

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Building **VOCABULARY**



Building  
**VOCABULARY**  
Foundations

Guided  
Practice  
Book

Building  
**VOCABULARY**  
from Word Roots

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# Building Vocabulary Frequently Asked Questions

In our work with teachers implementing *Building Vocabulary (BV)*, we have noticed similar questions and requests for additional information. We developed this FAQ site to provide additional resources for using *BV* and for teaching roots, in general.

— Timothy Rasinski, Ph.D., Nancy Padak Ed.D., Rick M. Newton, Ph.D., Evangeline Newton, Ph.D.

## Background

- Why teach with a roots approach?
- What does research say about using a roots approach?
- What do other teachers say about using a roots approach?

## Teaching Basics

- How do I help students learn the “divide and conquer” routine?
- What is “assimilation”?
- How do I answer students when they have questions about words that I can’t answer?
- How can I assess my students to know they are progressing?

## Scheduling

- What if I don’t have enough time to do *BV* every day? What do I do if our schedule is disrupted?
- Can I modify the program to make it fit my schedule?

## Scope and Sequence

- What if my students are starting *BV* in mid-stream? How do I catch up if my students didn’t have earlier levels?
- Do I have to do every lesson in *BV*?
- Do I need to do lessons in the order in which they are presented?

## Extensions

- What else can I do to develop students’ knowledge and appreciation of word roots?
- How can I incorporate vocabulary learning into writing?
- How can I incorporate vocabulary learning into content-area instruction?
- Is it possible for parents to do some of the *BV* activities with their children?
- What kind of professional development can we do on our own?

## Background

### Why teach with a roots approach?

- Over 60% of the words students encounter in their reading have recognizable word parts (*Nagy, Anderson, Schommer, Scott & Stallman, 1989*).
- Root study gives students the ability to learn many new words independently (*Carlisle, 2010*).
- Students learn to make connections among words that are semantically related (*Nagy & Scott, 2000*).
- Content-area vocabulary is largely of Greek and Latin origin (*Harmon, Hendrick & Wood, 2005*).
- Many English language learners speak first languages semantically related to Latin (e.g., Spanish). Enhancing this natural linguistic connection can accelerate these students' vocabulary growth (*Blachowicz, Fisher, Ogle & Watts-Taffe, 2006*).
- Many words from Greek and Latin roots meet the criteria for "tier two" words and are appropriate for instruction (*Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002*).
- Latin and Greek roots have consistent orthographic (spelling) patterns. (*Rasinski & Padak, 2008; Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2007*).
- Research suggests that the brain is a pattern detector (*Cunningham, 2004*). It has a strong propensity to detect patterns in its environment. Latin and Greek word roots are linguistic patterns that can help students with the meaning, sound, and spelling of English words.
- Many states are beginning to include a study of derivations in their elementary and middle school literacy standards. Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts identify the analysis of meaningful word parts, including word roots, as a necessary skill students should be able to do at the end of each grade level.
- Young readers' word instruction is often characterized by a study of word patterns called rimes. A Latin-Greek roots approach is the next logical and developmental step in word learning. (*Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2007*)

### What does research say about using a roots approach?

- The size and depth of elementary students' vocabulary is associated with proficiency in reading comprehension. Effective vocabulary instruction results in higher levels of reading comprehension (*Baumann, Carr-Edwards, Font, Tereshinski, Kame'enui, & Olejnik, 2002; Beck, Perfetti, & McKeown, 1982; Kame'enui, Carnine, & Freschi, 1982; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986*).
- Morphological analysis is important because it is generative and allows students to make connections among semantically related words or word families (*Nagy & Scott, 2000*).
- Developing morphological awareness is an integral component of word learning for young children (*Biemiller & Slonim, 2001*). In a comprehensive review of 16 studies analyzing the effect of instruction in morphological awareness on literacy achievement, *Carlisle (2010)* observes that "Children learn

morphemes as they learn language” (p. 465) (Carlisle, 2010).

- Many roots and affixes, including those of Latin and Greek origin, can readily be learned in the primary grades (Biemiller, 2005; Mountain, 2005; Porter-Collier, 2010).
- Teaching Latin and Greek roots is successful in the intermediate grades (Baumann et al., 2002; Carlisle, 2000; Kieffer & Lesaux, 2007).
- Research in content-area vocabulary has demonstrated the effectiveness of teaching Greek and Latin word roots, especially for struggling readers (Harmon et al., 2005).
- Classroom-based studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of teaching word parts and context clues (Baumann, Font, Edwards, & Boland, 2005).
- No single instructional method is sufficient. Teachers need a variety of methods that teach word meanings while also increasing the depth of word knowledge (Blachowicz et al., 2006; Lehr, Osborn & Hiebert, 2007).
- Students should be immersed in words, with frequent opportunities to use new words in diverse oral and print contexts in order to learn them thoroughly (Blachowicz & Fisher, 2006).
- Students need to become metacognitively and metalinguistically aware. They must understand and know how to manipulate structural features of language (Nagy & Scott, 2000).
- Vocabulary instruction must foster “word consciousness” i.e., an awareness of and interest in words (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2006). Activities like word exploration (etymology) and word play (puns, riddles) are central to vocabulary development (Lehr et al., 2004).

### What do other teachers say about using a roots approach?

*I have observed children use the study of roots in a generative manner. For example, one of our third graders commented aloud during a weekly quiz, “I know that,” as he pointed to the root trans. He proceeded to make the correct choice from the multiple choice questions. This exemplifies the function of teaching roots: providing experiences which support independent problem-solving while reading. This empowerment supports the teaching of roots in vocabulary as a necessary strategy.*

Terry Kindervater  
Elementary Literacy Director  
Euclid City School  
Euclid, Ohio

*Learning where word roots originated assists students in the understanding of word meanings. Seeing a word such as “telephone” in print, and studying the root “tele” can help students to quickly define other “tele” root words such as “telegraph”. Root word study opens up avenues for further vocabulary development.... Students are quick to learn that by simply taking a root, many other wonderful words can be made and added to their vocabulary!*

Laura Hixenbaugh  
Roosevelt Elementary  
Euclid City Schools  
Euclid, Ohio

*Vocabulary is an essential part of every subject that we teach our children. Vocabulary development is crucial for student success in the classroom. Building Vocabulary is a program designed to do just that. I incorporated the strategies from Building Vocabulary into my fourth grade math curriculum. This program enabled my students to create a deeper knowledge and understanding of their math vocabulary. As a result, our class achieved some of the highest achievement scores in the district. Building Vocabulary is user-friendly and applicable for any grade level or subject taught. I would highly recommend this program for any teacher who wants to build their students' vocabulary and increase their success within the classroom.*

Luke Smrdel  
Indian Hills Elementary Schools  
Euclid City Schools  
Euclid, Ohio

*As I was raising my boys, I analyzed the ACT vs. SAT as my eldest took those exams for college admittance. I compared the knowledge base with the curriculum that I knew my sons had been exposed to at [their high school]. Both exams include vocabulary. The ACT is supposed to be a test of what students learned in high school and included grammar.*

*I had my youngest take 2 specific courses post-secondary at KSU; grammar and the one on Greek/Latin roots. He got a perfect score on the ACT. Do I think that the course on Greek/Latin roots had a major impact? Yes!*

Victoria Krancevic  
Kent, Ohio

*[W]e now have the policemen in Stafford asking us about this "root thing." Why? Because the root of the week is scrolling across on the flashing sign in front of one of our high schools. Community folks go slowly past the school, or just stop, so they can read the "root of the week" and the definition. Really makes the former Latin and Greek scholars happy (and school board members), although not the traffic cops.*

Nancy Guth, Ph. D.  
Supervisor of Literacy and Humanities  
Stafford County (VA) Public Schools

## Teaching Basics

How do I help students learn the “divide and conquer” routine?

- The “Divide and Conquer” routine helps students recognize the structure, sound, and meaning of the roots they study. In brief, students “divide” words into prefixes, bases, and/or suffixes, consider the meaning of each word part, and then put these meanings back together to “conquer” the meanings of the original words. Each lesson in *Building Vocabulary* begins with “[divide and conquer](#)” as a means of introducing the root(s) that are featured in the lesson. (See pg. 10)
- “Divide and conquer” tips:
  - On each “Meet the Root” day, do at least some dividing and conquering with students before asking them to work independently.
  - Encourage students to work with partners so they can talk through the process.
  - When discussing answers, use the definition of the root in your talk (e.g., “replay” means “play again.”)
- If students are new to “divide and conquer,” you may want to begin with [compound words](#). Display several common compound words; ask pairs of students to identify the two words within each compound. (See pg. 11)
- Chart their responses:

Compound word	First word	Second word	Compound means
Bedroom	Bed	room	Room that has a bed
Shoelace	Shoe	lace	Lace of a shoe
Fingernail	Finger	nail	Nail on the finger

- You may also introduce (or reintroduce) “divide and conquer” using common prefixes. On a display board or chart, as well as on individual student sheets, have students list each complete word, divide each into component parts (prefix and root), and then provide a personal definition for each word. A [template](#) is provided. (See pgs. 12-13)
- An example using the prefix “re-” is provided below:

Word	Prefix	Base	Word me
Replay	Re	play	Play again
Redo	Re	do	Do again
Review	Re	view	View (look at) again

