



Root Words

Base Words

Cognates

Word Families

ETYMOLOGY

Etymology

***The Study of
Word Origins and Root Words***

What is etymology?



- The word **etymology** is derived from the Greek **etumos** which means **real** or **true**.
- The ending '**ology**' suggests the **study or science** of something.

That is the **etymology** of **etymology**.

What is etymology?



Here is an example:

- The Ancient Greek word **hippos** means **horse**.
- And **potamus** means **river**.

Hippopotamus literally means **river horse**.

**The English Language has
over
1,000,000 words**

Why Study
Greek and
Latin Roots?

Over 60% of the English language is derived
from Latin or Greek.

90% of all English words that are three
syllables or more are derived from Latin.

In the sciences and technology, over 90% of the
words are derived from Latin or Greek!

A single Latin root can generate 5-20 English words.



Facts about English Language

For hundreds of years after the fall of the Roman Empire, Latin was the language of education and knowledge in Europe.

This explains why so many terms we use connected with knowledge, religion, or education are of Latin origin.



Facts about English Language

During the 17th and 18th centuries, dictionary writers and grammarians felt that English was an imperfect language and Latin was perfect.

To improve the English language, they made up many English words from **Latin roots.**



How Latin words got into English Language

The Roman Empire
expanded into
Britain, bringing Latin



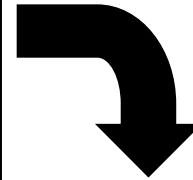
Latin words found
their way into the
Anglo-Saxon language
of the people in
Ancient Britain

For Example:

Latin word
"stratum"
means
"layered road"



"Stratum"
became "straets"
in Anglo-Saxon



Now called
"streets" in
modern English

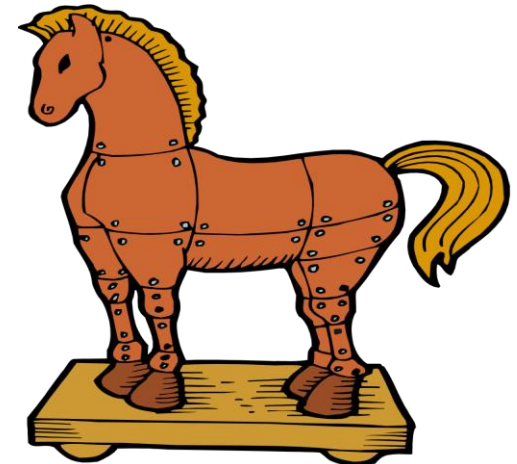


Miles of streets and roads were created.
Mile is from the Latin word mille, which means 1,000.
The Roman mile was measured as 1,000 paces.

Greek Influence

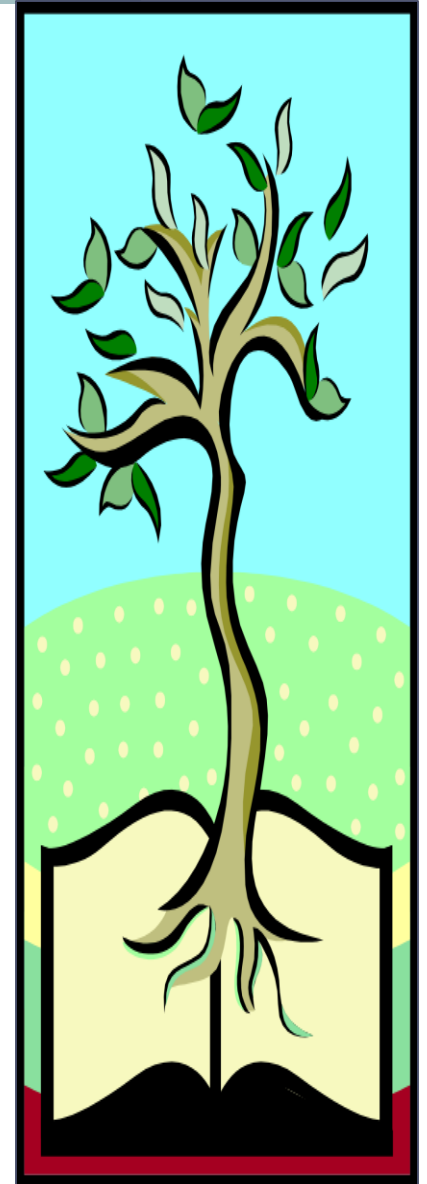
They used **Greek roots** also since Greek was considered the language of the arts.

