

Appendix D13

Sorting Prefixes and Suffixes

1. After reading a piece of text (whether it is a chapter in a fiction book or a few sections of a non-fiction book or textbook), have your child keep a list of words with multiple syllables that he/she read in the text. For example, your child might find words like international, submarine, embrace, transportation, unfriendly, climate, etc. Let your child pick words that are interesting to him/her.
2. After your child has gathered a long list of words, together you can look for patterns in the words, observing how they start and end. For example, do a lot of words begin with un-, im-, de-, mid-, or pre-? Do a lot of words end in -tion, -ly, -able, or -ful?
3. When you find three or more words that have the same beginning or ending, write the words with multiple syllables on a strip of paper. Sort these words into groups that have the same beginning and ending. For example, your child might have strips of paper that have the words return, restore, and regret in one group and the words objection, transportation, and creation in another group.
4. For the group of words that have the same beginning, cut off the first part of the word. (So for the example in step #3, you would have re – turn, re – store, and re – gret.) Do the same for the words that have the same ending. (For the examples in step #3, you would have objec – tion, transporta – tion, and crea – tion.)
5. Work together with your child to understand that the beginning part of the word is called a PREFIX. A prefix is a group of letters that do not mean anything on their own but add meaning to the rest of the word, which is called the ROOT. The ending part of the word is called a SUFFIX. A suffix is a group of letters that do not mean anything on their own but add meaning to the rest of the ROOT word.
6. Take a group of words with the same prefix (such as with return, restore, and regret). What does your child think the prefix re- means? How does the prefix re- change the root word? You can also use these lists [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) as a resource for meanings. Work together to understand that the prefix re- means to do something again.
7. Do the same as in step #6 with words that have the same suffix (such as objection, transportation, and creation). What does your child think the suffix –tion means? How does the suffix –tion change or help define the root word? Work together to understand that the suffix –tion means something about a process.
8. Explain to your child that knowing prefixes and suffixes can help in reading and understanding new words. Can your child generate new words that have the same prefix or suffix? Add these words to the list or to strips of paper.
9. To create a challenge with this activity, find words that have BOTH a prefix and suffix and cut up the parts of the word written on a strip of paper. For example, the word "returnable" could be cut into re – turn – able. What do the prefix and suffix mean in this word? Which is the root word?



10. As your child continues to keep track of words with multiple syllables, every so often sort the words by prefix and suffix and cut up the appropriate parts of the word.