- Some words contain more than one prefix (e.g., reproduction, deconstruction). Students can “divide and conquer” these more challenging words by

Removing the first prefix (e.g., re+production; de+construction)

Considering the meaning of the rest of the word (e.g., production= making or producing something; construction = building something)

Reconsidering meaning with the addition of first prefix (e.g., reproduction = making or producing something again; deconstruction = tearing “down” what has been built)

## What is “assimilation”?

- Some prefixes have [multiple forms](#). These slight changes reflect the recognizable and predictable phenomenon called **assimilation**. Some consonants change and become like (“similar to” = assimilate) the consonant that follows next within the word. Often this is done in order to make the word easier to pronounce. Although assimilation causes spelling changes, meaning of the prefix does not change. (See pg. 14)
- Prefixes ending in a consonant (such as con- and in-) may undergo a spelling modification when they attach to a base that begins with a different consonant. The final consonant of the prefix often changes into another consonant, facilitating pronunciation and enhancing euphony (sounding good). [PowerPoint](#) slides that demonstrate this have been provided. (See pgs. 15-17)
- Whenever a double consonant appears near the beginning of a word, the student should divide the word between the doubled consonant and identify the [assimilated](#) prefix. (See pg. 18)

## How do I answer students when they have questions about words that I can’t answer?

- Invite other students to answer the question.
- Say, “I’m not sure. Let’s look it up.” Then show students how to consult a [resource](#) to find an answer. Do not shy away from using this option. It’s important for students to understand that word learning is a lifelong process and that teachers are learners too. Moreover, these situations provide authentic opportunities to teach students how to use reference books and websites. (See pgs. 19-20)

## How can I assess my students to know they are progressing?

- Use the pre- and post-tests in each level of BV.
- Many BV activities can be scored. You can create a class chart to keep track of scores, perhaps using O (outstanding), S (satisfactory), or U (unsatisfactory) or +/- scoring schemes. Look for patterns rather than drawing conclusions based on single experiences.
- Use the Review lessons in each unit for assessment purposes.
- Ask students to think about and share what they are learning. This could be a class discussion, a journal-writing activity, or both.

## Scheduling

### What if I don’t have enough time to do BV every day? What do I do if our schedule is disrupted?

- Each level of *Building Vocabulary* has lessons for 28 weeks. You may be able to skip weeks occasionally or do a lesson over a two-week period and still complete the level during the school year.
- Look at the possibility of asking students to do some activities in centers or as homework. Days 2, 3, and 4 of each lesson may work well for this purpose.
- Make sure you devote sufficient time to Day 1, Meet the Root, which provides the foundation for all other activities within a lesson.

Can I modify the program to make it fit my schedule?

- Yes, you can devote more time to BV on fewer days each week. For example, a 3-day cycle might be Day 1, Days 2 and 3, and Days 4 and 5.
- Other modifications may also work, but remember to devote sufficient time to Day 1, Meet the Root, which provides the foundation for all other activities in a lesson. Also, remember that students need multiple exposures to new roots in order to learn them well.

## Scope and Sequence

What if my students are starting BV in mid-stream? How do I catch up if my students didn't have earlier levels?

- Make sure students understand how to [divide and conquer](#). (See pg.10)
- Many teachers have noted a learning curve when their students begin BV, perhaps because students are accustomed to memorizing only as a word-learning strategy. Be patient with your students while they are experiencing this learning curve; provide extra support (e.g., invite students to work in pairs) if needed. You may wish to show students how decoding and working with roots are [similar](#). (See pgs. 21-22)
- Teach the [common prefixes](#). Because these prefixes attach to most bases, they will help your students generate many new words easily. In fact, we have recently written a book that focuses exclusively on prefixes, [Practice with Prefixes](#). (See pg. 23)
- Borrow a lower level of BV from one of your colleagues. Read this level with your students in mind. Select a few of the more challenging lessons to use with (or adapt for) your students.

Do I have to do every lesson in BV?

- Not necessarily. However, lessons were selected and sequenced to reflect students' vocabulary needs at particular grade levels.
- Before you skip a lesson, ensure that your students already know the featured root. By "know," we mean ability to a) identify the root in words containing it and b) use root meaning to determine the overall meaning of these words.

Do I need to do lessons in the order in which they are presented?

- Not necessarily. However, lessons were selected and sequenced to reflect students' vocabulary needs at particular grade levels.
- If you change order of the lessons, read the teacher support material carefully and locate places that will need alteration.

## Extensions

What else can I do to develop students' knowledge and appreciation of word roots?

- Play word games. Many of the games you use in your classroom can be adapted for word root study. For example, try Word Match. Develop one set of words on index cards and a second set that contains the corresponding definition for each word. Randomly lay all cards out in a grid, face down. Then take turns overturning the cards, trying to match the word with its definition.



- Play Shakespeare. William Shakespeare invented approximately 8% of all the words he used. Many of the words he invented are compounds of existing words or word roots (e.g. *lackluster*, *bedroom*, *premeditated*). Invite students to invent their own new words using word roots they have previously learned (e.g., autophile: A person in love with himself or herself; matermand: A mother's order to her children).

### How can I incorporate vocabulary learning into writing?

- Put the words you have studied on display in the room (e.g. a word chart on the classroom wall). Challenge students to use words containing the root of focus in their writing (and oral language as well).
- Ask students to review previous writing for examples of words with the root of focus. These could be placed on a large piece of chart paper.

### How can I incorporate vocabulary learning into content area instruction?

- List the roots to be addressed within each unit of BV. Then think through your content area instruction. Look for links.
- Incorporate some of the content area words into the appropriate BV lessons.
- Challenge students to use roots in their content area study. They can look for words containing roots in their reading and, perhaps, post these on chart paper. If enough words are accumulated, students can develop webs showing how the words relate to the content area topic of study.
- Try some [strategies](#) developed and used successfully by other classroom teachers. (See pgs. 26-28)

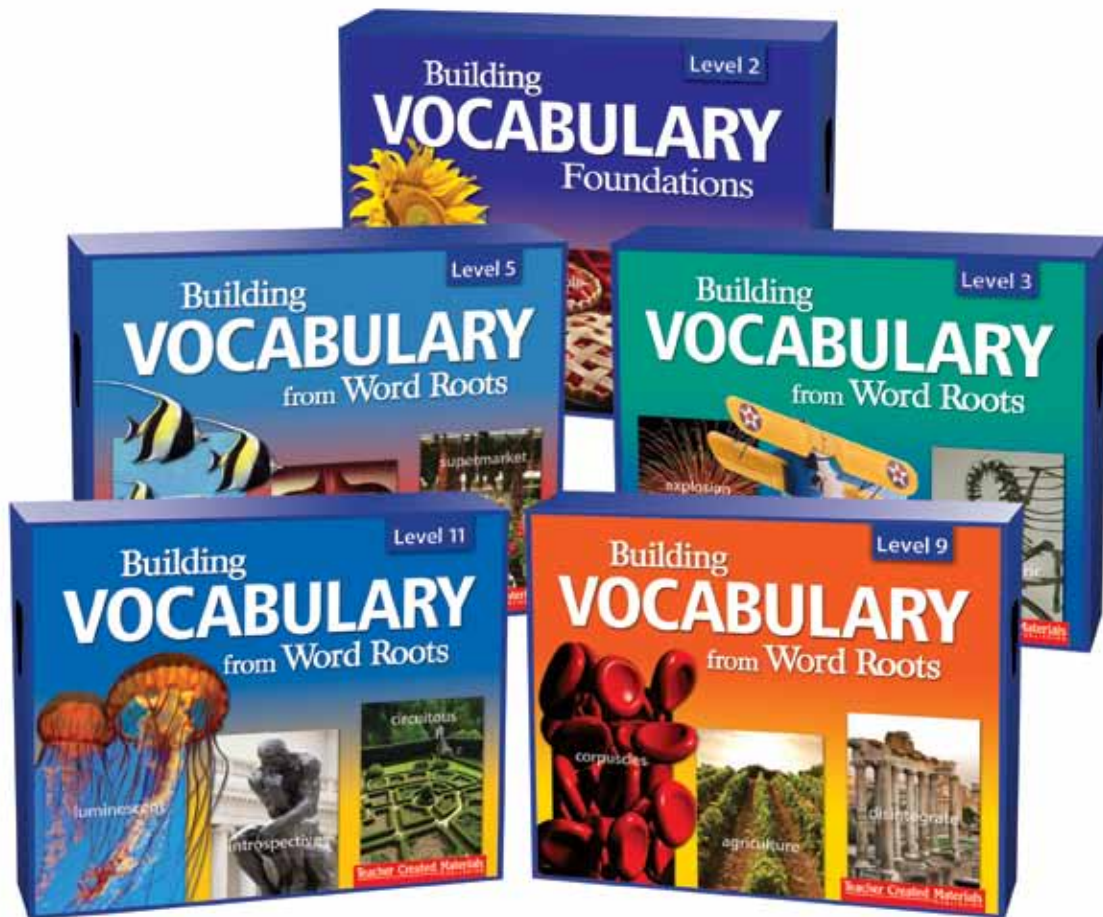
### Is it possible for parents to do some of the BV activities with their children?

