

GREEK LANGUAGE

Greece is linguistically homogeneous; only an estimated 1 to 2 percent of the population does not use Greek as the primary language.

Modern Greek is spoken on the mainland, on the surrounding islands, in the Greek community of Istanbul, in most of Cyprus, and in some villages of Calabria in southern Italy.

Greek is a direct descendant of the Indo-European language spoken by civilizations in the northeastern Mediterranean for centuries before Christ. The Greek language, in its several variations, has been used to record each step in **an unbroken literary tradition stretching almost 3,000 years**--a role that no other European language has been able to play. Modern Greek retains many of the linguistic qualities, and a high degree of unity, from its original stock.

Ancient Greek

The Greek language was in use for centuries before the era of recorded history. Prehistoric peoples who migrated from Central and northern Asia to the more fertile lands to the south settled in various sections of Greece, in



each of which a distinct dialect arose; the main dialects were Doric, Aeolic, and Ionic and other minor ones such as Arcado-Cyprian.

The **Arcado-Cyprian dialect**, about which very little is known, is the descendant of a form spoken in Mycenaean times in at least the Pelopónnisos and some of the southern islands. The deciphering (1952) of the so-called **Linear B** script, examples of which were found on tablets during the excavations made in Crete (Kríti) and on the mainland of Greece after 1900, revealed it as an ancestor (1500-1400 BC) of Arcado-Cyprian. **These researches indicate that the Greeks were a literate people many hundreds of years before the period of the first Greek poet, Homer (probably the 9th century BC).**

The **Doric dialect**, originally spoken in northern Greece, largely supplanted the older dialects in the Pelopónnisos and came to be spoken also in the Doric colonies, i.e. in southern Cyclades (Kikládhes), on the island of Crete, and in the Greek colonies in Asia Minor, Sicily, and Italy. Most of the poems of **Theocritus** in the 3rd century BC were written in this dialect, and the language of **Pindar** has many traits found in Doric.

Aeolic was spoken principally in the districts of Aeolis, Thessaly (Thessalia), and Boeotia. It was the language of the poets **Alcaeus** and **Sappho** and of three of the idylls of **Theocritus**.

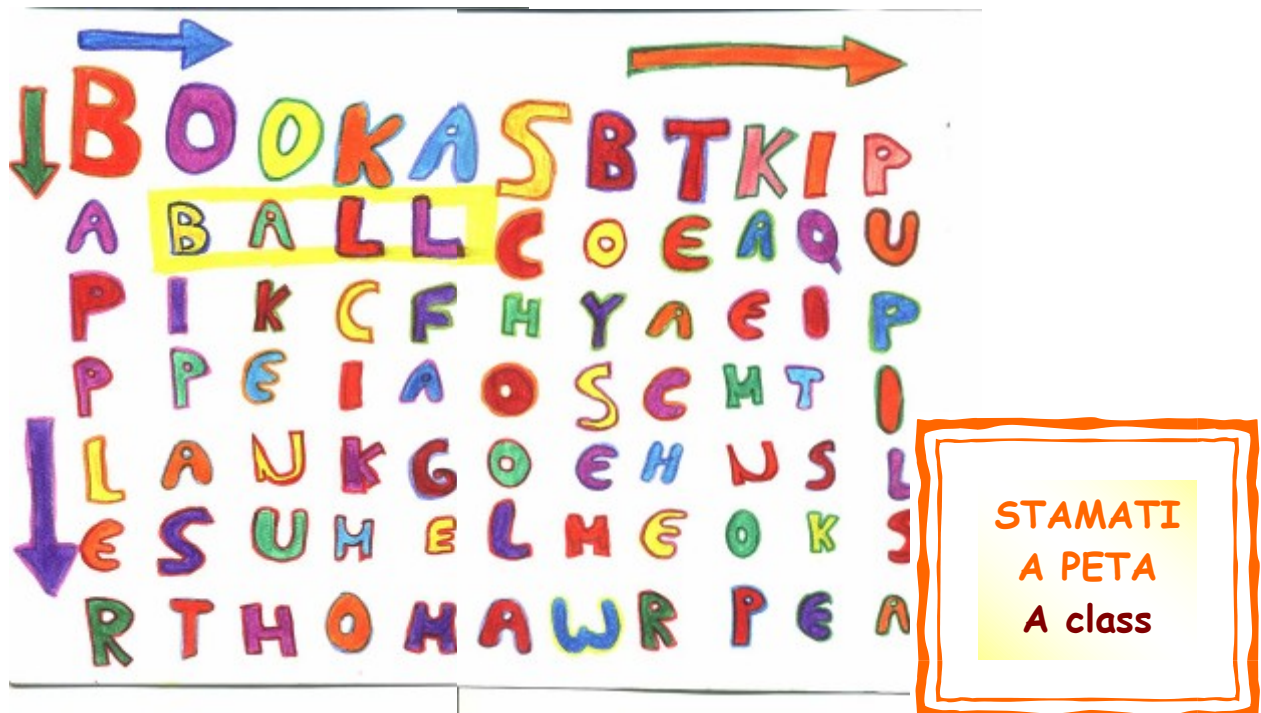
The **Ionic dialect** was spoken on many of the islands of the Aegean and on most of the western shore of Asia Minor. It was employed in various literary works of the 5th century BC, notably the writings of the physician **Hippocrates** and the historian **Herodotus**. **The language of the Homeric poems is the result of a literary tradition that seems to have begun in the Mycenaean and come down through Aeolic and Ionic dialects. It is Ionic dialect which combines Aeolic elements.**

