

Ancient Greek has a very large vocabulary, and it is long-term challenge to master a useful inventory of words because of dialectical variations, the use of different subsets of words in different genres of writing, and the variations in vocabulary over the centuries. Greek also has a very large number of morphological forms and a (comparatively) nuanced syntax with many possible constructions. For these reasons, fluency in reading Ancient Greek texts remains a challenge for most students for no short time after the initial hard work of an introductory course. This discussion is intended to give some guidance about some strategies for becoming a more fluent and confident reader.

There are of course dictionaries, and online mechanisms for looking up words, and many English translations to consult that can be set side by side with the Greek (if not already printed that way, as in the Loeb Classical Library texts). Such tools are certainly useful, in different ways, at various stages of one's study. But there is no substitute for confronting an un glossed passage without somebody else's translation to hand, or for internalizing enough of the language to work toward independence from such helps.

1. Vocabulary

A successful reader of Greek starts with an ample vocabulary and works to increase it. Almost all the vocabulary in *Introduction to Attic Greek* is high-frequency, so that set of words is one place to start (this set is featured in the online Vocabulary drill module at atticgreek.org).

To expand vocabulary, pursue several strategies. (1) Make lists of the words you need to look up when reading new passages and make an effort to master them (especially any that you have had to look up more than once, or meet repeatedly in reading). The goal is not simply to remember them during recitation at the next day's class, but to be able to recall them for the longer term. (2) Take advantage of patterns of derivation and compounding. If you know that *κτάομαι* means *acquire* and know that *ἐπι-* in compounds can mean *in addition*, in the proper context you might not need to look up *ἐπικτάομαι* in order to see that it is to be translated *acquire in addition*, and in any case the new word should be easier to memorize once you relate it to two known elements. Similarly, if you already know *μεταδίδωμι* and *μετέχω* and understand that one of the possible meanings of *μετα-* in compounds is *sharing*, then it is not difficult to infer the meaning of *μεταλαμβάνω*. (3) Recognize networks of etymology and derivation from basic roots. Consider this example from the root *λεγ-/λογ-*:

1. λέγω, (*pick out,*) *enumerate, tell, say; ἀντιλέγω, speak against, ἐκλέγω, select, ἐπιλέγω, say in addition or after, select, καταλέγω, tell in full, enumerate, προλέγω, say beforehand or publicly, συλλέγω, collect, διαλέγομαι, converse*

2. λεκτός, *capable of being spoken, ἀναμφίλεκτος, not subject to disagreement, ἄλεκτος, indescribable; διάλεκτος, conversation, language, dialect, διαλεκτικός, skilled in dialectic, διαλεκτική, dialectic; ἐκλεκτός, picked out, ἐκλεκτικός, selective, ἐπίλεκτος, chosen, select, σύλλεκτος, gathered*

3. λόγος, *word, account, reason, ἀπόλογος, story, account, διάλογος, dialogue, ἐπίλογος, epilogue, peroration, κατάλογος, register, catalogue, πρόλογος, prologue, σύλλογος, meeting, assembly; ἐκλογή, selection, συλλογή, collection; ἄλογος, irrational, ἀλογία, irrationality, ἀνάλογος, proportionate, in proportion, ἀναλογία, proportion, analogy, παράλογος, unexpected, unreasonable; λογικός, related to speech or reason, dialectical; λογική, logic*

4. λογίζομαι, *reckon, calculate, consider, ἀναλογίζομαι, reckon up, calculate, ἀπολογίζομαι, render an account, διαλογίζομαι, balance accounts, reckon exactly, παραλογίζομαι, reckon falsely, use fallacies, mislead by fallacies, συλλογίζομαι, compute,*

conclude from premisses, infer by syllogism; λογισμός, counting, calculation, reasoning, συλλογισμός, computation, syllogism; συλλογιστικός, inferential, syllogistic

