

Lecture One: Terminology

Terminology is a general word for the group of specialized words or meanings relating to a particular field, and also the study of such terms and their use.

Biological terms are sometimes difficult to understand, but most of the words can be broken into **parts** using their **root words** by utilizing their **prefixes** and **suffixes**.

Prefixes and **suffixes** are letters or group of letters which are added to either the beginning of a word (prefix) or the end of a word (suffix) to change its meaning and /or function. In other words, roots **followed** by a **hyphen** are **prefixes**. Roots **preceded** by a **hyphen** are **suffixes**.

As students of **biology**, you should **learn to recognize** word parts, since they often give a **clue** as to the meaning of a word.

Greek and **Latin** root words often are used in **scientific terminology**. Some scientific words are the same in English as they **originally** were in Greek or Latin. For example, the Latin words *species*, *genera*, *spectrum*, *bacillus*, and *coccyx* are still used today in their original form. Other words use Greek or Latin **prefixes** or **suffixes**.

The chart below lists some commonly used **prefixes** and **suffixes** and **their meanings**.

Latin or Greek prefix	Meaning
<i>a-</i> , <i>an-</i> , <i>non-</i> , <i>un-</i>	not, without, non, lack of, negative
<i>anti-</i> , <i>contra-</i>	against, opposed to; opposite
<i>auto-</i>	self, automatic, spontaneous
<i>bi-</i> , <i>di-</i> , <i>diplo-</i>	twice, double
<i>bio-</i> , <i>vita-</i>	related to life
<i>cat-</i> , <i>de-</i>	down
<i>chlor-</i>	green
<i>chrom-</i>	color
<i>cyto-</i>	cell
<i>eco-</i>	where one lives, home

<i>endo-</i>	within, in, inside
<i>entomo-</i> ,	insect
<i>epi-</i>	atop, above, on, over, upon
<i>ex-</i> , <i>ecto-</i> , <i>exo-</i> ,	out, outside, beyond, outer surface
<i>geo-</i>	earth
<i>herb-</i> , (<i>-phyte</i>)	plant
<i>herpe-</i>	reptile
<i>hetero-</i>	other, different
<i>hyper-</i>	above, excess, more than, over
<i>hypo-</i> , <i>sub-</i>	below, beneath, under
<i>intra-</i>	in, indoors, inside, interior, within
<i>macro-</i> , <i>mega-</i>	big, huge, large
<i>mar-</i>	sea
<i>medi-</i> , <i>meso-</i>	middle
<i>multi-</i> , <i>myria-</i> , <i>poly-</i>	many
<i>micro-</i>	little, small, tiny
<i>omni-</i> , <i>toti-</i>	all
<i>patho-</i>	disease
<i>phago-</i> , (<i>-troph</i>),(<i>-vore</i>)	To feed or eat
<i>prim-</i> , <i>proto-</i>	first or one
<i>re-</i>	again
<i>sym-</i> , <i>syn-</i> , <i>sys-</i>	with, together
<i>tax-</i>	arrange
<i>terr-</i>	land
<i>zo-</i>	animal
Latin or Greek suffix	Meaning
<i>-cide</i>	kill
<i>-logy</i>	study
<i>-osis</i>	actions, conditions, or states
<i>-phyll</i>	leaf
<i>-phore</i>	carry, to bear
<i>-scope</i>	view, see
<i>-trop</i> , <i>-volv</i>	turn, change