνω learn
κόλπος -ου, ό womb, bay	μανία -ας, ή insanity
κομίζω bring	μάντις -εως, ό prophet
κόπτω cut	μαρτυρέω witness, give testimony
κόρη -ης, ή girl	μαρτυρία -ας, ή witness, testimony, evidence
κοσμέω arrange	μάρτυς, μάρτυρος, ό or ή witness
κόσμος -ου, ό order	μάχη -ης, ή battle
κρατέω rule (+ <i>gen.</i>)	μάχομαι fight
κράτιστος -η -ον strongest	μέγαρον -ου, τό a large room
κράτος -ους, τό strength	μέγας, μεγάλη, μέγα big
κρείσσων -ον stronger	μέγεθος -ους, τό magnitude
κρίνω judge, decide	μέλας, μέλαινα, μέλαν black
κρίσις -εως, ή judgment, decision	μέλει it is a problem, or worry, for (+ <i>dat.</i>)
κριτής -ου, ό judge	μέλλω intend, going to
κρύπτω hide	μέν on the one hand, on the other hand
κτάομαι acquire	μέντοι however, of course
κτείνω kill	μένω stay
κύκλος -ου, ό circle	μέρος -ους, τό part
κυρέω meet (+ <i>gen.</i>), happen	μέσος -η -ον middle
κύριος -ου, ό lord, master	μετά with (+ <i>gen.</i>) after (+ <i>acc.</i>)
κύων, κυνός, ό or ή dog	μεταβάλλω change
κωλύω prevent	μεταπέμπω summon
κώμη -ης, ή village	μετέχω be involved (+ <i>gen.</i>)
λαγχάνω obtain by a lottery	μεταξύ between
λαλέω talk, babble	μέχρι until
λαμβάνω take	μή not (οὐ with indicative verbs)
λαμπρός -ά -όν bright	μηδέ and not
λανθάνω do without being noticed	μηδείς no one
λέγω say, speak	μήτε and not
λείπω leave	μηκος -ους, τό length
λευκός -ή -όν white	μήν [emphasizes preceding particle]
λεώς, λεώ, ό the people	μήτηρ, μητρός, ή mother
λίθος -ου, ό stone	μηχανή -ῆς, ή device
λιμνή -ένος, ό harbor	μικρός -ά -όν small
λίμνη -ης, ή pool, swamp	μιμνήσκω remind, (in perfect middle)
λιμός -οῦ, ό or ή hunger	remember
λογίζομαι calculate	μισέω hate

μισθός –οῦ, ὁ pay	ὀλίγος –η –ον few
μνᾶ μνᾶς, ἡ <i>mina</i> , = 100 <i>drachma</i> = 1/60 <i>talent</i>	ὄλλυμι destroy, lose
μνήμη –ης, ἡ memory	ὅλος –η –ον whole
μοῖρα –ας, ἡ fate	ὄμνυμι swear
μόνος –η –ον alone, single	ὅμοιος –α –ον or ὁμοῖος –α –ον like
μῦθος –ου, ὁ story	ὁμοιόω make like
μυριάς –άδος, ἡ 10,000, a countless amount	ὁμολογέω agree
μυρίος –α –ον countless	ὁμόω unite
ναί yes	ὅμως nevertheless
ναυμαχία –ας, ἡ sea battle	ὄνομα –ατος, τό name
ναῦς, νεώς, ἡ ship	ὀνομάζω call by name
ναυτικός –ή –όν naval	ὀξύς –εῖα –ύ sharp
νεανίας –ου, ὁ young man	ὀπλίτης –ου, ὁ heavily-armed soldier, hoplite
νεκρός –οῦ, ὁ corpse	ὄπλον –ου, τό weapon, tool
νέμω distribute	ὀποῖος –α –ον of what sort
νέος –α –ον young	ὀπόσος –η –ον as many as
νεώς, νεώ, ὁ temple	ὀπότε when
νησος –ου, ἡ island	ὅπου wherever
νικάω conquer, win	ὅπως how, as, so that
νίκη –ης, ἡ victory	ὀράω see
νοέω have in mind	ὀργή –ῆς, ἡ anger
νομίζω consider	ὀργίζω make angry
νόμιμος –η –ον customary	ὀρθός –η –ον straight