5. λογογράφος, prose-writer, speech-writer, λογοποιός, prose-writer, storyteller; θεολόγος, one who discourses about the gods, φυσιολόγος, one who discourses about nature, φιλόλογος, one who loves words or speeches, literary scholar; ἀξιόλογος, noteworthy, μικρόλογος, counting trifles, petty, ὁμόλογος, in agreement, corresponding

6. λέξις, speech, expression, style of speech, λεξικός, related to words, διάλεξις, discourse

7. εὐλογέω, praise, κακολογέω, revile, insult, αἰσχρολογέω, speak obscenities, ἀκριβολογέομαι, be precise in speech or reckoning, γενεαλογέω, trace a pedigree, γνωμολογέω, speak in maxims, μυθολογέω, tell stories, myths, or legends, (less often) converse, ὁμολογέω, agree, δικαιολογέομαι, plead a case in court; εὐλογος, reasonable, sensible, εὐλογία, plausibility, praise

8. ὁμολόγημα, agreement, μυθολόγημα, mythical narrative

2. Morphology

Rapid and accurate recognition of different parts of speech and of inflectional endings is a vital key to successful reading. No fluency is possible if you must pause a long time over each word, but nothing is more likely to get you off on the wrong track in understanding a sentence than an overhasty or inaccurate decision about what a form is. Students who postpone getting serious about accuracy in morphological analysis, like those who do not take vocabulary acquisition seriously enough, subject themselves to painful hours of puzzling over homework and a high probability of failure in translation.

One important asset for analysis is respect for the small details. You must subject yourself to an internal cross-examination, like a grammatical Socrates. Initially this is a slow process, but when you have done it enough, it becomes automatic and rapid. Here are examples where paying attention to little details matters:

- which breathing is that? e.g., ὀδούς (nom.) *tooth*; ὀδοῦς (acc.) *roads*
- where is the accent and what is it? e.g., ἄλλα, *other things*; ἀλλά, *but*; αὐτή, (nom.) *this woman*; αὐτή, (nom.) *she herself*; ποιεῖ, *he makes*; ποίει, (sing. imperative) *make*
- is there an iota subscript there or not? e.g., ἧ, (fem.) *to whom*, or (adverbial) *by which way*; ἧ̣ (3rd s. subjunctive) *may be*; ἧ̣, *indeed*, or *I was*, or (in Plato) *he said*
- is there reduplication, and does it point to a present stem or a perfect stem?
- in your analysis, are all the expected elements present, and does your analysis account for all the elements that are present? e.g., if you see ἀπιόντας as a participle of ἄπειμι, *be absent, distant*, what is the iota doing there? if you see it as a participle of ἀφίημι, why is there a pi instead of a phi, since the root of this verb has a rough breathing that appears in all of its tense stems?

Recognition of morphological details is involved in a feedback loop with the skill discussed next, segmentation: knowing your forms makes segmentation easier, and skill at segmentation often provides a shortcut to disambiguating similar or identical morphological forms.

3. Segmentation

Even the longest Greek periodic sentences are built up out of smaller parts, such as subordinate clauses, extended circumstantial participle phrases (including participle absolute phrases),

clause-equivalent infinitive phrases. So being able to recognize where clauses begin and end is an essential skill. But even within a clause there may be phrasal units that are most easily understood if treated as separate segments. Some of these subphrases may be distinct intonational units as well (as may be indicated by the position of enclitic words). In some texts editors have added punctuation that clarifies segmentation, but in many points of segmentation punctuation is either optional or not conventional. Some important clues can help you recognize segmentation:

