Silly Sentences with Prefixes and Suffixes

Teacher		**Class**	Year 4
Subject	English	**Topic**	Prefixes and suffixes
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United Kingdom

Pupils learn how to add prefixes and suffixes to root words. They build new words and use them in silly sentences.

Curriculum links

- use further prefixes and suffixes and understand how to add them [2]
- apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes as listed in Appendix 1, both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words they meet [2]

Learning objectives

- Students will build new words with un-, dis-, mis-, -ful, -less and -ness.
- Students will explain the spelling rules for joining prefixes and suffixes.
- Students will use new prefix and suffix words correctly in sentences.

Success criteria

- I can build four new words from a root word.
- I can join prefixes and suffixes with correct spelling.
- I can use two new words correctly in a sentence.

What students already know

Show root words happy, help and agree. Ask pupils to shout any longer word they can make from them and say what changed.

Key words

prefix	small bit joined to the front of a word to change what it means [3]
suffix	small bit joined to the end of a word to change how it is used [3]
root word	main part of a word that carries the basic meaning [3]
spelling rule	agreed way to join bits to a main word without mistakes [1]

Materials

- Slides 1-6, 9-12 and projector
- Video clip 1 Roots, Prefixes and Suffixes
- prefix cards with un-, dis-, mis- and suffix cards with -ful, -less, -ness
- sentence frame sheets and pencils
- printed copies of Worksheet Task C

Before the lesson

- Print prefix cards, suffix cards and sentence frame sheets for pairs
- Print copies of Worksheet Task C, one per pupil
- Test Slide 6 Video clip 1 (0:00-1:49) with sound
- Arrange tables for pair work with space to read aloud

Lesson outline

0–10 min **Starter** 10 min · Whole class

To recall prefix, suffix and root word and hook pupils into word building.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 1 Word Builders! Add bits at the start and end and give the hook: Let's make the silliest sentence in Year 4 - but every silly word still has to be spelt perfectly.
2. Show Slide 4 cards for prefix, suffix and root word and ask pupils to point to head for start, toes for end, tummy for main part.
3. Show Slide 5 mystery: This door will not move. Add un- to locked. What do you get? Model splitting unlocked into un + locked.
4. Take answers and fix meaning: un- means not, so unlocked means not locked.

STUDENTS DO

1. Join in with actions for start, end and main part and repeat meanings.
2. Solve the locked mystery with a partner and shout unlocked.
3. Tell the class what un- means in unlocked.

Say: Today we are word builders. A prefix is a bit at the start that changes meaning, and a suffix is a bit at the end that changes use. Our word machine chopped the beginnings and endings off. You will stick them back together and then write a silly sentence that still spells every word right.

Worked example: locked -> unlocked: Step 1 find root locked. Step 2 add prefix un- to the front. Step 3 join straight with no change. Step 4 check meaning: not locked, so the door opens.

Ask: Where does a prefix go and what does it do? (At the start, it changes meaning [3].) · What is the root word in unlocked? (locked, the main part that carries meaning.) · What does un- mean here? (not or opposite of, so not locked.)

Check understanding: Hands up for prefix at start and suffix at end; re-teach with Slide 4 cards if mixed up.

Support: Show locked written down with un- on a separate card to slide together. **Stretch:** Ask for another un- word they know and its meaning, such as unhappy or unfair.

Use: Slides 1, 4-5

10–25 min **Teaching** 15 min · Whole class

To model how to add prefixes and suffixes with correct spelling.

YOU DO

1. Play Video clip 1 and ask pupils to listen for the root word and spot the bit at the start and the bit at the end.
2. Show Slide 10 steps and model three joins on the board, underlining the join.
3. Show Slide 2 and Slide 3 to fix two key facts with examples.
4. Think aloud the y to i check: look at letter before y, count syllables, then change or keep.

STUDENTS DO

1. Watch the clip and call out root, prefix and suffix they hear.
2. Copy the three joins and draw a line where the parts meet.
3. Sort helpful and helpless as opposites: -ful means full of, -less means without.