The Greeks were the first Europeans to use an alphabet, to theorize about language, and to frame language categories.



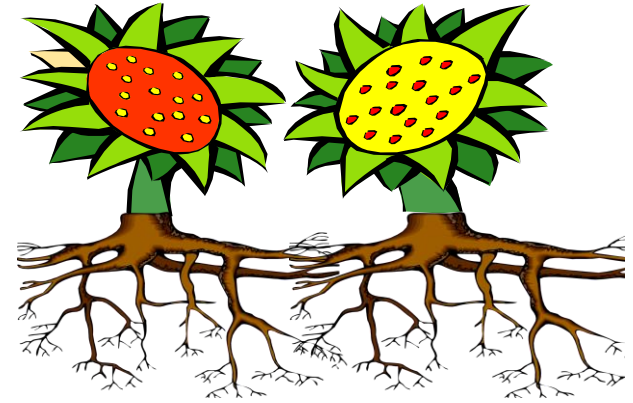
What is a root word?

- a part of a word
- the part that **carries the most meaning**
- often called a **base word** when it's a complete word
- by itself usually not a word



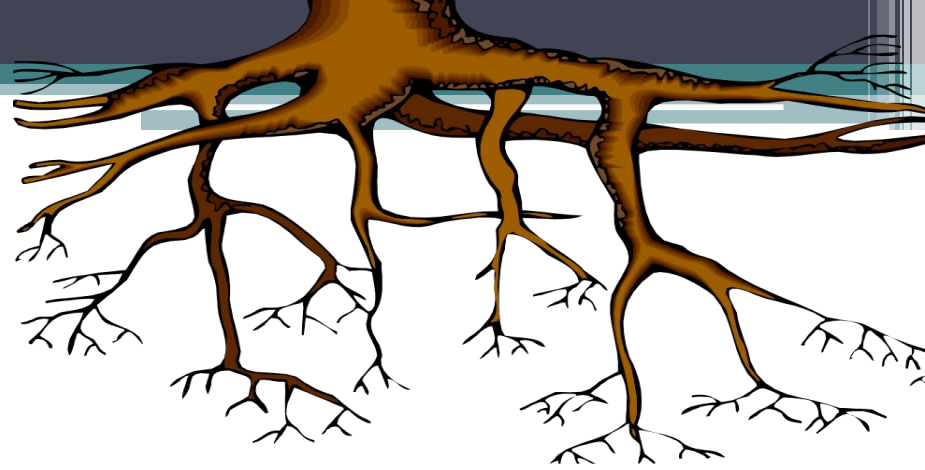
Properties of Roots

Main part of word

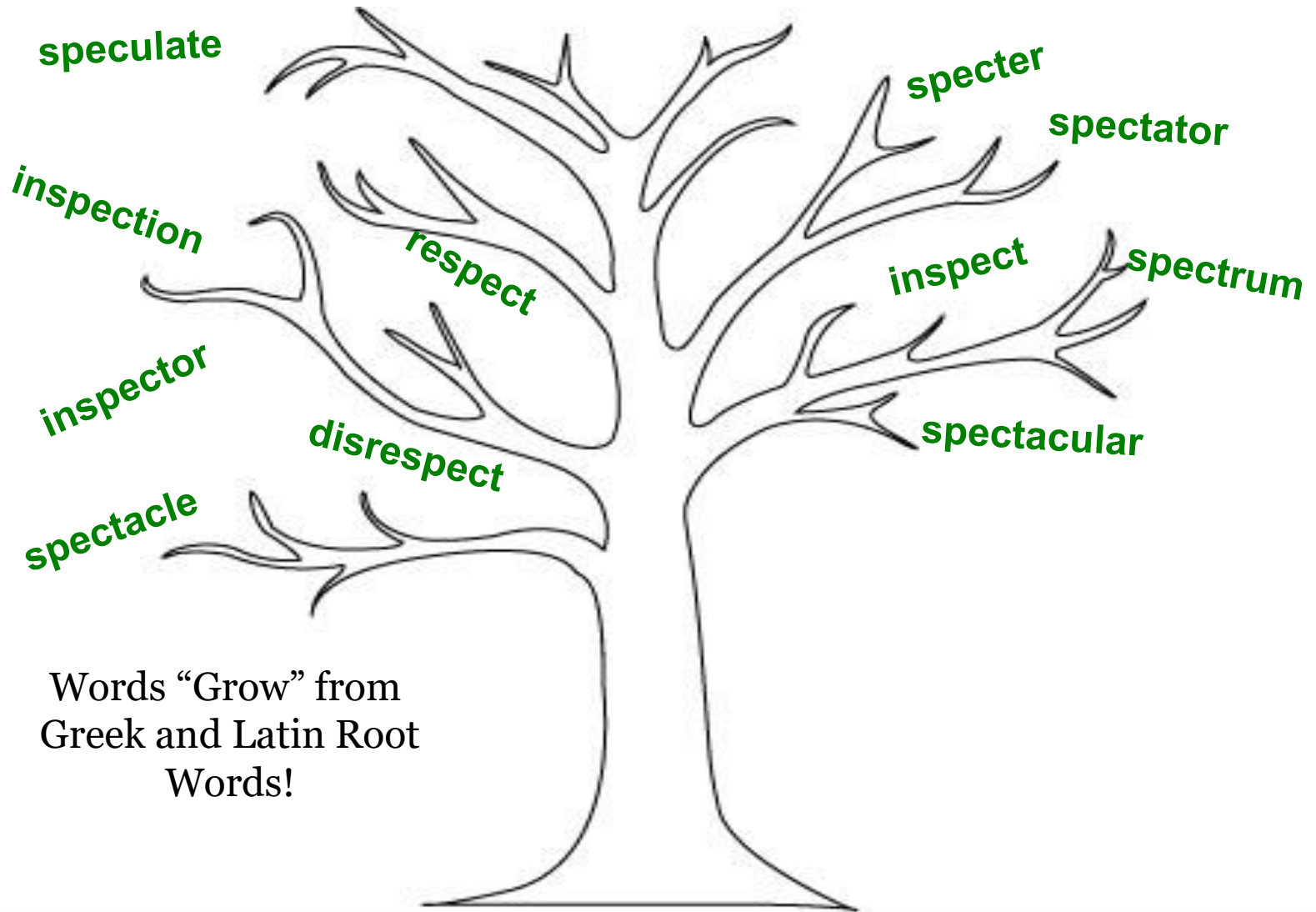


- Must have at least one in a word
- In English, limited to two in a word
- Simple words have one root
- Compound words have two roots

Knowing the Roots



- At least half of the words in the English language are derived from **Greek and Latin roots.**
- Knowing these roots helps us understand the meaning of words **before** we look them up in the dictionary.



Spec = See

EXAMPLES:

PNEUMONOULTRAMICROSCOPICSILICOVOLCANOCONIOSIS

ANTIDISESTABLISHMENTARIANISM

EXAMPLE
EXPLAINED:

**PNEUMONO
ULTRA
MICROSCOPIC
SILICO
VOLCANO
CONIOSIS**

a lung disease caused by the inhalation of a fine silica dust found in most volcanoes.

EXAMPLE
EXPLAINED:

**ANTI
DIS
ESTABLISH
MENT
ARIAN
ISM**

opposition to the belief that there should not be an official relationship between a country's government and its national Church

What is a base word?

A base word is a word part that by itself is also a word:

part	ition
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Partition has the base word ***part*** and means “to divide into parts.”



Base Words vs. Root Words



A root is a word part that is used to form other words.

A root by itself is usually not a word:

hier	o	glyph
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Hieroglyph has the root word **hier** and the root **glyph**. **Hier** means “sacred” and glyph means “carving.” Hieroglyph means “a carved symbol in the sacred writing of ancient Egypt.”

The Latin root **'port'**
means **to carry**.

Knowing the root can
help you unlock the
meaning of many
related words with
the same root.