- Yes. Many supplementary activities (see CD) are particularly well-suited to parent-child activity.
- You may want to notify parents of each "root of the week" and ask that they use words containing the root in conversation with their child.

### What kind of professional development can we do on our own?

- See Appendix E in *Greek and Latin Roots: Keys to Building Vocabulary* (Rasinski, Padak, Newton, & Newton, 2008) for many PD ideas.
- Read [What Are Word Roots](#) and the [supplementary](#) information located on the CD that accompanies BV or a book or article about vocabulary instruction. Keep notes of insights and discuss these with your colleagues. (See pgs. 29-30)
- To deepen your own understanding of roots, try your hand at a few [practice activities](#). You may want to do these with colleagues in a professional development setting. (See pgs. 31-40)
- Keep track of the learning curve as your students become accustomed to BV. Share your insights with colleagues.

# SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS



## HOW TO TEACH “DIVIDE & CONQUER”

(Rasinski, Padak, Newton & Newton, 2008)

**STEP 1:** Examine the word for recognizable parts (roots = prefix, base, suffix) and “slash “ between them.

Example: EXPOSE = EX / POSE

**STEP 2:** Focus on the BASE of the word (rather than on the prefix), because the base provides the core meaning

POSE means “put, place”

**Note:** It often helps to think of cognate words that use the same base. For example EXPOSE is cognate with POSE (posing for a picture), TRANSPOSE, COMPOSE, IMPOSE, DEPOSE, PROPOSE, etc. These words all contain the base meaning of “put, place.” The Teacher’s Guide always lists a large number of cognates: simply review the TG before presenting the lesson. You do not need to know all the cognates to teach the word!!

**STEP 3:** Add the meaning of the prefix and/or suffix: a prefix is either directional (up, down, around, in, out, under, through, etc.), negating (“not”), or intensifying (“very”). Most prefixes are directional in force.

EX means “out”

**STEP 4:** Combine the meanings of base and prefix into a “basic definition.” To EXPOSE means to “put out” (not to “out” “put”!). It’s helpful to activate students’ background knowledge by putting the words into a familiar context: e.g., we EXPOSE our fingers to frostbite when we “put” them “out” in extremely cold weather. We EXPOSE ourselves to danger when we “put” ourselves “out” in the open or put ourselves in harm’s way. A photographer EXPOSES film by “putting” it “out” in direct light. Talk about the word and situations in which you might find it. The Teacher’s Guide gives several examples of the root word used in context. The goal is NOT to produce a dictionary-perfect definition! Instead, aim to arrive at a sense of what the word means and how it can be used. As you talk about the word, you may use other forms of it (e.g., EXPOSURE, an EXPOSE in journalism, EXPOSITORY writing).

More examples:

**STEP 1:** Examine the word for recognizable parts (roots = prefix, base, suffix) and “slash “ between them.

Example: PROGRESS = PRO / GRESS

**STEP 2:** The base “gress” means “step, go.” (other GRESS words include congress, transgress, egress, aggression, regress: these are all “step, go” words. See TEACHER’S GUIDE).

**STEP 3:** The prefix pro- means “forward, ahead.”

**STEP 4:** Progress is “stepping” “forward, ahead.” Class is making excellent PROGRESS as we “move, go, step” “ahead.” Progressive-minded people are always looking to “move, step, go” “ahead” with new ideas.

**STEP 1:** Examine the word for recognizable parts (roots = prefix, base, suffix) and “slash “ between them.

Example: INSCRIBE = IN / SCRIBE

**STEP 2:** The base “scrib” means “write” (other SCRIB words include scribble, scribe, describe, transcribe, prescribe: these are all “write” words. See TEACHER’S GUIDE).

**STEP 3:** The prefix “in” means “in, on, into.”

**STEP 4:** To inscribe is to “write” something “in, on” something else. We INSCRIBE our names in the books we own. I want to INSCRIBE my initials on my fancy bathroom towels. Will your name be INSCRIBED in the Hall of Fame? Will your name be “written” “in” history?

## COMPOUND WORDS

airplane

backyard

bluebird

backache

birthday

classroom

countertop

fingernail

motorcycle

dollhouse

headache

mountaintop

outfielder

raindrop

snowplow

payday

sidewalk

sunrise

thunderbolt

wheelchair

## DIVIDE AND CONQUER THESE WORDS!

	prefix	+	base	=	word means
1.	_____		_____		_____
2.	_____		_____		_____
3.	_____		_____		_____
4.	_____		_____		_____
5.	_____		_____		_____
6.	_____		_____		_____
7.	_____		_____		_____
8.	_____		_____		_____
9.	_____		_____		_____
10.	_____		_____		_____

### Look over the words in "Divide and Conquer." Then answer these questions:

1) Pick out a word whose meaning you already knew. Write the word. What does it mean?

\_\_\_\_\_

2) Pick out a word you find very interesting that you did not know before. Write the word. What does it mean? Why do you find it interesting?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3) Pick out a new word you think is very hard. Write the word. What does it mean? Tell why you think it is hard.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

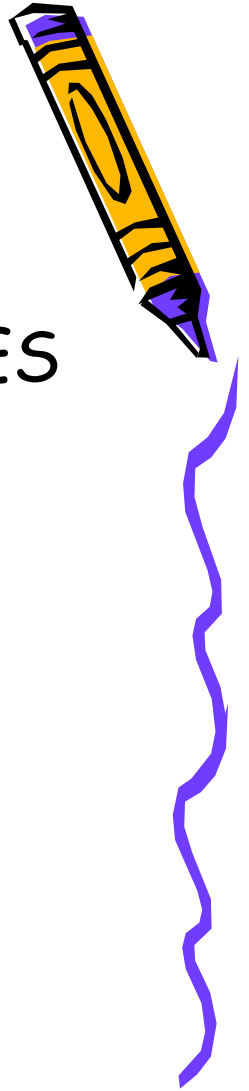
## DIVIDE AND CONQUER THESE WORDS!

	prefix	+	base	=	word means
1.	_____		_____		_____
2.	_____		_____		_____
3.	_____		_____		_____
4.	_____		_____		_____
5.	_____		_____		_____
6.	_____		_____		_____
7.	_____		_____		_____
8.	_____		_____		_____
9.	_____		_____		_____
10.	_____		_____		_____

## PREFIXES THAT ASSIMILATE

Prefix	Meaning	Examples of words that assimilate
<b>ad-</b>	to, toward, add to	accede, accelerate, affect, aggravate, allegiance, allusion, appendix, arrogant, assimilate, attract
<b>con-, co-</b>	with, together, very	collect, colloquial, combine, commit, commotion, complicate, compose, compound, collate, correct
<b>ex-,e-</b>	out, from, completely	expel, emission, effect
<b>dis-, di-</b>	apart, in different directions, not	different, diffuse, diffract, difficult
<b>in- (en-)</b>	in, on, into, against	imbibe, immigrant, important, impose, embrace
<b>in-</b>	not	Ignoble, illegal, illegible, impossible, irresponsible
<b>ob-</b>	toward, up against, completely	occurrence, offensive, offer, oppose, oppress
<b>sub-</b>	under, up from under	succeed, suffer, suffuse, support, suppress, suspend

# Easing Into Assimilation...



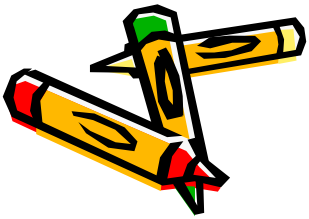
## Step 1: UNASSIMILATED PREFIXES

con + vention = convention

in + visible = invisible

sub + terranean = subterranean

ob + struction = obstruction





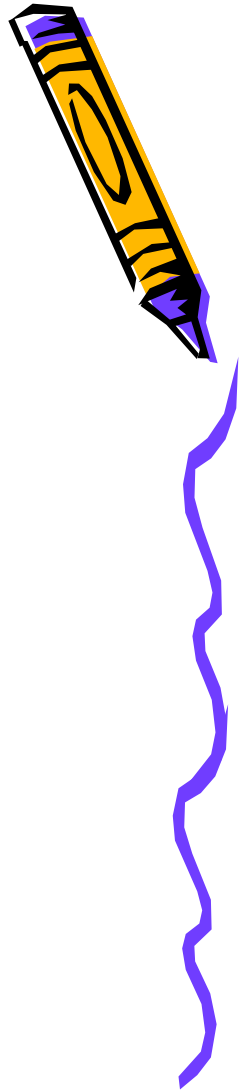
## STEP 2: PARTIAL ASSIMILATION

in + possible = impossible

con + pose = compose

in + port = import

con + press = compress



## STEP 3: FULL ASSIMILATION

con + rect = correct

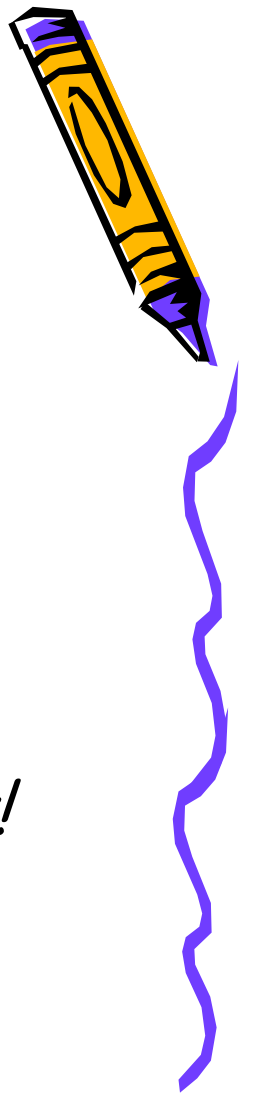
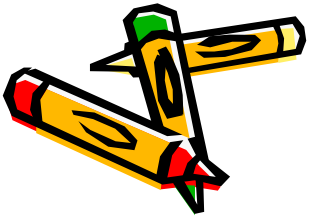
in + legal = illegal

sub + fer = suffer

ob + pose = oppose

ad + similation = assimilation!

