

## 🔍 Reading a word in context

- ✓ The test asks what a word means **as used here**: cover the choices, fill the blank with your own word, then match it
- ✓ Many words have several meanings: a *temperate* climate is mild; a *temperate* person is calm
- ✓ Related words mislead: *inclement* weather is stormy, but *clemency* is mercy
- ✓ **Restatement**: nearby synonyms define a word — in “the perspicacity, the insight, and the wit,” *perspicacity* is perceptiveness
- ✓ **Double negative = positive**: baseball is “*not unlike* a war” means it is like a war
- ✓ **Parallel structure**: a series matches in form and weight — under the bed, behind the couch, and in the trash
- ✓ Cover the suffixes of a long, unfamiliar word and read its prefix and root
- ✓ Trust your gut: you recognize about 20,000 words, though you use only 2,000—5,000

## 🧩 Prefixes and roots

| Part                   | Meaning              | Examples                 | Part         | Meaning              | Examples                  |
|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| a, an                  | without, not         | amoral, apathy           | ig, im, in   | not                  | ignoble, inept            |
| ab, abs                | apart, away from     | abstract, abscond        | im, in       | in, into             | immure, innovate          |
| ad (ac, af, al, at...) | to, toward           | address, attract         | inter        | between              | intervene, interpolate    |
| ambi, amphi            | both sides, around   | ambivalent, amphitheater | intra        | within               | intramural, intracellular |
| ante                   | before               | antechamber, anterior    | log          | thought              | logical, psychology       |
| anti                   | against              | antipathy, antibiotic    | narc         | sleep                | narcolepsy, narcotic      |
| arch                   | leader, chief, first | archetype, archenemy     | ob           | against, opposing    | obstinate, obnoxious      |
| ast                    | star                 | astronomer, asteroid     | ortho        | right, straight      | orthodontist, orthopedist |
| cata                   | down, completely     | cataclysm, catastrophe   | pan          | all, entire          | pandemic, panoply         |
| chrom                  | color                | monochromatic            | para         | beside, beyond       | parallel, paradox         |
| chron                  | time                 | chronology, chronicle    | path         | feel                 | empathy, apathy           |
| cogn, gno              | know                 | recognition, agnostic    | per          | through              | perceive, permeate        |
| demos                  | people               | democracy, demography    | peri         | around               | perimeter, periscope      |
| dia                    | across, through      | diaphanous, dialectic    | phon, phono  | sound                | telephone, microphone     |
| doc                    | teach                | doctrine, docile         | photo        | light                | photography, photon       |
| duc                    | lead, make           | educate, deduce          | pro          | forward, in place of | progressive, propulsion   |
| dyna                   | be able              | dynamic, dynasty         | retro        | back, backward       | retrograde, retrospective |
| ego                    | I, self              | egotist                  | super, supra | over, above, beyond  | superfluous, supercilious |
| epi                    | upon, over           | epigram, epilogue        | tele         | far                  | telescope, telegraph      |
| geo                    | earth                | geography, geology       | ultra        | excessively, extra   | ultrasonic, ultramodern   |
| hypo                   | under, beneath       | hypodermic, hypothesis   |              |                      |                           |

## 📖 Suffixes tell you the part of speech

| Makes a          | Suffixes, with meaning and example                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Noun</b>      | -ism belief ( <i>realism</i> ); -ist one who ( <i>idealist</i> ); -ity, -ment, -ness, -ship, -hood, -ance/-ence, -ancy/-ency state or quality of ( <i>gravity, judgment, boldness, friendship, childhood, emergence</i> ); -ion, -sion, -tion act or state of ( <i>invitation, exclusion</i> ); -cracy rule, power ( <i>democracy</i> ) |
| <b>Adjective</b> | -less without ( <i>hopeless</i> ); -ful, -ous, -ious full of ( <i>thankful, gracious</i> ); -able, -ible able to ( <i>capable, legible</i> ); -al, -ic related to ( <i>critical, poetic</i> ); -ive tending to ( <i>destructive</i> ); -y having ( <i>fluffy</i> ); -ish like, somewhat ( <i>childish</i> )                             |
| <b>Verb</b>      | -ize, -fy, -ate, -en to make ( <i>finalize, solidify, activate, harden</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Adverb</b>    | -ly in what way ( <i>beautifully</i> ); -ward direction ( <i>backward</i> ); -wise manner ( <i>clockwise</i> ); -fold degree ( <i>twofold</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                         |