Suffixes

A suffix is a letter, syllable, or word that is added to a root or stem of a word to either form a new word or add to its meaning. Suffixes are placed at the end of the root word. The main thing that a suffix shows is how it will be used in a sentence and how it is classified, in terms of whether the word is a noun, a verb, an adverb, or an adjective.

Suffixes are very useful because if one knows how to identify suffixes and what they mean, one can identify what kind of word it is in terms of grammar and increase one’s vocabulary.

**Verb Suffixes:** identifies the tense of the verb and its meaning. Suffixes like the one listed below generally show that the word is a verb.

- **‘-s’**: is to signify the third person singular in the present tense.
  
  *Example:* read (root word) + ‘-s’ (suffix) = runs

- **‘-ed’**: shows that the verb is in the past tense.
  
  *Example:* watch (root) + ‘ed’ (suffix) = watched

- **‘-en’**: shows that it is a past participle.
  
  *Example:* soft (root) + ‘en’ (suffix) = soften

- **‘-ing’**: the verb is being used in the present continuous to signify a process of doing
  
  *Example:* eat (root) + ‘ing’ (suffix) = eating

- **‘-ize’** or **‘-ate’** or **‘-ify’**: means to make or do
  
  *Examples:*
  - personalize
  - imitate
  - simplify

**Noun Suffixes:**

the following meanings:

- **‘-ance’** and **‘-ence’**: signify a state of being or the act of
  
  *Examples:* perform + ‘-ance’ = performance (the act of performing)
  Exist + ‘-ence’ = existence (the act of existing or the state of being)

- **‘-ant’, ‘-ent’, ‘-er’, ‘-or’, ‘-ian’, and ‘-ist’**: these suffixes signify one who does something
  
  *Examples:*
  - assistant
  - student
  - teacher
  - actor
  - historian
  - artist
Suffixes (Cont’d)

‘-ion’ and ‘-tion’: mean the act of or the result of or the condition of
Example: operate + ‘-ion’ = operation (the act of operation)

‘-ment’: means the act of
Example: commit + ‘-ment’ = commitment (act of committing)

‘-ness’: shows the quality of being
Examples: happy + ‘-ness’ = happiness (quality of being happy)
great + ‘-ness’ = greatness (quality of being great)

**Adjective Suffixes:** are suffixes that show that the words are adjectives and have the following meanings:

- ‘-able’, ‘-ible’: means able to be
  Examples: understand + ‘-able’ = understandable

- ‘-er’: means more
  Example: strong + ‘-er’ = stronger

- ‘-est’: means the most
  Example: tough + ‘-est’ = toughest

- ‘-ive’, ‘-ous’, and ‘-y’ signify to have the quality of or having the nature of
  Examples: active + ‘-ive’ = active

- ‘-ful’: means to be full of
  Example: careful + ‘-ful’ = careful

- ‘-less’: means to not have or lack
  Example: heartless

- ‘-logy’: means the study of
  Examples: biology (study of life processes)
  Egyptology (study of Egypt)

**Adverb Suffixes:** the following identifies the word as an adverb and expresses the manner in which something is done.

- ‘-ly’, ‘-fully’ and ‘-wise’ mean in the manner of
  Examples: natural + ‘-ly’ = naturally (in a natural manner)
  hope + ‘-fully’ = hopefully (in a manner of hope)
  clock + ‘-wise’ = clockwise (in the manner of a clock)
Suffixes Questions

Multiple Choice:

1. A suffix is a letter or syllable or word that is added to a root word at:
   
   a. The beginning  
   b. The middle  
   c. The end  
   d. None of the above

2. The suffix ‘–logy’ means:

   a. The study
   b. The superlative of something
   c. The quality of something
   d. The result of something

Identify the suffix and determine whether it is a verb, noun, adjective, or adverb:

3. Spoken  
   Suffix: _______  
   Type: ______________

4. Helpful  
   Suffix: _______  
   Type: ______________

5. Anticlockwise  
   Suffix: _______  
   Type: ______________

6. Sculptor  
   Suffix: _______  
   Type: ______________

7. Musician  
   Suffix: _______  
   Type: ______________

8. Listens  
   Suffix: _______  
   Type: ______________

9. Clarify  
   Suffix: _______  
   Type: ______________

10. Happiest  
   Suffix: _______  
   Type: ______________