



Reading On The Move

Beginning, Middle, and End Prefix, Suffix, and Root Words

Words are made up of different parts. All of these parts give meaning to, or can change the meaning of, the word. When you know the meaning of any part, it will help you to understand the whole word. Three of these parts are:

Prefix: *a group of letters that come at the beginning of a word.*

Suffix: *a group of letters that come at the end of a word.*

Root: *the basic part of a word; the prefixes and suffixes are added to it.*

Some words are just root words, meaning they don't have a prefix or suffix. Some words have a root word and just a prefix or just a suffix. Let's explore parts of a words some more.

Example: *Change* is a root word. By adding the prefix '*un*' and the suffix '*able*' you create a new word with a new meaning, *unchangeable*.

un + change + able = unchangeable

↑ ↑ ↑ ↑
prefix root suffix new word
 word

So, what does this new word mean? The prefix and suffix bring a new meaning to the root word. So, we need to figure out the meaning of the prefix and suffix to find the meaning of the new word.

The **prefix 'un'** means '*not*'

The **root word 'change'** means '*to alter*' or '*to make different*'

The **suffix 'able'** means '*can do*'

So, ***unchangeable*** means '*not able to be altered or made different*'

Let's explore prefixes some more. The chart on the next page shows some common prefixes and their meaning.

Here is a list of commonly used prefixes:

Prefix	Meaning	Example	Meaning of Example
an–	without	anarchy	without government
anti–	against	antibacterial	against bacteria
bene–	well, good	benefit	a good thing for someone
bi–	two	bicycle	vehicle with two wheels
bio–	life	biology	the study of living things
co–	with, together	cooperate	work together
dis–	not	disrespect	not respect
ex–	out	exit	the way to go out
geo–	earth	geology	the study of the earth
hyper–	over	hypertension	being overly tense
im–	not	impossible	not possible
in–	not	incomplete	not complete
inter–	between	interstate	between states
micro–	small	microbiology	the study of tiny living things
mid–	middle	midway	middle of the way, half way
mono–	one	monorail	a train that runs on one track
post–	after	post-test	a test taken after the unit
pre–	before	pre-test	a test taken before the unit
re–	do again	repeat	to do something again
trans–	across	transatlantic	across the Atlantic Ocean
un–	not	unhappy	not happy

Use what you know about prefixes to match each word with the correct definition. You may use the chart on page 3 or a dictionary if you have any trouble. The first one is done for you.

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|--------------------------------|--|
| _____ f1. <u>anemia</u> | a. something that can hurt <u>life</u> |
| _____ 2. <u>benefactor</u> | b. wait until <u>after</u> to do something |
| _____ 3. <u>biannual</u> | c. <u>between</u> countries |
| _____ 4. <u>biohazard</u> | d. send <u>out</u> |
| _____ 5. <u>coauthor</u> | e. a <u>tiny</u> living thing |
| _____ 6. <u>expel</u> | f. without enough red blood cells |
| _____ 7. <u>geothermal</u> | g. <u>over</u> active |
| _____ 8. <u>hyperactive</u> | h. <u>not</u> sure of |
| _____ 9. <u>international</u> | i. a person who does a <u>good</u> thing for you |
| _____ 10. <u>recall</u> | j. look at something <u>before</u> |
| _____ 11. <u>monochromatic</u> | k. <u>against</u> freezing |
| _____ 12. <u>incorrect</u> | l. write <u>with</u> another person |
| _____ 13. <u>preview</u> | m. <u>not</u> agree |
| _____ 14. <u>postpone</u> | n. heat made by the <u>earth</u> |
| _____ 15. <u>transport</u> | o. bring <u>across</u> , from one place to another |
| _____ 16. <u>midlife</u> | p. to remember, think of <u>again</u> |
| _____ 17. <u>microorganism</u> | q. <u>middle of</u> someone's life |
| _____ 18. <u>disagree</u> | r. <u>one</u> color |
| _____ 19. <u>uncertain</u> | s. <u>not</u> correct |
| _____ 20. <u>antifreeze</u> | t. every <u>two</u> years |

Use the word bank to complete each sentence. The first one is done for you.

