



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 roots of words help with reading, writing, and spelling?

Summary

In this lesson about Greek and Latin roots, students will explore word origins by discovering root words and applying them to their own writing. Students will work in groups and use learning strategies to recognize Latin and Greek roots, then complete a reading and annotation activity to identify English words that are rooted in Latin and Greek. Next, students will complete a writing activity to apply what they've learned, using a rubric to guide and evaluate their writing. While this lesson is currently aligned only to grade 8 standards, it would be appropriate to teach in grades 7 through 8, adjusting standards as needed.

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 the words with Greek and Latin roots.

Extend

Students write a paragraph that incorporates words with Greek or Latin roots.

Evaluate

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

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 8)

8.4.R.1: Students will increase knowledge of academic, domain-appropriate, grade-level vocabulary to infer meaning of grade-level text.

8.4.R.2: Students will use word parts (e.g., affixes, Greek and Latin 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](#)
- [Honecomb Harvest Cards—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Honecomb Harvest Cards—It's All Greek To Me - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Honecomb Harvest Cards—It's All Greek To Me.docx](#)
- [Honecomb Harvest Cards—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](#)
- [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 (attached)
- Honeycomb Harvest Cards (attached, one set per group of 3–4 students)
- Honeycomb Harvest Answer Key (attached, one per teacher)
- What-Lighting Paragraph handout (attached, one per student)
- What-Lighting Paragraph Answer Key (attached, one per teacher)
- Greek and Latin Roots handout (attached, one per student)
- Creative Writing Rubric (attached, one per student)
- Select a Topic Handout (attached, one per student)
- Internet connectivity (to access a YouTube video link)

Engage

Teacher's Note: Lesson Preparation

Prior to beginning this lesson, copy the **Honeycomb Harvest Cards** onto heavy or card stock paper, cut them out, and use envelopes or paper clips to organize them in sets. You will need one Honeycomb Harvest card set for each group of 3–4.

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

Display **slide 4** and ask the question, "Where do English words come from?" Have students turn to an [Elbow Partner](#) and share their ideas. Allow 1–2 minutes for partners to discuss, and then call on volunteers to share out their ideas. At this point, just listen to ideas without correcting any misconceptions.

Play the short video clip on **slide 5** from the movie [My Big Fat Greek Wedding](#).

Embedded video

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

After the movie, ask students where Mr. Portokalos, who is Greek, believes English words come from. Do students believe he is correct? Why or why not?

Possible Student Responses

Guide the discussion through the questions. Is Mr. Portokalos correct in that English words come from Greek? Mr. Portokalos is correct in that SOME of our English words come from Greek, but others come from other or older languages. "Arachnophobia," which he mentions, does come from the Greek root or base words of "arachno" and "phobia." "Kimono" comes from the Japanese language rather than Greek. Emphasize that, as Mr. Portokalos states, if you know the meanings of root or base words, you can often determine what the entire word means.

Explore

Many words in English have Latin or Greek root word parts because these languages are more ancient and were intermingled with Germanic languages. For a more comprehensive understanding of the origins of the English language, go [here](#).

Move students into heterogeneous groups of three or four. Ensure that groups are of mixed ability, as students may have different levels of prior knowledge regarding Latin and Greek root words. Display **slide 6**, and ask students the question posed: *How many of these common Greek roots do you know?*

Pass out the [Honeycomb Harvest](#) card sets that you prepared for each group. Display and discuss **slide 7**, which provides directions for how to make a Honeycomb Harvest. Tell student groups that they are looking for small honeycombs of words that belong together. Use the example on **slide 8** to explain the relationship of roots and their definitions to common English words to create the honeycomb effect. Allow 10–15 minutes for students to complete the activity—matching roots, their definitions, and the English words that developed from the roots.

Allow student groups to share out one of their honeycombs—the root word, its meaning, and examples of English words that use the root word. An answer key is provided in the attachments for your reference.

Explain

Explain to students that they now have some knowledge of root words and how that knowledge can help them understand English words. Pass out a **What-Lighting** handout, highlighter, and **Greek and Latin Root** handout to each student. ("What-Lighting" is a variation of the [Why-Lighting](#) strategy.)

Display **slide 9**. Ask students to read the paragraph individually, and, while they read, find and highlight the words with Greek and Latin roots. They can use their Root Word handout to help them. Based on the roots and word parts, students should annotate in the margins the definitions of the English words. For example, if students highlighted the word "aquarium" from the root word "aqua," they should annotate in the margins that "aquarium" means a tank that contains water and fish. Allow 20–25 minutes for this activity.

An answer key is provided in the attachments. Students can grade their own handouts or turn them in as an assessment/assignment for this lesson.

Teacher's Note: Differentiation

If students struggle with this activity working individually, you might allow them to work in pairs.

Extend

Display **slides 10–11**, and explain to students that they will compose their own pieces of creative writing using English words that have Greek or Latin roots. Pass out a **Paragraph Writing Rubric** to each student and explain the expectations for a high-quality written paragraph. Pass out the **Select a Topic** handouts. Using the table in this handout as a guide, students can choose from a bank of options for characters, settings, and creatures to write about in their paragraphs.

Teacher's Note: Differentiation

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

Optional: Extended Topical Support

If students have read any books in Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson series, such as *The Lightning Thief*, they will be familiar with Greek gods and myths. Riordan's author page located [here](#) (complete citation in Resource list) also has 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.

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/>
- Hook, P. (2011). Hexagon generator. <http://pamhook.com/solo-apps/hexagon-generator/>
- 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. (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/>