

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Elder Scrolls & New Roots: 12th Grade Etymology Quest

Morphological analysis, etymological tracing, and semantic shifts. This lab provides foundational decoding strategies for high-stakes academic reading and collegiate vocabulary.

1. In contemporary political discourse, a leader might be described as possessing 'charismatic' qualities. Based on the Greek root 'charis', what is the literal foundational meaning?

Answer: B) Grace or favor

The Greek root 'charis' means grace, favor, or gift. In a 12th-grade context, understanding the shift from 'divine gift' to 'personal charm' is key to semantic history.

2. The prefix 'ante-' (as seen in 'antediluvian') and the prefix 'anti-' (as seen in 'anticlimax') are morphemes that carry the same semantic meaning of 'against'.

Answer: B) False

These are distinct: 'ante-' means 'before' (as in before the flood), while 'anti-' means 'against' or 'opposed to'.

3. In Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein', the creature is often described as having an 'irreparable' sense of loneliness. What is the grammatical function of the suffix '-able' in this context?

Answer: C) It turns the verb into an adjective signifying capability

The suffix '-able' (or '-ible') transforms a verb (repair) into an adjective, meaning 'capable of' or 'fit for' being repaired.

4. If an 18th-century philosopher writes about the 'primogeniture' of a monarch, which root within the word identifies the concept of 'birth'?

Answer: B) Gen

The root 'gen' (from 'genus' or 'gignere') means birth, race, or kind. It is the same root found in 'generation' and 'genesis'.

5. In the word 'misanthrope', the prefix 'mis-' functions as a negator meaning 'wrong' or 'bad', while the root 'anthro' refers to 'mankind' or 'human'.

Answer: A) True

A misanthrope is literally someone who has a 'bad' or 'hateful' view of 'humans' (anthro).

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6. When analyzing the word 'equanimity'—a trait valued by Stoic philosophers—the Latin root 'equ' suggests what physical or metaphorical state?

Answer: B) Even or level

The root 'equ' means 'even' or 'equal'. Combined with 'animus' (mind/soul), it describes an 'even mind' or composure.

7. Cormac McCarthy often uses 'polysyndeton' in his prose. Using your knowledge of the prefix 'poly-', what does this rhetorical device involve?

Answer: B) The use of many conjunctions in close succession

The prefix 'poly-' means 'many'. In rhetoric, polysyndeton is the use of many coordinating conjunctions for stylistic effect.

8. If a literary critic describes a poem as 'evanescent,' they are using the prefix 'e-' (out) and the root 'van' (empty). This word implies that the poem's imagery is ____.

Answer: B) Quickly fading or disappearing like vapor

Evanescence comes from 'ex-' (out) and 'vanescere' (vanish). It describes something that is 'vanishing out' or fleeting.

9. The word 'bibliophile' utilizes the root 'biblio' (book) and the suffix '-phile' (lover of). Therefore, a bibliophile is someone who collects or loves books.

Answer: A) True

The breakdown of 'biblio' (book) and 'phile' (love/lover) correctly identifies the term for a book enthusiast.

10. Consider the word 'circumlocution.' If 'circum' means 'around,' what does the root 'locut' relate to?

Answer: B) Speech or talking

The root 'locut' (or 'loqu') means 'to speak'. Circumlocution is the act of 'talking around' a subject rather than being direct.