From the Ionic dialect developed the **Attic**, *the standard form of classical Greek*. **It was the language of philosophy and drama**. It was the language of Athens and the surrounding district of Attica and differed from the other Ionic forms chiefly in its contraction of vowels. Because of the political supremacy of Athens during and after the 5th century BC and the dominant role of Athenian art, philosophy, and drama, the Attic dialect superseded all others and became the chief literary language. Its influence was enhanced through its use by the greatest contemporary intellects, including the playwrights **Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles**, the orator **Demosthenes, Plato**, and the historians **Thucydides and Xenophon**.

With the conquests of **Alexander the Great** and the extension of Macedonian rule in the 4th century BC, a shift of population from Greece proper to the Greek settlements in the Middle East occurred. In this period, known as the Hellenistic, the Attic dialect, spoken by the educated classes as well as by the merchants and many emigrants, became the language common to all the Middle East. **As the Greeks mixed with other peoples, linguistic changes took place, Attic became the foundation of a new form of Greek, Koine, which spread throughout all areas of Greek influence. Koine was the language of the court and of literature and commerce throughout the Hellenistic empires.**

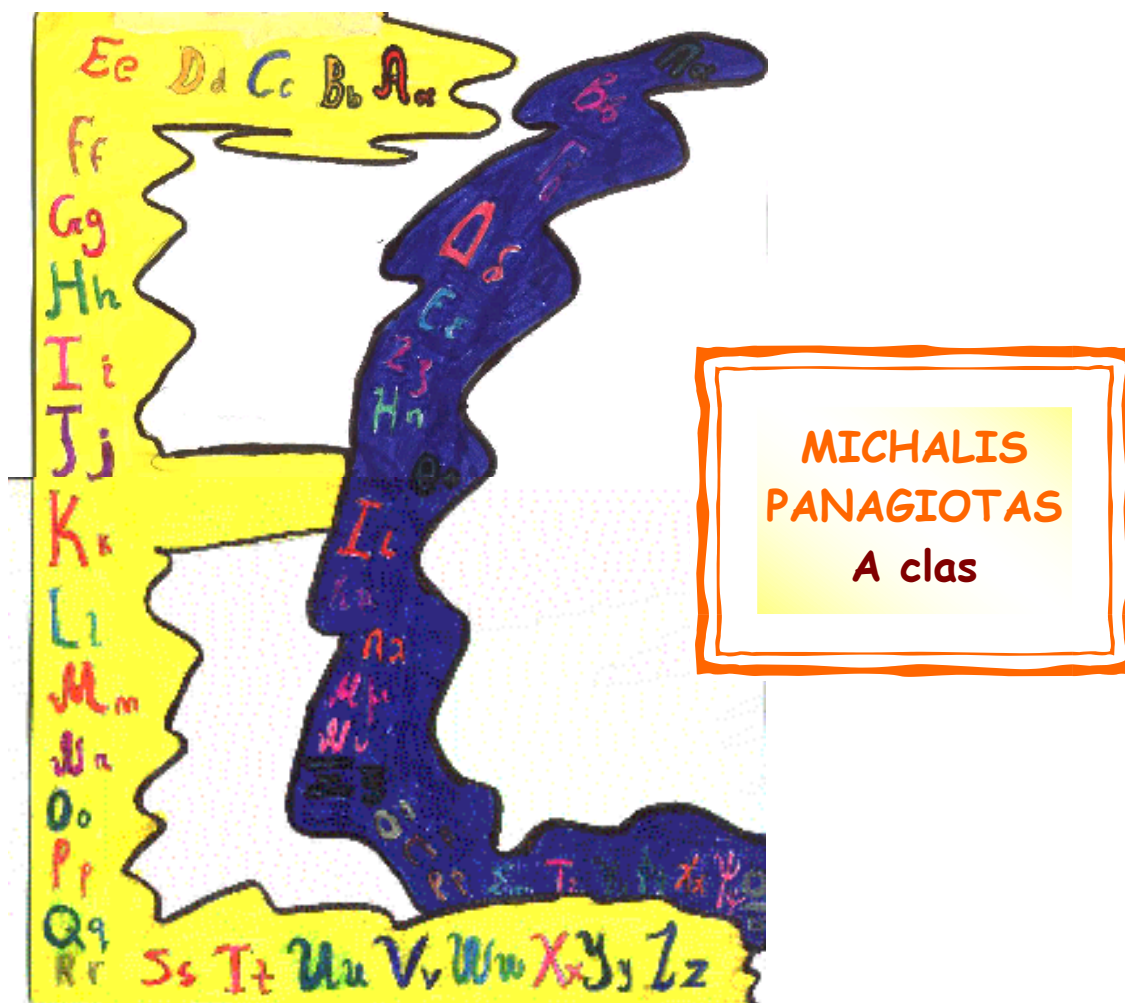
Koine soon became differentiated into two groups, literary Koine and the vernacular, or popular, tongue. The literary language was spoken and used by the educated upper classes, who until the Roman conquest maintained a vigorous and independent intellectual and artistic life and, while not forgetful of the great writers of earlier times, developed the language to meet their own needs, especially those of abstract thought on the fields of philosophy, grammar, and the social and physical sciences.

The vernacular tongue, on the other hand, was less influenced either by classical reminiscences or by the new developments of Hellenistic thought. It borrowed more freely from the vocabularies of Middle Eastern languages and suffered more severely from breakdown of the traditional grammar. It is known mainly from letters and documents on papyrus, and only slowly came to be used in literary works by writers of other linguistic origin. **Of these the most important are the four Gospels of the New Testament.**



