

# *Greek Morphemes Lessons*

*(It's NOT Greek to Me!)*

*Expanding English Vocabulary  
with Greek Morpheme Analysis*



**A Vocabulary Program  
Based on Over 200 Greek  
Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes**

**Organized and Developed by  
Alene H. Harris, Ph.D.**

## **STUDENT BOOK**

*This work is dedicated  
to Mrs. Jonelle Kirk,  
English teacher and lifelong influence  
of over 5,000 students,  
whose passion for vocabulary studies  
lives on in these materials.*

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*Greek Morphemes  
Lessons  
(It's NOT Greek to Me!)  
Table of Contents*

An Introduction to this Study of Vocabulary .....	1
Greek Morphemes: Lesson One .....	2
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Two.....	12
Review for Lessons One and Two .....	18
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Three .....	19
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Four .....	25
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Five .....	32
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Six .....	38
Review for Lessons One through Six .....	44
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Seven .....	46
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Eight .....	52
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Nine .....	58
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Ten .....	64
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Eleven .....	70
Greek Morphemes: Lesson Twelve .....	76
Review for Lessons Seven through Twelve .....	82
Color paper for Study Cards .....	85



## An Introduction to This Study of Vocabulary

Often people use the phrase “It’s Greek to me” to mean that they do not understand something.

The fact is, if you know just a little bit of Greek – in the form of small word parts (called *morphemes*), you will find yourself easily understanding words you’ve never heard before.

You actually have a lot of this knowledge in your head already – you just do not realize that it is there. Once you realize what you know, and then apply your knowledge to new vocabulary, you will amaze both yourself and your parents with your vocabulary skills.

If you are using the CD that comes with this program, please go to Lesson One Instruction and begin. If you are choosing not to use technology, read on.

In the English language, big words are often made up of small word parts, called *morphemes*, that come from other languages – especially Greek. (Some language analyses indicate that about 40% of our language comes from the Greek, with an even greater percentage of science and engineering terms.)

When you know the meanings of these small word parts, you can unlock the meaning of some real jawbreakers. For example, take the word

### microarchaegynophobiatic

At first glance, you have no idea what it means. But once you realize the meanings in the morphemes, the word reveals itself. Consider...

...words you know with MICRO all deal with something small.

...an ARCHAEOlogist studies old stuff.

...a GYNOCologist is a doctor who specializes in treating women.

...a PHOBIA is a fear of something, so a PHOBIAC would be a person with this fear.

Put this knowledge all together, and you have *a person who is afraid of little old ladies*. You’re probably asking, “Is that a real word?” The answer is, “Yes, if enough people start using it.”

Consider the word ASTRONAUT. Sixty years ago, there was no such word. Then a man got into a special ship and went closer to the stars than anyone before. What to call him? Hmmm? In the Greek, ASTR means *star* and NAUT means *ship*. So... You see how it works.

One thing to keep in mind is that morphemes are “place bound” – that is, some are *prefixes* and always come at the beginning of a word (for example the morpheme “pre-”) and others are *suffixes* and always come at the end (for example the morpheme “-ology”). Still others, known as *roots*, can come anywhere in a word, and these can have prefixes and suffixes attached to them.

### prefix + root + suffix

In each morphemes lesson you’ll begin by taking notes on some Greek roots and then adding some prefixes and/or suffixes. For each morpheme, begin by thinking of words you already know that contain that morpheme, and then consider what those words have in common. As you think, your parent or instructor will guide you to the meaning of each morpheme.

## *Greek Morphemes: Lesson One Notes*

### Roots

1. anthrop	=
2. bibl; biblio	=
3. graph; gram	=
4. miso	=
5. phil	=
6. phon	=
7. scop; skept	=

### Prefixes

8. a-; an-	=
9. caco-	=
10. eu-	=
11. macro-	=
12. mega-; megal-	=
13. micro-	=
14. sym-; syn-	=
15. tel-; tele-	=

### Suffixes

16. -ic	=
17. -mania	=
18. -maniac	=
19. -phobia	=
20. -phobic	=
21. -y	=

### Words to Work

1. anthropophiac
2. philanthropy
3. misanthrope
4. bibliomaniac
5. euphonious
6. cacography
7. megaphone
8. microscope
9. macroscopic
10. telegraph
11. bibliophile
12. symphony
13. megalomaniac❖
14. skeptical
15. aphonic
16. bibliography

❖ Be sure to learn the dictionary definition for this word.



## *Assignments A & B: Working Words*

On the right side of the last page you saw a list entitled “Words to Work.” Working the first half of the words will always be Assignment A – your first assignment in each lesson. Working the second half of the words will be each lesson’s Assignment B.