Words with 'port'



porter

portable

importable

import

export

exportable

deport

deportation

important

report

reporter

importer

portage

portfolio

Let's take a look at a few

A **porter** is a person employed to carry burdens, such as luggage.

Important means carrying a great significance or value.

Portable means easy to move carry.

Report means to carry back and repeat information.



See how easy it is when you
know the root word '**port**'
means **to carry**?



Greek and Latin Roots: Building Blocks of the English Language

Latin Word Parts

Aqua= water

Agri=field

Spec=see

Pre=before

Vascul=tube, vessel

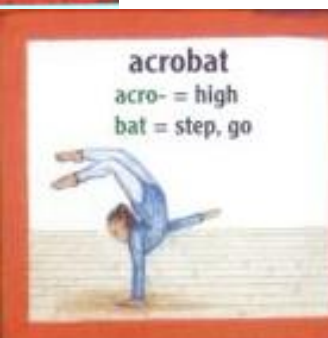
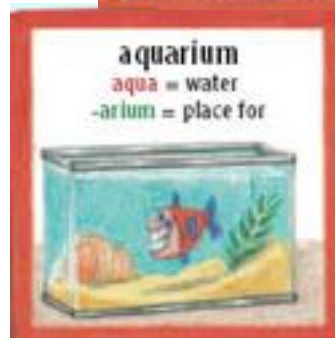
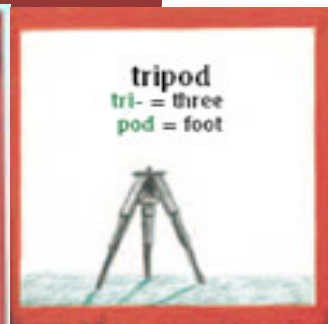
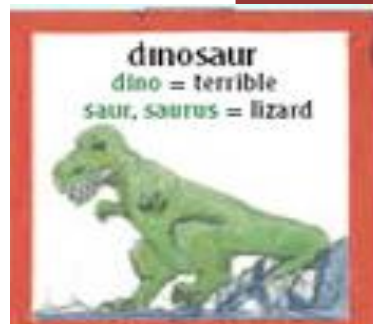
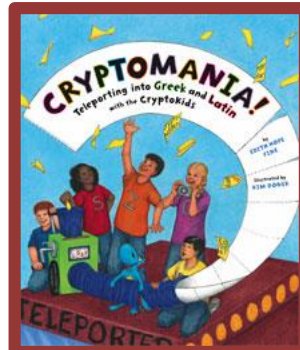
Dent=tooth

Ped= foot

Stella=star

Aud=hear

Terr=land



Greek Word Parts

Phile= one who loves

Auto=self

Photo=light

Cardi=heart

Cycl=wheel

Bio=life

Hydr=water

Therm=heat

Phone=sound

Geo=Earth

Latin root	Basic meaning	Example words
-dict-	to say	contradict, dictate, diction, edict, predict
-duc-	to lead, bring, take	deduce, produce, reduce
-gress-	to walk	digress, progress, transgress
-ject-	to throw	eject, inject, interject, project, reject, subject
-pel-	to drive	compel, dispel, impel, repel
-pend-	to hang	append, depend, impend, pendant, pendulum
-port-	to carry	comport, deport, export, import, report, support
-scrib-, -script-	to write	describe, description, prescribe, prescription, subscribe, subscription, transcribe, transcription
-tract-	to pull, drag, draw	attract, contract, detract, extract, protract, retract, traction
-vert-	to turn	convert, divert, invert, revert

Greek root	Basic meaning	Example words
-anthrop-	human	misanthrope, philanthropy, anthropomorphic
-chron-	time	anachronism, chronic, chronicle, synchronize, chronometer
-dem-	people	democracy, demography, demagogue, endemic, pandemic
-morph-	form	amorphous, metamorphic, morphology
-path-	feeling, suffering	empathy, sympathy, apathy, apathetic, psychopathic
-pedo-, -ped-	child, children	pediatrician, pedagogue
-philo-, -phil-	having a strong affinity or love for	philanthropy, philharmonic, philosophy
-phon-	sound	polyphonic, cacophony, phonetics

Practice Question

The root ‘**am**’ means **love** or **friend**.

