



Reading and Use of English Part 3 – Word formation

Overview: Students develop their ability to identify and form different parts of speech

Part of Exam: Reading and Use of English (Paper 1) Part 3

Language / Skill Practised: vocabulary, mainly prefixes, suffixes and negation

Materials: One copy of Worksheet one per two students. One advanced-level learners' dictionary per pair of students. We recommend the Macmillan English Dictionary. One copy of a Paper 1 Part 3 exam task per student. One copy of parts of speech identification sheet (see Worksheet 2 for example) per student. One more copy of a Paper one Part 3 exam task per student for extension (optional).

Time: 50 to 75 minutes (plus extension)

Preparation:

The Use of English sections do not need to be taught in the same order that they appear in the exam. It is probably best to deal with this part sooner rather than later because it develops skills that are useful for the writing part of the exam. You may want to prepare your own worksheets, especially to avoid easily translatable examples if you have students who speak Romance languages. It is a good idea to try to cover the suffixes used in the exam tasks.

Procedure:**Part One: Warmer – Call my bluff**

- Read out one of the examples from Worksheet 1. Ask the students to guess which answer is correct. Ask the ones who guessed correctly how they knew the answer. Hopefully they will answer 'it sounded right', or 'I think I saw it somewhere once'.
- Put students into pairs and give out the copies of Worksheet 1. Give them five minutes to do the task. When they have finished, conduct feedback as a class. You can keep a class tally of the groups' scores if you wish.

- Take one of the dictionaries, choose a random, level-appropriate word, and improvise another 'Call my bluff' question with one correct answer and two incorrect answers. Try to use some common suffixes in your incorrect answers. Then give out the other dictionaries and ask students to write five more similar questions in their pairs.
- Allow students ten minutes to write their own questions, monitoring and offering help. Ask one of the groups to read out a question. Write the three options on the board, but be careful not to give away the correct answer. Let the other groups guess which is correct. If you wish to continue with scoring, you can score points for teams that guess correctly and/or for teams that fool others into guessing the answers wrongly.
- It's usually best to stop the activity after 12 or so questions. In the last round, let teams choose which of their remaining questions they think is the most challenging.
- **Variation:** rather than the teams reading their questions out, they could just pass them onto the next team on their left to answer, then take them back to check. The reading out option is generally better (if longer) as hearing the options read aloud allows students to develop more of a feeling for which words 'sound correct'.

Part Two: Exam practice

- Give out the exam tasks (one per student).
- Tell students to cover the words on the right side of the text. Ask them to read the whole text and try to work out what part of speech (verb, noun, adjective) would fill each gap. Once they have decided on what part of speech would fill the gap, they can look at the words on the right of the text and start deciding which suffix or prefix needs to be added to create the correct answer. Remember that there will almost always be an adverb and also a word which requires a negative prefix.
- When they have finished, allow them to compare in pairs and then check answers as a class. For each answer, ask first 'What part of speech was needed here?' (e.g. 'a noun'). If



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there is doubt or disagreement, discuss what kind of words go with which others (see Top Tips for activities to practise this). Then ask what the actual word could be. Make sure every group gives an answer, and that if they have no, they still guess. Tell them that practice on this is coming (see below).

- In almost every exam task you do in every class, there will be someone who has missed a negative prefix because they have not paid attention to the actual meaning of the text. These students are also usually the ones who start writing straight away, so encourage students to read the whole text before they start guessing the answers as this will give them an idea of the tone of the text.

Part Three: Word formation guessing skills

- Ask for a few examples of the right derivations from the 'Call my bluff' task above. Ask the students which part is the affix. Ask them to make generalisations about what part of speech a word with that suffix usually is, e.g. a word ending in *-tion* is usually a noun. Ask for a couple more examples. Leave all these on the board.
- Give out Worksheet 2 and ask the students to complete the table, using their dictionaries if necessary. Conduct feedback as a class.
- Now tell students to look at the examples they wrote in the first table, and decide how the nouns were formed. They complete the table in pairs.
- There are often exceptions to the general rules given, but it is important to show students some general rules that they can use to work out answers in the exam.
- Check all the answers and then get students to use their tables to help them complete Part C on the worksheet.
- Extension:** You could do another exam task, letting them use their tables to guess any ones they are not sure of.

Worksheet 1

Key

- b fright*
- a extend*
- b compact*
- a forecast*
- a dreadful*
- b solidify*
- a ageism*
- b anger*
- c speaker*
- c angelic*

Worksheet 2

Part A (Suggested answers)

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives
<i>enjoyment</i>	<i>justify</i>	<i>expensive</i>
<i>entirety</i>	<i>empathise/ize</i>	<i>generous</i>
<i>friendship</i>		<i>dreadful</i>
<i>isolation</i>		<i>heartless</i>
<i>goodness</i>		
<i>violinist</i>		

Part B (Suggested answers)

Nouns		
Noun + suffix	Verb + suffix	Adjective + suffix
<i>friendship</i>	<i>enjoyment</i>	<i>entirety</i>
<i>violinist</i>	<i>isolation</i>	<i>goodness</i>

Part C answers

scarcity, fellowship, mother/motherhood, donation, admission



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Example question

Many of the women suffered from a feeling of _____ (help) when confronted with the powers that be.