Say: Most prefixes join straight with no changes to the root word [1]. If a suffix starts with a consonant letter, it is added straight on to most root words without any change [1]. If the root has more than one syllable and ends with consonant plus y, change y to i before a consonant suffix [1].

Worked example: mis + spell = misspell: join straight, keep both s letters [1]. help + ful = helpful: consonant suffix joins straight, nothing changes [1]. happy + ness = happiness: happy has two syllables and consonant p before y, so happy > happi + ness = happiness [1].

Ask: Do we change spell when we add mis-? (No, join straight and keep both s letters: misspell [1].) · Why does happy change to happi before -ness? (More than one syllable and consonant before y, so y changes to i [1].) · What do helpful and helpless mean? (Helpful is full of help, helpless is without help, they are opposites [4].)

Check understanding: Mini-whiteboards: write misspell, helpful and happiness from dictation; reteach the failed rule with colour join line.

Support: Keep only -ful and -ment first with short roots, suffix in different colour to see the join [1]. **Stretch:** Explain why enjoy + ment = enjoyment needs no change and use it in a sentence.

Use: Slides 2-3, 6, 10; Video clip 1 (0:00–1:49)

25–45 min **Main activity** 20 min · Pairs

To build prefix and suffix words and use them correctly in a silly sentence.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 9 task: Add un-, dis-, mis-, -ful, -less or -ness. Check: just join, or change y to i? Say what each new word means.
2. Give each pair prefix cards, suffix cards and a sentence frame sheet; remind them most prefixes are added without changes in spelling [1].
3. Circulate, ask pairs to prove spelling by pointing to the root inside each long word.
4. Choose two pairs to read aloud for the plenary vote.

STUDENTS DO

1. In pairs, build four new words from roots like help, happy, agree and kind.
2. Write each word with the join marked and write what it means underneath.
3. Write one silly sentence using two new words and practise reading it aloud.

Say: Pick one prefix card and one suffix card. Make words such as disappoint, disagree, disobey and misbehave, mislead, misspell, plus wonderful, payment and kindness. Check each join, say what the new word means, then build one silly sentence using two new words.

Worked example: Student A picks dis- + agree = disagree, joins straight, means not agree [1]. Student B picks kind + ness = kindness, joins straight, means the state of being kind. Silly sentence: I disagree with the helpful dragon about kindness. Both roots agree and kind are still spelt right inside.

Ask: Show me the root inside disagree. Did spelling change? (agree, no change, prefixes join straight [1].) · How did you spell happiness? (happy > happi + ness = happiness, y to i [1].)

Check understanding: Pairs point to root in each word and state meaning; if meaning is wrong, remove affix and rebuild from root.

Support: Provide sentence starters and partner talk first, with a small bank of ready-made words to choose from. **Stretch:** Challenge pupils to add because or so to explain their silly sentence using the new words.

Use: Slide 9

45–60 min **Plenary** 15 min · Whole class

To check spelling rules and meanings and celebrate useful new words.

YOU DO

1. Hear two silly sentences; class points to roots and checks joins.
2. Show Slide 11 vote: Which new word is most useful? unhappy, disagree, helpful, kindness. Tally and ask why.
3. Do Worksheet Task C together: tick the correct spelling, remembering the rules.
4. Show Slide 12 true or false to close: unhappy means not happy, mis + spell keeps both s letters.

STUDENTS DO

1. Read sentences, vote, and explain choice using root meaning.
2. Complete Worksheet Task C by ticking correct spellings.
3. Answer true or false with thumbs and correct the false ones.

Say: Great builders prove the spelling by finding the root. Vote for the most useful new word and tell us why. Then we will tick the right spellings. Remember, -ful and -less can make opposites from the same root [4].

Worked example: True or false: misspell is spelt with one s - false. It is mis + spell and keeps both s letters [1]. beauty + ful = beautiful: beauty > beauti + ful = beautiful, y to i because of consonant before y [1].

Ask: Why is kindness spelt with -ness straight on? (Suffix starts with consonant, so added straight on with no change [1].) · Which word means without care? (careless, -less means without [4].) · Which is right, happyness or happiness? (happiness, change y to i [1].)