νόμος –ου, ὁ custom, law	ὀρθόω set straight
νοῦς, νοῦ, ὁ mind	ὄρκος –ου, ὁ oath
νόσος –ου, ὁ disease	ὀρμάω rush
νύμφη –ης, ἡ bride	ὀρμή –ῆς, ἡ attack
νῦν, νυνί now	ὄρος, ὄρου, ὁ mountain, hill
νύξ, νυκτός, ἡ night	ὄρος, ὄρου, ὁ boundary
ξένος –ου, ὁ foreigner, stranger	ὅς ἢ ὅ who, which, that
ξύλον –ου, τό wood	ὅσος –η –ον however much
ὁ, ἡ τό the	ὅσπερ, ἤπερ, ὅπερ the very one who, the very thing which
ὅδε ἤδε τόδε this	ὅστε ἦτε ὅτε who, which
ὁδός –οῦ, ἡ road	ὅστις ὅτι any one who, anything which
ὅθεν from where	ὅταν = ὅτε + ἄν whenever
οἶδα know	ὅτε when
οἰκεῖος –α –ον domestic	ὅτι because, that
οἰκέτης –ου, ὁ servant	οὐ, οὐκ, οὐχ not (with indicative verbs)
οἰκέω inhabit, occupy	οὐδέ but not
οἰκία –ας, ἡ house, household	οὐδεῖς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing
οἰκοδομέω build a house	οὐκέτι no longer
οἶκος –ου, ὁ house	οὐτε and not
οἶμαι, οἴομαι think	οὐτις no one, nobody
οἶος –α –ον such a kind	οὐπω not yet
οἶος –α –ον τ' εἰμί be able	
οἴχομαι be gone	οὗ where
ὀκτώ eight	οὐκοῦν therefore

οὖν therefore, so	πειράζω test
οὐρανός -οῦ, ὁ sky, heaven	πειράω try
οὐσία -ας, ἡ substance, property	πέλας near
οὗτος, αὕτη, τοῦτο this	πέμπω send
οὕτως in this way	πεντακόσιοι -αι -α five hundred
ὀφείλω owe	πέντε five
ὀφθαλμός -οῦ, ὁ eye	πεντήκοντα fifty
ὄφρα so that, until	πέρ [emphasizes preceding word]
ὄχλος -ου, ὁ crowd, mob	περάω pass through
ὄψις, -εως, ἡ sight, appearance	πέρθω destroy
πάθος -ους, τό suffering	περί around, about (+ <i>gen.</i> , <i>dat.</i> , <i>acc.</i>)
παιδεύω educate	περίεμι be around
παῖς, παιδός, ὁ, ἡ child	περίστημι place round
παλαιός -ά -όν old	πέτρα -ας, ἡ rock
πάλιν back	πηρός -ά -όν disabled
παντάπασι altogether	πίμπλημι fill
πάντη entirely	πίνω drink
πάνυ altogether	πίπτω fall
παρά, παρ' from (+ <i>gen.</i>), beside (+ <i>dat.</i>), to (+ <i>acc.</i>)	πιστεύω trust
παραγγέλλω transmit	πίστις, -εως, ἡ trust
παραγίγνομαι be present	πιστός -ή -όν faithful
παραδίδωμι hand over	πλεῖστος -η -ον most
παράδοξος -ον contrary to expectation, paradoxical	πλείων, πλέων more
πάρεμι be present	πλέω sail
πάρεστι it is possible (+ <i>dat.</i>)	πλέως, πλέα, πλέων full of
παρέρχομαι pass by	πλήθος -ους, τό crowd
παρέχω provide	πλήν except (+ <i>gen.</i>)
παρίστημι set or stand beside	πληρώω fill
παρακαλέω call for	πλησίος -α -ον near
παραλαμβάνω receive	πλήσσω strike
παραπλήσιος -α -ον resembling	πλοῖον -ου, τό ship
παρασκευάζω prepare	πλούσιος -α -ον rich
παρασκευή -ῆς, ἡ preparation	πλοῦτος -ου, ὁ wealth
παραχρῆμα immediately	πνεῦμα -ατος, τό wind, breath
παρθένος -ου, ἡ girl	ποιέω make
πᾶς πᾶσα πᾶν all	ποιητής -οῦ, ὁ creator, poet
πάσσω sprinkle	ποιός -α -ον what sort of?
