

Unit 1 Prefixes

NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

Background and Objectives

In these four sorts most of the prefixes introduced in late syllables and affixes (*in-*, *un-*, *dis-*, *mis-*, *re-*, *ex-*, *pre-*) are reviewed with different words and students are introduced to eight additional prefixes (*de-*, *fore-*, *post-*, *after-*, *sub-*, *com-*, *en-*, and *pro-*). Less common prefixes and assimilated prefixes are covered in later sorts. The spelling of most of these words may not be particularly challenging, as they are made up of base words that are familiar and prefixes that are spelled regularly; however, working with the sorts helps students think through the generative process of how word elements—prefixes and bases—are put together. Students will:

- Identify the prefixes and what each means
- Explain how the addition of a prefix changes the meaning of the word
- Spell these words correctly

Targeted Learners

These sorts are for students in the early derivational relations stage who will already know the spelling and meaning of most of these words but who may never have examined words in categories to see the meaning connections between them. The words chosen for these sorts are suitable for students in upper elementary. For students in middle and high school, you may want to prepare additional sorts or substitute more challenging words from the word lists provided here. These sorts will prepare students for the longer words to come in later sorts where their ability to recognize morphemic chunks will make it easier to read and understand multisyllabic words.

Teaching Tips

Create a chart that you add to as new prefixes are introduced throughout this unit as well as throughout other units in this book. It will serve as a ready reference when students encounter words in sorts as well as in their reading materials. Students can create their own chart as part of their word study notebook.

Word hunts will be especially fruitful when students look for words that contain the prefixes shown in these sorts. Content area textbooks or informational text may be richer in these words than fiction so include those in word hunts. The dictionary is an easy place to hunt for words with prefixes, but wherever students look, they need to consider the meanings of words when deciding if it has a prefix with a particular meaning. For example, they should avoid selecting words such as *reason*, *mission*, or *precious* which begin with *re-*, *mis-*, and *pre-* but do not suggest “again,” “not,” or “before.” Students are likely to find many words that consist of a familiar prefix and attached to

a root word that does not stand by itself, such as *rebellion*. Without the prefix we are left with the root *bellion*, which does not have a familiar meaning. These roots will be examined in later sorts, and you may decide to explain the difference between base words and word roots to the students. Students can look up any words that they don't know the meaning of or that they have questions about. For example, the word *rebellion* contains the prefix *re-* and the word root *-bel-*, which comes from a Latin word that means "war." *Rebellion* (and *rebel*) literally mean "to war against." This mentioning of word roots and how they function within words will plant the seed for more extensive exploration of these important elements later on. (For example, in Sort 36 the words *antebellum* and *postbellum* are examined.)

There are many additional words listed for each of these sorts. Teachers may want to create additional sorts to spend more time with these prefixes or revisit these prefixes with harder words after students have studied the spelling features and Greek and Latin roots that make them more challenging. For example, *dejection* will be better understood after the study of words that end in *-tion* and the study of the Latin root *-ject-* meaning "throw."

Games from *WTW* that can be adapted for the features explored in this unit include Jeopardy, Card Categories, I'm Out, Word Study Pursuit, Word Study Uno, and other games described in Chapter 6. The card game Quartet described in Chapter 8 of *WTW* can also be adapted to review prefixes.

Many of the prefixes that are covered in this unit occur in Spanish and are easily recognized in some cognates: *intolerante* (*intolerant*), *explorar* (*explore*), *inflar* (*inflate*), *revisar* (*revise*), *preparar* (*prepare*), *submarino* (*submarine*), *compuesto* (*compound*), *proveer* (*provide*), and *encontrar* (*encounter*). The negative or opposite sense of *un-*, *dis-*, *mis-*, and *de-* do not exist in Spanish but are substituted with the prefix *des-* as in *desconocido* (*unknown*), *deshonra* (*dishonest*), *descorazonar* (*discourage*), and *desinflar* (*deflate*). *Ante-* and *pre-* are used instead of *fore-* (*foreboding* = *presentimiento*), and *pos-* is used instead of *post-* and *after-* (*posponer* for *postpone*). A Spanish/English dictionary will help you find more examples of these.