- articles very often begin a phrase of several words, whether we are dealing with a noun and its attributive modifiers, an attributive participle with its objects and adverbs, or an articular infinitive phrase
- prepositions normally begin a prepositional phrase, so the reader expects the rest of the phrase
- postpositives: clausal postpositives like *γάρ* and *οὖν* as well as postpositives that structure both clauses and shorter units like *δέ* and *τε* normally occur in the second position in a new unit, so even without editorial punctuation they strongly suggest that the immediately preceding word in the beginning of a new unit of some kind. (In Hesiod's line from his catalogue of Nereids, *Κυμῶ τ' | Ἡιόνη τε | ἐυστέφανός θ' Ἀλιμῆδη, τε* serves to delineate three units and indicates by its position that the epithet *fair-crowned* goes with the name Halimede and not with Eione). Furthermore, an anticipatory postpositive such as *μέν* or *τε* (when used with the first of a group of like units, with *τε καὶ... οἱ τε... καὶ...*) not only indicates that the previous word begins a new unit, but that one should expect a similar unit paired or balanced with it.
- other (non-postpositive) conjunctions used by the author, whether coordinating or subordinating
- punctuation marks that the editor has provided in the text

4. Syntactical decisions

(Suspense and resolution, or not forestalling your options)

A thorough inventory in your mind of syntactic possibilities is an important resource for fluent reading. You'll read more comfortably when you have a ready recall of a high proportion of the possible answers to questions like these: what are the possible uses of the dative (or another case)? what are possible uses of a subjunctive or optative in a subordinate clause? what are the possible uses of a subjunctive or optative in a main clause? what constructions use the infinitive? Similarly, it helps if the following questions naturally run through your mind when you see a participle: is this participle being used attributively or not, and if not, what nuance might it have as a circumstantial participle, or is there another word in the context that guides one to recognize a supplementary participle idiom?

In addition to being able to think of possibilities, you need to become proficient at making a good choice among them. A frequent error among those who are struggling with Greek is that they decide too soon what function a particular element plays in the sentence. For instance,

- deciding on the basis of word order that the first noun you see is the subject
- assuming a nominative is a subject without checking whether the verb may be a copula that takes a predicate noun
- assuming an accusative is the object without verifying that it might not be subject of an infinitive or predicate accusative or in apposition to the real object (or something else, like an accusative of duration of time or extent of space)

- assuming a middle-passive verb is one or the other without considering what the verb means, what idiomatic uses it may have, and how each choice might work with other elements in the sentence.
-

This can be called forestalling your options. Instead, early in a sentence, one may need to hold some syntactic decisions in suspense and wait for ambiguities or uncertainties to be resolved in the light of elements that come later in the sentence.

5. Scanning ahead

Although it is useful advice at the very beginning and when you are really stumped to look for the finite verb forms first to get a start on analyzing the structure, your aim should be to learn to read the Greek in the order it is written, holding elements in suspense (just as an ancient reader or listener would have had to do) until the meaning becomes clear. It is good practice first to read through a whole sentence, or a large but discrete chunk of a very long sentence, rather than to start in on analyzing or translating the first word or short phrase. When you are more experienced in segmentation, you will actually read segment by segment, but segmentation always involves scanning ahead beyond the single next word. Scanning a sentence or large part of it will also give you a sense of what the vocabulary challenges are, and whether you have to pause to look up several words. Generally, it is better to gain an overall sense of the layout of the sentence before you look up specific words. As mentioned earlier, by looking over the longer context of a sentence, you may gain clues that help you infer correctly the meaning of some words you have never seen before, if they are related to words and roots you know and derived by a pattern you are already familiar with. Similarly, if a word has an ending that could occur on either a noun (or adjective) or a verb, assessing the context may clarify which part of speech it is and guide you to more efficient searching in the dictionary.

6. Weaning yourself from writing out translations

Since the goal is to be able to read Greek texts without writing down a translation, the best practice is to be ready to recite in class from the Greek text, not to read out a written version. This will force you to make a greater effort to internalize vocabulary and idioms and reveal what items require further effort. If you are found a passage particularly difficult and feel uncertain, or find in class that your result was not correct, make note of the passage, ask about it in class, and record the correct version or hints about the correct version for the purposes of review.