πάσχω suffer, experience	πολεμέω make war
πατήρ, πατρός, ὁ father	πολέμιος -α -ον hostile (m.pl.: the enemy)
πάτριος -α -ον of or belonging to one's father	πόλεμος -ου, ὁ war
πατρίς, -ίδος, ἡ fatherland	πολιορκέω besiege
παύω stop	πολιορκία -ας, ἡ siege
πεδίον -ου, τό plain	πόλις, -εως, ἡ a city
πεζός -ή -όν on foot	πολιτεία -ας, ἡ constitution, citizenship, republic
πειθω persuade	πολιτεύω participate in government or politics
	πολίτης -ου, ὁ citizen

πολιτικός -ή -όν political	προσλαμβάνω take or receive besides
πολλάκις often	προσπίπτω fall upon, strike against
πολύς πολλή πολύ many	προστάσσω place at
πονηρός -α -ον evil, painful	προστίθημι put to
πόνος -ου, ό work	προσφέρω bring to
πορεία -ας, ή journey	πρόσωπον -ου, τό face
πορεύω carry, march	πρότερος -α -ον before
πορθέω destroy	πρόφασις -εως, ή excuse
πόρρω far	προφήτης -ου, ό prophet
ποταμός -οῦ, ό river	πρῶτος -η -ον first
ποτέ ever	πτερόν -οῦ, τό wing
πότερος -α -ον which of the two?	πύλη -ης, ή gate
ποτός -η -ον drinkable	πυνθάνομαι ascertain
πού somewhere	πῦρ, πυρός, τό fire
πούς ποδός, ό foot	πωλέω sell
πρᾶγμα -ατος, τό thing	πῶποτε ever yet
πρᾶξις, -εως, ή action	πως in any way
πράσσω do	πῶς how?
πρεσβευτής -οῦ, ό old man, ambassador (rare in pl.)	ῥάδιος -α -ον easy
πρεσβεύω be the elder or ambassador	ῥέω flow
πρέσβυς, πρέσβευς, ό ambassador (esp. in pl.), old man	ῥήτωρ, ῥήτορος, ό orator, speaker, politician
πρίν before	ῥύθμος -ου, ό rhythm
πρό + gen. before	ῥώμη -ης, ή strength
προάγω lead on	σαυτοῦ -ης yourself [reflexive]
προαίρεσις, -εως, ή choice, purpose	σαφής -ές clear
προαίρέω prefer, choose	σελήνη -ης, ή moon
πρόγονος -ου, ό ancestor	σημαίνω show
προδίδωμι betray	σημεῖον -ου, τό sign
προερέω, προεῖπον proclaim	σίτος -ου, ό grain
προέρχομαι advance	σκεπτομαι examine
προθέω run forward	σκευάζω prepare
προθυμία -ας, ή eagerness	σκίηνη -ης, ή tent, stage
πρόθυμος -ον eager	σκοπέω look at
προίημι send ahead, shoot	σός -ή -όν your, yours
προίστημι set in front	σοφία -ας, ή wisdom
πρόνοια -ας, ή foresight	σοφός -ή -όν wise
πρός + dat. to, + acc. in addition to	σπεύδω hurry
προσαγορεύω greet	σπονδή -ης, ή libation
προσάγω put before	σπουδάζω hurry