Word Bank				
biweekly	disabled	microphone	monotone	unclear
costar	ex-girlfriend	midflight	rewrite	uninterested

21. His handwriting was so messy, his teacher made him rewrite his paper more neatly.
22. If you are confused or _____ about any information, please ask me questions after the presentation.
23. Because we get paid _____ I won't get another paycheck until next week.
24. She acted _____ even though she was very curious about the new guy at work.
25. The plane ran out of fuel _____.
26. The presenter spoke with a _____ voice.
27. Selma Hayek and Tom Hanks will _____ in a new movie.
28. She is my _____. We broke up last year.
29. Please speak into the _____ so the whole audience can hear you.
30. The robber _____ the security alarm.

Like prefixes, **suffixes** are letters that are added to a word to give it a different meaning. However, they are added at the *end* of the word.

Here is a list of commonly used suffixes:

Suffix	Meaning	Example	Meaning of Example
-able	can do (something)	portable	able to be carried
-ible	can do (something)	edible	able to be eaten
-ed	has happened, past tense	walked	the walk has already happened
-er	a person who does an action	teacher	one who teaches
-ful	full of	hopeful	full of hope
-fy	to make	magnify	to make bigger
-ing	is happening, present tense	talking	there is talk happening
-ist	person who does an action or believes in a certain idea of religion	artist	person who works with art
-ize	to make	victimize	make someone a victim; harm someone
-less	not having	hopeless	having no hope
-ment	the action of	amendment	the action of changing
-ness	condition of	brightness	how much light there is
-ology	the study of	zoology	study of animals
-ous	full of, having	joyous	having much joy
-tion	action, process of	creation	the act of making

Use what you know about suffixes to match the word with the correct definition. The first one is done for you.

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| <u> k</u> | 31. edible | a. <u>can be</u> of comfort |
| _____ | 32. <u>consideration</u> | b. the watching has <u>already happened</u> |
| _____ | 33. beautify | c. <u>the study of</u> life |
| _____ | 34. <u>scientist</u> | d. <u>the action of</u> considering, or thinking about something |
| _____ | 35. legalize | e. <u>the action of</u> advancing, or moving forward |
| _____ | 36. glorious | f. there is singing <u>happening</u> |
| _____ | 37. <u>advancement</u> | g. <u>to make</u> beautiful |
| _____ | 38. biology | h. <u>not having</u> a home |
| _____ | 39. wonderful | i. <u>a person who studies</u> science |
| _____ | 40. homeless | j. <u>a person who</u> drives |
| _____ | 41. happiness | k. <u>able to be</u> eaten |
| _____ | 42. driver | l. <u>having or deserving</u> glory; magnificent |
| _____ | 43. watched | m. <u>to make</u> legal, or permitted by law |
| _____ | 44. singing | n. <u>full of</u> wonder; really great |
| _____ | 45. comfortable | o. the <u>condition of</u> being happy |

A **root word** is the word, or part of the word, which gives the word its meaning. Some root words are real words on their own, such as *'friend.'* This word means something without a prefix or suffix.

Example: **'Friend'** is a word all by itself: *He is my friend.*

Adding a prefix or suffix to the word changes the meaning of the word, but the root of the word stays the same. Take a look:

friendship means *'the state of being friends'*

friendly means *'of or like a friend; kindly'*

unfriendly means *'unlike a friend; hostile'*

friendless means *'without a friend'*

Other root words need a prefix or suffix to be a full word. Let's take a look at an example of this:

- The **root 'aud'** means *'to hear'*
- *'aud'* is part of a word and cannot be used as a word on its own
- Adding a suffix completes the word and gives it additional meaning, but does not change the root, *'to hear'*

aud + the suffix **ible** = **audible**, meaning *'able to be heard'*

aud + the suffix **ology** = the *'study of hearing'*

Here is a list of root words that do not stand alone as full words.