7. Cultural literacy

Many intermediate and even more advanced students fail to appreciate the importance of reading commentaries on works they are studying closely. As you read more texts, you should be gaining cultural literacy about Greek ways of behaving and thinking, knowledge that will make other texts you later meet more readily understandable. There are of course times when all you want from a commentary is a suggestion as to how to translate an unusual or difficult phrase or as to which use of the dative that is, but if you never pay attention to the other material in commentaries, you are squandering an opportunity to improve your Greek translation skills by learning about history, religion, values, customs, the history of the Greek language, particular idioms, and the like. Lack of such literacy will be a disadvantage whenever you are faced with a new passage (such as a sight exam passage).

8. When you are stumped

When a passage is really stumping you, then step back and ask yourself this sequence of questions:

- Where are the clause boundaries? A clause is recognized by the presence of a finite verb form (or an embedded representation of a clause in certain kinds of infinitive or participle phrases). And remember that in Greek the finite verb may be “understood” (for instance, omission of *ἔσται*; or ellipsis of verb in a clause when the verb is understood from the accompanying clause, as in some *μέν-δέ* or *οὐ-ἀλλά* contrasts or after *ἢ* = *than* or *ὡς*, *ὥσπερ* = *as*).
- If there is more than one clause, is there subordination? if so, deal with the main clause first, then with subordinate clauses.
- For each clause identify the finite verb of the clause.
- Figure out what its subject is: is it expressed, or to be understood from the context and the personal ending?
- Are there other predicate elements to go with this verb? E.g., a direct object accusative for a transitive verb, a dative with middle *πείθομαι* or a genitive with *κατηγορέω*, or a predicate noun or adjective with *εἰμί*, *γίγνομαι* or the like.
- What else is left in the clause once you have accounted for the above items?

An example: segmentation and thinking through a passage

Here is opening of the first part of the Extra Reading passage from Lysias, *Oration 1*.

ἐν μὲν οὖν τῷ πρώτῳ χρόνῳ, ὧ Ἀθηναῖοι, πασῶν ἦν βελτίστη· καὶ γὰρ οἰκονόμος δεινὴ καὶ φειδωλὸς καὶ ἀκριβῶς πάντα διοικοῦσα. ἐπειδὴ δέ μοι ἡ μήτηρ ἔτελεύτησεν, ἡ πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἀποθανοῦσα αἰτία μοι γεγένηται— ἐπ’ ἐκφορὰν γὰρ αὐτῆ ἀκολουθήσασα ἡ ἐμὴ γυνὴ ὑπὸ τούτου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὀφθείσα χρόνῳ διαφθείρεται· ἐπιτηρῶν γὰρ τὴν θεραπείαν τὴν εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν βαδίζουσαν καὶ λόγους προσφέρων ἀπώλεσεν αὐτήν. πρώτου μὲν οὖν, ὧ ἄνδρες, (δεῖ γὰρ καὶ ταύθ’ ὑμῖν διηγῆσασθαι) οἰκίδιον ἔστι μοι διπλοῦν, ἴσα ἔχον τὰ ἄνω τοῖς κάτω κατὰ τὴν γυναικωνίτιν καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἀνδρωνίτιν. ἐπειδὴ δὲ τὸ παιδίον ἐγένετο ἡμῖν, ἡ μήτηρ αὐτὸ ἐθήλαξεν· ἵνα δὲ μή, ὅποτε λούσθαι δεοί, κινδυνεύῃ κατὰ τῆς κλίμακος καταβαίνουσα, εἰγὼ μὲν ἄνω διητώμην, αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες κάτω.

Consider the first large segment as defined by the editor’s use of the period:

ἐν μὲν οὖν τῷ πρώτῳ χρόνῳ, ὧ Ἀθηναῖοι, πασῶν ἦν βελτίστη· καὶ γὰρ οἰκονόμος δεινὴ καὶ φειδωλὸς καὶ ἀκριβῶς πάντα διοικοῦσα.

This consists of two clauses, with the *γάρ*-clause subordinate in logic, if not in syntax, to the preceding clause (the punctuation with a colon indicates this relation).

