

## OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/ENGLISH IB/TOPS/MACS/CLASS 2 HOMEWORK

NAME (FIRST AND LAST): \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

**DECIPHERING UNFAMILIAR WORDS****UNDERSTANDING PREFIXES, SUFFIXES, AND ROOTS**

As we read, we often have to find the meanings of unknown words. One way to do this is to look up the definitions in a dictionary, but this can be very time consuming. An easier way is to guess – not randomly but intelligently! We can apply our knowledge of prefixes (common word beginnings), suffixes (common word endings), and roots (common word bases). While this strategy will not work for every unknown word we encounter, it is amazing how many words can be deciphered simply by knowing the meanings of these common word parts that appear time and again.

The English language contains hundreds of prefixes, suffixes, and roots. The more of these word parts you can identify and understand, the greater your power to decipher the meanings of unknown words will be. Here are some examples of how they work.

**A prefix is a word part added to the beginning of a root to create a new meaning.**

Examples of prefixes:

- astro (star) astronomy—the study of the stars
- cent (hundred) century—a period of 100 years
- mono (one) monorail—a vehicle that runs on one rail

**A suffix is a letter or a group of letters added to the end of a root to change its meaning.**

Examples of suffixes:

- able (able; can do) agreeable—able or willing to agree
- er (one who) practitioner—one who practices something
- ology (the study of) geology—the study of the earth, rocks

**Roots are the form of a word after all prefixes and/or suffixes are removed. A root or base word is a word from which other words are formed—either by adding parts in front of it or at the end. To find the root, you simply remove all the parts that have been added. When you cannot take away any more letters or parts and still have a word that is related in meaning, you have probably found the root.**

Examples of roots:

- fide (faith; trust) confident—trusting oneself
- graph (write) biography—a writing about one's life
- onym (name) anonymous—unnamed; without a name

**Important!**

Remember that to use prefixes, suffixes, and roots effectively, you must also consider the main idea of the passage that you are reading, along with other word clues that you find. When you put everything together, watch how many words you can decipher!

**A) PREFIX EXERCISE**

In the table below, the definitions of some common prefixes are listed. Examples of words that contain these prefixes are provided as well. In the column on the far right, come up with your own examples. There should be one example for each prefix. The first one “un-” has been done for you.

Prefix	Definition	Examples	Your example
un-	not/opposite	unlock, unsafe, uncover	<i>untidy</i>
re-	again/back	reread, rewrite, return	
in-	not	inactive, income	
im-	not	impossible, improper	
dis-	not/opposite of	dislike, distrust, disagree	
mis-	bad or badly wrong or wrongly	misbehave, misread, misspell	
de-	reduce away from	defeat, deform, decrease	
en-, em-	to cause to be, to put into or onto, to go into or onto	encounter, enable, employ, embark, encircle	
anti-	opposite, against	antibiotic, antifreeze	
auto-	self	autograph, automatic	
in-, il-, im-, ir-	not	inability, impatient, irregular, illegal	
inter-	between	intercept, interview, interstate	

## B) SUFFIX EXERCISE

In the table below, the definitions of some common suffixes are listed. Examples of words that contain these suffixes are provided as well. In the column on the far right, come up with your own examples. There should be one example for each suffix. The first one “-er” has been done for you.

Suffix	Definition	Examples	Your example
-er	person connected with	teacher, baker, writer	<i>dancer</i>
-ful	full of	beautiful, painful	
-less	without	careless, helpless	
-tion	act of, state of, result of	attention, invitation, restriction	
-ness	condition, state of	darkness, fairness	
-ment	act, process	enjoyment, replacement	
-en	made of, to make	wooden, dampen, tighten	
-able, -ible	can be done	enjoyable, sensible, doable	
-ive	inclined/tending toward an action	festive, talkative, active, sensitive	
-logy, -ology	science of/study of	biology, chronology	
-ence, -ance	act/condition of	persistence, excellence, assistance, importance	
-an	one having a certain skill/relating to/belong to	electrician, magician, American, suburban	
-ent, -ant	causing a specific action	obedient, absorbent, abundant, elegant	
-ity, -ty	state of/quality of	prosperity, equality	
-ic	relating to/characterized by	energetic, historic	
-ize	to make/to cause to become	fertilize, criticize, apologize	
-ous	full of	adventurous, nervous, mysterious, courteous	

### C) ROOT EXERCISE

In the table below, the definitions of some common roots are listed. Examples of words that contain these roots are provided as well. In the column on the far right, come up with your own examples. There should be one example for each root. The first one “bio” has been done for you.