### How to Work a Word

1. Start by writing the word in the top of each box.
2. Examine the word to find the Greek morpheme or morphemes it contains.
3. Then beneath the word, one morpheme per line, write the morphemes you identify and their meanings.
4. Next synthesize your knowledge to form a possible definition. Label it MD for *My Definition*.
5. Now, write the dictionary definition and label it DD for *Dictionary Definition*.
6. Finally, compare the two definitions and see how close you came.

For example,

### 1. *anthropophobic*

*anthrop* = *man; mankind*

*-phobic* = *one who has a morbid fear of*

*M.D.* = *one who has a fear of mankind*

*D.D.* = *one who has an intense fear of human society*

You will find that for most of the words, your synthesized definition is every bit as good as the dictionary. There will be only a very few words in this study that are not obvious and will require “dictionary knowledge” for an accurate understanding of the meaning. These words will have an asterisk to identify them in your Words to Work list.



# Greek Morphemes: Lesson One - Assignment A

Directions: Write and work the first eight words through the *Dictionary Definition* level.

1. ----- ----- ----- ----- -----	5. ----- ----- ----- ----- -----
2. ----- ----- ----- ----- -----	6. ----- ----- ----- ----- -----
3. ----- ----- ----- ----- -----	7. ----- ----- ----- ----- -----
4. ----- ----- ----- ----- -----	8. ----- ----- ----- ----- -----



# Greek Morphemes: Lesson One - Assignment B

Write and work the last eight words through the *Dictionary Definition* level.

9. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	13. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
10. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	14. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
11. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	15. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
12. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	16. <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



## Assignments C and D: Context Clue Sentences and Review

Now you are ready to USE some of these words. This will always be Assignment C-1.

But first, let's think about how word meaning can sometimes be revealed by the context of a sentence. What about the other 60% of English words that do not come from Greek? Are there some ways to figure words out if you do not know the morphemes within them? Yes!

Word meaning can be revealed in context in four different ways:

Definition in Context	The <i>aphonic</i> giraffe was <u>incapable of making a sound</u> .
Synonyms	The final letter e in the word is <i>aphonic</i> , <u>soundless</u> .
Antonyms	The gorilla was <u>loudly vocal</u> ; but the giraffe, <i>aphonic</i> .
Examples	In the words <u>cake</u> , <u>hope</u> , and <u>file</u> , the final letter e is <i>aphonic</i> .

As you use any eight selected words from the lesson in sentences for Assignment C-1, practice creating context clue sentences for each of these four types for each word you use. This will help you become more aware of context clues in your regular readings and thus increase your reading comprehension.

You are also ready to USE the morphemes. This will always be assignment C-2.

It's time to try your hand at creating words from the morphemes you now know. Just remember that each word needs at least one root, and that prefixes go at the front and suffixes go at the back. Play with the roots, prefixes, and suffixes to create two new words. Work each word through the *My Definition* level. In lieu of a *Dictionary Definition*, write a context clue sentence for your word.

Assignment D is a two-part review. The first part involves a series of created words for you to analyze the morphemes and synthesize a possible meaning. And yes, some of them may be a bit far-fetched, but each was created by a secondary student such as yourself (and used in a context clue sentence). The second part asks you to match some of these created words with Funny Definitions. For example, the created word PHILOPHOBIAC:

$$\text{philophobic} = \text{one who has a fear of love}$$

The matching Funny Definition for this created word is *this person would not want to read a romance novel*.

## *Greek Morphemes: Lesson One - Assignment C*

C-1: Create a context clue sentence for any eight of the words you worked in Assignments A and B. Label each sentence as either D for *definition*, S for *synonym*, A for *antonym*, or E for *example*.

Clue	Sentence
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

C-2: Now create two new words, work each word through the *My Definition* level, and write a context clue for the created word.

<p>9. _____</p>	<p>10. _____</p>
-----------------	------------------



# Greek Morphemes: Lesson One - Assignment D

Break each word apart as shown below and write a possible definition.

1. <sup>love</sup> <sup>one who has a fear of</sup>  
 philophobic one who fears love
2. megalomaniac \_\_\_\_\_
3. cacobiblio \_\_\_\_\_
4. macrograph \_\_\_\_\_
5. synphonomaniac \_\_\_\_\_
6. philanthropy \_\_\_\_\_
7. misograph \_\_\_\_\_
8. philomaniac \_\_\_\_\_
9. eumegalibliomaniac \_\_\_\_\_
10. cacophonous \_\_\_\_\_
11. biblioskept \_\_\_\_\_



## *Greek Morphemes: Lesson One - Assignment D continued*

Directions: Look at the “created” words you worked for Lesson One and try to match them with the “funny definitions” below. Write the number of the word on the review page before each of the definitions. Not all words will be used.

The first one is done for you as an example.

