



**“CLEAN ENVIRONMENT – CLEAN SCHOOL CLIMATE WITH CREATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES IN SCHOOL EDUCATION”
2023-1-NO01-KA 220-000159229**

Sustainability in Literature Curriculum in Greek Senior High School

Age range: 15-18 years (1st Grade and 3rd Grade of Senior High School)

Introduction:

Literature is related to the human experience and broadens our horizons and critical ability in order to lead us to the understanding of ourselves and the world in which we live. For the Greek reality, the nature, the life in the countryside as well as the life in the city, the Greek landscape in general, have an important place in literary production. Sometimes as a symbol and sometimes as a setting for action, sometimes as a metaphor for an emotional state and sometimes as a bearer of supreme values, nature has infinite reflections in Modern Greek literature. And of course it becomes an occasion to inspire musical composers or to combine it with painting, theater or cinema.

Through an expanded variety of texts concerning nature and man's place in it, the role of Literature emerges as strategic, as it develops a repertoire of symbolic forms, modes and conventions that facilitate the analytical approach of aspects of the world that pre-existed and the one that surrounds the students, reinforcing their critical attitude towards the way in which literature presents meanings and values.

Why It Is Important:

1. The development of students' critical and creative relationship with the environment

The basic objective of teaching literature in Greek high school is the critical education in modern culture. The development of students' critical and at the same time creative relationship with the modern natural, social and cultural environment, as well as the symbolic strengthening of the subjectivity of all students turns them into suspicious and active citizens and producers of culture. This means that the starting point is the problems and characteristics of the modern, complicated and hard to understand world. One of these problems, the ecological disaster, requires immediate awareness and vigilance, the adoption of values and practices and the undertaking of initiatives and actions.

2. Environmental awareness

The Literature course comes to speak obliquely about what we see or live, to illuminate the ecological concern of the planet and to set on alarm bells, which we often do not hear. The multiday fires that do not blow out, stormy winds, floods that bury hundreds of acres in mud, rising temperatures, water and air pollution, chemicals in food and other similar phenomena should awake us to stop our frantic march towards self-destruction.

3. Connecting reading with personal experiences and values.

The students pose critical for them questions/topics of discussion, about issues addressed by the texts. These questions function as axes or centers of interactions and conversations between students, as free personalities both in their intellectual and emotional dimensions.

Course: Modern Greek Language and Literature - First Grade (age 15-16)

Objective: The understanding, the interpretation and the critical approach of literary texts so that the students investigate how perceptions, attitudes, ideas, and prejudices about the nature and the environment are represented.

Key Topics:

- Focusing on the common man, the issue of a life reconciled with nature, the self-sufficiency of the natural space, the austerity and the man's search for the substance of life behind the appearance.
- The effect of the nature on the human soul in earlier forms of life, in contrast to the modern way of life and social organization. The literature of the past as a complex transcendence of reality can offer, among other things, an insight into the perceptions of nature in other times. How did people understand their social existence in relation to natural resources? Which was their landscape perception?
- The contact with nature as a way out for personal quality of life and social redefinition. The reassessment of our behavior towards nature and the change of lifestyle.

Activities:

- Interpretation and critical approach to the texts with the aim of investigation of the way in which ideas, perceptions, prejudices, about man, society and the world.
- Approach to the historical dimension of the human condition, that is, the way in which the historical moment forms consciousnesses, values and identities and defines the relationship of individuals with their environment and their individual course.
- Speech production in the classroom
- Presentation of individual and/or group work.
- encouraging students to propose texts with similar content for discussion and presentation in class
- utilization of their interpretive attempts in order to substantiate their positions
- showing films based on literary works of environmental interest
- students listen to poetry set to music
- Classroom discussions on the importance of environmental protection

Typology of the activities: Lessons, Guided discussions, practical labs, Creative labs, movie screening, listening to music

Examples:

1. Excerpt from the opus of Dionisios Solomos “Free Besieged”

The “Free Besieged” is among the top works of Dionisios Solomos and of Modern Greek poetry in general. Its subject is the heroic struggle of the citizens of Messolonghi, during the second siege of the city by the Ottomans (1825-1826), until the desperate exit. Starting from the specific historical event, the poet goes back to man's struggle for morality and his inner freedom. In the poem the height of man's soul and at the same time the natural feelings (love, maternal love, excitement of glory, philanthropy, and love for the good things of nature) in all their intensity, while they are covered by shadow of death. In the heavenly peace, where the poet exalts the Besieged, so that “all their works, words, and reflections may be likened to the fairest and sweetest creation of nature”

