

Max's Magnificent Word Factory

Learning objective: To identify and understand the impact of prefixes and suffixes on word meaning.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Pay close attention to how the root words change when letters are added to the beginning or end.

Max the monkey sat in his treetop laboratory, surrounded by piles of wooden letter blocks. He was fascinated by how small changes could transform a word entirely. 'It's like a maths puzzle!' Max chirped. He picked up the root word 'appear' and attached the prefix 're-' to the front. Suddenly, it became 'reappear', meaning to show up once again. Max grinned and reached for the word 'care'. By adding the suffix '-less' to the end, he created 'careless', describing someone who is not careful. His friend Pip the caterpillar crawled over to observe. Pip loved how adding prefixes like 'un-' or 'dis-' could create the opposite meaning, such as 'unhappy' or 'disagree'. Max explained that suffixes were just as powerful; they could turn a noun into an adjective, like changing 'joy' into 'joyful'. The duo spent the afternoon rearranging their blocks, crafting a marvellous collection of new words. They realised that understanding these small letter groups was the secret key to unlocking the meaning of even the most complex vocabulary in their favourite storybooks.

Word bank: prefix · suffix · root word · disagree · careless · reappear · joyful

1. Identify two words from the text that contain a prefix and two words that contain a suffix. (2 marks)

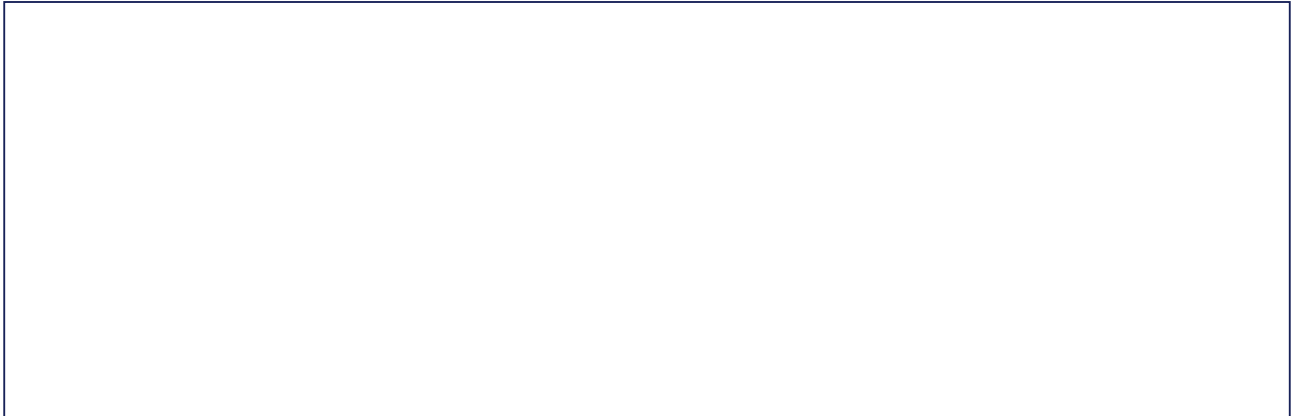
2. What does Max mean when he says adding prefixes and suffixes is like a 'maths puzzle'? (2 marks)

3. Why might a writer choose to use the word 'careless' instead of just saying someone is 'not careful'? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, explain how the prefix 're-' changes the meaning of a root word. (2 marks)

5. Do you think learning prefixes and suffixes is a useful skill for a reader? Justify your answer using examples from the passage. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw Max the monkey in his treetop laboratory holding a wooden block that says 'RE' in one hand and 'PLAY' in the other, showing how he creates the word 'REPLAY'.



Extension challenge: Choose three root words of your own. Create a table showing how you can add different prefixes and suffixes to each one to create new words. Write a short paragraph explaining why prefixes are added to the start of a word while suffixes are added to the end. What might happen if we tried to add a suffix to the front of a word?