Using Morphology to Support English Language Learners
Resource Bundle

inspire
TEACHING LEARNING

Key Terms	
Morpheme	The smallest unit of language that has meaning ("re-" is a morpheme; "girl" is a morpheme; neither can be broken down).
Morphological Awareness	A student's awareness of the structure of words and his or her ability to recognize and use this structure (Kieffer & Lesaux, 2007; Hickey & Lewis, 2013).
Morphology	"The study of the smallest units of language that hold meaning" (Hickey & Lewis, 2013, p.70).

Best Practices to Increase Morphological Analysis Skills		
Best Practice:	**How to do it:**	**Explanation/Example**
Build Metalinguistic Awareness	- Work with students to *reflect on* and *be aware of* differences between two languages (August et al., 2005; Hickey & Lewis, 2013). - Highlight similarities and differences between a student's native language and English. - Discuss the meaning of words within a specific content area and compare its meaning in other subjects.	Over 80% of English language learners speak Spanish, which originates in Latin (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). A cognate is a word that looks and means the same thing in English and a student's native language. For example: different and diferente share the same Latin cognate "differre" which means to set apart.
Create a Morphology Anchor Chart[1]	- Create and post a chart that has the following column titles: prefix, root word, suffix, new word, and meaning. - Work with students to add new words to the chart as they encounter them. - Consider adding a column entitled "origin" that would encourage students to research the origin of an affix or root word.	A morphology anchor chart can help develop students' morphological analysis skills as well as their metalinguistic awareness. Anchor charts can be related to a particular content area (where similar roots and affixes will emerge) and used throughout the school day. As students encounter new words, they can refer back to the anchor charts for root or affix meaning.
Increase Affix Automaticity[1]	- Use engaging activities that will help students develop fluency with morphemes (National Institute for Literacy, n.d.). Relate morphemes to their context in the subject area. - Create flashcards or a memory game that incorporates root words, affixes, and their meanings[2][3]. Relate those affixes to the content word and meaning in context.	As students increase their recognition and understanding of affixes, they will grasp the meanings of words more quickly. When students are able to focus their efforts on deriving meaning from a word - rather than decoding it - they will understand more of what they read (Kieffer & Lesaux, 2008).

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[1] See example on page 2 of this document.
[2] Click for lists of common root words and affixes for K-8th grade and 5th-12th grade
[3] This website has different morphology activities for elementary, middle, and high school.

Sample Math Anchor Chart:

Prefix	Root Word	Suffix	Meaning	Origin
	frac-	-tion	frac-: break -tion: the act of	Latin: frangere means "to break"
	divis-	-ible	Divis: divide -ible: capable	Latin: dividere means "divided"
peri-	meter		peri-: around meter: to measure	Greek: perimetros means "to measure around" Greek: metron means "measure"
in-	vert		in-: into -vert: to turn	Latin: invertere means "to turn inside out"

Sample Morphology Matching Activity:

Common Affixes Memory: Cut the words and affixes out and have students play "Memory" by matching the affix to its meaning.

pre-	inter-	-trans	-able, -ible	mis-
Before	Between	Across	Can be done	Wrongly
-en	-ion, -tion, -ation, -ition	-ness	-anti	-less
made of	Act or process of	State or condition of	Against	Without

Additional Resources
Supplement

Here are links to common affix and root word lists broken up by grade level:

Early Elementary	• Reading Rockets provides downloadable lists of common affixes as well as Greek and Latin root words. • This document provides lists broken down by grade level. • Scholastic provides this list of the most common pre- and suffixes.
Elementary	• Here is a lesson for 3-5th graders called Rooting Out Meaning • Readwritethink.org provides this list of common content area roots and affixes. • Reading Rockets provides downloadable lists of common affixes as well as Greek and Latin root words.
Middle and High School	• Readwritethink.org provides this list of common content area roots and affixes. • Reading Rockets provides downloadable lists of common affixes as well as Greek and Latin root words. • This is a list of root words and affixes all related to science.

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