A quick guide to the Perseus Digital Library: Investigating words with the Word Study Tool

This document provides a quick guide on how to use the Word Study Tool to investigate dictionary entries and find where words are used in works in the collections of the Perseus Digital Library, followed by a step-by-step example that you can work through for practice.

Quick guide

Each Greek word in the texts is hyperlinked to the Word Study Tool, which provides potential definitions and elaboration information about the morphology of the specific form of that word.

To access the information, click the word, and the Word Study Tool opens in a new tab. This provides:

- potential lemmas (lemma = dictionary form, or base form).
- possible morphology of that form.
- a simple definition.
- links to different dictionaries with full lexicon entries.
- word frequency statistics with links to search results that show where else the word is used within the same text, and 'more statistics' to find it in other works.

Step-by-step example

This example demonstrates how to investigate words using the functions in the Word Study Tool.

If you do not already have the first page of the Iliad displayed, follow this link to start: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0133%3Abook%3D1%3Acard%3D1

Finding the basic information for a word in the Word Study Tool

Click on the second word, ἄειδε.

The Greek Word Study Tool opens in a new tab.

In the Word Information box, it shows the dictionary form (lemma) at the top, in this case ἄειδο, and the possible forms below (morphology section).
Notice the following information:

- In this case, there are two possible forms of the verb that are spelt the same way in Greek. The most likely form is highlighted in pink.
- The basic morphology information such as the part of speech, or if it is singular or plural, which might help in deciphering a passage. In this example it is a verb, second person ("you"), singular, present imperative (command), active, which would mean "Sing!"
- Simple definitions are collected by an automated process, and are sometimes unclear (as in this example). You can look at a dictionary entry to give a more exact definition.
- Below the lemma there are links to each dictionary (lexicon) entry:
  - LSJ (Liddell, Scott, and Jones), which is the most detailed
  - Middle Liddell, which is useful if you want a general definition or range of meanings
  - Slater which is focused on terms used in Pindar’s works
  - Autenrieth which is focused on terms used in the Homeric works.

**Showing and reading a lexicon entry**

Select the LSJ link.

The lexicon entry for ἀείδω is displayed.
There is a lot of information here:

- The initial portion provides various forms of the word as attested in the literature, including abbreviations of the authors and works.
- The base meaning is given after the em dash: ——

  (ἄειδος, cf. ὕδης, ὕθεια.) [α': but α_ metri gr. Od. 17.519, h.Hom.12.1, 27.1, Il.Parav..1, Thgn.4, Theoc.7.41, etc.]: — sing, **I.1.604**, etc.: hence of all kinds of vocal sounds, crow as cocks, **Pl.Smp.223c**: hoot as owls, **Arat.1000**; croak as frogs, **Arist. M8.35b3**, **Thphr.Sgn.3.5**, etc.; of tettigies χαλίδις ὁς αἰσθήνεις **Stes. ap.Arist.Rh.1412a23**: of other sounds, **Swang**, of the bow-string, Od.21.411; whistle, of the wind through a tree, **Mosch.Fr.1.8**: ring, of a stone when struck, Thgn.2.26: — prov., ποίησις ἐλευθερίας to crow too soon, **Pl.Th.1.164c**: Constr.—: a_ tivι sing to one, Od.22.246; also, vie with one in singing, Thgn.8.6.; a_ πρὸς αὐλοῦν ἤ λύραν sing to...; **Arist.Pr. 91.8a23:** οὐ aυλοῦς **Ph.2.41c**: — aίσθασι... χαλίδας Δημιουργός, poet. for ιππῶν, **Epigr.Gn.237.7** (Smyrna).

II. **[select]** trans.,

1. **[select]** c. acc. rei, **sing of, chant**, "μὴ μὴν ἄειδε" **I.1.1**: "παύνησα" **1.473**: κλέα ἄνθρωπον, νοτιότατα, **9.189**, Od.1.326: "τὸν Βασιλέα τοῦ ἐμοῦ" **S.Fr.966**: c. gen. sc. μελοκ.: sing an air of... "φοβοῦντος" **Ar.V.269**, cf. 1225; abs., a_ ἀμφι τίνα to sing in one's praise, Od.8.266; "ἀμφί τίνα" **Terp.2**, cf. **E.Tr.513**: "ἐἰς τίνα" **Ar.Lys.1243**: later, simply = καλάντι, **Ael.NA3.28**: — Pass., of songs, to be sung, **Hdt.4.35**: "παρὰ λαεχθέντα καὶ ἄσθεντα" **Pl.Ly.205e**: δομα καλός ἀσθένις, opp. λόγος καλός ὑθεῖς, **X.Cyr.3.3.55**: ἀδέκτα λόγους, the story runs, **Ph.1.189**.

2. **[select]** of persons, places, etc., **sing, praise, celebrate, B.6.6**, etc.: — Pass., a_ ἀδέκτας ὄρεσσας, is celebrated as the nurse of heroes, **Pl.B.8.25**, cf. 5.24.

3. **[select]** Pass., to be filled with song, "ἀίσθασί πῶς τίμην... θαλάσσας" **Pl.Q.10(11).76**.

First level (usually capital letters) are different/distinct uses.

Second level (usually roman numerals) are differences in meaning.

Third level (arabic numerals, maybe lower case letters) are specific shades of meaning and particular instances of use in context.
Finding where else the word is used

1. In the main Word Information box, look at the Word Frequency Statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ἀείδω</td>
<td>24 times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example, the statistics are for *Iliad* because you came to the entry from *Iliad*. Notice that the verb ἀείδω occurs in all its forms between 7 and 24 times in this work.

2. Click the number 24 under Max.
   A new tab opens with the Search Results for the word. The first instance of the word is displayed, highlighted, with the surrounding text.

   Notice that in the grey band, More(11) indicates that the word occurs in 11 sections within *Iliad*.
3. Click the **More (11)** link to expand the list.

![Greek text]

Click on the 'book/card' heading to be taken to that section of text.

In this example, click **book 9, card 162**. That section of the text is displayed. Scroll down and notice that two forms of the word are highlighted: ἄειδε in line 189, and ἄείδων in line 191:

4. Close the Search Results tab to return to the Word Study Tool tab.
Finding the word in other works
In the Word Study Tool tab:
To display the frequency across all the works in the Perseus Digital Library, click the ‘more statistics’ link.
A list is displayed showing where else the word occurs.

In the case of ἀείδω in all its forms, there is a long list:

You can click on any of the titles to go directly to the work, or on the statistic in the Max column to display the list of lines in which the word appears in that work.