The temptation (excerpt no.6 from Diagram C)

*Love danced with blond April,
And nature found its good and sweet time,
And into the shadow that flared up and closed dews and smells
Inaudible and passed out bird song.
Waters pure and sweet, waters graceful,
They pour into the perfumed abyss,
And they take her calf, and leave their dew,
And everything in the sun showing the riches of their source,
They run here, they run there, and they act like nightingales.
Life springs on earth, in the sky, in waves.
But in the lake the water, still and white,
Still wherever you see, and so white to the bottom,
The butterfly played with a small unknown shadow,
Which has perfumed her sleep in the wild lily.
Moonstruck, my friend, tell me what do you see tonight
Night full of miracles, night full of magic!
Without the land, the sky and sea to blow,
Not as much as the bee does near the flower,
Around something still that whitens in the lake,
Alone the full moon stirred,
And a beautiful girl comes out dressed in its light*

Tasks

- In the first two verses the main themes are Love and Spring. With what imagery are these themes developed in the following verses of the excerpt?
- One of the main features of the first section is movement; how is it expressed and what is its significance? What are the main features of the second section?
- Justify the title of the passage, after taking into account the verse no.14 *"The soul trembles and sweetly misses itself"* (Diagram B, no.2).
- The poet in his *Reflections* (no. 5) articulates his desire to form a scale of forces that "besiege" the people of Messolonghi and which they manage to overcome. Looking again at Diagrams B and C: a) summarize these powers, b) say which of them are natural (pertaining to the natural man) and which moral (pertaining to the moral part of man).

2. "Triseugeni"

(Excerpt from the theatrical play "Triseugeni", written and published in 1903 by Kostis Palamas)

The heroine, Triseugeni, is a beautiful young woman who does not want to submit to anyone. However, she falls in love with the son of her father's enemy, the ship-owner and captain Petros Floris. In the excerpt they discuss their upcoming wedding.

[...] I want to run by your side, far from every people, towards all the seas of the world. From my childhood, something inexplicable was rumbling inside me. Wife of Petros Floris and fairy of the bay. Didn't walls always make me sad? Wasn't the house suffocating me? Didn't the neighborhood make me sick? Didn't I always find an occasion to climb up in the window, to be in the street, to play on the shore, to bring round in the boats, to bleach the clothes in the river, to reap in the plain, to spread in the threshing-floor, to plant in the orchard, to stay up late under the stars, to create festivals, to knit dances, to enjoy the joys of the sun, to celebrate the celebrations of the air? And didn't I live this whole life with the longing in me and with the expectation, sleeplessly, of a deeper and truer, freer and more worthy life? [...]

Tasks

- How does the natural environment affect the heroine's soul?
- How does nature fit in with the psyche of the heroine?

- What messages about the influence of nature on the human soul does the poet convey?

Resources

In addition to the textbooks, the following resources are used:

- Digital repositories approved or proposed by the Ministry of Education and the Institute for Education Policy
- The educational scripts for Literature from the Proteas web portal. <http://proteas.greek-language.gr/scenarios.html>
- Greek Language Center: Index of the digital resources and tools for the language courses for high school. http://www.iep.edu.gr/images/IEP/EPISTIMONIKI_YPIRESIA/Epist_Monades/B_Kyklos/Humanities/2017/evretirio_2017_final.pdf
- “Fotodentro” - National aggregator of educational content <http://photodentro.edu.gr/aggregator/>
- WWF: “Refractions of nature in modern Greek literature” <https://www.contentarchive.wwf.gr/images/pdfs/pe/Fysi&Anthropos3.pdf>
- Cantus firmus, Journal of Art and Speech: “Ecology in Literature” https://cantus.blogspot.com/2017/12/blog-post_41.html

Assessment:

- Class Participation: Evaluation of students' engagement in classroom discussions about the influence of the environment on human life.
- Understanding the content of the texts and the values they project as guides for modern life.
- Reflection activities and development of metacognitive skills: The students are asked to describe the way in which they worked, the strategies with which they approached the texts or the skills they used to reach a better result.

Conclusion:

The literature of the past as a complex transcendence of reality can, among other things, offer an insight into the perceptions of nature in other times. It offers an insight for the ways that people used to understand their social existence in relation to the natural resources and for the landscape perception, the urban space and the use of technology. Through a combination of activities, students will begin to understand the effect of the natural environment on the human mind and soul, so that they act to protect it.

