

Lesson 1

Morphemes

In this first lesson, you will learn what a **morpheme** is and how learning about them will make you a better reader and writer.

You'll also complete a grammar practice activity and learn the difference between the commonly confused words "accept" and "except".

Also, throughout this course you will be reading a Question and Answer session from other students. Here is the first one below.

Tonysha asks:

I was having a dispute with my sister, and she said that affixes, prefixes, and suffixes are all different, but I thought that affixes were related to suffixes and prefixes in some way...aren't they? By the way, what's the difference between prefixes and suffixes?

Answer:

Both **prefixes and suffixes are known as affixes**. A prefix is added to the beginning of a word, in order to change its meaning.

Example: Un-acceptable. In this example, the **prefix -Un** is added to the root word accepted.

Now, a suffix is added to the end of the word, in order to present another form of a word, and to change its meaning.

Example: Unacceptable. In this example, the **suffix -able** is also added to the root word accept. The root word that this suffix is added to wouldn't be unaccept, because unaccept isn't even a word.

So, it seems as though you and your sister may have both made some valid claims!

Accept and Except

The words “accept” and “except” may sound the same, but their meanings are quite different.

Accept: to willingly take or receive something offered. Accept is **always a verb**.

Example: I guess I have to accept the fact that I must do my homework.

Except: not including. Except can be a preposition or conjunction.

Example: I’m going to complete all of my homework tonight except for the essay because it’s not due until next Monday.

Tip: To keep the two straight, remember that **except** is similar to **exclude** in spelling and meaning.

Morphemes

A morpheme is the smallest part of a word which still has meaning. Learning morphemes helps decipher unfamiliar words. When you encounter a word you don’t know, you can often figure out its meaning by breaking it down into its morphemes.

Every word is made of one or more morphemes. Some words consist of only a **single morpheme**. They are called **simple words**.

The word **build** means “to construct”; it can’t be broken down into any smaller units that have meaning.

Build is a morpheme because it can’t be broken down any further.

Build is also called a **free morpheme** because **it has meaning on its own** without other morphemes.

Builder, however, can be broken down into the morphemes **build** and **-er**.

"er" is a **bound morpheme** because **it does not have a meaning on its own**, and can only occur as a part of a word.

Except vs. Accept Worksheet

Fill in the correct word (various forms of either except or accept) for each sentence. Clue: You may have to add affixes to these words!

1. The speech began early and I didn't expect to have to _____ the award that soon.
2. The greatest aspect of taking dancing Lessons is feeling that graceful motion flow through your body; I love it all _____ for the fact that my feet are always a bit sore afterward.
3. I'm just going to have to _____ the fact that I can't always have what I want to eat, _____ for on special occasions.
4. The man's resignation was _____, but not too many people were thrilled about it, _____ for his wife.
5. Always give someone another chance; the _____ to this rule depends on whether or not they've already used up that second chance!
6. Chris's willingness to date Lakaiya depended solely on his parents' _____ of her.
7. The expectations for most athletes are very high; there are generally no _____ to this rule.
8. The child's rude behavior was completely _____.
9. The business woman's presentation was spectacular and quite _____ considering she was so new to the company.
10. The woman's claim was impractical, and therefore _____ by the jury.

Lesson 2

Free and Bound Morphemes

This Lesson will focus on how to break down words into free and bound morphemes in order to better understand unfamiliar words. First, let's examine an absurdly long word with many morphemes: *Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanokoniosis*.

Alec asks:

I was looking at in the Guinness World Book of Records, and I came across the longest word in the English language: **Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanokoniosis**. Do you have any idea what this word means? Is it really even a word?

Answer:

Yes, it most certainly is a real word! And, phonetically, it's pronounced like this:

na-moan-o-ultra-micro-scopic-silly-cone-o-volcano-cone-e-osis!

Did you get that? Before I tell you what it means Alec, do you see any familiar words in the pronunciation? Here is what each part of the word means:

pneumon: lung disease (as in pneumonia); ultra extremely; microscopic: small;

silic: flint (as in silicon); volcano (the word);

coni: dust; osis: as in tuberculosis.

The meaning of the word, in general, is a lung disease that is caused by the inhalation of small volcanic silicon dust particles

Free & Bound Morpheme Worksheet

Circle the part of the words that are bound morphemes and underline the part of the word that is a free morpheme (it may be the whole word).

Example:

Girl: If there is only one morpheme, as in the word girl, then the word will only be Underlined. If the word was Girls then you would circle the –s and underline Girl.

Words:

1. Liked
2. Hands
3. Hunter
4. Act
5. Allows
6. Container
7. Presentation
8. Poured
9. Statements
10. Trying
11. Conclusion
12. Bound
13. Freedom
14. Talented
15. Activate
16. Knowledgeable

