

PARENT GUIDE SERIES

Word Parts Made Fun

Help your child unlock new words using prefixes, suffixes, and roots



For Parents & Caregivers

Dr. Chase Young · LiTerrific Reading
lfcreading.com · thebestclass.org

What Are Word Parts?

Many English words are built from smaller parts: prefixes (beginning), roots (middle), and suffixes (ending). When your child learns these building blocks, they can figure out the meaning of words they've never seen before.

Example: If your child knows *un-* means "not" and sees the word *unfamiliar*, they can work out it means "not familiar" — without being told.

Common Prefixes to Know

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
un-	not	unhappy, unfair, undo, unlike
re-	again	redo, replay, rewrite, return
pre-	before	preview, preschool, preheat
mis-	wrong	mistake, misunderstand, mismatch
over-	too much	overdo, overflow, overreact
non-	not	nonfiction, nonsense, nonstop

Fun Activities at Home

Invent a Word

Combine real prefixes, roots, and suffixes to make up words. Can your child define prethinkify? (pre- + think + -ify = to prepare your thoughts in advance). Take turns inventing words.

Opposite Day Storytelling

Tell a story, then retell it by swapping prefixes. A scary story with unusual, uneasy, nonhuman becomes calm with usual, comfortable, human.

Root Word Detective

Pick a root (like fract = to break) and hunt for words: fraction, fracture, infraction, refract. Keep a detective notebook.

Break Down Big Words

'Unbelievable' = un (not) + believe + able (can be) = something that can't be believed. Help them break it apart rather than just telling them the meaning.