ἐν μὲν οὖν τῷ πρώτῳ χρόνῳ, ὧ Ἀθηναῖοι, πασῶν ἦν βελτίστη·
καὶ γὰρ οἰκονόμος δεινὴ καὶ φειδωλὸς καὶ ἀκριβῶς πάντα διοικοῦσα.

The first clause here has three segments, made obvious again by punctuation:

ἐν μὲν οὖν τῷ πρώτῳ χρόνῳ,
ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι,
πασῶν ἦν βελτίστη·

Even if the clause did not have the parenthetical vocative that causes the use of commas, the simpler sentence ἐν μὲν οὖν τῷ πρώτῳ χρόνῳ πασῶν ἦν βελτίστη would obviously fall into two segments because a prepositional phrase is always discernible as a multi-word unit.

Furthermore, the first segment contains the postpositive combination μὲν οὖν, where οὖν indicates a new step in the argument or narrative (*now then, well then*) and μὲν provides an anticipatory clue that a balancing and very often contrasting statement is to follow (the expectation raised by μὲν is answered by the δέ in ἐπειδὴ δέ at the beginning of the next large segment).

The first segment requires no deep thought: *in the first time* is a rough first version, but a good reader will not be content with that and will refine the version, using the more precise English preposition *during* and giving χρόνῳ one of its specific senses, *period of time*.

The second segment is an obvious vocative, requiring no effort. The third segment finally offers the important constituents of a clause. The genitive πασῶν by itself could have many possible uses (for instance, there might have been a feminine plural genitive participle following soon after to form a genitive absolute), but if one has scanned the whole segment, the superlative ending -ίστη points strongly in the direction of partitive genitive, and the matching feminine gender of βελτίστη and πασῶν also favors this.

The finite verb ἦν is an element that the reader has been expecting. In isolation, this form would make one either expect an expressed noun as subject (either a singular noun or a neuter plural noun) or assume an unexpressed subject pronoun from the context (*he, she, it, or if the antecedent is neuter plural, they*). Again, by scanning the whole brief segment and recognizing that βελτίστη is an adjective and not a noun, one can quickly infer that the subject *she* is to be understood from the context and that the adjective is a predicate adjective: *she was the best of all women* (note how πᾶς, like demonstratives, is idiomatically used without the noun *women*, since the gender and number are obvious from the form). [What if a nom. sing. fem. noun had followed ἦν? In that case, one should not leap to the conclusion that it is the subject, because the verb is a copula and nominative with a copula can be either subject or predicate: some consideration of the context and possible senses would be needed to decide between those possibilities.]

The appended γάρ-clause is short in itself and less obvious to segment:

καὶ γὰρ οἰκονόμος δεινὴ καὶ φειδωλὸς καὶ ἀκριβῶς πάντα διοικοῦσα.

The clause contains four nominative singular forms. Two of these are clearly feminine. The compound noun οἰκονόμος, *housekeeper, household manager*, is one that can be masculine or feminine, and the adjective φειδωλός is reported, if you consult a thorough enough dictionary, to be used occasionally as a two-ending adjective rather than a three-ending adjective. Therefore, in this sentence all four of the words are feminine, with the noun οἰκονόμος being the head-word and the three adjectival forms (since the participle διοικοῦσα is of course adjectival too) being its modifiers. Indeed, the adjectives are arranged in a typical pattern known as a *tricolon crescendo* since of the three parallel items linked together the second is longer than the first (three syllables

vs. two) and the third item (the whole participial phrase with participle, an adverb, and the participle's object) is longest and weightiest. Finally, one needs to observe that there is finite verb expressed in this clause: ἦν, *she was*, has to be understood from the previous clause. So the first rough pass might be *For truly she was a housekeeper keen and thrifty and managing everything with precision*: this is a possible but not very common arrangement in English idiom. So one needs to make some adjustment: either *For truly she was a housekeeper who was keen and thrifty and managed everything with precision* or *For truly she was a keen and thrifty housekeeper who managed everything with precision*.