During the 1st and 2nd centuries AD a group of scholars advocated a return to the pure Attic dialect of the 5th and 4th centuries BC. Many great writers of the 2nd century and later, including the essayist and biographer **Plutarch** and the geographer **Pausanias**, used the literary Koine, but Atticists also continued to arise and occasionally dominated the literary scene. With the destruction of the libraries in Alexandria in the civil wars of the 3rd century and by the Roman emperor Theodosius in 191 and the closing of the Athenian schools of philosophy by the Byzantine emperor Justinian in 529, even the literary language, which was deviating more and more from the spoken and living vernacular, became confined to the church, to a few scholars, and to the hack writers of the time.

As the Byzantine Empire declined, its territory became divided into small independent states. The literary Koine, which was confined to the great cultural centers, remained static, but the vernacular Koine broke up into many local dialects, developing further as it was influenced by the migrating peoples in the Middle East.



Modern Greek

Throughout the Byzantine period and the years of Turkish domination, Greek people continued to use the vernacular Koine and literary tradition was mainly in spoken form such as demotic poetry. Toward the end of the 18th century, a rising Greek bourgeoisie, with the beginnings of a national consciousness, began to develop. In the 19th century, after freedom had been achieved, the Greeks faced more immediate problems than the linguistic, with the result that no uniform language was established throughout the new nation.

Late in the 19th century, Greek scholars and writers concerned themselves with a systematization of **the popular tongue** for purposes of education and communication. The leaders of this widespread movement were known as Demotikists, because the vernacular language is called **Demotike**. The principal results of the movement were the creation of a vernacular grammar and the production of a large body of literary works based on the achievements, life, and customs of the people. In present-day Greece the vernacular is the chief medium of most Greek novelists and poets.