προσδέχομαι accept	σπουδή -ης, ή eagerness
πρόσειμι belong to, be present	στάδιον -ου, τό stade = 606.75 feet = roughly 1/8 of a mile
προσέρχομαι come or go to	στάσις -εως, ή revolution
προσέχω hold to, offer	στέλλω send
προσήκω have arrived	στερέω separate
πρόσθεν before	στέρνων -ου, τό chest

στεφανώω surround, crown	σώζω save
στόλος -ου, ό expedition	σῶμα -ατος, τό body
στόμα -ατος, τό mouth	σωτηρία -ας, ή safety
στρατεία -ας, ή expedition, campaign	τάλαντον -ου, τό an amount of silver worth 600 drachma
στράτευμα -ατος, τό expedition, campaign	τάξις -εως, ή arrangement, order
στρατεύω do military service	τάσσω arrange
στρατηγός -οῦ, ό general	ταύτη in this way,
στρατιά -ᾶς, ή army	ταῦρος -ου, ό bull
στρατιώτης -ου, ό soldier	ταυτό = τὸ αὐτό the same
στρατοπεδεύω encamp	τάφος -ου, ό tomb
στρατόπεδον -ου, τό camp	τάχος -ους, τό speed
στρατός -οῦ, ό army	ταχύς -εἶα -ύ quick
στρέφω turn	τε and
σύ, σου you	τείνω stretch
σύν with (+ <i>dat.</i>)	τειχέω build walls
συνάγω bring together	τείχος -ους, τό wall
συνάπτω bind together	τεκμήριον -ου, τό evidence
συγγενής -ές related	τέκνον -ου, τό child
συγγνώμη -ης, ή pardon	τελευταῖος -α -ον last, final
σύγκλητος -ον specially called	τελευτάω finish, die
συλλαμβάνω collect	τελευτή -ῆς, ή completion, death
συμβαίνω happen, agree with	τελέω fulfil
συμβάλλω throw together	τέλος -ους, τό end
συμβουλευώ advise	τέμνω cut
σύνεμι be with, associate with, live with	τεσσαράκοντα forty
συνέρχομαι to come together	τέσσαρες -α four
συνεχής -ές continuous	τέταρτος -η -ον fourth
συνθήκη -ης, ή composition, contract	τετρακόσιοι -αι -α four hundred
συνίστημι bring together	τεύχω build
συμμαχέω be an ally	τέχνη -ης, ή art, skill
συμμαχία -ας, ή alliance	τή, here, there
σύμμαχος -ον allied	τηλικούτος -αύτη -οὔτων of such an age or size
σύμπας -πᾶσα -πᾶν all together	τηρέω watch for
συμφέρω benefit (+ <i>dat.</i>)	τίθημι put
συμφορά -ᾶς, ή accident	τίκτω give birth
συντάσσω arrange	τιμάω honor
συντίθημι put together	τιμή -ῆς, ή value
συγχωρέω come together, agree	τιμωρέω help, avenge
σφάζω kill	τιμωρία -ας, ή help, vengeance
σφείς, σφῶν they	τις τι someone, something
σφέτερος -α -ον their (own)	τίς τί who? what? which?
