



Greek Writing

ABC, 123 ... How did the Greeks do it?

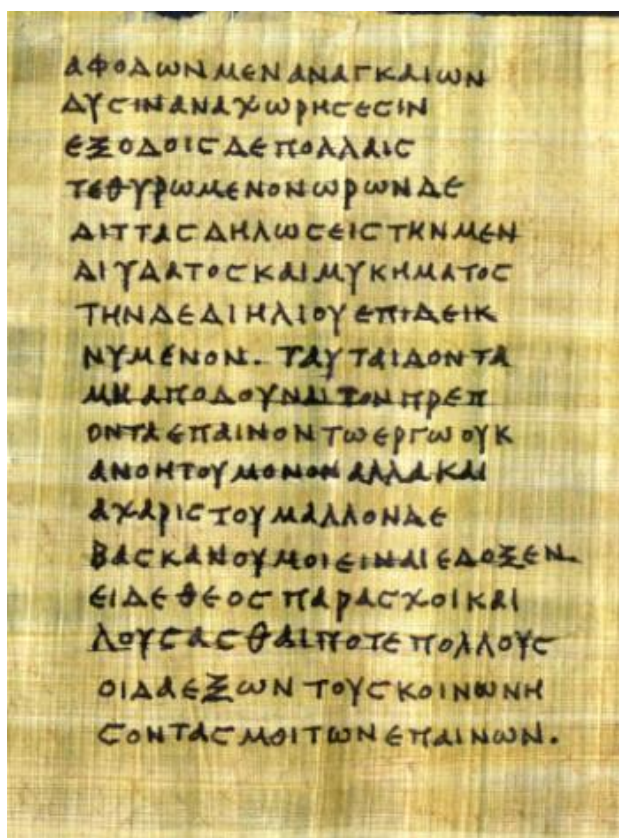
You have

- Pen
- Paper
- Worksheets photocopied

Activity

In this activity you can learn the Greek alphabet and decipher some words written in Greek. You will need the worksheets on the next pages which can be photocopied.

Research Opportunities



This is a piece of papyrus with ancient Greek writing on it. When it was written down, no gaps were put between words like we do today. This makes it hard for scholars to translate sometimes! Why do you think they didn't use gaps between words? What other materials did people write on in the ancient world?

Useful Questions

- What other alphabets and forms of writing do you know about?
- What was the earliest form of writing?
- Why not make up your own alphabet or code and write secret messages to your friends?

Useful Websites

Ancient scripts:

<http://www.ancientscripts.com/index.html>

Typography on the BBC website:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/art/howto/typography/history.shtml>

	National Curriculum	List of topics
KS 1	Mathematics, Ma2	Interpreting data
	Literacy En2	Skills – increasing vocabulary
	History 1, 2, 3, 4, 6	N/A
KS 2	Mathematics, Ma2	Algebra symbols, Interpreting data
	Literacy En2	Skills – increasing vocabulary
	History 1, 2, 3, 4, 12	Unit 14, Unit 15

creativeminds

The Creative Minds project works with museums libraries and archives across the Yorkshire region, to provide young people with learning opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (S.T.E.M.). This ground-breaking project is the first of its kind in the country and is managed by MLA Yorkshire. This pack was developed by Creative Minds with funding from Yorkshire Forward.



Greek writing - worksheet 1

This is the Greek alphabet (the first letters are the capital letters, the second are lower case):

Α α
alpha
A a

Β β
beta
B b

Γ γ
gamma
G g

Δ δ
delta
D d

Ε ε
epsilon
E e

Ζ ζ
zeta
Z z

Η η
eta
E e

Θ θ
theta
TH th

Ι ι
iota
I i

Κ κ
kappa
K k

Λ λ
lambda
L l

Μ μ
mu
M m

Ν ν
nu
N n

Ξ ξ
xi
X x / ks

Ο ο
omicron
O o

Π π
pi
P p

Ρ ρ
rho
R r

Σ σ / ς
sigma
S s

Τ τ
tau
T t

Υ υ
upsilon
Y / U y / u

Φ φ
phi
F / PH f / ph

Χ χ
chi
CH ch

Ψ ψ
psi
PS ps

Ω ω
omega
O o

Note about sigma: σ is used in the middle of a word, ς is used at the end of a word *both* represent the letter 's'.

Greek writing - worksheet 2

The word 'alphabet' comes from the names of the first two letters of the Greek alphabet. Write them down here:

How many letters are there in the Greek alphabet? _____

How many letters are there in our alphabet? _____

Try and write your name in Greek here:

Lots of words have survived from ancient Greek in the English we speak now. Here are some of those words written in Greek. Write the letters of our alphabet underneath to work them out. Watch out for Greek letters that are two letters in our alphabet.

ε χ ο δ ρ α μ α κ ο σ μ ο ς

ο λ υ μ π ο ς ο ρ κ ε σ τ ρ α σ κ ε ν ε

There are lots more words that come from Greek in English. Try writing these words using the Greek alphabet:

Demokratia _____

– in English this translates as ‘democracy’.

Demos means ‘people’

Kratia means ‘power’

So the word ‘democracy’ literally means ‘people power’.

Philosophia _____

– in English this translates as ‘philosophy’.

Philos means ‘love’

Sophia means ‘wisdom’

So the word ‘philosophy’ literally means ‘love of wisdom’.

Strategos _____

– in English this translates as ‘strategy’.

Strategos was the name given to a general in the army

So our word ‘strategy’ comes from the Greek word for general.

Archaeologia _____

– in English this translates as ‘archaeology’.

Arche means beginning

Ologia means knowledge

So the word ‘archaeology’ means ‘knowledge about the beginning [long ago]’.

Hippopotamos _____

– in English this translates as ‘hippopotamus’.

Hippo means ‘horse’

Potamos means ‘river’

So the word ‘hippopotamus’ means ‘river horse’.

I wonder if you can find out about any more? Think of the words you know ending in ‘ology’ – they have all come from Greek!