Opposed to the Demotikists were the **purists**, the advocates of a purified Greek (Katharevousa). These scholars aimed primarily at reawakening the Greek people to a consciousness of their ancient cultural heritage. The purists disregarded the widespread use of the written and spoken vernacular, espousing an elegant, scholarly, artificial language based on Ancient Greek and remote from the speech of everyday life. As a result of the campaigns waged by the purists, the government adopted Katharevousa, but in 1976 **demotic Greek** became the official language by an act of Parliament. It became the language used by the government, virtually all the newspapers, and most university professors.

The **purist** and **vernacular** forms of Modern Greek differ chiefly in that the grammar, orthography, and vocabulary of the former are much closer to Ancient Greek. Phonetically the two are identical, both varying from Ancient Greek principally in the substitution of stress for pitch in accented syllables and in the altered pronunciation of vowels and diphthongs.

The principal grammatical differences between Modern and Ancient Greek are in declension and verbal conjugation. In declension, Modern Greek (purist and vernacular) has abandoned two basic forms used in Ancient Greek: the dual, a form indicating that a noun, pronoun, or adjective refers to two persons or things; and the dative case, which is now used only in a few idiomatic expressions. The dual form has also been abolished from verbal conjugation, as have the optative mood (used in antiquity to indicate doubt or desire) and the

infinitive. In place of the specific verb forms used to denote the various tenses in Ancient Greek, Modern Greek makes extensive use of auxiliary verbs. The Ancient Greek imperative forms have been largely supplanted by the use of an auxiliary



TSAMPIKA
KONTOGIANNOU
A class

GREEK ALPHABET

Greek Alphabet

Upper Case	Lower Case	Name	Transliteration	Upper Case	Lower Case	Name	Transliteration
A	α	alpha	a	N	ν	nu	n
B	β	beta	b	Ξ	ξ	xi	x
Γ	γ	gamma	g	Ο	ο	omicron	o (short)
Δ	δ	delta	d	Π	π	pi	p
E	ε	epsilon	e (short)	Ρ	ρ	rho	r
Z	ζ	zeta	z	Σ	σ, ς	sigma	s
H	η	eta	e (long)	Τ	τ	tau	t
Θ	θ	theta	th	Υ	υ	upsilon	u
I	ι	iota	i	Φ	φ	phi	ph
K	κ	kappa	k	Χ	χ	chi	ch
Λ	λ	lambda	l	Ψ	ψ	psi	ps
M	μ	mu	m	Ω	ω	omega	o (long)

Ancient and modern Greek are both written in the Greek alphabet, which consists of 24 letters. The word **alphabet** comes from the first two letters of the Greek alphabet, *alpha* and *beta*.



SIMPLE GREEK

PRONUNCIATION

a is as in **cut**
e is as in **ten**
o is as in **got**
i is as in **sit**
u is as in **put**
th is as in **thin**
d is as in **then**
j is as in **yet**
h is as in **house**
x is as in **exit**

The rest are similar to English consonants.

Yes	Ne	Ναι
No	Ochi	Όχι
Ok	Entaxi	Εντάξει
Hello	Jiasu	Γεια σου
Good morning	Kalimera	Καλημέρα
Good afternoon	Kalispera	Καλησπέρα
Good night	Kalinichta	Καληνύχτα
Bye	Antio	Αντίο
How are you?	Pos ise	Πως είσαι
Fine	Orea	Ωραία
Very well	Poli kala	Πολύ καλά
Thanks	Efcharisto	Ευχαριστώ
Please/ You are welcome	Parakalo	Παρακαλώ
Excuse me	Me sijchorite	Με συγχωρείτε
Sorry	Sijnomi	Συγγνώμη
Maybe	Isos	Ίσως
What s your name	Pos se lene	Πως σε λένε
My name is	Me lene	Με λένε
Where are you from	Apo pu ise	Από πού είσαι
I am from	Ejo ime apo	Εγώ είμαι από
Do you like?	Su aresi	Σου αρέσει
I like	Mu aresi	Μου αρέσει
Greece	Elada	Ελλάδα
The Netherlands	Olandia	Ολλανδία
Portugal	Portojalia	Πορτογαλία
Poland	Polonia	Πολωνία
Lithuania	Lithuania	Λιθουανία
Europe	Evropi	Ευρώπη