σφόδρα exceedingly	τοι let me tell you, for sure
σχεδόν close, almost	τοίνυν therefore
σχῆμα -ατος, τό form	τοιόσδε, τοιάδε, τοιόνδε such a
σχολή -ῆς, ή leisure	τοιούτος, τοιαύτη, τοιούτο such as this

τολμάω dare	φάσκω claim
τόξον –ου, τό bow	φαῦλος –η –ον trivial
τόπος –ου, ὁ place, topic	φέρω carry
τοσόσδε –ηδε –ονδε so much, so many	φεύγω flee, run away
τοσοῦτος –αύτη –οὔτο(ν) so large, so much	φημί say
τότε then	φθάνω anticipate
τραῦμα –ατος, τό wound	φθείρω destroy
τρεις τρία three	φιλέω love
τρέπω turn	φιλία –ας, ἡ love, friendship
τρέφω nourish	φίλιος –α –ον friendly, dear
τρέχω run	φίλος –η –ον beloved, dear
τρέω flee	φοβέω terrify
τριάκοντα, thirty	φόβος –ου, ὁ fear
τριακόσιοι –αι –α, three hundred	φόνος –ου, ὁ slaughter
τριβω rub	φράζω tell
τριήρης –ους, ἡ trireme	φρήν, φρενός, ἡ mind
τρίτος –η –ον third	φρονέω think
τρόπος –ου, ὁ way	φροντίζω think
τροφή –ῆς, ἡ nourishment, food	φρουρά –ᾶς, ἡ guard
τυγχάνω happen (+ <i>part.</i>) hit, meet, have (+ <i>gen.</i>)	φυγᾶς –ᾶδος, ὁ or ἡ fugitive
τυραννίς –ίδος, ἡ tyranny	φυγή –ῆς, ἡ escape
τύραννος –ου, ὁ ruler, tyrant	φυλακή –ῆς, ἡ guard
τύχη –ης, ἡ luck	φυλάσσω guard
ὕβριζω insult, offend, disrespect	φυλή –ῆς, ἡ race, tribe
ὕβρις –εως, ἡ offense, disrespect, arrogance	φύσις –εως, ἡ nature
ὕγιής –ές healthy	φύω produce
ὕδωρ, ὕδατος, τό water	φωνέω make a sound, speak
υἱός –οῦ, ὁ son	φωνή –ῆς, ἡ sound, voice
ὕμετερος –α –ον your, yours	φῶς, φωτός, ὁ light
ὑπάτος –η –ον highest, the top of	χαίρω be happy
ὑπέρ for (+ <i>gen.</i>), beyond (+ <i>acc.</i>)	χαλεπός –ή –όν difficult
ὕπερβάλλω excel	χάρις, –ιτος, ἡ grace, favor
ὕπερβολή –ῆς, ἡ excess	χειμών –ῶνος, ὁ winter
ὕπισχνέομαι promise	χείρ, χειρός, ἡ hand
ὑπνος –ου, ὁ sleep	χειρόω manage, master
ὑπό by (+ <i>gen.</i>), under (+ <i>gen.</i> , <i>dat.</i>), down under (+ <i>acc.</i>)	χείρων, χειρον worse
ὕπακούω listen to	χέω pour
ὕπαρχω begin, exist	χίλιοι –αι –α a thousand
ὕπολαμβάνω take up	χόω pile up, bury
ὕπομένω stay behind, survive	χράομαι use (+ <i>dat.</i>)
ὕστερος –α –ον following	χράω (a) scrape (b) attack, be eager, desire (<i>impf</i>) (c) furnish
ὕψηλός –ή –όν high	χρεία –ας, ἡ use
φαίνω show, appear	χρή it is fated, necessary
φάλαγξ, –αγγος, ἡ phalanx, battle-array	χρῆμα –ατος, τό thing, (<i>pl.</i>) money
φανερός –ά –όν clear	χρήσιμος –η –ον useful
φάρμακον –ου, τό drug	χρηστός –ή –όν useful

χρόνος -ου, ó time
χρυσοῦς -ῆ -οῦν golden
χρυσός -οῦ, ó gold
χώρα -ας, ἡ land
χωρέω move
χωρίον -ου, τό place
χωρίς apart
ψευδής -ές false
ψεύδω lie, cheat
ψηφίζω vote
ψήφισμα -ατος, τό decree

ψηφος -ου, ἡ vote
ψυχή -ῆς, ἡ breath
ὦ, O! oh!
ὧδε in this way
ὥρα -ας, ἡ season
ὥς as, since, so that (+ subj/opt), (indirect
statement) that, to (+ acc.)
ὥσπερ just as, as if
ὥστε that (result)
ὠφελέω help