

Lesson 19 February 13-17  
The Optative

1. Like the subjunctive, the **optative** is an unreal mood used mainly in subordinate clauses. There are a few independent uses as well.
2. The optative occurs in the present, aorist, future, and perfect tenses. The perfect optative is very rare and will not be introduced this year. Like the subjunctive and infinitive, the tense of the optative expresses aspect, not time. The future optative is used in one particular type of construction to be introduced later. Whenever you see a construction calling for an optative, assume it means a present or aorist optative.
3. The sign of the optative is *ι*. In all tenses and voices this combines with the theme or stem vowel to form a diphthong (*οι, αι, ει*). In the active voice, there are two sets of endings. In the middle there is only one set. While the endings of the subjunctive are based on primary endings, the optative endings are based on secondary endings. They are as follows:

	<i>Weak Active</i>	<i>Strong Active</i>	<i>Middle</i>
1st singular	-μι	-ην	-μην
2nd singular	-ις	-ης	-ιο
3rd singular	-ι	-η	-ιτο
1st plural	-μεν	-ημεν	-μεθα
2nd plural	-τε	-ητε	-ισθε
3rd plural	-εν	-ησαν	-ιντο

4. The weak endings are used in the present, future, and aorist active of *-ω* verbs, excepting contract verbs, and in the plural of contract verbs and *-μι* verbs. The strong forms are used in the aorist passive and *-μι* verbs, and for the singular forms of contract verbs. Sometimes a verb can use either the strong or weak form. The declension of *παιδεύω* and the 2nd aorist of *μανθάνω* are as follows:

	<i>Present Active</i>	<i>Present Middle/Passive</i>
1st singular	παιδεύοιμι	παιδευοίμην
2nd singular	παιδεύοις	παιδεύοιο
3rd singular	παιδεύοι	παιδεύοιτο
1st plural	παιδεύοιμεν	παιδευοίμεθα
2nd plural	παιδεύοιτε	παιδεύοισθε
3rd plural	παιδεύοιεν	παιδεύοιντο

  

	<i>Future Active</i>	<i>Future Middle</i>
1st singular	παιδεύσοιμι	παιδευσοίμην
2nd singular	παιδεύσοις	παιδεύσοιο
3rd singular	παιδεύσοι	παιδεύσοιτο
1st plural	παιδεύσοιμεν	παιδευσοίμεθα
2nd plural	παιδεύσοιτε	παιδεύσοισθε
3rd plural	παιδεύσοιεν	παιδεύσοιντο

	<i>1st Aorist Active</i>	<i>1st Aorist Middle</i>
1st singular	παιδεύσαιμι	παιδευσαίμην
2nd singular	παιδεύσαις/παιδεύσειας*	παιδεύσαιο
3rd singular	παιδεύσαι/παιδεύσειε*	παιδεύσαιτο
1st plural	παιδεύσαιμεν	παιδευσαίμεθα
2nd plural	παιδεύσαιτε	παιδεύσαισθε
3rd plural	παιδεύσαιεν/παιδεύσειαν*	παιδεύσαιντο

\*In the active 2nd singular, and 2nd & 3rd plural, the second form is the more common

	<i>2nd Aorist Active</i>	<i>2nd Aorist Middle</i>
1st singular	μάθοιμι	μαθοίμην
2nd singular	μάθοις	μάθοιο
3rd singular	μάθοι	μάθοιτο
1st plural	μάθοιμεν	μαθοίμεθα
2nd plural	μάθοιτε	μάθοισθε
3rd plural	μάθοιεν	μάθοιντο

	<i>Aorist Passive</i>	<i>Future Passive</i>
1st singular	παιδευθείην	παιδευθησοίμην
2nd singular	παιδευθείης	παιδευθήσοιο
3rd singular	παιδευθείη	παιδευθήσοιτο
1st plural	παιδευθείημεν/παιδευθείμεν	παιδευθησοίμεθα
2nd plural	παιδευθείητε/παιδευθεῖτε	παιδευθήσοισθε
3rd plural	παιδευθείησαν/παιδευθεῖεν	παιδευθήσοιντο

5. Contract verbs normally use the strong forms in their present active singular, and the weak forms in the present active plural (although the strong forms occasionally appear in the plural, and the weak forms in the singular):

#### φιλέω

	<i>Present Active</i>	<i>Present Middle/Passive</i>
1st singular	φιλοίην (φιλεοίην)	φιλοίμην (φιλεοίμην)
2nd singular	φιλοίης (φιλεοίης)	φιλοῖο (φιλέοιο)
3rd singular	φιλοίη (φιλέοι)	φιλοῖτο (φιλέοιτο)
1st plural	φιλοῖμεν (φιλέοιμεν)	φιλοίμεθα (φιλεοίμεθα)
2nd plural	φιλοῖτε (φιλέοιτε)	φιλοῖσθε (φιλέοισθε)
3rd plural	φιλοῖεν (φιλέοιεν)	φιλοῖντο (φιλέοιντο)

