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*Note:* Every effort has been made to provide accurate and current Internet information in this book. However, the Internet and the information posted on it are constantly changing, so it is inevitable that some of the Internet addresses listed in this textbook will change.

## SORT 19 Vowel Alternation: Long to Short

<i>long vowel</i>	<i>short vowel</i>	
please	pleasant	mineral
breathe	revision	cavity
mine	athletic	breath
revise	humanity	nature
athlete	natural	cave
precise	criminal	humane
type	ignition	typical
crime	precision	ignite

## SORT 20 Vowel Alternation: Long to Short or Schwa

<i>long vowel</i>	<i>short vowel</i>	<i>long vowel</i>	<i>schwa</i>
<b>volcano</b>	<b>volcanic</b>	<b>compose</b>	
<b>composition</b>	conspire	admire	
custodian	competition	serene	
divine	conspiracy	custody	
compete	admiration	invitation	
define	serenity	divinity	
invite	opposition	definition	
reside	oppose	resident	

**SORT 21 Adding Suffix -ity: Vowel Alternation, Schwa to Short**

<b>-əl</b>	<b>-ity</b>	
<b>personal</b>	<b>personality</b>	hostile
brutal	mentality	general
hostility	fatality	mental
fatal	formality	local
mobile	generality	brutality
locality	original	formal
individual	originality	mobility
fertile	individuality	fertility

# Unit V Greek and Latin Elements I

## NOTES FOR THE TEACHER

### Background and Objectives

In these sorts we begin the more systematic and formal exploration of Greek and Latin elements and their combinations. Literally thousands of English words are derived from Greek and Latin and the generative nature of English becomes evident in the study of these elements. Often, when we need a new term, especially when we need scientific names, we go back to these elements. Students who are taking biology and other content subjects are likely to encounter hundreds of words such as these, and an understanding of how Latin and Greek elements work will help with the vocabulary load they need to acquire.

When discussing meaningful elements in words that are neither prefixes nor suffixes, linguists make a terminological distinction between elements that come from Latin and elements that come from Greek. Stems, roots, and combining forms are all used, but it is not necessary to make this distinction with students; the term **root** usually works well enough for both Greek and Latin elements and is widely used. See Chapter 8 in *WTW* for a fuller discussion of these terms.

We begin with number and size prefixes and their combination with bases and roots. Then we move to Greek roots because they occur fairly frequently in printed materials from the intermediate grades onward *and* their meaning is also relatively concrete and straightforward. The systematic exploration of Latin roots will begin with Sort 30, beginning with the most common and transparent roots. The spelling of some Latin roots changes across related words. We have both *flexible* and *reflect* in which the roots (*flex* and *flect*) mean “bend.” We have both *inscribe* and *transcript* in which the roots (*scribe* and *script*) mean “write.” These forms come from the original Latin verbs, in which the sound changed in different forms, and therefore the spelling changed as well. This is similar to what happens in many English verbs: We *come* to visit today / we *came* to visit yesterday; I will *run* quickly / I *ran* quickly. Students will:

- Learn to identify the Greek and Latin elements in polysyllabic words
- Find or brainstorm additional words that share the same elements
- Spell and demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of words, prefixes, and roots covered in these sorts

### Targeted Learners

These sorts are appropriate for students in the middle to late derivational relations stage who are familiar with prefixes and suffixes. The assessments found at the end of this unit can be used as both pretests and posttests but nearly all students at all levels (including adults!) will benefit from the study of these Greek and Latin elements. The

the meanings of the roots. *Laudable* is an “oddball”; it means “praiseworthy” and does not contain the root *aud*.

Following are other words that you may walk through with the students after they sort and discuss them: *unpredictable*—after *un-* and *-able* are removed, the base word *predict* remains. Literally, *predict* means “to say before”; put *-able* back on and discuss what *predictable* means, then put *un-* back on and discuss what *unpredictable* means. Take *supervisor* apart in a similar way. *Supervise* means to “see over” or “look over from above” and the *-or* suffix indicates “one who does this.” *Contra-* is not a common prefix but it means “against” and shows up in both *contraband* and *contrary*. *Dictionaries* do not “speak” but are full of the words that make up our speech.