*Tip: Look for a doubled consonant!*



## EASING INTO ASSIMILATION:

### What students need to know (1-2-3):

Students can master assimilation in three easy steps by letting their ears and eyes guide them. As they sound out the words (and ask, "Does it sound good?"), they will easily learn to spell each word correctly. Without getting technical, they will readily pick up non-assimilation, partial assimilation, and complete assimilation. When they write the word, they will see if it looks right.

Students work with three sequential lists: 1) words with no assimilation; 2) words with partial assimilation; 3) words with full or complete assimilation. Here are some suggestions.

#### STEP 1:

Rewrite these words without changing the spelling of the prefix. Does the whole word sound good? Is it easy to pronounce? Does the written word look right to you?

Prefix	+	Base	=	Complete word	Word Meaning
con-	+	vention	=	_____	(a "coming together")
in-	+	visible	=	_____	("not able to be seen")
in-	+	finite	=	_____	("not having an end")
con-	+	tract	=	_____	("draw together")

#### STEP 2:

Rewrite these words by changing the last letter of the prefix into an "m." Does the whole word sound good? Is it easy to pronounce? Does the written word look right to you?

Prefix	+	Base	=	Complete word	Word Meaning
in-	+	port	=	_____	(a "coming together")
con-	+	bine	=	_____	("not able to be seen")
con-	+	pose	=	_____	("not having an end")
in-	+	possible	=	_____	("draw together")

#### STEP 3:

Rewrite these words by changing the last letter of the prefix into the first letter of the base. The result will be a double consonant near the beginning of the word. Does the whole word sound good? Does the written word look right to you?

Prefix	+	Base	=	Complete word	Word Meaning
con-	+	rect	=	_____	(accurate and "right with")
in-	+	legal	=	_____	("not lawful")
con-	+	motion	=	_____	(the "moving""together" of things)
ad-	+	tract	=	_____	("draw to or toward")
ad-	+	flect	=	_____	("do something to")

# Word Resources for Answering Students' Questions

## Resources Students Can Use

### The Lex Files

<http://lexfiles.info/>

This site of Latin and Greek prefixes, suffixes, and root words includes lists of quotations, legal and terms, religious expressions, and various abbreviations from Latin and Greek.

### Word Central

<http://www.wordcentral.com/>

Maintained by Merriam-Webster, this site has plenty of activities and information for students, as well as resources (including lesson plans) for teachers. You can even build your own dictionary.

### Little Explorers English Picture Dictionary

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/Dictionary.html>

When they click on a letter of the alphabet, students will find dozens of words, each with a picture and definition. Best of all, this site also has picture dictionaries that go from English to Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, German, Swedish, Dutch, and Japanese! These dictionaries will captivate all your students and provide extra support to English language learners. (NOTE: Older students may enjoy working with some of the other electronic dictionaries and resources listed in the Teacher Resources section.)

## Resources for Teachers

### Websites for Word Roots/Word Lists

#### Lists of Latin and Greek Roots

[http://www.awrsd.org/oak/Library/greek\\_and\\_latin\\_root\\_words.htm](http://www.awrsd.org/oak/Library/greek_and_latin_root_words.htm)

<http://www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0907017.html>

<http://academic.cuesta.edu/acasupp/as/506.htm>

#### Word Roots and Prefixes

<http://www.virtualsalt.com/roots.htm>

Has lists of roots and words that come from them.

### Dictionaries and Reference

#### Allwords.com

<http://www.allwords.com/>

The online dictionary does a multilingual search that ELL students will find very useful. "Links for word lovers" will take you to all kinds of resources for information (dictionaries, thesaurus, etymologies) and wordplay (puns, rhymes, songs, quotations).

#### AskOxford.com

<http://www.askoxford.com/>

Online dictionary that includes word games and other support materials for spelling, grammar, etymology and foreign phrases, plus an "Ask the Experts" link where you can find answers to frequently asked questions about language.

**The Big List**

<http://www.wordorigins.org/>

Explains the origin of over 400 familiar words and phrases that are “interesting or because some bit of folklore, sometimes true and sometimes false, is associated with the origin.”

**Merriam-Webster Online**

<http://www.m-w.com/>

This site has an extensive and easy-to-use online dictionary and thesaurus that even provides audio pronunciations. Students will enjoy free word games and can sign up for Word-of-the-Day.

**One Look Dictionary Search**

<http://www.onelook.com/>

Type in a word and let this site look it up in several dictionaries! It also has a “Reverse Dictionary”: You type in a description of the concept and it finds words and phrases that match it.

**Online Etymology Dictionary**

<http://www.wordexplorations.com/>

Type in a word – any word – and this dictionary will tell you its history.

**Thesaurus.com**

<http://thesaurus.reference.com/>

Type in a word and quickly find synonyms and antonyms. Also has a dictionary, an encyclopedia, and a word-of-the-day in English and Spanish.

# GETTING INTO WORDS: FROM SOUND TO MEANING "STEP BY STEP"

## I. BISYLLABIC COMPOUND WORDS

WORD IS:	ONE BASE WORD IS:	OTHER BASE WORD IS:
BEDROOM:	_____	_____
BIRTHDAY:	_____	_____
FOOTBALL:	_____	_____
PLAYGROUND:	_____	_____

What are students doing? They are (1) getting into words by dividing and conquering, and (2) searching for words within a word (i.e, they are looking for word-parts).

## II. TRISYLLABIC COMPOUND WORDS

WORD IS:	ONE BASE WORD IS:	OTHER BASE WORD IS:
SPIDERMAN:	_____	_____
COUNTERTOP:	_____	_____
DISHWASHER:	_____	_____
HAIRDRESSER:	_____	_____

What are students doing? They are (1) getting into longer words, and (2) searching for words within a word (word-parts).

## III. NEGATING WITH PREFIXES (un-, in- = "not")

WORD IS:	ONE BASE WORD IS:	OTHER BASE WORD IS:
UNWRAP:	_____	_____
UNABLE:	_____	_____
INCORRECT:	_____	_____
INCOMPLETE:	_____	_____

What are students doing? They are (1) identifying and translating prefixes, (2) searching for a word within a word, and (3) preparing to recognize roots (a root is a word-part that carries meaning, not just sound. There are 3 kinds of roots: prefix, base, and suffix).

#### IV. SOME "DIRECTIONAL PREFIXES" (pre- = "before;" re- = "back, again")

WORD IS:	ONE BASE WORD IS:	OTHER BASE WORD IS:
PRESOAK:	_____	_____
REWRITE:	_____	_____
RETURN:	_____	_____
PRESHRUNK:	_____	_____
REFILL:	_____	_____

What are students doing? They are (1) identifying and translating prefixes, and (2) thinking about how the prefix affects the meaning of the word.

#### V. SOME EASY SUFFIXES (-er = "more;" -est- = "very, most;" -ful- = "full of;" -less = "without;" -able = "can, able to be done")

WORD IS:	ONE BASE WORD IS:	OTHER BASE WORD IS:
FASTER:	_____	_____
FASTEST:	_____	_____
COLORFUL:	_____	_____
COLORLESS:	_____	_____
WASHABLE:	_____	_____
HOPEFUL:	_____	_____
HOPELESS:	_____	_____

#### WHAT HAVE STUDENTS LEARNED?

They have learned to get inside words and look for units that carry meaning. They have learned to look for roots. They have learned to think about how the different parts of a word (beginning, middle, end – or – prefix, base, suffix) all work together to generate meaning. They have learned a strategy for approaching longer (polysyllabic) words that they may previously have avoided, feared, or ignored!

They have learned how to divide and conquer a word by its recognizable parts. They are now ready to learn some bases. By learning bases, they will create a data-base of even more recognizable word parts. What are students NOT doing? They are not memorizing wordlists!