#### τιμάω

	<i>Present Active</i>	<i>Present Middle/Passive</i>
1st singular	τιμών (τιμαοίην)	τιμώνην (τιμαοίμην)
2nd singular	τιμώνης (τιμαοίης)	τιμῶο (τιμάοιο)
3rd singular	τιμώνη (τιμαοίη)	τιμῶτο (τιμάοιτο)
1st plural	τιμῶμεν (τιμάοιμεν)	τιμώνμεθα (τιμαοίμεθα)
2nd plural	τιμῶτε (τιμάοιτε)	τιμῶσθε (τιμάοισθε)
3rd plural	τιμῶεν (τιμάοιεν)	τιμώνντο (τιμάοιντο)

## δηλώω

	<i>Present Active</i>	<i>Present Middle/Passive</i>
1st singular	δηλοῖην (δηλοοίην)	δηλοίμην (δηλοοίμην)
2nd singular	δηλοῖς (δηλοίς)	δηλοῖο (δηλόοιο)
3rd singular	δηλοῖη (δηλοοίη)	δηλοῖτο (δηλόοιτο)
1st plural	δηλοῖμεν (δηλόοιμεν)	δηλοίμεθα (δηλοοίμεθα)
2nd plural	δηλοῖτε (δηλόοιτε)	δηλοῖσθε (δηλόοισθε)
3rd plural	δηλοῖεν (δηλόοιεν)	δηλοῖντο (δηλόοιντο)

6. The present optatives of εἰμί & εἶμι, and the perfect optative of οἶδα are as follows. Note that εἰμί and οἶδα can use either strong or weak forms in the plural:

	<b>εἰμί</b>	<b>εἶμι</b>	<b>οἶδα</b>
1st singular	εἶην	ἴοιμι/ἰοίην	εἰδείην
2nd singular	εἶης	ἴοις	εἰδείης
3rd singular	εἶη	ἴοι	εἰδείη
1st plural	εἶμεν/εἴμεν	ἴοιμεν	εἰδείμεν/εἰδεῖμεν
2nd plural	εἶτε/εἴτε	ἴοιτε	εἰδείτε/εἰδεῖτε
3rd plural	εἶσαν/εἴεν	ἴοιεν	εἰδείσαν/εἰδεῖεν

7. Reduplicating -μι verbs (τίθημι, δίδωμι, ἵημι, ἴστημι and compounds) use strong forms in their present and 2nd aorist active singulars, and either strong or weak form in their present and 2nd aorist active plurals. -νυμι verbs use weak forms, with ο as the thematic vowel:

## τίθημι

	<i>Present Active</i>	<i>Present Middle/Passive</i>
1st singular	τιθεῖην	τιθείμην
2nd singular	τιθεῖς	τιθεῖο
3rd singular	τιθεῖη	τιθεῖτο
1st plural	τιθείμεν/τιθεῖμεν	τιθείμεθα
2nd plural	τιθεῖτε/τιθεῖτε	τιθεῖσθε
3rd plural	τιθείσαν/τιθεῖεν	τιθεῖντο

	<i>Aorist Active</i>	<i>Aorist Middle</i>
1st singular	θείην	θείμην
2nd singular	θείς	θείο
3rd singular	θείη	θείτο
1st plural	θείμεν/θειμεν	θείμεθα
2nd plural	θείτε/θειτε	θείσθε
3rd plural	θείσαν/θειεν	θείντο

## δίδωμι

	<i>Present Active</i>	<i>Present Middle/Passive</i>
1st singular	διδόην	διδοίμην
2nd singular	διδούς	διδοῖο
3rd singular	διδοῖη	διδοῖτο
1st plural	διδοίμεν/διδοῖμεν	διδοίμεθα
2nd plural	διδοῖτε/διδοῖτε	διδοῖσθε
3rd plural	διδοῖσαν/διδοῖεν	διδοῖντο

	<i>Aorist Active</i>	<i>Aorist Middle</i>
1st singular	δοίην	δοίμην
2nd singular	δοίης	δοῖο
3rd singular	δοίη	δοῖτο
1st plural	δοίμεν/δοῖμεν	δοίμεθα
2nd plural	δοίητε/δοῖτε	δοῖσθε
3rd plural	δοίησαν/δοῖεν	δοῖντο

