

International Greek Language Day (instructions)

The 9th of February has officially been declared International Greek Language Day. The specific date coincides with the commemoration day of Greece's national poet Dionysios Solomos.

Starting last year, this day is expected to highlight the contribution of the Greek language to the development of the European and international culture. It's a unique language that has been constantly spoken for 40 consecutive centuries! It's the language of important philosophers, poets and writers such as Homer, Plato, Thucydides, Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Hippocrates, the Evangelists, the Church Fathers and many more. The Greek language shaped the history of human culture and it is also the fundamental language of literature and science. The aim of this day is to promote our language especially through our schools.

Taking all this into consideration, the Education Office of the Greek Embassy in London is calling all the schools, where the Greek language is taught, the school committees, the Parents' Associations and the seconded teachers, who teach either at schools or universities to organize educational tasks in order to keep the Greek language alive and contribute to its dissemination.

Let us mention some examples of such tasks:

- **To organize an open event and discussion in order to stress the utmost importance of the Greek culture in connection with the works of Dionysios Solomos.** For example, a lecture on the evolution of the Greek language and the dissemination of the Greek culture, or the interaction of the Greek language with the human sciences and Arts, or the promotion of the Greek scientific, cultural and physical heritage, or presentations about our country's History, Geography, Mythology, Archaeology, Science, Philosophy, Greek Poetry and Prose, or about the works of Dionysios Solomos.
- **To design and implement, in the classroom, educational exercises which are closely related to the Curriculum and the school books.** For example, multimodal texts, theatrical plays, Greek songs, poems and prose by writers and poets such as Palamas, Kazantzakis, Kavafis, Seferis, Elytis, etc. The aim is to make students actively participate in the production of written or oral speech through debates, oral presentations, free writing, vocabulary games, experiential learning, role playing, literature clubs, reading competitions, etc.
- **Offer chances for communication through digital technology.** For example, communication with a Greek writer through Skype, communication with a linguist or a scientist, use of YouTube in the classroom, exchange of experiences and promotion of the distinctive characteristics of the Greek Diaspora, use of the material from the Centre of the Greek Language. We could also ask our students to describe their school talking with another classroom somewhere in the world, to share thoughts and feelings or to talk about customs and legends of our culture. Finally, depending on the age of our students we could also make use of Instagram, Snapchat, FaceTime, WhatsApp, etc.
- **Project assignments either individually or in groups** which will meet the needs of both the Greek students living abroad and of those who would like to learn about our language and culture. For example, cross-curricular tasks, cross-cultural approaches, comparative analysis of the customs of Greece and the host country, projects focusing on the interrelation between Greece and Cyprus, partnerships between schools, reading and presentation of literature books, creative writing, book exhibitions, inviting experts in the classroom or grandparents, etc.

For the International Greek Language Day, the teachers are free to choose and implement the tasks that are more suitable for their classroom. They can also think and put in action something innovative or take any other initiative focusing on the dissemination of the Greek language and culture.

To conclude, the idea behind this day is to cherish the strength and beauty of our language and to foster its dissemination. After all, by supporting the Greek language, we expand its influence and we reinforce our country.