## PREFIXES IN BUILDING VOCABULARY FROM WORD ROOTS

### Level 3:

#### Prefixes presented:

un- = not

re- = back, again

pre- = before

in-, im-, il- = not ("negative in-")

ex- = out

sub- = under, below

co-, con- = with, together

#### Number prefixes:

uni-, unit- = one

bi- = two

tri- = three

#### sample words (*as in ...*):

unable, unbutton, unwrap

rewrite, redo, return

preheat, prewash, previews

incorrect, invisible, impossible, illegal

exit, export, extract

submarine, subzero, subway, submerge

coauthor, cooperate, construct, contract

unicorn, uniform, united, unit

bicycle, bilingual, biweekly

tripod, trio, triplets, triangle

### Level 4:

*Level 4 begins with a review of Level 3 prefixes, including a "prefix bank"*

in-, im-, il- = in, on, into ("directional in-")

induct, import, illustrate

com-, col- = with, together

compose, collect

de- = down, off of

descend, deduct

pro- = forward, for, ahead

promote, propel

trans- = across, change

transport, transmit, transpose

inter- = between, among

interrupt, interfere

per- = through, thorough(ly)

perforated, perfume, perfect

\* auto- = self

automobile, automatic

\* tele- = far, from afar

telescope, telephone, television

#### Prefixes of sum and size:

multi- = many

multiply, multicolored

\* poly- = many

polygon, polytheism

\* micro- = small

microwave, microscope, microphone

\* mega-, megal- = big

megaphone, megalopolis, "megabucks"



## Level 5:

*Level 5 begins with a review of Level 4 prefixes, including "prefix bank"*

di-, dif- dis- = apart, in different directions, not	divert, differ, dismiss, dishonor
a-, ab-, abs- = away, from	aversion, abduct, absent
super-, sur- = on top of, over, above	supervise, survive
ad- = to, toward, add to	addition, adverb, adhesive

\*Asterisk indicates a **Greek** prefix. All other prefixes are **Latin**. Greek roots frequently occur in scientific, medical, and technical vocabulary. Latin roots appear in more "all-purpose" vocabulary

## Level 6:

*Level 6 begins with a review of Level 5 prefixes, including "prefix bank"*

### **Prefixes presented:**

ante- = before

post- = after

ob- = up against, in the way

ambi- = around, on both sides

\* amphi- = around, on both sides

contra-, contro-, counter- = against, opposite

\* anti-, ant- = against, opposite

\* syn-, sym-, syl- = with, together

\* dia- = through, across, thorough

\* peri- = around

circum-, circu- = around

### **sample words (as in ...):**

ante-bellum, antecedent

post-bellum, postpone

obstruct, obnoxious

ambidextrous, ambiguous

amphibian, amphitheater

contradict, controversy, counteract

antibiotic, antonym

synthesis, symphony, syllable

diameter, diagnosis

perimeter, periscope

circumvent, circuit

## Level 7:

*Level 7 begins with a review of Level 6 prefixes, including "prefix bank"*

con- = with, together, very

e-, ex-, ef- = out, very

per- = through, thorough, wrongly

sub- = below, under, up from under

\* hypo- = below, under, up from under

se- = aside, apart

\* para- = aside, apart

confection, concussion

expire, effort, excessive

perspire, perfection, persecute

subvert, subterranean

hypodermic, hypothermia

secede, separate, segregation

parallel, paragraph, paramedics

tra-, trans- = across, change

transgression, travesty

\* meta- = across, change

metabolism, metamorphosis

### Level 8:

*Level 8 reviews selected earlier prefixes while presenting more advanced vocabulary.*

ad- = to, toward, add to (review)

admit, accelerate, attraction

di-, dif-, dis- = apart, in different directions,  
not (review)

digress, disruptive, discredit

\* a-, an- = not, without ("alpha privative")

atheist, amoral, anhydrous, anemia

\* eu-, ev- = good, well

euthanasia, euphemism, Evangelist

\* dys- = bad, improper

dysfunction, dystrophy, dyspeptic

\* epi- = upon, to, in addition to

epidermis, epicenter, epilogue

\*Asterisk indicates a **Greek** prefix. All other prefixes are **Latin**. Greek roots frequently occur in scientific, medical, and technical vocabulary. Latin roots appear in more "all-purpose" vocabulary.

*R. & E. Newton, N. Padak, T. Rasinski  
"Building Vocabulary from Word Roots"*

# BUILDING VOCABULARY EXTENSIONS & CENTER IDEAS

Joanna Newton

**Root of the Week:** To highlight the base/prefix/suffix/word family your class is studying create a Root of the Week chart. Put a large piece of poster paper in a place where students can reach it with markers next to it. On the day you introduce your new unit write the root on the chart. Invite students to add words with that root to the chart throughout the week. They can add words they find in books, poems, songs, dictionaries, talking to parents, etc., as long as they contain the root being studied. Students write their names next to the words they add. At the end of the unit spend 5-10 minutes going over the chart. Ask each student to tell about the word s/he added, what it means, where they found it and how they would use it. Continue adding words to the chart as they come up. This can be a growing, interactive word wall you use all year.

**Poetry:** Have students participate in shared/interactive reading activities with poems that feature the root/word family you are studying. Let students find the root/word family in the poem and discuss the new vocabulary. Put the poems in your poetry/fluency center for students to reread. Have students perform favorite poems for Literacy Café.

Run several poems with the root/word family you are studying on overhead transparencies, or laminate. Have students highlight the roots/word families in the poems during independent work stations.

As an extension, have students rewrite an existing poem by changing the prefixes/suffixes in the poem. For example, replace words with the -less suffix with words that have the -ful suffix: A joyless day becomes a joyful day. Students will have to work with vocabulary to create a new poem that makes sense.

**Roots Matching Game:** On one set of index cards write several bases. On another set write prefixes/suffixes. Students work with buddies, or independently to match the bases with the corresponding prefixes/suffixes. (Cut the cards to look like puzzle pieces so students can self-check their work.)

**Word Families Matching Game:** On one set of index cards draw pictures of words that have the word families being studied. Write the word under the picture, leaving the word family out. For example, under a picture of a house, write h\_\_se. On another set of cards write the word families being studied. Students work with buddies or independently to match the words with their missing word families. (Cut the cards to look like puzzle pieces so students can self-check their work.)

**I'm Merriam Webster! Dictionaries:** Have students create their own dictionaries with words they invent. Students use their knowledge of bases, prefixes and suffixes to make up words. They can organize their dictionaries to look like a regular dictionary: alphabetical order, definitions, pronunciation guides etc. This can be an ongoing project that students work on during independent work stations. A sample entry could read: hydrohorse-a horse that gallops on water.

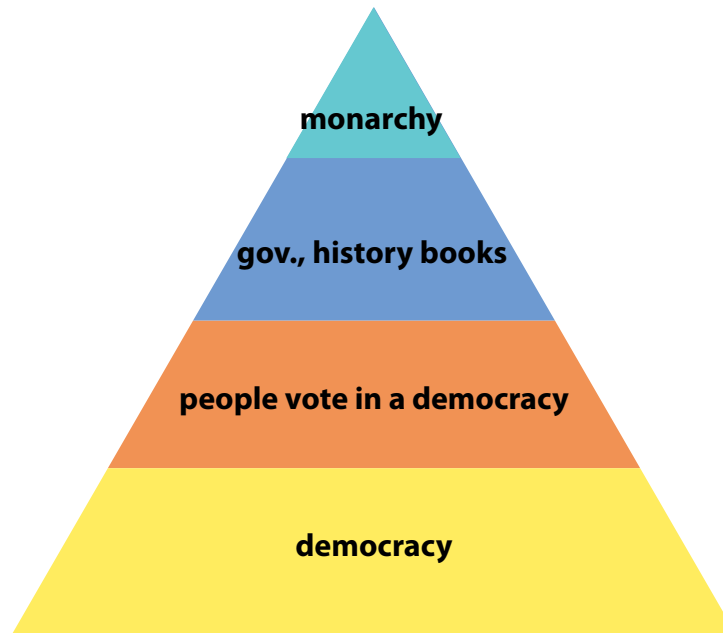
**Content Area Connections:** When starting a new science/social studies unit pick a base to study that connects to required content-area vocabulary. For example, when studying government study the -cracy suffix, meaning "rule by," or when studying geography focus on the geo root, meaning "earth." Let students play with the root by creating their own words, then use it to launch necessary vocabulary such as democracy, aristocracy etc. Have students create concept wheels around the root.

**Roots Cubes:** Wrap tissue boxes in plain paper so that they can be used as dice, or use dry-erase dice. On the dice write different roots. On one cube write bases, on another write prefixes and/or suffixes. Working in pairs, students take turns rolling the dice to create words. One student rolls; the other student gives the meaning of the word or uses it in a sentence. Students earn points for correctly using words.

**Word Study Notebooks:** For teachers not using the student books, have students keep all of their word study work in one interactive notebook. Students can glue all work into their notebooks so they have a vocabulary resource. At the end of word study have students reflect on their learning for the day. Older students can write a sentence about what they did with their word study time and/or what they learned. Younger students can use a checklist. Collect each notebook once a month to check that students are completing tasks regularly.

**Word Pyramids:** Have students create pyramid posters for words. On the bottom of the pyramid, students write the word, working their way up with the definition, correct usage in a sentence, where the word would occur, synonym, and/or antonym.

Example:

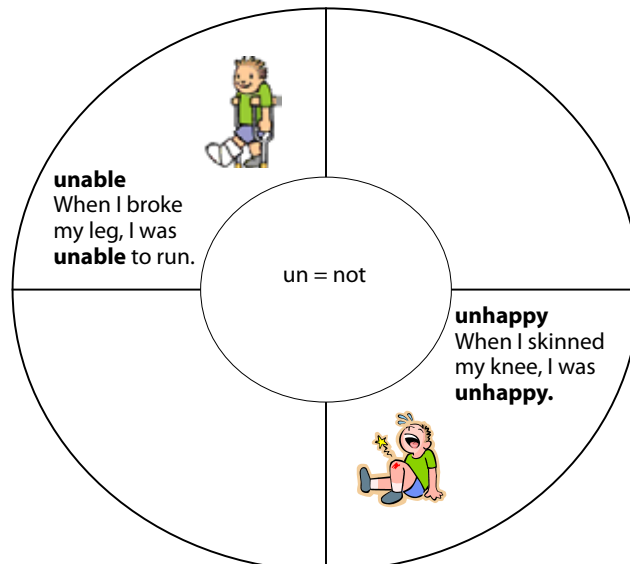


**Root Trees:** Using a tree diagram, students combine bases, prefixes and suffixes to create words. Students fill the tree with word "fruit."