### ἴημι

	<i>Present Active</i>	<i>Present Middle/Passive</i>
1st singular	εἶην	εἶμην
2nd singular	εἶης	εἶο
3rd singular	εἶη	εἶτο
1st plural	εἶμεν/εἶμεν	εἶμεθα
2nd plural	εἶητε/εἶτε	εἶσθε
3rd plural	εἶησαν/εἶεν	εἶντο

	<i>Aorist Active</i>	<i>Aorist Middle</i>
1st singular	εἶην	εἶμην
2nd singular	εἶης	εἶο
3rd singular	εἶη	εἶτο
1st plural	εἶμεν/εἶμεν	εἶμεθα
2nd plural	εἶητε/εἶτε	εἶσθε
3rd plural	εἶησαν/εἶεν	εἶντο

### ἴστημι

	<i>Present Active</i>	<i>Present Middle/Passive</i>	<i>2nd Aorist</i>
1st singular	ἵσταίνην	ἵσταίμην	σταίην
2nd singular	ἵσταίης	ἵσταῖο	σταίης
3rd singular	ἵσταίη	ἵσταῖτο	σταίη
1st plural	ἵσταίμεν/ἵσταίμεν	ἵσταίμεθα	σταίμεν/σταίμεν
2nd plural	ἵσταίητε/ἵσταίτε	ἵσταῖσθε	σταίητε/σταίτε
3rd plural	ἵσταίησαν/ἵσταίεν	ἵσταῖντο	σταίησαν/σταίεν

### δείκνυμι

	<i>Present Active</i>	<i>Present Middle/Passive</i>
1st singular	δεικνύοιμι	δεικνυοίμην
2nd singular	δεικνύοις	δεικνύοιο
3rd singular	δεικνύοι	δεικνύοιτο
1st plural	δεικνύοιμεν	δεικνυοίμεθα
2nd plural	δεικνύοιτε	δεικνύοισθε
3rd plural	δεικνύοιεν	δεικνύοιντο

8. The optative is used with the untranslatable particle ἄν to indicate possibility or probability. This is known as the **potential optative**. It is best translated into English with words like “may,” “might,” and “could.” The negative is οὐ:

παιδεύσαιμεν ἄν τοὺς παῖδας.

*We may teach the children.*

οὐ μάθοις ἄν τὰ καινά.

*You might not learn new things.*

φιλοῖτο ἄν ὑπὸ αὐτῆς.

*He may be loved by her.*

9. **Wishes** in Greek are expressed with either the optative or the indicative:

A. A wish that can be attained or fulfilled is expressed with the optative, often preceded by εἴθε or εἰ γάρ (if only, would that). The negative is μή.

παιδεύσαιμεν τοὺς παῖδας

*May we teach the children!*

εἰ γὰρ μὴ μάθοις τὰ καινά.

*Would that you not learn new things!*

εἴθε φιλοῖτο ὑπὸ αὐτῆς.

*If only he would be loved by her!*

B. A wish that can not be or was not attained or fulfilled is expressed with the imperfect indicative for present time and the aorist indicative for past time, always preceded by εἴθε or εἰ γάρ. The negative is μή.

εἴθε ἐπαιδεύομεν τοὺς παῖδας.

*If only we were teaching the children. (but we are not).*

εἰ γὰρ μὴ ἔμαθες τὰ καινά.

*Would that you had not learned new things. (but you did).*

εἴθε ἐφιλοῦτο ὑπὸ αὐτῆς.

*If only he were loved by her. (but he is not).*

10. **Unattainable wishes** can also be expressed in Greek using the 2nd aorist of ὀφείλω, ὄφελον, with the present infinitive for present unattainable wishes, and the aorist infinitive for past unattainable wishes. εἴθε or εἰ γάρ may be used, but are not required. The negative is μή.

ὀφείλομεν παιδεύειν τοὺς παῖδας.

*If only we were teaching the children (but we are not).*

εἰ γὰρ ὄφελες μὴ μαθεῖν τὰ καινά.

*Would that you had not learned new things (but you did).*

εἴθε ὄφελε φιλεῖσθαι ὑπὸ αὐτῆς.

*If only he were loved by her (but he is not).*

## Vocabulary

κινδυνεύω, κινδυνεύσω, ἐκινδύνευσα, κεκινδύνευκα, κεκινδύνεμαι, ἐκινδυνεύθην to be daring, take a risk, venture; to run the risk of (+ inf.)