Select the best meaning of the word *friendly*.

- A. amend
- B. ambition
- C. amicable
- D. ambush

How did you do?



Here's a Clue:



You could have looked at the part of speech of ***friendly***.

You see a suffix ending. The ***-ly*** (meaning ***like***) tells you this word must be an adjective or an adverb, both parts of speech used to describe someone or something.

The suffix ending ***-able*** (meaning ***capable of***) should also tell you this word is an adjective.

Decoding words is a very helpful strategy.

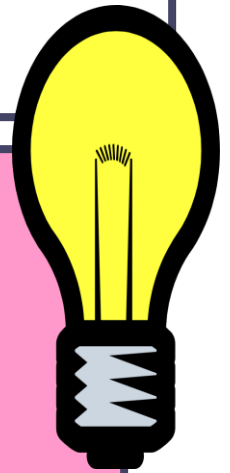
If you understand that there are two Latin roots that mean **light**:

luc- and **lum-**

you can begin to figure out some of the meanings of the words below.

luminous
lucid
luminescent
luminousness

illuminate
luminaria
translucent
illumination



The Latin roots '**pod**' and '**ped**' mean foot. Knowing this, you will be able to figure out the meanings of each of these words:

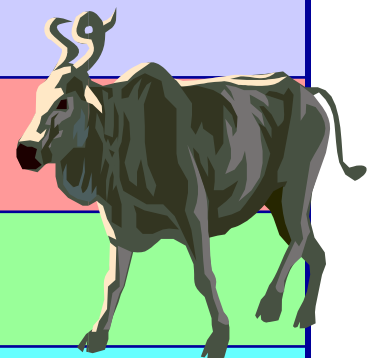
podiatrist = treats foot ailments

pedestrian = person who walks

pedicure = care of the feet

pedal = lever worked by the foot

quadruped = animal with four feet



Wow!
We've covered quite a lot!



Here's a little bit more.

Cognates

Most *French words and Spanish words have Greek and Latin roots (just like English words).*

So these languages have a lot of *cognates*...

We are talking about THOUSANDS of words that are used in the same meaning and sense across languages!



Common Cognates

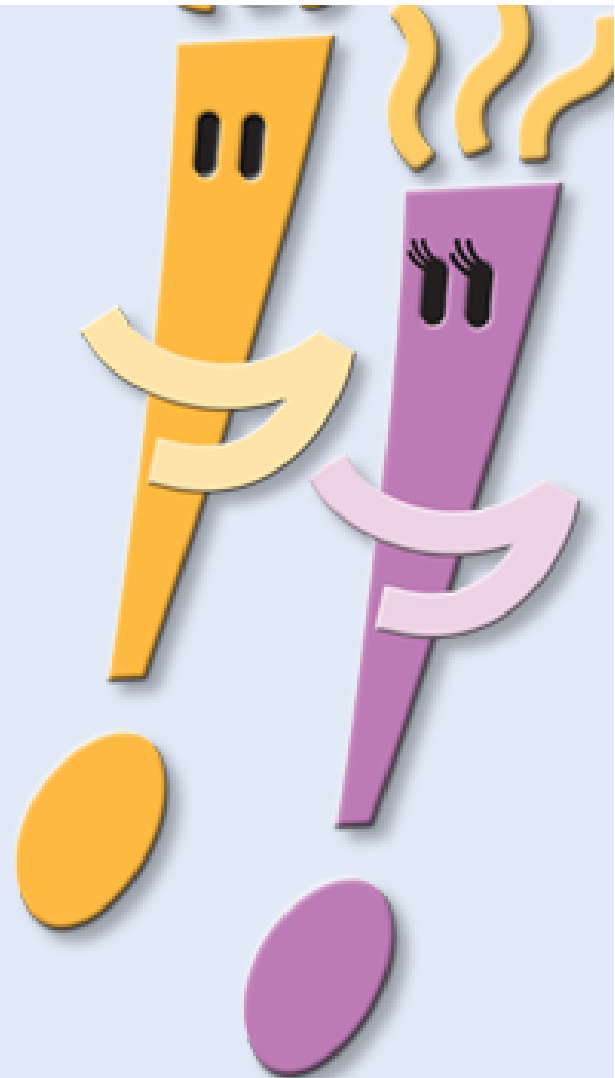
English	Spanish
family	familia
center	centro
radio	radio
class	clase
desert	desierto
magic	magia
gorilla	gorila