**Bases Cloze Activities:** Create cloze activities in which students have to supply the correct bases. Run them on overhead transparencies or laminate to reuse. Have students work on them during independent work time and swap papers with each other to check for accuracy. Or, have students create their own cloze activities and give to each other solve. A sample might read, Jackie Robinson was in\_ \_ \_ \_ ed into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962.

**Root Wheels:** Write a root in the middle of a circle. Divide the circle into 4, 6 or 8 parts. In each part have students write a word with the root, use the word in a sentence and draw a picture.

Example:



**Word Part Scramble:** Write several bases, prefixes and suffixes on index cards. Give each student one card. Students walk around the room to connect their word parts to make words. For example, one student has the intro base; another has the duc/duct base. They connect to make the word introduce. As an extension include a set of cards with definitions so that students build words and find their corresponding definitions.

**Bases Grids:** Using a grid format let students match bases, prefixes and suffixes to form words.

Example:

	tract	duc/duct	cur/curs/cours
a-,ab-,abs-	abstract	abduct	oc
re-	retract	reduce	recur
e-, ex	extract	educate	excursion

**Zip Around Games:** Play class zip around games with content-area vocabulary. Each student gets a card with two items: 1) a word from one root and 2) the definition of a word from a different root. Students match their cards with the correct definitions. For example, one student has a card that reads: “The period of time in the south that was before the civil war. My base means war.” The answer, “antebellum,” will be on another student’s card. That student will then ask the question on his/her card: “Who has the word for the type of government used in ancient Greece? My root means people.” Another student will have the answer “democracy” on his/her card. That student will then ask the next question. This question-answer-question routine continues until all cards have been played. (Note: The person who starts the game only reads the question. If everyone has answered the questions correctly, the person who started should also be the last person to answer.)

Sample Zip around Game	
Democracy The ancient Romans invented these to carry water across the empire. My base means <i>to lead or carry</i> .	Pact This is the temple that the Romans built to honor their gods. My base means <i>all</i> .
Aqueduct This is the type of government in which a king or queen makes the laws. My prefix means <i>one</i> .	Acropolis This is what 2 warring sides of a conflict make when they want to stop fighting. My base means <i>peace</i> .
Monarchy The Native Americans told these types of stories. My base means <i>to read</i> .	Pantheon. South Carolina was the first state to do this in 1860. My base means <i>apart</i> .
Legend. The ancient Greeks used this place to protect Athens from invaders. My base means <i>high</i> .	Secede This is the type of government used in ancient Greece. My base means <i>people</i> .

# WHAT ARE WORD ROOTS?

## What is a root?

“Root” is the generic or “umbrella” term for the three categories of word parts. Prefixes, bases, and suffixes comprise the three kinds of “roots.”

Many people use the terms “root” and “base” as if they were synonyms. Technically, however, the term “root” is broader and incorporates the sub-category of “base.”

See Donald M. Ayers, *English Words from Latin and Greek Elements* (second edition, revised and expanded by Thomas Worthen with the assistance of R. L. Cherry) (The University of Arizona Press, Tucson 1986) page 27. See also Oscar E. Nybakken, *Greek and Latin in Scientific Terminology* (Iowa State University Press, Ames 1959) pages 3-5.

## What is a prefix?

A prefix is a root placed at the beginning of a word. When a prefix attaches to the base, a new word is generated. A prefix usually affects the meaning of the word in one of three ways:

- directional (e.g., under, down, with, out: as in submarine, descend, conduct, exit)
- negating (as in unkind, impossible, nonsense)
- intensifying (as in commotion, perfection)

A prefix does not stand on its own: it attaches either to an intact word (e.g., redo) or to the base of a word (e.g., educate, invention).

## What is a base?

A base is a root that provides a word with its core meaning. Prefixes and suffixes often attach to the base. Unlike a prefix or suffix, however, a base can often stand on its own as an intact word (e.g., duct; as well as induct, deduction, conductor).

Although some people refer to the “base” of a word as its “stem,” the term “base” is technically more precise and deemed correct by Latinists.

## What is a suffix?

A suffix is a root placed at the end of a word. In general, a suffix indicates a word’s “part of speech” as noun, verb, adjective, or adverb (e.g., local [adjective], location [noun], locate [verb], locally [adverb]). A suffix may also indicate the tense of a verb (e.g., jumped, jumping).

Like a prefix, a suffix does not stand on its own: it attaches either to an intact word (e.g., tractor) or to the base of a word (e.g., possible).

## What is a root?

“Root” is the generic or “umbrella” term for the three categories of word parts. Prefixes, bases, and suffixes comprise the three kinds of “roots.”

A prefix is a root placed at the beginning of a word. A prefix does not stand on its own: it attaches either to an intact word (e.g., redo) or to the base of a word (e.g., invention).

A base is a root that provides a word's main meaning. It can be either a whole word (prepay) or a word part (ex., predict).

A suffix is a root which appears at the end and affects the word's meaning (ex., colorful, colorless).

In general, a suffix indicates a word's "part of speech" (e.g., local [adjective], location [noun], locate [verb], locally [adverb]). A suffix may also indicate the tense of a verb (e.g., jumped, jumping).

Like a prefix, a suffix does not stand on its own: it attaches either to an intact word (e.g., tractor) or to the base of a word (e.g., possible).

See Donald M. Ayers, *English Words from Latin and Greek Elements* (second edition, revised and expanded by Thomas Worthen with the assistance of R. L. Cherry) (The University of Arizona Press, Tucson 1986) page 27. See also Oscar E. Nybakken, *Greek and Latin in Scientific Terminology* (Iowa State University Press, Ames 1959) pages 3-5.

## WORKING WITH SIX BASES

### I. WORD COMPOSITION

Fill in the blanks with English words derived from the following six bases:

Bases	Definition
GRAD-, GRESS-	step
LOQU-, LOCUT-	speak, talk
PUNG-, PUNCT-, POINT-	prick, point, pierce
SENT-, SENS-	think, feel
TRUD-, TRUS-	push, thrust
VID-, VIS-	see

1. The name of the capital of Rhode Island, \_\_\_\_\_ . (God in His capacity as the one who "sees" "ahead" and takes care of us), is based in the Protestantism of the Europeans who settled America.
2. We get our weekly \_\_\_\_\_ (supplies which we select by "seeing" "ahead" to our future needs) at the grocery store every Saturday.
3. We pray that our \_\_\_\_\_ (sins and wrongs which we commit by "stepping" "across" the line dividing right from wrong) may be forgiven us.
4. In order to practice his \_\_\_\_\_ (oral delivery; "speaking" "out"), little Demosthenes would stuff his mouth with pebbles and try speaking against the roar of the sea.
5. In the \_\_\_\_\_ (manner of "speaking" associated with a region) of the southern United States, ya'll is accepted as the plural of "you."
6. The \_\_\_\_\_ (occurring when people "speak" "together" in informal settings) meaning of "mad" is "angry." The proper meaning of "mad" is "insane."
7. Upon conviction, the defendant agreed to \_\_\_\_\_ (confess in full detail by "speaking" "to" the entire crime) to the crime.
8. The Latin-based equivalent for a Chatty Cathy doll would be \_\_\_\_\_ ("talkative") Lotta.
9. "See" "to" it that you take your LER courses well before your junior year, says your \_\_\_\_\_ (counselor, consultant, academic overseer).
10. She was elected to the \_\_\_\_\_ (arousing envy, jealousy, and ill will which drives others to "see" "on" you with bad feelings) position of chairman of the Grievance Committee.
11. I wish my teenage son would \_\_\_\_\_ (obliterate, totally do away with; "pierce" "out") the word "whatever ..." from his vocabulary.
12. I had a \_\_\_\_\_ ("feeling" "beforehand," an intuitive foreboding) that things would not go well when I visited the doctor.



13. I do not \_\_\_\_\_ (harbor a grudge by allowing a bad "feeling" to come "back, again") you for forgetting my birthday again this year, you \_\_\_\_\_ ("not" "feeling," emotionally numb) slug.
14. I \_\_\_\_\_ ("pierced," made a hole) my rear tire when I drove across the railroad tracks.
15. There is no more \_\_\_\_\_ (acrid, offensive to the smell; "piercing" the senses) odor than that of rotten eggs.
16. "Million Dollar Baby," which deals with love, death, and forgiveness, is a very \_\_\_\_\_ (emotionally "piercing") film.
17. Did Bill Clinton ever display or feel any sign of \_\_\_\_\_ (contrition, remorse; a "very" "piercing" feeling that gnaws at you) over the way he behaved with Monica?
18. George W. Bush likes to \_\_\_\_\_ (make "pointed," sharpen, make more cutting) his public remarks with words like "freedom" and "liberty."
19. You should not \_\_\_\_\_ ("thrust" "up against" without invitation) your religious views when addressing an unknown audience.
20. "This way to the \_\_\_\_\_" (exit, the passage through which you "step" "out" of a room) is the sign P.T. Barnum put up in his overcrowded circus tent in order to thin out the crowd.
21. Every time she \_\_\_\_\_ (strays, wanders; "steps" "in a different direction" from the topic), I stop taking notes and stare out the window.
22. Tim Russert usually has 4 \_\_\_\_\_ (participants in a dialogue; those who "speak" "between, among" one another) on his weekly show, "Meet the Press."