SORT 1 PREFIXES (IN-, UN-, DIS-, MIS-)

Demonstrate, Sort, and Reflect

(See page 13.) All of these prefixes change the base word to a negative meaning or to an opposite meaning. Prepare a set of words to use for teacher-directed modeling. Save the discussion of word meanings until after sorting. Display a transparency of the words on the overhead or hand out the sheet of words to the students. Ask them what they notice about the words and get ideas about how the words can be sorted. Students usually notice that all the words contain prefixes. Remind them of the terms **prefixes** (units added to the beginning of a word) and **base word** (the word to which prefixes and suffixes are added). Put up the headers (*un-*, *in-*, *dis-*, *mis-*) and the bolded key words and then sort the rest of the words.

The discussion after the first sort might go something like this: "Look at the words under *un-*. What do you notice about the meanings of these words?" Focus on the key word *uneasy*. Ask students for the base word. Explain that a prefix has been added to the base word and that it changes the meaning of the word. Ask students what *uneasy* means (a feeling that is the opposite of easy or not easy). Repeat this with the other words under *un-*, talking about the meaning of each word. Then remind students that a prefix has a meaning of its own and ask them what *un-* means in the first list of words (it means "not" or "the opposite of"). Repeat this with the words under *in-* ("not"), *mis-* ("bad" or "badly"), and *dis-* ("not" or "the opposite of") to review the meaning of each prefix. Students can write these meanings on their

headers. Some words will not be literal reversals of the base word. Ask students if they've thought about how *disease* can literally mean "the opposite of" *ease*? *Mistake* and *mischief* clearly have negative meanings but are not really the opposite of the base words *take* and *chief*. Point out the double *s* in the commonly misspelled word *misspell* and ask students why there must be two. (One goes with the prefix and one with the base word.)

<i>in-</i>	<i>un-</i>	<i>dis-</i>	<i>mis-</i>
insincere	uneasy	dishonest	misspell
informal	unaware	disbelief	misfortune
infrequent	unknown	disorder	mistake
inhuman	undress	disconnect	misleading
inexpensive	unfasten	disease	mischief
insane	untidy	disrespect	
		discourage	

Extend

Students should go on *word hunts* in familiar reading material to locate as many words as they can with these same prefixes. They may find words like *inside* and *inject* where the prefix *in-* suggests "into" rather than "not." Just have them add these in another column for now (they will study them in the next sort). There will also be some "exceptions"; that is, words such as *uncle* and *reach* that do not have identifiable prefixes because there is no base word or root left when the prefix is removed. These are known as *false prefixes*.

Additional Words.

- un-** *unattached, unbroken, unarmed, unaided, unbearable, uncomfortable, uncommon, unconscious, unexpected, unfortunate, unfriendly, unglued, ungrateful, unheated, unlucky, unpopular, unravel, unreasonable, unsuccessful, untangle, untouched, unplanned, unworthy*
- in-** *inability, inaccurate, inadequate, inaudible, incapable, inconsiderate, inconvenient, incredible, incurable, indigestion, indirect, inefficient, inexperienced, inflexible*
- dis-** *disadvantage, disappoint, disapprove, disarm, disaster, discard, discontinue, discord, discount, discharge, disfigure, disgrace, distrust, disinfect, disjointed, dislocated, dismount, disown, disprove, disqualify, distaste, distract, distress*
- mis-** *misbehave, misconduct, misfit, misgivings, misprint, misstep, mistrusted, misused, misunderstood*

SORT 2 PREFIXES (PRE-, FORE-, POST-, AFTER-)

Demonstrate, Sort, and Reflect

(See page 14.) You can introduce this sort in a manner similar to Sort 1, but students can probably sort by prefixes without much introduction. *Pre-* and *fore-* both mean "before" whereas *post-* and *after-* both mean "after." Spend time discussing with students the meanings of the prefixes and words. The word *prefix* offers an excellent opportunity for thinking explicitly about what this term means: literally, "to fix before." The *pre-* in *preposition* is pronounced differently (as it is in *preface*) but talk about the base word and how a preposition is a part of speech that comes before a position as in "up the hill" or

“under the covers.” Compare and contrast *preseason/postseason*, *forethought/afterthought*, and *foreword/afterword*. The latter word pair may be illustrated by showing the students a book that has a foreword and an afterword. A foreword is usually written by someone other than the author. If the word *preface* does not come up in this discussion, you may choose to mention it: It literally means “to speak before” and, in contrast to a foreword, is usually written by the author.

