

It's All Greek to Me

Greek and Latin Roots

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Grade Level	7th – 8th Grade	**Time Frame**	100 minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	1-2 class period(s)
Course	Composition, Creative Writing		

Essential Question

What is the purpose of applying grammar and mechanics? How can knowing the roots of words help with reading, writing, and spelling?

Summary

In this lesson on Greek and Latin roots, guide students to explore word origins by discovering root words and applying them to their writing. Have students work in groups to recognize Latin and Greek roots using learning strategies. Lead them through a reading and annotation activity to identify English words rooted in Latin and Greek. Then, instruct students to complete a writing activity to apply what they've learned, using a rubric to guide and evaluate their work. Although this lesson is aligned to 8th-grade standards, it is appropriate for 7th-8th grades. Adjust standards as needed for your grade level.

Snapshot

Engage

Students watch a YouTube clip from the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* and preview word parts.

Explore

Students participate in a Honeycomb Harvest activity.

Explain

Students "What-Light" a text by finding words with Greek and Latin roots.

Extend

Students write a paragraph incorporating words with Greek or Latin roots.

Evaluate

Students are evaluated based on their completion of "What-Lighting" and their written paragraphs.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

WME201: Understand the implication of a familiar word or phrase and of simple descriptive language
WME301: Analyze how the choice of a specific word or phrase shapes meaning or tone in somewhat challenging passages when the effect is simple
WME503: Interpret virtually any word or phrase as it is used in somewhat challenging passages, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 8)

8.4.R.3: Use word parts (e.g., affixes, Greek roots, stems) to define and determine the meaning of increasingly complex words.

Attachments

- Greek and Latin Roots—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.docx
- Greek and Latin Roots—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.pdf
- Greek and Latin Roots—It's All Greek To Me.docx
- Greek and Latin Roots—It's All Greek To Me.pdf
- Honeycomb Harvest Answer Key—It's All Greek To Me.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest Answer Key—It's All Greek To Me.pdf
- Honeycomb Harvest Cards—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest Cards—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.pdf
- Honeycomb Harvest Cards—It's All Greek To Me.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest Cards—It's All Greek To Me.pdf
- Lesson Slides—It's All Greek To Me.pptx
- Paragraph Writing Rubric—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.docx
- Paragraph Writing Rubric—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.pdf
- Paragraph Writing Rubric—It's All Greek To Me.docx
- Paragraph Writing Rubric—It's All Greek To Me.pdf
- Select a Topic—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.docx
- Select a Topic—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.pdf
- Select a Topic—It's All Greek To Me.docx
- Select a Topic—It's All Greek To Me.pdf
- What-Lighting Paragraph Answer Key—It's All Greek To Me.docx
- What-Lighting Paragraph Answer Key—It's All Greek To Me.pdf
- What-Lighting Paragraph Student Handout—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.docx
- What-Lighting Paragraph Student Handout—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.pdf
- What-Lighting Paragraph Student Handout—It's All Greek To Me.docx
- What-Lighting Paragraph Student Handout—It's All Greek To Me.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides
- Honeycomb Harvest Cards (one set per group of 3–4 students)
- Honeycomb Harvest Answer Key
- What-Lighting Paragraph handout (one per student)
- What-Lighting Paragraph Answer Key
- Greek and Latin Roots handout (one per student)
- Creative Writing Rubric (one per student)
- Select a Topic handout (one per student)
- Highlighters (one per student)
- Internet connectivity (to access a YouTube video link)

10 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Lesson Preparation

Before the lesson, copy the **Honeycomb Harvest Cards** onto card-stock paper, cut them out, and organize them into sets using envelopes or paper clips (one set per group of 3-4 students).

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Display and discuss **slides 2-3**, which show the lesson objectives and essential questions. Inform students that they will be able to answer the guiding questions by the end of the lesson.

Move to **slide 4** and ask, “Where do English words come from?” Have students turn to an Elbow Partner and share ideas. After 1-2 minutes, call on volunteers to share their thoughts. Listen without correcting misconceptions at this point.

Play the video clip on **slide 5** from *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*.

Embedded video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VL9whwwTK6I

After the video, ask students where Mr. Portokalos believes English words come from. Discuss whether students believe he is correct and why or why not.

Possible Student Responses

Explain that Mr. Portokalos is correct that some English words come from Greek, but others come from different languages. For example, "arachnophobia" does come from Greek roots, but "kimono" comes from Japanese. Understanding the meanings of root words can help determine the meaning of entire words.

15 minutes

Explore

Explain that many words in English have Latin or Greek roots. Group students heterogeneously in groups of 3-4 to ensure a mix of ability levels. Display **slide 6** and ask, “How many of these common Greek roots do you know?”

Pass out the Honeycomb Harvest cards to each group. Display **slide 7** and explain the directions for the Honeycomb Harvest activity. Use **slide 8** as an example to explain the relationship between roots, their definitions, and common English words. Allow 10-15 minutes for the activity. Use **slide 9** to display a 15-minute timer.

Invite groups to share one of their honeycombs and explain the root word, its meaning, and examples of English words. Use the answer key as a reference.

25 minutes

Explain

Tell students that understanding root words can help them interpret English words. Distribute the **What-Lighting** handout, a highlighter, and the **Greek and Latin Root** handout.(Note: "What-Lighting" is a variation of the Why-Lighting strategy.)

Move to **slide 10** and ask students to read the paragraph individually, highlighting words with Greek and Latin roots. They can use their handouts for reference. Instruct them to annotate the margins with the definitions based on the roots. For example, if they highlight "aquarium," they should write "a tank that contains water and fish" in the margin. Allow 20-25 minutes for the activity, and use **slide 11** to display a 20-minute timer.

Use the answer key to evaluate or have students self-check their handouts.

Teacher's Note: Differentiation

If students struggle, allow them to work in pairs.

30 minutes

Extend

Move to **slides 12-13**. Explain that students will now write a creative paragraph using words that have Greek or Latin roots. Pass out the **Paragraph Writing Rubric** and **Select a Topic** handout. Allow students to choose their characters, settings, and creatures from the options on the handout.

Teacher's Note: Differentiation

If writing a paragraph using English words with Greek or Latin roots is too challenging, consider having students work in pairs to create a paragraph together or simplifying the topic as needed.

Optional: Extended Topical Support

If students have read any books from Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson* series, such as *The Lightning Thief*, they will be familiar with Greek gods and myths. Riordan's author page (complete citation in the Resource list) also includes a Greek mythology guide for students. Refer students to this page or similar resources to find more information about Greek gods and their portrayal in myths.

5 minutes

Evaluate

Pass out a sticky note to each student. As an Exit Ticket, ask students: *How can knowing roots of words help you with reading, writing, and spelling?*

Students can also be evaluated on the completion of their highlighted and annotated texts and their creative writing paragraphs.

Resources

- EnglishClub. (n.d.). History of English. https://www.englishclub.com/history-of-english/
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Bell ringers and exit tickets. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/125
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elbow partners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Honeycomb harvest. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/61
- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). K20 Center 15 minute timer. [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/m3zT2IxZQaw?si=Ql4_cZBMxEIH4brM
- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). K20 Center 20 minute timer. [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/bjcwzinQlEE?si=mm7jZaf1Clefb_Ko
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Why-lighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/128
- Rulfoq (2008, Dec. 30). My big fat greek wedding - Give me any word, and I show you how the root is Greek... [Video clip]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=VL9whwwTK6I&feature=emb_logo
- Riordan, R. (n.d.). Meet the Greek gods. http://rickriordan.com/extra/meet-the-greek-gods/