## II. WORD DISSECTION

Slash these words between their elements; translate the elements into English. Select the definition from the words at the bottom of the next page. (There will be leftover choices!)

1. PROTRUSIVE: \_\_\_\_\_  
def.: \_\_\_\_\_
2. GRANDILOQUENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
def.: \_\_\_\_\_
3. IMPROVIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
def.: \_\_\_\_\_

4. ABSTRUSE: \_\_\_\_\_

def.: \_\_\_\_\_

5. OBLOQUY: \_\_\_\_\_

def.: \_\_\_\_\_

6. INSENSATE: \_\_\_\_\_

def.: \_\_\_\_\_

7. PUNCTILIO: \_\_\_\_\_

def.: \_\_\_\_\_

8. PUNCTILIOUS: \_\_\_\_\_

def.: \_\_\_\_\_

9. AGGRESSOR: \_\_\_\_\_

def.: \_\_\_\_\_

10. DISSENT: \_\_\_\_\_

def.: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition Choices (only 10 of these 19 are correct):

figure of speech    thoughtless    defensive    jutting    bombast    bombastic

attacker    differ in opinion    destroy    slander    sinful

casual    hard to understand    precisely detailed    not endowed with feeling

detail of etiquette or grammar    cutting    victimize    nonsensical

## LATIN NUMERICAL BASES

Latin numerical bases are found at the beginning of a word. But a numerical base is not technically a prefix, since it does not have direction, does not intensify, and does not negate. Thus, it is possible for a word to consist of only a numerical base and a suffix.

Identify the numerical base in each of these words:

1. BICYCLE – TRICYCLE - UNICYCLE \_\_\_\_\_
2. QUARANTINE \_\_\_\_\_
3. BINOCULARS (what is the base of this word?) \_\_\_\_\_
4. SEXTET \_\_\_\_\_
5. DECIMAL \_\_\_\_\_
6. DECIMATE \_\_\_\_\_
7. CENTURY \_\_\_\_\_
8. CENTENNIAL – BICENTENNIAL – SESQUICENTENNIAL (SESQUI = 1 ½) \_\_\_\_\_
9. QUARTER HORSE \_\_\_\_\_
10. QUARTER – QUARTERS – HEADQUARTERS \_\_\_\_\_
11. OCTOGENARIAN – SEXAGENARIAN - CENTENARIAN \_\_\_\_\_
12. TRIAD - DYAD \_\_\_\_\_
13. DUALISM \_\_\_\_\_
14. QUADRANGLE \_\_\_\_\_
15. TRINITY \_\_\_\_\_
16. A TRIUNE GOD \_\_\_\_\_
17. MILLIMETER \_\_\_\_\_
18. MILE \_\_\_\_\_
19. MILL (1/10 of a cent) \_\_\_\_\_
20. CENT \_\_\_\_\_
21. MILLION \_\_\_\_\_
22. BILLION \_\_\_\_\_
23. TRILLION \_\_\_\_\_
24. QUADRIPARTITE \_\_\_\_\_
25. TRIPARTITE \_\_\_\_\_
26. UNICORN \_\_\_\_\_
27. THE SEPTUAGINT (LXX) \_\_\_\_\_

28. TRIVIAL (what is the base of this word?) \_\_\_\_\_
29. CENTURION \_\_\_\_\_
30. PRIMER (pronounced two ways, with two meanings!) \_\_\_\_\_
31. DUAL (do not confuse with a DUEL, which means "battle") \_\_\_\_\_
32. OCTAVE \_\_\_\_\_
33. UNANIMOUS \_\_\_\_\_
34. UNIFORM \_\_\_\_\_
35. UNIFY \_\_\_\_\_
36. UNITE \_\_\_\_\_
37. UNIT \_\_\_\_\_

Learn the "year" words:

Learn this base: ANN(I)-, ANN(U)-

and, through base modification = year

ENN(I)- in compounds

Can you recognize and compose these words:

1. ANNIVERSARY: \_\_\_\_\_
2. ANNUAL: \_\_\_\_\_
3. BIENNIAL: \_\_\_\_\_
4. BIENNIAL: \_\_\_\_\_
5. SEMIENNIAL: \_\_\_\_\_
6. QUADRENNIAL: \_\_\_\_\_
7. SUPERANNUATED: \_\_\_\_\_
8. ANNALS: \_\_\_\_\_
9. PERENNIAL (S): \_\_\_\_\_
10. ANNUALS: \_\_\_\_\_
11. SESQUICENTENNIAL: \_\_\_\_\_
12. ANNUITIES: \_\_\_\_\_
13. MILLENNIUM: \_\_\_\_\_
14. MILLENNIAL: \_\_\_\_\_
15. QUARTER-ANNUAL: \_\_\_\_\_

## PRACTICE WITH PON-, POS-, POSIT- (= “put, place”)

This exercise provides practice in Divide & Conquer and in Combine & Create. All words are based on Latin PON-, POS-, POSIT-, which means put, place.

Prefix Bank:

con-, com-	= with, together	ob-, op-	= up against
de-	= down, off	pre-	= before
dis-	= apart, in different direction	pro-	= forward, ahead
ex-	= out	sub -	= under, below
in-, im-	= in, on, into	trans-	= across, change

### I. DIVIDE & CONQUER

Identify the prefix and base in each of these words. Write the meaning of the prefix and base in the blanks to the right. Select the best definition from the definition bank.

WORD IS:	PREFIX MEANS:	BASE MEANS:	WORD MEANS:
1. COMPOST:	_____	_____	_____
2. DEPOSE:	_____	_____	_____
3. EXPOSE:	_____	_____	_____
4. DEPOSIT:	_____	_____	_____
5. TRANSPOSE:	_____	_____	_____
6. OPPONENT:	_____	_____	_____
7. COMPOSITION:	_____	_____	_____
8. PROPOSAL:	_____	_____	_____
9. DISPOSAL:	_____	_____	_____
10. COMPOSITE:	_____	_____	_____

Definition Bank:

Change the order or position of something

made up of different parts

A suggestion that is put forth

a rival or foe

A collection of yard clippings

to dethrone

To put down a payment

an essay; an arrangement of words in writing

A garbage dispenser

to put in danger’s way

## II. COMBINE & CREATE

Using the same ten words that appear in Divide & Conquer, complete each sentence with the correct word based on PON-, POS-, POSIT-. Clues for the prefix and base are provided within quotation marks.

1. I "put" all my grass clippings and raked leaves "together" in a \_\_\_\_\_ heap in the back of my yard.
2. If you \_\_\_\_\_ your nose, ears, and fingertips by "putting" them "out" in extreme cold, you may get frostbite.
3. The angry masses were eager to \_\_\_\_\_ ("put" "down" from his throne) their bloodthirsty dictator.
4. When typing, I sometimes write "teh" for "the" and carelessly \_\_\_\_\_ ("change" the "places" of) those letters.
5. I have to write a \_\_\_\_\_ (essay that is "put" "together" with sentences and paragraphs) for my English class over the weekend.
6. I'd like to make a \_\_\_\_\_ (suggestion that is "put" "forward") of marriage.
7. I'd like to make a \_\_\_\_\_ (money that is "put" "down" in payment) of \$100.
8. I respectfully disagree with my \_\_\_\_\_ (foe or rival who "places" himself "up against" my views and challenges them) on this issue.
9. According to the \_\_\_\_\_ ("put" "together" from a description) drawing from the police, the suspect had a scar on his right cheek.
10. My garbage \_\_\_\_\_ "puts" all my vegetable peelings "apart, in different directions" and washes them down the drain.

### Challenge

Can you complete these sentences with the correct PON-, POS-, POSIT- word. These words have NO PREFIXES: they all begin with PO ...

1. When I "place" a letter in the mailbox, I \_\_\_\_\_ it.
2. A rod or pole that has been "placed" in the earth is called a \_\_\_\_\_ .
3. Whenever I \_\_\_\_\_ for a picture, I "put" my shoulders back and smile in order to look my best.
4. My teacher wants me to develop good \_\_\_\_\_ and tells me to "put" my back up straight when I sit at my desk.

## RUN WITH THIS: Words from CUR-, CURS-, COUR-, COURS-

The words in this exercise derive from the Latin base meaning run, go. The Latin base is **CUR-, CURS-**; the French forms **COUR-, COURS-** ultimately derive from Latin.

Teachers will enjoy exploring the many derivatives of this base, and students will recognize many words that they perhaps never thought about before.

### WORDS WITHOUT PREFIXES: WHO/WHAT AM I?

Fill in each blank with the correct running, going word that begins with **CUR-, CURS-, COUR-, or COURS-** (no prefixes!).