pre-	fore-	post-	after-
prepare	foretell	postpone	afternoon
predict	foreman	postwar	afterword
preface	foreword	postseason	afterthought
prehistoric	forefathers	postdate	aftertaste
precede	foresight	posttest	
prefix	forethought		
preseason			
preposition			
prewar			

Additional Words.

pre- precedent, predate, predetermine, preexisting, prejudice, preliminary, premier, premium, premonition, preoccupied, preventative, previous

fore- forecourt, forefinger, foregone, foreground, forehand, foreknowledge, foreordained, forepaw, forerunner, foreshadow, forewarning

post- posthumous, postscript, postcolonial, postdated, postmortem, posterior, postmodern, postgraduate

after- afterlife, aftermath, aftereffects, afterglow, aftershocks, afterworld

SORT 3 PREFIXES (RE-, EX-, IN-, DE-)

Demonstrate, Sort, and Reflect

(See page 15.) Introduce this sort in a manner similar to Sort 1 but be aware that many of these words do not have a base that stands alone. Begin the discussion with words that have a base word that is clearly affected by the prefix and can be interpreted literally. *Replay* means to “play again” or “play back.” Some words cannot be interpreted so literally but should be words that are familiar to the students. For example, they should be able to see how *inflate* and *interior* are related to “into” even though the base words are unclear in meaning. *Re-* can mean either “again” or “back,” *ex-* means “out of” or “beyond,” *de-* means “to take away,” and *in-* is revisited here in words where it means “into” or “inside” as in *inflate*.

re-	in-	ex-	de-
replay	inflate	exhale	deflate
reappear	interior	exile	defrost
reclaim	inhabit	explore	deprive
reconsider	inmate	excess	decrease
reruns	install	exhaust	delete
research	inhale	exterior	
reaction			

Extend

Look for antonyms (*inhale, exhale, interior, exterior, deflate, inflate*) and challenge students to use them in sentences: *The exterior of the little house was shabby but the interior was clean and tidy.*

Take all the *in-* words from last week and this week and mix them up. Then ask students to sort them by whether the meaning refers to “not” or “in.”

Create the card game Quartet described in Chapter 8 of WTW using the eight prefixes covered so far. Require students to add the meaning when they ask for matches: “Give me any cards you have with the prefix *in-* meaning ‘not’.”

De- occurs in many words (*dessert, decade, delicate*) that do not suggest “away from,” so in word hunts students need to consider the meaning of the word carefully.

Additional Words.

re- rearrange, reassure, recline, recover, reforest, refrain, reimburse, revolt, revolution, repair, repellent, replacement, respond, restrain, revenge, reverse, retrieve, retreat
ex- excavate, excellent, excerpt, except, exception, exchange, excrete, excursion, exempt, exhibit, exodus, exoskeleton, exotic, explode, export, exposure, extent, extinct, extract, extremity
in- (in, inside) inborn, incite, incision, include, infection, inference, influence, ingredient, injection, inquire, inscription, insight, insert, install, intrude, invasion, investment
de- debug, decaffeinated, decanter, decapitate, decongestant, decontaminate, deficient, deforestation, defuse, degenerate, degrading, dehydrated, demerit, demolish, demoralized, denominator, denounce, deodorant, deplete, deported, deposed, depreciate, deprived, derived, desegregate, detached, detract, deviate

SORT 4 PREFIXES (SUB-, COM-, PRO-, EN-)

(See page 16.) In this group of prefixes the meaning of *sub-* and *com-* are straightforward, *sub-* meaning “below” or “under” as in *subway* and *com-* meaning “with” or “together” as in *combine*. In these words *en-* occurs in verbs and generally suggests “causing something to happen” as in *encourage*. Compare *encourage* with *discourage* from an earlier sort. *Pro-* is a common prefix but is harder to pin down in terms of its meaning. In these words it suggests “for,” “forward,” or “in favor of” as in *promote* (literally, “to move forward”). Word hunts will turn up many words beginning with *pro-* whose meaning will not be clearly related to this.

