

Assessing Vocabulary in Beginning Greek

This paper proposes effective strategies for assessing the practice and knowledge of beginning Greek vocabulary at the secondary level. These strategies have been practiced in the high school classroom with juniors and seniors but may also be applied in the university classroom. Students in the classroom frequently rely on recognition of the shapes of words in order to form meaning or remember what a Greek word means. Most vocabulary study methods (paper and digital flashcards, rote memorization programs and games) support one specific type of recognition, and traditional assessments (vocabulary quizzes with Greek forms presented accompanied by blank lines) allow for students to use these methods for regurgitating information without thinking about what the Greek words mean and how they are formed. Methods that present minimal information and expect students to record all vocabulary information provides an avenue for students to demonstrate real or complete knowledge of vocabulary. This knowledge of vocabulary consists of word meanings, word formation, and word relationships. Students then apply this knowledge by attempting to make meaning in Greek as the target language. Several mitigating strategies may be applied in the context of both major and minor assessments to gauge level of comprehension without compromising a student's motivation to continue progressing in their knowledge.