LEXICON EXERCISES

NOTE: Some of these items will require the Big Liddell, as noted.

1. **Spelling.** What is the difference between these similar words? What phonemes are distinctive here?

   μόρος μωρός  φύλλον, φῦλον  κώλου, κόλον  μέλλω, μέλο
   φόνος, πόνος  φυγή, πυγή  θίς, τίς  θοῦ, τοῦ

2. **Homonyms.** Like English, Greek has confusing homonyms.

   – find four radically different meanings for οὖρος
   – find two radically different meanings for λίς (which, by the way, is unrelated to the Latin word *lis*). In actual texts, which meaning does it always have in the nominative? –in the dative?
   – find two radically different meanings for the verb δέω. Which one is the source of the impersonal verb, δεῖ?

3. The Greeks were fond of compound words, but even in Greek, a grandiose compound can sound humorous, like "honorableabilitudinidad" or "floccinaucinihilipilification" in English (I'm not sure whether Turbinostaustralnatriebwerkssystem was meant to be humorous in German). What do the following words mean – the longest Greek words I could find – and who used them, in what genre of literature? (You'll need the Big Liddell for these.)

   βρυσωνοθρασυμαχειολειψικέρματος

   ἀρχαιομελησιονοφρυνιχήρματος

4. **Familiar Greek terms:***

   – What is (are) (the) "hoi polloi?"
   – What is "Kyrie Eleison" (besides the chorus of the 1986 number one hit song *Kyrie* by Mister Mister)? Hints: "eleison" is a Late Latin transliteration which would more accurately be "eleēson." -σου is the normal second person singular aorist imperative ending.

   – What does "gorilla" have in common with "Amazon?" (needs the Big Liddell)
   – What does a "palindrome" do? The Greeks liked them, too. Here's a long one:

   ΝΙΨΟΝΑΝΟΜΗΜΑΜΗΜΝΑΝΟΨΙΝ [solution on the next page]
νίψων ἀνόμημα μὴ μόναν ὁψὶν: "wash your sins, not only your face" – from the courtyard font of the church Hagia Sophia. What does "hagia sophia" mean?

5. Unfamiliar Greek terms. Now that you are studying Greek, you will have no problem coming up with cool-sounding names for the science fiction novels you write. In the books by Piers Anthony about a malevolent prison planet, why would he have used titles like Chthon and Phthor?

6. Obscure vocabulary. The Greeks had a lot of words, and they weren't afraid to borrow from other languages, either. τὸ κολεόν, ἡ λαβή and τὸ πυγλιόν are parts of what Persian object kept in the Parthenon? How was it decorated? What Roman poet managed to squeeze this word into a poem? (You'll need the Big Liddell for these.)

7. Literary subjects:

– If a man has ὕβρις the gods may inflict στῆ on him, followed by Νέμεσις. What are these and in what literary genre would you expect to find this sequence?

– If a woman becomes a Βάκχη or a μαίνας and participates in the σπάραγμα and the ὦμοφαγία, in whose ritual is she participating and what kind of ritual is it?

– What are two Greek cities besides Athens (αἱ Ἀθήναι) whose names are often plural in form?

8. Mythology/religion:

A lot of gods and goddesses were personifications of concepts. What spheres did the following gods or goddesses control?

Ὑγίεια

Ὑπνος — and who is his twin brother?

Τύχη

Χάος

Ἐρως — and what is his specific function?

Δίκη

Ορκος — and what is his specific function?

Ερις
– How do the names Ευμενίδες and Σεμναί, applied to the 'Ερινύες (plural of 'Ερινύς) illustrate the meaning of "euphemism?"

– Who were the Λιταί (plural of Λιτή) who helped clean up after Ατη, and which poet first personified them?

– The head god Ζεύς had influence over many spheres. What did Ζεύς control in each of the following functions?

Ζεύς ξένιος
Ζεύς Σωτήρ
Ζεύς Ἐλευθέριος
Ζεύς Ὀρκίος
Ζεύς Ἐρκεῖος
Ζεύς Κτήσιος
Ζεύς Ἐφέστιος
Ζεύς Χθόνιος

– We are all familiar with the most common names of the Olympian gods, but they were often called by other names ("appellations" or "epithets"). Whom would you be invoking if you called on the following?

Λοξία — and what did the Romans call the goddess who performed the same function?

hint: look under the alternative name for Λοξία

Κυθέρια
Κύπρις
Φιλομειδής
Ἰακχος
Ἐνυάλιος
Ἀργειφόντης

– An important god may be called by many different names. What is the familiar name of the god named with the following names, and what might these names signify?

Φοῖβος
– As a major goddess, Ἀθηνᾶ (the usual Attic name, contracted from Ἀθηναία – in other dialects Ἀθηνη, Ἀθάνα and Ἀθανά) had various functions. What functions do these epithets indicate?

Ἀθηνᾶ Πρόμαχος
Ἀθηνᾶ Νίκη
Ἀθηνᾶ Παρθένος


– If the Greek word for apple is μῆλον, what is the Greek word for:
  - quince
  - peach
  - orange

– If the Greek word for nut is κάρυον, what is the Greek word for:
  - walnut
  - chestnut
  - filbert

– Why might the plant genus which contains chocolate (a New World plant) be named Theobroma?

– The battle of the Athenians and Plataeans against the Persians on the coastal plain of Marathon was presumably fought amid the smell of what trampled herb?


– The level of respect afforded to the high king Agamemnon by his allied kings was not always very high. What was Achilles saying, for instance, when he publicly called Agamemnon an οἰνοβαρῆς having ὀμμα κυνὸς and κραδίη ἐλάφῳ (= ἐλάφου)? (Iliad I, 224)
– Judging by the following epithets in Homer, what was the primary domain or function of Ζεύς in this early literature?

' ὑψιβρεμέτης
 Νεφεληγερέτα
 Στεροπηγερέτα
 Κελαινεφής

– How would you translate the following words, and what problem might arise in the translation?

ῆτορ
καρδίη
θυμός


– Early Christians used a fish symbol for the acronym ἸΧΘΥΣ (“fish”). Just what does "Ἰησοῦς Χριστός Θεοῦ Ὑιὸς Ζωτήρ" mean?

– If ἡ παρθένος is a virgin, then what would you expect ὁ παρθένος to be? Is that necessarily what it means?

12. Famous Greek sayings. What do the following popular sayings mean?

μηδὲν ἄγαν
μέτρου ἀριστον
σῶμα σῆμα
πάθει μάθος [hint: πάθει is not a verb]