

INSTRUCTION AFFIXES

Once students are competent at using letter-sound relationships to decode words, they begin to recognize meaningful units of words, such as graphemic bases (–an, –ain), affixes (–ed, re–), or syllables (be•cause, to•geth•er). Structural elements of words follow predictable patterns. Able readers deduce these patterns without giving them much thought. They perceive common roots and affixes, divide words rapidly, and decode accurately. On the other hand, struggling readers are not adept at recognizing or utilizing structural cues, so they need formal instruction. All students, even those who read with ease, spell more accurately as cognizance of orthographic features advances.

The structural analysis materials and resource lists in this section target word analysis skills, as opposed to vocabulary development. These are addressed in the vocabulary section.

STEP 1 – TEACH STUDENTS TO IDENTIFY PREFIXES/ROOT WORDS/SUFFIXES

When introducing prefix/root word/suffix identification and usage to students, it is preferable to use roots that are English words after affixes are removed. Students grasp these concepts more readily when dealing with affixes on known words. The third example below contains a Latin root (voc, vok – to call), an example of root words to avoid in phonics exercises.

PREFIX	ROOT	SUFFIX	
dis	grace	ful	
re	turn	ing	
pro	vok	ed	(Latin root)

STEP 2 – TEACH OR REVIEW COMMON SUFFIX USAGES

Suffixes are added to the end of words to modify usage. These are common suffix usages:

- –s or –es to form plurals or third-person-singular verbs
- –ed to form past tense verbs
- –ing to form present participle verbs or –en or –ed to form past participle verbs
- –er to form comparative adjectives or –est to form superlative adjectives

In addition, suffixes are used to change words from one part of speech to another (act→actor, verb→noun). As students are learning about orthographic characteristics of words, it is suffix recognition that is the goal. Complexities of usage can be learned once they read proficiently.

STEP 3 – TEACH HOW PREFIXES ARE USED TO CHANGE WORD MEANING

Prefixes are placed at the beginning of words to change meaning. “Pre” in “prefix” is a prefix meaning “before” or “in front of.” The study of prefixes and their affect on meaning is a valuable strategy for expanding word knowledge and is covered in the vocabulary section.

As a word analysis strategy, prefix recognition and general usage concepts are the objectives. Students need to be able to recognize and remove prefixes when breaking down words.

RESOURCE LIST PREFIXES & SUFFIXES

PREFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLES
a- (before consonants) an- (before vowels)	on, in, to, of, not	aboard, ashore, apart, asymmetric anesthetic, another, anarchy
ab-	from, away	abnormal, abstain, abstract
ac-, ad-, af-, ag-, as-, at-	to, toward	accent, acquire, admit, adapt, affair, aggressive, assign, attune
ambi-	both	ambidextrous, ambiguous
amphi-	around	amphitheater, amphibian
ante-	before	antecedent, anteroom
anti-	against, oppose	antifreeze, antitrust, antidote
arch-	chief	archangel, archrival
auto-	of/by self	automobile, autograph, automatic
be-	by, away	beside, behave, befriend, beneath
bi-	two, twice	bipartisan, bicycle, bifocal, biweekly
by-	near, aside	bypass, bystander, bylaw
circum-	around	circumstance, circumspect
co-, com- con-, col- cor-	with, together	cooperate, coincide, combat, combine, conflict, conduct, collect, collaborate, correct, correspond
contra-, counter-	against, opposite	contradict, counterproposal
de-	away, down, opposite	depart, decay, deplete, deactivate
dis-	opposite, from, away	dishonest, disobey, disgust, discount
en-, em-	put into, on, make	endanger, enforce, emphasis
epi-	upon, around	epidermis, epilogue, epidemic
e-, ex-	out of, from	emit, evict, exhale, export, exclaim
en-	make, in	enlarge, entrust, unfold
for-, fore-	away, in front of	forget, foretell, foreground
in-, im-	in, into	inject, intense, impress, impact
in-, im- il-, ir-	not	indefinite, impatient, impossible, illiterate, illegal, irresponsible
inter-	between, mutual	interact, international, interrupt
intra-, intro-	within, into	intramural, intravenous, introduce
mis-	wrong	mismanage, misinterpret, mistake
mono-	one	monolateral, monotone

PREFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLES
multi-	several	multifaceted, multicolored
non-	not	nonviolent, nonsense, nonfiction
ob-, of-, op-	in way of, toward	obstacle, obscure, offense, oppose
per-	throughout, completely	permit, perplex, pertain
pre-	before	prehistoric, prepaid, preschool
post-	after	postpone, posttest, postscript
pro-	support, before, forward	pronoun, proponent, profess
re-	back, again	repeat, retract, return, reconstruct
semi-	partly, half	semicircle, semiannual, semiskilled
sub-, suc-, suf- sug-, sup-, sus-	under, lower, next	submarine, succeed, suffer, suggest, suppose, suspend, suspect
super-	over, above	supernatural, supervise
tele-	from a distance	telephone, telepathy, television
trans-	across, beyond, change	transport, transform, transcript
ultra-	beyond	ultraviolet, ultrasonic
un-	not, opposite	unpleasant, unlikely, untie, unfair

SUFFIX	PART OF SPEECH	EXAMPLES
-able, -ible	adjective	laughable, portable, visible
-ability, -ibility	noun	marketability, credibility
-acy	noun	diplomacy, accuracy, literacy
-age	noun	percentage, courage, package
-al	adjective	comical, annual, familial
-an, -ian	noun	American, magician, optician
-ance, -ence	noun	acceptance, conference
-ancy, -ency		constancy, emergency
-ant, -ent	adjective noun	observant, different, indulgent assistant, president
-ar, -er	adjective noun	singular, sweeter (comparative) beggar, liar, teacher, southerner
-arian	noun	disciplinarian, humanitarian
-ed	verb (past tense) adjective	walked, hummed, played feathered, treasured, striped
-en	verb adjective	loosen, harden, weaken earthen, swollen, wooden

SUFFIX	PART OF SPEECH	EXAMPLES
-es	noun (plural) verb (present indicative)	boxes, dishes, ladies, kisses teaches, brushes, fixes
-est	adjective (superlative)	prettiest, kindest, snowiest
-ful	adjective	colorful, beautiful, wonderful
-fy, -ify	verb	petrify, magnify, intensify, satisfy
-ic, -ical	adjective	heroic, dramatic, terrific, optic historical, technical, cynical
-ing	verb (participle) noun	throwing, plowing, fighting blessing, paneling
-ion -sion -tion	noun	fashion, union, champion division, vision, inversion motion, suggestion, contribution
-ish	adjective	childish, yellowish, English
-ism	noun	criticism, autism, fanaticism
-ist	noun	lyricist, motorist, biologist
-istic	adjective	legalistic, ritualistic
-ity	noun	density, curiosity, brevity
-ive	adjective	disruptive, evasive, lucrative
-ize	verb	alphabetize, equalize, emphasize
-less	adjective	hopeless, thoughtless, colorless
-ly	adverb adjective	meanly, roughly, thoughtlessly elderly, daily, womanly
-ment	noun	development, accomplishment
-ness	noun	loudness, meanness, kindness
-ory	adjective noun	auditory, discriminatory directory, observatory
-ous -osity	adjective noun	joyous, serious, courteous, gracious curiosity, monstrosity
-th	noun adjective (numeric)	growth, health, width fifth, sixteenth
-ty	noun adjective (numeric)	activity, certainty, safety, property twenty, sixty
-ure	noun	architecture, legislature
-ward(s)	adverb	homeward, backwards, forward
-y	adjective noun	curly, windy, messy, fruity jealousy, blasphemy