The next large segment defined by the use of a period is:

ἐπειδὴ δέ μοι ἡ μήτηρ ἐτελεύτησεν, ἢ πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἀποθανοῦσα αἰτία μοι γεγένηται—
ἐπ' ἐκφορὰν γὰρ αὐτῇ ἀκολουθήσασα ἡ ἐμὴ γυνὴ ὑπὸ τούτου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὀφθείσα χρόνῳ
διαφθείρεται· ἐπιτηρῶν γὰρ τὴν θεράπαιναν τὴν εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν βαδίζουσιν καὶ λόγους
προσφέρων ἀπώλεσεν αὐτήν.

This can be segmented into four major parts:

ἐπειδὴ δέ μοι ἡ μήτηρ ἐτελεύτησεν,
ἢ πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἀποθανοῦσα αἰτία μοι γεγένηται
ἐπ' ἐκφορὰν γὰρ αὐτῇ ἀκολουθήσασα ἡ ἐμὴ γυνὴ ὑπὸ τούτου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου
ὀφθείσα χρόνῳ διαφθείρεται·
ἐπιτηρῶν γὰρ τὴν θεράπαιναν τὴν εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν βαδίζουσιν καὶ λόγους
προσφέρων ἀπώλεσεν αὐτήν.

The cascading indentation is intended to indicate that each unit is logically subordinate to the unit before it, and since the first unit itself is a subordinate temporal clause, this means the entire sentence lacks a main clause. This sort of phenomenon is exactly what a commentary or set of annotations should discuss, since this is not something that a beginning to intermediate student should be expected to recognize.

As mentioned earlier, in the first segment here

ἐπειδὴ δέ μοι ἡ μήτηρ ἐτελεύτησεν

the δέ answers the expectation created by the preceding μέν οὖν (in addition, the initial temporal prepositional phrase in the first limb is balanced by the initial temporal clause in the second).

In scanning forward through the next large segment

ἢ πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἀποθανοῦσα αἰτία μοι γεγένηται

one should note that the initial relative pronoun in the nominative makes one expect a singular verb, which is found at the end of the clause in γεγένηται. The next three words are the simple noun-phrase, πάντων τῶν κακῶν, with the common substantivalized use of neuter κακόν, accompanied by its article and πάντων in its common predicative position. Initially, one will need to suspend any decision about the syntax of this genitive phrase and await later elements that might clarify its use. In reading forward, the adjective αἰτία will offer the answer (ideally, a student learns not just the definition of αἴτιος, *cause of, responsible for*, but also “+ gen.”). The fact

that ἀποθανοῦσα intervenes between the dependent genitive phrase and its head-word should not be misleading, because ἀποθνήσκω does not typically govern a genitive.

The placement of enclitic μοι suggests that αἰτία begins a new intonational subunit, αἰτία μοι γεγένηται. The dative pronoun is readily understandable as the dative of disadvantage commonly found when αἴτιος is a predicate adjective, as it is here with the copula γεγένηται.

A scan of the next section suggest the following division:

ἐπ' ἐκφορὰν γὰρ αὐτῇ ἀκολουθήσασα | ἡ ἐμὴ γυνὴ | ὑπὸ τούτου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὀφθεῖσα |
χρόνῳ διαφθείρεται

One can detect a nominative noun phrase and two participles agreeing with the noun, neither in attributive position, and thus both circumstantial. The segmentation of the initial participial phrase is obvious because of the articular noun phrase that follows it, while the ὑπὸ + gen. phrase is the common idiom for expression of personal agent and thus easily associated with the immediately following passive participle. One might hesitate slightly over where to attach χρόνῳ, but it gives better sense with διαφθείρεται, and Lysias often affects a structure in which verbal forms come last and are preceded by the adverbs and other complements that depend on them.

