

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Dissect the Lexical DNA: AP-Level Etymology Challenge

Can you reconstruct a word from its Latinate and Greek components? Synthesis complex morphemes to dominate academic and legal vernacular.

1. In a philosophical treatise, an author describes a 'monolithic' power structure. Given the Greek root 'lithos,' how is this structure being characterized?

Answer: C) A massive, uniform, and rigid entity

The root 'mono-' means single and 'lith' (from lithos) means stone; a monolithic structure is like a single, massive stone—unchanging and uniform.

2. To describe a person whose moods change as unpredictably as the Roman god of shifting forms, one might use the adjective _____ean, derived from the root 'Proteus'.

Answer: B) Prote

The term 'Protean' comes from the Greek sea-god Proteus, symbolizing the ability to assume different shapes or roles effortlessly.

3. The etymological origin of 'anachronism' suggests something that is 'against time' or misplaced in a specific era.

Answer: A) True

Derived from the Greek 'ana-' (against/back) and 'chronos' (time), an anachronism is an error in chronology where something is placed in the wrong time period.

4. Analyze the word 'somnambulist' in a literary context. Based on the roots 'somnus' and 'ambulare,' what is the character doing?

Answer: B) Walking while asleep

The root 'somin' means sleep and 'ambul' means walk (as in ambulance or perambulate), identifying a sleepwalker.

5. In legal medicine, a 'morphology' study focuses on the _____ of organisms, utilizing the Greek root 'morph'.

Answer: D) Form and structure

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The root 'morph' means form or shape; morphology is the study of the physical form and structure of organisms.

6. The prefix 'ob-' in the word 'obsequious' serves to intensify the root and implies a direction of 'against' or 'toward' in a submissive manner.

Answer: A) True

From 'ob' (toward) and 'sequi' (to follow), an obsequious person is literally following toward or complying with someone's every wish.

7. If a political commentator refers to a 'polysemous' statement, they are highlighting that the statement has:

Answer: B) Many possible meanings

'Poly' means many and 'sema' refers to signs or meanings (as in semantics), indicating a word or phrase with multiple interpretations.

8. The word 'peripatetic,' often used to describe Aristotle's school of philosophy, uses the prefix 'peri-' to suggest his habit of teaching while _____.

Answer: B) Walking around

'Peri-' means around, and 'patein' means to tread; peripatetic describes someone who travels or walks from place to place.

9. A 'misanthrope' and a 'philanthropist' are etymological opposites primarily because of which morphemic shift?

Answer: C) The prefix shift from 'mis-' (hatred) to 'phil-' (love)

Both share the root 'anthro' (human). The distinction lies in 'mis-' (to hate) versus 'phil-' (to love).

10. The word 'capitulate' is derived from the root 'caput' (head), originally referring to the drawing up of treaty headings or chapters for surrender.

Answer: A) True

From the Latin 'capitulum' (little head/chapter), it moved from organizing terms of an agreement to the act of surrendering under those terms.