Course: Modern Greek Language and Literature – Module “Ecology” - Third Grade (age 17-18)

Objective: The interpretation of the literary text related to ecology so that the students to be able to formulate an interpretive comment. The interpretive commentary constitutes personal work, which the students undertake in order to reconstruct elements from previous teaching or reading.

Key Topics:

- The role that human behavior plays in the destruction of the environment.
- The contact with nature as a way out for personal quality of life and social redefinition. The reassessment of our behavior towards nature and the change of lifestyle.

Activities:

- Interpretation and critical approach to the texts with the aim of investigation of the way in which ideas, perceptions, prejudices, about man, society and the world.
- Creation of an interpretive commentary.
- Presentation of individual and/or group work.
- Utilization of their interpretive attempts in order to substantiate their positions.
- Classroom discussions on the importance of environmental protection.

Typology of the activities: Lessons, Guided discussions, practical labs, Creative labs

Examples:

1. Nikiforos Vrettakos "Speech-Protest at a conference on environmental pollution"

(The poetry of Nikiforos Vrettakos is characterized by an optimistic mood and a deep love for nature, life and man)

Before the atmosphere was polluted, gentlemen, it should have
something else gets infected. How and from which saprophytes
or **microorganisms** may the rotting of the earth began, no one
maybe he can't say it precisely. History is a
very difficult thing. Did it begin when
the Europeans were fighting in China for opium
and for Christ? Or the time when black people were loaded
like prunes, they were unloaded
on the beaches in heaps and they were selling them
for ten cents each? Before? Then? Yesterday,
when that horrible businessman
of Hades, with the blast furnaces crematoria, claimed
that God created him and that he planned
his destiny on earth, while it is indisputable
that God never get his hands on shit?
What promise shall we make now, gentlemen, to the fish?
We could certainly do it today, if in time
infected organisms were isolated,
if unclean hands were cut off,
if it was emptied the Statue of Liberty in time from decay
blood it has inside. Anyway, because
we must not lose hope, we must
do something. Somewhere to escape.
Let's act anyway. Let's go to Delphi!

Tasks

- What problems does the poet complain about?
- Locate two symbol words and write what they symbolize.
- Do you agree or disagree with the poet's views? Document your views.

2. Prophecy

The poem belongs to the collection of Argyris Chionis "The voice of silence", Poems 1966-2000,

"There will be time
that the sea will dry up
and the ships will become
caravans and it will become our soul
desert
and the seagulls
pet dreams
Time will come
where death
will no longer be the bottom
but the sun
and nostalgia
not the land
but the water.
Then also the dream

it will change color;
it won't be blue anymore
but yellow.”

Task:

What do you think the content of the “Prophecy” is? Substantiate your answer with three textual indicators. Considering that the poem is included in a collection of 1966 do you think that the “Prophecy” is being verified in the current era?

Resources

In addition to the textbooks, the following resources are used:

- Digital repositories approved or proposed by the Ministry of Education and the Institute for Education Policy
- The educational scripts for Literature from the Proteas web portal. <http://proteas.greek-language.gr/scenarios.html>
- Greek Language Center: Index of the digital resources and tools for the language courses for high school. http://www.iep.edu.gr/images/IEP/EPISTIMONIKI_YPIRESIA/Epist_Monades/B_Kyklos/Humanities/2017/evretirio_2017_final.pdf
- “Fotodentro” - National aggregator of educational content <http://photodentro.edu.gr/aggregator/>
- Study of New Hellenism. New Greek Literature and Culture www.snhell.gr

Assessment:

- Class Participation: Evaluation of students' engagement in classroom discussions about the influence of the environment on human life.
- Understanding the content of the texts and the values they project as guides for modern life.
- The clarity of the formulation of the main theme, which is related to the degree of understanding of the ideas and emotional climate of the text.
- The reading students' response to the topic, with sufficient documentation and support of the answer with references in the text.

Conclusion:

Can Literature concern the students so that they change their life attitude and take initiative to act in order to reverse the situation? Can Literature provide practical solutions or even theoretical conceptions that will help change mindsets? Probably not. But the art in general does not give answers, but asks questions, demonstrates problems and raises concerns. Of course, this is not enough. It goes a little further when it develops an ethics of ecology, which concerns our individual choices, as they start from personal awakening and awareness and end up changing our daily lives. And at the same time, when developing a policy of environmental action, with which humanity, from the local municipality to the global community, will take specific measures and undertake specific commitments.