Welcome	Kalos irthes	Καλώς ήρθες
Yesterday	Xtes	Χτες
Today	Simera	Σήμερα
Tomorrow	Avrio	Αύριο
Here	Edo	Εδώ
There	Eki	Εκεί
What	Ti	Τι
Who	Pios	Ποιος
When	Pote	Πότε
Where	Pu	Που
How	Pos	Πως
How old are you	Poson chronon ise	Πόσων χρονών είσαι
I am . years old	Ejo ime...chronon	Εγώ είμαι ... χρονών
One	Ena	Ένα
Two	Dio	Δύο
Three	Tria	Τρία
Four	Tesera	Τέσσερα
Five	Pente	Πέντε
Six	Exi	Έξι
Seven	Epta	Επτά
Eight	Okto	Οκτώ
Nine	Enia	Εννιά
Ten	Deka	Δέκα
Hundred	Ekato	Εκατό
Thousand	Chilia	Χίλια
Million	Ekatomirio	Εκατομμύριο
Airport	Aerodromio	Αεροδρόμιο
Hotel	xenodochio	Ξενοδοχείο
Money	Lefta	Λεφτά
Ticket	Isitirio	Εισιτήριο
Breakfast	Proino	Πρωινό
Lunch	Mesimeriano	Μεσημεριανό

Dinner	Dipno	Δείπνο
Dessert	Epidorpio	Επιδόρπιο
Wine	Krasi	Κρασί
Water	Nero	Νερό
Beer	Mpira	Μπίρα
Orangeade	Portokalada	Πορτοκαλάδα
Lemonade	Lemonada	Λεμονάδα
Coffee	kafes	Καφές
Bread	Psomi	Ψωμί
Monday	Deftera	Δευτέρα
Tuesday	Triti	Τρίτη
Wednesday	Tetarti	Τετάρτη
Thursday	Pempti	Πέμπτη
Friday	Paraskevi	Παρασκευή
Saturday	Savato	Σάββατο
Sunday	Kiriaki	Κυριακή
Day	Imera	Ημέρα
Month	Minas	Μήνας
Week	Evdomada	Εβδομάδα
Hour	Ora	Ωρα
Minute	Lepto	Λεπτό
School	Scholio	Σχολείο
Lesson	Mathima	Μάθημα
Pupil	Mathitis	Μαθητής
Pencil	Molivi	Μολύβι
Pen	Stilo	Στυλό
Rubber	Joma	Γόμα
Bag	Tsanta	Τσάντα
Desk	Thranio	Θρανίο
Chair	Karekla	Καρέκλα
Classroom	Taxi	Τάξη
Teacher	Kathigitis	Καθηγητής
Break	Dialima	Διάλειμμα
Religion	Thriskeftika	Θρησκευτικά

Physics	Fisiki	Φυσική
Chemistry	Chimia	Χημεία
Mathematics	Mathimatika	Μαθηματικά
Music	Musiki	Μουσική
English	Aglika	Αγγλικά
German	Jermanika	Γερμανικά
Ancient Greek	Archea elinika	Αρχαία ελληνικά
Modern Greek	Nea elinika	Νέα ελληνικά
Physical Education	Fisiki ajoji	Φυσική αγωγή
History	Istoria	Ιστορία
Geography	Jeojrafia	Γεωγραφία
Biology	Violojia	Βιολογία
Art	Kalitechnika	Καλλιτεχνικά



TEXTS BY PUPILS

The texts that follow were prepared by pupils who participate in Comenius project. This is what they wanted to let you know about **Greece**

My country

Greece is a country in the south east of Europe. It is small and it has population of about 11 million. It is known for its many islands. It has about 4.000 islands and millions of tourists visit them in the summer.

My country is also famous for its ancient civilization. Democracy was born in Greece and so were drama and many arts. It is full of antiquities and museums. The most famous ancient building is the Parthenon. It is in Athens, the capital of Greece. Athens has a population of about 5 million.

It is a big modern and crowded city. My country is a member of the European Union.

Greece has one of the longest histories in the world. Its history starts from 1500 B.C. till today. In its history there were many wars and it's a miracle that such a small country has survived.

FLORA PINNIKA A class

GREECE, my favorite country

Every time that Greece comes to my mind, I think of all those lovely, crystal clear beaches, the warm weather and especially the very tasty and healthy food (which is based on olive-oil).

You may think that I love Greece, because it is my country. The truth is that Greece is one of the most beautiful countries, even now, in the year 2001. Greece is still full of natural beauties (lots of trees, fresh air, mountains and much more).