<i>dic</i>	<i>aud</i>	<i>vis</i>	oddball
<b>dictate</b>	<b>audible</b>	<b>vision</b>	laudable
contradict	auditorium	visible	
unpredictable	audition	supervisor	
dictator	audience	vista	
edict	audiotape	visitor	
dictionary	auditory	invisible	
prediction	audiovisual	revisit (audiovisual)	

**Additional Words.** *abdicate, diction, dictum, dedicate, indict, jurisdiction, valedictorian, vindicate, verdict, inaudible, audiology, visage, visit, visa, visual, advise, envision, provision, improvise*

## SORT 32 LATIN ROOTS (GRESS, RUPT, TRACT, MOT)

(See page 90.) This sort covers the Latin roots *gress*, which means “to go”; *rupt*, which means “to break”; *tract*, which means “to draw or pull”; and *mot*, which means “to move.” As with the roots in the previous two sorts, these roots occur with considerable frequency.

### Background Information

Draw on students’ knowledge of prefixes as you discuss the words.

*Progress* = *gress* “to go” + *pro* “forward”—so *progress* literally means “to move forward.”

*Interrupt* = *rupt* “to break” + *inter* “between”—so *interrupt* literally means “to break in between,” which is what you do when you *interrupt* a conversation.

*Detract* = *tract* “to draw or pull” + *de* “away, apart”—so *detract* literally means “to draw away from,” which is what happens when something *detracts* from what you want people to pay attention to. (“Your hollering about why you like your candidate *detracts* from your goal of getting people to vote for her.”)

*Promote* = *mot(e)* “to move” + *pro* “forward”—so when you *promote* an idea, you move that idea forward.

### Sort and Reflect

Have the students sort the words according to the root. As in the previous sort, have students pair up to discuss the meanings of each of the words. Then regroup to discuss any

of the words about which they were uncertain. The use of a dictionary with etymological information will come in handy here. Tell the students that they may notice these elements in other words, but that you will be exploring the elements in depth later on. For example, *attract* and *aggressive* actually contain the absorbed prefix *ad-*, meaning “to or toward”; this and other absorbed prefixes are addressed in Sorts 56 to 59. In several of the words *e-* is a prefix meaning “out”; for example, when a volcano *erupts* it literally “breaks out”; *emotion* literally means “the act or result of moving out”—discuss with students how this word has come to possess the connotative meaning it has now. When someone is *emotional*, what “moves out” from within them? Point out that the base word of *emotion* is *emote*, a word that we don’t run across nearly as often as *emotion*. Where do they think the word *emoticon* comes from? What word is combined with *emotion/emote* to create *emoticon*? (*icon*) (:

<i>gress</i>	<i>rupt</i>	<i>tract</i>	<i>mot</i>
<b>progress</b>	<b>interrupt</b>	<b>detract</b>	<b>promote</b>
regress	erupt	distract	motion
digress	rupture	traction	demote
aggressive	abrupt	attract	locomotive
egress	disrupt	extract	motivate
transgress		tractor	emotion
			emoticon

### Extend

Ask students to look for words that they can change to or add the *-ion* ending: *progression, regression, aggression, interruption, attraction, locomotion*.

**Additional Words.** *congress, ingress, bankrupt, corrupt, contract, retract, protracted, intractable, abstract, emote, motor, remote, automobile, motivation, motel, locomotion, commotion*

## SORT 33 LATIN ROOTS (FRACT, FLECT/FLEX, JECT, MIS/MIT)

(See page 91.) This sort covers the Latin roots *fract*, meaning “to break”; *flect* or *flex*, meaning “to bend”; *ject*, meaning “to throw”; and *mis* or *mit*, meaning “to send.”

### Sort and Reflect

Have the students sort the words according to the root. Have them sort individually, and then have them compare their sorts with those of a partner to see if they had different categories. Some students will sort according to the spelling of the root so that words containing *flex* and *flect*, for example, will be in different groups. Have the students then discuss what they think each root means. Guide their discussion by focusing first on the more obvious or literally apparent combinations: for example, *fraction* is “the result of breaking” something into smaller pieces; *reject* is to “throw back.” You may facilitate discussion of some of the more semantically opaque combinations, such as *objection*. An *objection* is, literally, “the act or result of throwing against” (*ob* means “against”). More connotatively, making an *objection* is “throwing” a verbal point against someone. Mention *permission*: Which word does it come from? How about *transmission*? Mention also that *trajectory* actually comes from the combination of the prefix *trans-* “across” + *-ject-*, literally “to throw across”; “the long *trajectory* of the soccer ball as it soared over the