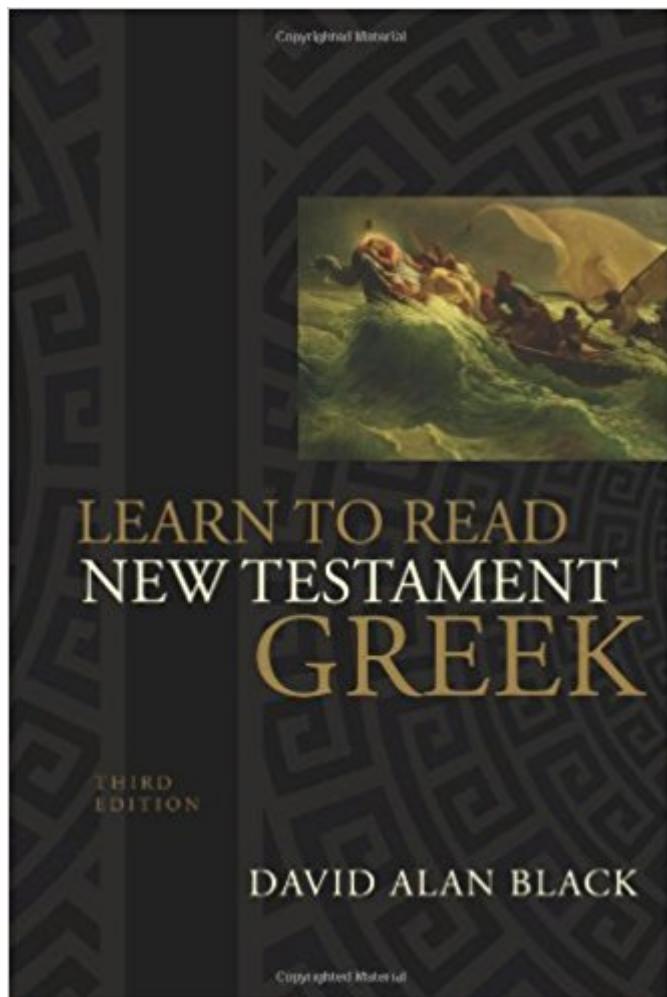


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Learn To Read New Testament Greek



Synopsis

An academic staple updated for the first time in fifteen years, David Alan Black's user-friendly introduction to New Testament Greek keeps discussion of grammar as non-technical as possible. The simplified explanations, basic vocabularies, and abundant exercises are designed to prepare the student for subsequent practical courses in exegesis, while the linguistic emphasis lays the groundwork for later courses in grammar. Revisions to this third edition include updated discussions and scholarship, further back matter vocabulary references, and additional appendices."A streamlined introductory grammar that will prove popular in the classroom."•Murray J. Harris, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School"Clear charts, clear examples, clear discussion•what more could one want from a beginning grammar!"•Darrell L. Bock, Dallas Theological Seminary"•combines the strengths of a fairly traditional sequence of topics, in generally manageable chunks with clear explanations fully abreast of modern linguistics."•Craig L. Blomberg, Denver Seminary"Pedagogically conceived, linguistically informed, hermeneutically sensitive, biblically focused•unique among beginning grammars. It sets a new standard."•Robert Yarbrough, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, Greek --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

David Alan Black is professor of New Testament and Greek at Southeastern Baptist Theological

Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. An avid horseman, he and his wife live on a 123-acre working farm in southern Virginia and are self-supporting missionaries to Mecklenburg County, Virginia, and Ethiopia.

On the strength of reviews, I bought Black's Learn to Read New Testament Greek and Mounce's Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar and tried to read them together. But I quickly gave up on that as both books follow a very different course and studying them together is just not possible. Because Mounce's book has a separate workbook, which I did not buy, I decided to start with Black as it comes with exercises. This review compares both books and is written primarily for people studying Greek on their own. These are the advantages Black has over Mounce: 1) It's much cheaper. Not only is the book much cheaper than Mounce's but when you add in Mounce's workbook, the difference in price is very significant. Please note that there are no exercises at all in Mounce apart from the workbook. 2) Black's book is very nicely sized and lightweight. During the months I studied it, I carried it around with me everywhere and every time I had to wait for something, like in line at the supermarket cashier or while waiting for my wife as she performed her perennial shopping rites, out came the book. This would not have been possible with Mounce. The book is just too unwieldy; in fact, the postal service even refused to deliver the book from and I had to go pick it up! Reason given: "Large package". 3) The most important advantage Black has over Mounce is that his book is perfectly suited to the beginner. I cannot imagine how a book on Greek grammar can be simplified further without sacrificing vital content. I think Mounce is just way too difficult for the beginner. This is especially true in the second half of the book, on verbs. Verbs are the most difficult thing to learn in basic Greek and I'm afraid many beginners will drown if they try to take on Mounce. 4) Closely related to 3) is Black's organizational genius. His book is not just easy to study but it's made easier by the way he organizes his material. I cannot understand it but Mounce is very much inclined to tell you about something and then ask you to wait for further explanation later. Look at the way he deals with the middle voice. He tells you the form of the middle/passive voice and then tells you to wait for later chapters where he will explain what the middle voice is! If I had used Mounce as my first book, I would have torn my hair out or more likely, given up on Greek altogether. The same goes for vocabulary lists. Black's vocabulary follows closely the chapter content. For example, if he has just taught you second declension nouns, he will then give you a list of second declension nouns to memorize, arranged nicely in their sub-categories. Mounce's vocabulary lists have no order at all. You may think this is a small thing to bring up but my memory seems to associate words I learn together and learning words from the same type really helps my recall. 5) Again, related to 3), is the