1. I am the little arrow or figure that "runs" across your computer screen: \_\_\_\_\_

2. I am the "running" flow of a river: \_\_\_\_\_

3. I am cash that flows and "runs" in commercial exchanges: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Race horses and runners "run" on me toward the finish line: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Students take me as they "run, go" in their pursuit of knowledge: \_\_\_\_\_

(HINT: this is the same word as number 4, above, but used in a different sense).

6. I am a set or sequence of courses that "run" in a course of study: \_\_\_\_\_

(HINT: I contain a double "r").

7. I "run" with letters and packages to deliver them promptly: \_\_\_\_\_

8. We are the "running" reindeer of Santa Claus in "'Twas the Night Before Christmas:"

\_\_\_\_\_ (HINT: "More rapid than eagles, his \_\_\_\_\_ they came.")

9. Young students learn to write in \_\_\_\_\_ so that their letters "run" together with ligatures to enable them to write more quickly than in printing.

**Stop and reflect:** Did you ever think that so many familiar words would derive from a single Latin base?

### LEVELS OF MEANING ...

As you review the words above, think about the idea of running and going as it applies to people and things that do not physically move on foot!

Many of our currency words contain a notion of flowing and running. Money runs through our fingers; we speak of cash flow and liquid assets. Little wonder that money is so hard to hold on to! Its very essence is to run!

**DID YOU KNOW:** Many of our **education** words contain a notion of running, including racing and competing: we take courses in a curriculum; we have fast tracks and teaching goals; some students are fast learners. Even the academic word term refers to the end (terminus) of a race track!

## COMBINE & CREATE: CUR-, CURS-, COUR-, COURS-

### RUNNING WORDS WITH PREFIXES

Good prefixes to learn with this base are:

<b>con-</b>	= <b>with, together</b>
<b>dis-</b>	= <b>apart, in different directions</b>
<b>ex-</b>	= <b>out</b>
<b>extra-</b>	= <b>outside</b>
<b>in-</b>	= <b>in, on, into</b>
<b>ob-</b>	= <b>up against, toward (ob-, followed by CUR, assimilates into oc-, as in OCCUR)</b>
<b>pre-</b>	= <b>before</b>

Complete each sentence with the correct running, going word built on the Latin base CUR-, CURS-, COUR-, COURS-, which means run, go. Each word will begin with a prefix listed above.

1. Tomorrow our class will go on an \_\_\_\_\_ (field trip; a *running, going out*) to the local art museum.
2. The horse-drawn carriage of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the \_\_\_\_\_ (*before runner*; one thing that precedes another in development) of the automobile.
3. We may not always \_\_\_\_\_ (agree; *run, go* with each other) with one another, but we always respect the right of our neighbors to express their opinions.
4. The airport has recently expanded and added several new \_\_\_\_\_ (paths that *run together* at the terminal) in order to accommodate more travelers.
5. My parents \_\_\_\_\_ (*ran into* and assumed as a burden) a huge debt when they bought their new house, followed by two new cars.
6. Although the lecturer was interesting, he was hard to follow because he engaged in so many digressions. His lecturing style was rambling and \_\_\_\_\_ (disorganized and random; *running in different directions*).
7. Have you heard this new word? When airplanes *run into* each other on the runway before they are airborne, we call the collision a runway \_\_\_\_\_ (a *running into* one another). This is quite different from a collision or airplane crash, which occurs only in the air. The same word can describe a military invasion, in which soldiers *run into* foreign territory.
8. When something happens, we say that it \_\_\_\_\_ (*runs, goes up against* us).
9. School activities, such as clubs and plays, are called \_\_\_\_\_ (*outside the run* or regular course of studies) activities.
10. We have a \_\_\_\_\_ (repeating; *running back, again*) problem in this riverside town: the levees often break, and the residents must evacuate their houses.

**[Answers:** 1. *excursion*; 2. *precursor*; 3. *concur*; 4. *concourses*; 5. *incurred*; 6. *discursive*; 7. *incursion*; 8. *occurred*; 9. *extracurricular*; 10. *recurrent / recurring*



## HOW BASIC ARE BASES?

1) Bases express basic ideas that students readily understand.

Example: MOT-, MOV-, MOBIL- = move

Basic words include:

- motor
- motorcycle
- motorboat
- locomotive
- motion
- movement
- movers
- remove
- remote control
- commotion (e.g., all the noise and activity in a classroom)
- promotion, promoted (e.g., a moving ahead from one grade to the next)
- demotion, demoted (e.g., a moving down to a lower grade)
- mobile (e.g., a hanging ornament)
- mobile phone
- automobile
- Batmobile

2) Bases provide the base for more advanced vocabulary:

- motivate
- self-motivation
- movers and shakers (same word as above, with expanded meaning)
- the motive behind a crime that *moved* the criminal to act
- a sales promotion (same word as above, with expanded meaning)
- to promote an idea (to *move* it *ahead*)
- to be upwardly mobile (same word as above, with expanded meaning)
- social mobility
- immobile, immobility
- a remote location (same word as above, with expanded meaning)

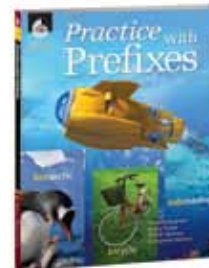
3) Bases provide the base for specialized vocabulary:

- a symphony with four movements (same word as above, with expanded meaning)
- a motif that moves through a wallpaper design, a musical composition, or a book
- to make a motion at a meeting: so moved!
- emotions are feelings that *move* us: I was so moved!

4) Bases provide the base for neologisms (new words in advertising, sales, pop culture):

- motion pictures = the movies
- motor hotel = motel
- emoticon = icons on a computer screen that show emotions!

# PRACTICE WITH PREFIXES



See additional support with *Practice with Prefixes*.

## I. WORD DISSECTION:

In the words below, separate the prefix with a slash and write the meaning of the prefix in the blank.

Ex: DE/DUCTION: down

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. AMBIDEXTROUS: _____ | 6. REPEAT: _____       |
| 2. INTERJECT: _____    | 7. CIRCUMSCRIBE: _____ |
| 3. PREVENTION: _____   | 8. ATTRACT: _____      |
| 4. SUBTRACT: _____     | 9. CONVENE: _____      |
| 5. POSTPONE: _____     | 10. DIVERT: _____      |

## II. WORD COMPOSITION:

The base TRACT means *pull, draw, drag* (make a flashcard!). Add the appropriate prefix to this base to compose the defined word.

Ex: to *draw together*: con TRACT

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| 1. to lengthen in time; to <i>draw forward, ahead</i> :                        | _____TRACT    |
| 2. to take away; to <i>draw from under</i> as in a column of numbers:          | _____TRACT    |
| 3. to take back or disavow; to <i>draw back</i> an earlier statement:          | _____TRACT    |
| 4. having pleasant features that <i>draw</i> others to you:                    | _____TRACTIVE |
| 5. the <i>drawing together</i> of a muscle:                                    | _____TRACTION |
| 6. to diminish; to <i>drag down</i> :  | _____TRACT    |
| 7. to remove by <i>drawing, pulling</i> something out:                         | _____TRACT    |
| 8. something that <i>pulls</i> your attention <i>in different directions</i> : | _____TRACTION |
| 9. theoretical, not concrete; <i>drawn away from</i> the real and actual:      | _____TRACT    |
| 10. an agreement <i>drawn together</i> by two or more parties:                 | _____TRACT    |

### III. WORDS IN CONTEXT

Complete the blanks with the appropriate word from the composition exercise. In some cases, you may need to change the suffix (e.g., contract, contractual, contraction)

1. Does excessive makeup \_\_\_\_\_ from a person's natural beauty?
2. You'd better have a dentist \_\_\_\_\_ that tooth. An exodontist specializes in difficult tooth-\_\_\_\_\_.
3. I forgot to put the vanilla \_\_\_\_\_ in the cookie dough.
4. Because this class meets only one day a week, we hold class for a \_\_\_\_\_ three-hour session.
5. The purpose of *Previews of Coming* \_\_\_\_\_ is to draw you back to the movies next week.
6. The journalist had to print a \_\_\_\_\_ of his offensive statement. (Observe the difference between this and a mere correction.)
7. Do you like \_\_\_\_\_ art?
8. You must \_\_\_\_\_ your muscles when working out with weights.
9. I find all that noise in the hall terribly \_\_\_\_\_ when I'm trying to memorize my flashcards.
10. You should find a quiet place where you can study without any \_\_\_\_\_.
11. I made an error in \_\_\_\_\_ when I entered that check into my register.
12. We have a \_\_\_\_\_ agreement that the paving job will be completed in ten days.

### IV. CAN YOU FIGURE OUT THE MEANING THROUGH THE WORD'S COMPONENT PARTS?

1. What is an **INTRACTABLE** child? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What are "Dissertation **ABSTRACTS**"? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why do we call a **TRACTOR** a tractor? (Did you hear about the woman who ran off with a tractor salesman ...??) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Have you ever been in **TRACTION**? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why do you need a **PROTRACTOR** for geometry class? \_\_\_\_\_
6. When I was in elementary school **RETRACTABLE** ball-point pens were all the rage.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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