

VANGUARD GREEK
PART 1

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INTRODUCTION

It may seem impossible to teach a six year old child some Greek. It is not; you are not the first to teach a six year old Greek. The first step is to learn the Greek alphabet. Follow the steps below and it shall be accomplished in a short amount of time.

WHEN TO BEGIN

Begin when the child begins the Vanguard age 6 curriculum.

PREPARATION

Photocopy the Greek alphabet pages from this book. Post them on a schoolroom wall.

Learn each letter ahead of time so you can teach your child. (A complete list of all of the Greek letters, names and sounds is found at the end of this chapter. A summary and reminder page is located in the front of this book.)

FIRST DAY

On the first day, explain to the child the he has already learned the letters of the English alphabet. They are ABCDE... *et cetera*. Now he is going to learn the letters of a different alphabet: the Greek alphabet.

There are only twenty-four letters in the Greek alphabet. Many of the letters are the same as the English alphabet, which will make it easier.

The first letter of the Greek alphabet is alpha. (Point to the letter alpha on the Greek alphabet poster that combines capitals and small letters next to each other. This should be displayed in the schoolroom, such as on the wall.) Have the child point to the letter and say "alpha."

Now explain that the name of that letter in English is A ("ay"), but the name of that letter in Greek is "alpha." The *sound* of that letter is the same as the English letter A. (short *a* sound, as in *cat*)

You will also need to explain that the Greek letter alpha has two forms, a capital form and a small form, just like the letter Aa in English has a capital form and a small form.

Once the child knows alpha, teach beta and gamma as well. Teach the names and sounds. Have the student recite "alpha, beta, gamma" while pointing to each letter on the wall. Use all three sheets of the Greek alphabet (capitals, small letters, and capitals/smalls combined) to teach.

Once the student can point to the Greek letters alpha, beta and gamma, and can give the name and sound of each, the lesson is done for the day. This may only take a few minutes.

SECOND DAY

Ask the child to point to the letters that were learned yesterday and give the name and sound of each. Reteach any that are forgotten.

Now have the child point to the next letter of the alphabet (delta). Learn its name (delta) and sound ("d"). Then learn epsilon (short "e" sound) as well. Review these five letters on all three Greek alphabet pages (capitals, small letters, and capitals/small letters combined) until the student knows them.

It is good to begin and end each lesson by reciting the portion of the Greek alphabet that the child knows, pointing to each letter as it is named. When teaching, it is good to do the alphabet forward, backward, and in random order just to make the child think.

Finally have the child recite the portion of the Greek alphabet that he knows, pointing to each letter as he says the name of each letter. (alpha, beta). Greek class is done for the day.

THIRD DAY (AND EACH DAY THEREAFTER)

On the third, and all subsequent days, have the child begin Greek class by saying the name and sound of the letter that was learned the previous day. Then the child recites the portion of the Greek alphabet that he has already learned. The student should point to each letter as he says its name. (Do not have the child say the sound of each letter, only the name.) If the student forgets a letter, reteach that letter. Then go through again the portion of the alphabet that the child knows, this time having the child give the sound of each letter instead of its name.

Once this review is done, learn the next letter in the Greek alphabet. Teach the child the name and sound of the letter.

End the class by having the child recite the entire Greek alphabet that he knows so far, up to the letter that was learned today. Be sure the child points to and looks at each letter as he names it, so that the visual image of the letter will be combined with the name of the letter coming out of his mouth.

WHEN THE ENTIRE GREEK ALPHABET IS LEARNED

Eventually the child will be able to recite the entire Greek alphabet. When the child can do this, it is time to congratulate the child on a job well done.

It is also time to learn which Greek letters are the vowels...

GREEK VOWELS

Explain to the child that English has five letters which are vowels: A, E, I, O and U. Greek has *seven* letters which are vowels. They are Αα, Εε, Ηη, Ιι, Οο, Υυ and Ωω.

As part of reviewing the alphabet, the child should know that there are five vowels in English and seven vowels in Greek. The child should be able to point to and name each of the seven Greek vowels.

ENDING

When the child can point to and name all of the letters of the Greek alphabet, and can point to and name all seven vowels of the Greek alphabet, it is time to review. When the student has reviewed the Greek alphabet and the Greek vowels for 2-3 days, the student has completed Part 1. The Greek class is done until it is time to begin Part 2, approximately six months later.

