

Word Formation (prefixes and suffixes) – Worksheet 1

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ Score: / 38



Do this worksheet
online and check your
answers instantly

Exercise 1: What do the prefixes mean?

Match each word with its meaning from the box. There are two extra meanings you do not need.

Example: replay → play something again

WORD BOX

think something is bigger or better than it really is write something again in a different way
behave badly not given enough money for your work
a person who starts a company together with someone else a person you used to work with
reserved in advance able to kill harmful bacteria use something too much
able to be used again

1. overestimate → _____
2. rewrite → _____
3. misbehave → _____
4. underpaid → _____
5. co-founder → _____
6. ex-colleague → _____
7. pre-booked → _____
8. antibacterial → _____

Exercise 2: Negative words

Complete the sentences with words from the box. There are two extra words you do not need.

WORD BOX

illegal irresponsible impatient unreliable inaccurate unemployed dishonest disagree
irregular uncomfortable

9. It's _____ to drive without a licence in most countries.
10. Leaving a small child alone at home is completely _____.
11. Don't be so _____! The bus will be here in a minute.
12. My old car was so _____ that it broke down every month.
13. The figures in the report were _____, so we had to check them all again.

14. He lost his job in March and has been _____ since then.
15. It was _____ of her to keep the money she found in the street.
16. I _____ with you – I think the plan is too expensive.

Exercise 3: Add a prefix

Complete each sentence by adding *un-*, *dis-*, *mis-*, *re-*, *over-* or *under-* to the word in brackets. Change the form of the word if necessary.

Example: I'm sorry, I ____ (read) the instructions and did the wrong exercise. → misread

17. Sorry, I _____ (understand) your question. Could you repeat it?
18. The meat was _____ (cook) and very dry because we left it in the oven too long.
19. The shop is closed while it is being _____ (decorate).
20. Many experts _____ (estimate) how difficult the project would be, so it took twice as long.
21. Please _____ (plug) the computer before you clean it.
22. The magician made the coin _____ (appear) – one second it was in his hand, the next it was gone.
23. You've _____ (spell) my name – it's Katrin with a K, not a C.
24. After the exam was cancelled, students had to _____ (take) it in June.

Exercise 4: Form the correct word

Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits the gap.

Example: She spoke with great ____ about her trip. (ENTHUSIAST) → enthusiasm

25. The _____ of the new bridge took three years. (CONSTRUCT)
26. It was very _____ of you to remember my birthday. (THOUGHT)
27. Entrance to the museum is cheap, so it's very _____ for families. (AFFORD)
28. There has been a sharp rise in _____ in the area since the factory closed. (EMPLOY)
29. Climate change is one of the biggest _____ challenges we face. (ENVIRONMENT)
30. Her _____ to stay calm under pressure impressed the interviewers. (ABLE)
31. The instructions were completely _____, so nobody knew what to do. (HELP)
32. The company plans to _____ its factories over the next five years. (MODERN)

Exercise 5: Find the mistake

Each sentence has one mistake with word formation. Write the correct sentence.

33. Smoking in public buildings is illegal in many countries.
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34. The weather was so unpredictable that we cancelled the trip.

35. Thank you for your kindness during my stay.

36. She felt very dissatisfy with the service at the hotel.

37. The new manager is very friendly and approachful.

38. We were impressed by the beautiful views from the hotel.

Answer key – Word Formation (prefixes and suffixes) – Worksheet 1

Exercise 1: What do the prefixes mean?

1. **think something is bigger or better than it really is**
Over- means 'too much', so you estimate too highly.
2. **write something again in a different way**
Re- means 'again'.
3. **behave badly**
Mis- means 'badly' or 'wrongly'.
4. **not given enough money for your work**
Under- means 'not enough'.
5. **a person who starts a company together with someone else**
Co- means 'together with'.
6. **a person you used to work with**
Ex- means 'former'.
7. **reserved in advance**
Pre- means 'before'.
8. **able to kill harmful bacteria**
Anti- means 'against'.

Exercise 2: Negative words

9. **illegal**
Il- is used before words starting with l: legal → illegal.
10. **irresponsible**
Ir- is used before words starting with r: responsible → irresponsible.
11. **impatient**
Im- is often used before words starting with p: patient → impatient.
12. **unreliable**
Something unreliable cannot be trusted to work well.
13. **inaccurate**
Inaccurate means 'not correct or exact'.
14. **unemployed**
Unemployed means 'without a job'.
15. **dishonest**
Dis- + honest describes someone who is not honest.
16. **disagree**
We say 'disagree with someone'.

Exercise 3: Add a prefix

17. **misunderstood**
Mis- means 'wrongly'; past simple: misunderstood.
18. **overcooked**
Over- means 'too much'.
19. **redecorated**
Re- means 'again'; passive needs the past participle.
20. **underestimated**
Under- means 'not enough': they thought it was easier than it was.
21. **unplug**
Un- reverses the action: unplug means disconnect from the power.
22. **disappear**
The reviewer's answer was already correct, but the original sentence also allowed the unchanged base word 'appear', so the context now makes it clear that the coin vanished.
23. **misspelt**
The reviewer's answer 'misspelt' is already accepted, and the correction that follows makes it clear the name was spelt wrongly, so no change is needed.
24. **retake**
Re- means 'again': take the exam again.

Exercise 4: Form the correct word

25. **construction**
A noun is needed after 'the'; construct + -ion.
26. **thoughtful**
An adjective is needed; -ful means 'full of'.
27. **affordable**
An adjective is needed; -able means 'can be done'.
28. **unemployment**
A negative noun is needed: un- + employ + -ment.
29. **environmental**
An adjective is needed before 'challenges'; add -al.
30. **ability**
A noun is needed; able → ability.
31. **unhelpful**
A negative adjective is needed: un- + help + -ful.
32. **modernise**
The reviewer's answer 'modernise' is already accepted alongside the -ize spelling, and only a verb fits after 'to', so the item is clear as written.

Exercise 5: Find the mistake

33. **Smoking in public buildings is illegal in many countries.**

The negative of legal is illegal.

34. **The weather was so unpredictable that we cancelled the trip.**

The correct spelling is unpredictable (-able).

35. **Thank you for your kindness during my stay.**

The noun from kind is kindness.

36. **She felt very dissatisfied with the service at the hotel.**

An adjective is needed after 'felt very': dissatisfied.

37. **The new manager is very friendly and approachable.**

The adjective is approachable (easy to talk to).

38. **We were impressed by the beautiful views from the hotel.**

When adding -ful, the y in beauty changes to i: beautiful.

Notes for teachers: Start with Exercise 1 so learners notice how prefixes change meaning, then move to the more exam-like tasks. Typical mistakes include choosing the wrong negative prefix (illegal, irresponsible), adding the wrong suffix (kindliness, approachful) and misspelling forms such as -ible/-able. As a follow-up, ask learners to build word families (e.g. employ, employer, employee, unemployed, unemployment) for five words from the worksheet.