Present participles worksheet
[this worksheet accompanies the video on the present active participle by Maria-Elpiniki Oikonomou]

What is a participle?
A participle is an adjective formed from a verb. As it comes from a verb it has tense and voice, and can have a direct or indirect object or complement; but it behaves like an adjective, and so qualifies a noun, meaning that it has case, gender and number:

Smiling, the girl opens the door.

The participle, 'smiling':

- comes from a verb ('to smile')
- describes the girl
- shows us something that is happening at the same time as the action in the main verb. Its form remains the same irrespective of the tense of the main verb:

Smiling, the girl opened the door.

The same situation occurs in Greek.

Forms of the Greek present participle

The masculine and neuter forms follow the pattern of the third declension. The feminine forms follow the pattern of the first declension:

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<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
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<td>ἔχουσαι(ν)</td>
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Note that the -vt- of the stem drops out in front of -σι(ν) in the masculine and neuter dative plural. This form is the same as that of a 3rd person plural present tense verb; context will make it clear whether the word you are looking at is a 3rd person plural verb or a participle.
Present participle of the verb 'to be'  

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<td>Dat. ὄντι</td>
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Using the present participle

The present participle can convey a range of meanings in Greek:

λέγουσα, ἡ κόρη ἔπεσεν.

Speaking, the girl fell.
While speaking, the girl fell.
As / when she was speaking, the girl fell.
Because she was speaking, the girl fell.

(πεσ- = second aorist stem of πίπτω, I fall).

τούτο λέγουσα, ἡ κόρη ἔπεσεν.

Saying this, the girl fell.
While saying this, the girl fell.

Participles can tell us information about the subject of the verb when no noun is used and we infer the person from the ending:

τὴν οἰκίαν λείπων χρήματα ἔπεσεν.

Leaving the house, he found money.

(εὑρ- = second aorist stem of εὑρίσκω, I find).

The masculine nominative participle tells us that the otherwise unspecified subject of the verb is a man.

Sometimes the participle is best translated as a separate clause describing the noun it agrees with:
τοὺς στρατηγοὺς ἐθαύμασα ἀνδρείους ὄντας.

I admired the generals, who were brave.
(literally, "I admired the generals, being brave."

**Working with participles in Greek sentences**

- Find the participle, and identify its case, gender and number
- Make sure you are clear which noun it agrees with
- Try the literal translation of "–ing" first, then see whether it is better translated as
  - A temporal clause – while/when/since/as
  - A causal clause – because/since/as
  - A relative clause – who, which, that

**The participle with the definite article**

The participle is also used with the definite article

ὁ παῖς ὁ τὸν ἱππόν διώκων ἐκεῖ μένει.

The child – the one chasing the horse – is staying there.
The child **who is chasing** the horse is staying there.

πιστεύομεν τοῖς νεανίας τοῖς τιμάς ἔχουσιν.

We trust the young men **who have** honours.

The participle can also be used with an article but without a noun:

οἱ τοὺς λίθους βάλλοντες φεύγουσιν.

**The ones throwing** stones are fleeing.

ἡ τὴν ἑπιστολὴν πέμπουσα νόσον ἔχει.

**The one sending** the letter has a disease.

Cf. ὁ ἄρχων = the one ruling = the ruler.

**Practice sentences**

1. τὰ ζώα ἐξάγοντες, οἱ νεανίαι τὸν ποιητὴν εἶδον.
   (vocabulary – ζῶον, τό: animal; ἐξάγω: I lead out; ποιητής, ὁ: poet; ἑ- = second aorist stem of ὑπάρχω, I see)
2. τὸν σίτον ἐσθίοντες, οἱ παιδεῖς τὸν τοῦ γέροντος μύθον ἠκουν.
   (vocabulary – σίτος, ὁ: food; γέρων, γέροντος, ὁ: old man; μῦθος, ὁ: story)

3. τὴν ὅδον οὐχ εὐρίσκοντες, ἐν λιμένι ἐμένομεν.
   (vocabulary – λιμήν, λιμένος, ὁ: harbour)

4. ὁ γύρας ὁ τάς ὄρνιθας ἐσθίων μέγας τε καὶ χαλεπός ἑστιν.
   (vocabulary – ὄρνις, ὄρνιθος, ἡ: bird; χαλεπός, -ή, -όν: cruel)

5. οἱ τὸν πόλεμον ἐθέλοντες μωροί εἰσιν.
   (vocabulary – μωρός, -ά, -όν: stupid)

Practice sentences – extension

6. ἐδιώξατε τοὺς κριτὰς τοὺς ἄδικως κρίνοντας.
   (vocabulary – ἄδικως: unjustly; κρίνω: I judge)

7. οἱ οὐ φεύγοντες πολλά ἐν τῇ ἄγορᾳ λέγουσιν.
   (vocabulary – πολλά: many things)

8. οἱ τοῖς κριταῖς πιστεύοντες οὐδέποτε πάσχοσιν.
   (vocabulary – οὐδέποτε: never; πάσχω: suffer)

9. θαυμάζομεν τοὺς νεανίας δώρα τοῖς θεοῖς φέροντας.

10. οἱ ναῦται τὰ πλοῖα φυλάσσοντες τοὺς πολέμίους φεύγειν κωλύουσιν.
    (vocabulary – πολέμιος, -α, -ων: hostile; can be used as a noun to mean "the enemy"); φεύγειν: to flee (infinitive); κωλύω: prevent)
Practice sentences – answers (see video for full explanation)

1. Leading out the animals, the young men saw the poet.
2. Eating their food, the children were listening to the story of the old man.
3. Not finding the way, we were staying in the harbour.
4. The giant who eats birds is both big and cruel.
5. Those wishing for war are stupid.
6. You chased the judges who were judging unjustly.
7. Those who are not being prosecuted / accused say many things in the agora.
8. Those who trust the judges never suffer.
9. We admire the young men who bring gifts to the gods.
10. The sailors guarding the ships are preventing the enemies from fleeing.