Answer: *helplessness*

Tip 1 The students will be given one continuous text with questions similar to the one above plus one example. They should change the word given in brackets at the end of the line, usually by adding prefixes and suffixes, so that it fits into the text both by meaning and part of speech. They will always need to make some changes, and often more than one – e.g. *harm* to *harmlessness*. In other words, just inserting the word given will never get a point.

Tip 2 As always, the first thing students should do is read the whole text first.

Tip 3 The words are always next to the line with the relevant gap, so stop students who think they have to try to find where each word should go.

Tip 4 After reading through the text, the students can start the task. They should first go with their instinct. If a word pops into their head it is probably right, especially with the students who read a lot in English (but see tips below).

Tip 5 If no ideas pop into their heads, or they wish to check their answers, they should think about what kind of word goes into each gap. This can be done using clues such as word order. For example, if there is an article preceding the gap, they will need to place a noun after it. If there is already a noun after the gap, then they will need an adjective, etc. This can be practised without the distraction of worrying about meaning by using 'nonsense' words in the gaps. This can be done in the following manner: have lots of sentences with 'Doobeedoobeadoo' in them and have students say what part of speech it is in sentences like 'I wouldn't doobeedoobeadoo that if I were you'. Alternatively, identify the parts of speech in nonsense poetry like 'The Jabberwocky'.

Tip 6 Having ascertained what kind of word should go in the gap, students then have to come up with the actual word! If they are completely unfamiliar with it (which is not often the case) they can guess it by adding various prefixes and suffixes until they get something that sounds right and obeys the rules of word formation (see Worksheet 2 for practise of this). Often, while they are doing this, they will hit on the right answer and suddenly realize that they were familiar with it after all, if only passively. This routine should also be used when you go through the answers.

Tip 7 Students won't lose points for wrong answers. But as they get no points if they make no changes (see above), they must alter each word.

Tip 8 If they have time (they usually will), students should read through the whole text again with their answers completed to make sure it makes sense and sounds correct. The type of mistake they will often pick up at this point is not changing words to the negative to fit in with the meaning of the text (for example, putting *helpfulness* in the example above – grammatically correct but nonsensical in this context).



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Call my bluff

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 What is the noun form of <i>frightened</i>?</p> <p>a frightness</p> <p>b fright</p> <p>c frightion</p> | <p>6 What is the verb form of <i>solid</i>?</p> <p>a solidate</p> <p>b solidify</p> <p>c solidize</p> |
| <p>2 What is the verb form of <i>extension</i>?</p> <p>a extend</p> <p>b extent</p> <p>c extensify</p> | <p>7 Which is the noun form of <i>aged</i>?</p> <p>a ageism</p> <p>b age-related</p> <p>c agor</p> |
| <p>3 What is the verb form of <i>compact</i>?</p> <p>a compactify</p> <p>b compact</p> <p>c compactize</p> | <p>8 Which is the noun form of <i>angry</i>?</p> <p>a angrier</p> <p>b anger</p> <p>c angrily</p> |
| <p>4 What is the verb form of <i>forecast</i>?</p> <p>a forecast</p> <p>b forecasted</p> <p>c forecastness</p> | <p>9 Which is the noun form of <i>speak</i>?</p> <p>a speaking</p> <p>b spoken</p> <p>c speaker</p> |
| <p>5 What's the adjective form of <i>dread</i>?</p> <p>a dreadful</p> <p>b dreadful</p> <p>c dreadive</p> | <p>10 What's the adjective form of <i>angel</i>?</p> <p>a angelism</p> <p>b proangel</p> <p>c angelic</p> |



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Suffix patterns

Part A: What word class does a word ending in the following suffixes usually have? Write an example of a word ending in each suffix in the correct column. Make sure the word actually contains a suffix (e.g. *fish* does not equal *f + ish*!)

-ment	-ive	-ity	-ship
-ous	-ful	-ify	-tion
-ness	-ist	-less	-ise/-ize

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives
<i>enjoyment</i>		

Part B: Now divide the nouns again according to how they are made, e.g. *actor* is verb (*act*) + suffix (*or*).

Nouns		
Noun + suffix	Verb + suffix	Adjective + suffix
	<i>enjoyment</i>	

Part C: Use the examples above to guess the noun forms of these words:

- scarce (adj) _____
- fellow (n) _____
- mother (v) _____
- donate (v) _____
- admit (v) _____