- 1   A. this person would not want to read a romance novel
- B. fingernails on a chalkboard
- C. not acceptable for a book report
- D. could cause you not to sign up for an art class
- E. this person would not collect elephants
- F. this person really loves reading *War and Peace* and *Gone with the Wind*
- G. Scrooge’s attitude at the beginning of “A Christmas Carol”
- H. what you do in the library
- I. shouts from the page

What funny definitions can you create to match one or both of the two words you did not match with a definition above?

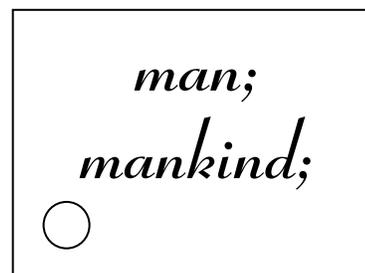
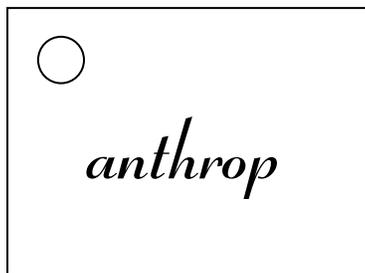


## *Greek Morphemes: Making a Set of Study Cards*

Learning is most effective when you engage multiple senses. Thus far you have seen morphemes and meanings (seeing) and you have written them (touching). Next you are going to prepare yourself a set of study cards to use in a review that involves all three brain pathways – seeing, touching, and hearing.

You will be making a set of self-review study cards for each lesson. You'll find six different colors of paper at the end of your book, each page lined off in approximately 1.5'x2' squares, and labeled with a lesson number. For each lesson you will need to cut the page apart and punch a hole in the top left corner of each card before beginning. You should have as many cards as there are morphemes for the lesson PLUS the title cover card.

Start by placing the stack of cards on your workspace so the hole is in the top left corner. Now take your top one and write the first morpheme on the front. Now turn that card over so the hole is at the bottom and write the meaning on the back.



Set that card aside and do the same for each of the other morphemes in a lesson.

Make the *LESSON ONE* title card the first card in your stack, hook them together with a ring or rubber band, and begin reviewing.

- 1 – Turn the cards to look at a morpheme and say it aloud.
- 2 – Then think and say aloud the meaning of the morpheme.
- 3 – Now turn the card over and check your knowledge of that morpheme meaning with the answer on the back.
- 4 – Keep going until you have reviewed all the morphemes.

Once you know them forwards, work on them backwards.

- 1 – Turn the cards to look at the meaning of a morpheme and say it aloud.
- 2 – Then think and say aloud the Greek morpheme with that meaning.
- 3 – Now turn the card over and check your knowledge of the morpheme with that meaning with the answer on the back.
- 4 – Keep going until you have reviewed all the morphemes.

Note that in future lessons you will make these study cards right after taking the notes on the morpheme meanings.

## *Greek Morphemes: Taking the Tests*

You will have 15 tests in this vocabulary study:

- one at the end of each of the 12 lessons
- one as a review of Lesson One and Lesson Two
- one midpoint test over Lessons One through Six
- one final test over Lessons Seven through Twelve

Each of the twelve lesson test will have about eight words for you to work through the *My Definition* level; the review of the first two lessons will have both words to work and matching; the midpoint (Lesson One through Lesson Six) and final (Lesson Seven through Lesson Twelve) will have multiple choice and matching.

Remember that you can get partial credit for a partial definition. Unless you are told otherwise for a very few words, you will not need to memorize a dictionary definition.

Most of the words will be “real” words, but there may be one or two “created” words as well.

Tests are scored with one point for identifying each morpheme and its meaning in the word and one point for synthesizing this knowledge into a definition.

REMEMBER -- If a word has two or more morphemes, and you remember one but not the other, make a PARTIAL DEFINITION for PARTIAL CREDIT. For example, if you had the word MICROBIBLIOPHOBIA, and you could not remember the meaning of the morpheme *-phobia*, it would look like this:

1. microbibliophobia	<u>score</u>	
<i>micro-</i> = <u>small</u>	+1 of possible 1	This equals 2 2/3 points out of 4 points possible.
<i>biblio-</i> = <u>book</u>	+1 of possible 1	
<i>-phobia</i> = _____	+0 of possible 1	
<i>MD</i> = <u>something to do with small books</u>	+2/3 of possible 1	

**Now, use your set of study cards for review to prepare for the Lesson One test.**

**Test yourself using the interactive review for Lesson One on the CD.**



**NOTE: The INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL includes the following:**

- 1 - answer keys for all words to work**
- 2 - answer keys for all matching of created words**
- 3 - twelve lesson tests and three review tests**
- 4 - answer keys for all tests**