sub-	com-	pro-	en-
subway	combine	propel	enable
subset	company	propose	encourage
submarine	companion	protect	entrust
subtotal	compound	provider	endanger
subtitle	compress	promote	enforce
submerge	comrade	progress	enlarge

Additional Words.

sub- subatomic, subcommittee, subconscious, subcontinent, subculture, subliminal, subplot, subservient, subsidiary, subsidize, substandard, subtraction, subtrahend, subterranean, suburban, subversive
com- committee, commune, communicate, communism, community, compact, compassion, compatible, competition, compile, complement, component, composite, comprise

pro- *proceed, procure, profess, prologue, propagate, procreate, propaganda, proponent, proscribe, proselytize, prospector, protracted, provoke, provisions*
en- *enclose, endorse, endow, engrave, engrossed, enhance, enjoy, enlighten, enlist, enrage, enroll, entangle, entice, entitle, envelop*

ASSESSMENT 1 FOR SORTS 1-4

(See page 17.) Ask students to match each prefix with its meaning. Below is the answer key.

1. <i>mis-</i> (d)	a. not		1. <i>dis-</i> (b)	a. out of
2. <i>pre-</i> (c)	b. cause		2. <i>fore-</i> (e)	b. not
3. <i>re-</i> (f)	c. before		3. <i>ex-</i> (a)	c. take away
4. <i>in-</i> (a)	d. badly		4. <i>in-</i> (g)	d. under
5. <i>post-</i> (e)	e. after		5. <i>sub-</i> (d)	e. before
6. <i>com-</i> (g)	f. again or back		6. <i>de-</i> (c)	f. for
7. <i>en-</i> (b)	g. with		7. <i>pro-</i> (f)	g. into

Ask students to spell and define the following words. It is fine to use the word as part of the definition as in *endanger—to put someone in danger*.

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. misfortune | 2. untidy | 3. discourage |
| 4. insane | 5. predict | 6. reconsider |
| 7. foretell | 8. misspell | 9. defrost |
| 10. endanger | 11. protect | 12. subtitle |
| 13. comrade | 14. exterior | 15. postpone |

SORT 1 Prefixes (*in-*, *un-*, *dis-*, *mis-*)

<i>in-</i>	<i>un-</i>	<i>dis-</i>	<i>mis-</i>
uneasy	insincere	dishonest	
misspell	unaware	informal	
disbelief	misfortune	unknown	
infrequent	disorder	mistake	
undress	inhuman	disconnect	
misleading	unfasten	inexpensive	
disease	mischief	untidy	
insane	disrespect	discourage	

SORT 2 Prefixes (*pre-, fore-, post-, after-*)

<i>pre-</i>	<i>fore-</i>	<i>post-</i>	<i>after-</i>
prepare	foretell	postpone	
afternoon	predict	foreman	
postwar	prefix	preface	
foreword	postseason	afterthought	
prehistoric	forefathers	postdate	
aftertaste	precede	foresight	
posttest	preseason	preposition	
forethought	afterword	prewar	

SORT 3 Prefixes (*re-*, *ex-*, *in-*, *de-*)

<i>re-</i>	<i>ex-</i>	<i>in-</i>	<i>de-</i>
replay	inflate	exhale	
deflate	reappear	interior	
exile	defrost	reclaim	
inhabit	explore	deprive	
reconsider	inmate	excess	
decrease	reruns	exhaust	
delete	research	inhale	
exterior	reaction	install	

SORT 4 Prefixes (*sub-*, *com-*, *pro-*, *en-*)

<i>sub-</i>	<i>com-</i>	<i>pro-</i>	<i>en-</i>
subway	combine	propel	
enable	subset	company	
promote	encourage	submarine	
companion	propose	entrust	
subtotal	compound	protect	
endanger	subtitle	compress	
provider	enforce	submerge	
comrade	progress	enlarge	

Assessment 1 for Sorts 1-4

Beside each prefix write the letter of the matching meaning.

Name _____

1. mis-	a. not	1. dis-	a. out of
2. pre-	b. cause	2. fore-	b. not
3. re-	c. before	3. ex-	c. take away
4. in-	d. badly	4. in-	d. under
5. post-	e. after	5. sub-	e. before
6. com-	f. again/back	6. de-	f. for
7. en-	g. with	7. pro-	g. into