Common Cognates

English | French

- ✓ hockey | **hockey**
- ✓ dentist | **dentiste**
- ✓ chocolate | **chocolat**
- ✓ radio | **radio**
- ✓ fruit | **fruit**
- ✓ soccer | **soccer**
- ✓ scientist | **scientiste**
- ✓ taxi | **taxi**
- ✓ pizza | **pizza**
- ✓ dictionary | **dictionnaire**
- ✓ example | **exemple**



And...

it doesn't stop with just Spanish and French!



English

analytical
pathological
philosophical
mechanical
historical
ideological
geological
ethical
traditional
conventional
structural
cultural
commercial
experimental



German

analytischen
pathologischen
philosophischen
mechanischen
historischen
ideologischen
geologischen
ethischen
traditionellen
konventionellen
strukturellen
kulturellen
kommerziellen
experimentellen



Dutch

analytische
pathologische
filosofische
mechanische
historische
ideologische
geologische
ethische
traditionele
conventionele
structurele
culturele
commerciële
experimentele



Swedish

analytiska
patologiska
filosofiska
mekaniska
historiska
ideologiska
geologiska
etiska
traditionella
konventionella
strukturella
kulturella
kommersiella
experimentella



Norwegian

analytiske
patologiske
filosofiske
mekaniske
historiske
ideologiske
geologiske
etiske
tradisjonelle
konvensjonelle
strukturelle
kulturelle
kommersielle
eksperimentelle

Word Families



English words with the same base word or root word often have related meanings. When they do, they make up what's called a **word family**.

Knowing the meaning of the **base word** or **root** can help you figure out the meanings of the words in the family.

Word Families from a Root

BASE WORD

light

en light ment

flood light

light -year

spot light

BASE WORD

spect

spect acle

pro spect

in spect or

spect ator

Here's another word family that shares the Latin root **pos** meaning **to put or to place**.

im	pos	ition
pro	pos	e
trans	pos	e
de	pos	it

im	pos	e
	pos	ture
	pos	itive
pre	pos	ition

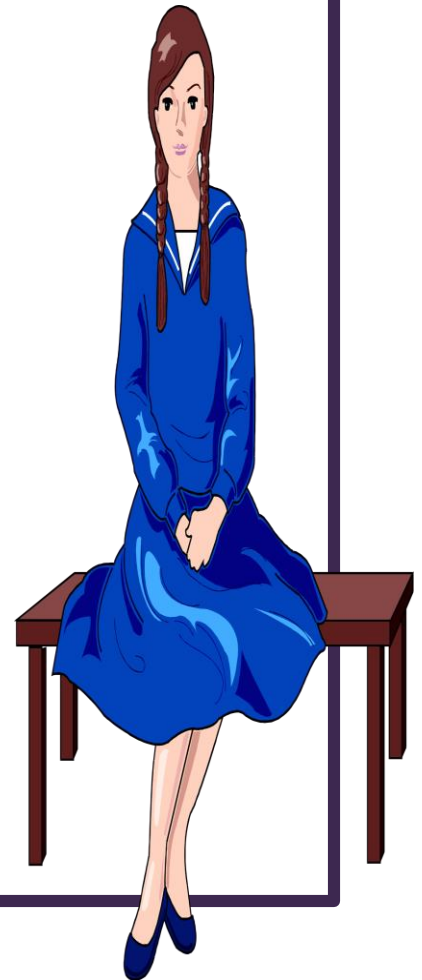
Here are their meanings

im**position** = a burden or unfair demand **placed** on someone

im**pose** = to **place** a burden or unfair demand

posture = to **put or place** the body in a certain position

de**posit** = to **put** or set down;
to **place**



Learn one root

Learn one root and you have the key that will



**unlock meanings of ten, twenty, or even
hundreds of English words.**

**DIG IN THE WORDS AND
KNOW THEIR ROOTS
TO UNLEASH THE**

