

Language Arts 9

Word Study

This section of your notebook will contain all handouts and assignments related to words:

- Vocabulary Lists
 - “Word Cells”
 - Morphemes
 - Etymology
 - Prefixes
 - Suffixes
 - Affixes
- Dictionary Study
- “Neologolusion”
- Literal Definitions
 - Word Origins
 - Spelling

Word Cells

Just like cells make up the human body, word cells make up our language. Word cells are the little bits and pieces that we have borrowed from other languages in order to create English. Most of the word cells on the lists you will be assigned in this class are really just Greek or Latin *root words*, but some of them are also *prefixes* or *suffixes*. Rather than quibble over the precise definitions of all these terms, we'll just call all of them Word Cells. If you encounter an unfamiliar word, you can often figure out what it means if you know what all the parts (cells) of it mean. For example, let's say you come across the word *antipathy*. You may not know exactly what it means, but you certainly recognize the cell *-anti-* from words like *antifreeze*, *antiwar*, and *antidote*. Then, if you think a bit more, you might notice that you've seen the cell *-path-* before in words like *sympathy*, *empathy*, and *pathetic*, all words that relate to feelings. Put *-anti-*, which clearly means "against" with *-path-*, "feelings", and you can figure out that *antipathy* is "feeling against something." Of course that may not be exactly what the dictionary says, but you get the general idea, which helps you make meaning of whatever you happen to be reading. Knowing the word cells will help you figure out the meanings of words you might not otherwise know.



Neologolusion

By combining prefixes, root words, and suffixes, you can make an unlimited number of words. For example, the title of this activity is a combination of the prefix *neo-* (new) with the word cells *-log-* (word) and *-lus-* (play) and the suffix *-ion* (process or quality) to create a noun that means *the process of playing with new words*. Using cells from your weekly lists and the lists of prefixes and suffixes create some new words and their dictionary entries. Here is an example:

macrography (noun) huge handwriting or oversized fonts students use to create the appearance of having written more than they actually did [macro = large, graph = write, -y = state or quality] Other forms: (nouns) *-ology*, *-ologist*, *-ologism*, *-er*; (verbs) *-ing*, *-ed*, *-ize*; (adj.) *-ic*. My students believe that macrography will make up for writing that is lacking in specific detail.



Literal Definitions

If you combine the definitions of the separate cells in a word, you get a literal definition. This may not be exactly what the dictionary says, but it will give you an idea of the word's meaning and help you deduce the meanings of other words you don't yet know. For example, the dictionary definition of photograph is "a picture or likeness obtained by photography." However, if you combine the cells photo (light) and graph (write), you get a literal definition: "light writing" or "writing with light."

-clud- / -clus-	close, shut	
include	[<i>literal definition = etymology</i>] -in- (in) + -clud- (close) = close in	I wanted to <u>include</u> Bubba in the group, so I signaled that he should join us.
exclusion	-ex- (out) + -clus- (close) + -ion- (quality/act of) = act of closing out	Because of his many previous <u>exclusions</u> , Bubba was nervous at first about joining our group.
conclude, secluded, preclude, occlude, recluse, exclusivity, conclusive, inconclusive, cloister (variant), reclusive		



Keep this page at the front of the Word Study section in your English binder.