It is helpful if the Greek alphabet pages stay posted on the schoolroom wall, even when there is no Greek class, as a reminder to the student of what has been learned. If the student chooses to review or talk about the Greek alphabet on his own during the time when there is no Greek class, this is certainly acceptable.

GREEK ALPHABET

Capital	Small	Name (Eng)	Pronunciation	Sound
A	α	alpha	al-fuh	short a (as in <i>cat</i>)
B	β	beta	bay-tuh*	b (as in <i>bat</i>)
Γ	γ	gamma	gam-muh	g (as in <i>get</i>)
Δ	δ	delta	del-tuh	d (as in <i>dog</i>)
E	ε	epsilon	ep-see-lon	short e (as in <i>egg</i>)
Z	ζ	zeta	dzay-tuh	dz (as in <i>adze</i>)
H	η	eta	ay-tuh	long a (as in <i>lake</i>)
Θ	θ	theta	thay-tuh	th (as in <i>thing</i>)
I	ι	iota	ee-oh-tuh	long e (<i>i</i> as in <i>machine</i>)
K	κ	kappa	kap-puh	k (as in <i>kin</i>)
Λ	λ	lambda	lamb-duh	l (as in <i>laugh</i>)
M	μ	mu	mew	m (as in <i>map</i>)
N	ν	nu	new	n (as in <i>nap</i>)
Ξ	ξ	xi	ksee	x (as in <i>tax</i>)
O	ο	omicron	o-mee-kron	short o (as in <i>on</i>)
Π	π	pi	pee**	p (as in <i>pat</i>)
P	ρ	rho	roe	r (with the r rolled with the front of the tongue, as the Spanish <i>r</i> . If you cannot do this, just pronounce it as the English letter <i>r</i> .)
Σ	σ,ς	sigma	seeg-muh	s (as in <i>sun</i>) (Note that the letter sigma has two lower case forms. The first employed at the beginning or middle of a word, and the last is used only at the end of a word. For example, σοσ (sos).)
T	τ	tau	tah-oo	t (as in <i>tap</i>)
Υ	υ	upsilon	up-see-lon	u (as in <i>put</i>)
Φ	φ	phi	fee	f (as in <i>funny</i>)
X	χ	chi	(see discussion on the next page)	
Ψ	ψ	psi	psee	ps (as in <i>lips</i>)
Ω	ω	omega	oh-meh-guh	oo (as in <i>food</i>)

*British and Commonwealth tradition is to pronounce this letter as "bee-tuh."

**Often pronounced as the English word "pie" by those who do not know Greek and who wish to distinguish the Greek letter Π from the English letter P.

Xχ

The Greek letter χ is probably the most difficult letter of the Greek alphabet for an English speaker to learn. All of the other letters of the Greek alphabet have a similar sound in the English language. English no longer uses the sound of this letter. You will need to learn a new sound.

SOUND

If you happen to know German, the sound of this Greek letter is the same as the German (or Scottish) *ch* letter combination, as in *lauchen* (laugh).

If you happen to know Spanish, the sound of this Greek letter is similar to the Spanish *j* as in *mujer* (woman). It is also the sound of the Afrikaans *g*.

If you happen to be familiar with old forms of English, it is the same as the letter *ȝ* or the *gh* letter combination before the sound was altered into its modern forms.

The sound of the Greek letter χ is the sound of gargling air. Let the back of your tongue roll against the back of the roof of your mouth. Breathe out as you do this, so that it sounds like you are gargling air. That is the sound of the Greek letter χ.

Note that the Greek letter χ is NOT pronounced like the English letter Xx, even though they look similar. The English letter Xx is the same as the Greek letter Ξξ (xi)

NAME

The name of the Greek letter χ is the sound of the letter (see above) followed by the English *ee* (long e) sound. In English it is spelled *chi*, with the German or Scottish *ch* giving the gargling of air sound, and the *i* giving the long e sound.

MISPRONUNCIATION

Since there are few English speaking people who even know how to make the sound of the Greek letter χ (*chi*), the name and sound of this letter are almost always mispronounced by English speakers.

The most common way this letter is pronounced in English is as the letter *k*. Instead of gargling the back of the tongue against the back of the roof of the mouth, the tongue is hit once against the roof of the mouth, making the *k* sound.

This leads to the common English mispronunciation of the name of the Greek letter χ. When spelled in the English way (*chi*), it is often mispronounced “*kai*”, as in the English word *kite* without the *t* sound on the end.

Please teach the correct pronunciations, not the mispronunciations.