

Lesson 3.4 Words and Sounds and Relationships: Latin Roots

key words: parts of speech, Greek, Latin, affixes, suffixes, prefixes, roots, morphology

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.1a Explain the function of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in general and their functions in particular sentences. <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/3/1/a>

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4b Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *telegraph*, *photograph*, *autograph*). <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/4/4/b>

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.4b Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *photograph*, *photosynthesis*). <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/5/4/b>

Language changes. You're all aware, when you stop to think about it, how we sometimes pronounce things differently – *pajamas*, *apricot*, *coupon*. Can you think of other words that you pronounce one way and someone else pronounces another way? When the majority of people adopt the newer way of pronouncing a word, we say that the language has changed.

Sound changes in regular, patterned ways. When you know something about some of the changes that happened long ago, it can reveal relationships among words that you might not otherwise have known about. There is a well-known change that took place even before there was a language known as English. We call this change Grimm's Law; it is named for Jacob Grimm (who, along with his brother William collected the tales that became known as Grimm's fairy tales), and it affected the whole Germanic branch of languages including Dutch, German, Frisian, and Swedish.

Grimm noticed that when there were certain sounds in Latin, there were certain other sounds in the Germanic languages, including English. In 1822, he published these sound correspondences, which then became known as Grimm's Law. Here they are.

b → p

d → t

g → k

p → f

t → th

k → h

Because English, later in its life, borrowed so many words from Latin, Greek, and French, there are a great many words that are of non-Germanic origin that did not undergo the Grimm's Law sound shift (since it only affected the Germanic languages). For example, we have the English word *tooth* and the Latin root *dent-*, of *dentist*, *dental*, *dentures*, and so on. So those "d"s turned into "t"s in English, but stayed "d"s in the languages that English later borrowed from. Some other examples:

And if you compare other non-Germanic words from Spanish or French with English ones, you can see these sound changes here too; the word *deux* in French or *dos* in Spanish, both meaning 'two.' Or the words *père* in French or *padre* in Spanish, both meaning 'father'. Those "d"s all became "t"s in English, and the "p"s became "f"s.

Grimm's Law is an example of the importance of some sound changes to understanding connections among words.

For the following words, take the first word (of non-Germanic origin) and apply Grimm's Law to the bolded sound to get a word of Germanic origin that has a related meaning and describe the meaning relationship.

Example: **p**edal – foot (You use your foot on a pedal.)

d-t: **d**ecimal
 rodent
g-k: **g**rain
p-f: **p**aternal
t-th tricycle
k-h: unicorn
 cardiac

[Teacher Notes: Remind students they should focus on sound not spelling/

d-t:	d ecimal	ten, rat
	r odent	
g-k:	g rain	corn
p-f:	p aternal	father
t-th	tricycle	three
k-h:	unicorn	horn
	c ardiac	heart