

ETYMOLOGY: 10th Grade English Worksheet

What Is Etymology?

Etymology is the study of the **origin and history of words**. By examining a word's roots, prefixes, suffixes, and language of origin, you can often figure out its meaning.

Common Word Origins

- **Greek** – many words connected to science, mathematics, and philosophy
 - **Latin** – many words connected to government, law, science, and education
 - **French** – many words connected to food, art, fashion, and government
 - **Old English/Germanic** – many common everyday English words
 - **Spanish** – words such as *patio*, *canyon*, and *ranch*
 - **Arabic** – words such as *algebra*, *alcohol*, and *zero*
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Part I: Multiple Choice

1. What does the term **etymology** mean?
A. The study of sentence structure
B. The study of word origins and history
C. The study of how words are pronounced
D. The study of punctuation
2. If you know that the Greek root **bio** means "life," which word most likely relates to life?
A. biography
B. telescope
C. telephone
D. geometry
3. The Latin root **aqua** means "water." Which word contains this root?
A. aquarium
B. agriculture
C. audible
D. annual
4. The Greek root **geo** means "earth." What does **geology** most likely mean?
A. The study of animals
B. The study of stars
C. The study of Earth
D. The study of language
5. The Greek root **chron** means "time." Which word is related to time?
A. chronological
B. geography
C. biology
D. photograph
6. The Latin root **scrib/script** means "write." Which word is related to writing?

- A. describe
- B. transport
- C. predict
- D. inspect

7. If **tele** means "far" and **phone** means "sound," what does **telephone** literally suggest?
- A. sound from far away
 - B. writing from far away
 - C. seeing from far away
 - D. traveling far away
8. The Greek root **photo** means "light." Which word is connected to this meaning?
- A. photograph
 - B. biography
 - C. microscope
 - D. submarine
9. The prefix **pre-** means "before." What does **predict** most closely suggest?
- A. to say after something happens
 - B. to say or state beforehand
 - C. to write something down
 - D. to say something repeatedly
10. The prefix **anti-** means "against." Which word means "against social behavior"?
- A. antisocial
 - B. autobiography
 - C. international
 - D. prehistoric
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Part II: Match the Roots

Directions: Match each root with its meaning. Write the correct letter on the line.

Root	Meanings
11. ____ bio	A. hear
12. ____ geo	B. carry
13. ____ aqua	C. see/look
14. ____ chron	D. life
15. ____ photo	E. earth
16. ____ tele	F. water
17. ____ aud	G. time
18. ____ port	H. light
19. ____ dict	I. far
20. ____ spect	J. say/speak

Part III: Use Word Parts to Determine Meaning

Directions: Use the roots, prefixes, or suffixes in each word to determine its meaning.

21. Aquatic

The root *aqua* means "water." What does **aquatic** most likely mean?

- A. related to water
- B. related to air
- C. related to land
- D. related to fire

22. Biography

The root *bio* means "life," and *graph* means "write." What is a **biography**?

- A. a story about a fictional character
- B. a written account of someone's life
- C. a description of a place
- D. a prediction about the future

23. Spectator

The root *spect* means "look" or "see." What is a **spectator**?

- A. someone who watches an event
- B. someone who organizes an event
- C. someone who performs at an event
- D. someone who writes about an event

24. Transport

The root *port* means "carry," and *trans-* means "across." What does **transport** mean?

- A. to carry across or from one place to another
- B. to look carefully
- C. to speak loudly
- D. to write about something

25. Audible

The root *aud* means "hear." What does **audible** mean?

- A. able to be seen
- B. able to be touched
- C. able to be heard
- D. able to be written

26. Contradict

The Latin root *dict* means "say," while *contra-* means "against." What does **contradict** mean?

- A. to agree with someone
- B. to speak against or state the opposite
- C. to repeat someone's words
- D. to speak quietly

27. Microscope

The Greek root *micro* means "small," and *scope* means "look at." What is a microscope used for?

- A. looking at very distant objects
- B. looking at very small objects
- C. measuring temperature
- D. measuring time

28. International

The prefix *inter-* means "between" or "among," and *nation* refers to a country. What does **international** mean?

- A. within one country
- B. between or involving multiple countries
- C. against another country
- D. before a country existed

Part IV: Word Origins

Directions: Choose the language of origin that best fits each word.

A. Greek	B. Latin	C. French	D. Spanish	E. Arabic
29. ____ algebra		32. ____ biology		35. ____ restaurant
30. ____ patio		33. ____ aquarium		36. ____ geometry
31. ____ ballet		34. ____ canyon		

Part V: Etymology in Context

Directions: Using your knowledge of word parts and origins, determine the meaning of the bold word.

37. The scientist studied **geothermal** energy, which comes from heat beneath Earth's surface.

The roots *geo* and *therm* most likely mean:

- A. earth and heat
- B. water and light
- C. life and time
- D. sound and movement

38. The historian arranged the events in **chronological** order, beginning with the earliest event.

The root *chron* helps show that the word relates to:

- A. writing
- B. time
- C. geography
- D. speech

39. The student used an **autobiography** to learn about the author's own life.

The prefix *auto-* means "self," and *bio* means "life." An autobiography is therefore:

- A. a story about another person's life
- B. a person's account of his or her own life
- C. a fictional story about a person's life
- D. a history of an entire country

40. The teacher asked students to **inspect** their essays carefully before submitting them.

The Latin root *spect* means "look." Based on this root, **inspect** most likely means:

- A. to look into or examine carefully
 - B. to write quickly
 - C. to speak loudly
 - D. to carry away
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