

The Word-Building Workshop

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

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions below to test your understanding of how prefixes and suffixes change the root of a word.

Pip the caterpillar spends his afternoons in the BookFlik library, meticulously organising his collection of words. He believes that every word is like a tiny construction set. By adding a prefix to the start or a suffix to the end of a root word, you can completely transform its meaning or purpose. Pip often shows his friends how the prefix 'un-' can turn a 'predictable' day into an 'unpredictable' adventure. Meanwhile, he uses the suffix '-ful' to turn the noun 'joy' into the adjective 'joyful'. Pip warns his friends not to 'misinterpret' these building blocks, as adding the wrong part could lead to confusion. For example, adding '-less' to 'hope' creates 'hopeless', which has a very different feeling to 'hopeful'. By mastering these small additions, Pip ensures his stories are always precise and exciting. He suggests that if you are ever unsure about a word, you should strip away the extra parts to find the root. Once you discover the original meaning, the new version becomes much easier to understand. It is a brilliant way to expand your vocabulary and become a master of language.

Word bank: prefix · suffix · root word · misinterpret · joyful · unpredictable

1. According to the text, what does Pip suggest you do if you are unsure about the meaning of a word? (2 marks)

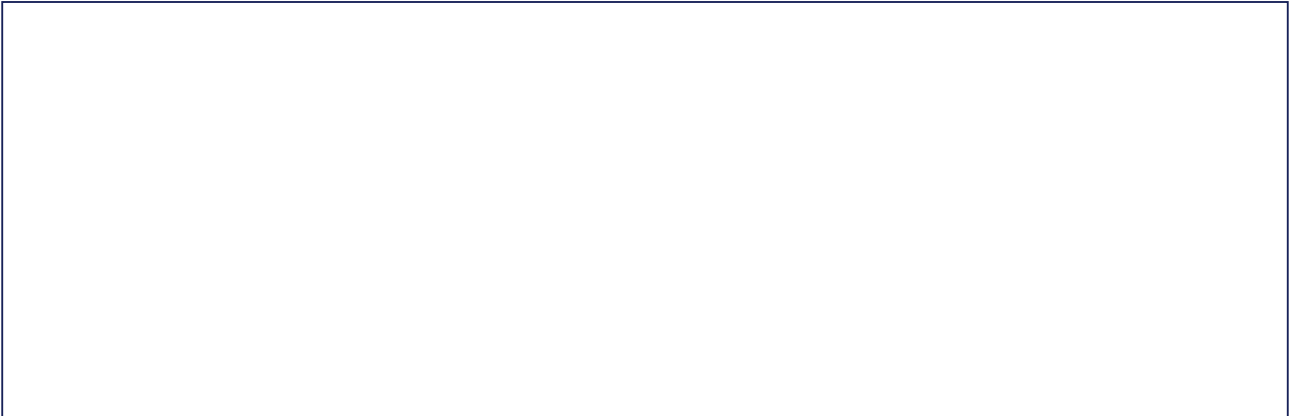
2. Which prefix does Pip use to turn the word 'predictable' into its opposite? (1 mark)

3. Why does Pip compare words to a 'construction set'? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, why is it important to choose the correct suffix, such as '-ful' or '-less'? (2 marks)

5. Do you agree with Pip that learning prefixes and suffixes is a 'brilliant way' to expand your vocabulary? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Pip the caterpillar building a 'word tower' out of wooden blocks, where each block represents a prefix, a root word, or a suffix.



Extension challenge: Choose three root words of your own. Create a table and show how you can change the meaning of each root word by adding at least two different prefixes or suffixes to each one.