

# Greek and Latin Roots and Affixes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_ / 10



## Quick Review

Most long English words are built from smaller parts. Knowing a few Greek and Latin roots unlocks hundreds of words. **Greek roots:** auto- (self), bio- (life), graph (write), hydro- (water), micro- (small), photo- (light), tele- (far), therm- (heat), chrono- (time), geo- (earth).

**Latin roots:** aud- (hear), dict- (speak), port- (carry), rupt- (break), scrib/script (write), spect- (see), struct- (build), vis/vid (see), vert- (turn), tract- (pull). **Prefixes:** pre- (before), re- (again/back), sub- (under), trans- (across), dis- (not/apart), mal- (bad), post- (after), anti- (against), inter- (between). **Suffixes:** -able/-ible (can be), -less (without), -ous (full of), -tion/-sion (act/state of), -ity (quality of).

## PRACTICE

Use the meaning of the root, prefix, or suffix to choose the *BEST* definition of each word.

- The word **chronological** contains the Greek root *chrono-*, meaning *time*. **Chronological** most likely means —
  - arranged by importance.
  - arranged in time order.
  - arranged alphabetically.
  - arranged by topic.
- The word **transport** contains the Latin root *port*, meaning *carry*, and the prefix *trans-*, meaning *across*. **Transport** most likely means —
  - to break apart into pieces.
  - to look across a great distance.
  - to send a message far away.
  - to carry from one place to another.
- Two words share the Greek root **bio-**: *biography* and *biology*. What does this root most likely mean?
  - life
  - writing
  - earth
  - study



4. The word **inaudible** contains the Latin root *aud*, meaning *hear*, the prefix *in-*, meaning *not*, and the suffix *-ible*, meaning *able to be*. **Inaudible** most likely means —
- A. able to be heard clearly.
  - B. loud enough to be heard.
  - C. not able to be heard.
  - D. spoken in a foreign language.
5. The word **dictate** contains the Latin root *dict*, meaning *speak* or *say*. **Dictate** most likely means —
- A. to write words by hand quickly.
  - B. to speak words for someone else to write down or follow.
  - C. to listen carefully to a teacher's words.
  - D. to argue back and forth with another person.
6. Two words share the Latin root **spect**: *inspect* and *spectator*. What does this root most likely mean?
- A. look or watch
  - B. build or make
  - C. carry or move
  - D. speak or say
7. The word **submerge** contains the prefix *sub-*, meaning *under*, and the root *merge*, meaning *dip* or *plunge*. **Submerge** most likely means —
- A. to lift up high above the surface.
  - B. to dip lightly across the top of water.
  - C. to combine two things into one.
  - D. to put completely under the surface of water.
8. Two words share the prefix **mal-**: *malfunction* and *malnourished*. What does this prefix most likely add to a word?
- A. the meaning *before*.
  - B. the meaning *between*.
  - C. the meaning *bad* or *wrong*.
  - D. the meaning *again*.
9. The word **antibiotic** is built from three parts: *anti-* (against), *bio-* (life), and *-tic* (an adjective ending). Using the meanings of the parts, explain in 2–3 sentences why doctors prescribe antibiotics. Be sure to mention what kind of *life* the word refers to.

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10. Use roots and affixes to define each underlined word in 1 short sentence each. Then name the root that gives the main meaning.

(a) thermometer (b) visible (c) interrupt

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## Answer Keys

- 1  A  B  C  D
- 2  A  B  C  D
- 3  A  B  C  D
- 4  A  B  C  D
- 5  A  B  C  D


- 6  A  B  C  D
- 7  A  B  C  D
- 8  A  B  C  D
- 9
- 10

### Explanations

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 1. B | <i>Chrono-</i> = <i>time</i> , so a chronological list is <b>arranged in time order</b> (earliest to latest, or the reverse). A, C, and D each name a real way to organize information — but they ignore the <i>chrono-</i> root, which fixes the meaning to time.   |
| 2. D | <i>Trans-</i> (across) + <i>port</i> (carry) = <b>to carry from one place to another</b> . A uses the wrong root ( <i>rupt</i> = break). B ignores <i>port</i> and uses <i>spect-</i> (look) instead. C ignores <i>port</i> and uses <i>tele-</i> (far) plus <i>graph</i> (write/send) instead.  |
| 3. A | Both <i>biography</i> (writing about a life) and <i>biology</i> (study of living things) share the meaning <b>life</b> . B is the <i>graph</i> part of <i>biography</i> , not <i>bio-</i> . C is <i>geo-</i> (earth), a different root. D is the <i>-logy</i> ending of <i>biology</i> , not the shared <i>bio-</i> root.  |
| 4. C | <i>In-</i> (not) + <i>aud</i> (hear) + <i>-ible</i> (able to be) = <b>not able to be heard</b> . A drops the negative prefix. B reverses the meaning by ignoring <i>in-</i> . D ignores the root altogether and guesses based on sound.  |
| 5. B | <i>Dict</i> = <b>speak</b> , so a person who dictates <b>speaks words for someone else to write down or follow</b> . A uses <i>scrib/script</i> (write), the opposite role. C uses <i>aud</i> (hear), the listener's role. D names a verbal exchange but loses the one-way <i>speak-and-record</i> meaning.  |
| 6. A | An inspector <b>looks at</b> things closely; a spectator <b>watches</b> a game. The shared meaning is <b>look or watch</b> . B is <i>struct</i> (build). C is <i>port</i> (carry). D is <i>dict</i> (speak). Students sometimes mix up <i>spect</i> with <i>spec</i> in <i>specific</i> — that is a different word family.   |
| 7. D | <i>Sub-</i> (under) + <i>merge</i> (dip/plunge) = <b>to put completely under the surface</b> . A reverses the prefix <i>sub-</i> with <i>super-</i> (above). B drops the <i>sub-</i> and treats the action as surface-level only. C grabs another meaning of <i>merge</i> (combine) but ignores the water root altogether.   |
| 8. C | A <i>malfunction</i> is when something works badly; a <i>malnourished</i> animal is fed badly. The prefix <b>mal-</b> means <b>bad or wrong</b> . A is <i>pre-</i> . B is <i>inter-</i> . D is <i>re-</i> . Each distractor is a real prefix — just not the one shared by these two words.   |
| 9.   | <b>Answer:</b> <b>&lt;b&gt;Antibiotic&lt;/b&gt;</b> literally means <b>&lt;i&gt;against life&lt;/i&gt;</b> . The <b>&lt;i&gt;life&lt;/i&gt;</b> it acts against is <b>&lt;b&gt;bacterial life&lt;/b&gt;</b> — tiny living organisms that can cause infection. Doctors prescribe antibiotics to fight bacterial infections by killing the bacteria or stopping their growth, while leaving the patient's own cells alone.   |
| 10.  | <b>Answer:</b> (a) A <b>&lt;b&gt;thermometer&lt;/b&gt;</b> is a tool that measures heat or temperature; the main root is <b>&lt;i&gt;therm-&lt;/i&gt;</b> (heat). (b) Something <b>&lt;b&gt;visible&lt;/b&gt;</b> is able to be seen; the main root is <b>&lt;i&gt;vis-&lt;/i&gt;</b> (see). (c) To <b>&lt;b&gt;interrupt&lt;/b&gt;</b> someone is to break in between their words or actions; the main root is <b>&lt;i&gt;rupt-&lt;/i&gt;</b> (break), with the prefix <b>&lt;i&gt;inter-&lt;/i&gt;</b> (between). |



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