I grew up in Chicago (U.S.A.), so when I came to Greece, I felt so nice to be in my country, which I had never seen. I live on Rhodes island, which looks magical!

But Rhodes is not the only beautiful place. Everywhere you go in Greece, there is a very nice place to see. Every place is special and has its own history and beauty.

HARRIET PATSAIS B class

My town

My town is named Archagelos. It is situated in east coast of Rhodos and it is a seaside town. About 8.000 people live in Archagelos. Since there are not any factories in my town the environment is clean. There are many sights, which are well worth visiting, like beautiful beaches, monasteries {one of them situated at the top of a mountain}, valleys and small forests. Also there are many shops, hotels and other places of interest. Archagelos is a nice place for young and elderly people.

ANTHI PATSAI A class

ARCHAGELOS

Archagelos is a very and beautiful village. There are many beaches nearby which are clean. Archagelos has high mountains too with a variety of vegetation. There is a castle on a hill and the view from up there is wonderful! There is a church which is very nice, it is the church of Archagelos Michael who is the patron saint of village. Our school, Gymnasium of Archagelos is a big and beautiful school, with sunny classrooms. There is an English classroom, a computer lab a gym and a science room.

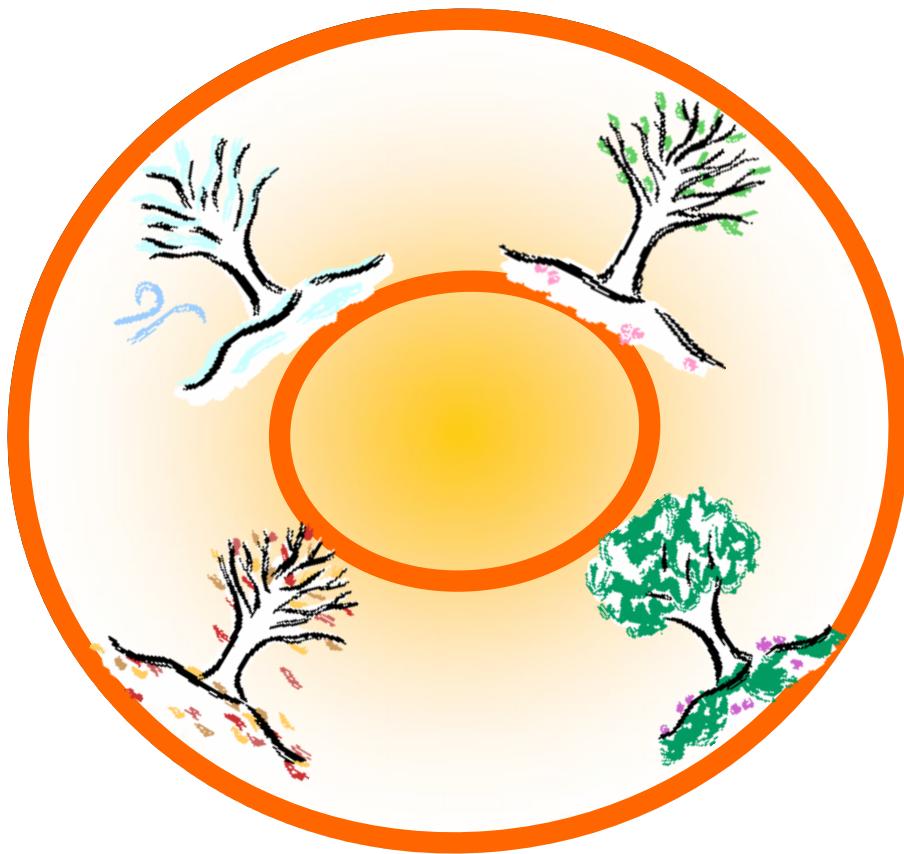
ANTHI THOMA B class

Sources of information

1. Encarta Encyclopedia 2000.
Microsoft
2. Encarta World Atlas 2000.
Microsoft
3. Encyclopedia Britannica.
4. World Atlas. DK Multimedia
5. GREECE. Athens and the Mainland.
EYEWITNESS Travel Guides
6. Greek National Tourism Organization

Websites

1. www.europa.int
2. www.dk.com
3. www.hellenism.gr
4. www.gnto.gr
5. www.greek-indexer.gr



Gymnasium of Archagelos
Rodos GREECE
MAY 2001