Note how the finite verb placed at the end of the clause resolves the expectation raised by the nominative singular elements that have preceded. Both prepositional phrases are easy to recognize as subunits; as to the second phrase, even if one is momentarily tempted to view ὑπὸ τούτου as complete (as it could be in other contexts), the immediate continuation τοῦ ἀνθρώπου should cause one to revise that assumption. In the first phrase, a reader who knows the use of the dative with verbs of accompaniment and following (ἔπομαι) and with verbs of attending and serving (δουλεύω) might not find it necessary to verify that ἀκολουθέω takes a dative (although one might need to look up the verb anyway if it has never been seen before).

The fourth major division of this part of the passage is

ἐπιτηρῶν γὰρ τὴν θεράπειαν τὴν εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν βαδίζουσιν | καὶ | λόγους προσφέρων ||
ἀπώλεσεν αὐτήν

Here, after so many feminine words referring to the speaker's wife and mother, the initial participle ἐπιτηρῶν indicates a change to a masculine singular subject. If the word itself is unfamiliar and thus one is not sure it is the participle of a contract verb, scanning ahead to καὶ ... προσφέρων should help to persuade one of the nominative participle interpretation rather than genitive plural or a noun or adjective. Moreover, τούτου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in the previous sentence makes it easy to understand who this *he* is. For the accusative τὴν θεράπειαν that follows the participle immediately, one's primary hypothesis should be that it is an object of ἐπιτηρῶν (even if one doesn't know what that means until one looks it up). When τὴν ... βαδίζουσιν follows immediately, this is most likely to be an attributive participle modifying θεράπειαν (again, even if one does not yet know what that noun means or what the verb βαδίζω means). The finite verb (awaited since hearing the nom. sing. ἐπιτηρῶν) heads the final subunit of the sentence, since the only other component of that unit is the unemphatic pronoun αὐτήν, which is not used to begin an intonational subunit (when αὐτός is placed at the head of a segment, it is in its emphatic or intensive use: for instance, if Lysias had instead said αὐτὴν τὴν ἐμὴν γυναῖκα ἀπώλεσεν).

The next major division of the passage is

πρῶτον μὲν οὖν, | ὦ ἄνδρες, | (δεῖ γὰρ καὶ ταῦθ' ὑμῖν διηγήσασθαι) | οἰκίδιον ἔστι μοι
διπλοῦν, | ἴσα ἔχον τὰ ἄνω τοῖς κάτω κατὰ τὴν γυναικωνίτιν καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἀνδρωνίτιν.

Here again, μὲν οὖν tells the reader or listener that there is a transition to a new point in the argument or narrative and that this statement is anticipatory of a sentence to be offered next. We also have the initial temporal adverb πρῶτον and another parenthetic vocative. The appearance of δεῖ γὰρ at this early point in the sentence, when we have so far had only the adverb, connective, and vocative, means that this is a parenthetic γὰρ-clause rather than the much more common type of follow-on explanation (seen in the three previous uses of γὰρ in this passage). Here modern editors usually help the reader by punctuating with the modern curved brackets (or if an editor declines to use this modern invention, a colon (or comma) before and a colon (or comma) after the phrase may mark off such an explanatory interruption within a sentence). In oral delivery, the boundary between the γὰρ-clause and the resumption of the sentence at οἰκίδιον would also have been obvious from the intonation or relative length of pauses.

δεῖ immediately raises the expectation of either an infinitive (more common) or a genitive complement (less common), and Lysias typically here ends his phrase with the infinitive that resolves this suspense. In interpreting καί, one may well favor at once the view that it is adverbial with ταῦτα, so long as one keeps an open mind (one would need to take it as *both* if one later found not just διηγήσασθαι but διηγήσασθαι καὶ δῆλα πάντα ποιεῖν).

In the next segment, the head word οἰκίδιον is followed by the enclitic words ἐστὶ μοι [ἔστι μοι in the Oxford Classical Text quoted here, but if Lysias had meant to use emphatic (existential) ἔστι, I suspect he would have used the presentational verb-initial order ἔστι μοι οἰκίδιον]. These enclitics separate the noun from its attributive adjective διπλοῦν.