λυπέω, λυπήσω, ἐλύπησα, λελύπηκα, λελύπημαι, ἐλυπήθην to grieve, vex, annoy  
μοιχεύω, μοιχεύσω, ἐμοίχευσα, μεμοίχευκα, μεμοίχευμαι, ἐμοιχεύθην to commit adultery, commit adultery with, debauch (*act. of the man, pass. of the woman*)

ὀφείλω, ὀφειλήσω, ὠφείλησα and ὠφελον, ὠφείληκα to owe, have to pay; to be obliged to do (+ inf.); 2nd aorist only + inf. used to express unattainable wish.

πίπτω, πεσοῦμαι, ἔπεσον, πέπτωκα to fall, fall down; fall upon, attack (+ ἐν + dat.)

σκέπτομαι, σκέψομαι, ἐσκεψάμην, ἔσκεμμαι to look about carefully, look at; examine, consider  
τιμωρέω, τιμωρήσω, ἐτιμώρησα, τετιμώρηκα, τετιμώρημαι, ἐτιμωρήθην to exact or seek revenge for (+ dat.); take vengeance on; (*in present system*) aid, help

φοιτάω, φοιτήσω, ἐφοίτησα to go back and forth, frequent; to go to visit (+ πάρα + acc.)

ὠθέω, ὠσω, ἔωσα, ἔωκα, - , ἔωσμαι, ἐώσθην thrust, push

δράχμη, -ης ἢ drachma (a coin that equaled one day's pay for a skilled worker)

κέρδος, -ους τό gain, profit

νομοθέτης, -ου ὁ lawgiver

πένης, -ητος ὁ day-laborer, a person who works for low pay

τρόπος, -ου ὁ way, manner, fashion; habit, custom

μεστός, -ή, ὄν full, full of (+ gen.)

οἰκεῖος, -α, -ον in or of the house, belonging to the household

πλούσιος, -α, ον wealthy, rich; rich in (+ gen.)

σωφρών, σωφρόν prudent, temperate, self-controlled

φανερός, -ά, -όν clear, visible, manifest, conspicuous

ἄν untranslatable particle used with potential optative and certain conditions to indicate possibility

ἄνα (*prep.*) (+ acc.) up to, up (opposite of κατά)

ἄνω (*adv.*) up, upwards

ἐπί (*prep.*) (+ gen.) on, upon; (+ dat.) on, by; (+ acc.) to, towards (of a goal)

πλὴν (*prep.*) (+ gen.) except; (*conj.*) except, except that, unless, only, but

τότε (*adv.*) then, at that time

### Greek to English Sentences

1. εἴθε ἔπεσες ἐν τοῖς Πέρσαις ἐλθοῦσι ἀνὰ τὴν ὁδὸν, ἀλλὰ ἤδη ἐπεφεύγεσαν εἰς τὴν αὐτῶν πόλιν
2. οἱ θεοὶ διδοῖεν ἄν πολλὰ καλὰ δῶρα τοῖς σωφροσιν, οὐ δὲ μὴ πέμψωσί οὐδένι καὶ πλουσίῳ τῶν χρημάτων καὶ μεστῷ αἰσχύνῃς μίαν δράχμην.
3. εἰ γὰρ ὠφέλομεν μὴ λυπῆσαι τὸν κρατίστον νομθέτην, τῆς γὰρ ὀργῆς μεστὸς διαφθείρειε ἄν ἡμᾶς τε καὶ πάντας φιλουμένους ὑπὸ ἡμῶν.
4. τίνι τρόπῳ σκέψωμαι τούσδε τοὺς λέοντας τὰ παιδιά φυλάττοντας ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ;
5. οἱ στρατιῶται μὴ ὠθοῖντο παρὰ τῶν ἑαυτῶν ἵππων πλὴν τοῦ νενικημένου τοῖς βαρβάροις.
6. ὀφείλεις μὴ μοιχεύειν τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πένητος, σὲ γὰρ ταχέως τιμωρήσει.
7. οἱ οἰκεῖοι οὐ φιλήσειαν ἄν τοὺς ἡγεμόνας, χρὴ δὲ τούτους ἐκείνοις ἀεὶ πείθεσθαι ἢ ἐπὶ τῇ ὁδῷ ἢ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ.
8. εἴθε κινδυνεύοιτε πολεμῆσαι τοῖς κακοῖς διεφθοροσιν τὰς οἰκίας καὶ ἡρημένοις τὰ δεῖπνα Πέρσαις.

### English to Greek Sentences

1. An unjust man might kill citizens and conquer cities, but he will never destroy the gods themselves.
2. If only you had not committed adultery with my husband, for now you have wronged both yourself and your children for countless years.
3. Would that the Athenians cease guarding the city and attack the citizens who betrayed them.
4. If only the truth were always visible, for, I suppose, all men might appear both wise and prudent.
5. You could thrust your spear into the eye of the tyrant, but will you then become happier?