way Black writes. If you want to know what concise means, read his book. He does not waste a single word. This makes his book ideal for reviewing your lessons. In comparison, Mounce's book feels overwritten and bloated. There's quite a bit of repetition. He has a sectional overview, a chapter overview, a mid-lesson review and a final review! This, especially when added to the lack of organization, makes finding a piece of information very hard.⁶⁾ I really don't like the cartoon professor in Mounce. I just don't see the point of having it. I know he's trying to add some light-hearted humor but it's hard enough trying to memorize hundreds of Greek words without being taught modern Greek words as well. Some of you may adore the professor though.⁷⁾ The most difficult thing in basic Greek grammar is the participle. Black's chapter on participles is a model of concise clarity. He gives many examples of the use of participles in simple sentences he creates himself that allow the student to try translating them. Mounce's examples come from the New Testament and are much harder to work on. These are the advantages Mounce has over Black:
1) There's a great deal more Greek in Mounce than in Black, a lot more details.
2) Mounce is very concerned with his readers. He makes a lot of effort to encourage his students. His warmth is very touching.
3) Even though I think Black's vocabulary lists make memory work easier, Mounce's vocabulary has some weighty, secret weapons. For one thing, Mounce teaches you all the words that occur 50 times or more in the New Testament. Black cares less about the frequently recurring words. Because I use the Reader's Edition of the UBS Greek New Testament which gives, at the bottom of the page, definitions of words that occur less than 30 times in the New Testament, I am sometimes surprised to find that I know words that are explained. Not that knowing less frequently occurring words is a disadvantage of course but it's better for beginners to learn the high-frequency words first and Mounce concentrates on those.
Another thing about Mounce's vocabulary that I like is the care he lavishes in explaining details pertaining to the words he asks you to memorize. Some of this information is valuable.
4) Even though Black's conciseness is much appreciated, at times he can be a bit too concise. For example, after spending months almost killing myself learning the different paradigms for the various tenses of verbs, I was totally dismayed when I reached the last chapter and found a new type of verbs, the -mi verbs, with a whole new set of paradigms to memorize. In this last chapter, Black just pretty much gives the various paradigms in table form and then asks you to memorize some of them. Mounce, as usual gives more details, details which are much needed to encourage the distressed student. He says (on Page 319), "There is good news and bad news about these verbs. The bad news is that their forms change so drastically that they can become almost unrecognizable. The good news is that there are very few of them. The bad news is that these few mi verbs are common. The good news is that most of the changes occur only

in the present tense."A few paragraphs later he adds, "But even those people who use Greek regularly have trouble in reproducing the mi verb paradigms from rote memory." This was sufficient to lift my spirits and made me continue studying!Throughout his book, Black came across as a master-teacher making the path as easy as possible for his students to travel. Mounce is more of the scholar with a passion that he wishes to share with his students. My advice to you, if, like me, you do not enjoy the benefits of the classroom, is to study Black thoroughly, master it and then let Mounce add to your knowledge.

Well done for a beginner. Get the workbook that goes with it and that helps reinforce the textbook content.

The book itself is great. The problem is the Kindle version. When a Greek word is or phrase is written, it is in a small and faint type size that can't be changed. Even setting the type size to its largest setting has no effect on these Greek words and phrases. Trying to determine accents and breathing marks is impossible. I don't know what it looks like in the print version, but it renders the Kindle version useless to a very large degree.

My version, purchased for \$2.99 on special and listed under ASIN: B003WEA4WA allows you to click on the images to enlarge them full screen, although as noted, pinching to enlarge the text does not work on the graphics. This Kindle book is the Expanded edition to the Third edition. Once the images are full screen they can then be zoomed in and moved around on my Samsung Note 4, however that is NOT the case with my Kindle Paperwhite 3.0 although due to the high res of the Kindle it is still readable to me even without the zoom.Your mileage may vary depending on device.

Font issue. The regular instructional text will increase in size. But, the Greek charts and grammar will not. The Greek text I found to be barely readable in a lightish grey small font size. Too bad. Hopefully the editors will adjust the font for KINDLE users. In the meantime, I had to refund my purchase.

This is a review of the Kindle version and not of the excellent text by David Alan Black. As much as I love the kindle, this eBook simply doesn't work well in that format. The Greek font is too small to read and fuzzy at that. The Greek within the paragraphs was unable to be enlarged; however, the text around the Greek was crisp with no issues. This is a Kindle porting problem and I immediately

asked for a refund upon downloading and reviewing. This will teach me to sample the eBooks from now on. Do not buy the Kindle version.

Extremely intuitive introductory Greek grammar. Black's approach prepared me for Greek 2. A couple of downsides: (1) contrary to Mounce's grammar, the early chapters' practice exercises are not from the NT, and (2) Black doesn't get into much discussion of morphology, which, for some, can be a helpful aid in memorizing vocabulary. However, these two negatives don't detract from the value of this book. I would highly recommend it.

The book is pithy and concise/ With its stress on the importance of the phoneme, however, it would be nice to include a CD in respect to the pronunciation both with the letters and the reading lessons. I give the book itself an extra half star to four and a half, and a solid five with a CD as mentioned. But as with all primers, the approach is suitable to me for independent study but may not appeal to others. It gives me what is required without having to purchase another book or go to some online site for assistance which seems to me a mercenary approach.

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