Root Word	Meaning	Example	Meaning of Word
agri–	field	agriculture	science of growing crops in a field
ann–	year	annual	once a year
antrop–	man/human	philanthropy	being generous to people
arch–	government, first	monarch	king
aqua–	water	aquatic	having to do with water
aud–	hear	auditorium	a place for people to come and hear a speech or performance
auto–	self	autobiography	the story of your life, written by you
cent–	one hundred	centipede	an insect with 100 legs
chrono–	time	chronology	a list of events in time
civi–	citizen	civilian	a person who is not in the military
cord–	heart	accord	agree (from the heart)
demos–	people	epidemic	a disease that affects many people at the same time
fac– ,fic– fect– , fec–	to make or do	fiction	a made-up story
graph–, gram–	writing	graphic	something that is written
labor–	to work	laboratory	a place where scientists work
man–	hand	manual	done by hand
mar–	sea	maritime	having to do with the sea
port–	carry	portable	able to be carried
terr–	land	subterranean	under the ground or land
vita–	life	vital	something important for life

Use what you know about root words to match the word with the correct definition. You may use the chart or a dictionary if needed. The first one is done for you.

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|---------------------------|---|
| <u> c </u> 51. agrarian | a. the study of early cultures, or <u>the first things</u> in history |
| _____ 52. anniversary | b. full of <u>question</u> |
| _____ 53. employment | c. having to do with farming in the <u>field</u> |
| _____ 54. anthropology | d. of no <u>use</u> |
| _____ 55. archaeology | e. a group of people who <u>hear</u> something |
| _____ 56. aquarium | f. something that happens every <u>year</u> , on a certain date |
| _____ 57. useless | g. full of <u>belief</u> |
| _____ 58. audience | h. a record of the history of events in <u>time</u> |
| _____ 59. automobile | i. the study of early <u>humans</u> |
| _____ 60. beautiful | j. full of <u>good looks</u> |
| _____ 61. century | k. a tank of <u>water</u> for fish |
| _____ 62. chronicle | l. the culture of the <u>citizens</u> of a country |
| _____ 63. civilization | m. having to do with <u>work</u> |
| _____ 64. faithfully | n. something you drive by <u>yourself</u> |
| _____ 65. wonderful | o. <u>100 years</u> |

Use the word bank and what you know about prefixes, suffixes, and root words to complete each sentence. The first one is done for you.

Word Bank		
cardiac	telegram	export
democracy	collaborate	territory
factory	manufacture	vitamins
	submarine	

61. China and Japan export many goods to other countries.
62. They _____ cars, clothes, shoes, and many other things in their factories.
63. My father works in a _____ that makes food for cows.
64. Vegetables have important _____ and minerals that help keep you healthy.
65. The government of the United States is a _____. Political power comes from the people.
66. Many older people have _____ problems. They are at risk for a heart attack.
67. Fifty years ago, before e-mail, a fast way to send a message was by _____.
68. The Klondike Gold Rush occurred in the Yukon _____ of Canada.
69. When you _____ with others on a job, the work gets done faster.
70. A _____ allows explorers to see parts of the ocean never seen by man.

➔ Answer Key

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| 1. f | 8. g | 15. o |
| 2. i | 9. c | 16. q |
| 3. t | 10. p | 17. e |
| 4. a | 11. r | 18. m |
| 5. l | 12. s | 19. h |
| 6. d | 13. j | 20. k |
| 7. n | 14. b | |

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| 21. rewrite | 26. monotone |
| 22. unclear | 27. costar |
| 23. biweekly | 28. ex-girlfriend |
| 24. uninterested | 29. microphone |
| 25. midflight | 30. disabled |

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|-------|-------|-------|
| 31. k | 37. e | 43. b |
| 32. d | 38. c | 44. f |
| 33. g | 39. n | 45. a |
| 34. i | 40. h | |
| 35. m | 41. o | |
| 36. l | 42. j | |

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|-------|-------|-------|
| 46. c | 52. d | 58. l |
| 47. f | 53. e | 59. g |
| 48. m | 54. n | 60. b |
| 49. i | 55. j | |
| 50. a | 56. o | |
| 51. k | 57. h | |

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| 61. export | 66. cardiac |
| 62. manufacture | 67. telegram |
| 63. factory | 68. territory |
| 64. vitamins | 69. collaborate |
| 65. democracy | 70. submarine |