Root	Definition	Examples	Your example
bio	life	biography, biopsy	<i>biology</i>
graph	write	telegraph, phonograph, autograph	
phon	sound	symphony, microphone, phonics	
scope	see	microscope, periscope, stethoscope	
geo	earth, ground, soil		
vis/vid	to see	video, provide, providence, evidence	
ast/astr	star	astronaut, asterisk, disaster	
mit	to send	emit, admit, remit, transmit	
audi/aud	hear	audience, auditorium, audiovisual	
dict	to say, tell	diction, dictator	
port	to carry	portable, transport	
scrib/script	to write	describe, manuscript	
spect	to see/watch/observe	prospect, respect, specimen	
hydr	water	hydrogen, hydrant	
chron	time	chronological, synchronize, chronical, chronic	
therm	heat	thermometer, thermostat, thermos	
bene	good	benefit, benign, beneficial	

## D) FINDING ROOTS

- I. Which of the following are root words only, without any other parts added?  
Circle them:

scream	faultless	coffee	recoverable
painful	straight	inconsiderate	overturning
nature	brother	lemonade	speech
unknown	pen	paper	era

- II. A word from the list below has been written on each line below. On the same line, write three other words from the list that have the same root word.

undeveloped	interact	Structural	transaction
recolouring	friendship	colourfully	inactive
actor	development	developer	multicoloured
unfriendly	obstruction	friendlessness	developmental
destructive	befriending	discolouration	construction

1. Undeveloped: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Recolouring: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Actor: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Unfriendly: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Destructive: \_\_\_\_\_

## VOCABULARY BUILDING

*The words in this vocabulary section are taken from "The Fateful Meeting," Chapter 1 of the story about the travels of Bridget, Barnaby, Babette, and their feline friend Beauregard. Chapter 1 is in the Week 1 Handout.*

**A) Use a good dictionary to find the definitions of the words below. Write down the definitions in the space provided.**

1. Gallivanting: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Carousing: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Idiosyncrasy: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Naïve: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Unkempt: \_\_\_\_\_

## B) RELATIONSHIPS

**Decide what relationship the following pairs of words have to each other. If they have similar meanings, write "S" next to the pair of words. If they have opposite meanings, write "O" next to the words.**

1. \_\_\_ anxiety :: uneasiness
2. \_\_\_ hesitant :: reluctant
3. \_\_\_ chic :: unkempt
4. \_\_\_ carousing :: gallivanting
5. \_\_\_ sophisticated :: naive
6. \_\_\_ suspicion :: trust
7. \_\_\_ quirk :: idiosyncrasy
8. \_\_\_ premature :: tardy
9. \_\_\_ amateur :: dabbler
10. \_\_\_ despicable :: foul
11. \_\_\_ acquaintance :: close friend

### C) SENTENCE COMPLETION

Fill in the blanks with the help of the word bank below. Do not use any word more than once.

unkempt	idiosyncrasies	gallivanting	anxiety	reluctant		
dabbled	naïve	uneasy	chic	foul	quirks	trust

- David was always out \_\_\_\_\_ instead of doing school work, so no one was surprised when he failed eighth grade.
- Wearing a dyed green carnation on his coat was one of Oscar Wilde's \_\_\_\_\_.
- "Before I became an accountant, I \_\_\_\_\_ in music," sighed Nancy, "I was even in a band during one semester in college."
- The security guard was very embarrassed when he found out that the \_\_\_\_\_ man in the shabby jacket he had just thrown out was, in fact, Albert Einstein, the famous scientist and guest speaker.
- The thought of playing a tuba solo in front of the whole stadium caused Mort a great deal of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ian always mixes together all the food on his plate before he eats it. It's just one of his \_\_\_\_\_.
- Susan was \_\_\_\_\_ to leave the beach because she was only halfway through building her sandcastle.
- Jack's sister told him someone had put poison in the Christmas candy and that he better give his to her so she could get rid of it, and he was so \_\_\_\_\_ he didn't realize she just wanted his candy for herself.
- Simon is \_\_\_\_\_ driving by himself late at night.

10. Lance just got back from Paris with a French girlfriend and a  
\_\_\_\_\_ wardrobe.

#### **D) CREATING SENTENCES**

**Create your own sentence for each of the following words. Make sure that the sentences show that you really understand the meanings of the words.**

1. Dabbled: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Anxiety: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Naïve: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Reluctant: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Acquaintance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**THE END**