The comma helps the reader perceive the beginning of a new segment, but even if it were not there, the neuter plural ἴσα, having no relation to any word in the sentence so far, would suggest a new phrase, and the neuter participle ἔχον, evidently agreeing with οἰκίδιον, suggests a participial phrase explicating the idea *double structure*. The substantive phrase τὰ ἄνω provides an object for ἔχον and a noun for ἴσα to modify as a predicate adjective. The next substantive phrase, τοῖς κάτω, is in the dative, obviously paired in some way with τὰ ἄνω, and the dative is easy to interpret because ἴσα has preceded (adjectives of likeness and equality take the dative). The remainder of this segment is two prepositional phrases joined by καί, obviously parallel in structure and semantics (κατὰ = *in respect to*) as well as rhyming in their ending -ωνίτιν.

The final major segment defined by the use of a period is

ἐπειδὴ δὲ τὸ παιδίον ἐγένετο ἡμῖν, ἡ μήτηρ αὐτὸ ἐθήλαζεν· ἵνα δὲ μή, ὅποτε λούσθαι δέοι,
κινδυνεύη κατὰ τῆς κλίμακος καταβαίνουσα, ἐγὼ μὲν ἄνω διητώμην, αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες κάτω.

This is clearly composed of two sentences, which the editor has chosen to separate with a colon, because δέ is here continuative and not contrastive. The second sentence ends with short parallel clauses linked by μέν and δέ. Using indentation to indicate subordination, we may indicate the substructure as follows:

ἐπειδὴ δὲ τὸ παιδίον ἐγένετο ἡμῖν,
ἡ μήτηρ αὐτὸ ἐθήλαζεν·

ἵνα δὲ μή ... κινδυνεύη κατὰ τῆς κλίμακος καταβαίνουσα,
ὅποτε λούσθαι δέοι

ἐγὼ μὲν ἄνω διητώμην,
αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες κάτω.

In the initial temporal clause, the neuter τὸ παιδίον is in itself ambiguous as to case (nominative or accusative), but this ambiguity is immediately resolved in favor of the nominative by the following copula ἐγένετο. Otherwise the first sentence is extremely simple, and it is easy to understand that αὐτὸ is the direct object of ἐθήλαζεν even before one looks up the meaning of the verb.

The second sentence is more complex. In prose ἵνα is almost always a conjunction introducing a purpose clause (with the subjunctive or optative). With the indicative ἵνα means *where*, and this usage is common in poetry, but quite rare in Attic prose. If a reader already is aware of this latter possibility, any ambiguity is immediately resolved by the following μή even before the subjunctive κινδυνεύη is encountered. Κινδυνεύω is the sort of verb that a student who knows κίνδυνος might not need to look up.

The editor has marked off with commas the short temporal clause ὅποτε ... δέοι that separates ἵνα μή and the subjunctive κινδυνεύη, and it can be set aside for the moment. The remainder of the purpose clause is a circumstantial participial phrase (again with the modifier placed before the participle) and features a simple reinforcement of the concept *down* by the echoing of the preposition in the verbal prefix. [Notice how Greek uses the genitive here in κατὰ τῆς κλίμακος, *down the staircase or ladder*, because it assumes an image of movement down from the top. Usually κατὰ + gen. indicates movement *down from* a point of origin or *down upon/into* a destination.] The temporal clause with the optative must express past general condition force (and that fits with the imperfect indicative διητώμην in the main clause).

The bipartite main clause features very simple parallelism:

ἐγὼ	μὲν	ἄνω	διητώμην,
αἱ γυναῖκες	δὲ	κάτω	(διητῶντο)

Of course, it is typical that δέ actually occurs between the article and the noun, αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες, although αἱ γυναῖκες δέ... is also possible, if much less frequent. The ellipsis of διητῶντο is to be expected in a sentence of this sort.