Check understanding: Worksheet Task C answers and Slide 12 thumbs; re-model any rule with more than a third wrong.

Support: Underline the root in Task C options so only the join needs checking. **Stretch:** Ask for a word with both a prefix and suffix, such as unhelpful, and split into three bits.

Use: Slides 11-12; Worksheet Task C

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Writing misspell with one s	Spelling shows mispell in books or on boards	Split to mis + spell and keep both s letters because prefixes join straight [1].
Adding -ness or -ful without changing y to i, e.g. happyness	y still in longer word with consonant before it	Check consonant before y and syllables: happy > happi + ness = happiness [1].
Mixing up -ful and -less meanings	Says helpless means full of help	Teach as opposites from same root: -ful means full of, -less means without [4].

Support

- Give only un- and dis- with spoken roots first to build unhappy, unfair, disagree and dislike.
- Limit suffix choice to help, care and hope with frames: Someone helpful will... and Without help...

Stretch

- Challenge pupils to build two words from same root, such as behave, misbehave and behaviour, and explain both.
- Challenge pupils to add a sentence using -ly or -ness with same root, such as helpfully or helplessness.

For the LSE or teaching assistant

Sit with target pairs in main activity. Help them split words to root, prompt the straight-on or y to i check, and scribe meaning if needed.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Add dis- to agree. Spell it and say what it means.	disagree, means not agree.
Add -ness to happy. Spell it and explain the change.	happiness, happy > happi + ness, y to i.
What is the root in helpless and what does helpless mean?	help, means without help.

Homework

Find two prefix words and two suffix words in your reading book and write root + affix = new word.

Sources

1. English appendix 1 · gov.uk · https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf
2. Year 4 Curriculum – Woolmore Primary School · woolmore.towerhamlets.sch.uk · https://www.woolmore.towerhamlets.sch.uk/year-4-curriculum/
3. What are prefixes and suffixes? - BBC Teach · bbc.co.uk · https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/skillswise/articles/zkmbt39
4. Word Formation in English — Prefixes & Suffixes | ELS · elitelanguage.co.uk · https://elitelanguage.co.uk/grammar/word-formation/
5. Prefixes and Suffixes Teaching Resources and Printables for ... · sparklebox.co.uk · https://www.sparklebox.co.uk/literacy/writing/grammar/prefixes-suffixes.html
6. Prefixes and Suffixes Introduction - How to Spell · howtospell.co.uk · https://howtospell.co.uk/prefixes-and-suffixes-introduction
7. Prefixes and suffixes - KS2 English - BBC Bitesize · bbc.co.uk · https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zqqsw6f
8. Prefixes and suffixes - KS1 English - BBC Bitesize · bbc.co.uk · https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z8mxrwx
9. Prefixes and Suffixes: A Complete Grammar Guide for Kids · planetspark.in · https://www.planetspark.in/english-grammar/prefixes-and-suffixes-grammar-guide
10. What Are Prefixes and Suffixes? – Explained for Kids · smartonlinegames.com · https://smartonlinegames.com/learn/what-are-prefixes-and-suffixes.html
11. Prefixes and Suffixes List: Meanings and Examples (K-5) · whatihavelearnedteaching.com · https://whatihavelearnedteaching.com/teaching-prefixes-and-suffixes/
12. The Complete Guide to Teaching Prefixes and Suffixes · teachingwithamountainview.com · https://teachingwithamountainview.com/teaching-prefixes-and-suffixes/
13. Identify Prefixes, Suffixes, and Base Words - Kids Academy · kidsacademy.mobi · https://www.kidsacademy.mobi/lesson/identify-prefixes-suffixes-and-base-words-34755967/
14. Prefixes And Suffixes Worksheets With Answers (Free Printable ... · atozworksheet.com · https://atozworksheet.com/prefixes-and-suffixes-worksheets/
15. Prefixes and suffixes: Definition, List and Examples · englishan.com · https://englishan.com/prefixes-and-suffixes/