

Name _____

Vocabulary • Word Structure

- A **prefix** is added at the beginning of a base word to change its meaning.
- Sometimes you can use prefixes to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word.
- The prefixes *un-* and *dis-* usually mean “the opposite” or “to do the opposite.”

Directions Read the following passage. Then answer the questions below. Look for prefixes in words to help determine their meaning.

Quietly, Rosa unscrewed the bottle of pickles. She was making a huge sandwich for her mom, who was busy in her office. “Try to be quiet,” her mom had said. Rosa wanted to surprise her mom, because sometimes she worked so hard that she forgot to eat. For Rosa, it was unthinkable to miss a meal.

Rosa didn’t want to show disrespect to her mom, but she couldn’t help being excited about the sandwich she’d made. She came to the door and announced, “Lunch is served!” Her mom smiled and said, “How did you know I was hungry?” Rosa was relieved and pulled up a chair to join her mom for lunch.

1. If *unscrewed* means “loosened by turning,” what does its base word mean and why?

2. If *unthinkable* means “impossible to imagine,” what does its base word mean and why?

3. What word uses the prefix *dis-*? How does this prefix change the meaning of its base word?

4. Fill in the blank: If Rosa’s mom wanted Rosa to make the sandwich again, she might say, “Rosa, can you _____ this sandwich?”

5. Add prefixes to *pleased* and *excited* so each new word’s meaning will be the opposite of the base word. Use one of the new words in a sentence.

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Home Activity Your child identified prefixes in words to understand their meanings. With your child, read a short selection. Ask your child to point out words that use prefixes and to explain how the prefixes change their meanings.